A Social History of Grand Forks, North Dakota 1880-1914

Robert Samuel Anderson

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A SOCIAL HISTORY OF GRAND FORKS,
NORTH DAKOTA 1880-1914

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate Division
of the
University of North Dakota

by
Robert Samuel Anderson

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Arts
June, 1951
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This thesis, presented by Robert Samuel Anderson, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, is hereby approved by the Committee on Instruction in charge of his work.

Committee on Instruction.

[Signatures]

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Director of the Graduate Division.
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Robert Samuel Anderson
PREFACE

This story was written from the position of an outside observer looking in, and is an attempt to contribute to the knowledge of a very interesting phase of history, local history, as observed from a previous non-acquaintence position with the situation. The writer first received his interest in local history while an undergraduate student at Bemidji State Teachers College, Bemidji, Minnesota, while listening to lectures on local history by Professor Harold T. Hagg, Head of the History Division of the Department of Social Studies at that institution.
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CHAPTER I
BEFORE 1880

About thirty thousand years ago, a slow-moving blanket of ice covered the area which is now Grand Forks, North Dakota. This glacial sheet pushed ahead of it, or covered up, all that lay in its path. In the process many animals and plants were either destroyed completely or preserved in their whole form in the ice blocks. Also, this moving mass of ice carved out many of the deep lake beds and valleys of the Red River valley area. From the evidences of geological formations it is known that the elephant and the tiger once roamed the forests in and about Grand Forks. This being the case, the climate here was at that time sub-tropical. The remains of these animals are found in the clay beds of Dakota rivers.¹

One of the gigantic lake beds that was created by this glacial movement was Lake Agassiz. This ancient lake, almost like an inland sea, came about as a result of the slow melting of the glacial ice in the deep lake bed as the glacier slowly receded. Lake Agassiz encompassed portions of Manitoba, Minnesota, and North Dakota. At the site of Grand Forks the lake was about a hundred miles wide and some three hundred and thirty feet deep.² During the existence of this lake a glacial silt known as detritus³ was

² Alexander Aas, "The History of the City of Grand Forks to 1889," a Master's Thesis at the University of North Dakota, 1920, 3.
³ Detritus is an accumulation of fragments, or alluvial rock, broken off, or worn away, by action of water.
deposited at the bottom of the lake bed. This action was accomplish-
ed by a constant wearing away of the rock by the many rivers which
flowed into the lake. In the area around Grand Forks this silt was
from twenty to thirty feet deep. These alluvial deposits are the
bases of the rich black Miami clay loam which was to produce the
agricultural wealth of the Red River Valley. The belt of this loam:
extends from five to ten miles on each side of the river. The clay
loam in the immediate vicinity of Grand Forks is from one inch to
four or five inches of mucky loam underlaid with black loam. Some
of the beaches, representing different levels of the lake as it receded after glaciation, are found in many sections of Grand Forks
County.

For a period of thousands of years after the recession of
glacial Lake Agassiz, numerous tribes of people of Mongoloid stock
migrated into the region of what is today North Dakota. Originally,
these Mongoloid peoples migrated from Asia by way of the Bering
Strait and thence down the west coast where they developed a fairly-
high degree of civilization. Eventually the descendants of these
people crossed the Rockies and spread out over the plains region.
At the time that the white man first came to Dakota the northwestern
section of the state was occupied by the Chippewa branch of these

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5 Second Biennial Report of the Director of the Agricultural
Survey of North Dakota (Bismarck, 1904), 45.
6 Ibid., 45.
7 Aas, 3.
mongoloid peoples, and the southern portion of the area was occupied by the Sioux tribes. The Chippewas spread out as far as western North Dakota, south to Devils Lake, and north into Manitoba. Their main camp seems to have been in the Turtle Mountain region. The Chippewas are Algonquins and were essentially a forest people, highly skilled in the art of woodcraft. They used birch bark in the construction of their homes, canoes, and household utensils. They practiced polygamy and were cannibalistic to a limited extent in warfare. The Sioux, on the contrary, centered their entire life around the buffalo for food, housing, clothing, and food containers. Bows for the hunt were made from buffalo bones, and hoes for agricultural purposes were made from the shoulder blades of the buffalo.

The French were probably the first white people to see these aborigines, and to send explorers and expeditions into the wilds of what is today the state of North Dakota. In the early thirties of the eighteenth century they moved down from their settlements in Quebec and Ontario in search of fur. Their route of travel was down the Ottawa river from Montreal to the Great Lakes, which they traversed until they reached the point where the Rainy River pours into Lake Superior, just above the present city of Duluth, Minnesota. The course of the Rainy River would be followed until the Lake of the Woods was reached, from which point a system of portages through the many lakes and streams of Minnesota would be used until the Red Lake river was located. It was in the year 1734 that Sieur de La Vérendrye, his followers, and Chippewa Indian guides set out from

8 J. M. Gillette, Social Economics of North Dakota (Minneapolis, 1942), 1.
the region of Lake Winnipeg to look for new streams and areas inhabited by fur-bearing animals. Vérendrye was also searching for the mythical Northwest Passage. It was he who was credited with the discovery of the Red River of the North in 1734, near the site of present-day Pembina. That year he built Fort Maurepas near the present site of Winnipeg.

Although Vérendrye never passed directly through the site of Grand Forks, his guides knew of its location. The Chippewas purposely directed Vérendrye's party along the eastern side of the Red river because of their deadly fear of the Sioux, who often lay in wait for them at the river's junction with the Red Lake River.

Six years later, in 1740, some of the men who had been in La Vérendrye's party traveled up the river in search of furs and saw the site of Grand Forks. The size of the confluence made such an impression upon them that these men called it Les Grandes Fourches, or the Great Forks. At this time these men decided to set up a transfer center at the forks. From this center trappers shipped their furs via voyageurs and couriers des bois to either Grand Portage, which was near the present city of Duluth, and the Great Lakes region, or to the area near present day St. Paul by way of the Red River and its tributaries.

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9 Gillette, 3; also, Cf., Elliott Coues, New Light on the History of the Northwest (New York, 1897), 139. Vérendrye's guides were chiefly Chippewa Indians. Over seventy years later, in 1801, Alexander Henry, Jr. confirms the fact that the site of Grand Forks was a favorite spot for the Sioux to ambush the Chippewas coming down the Red Lake river.

10 Coues, 139.

11 H. V. Arnold, The Early History of Grand Forks, North Dakota (Larimore, 1918), 12.
the plans of the French very nicely for at least three reasons. First, it was located in the immediate vicinity of a wooded area; second it was situated at the forks of two navigable streams pointed in three directions; and third, the locale was ideal as a resting point and transfer center for the long hauls involved in the fur trade. Such a situation meant that the renewal of many friendships and the making of many new acquaintances took place as the men of the fur trade congregated at the forks. This first transfer post was used only intermittently for many years, however.

During the greater part of the Eighteenth Century, when the French were occupying the region in which Grand Forks is located, France was engaged in a gigantic struggle with Great Britain and Spain for possession of overseas trade and colonies. Directly related to this struggle was the search for the shortest route to India and the Far East, which was the main reason for the search of the mythical Northwest Passage in North America. As has already been mentioned, V'erendrye had been looking for this passage. However, Frenchmen in the Grand Forks area were more concerned with fur than the war, but French power and control over the area of present day North Dakota and the entire Upper Midwest ended, for all practical purposes, with the Treaty of Paris in 1763, which concluded the Seven Years' War.

For a period of almost forty years, after the conclusion of the

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12 Arnold, 13. (the conclusions in this paragraph are the writer's.

13 Ibid., 15.
Treaty of Paris, there seems to have been very little interest in Les Grandes Fourches as no available evidence records any events that might have occurred between the period of French occupation and the arrival of Alexander Henry Jr., an agent of the Northwest Fur Company of Montreal, on the morning of November 8, 1800. From the description he gives us of the forks, however, there must have been someone here, at least periodically. Opposite the site where the Red Lake river enters the Red, Henry and his men set up a temporary camp. Les Grandes Fourches appeared to Henry as follows, according to his journal:

The soil, banks, and muddy beach are the same as below, (Henry means that it was the same as that around Pembina and the Mouse river region) and so are the large woods, with the addition of bois incommun and prickly ash, of which there is an abundance. The water appears very deep at the confluence, and my guide tells me that the sturgeon winter here. We saw several jump. We saw several old war camps, and a range of elm-bark cabins, which our guide tells me were erected last summer, of about 100 men who had been here before the leaves were full green; but we saw no fresh tracks. Near this last war camp was a great quantity of horse dung, and stakes driven into the ground to fasten their horses. 14

For a period of five or six years Henry shuttled back and forth between Pembina, eighty miles to the north, and the forks with Pembina being his main base of operations. In his journal he briefly described the fauna of the area, telling us that the red deer, and particularly the buffalo, roamed the ground around the site of Les Grandes Fourches (which was the name that he gives the site in his journal), in large numbers. He reports that more buffalo died

14 Coues, 141.
as a result of falling through the thin ice on the rivers than by
the hand of man. It is interesting to note that of the buffalo
killed only the entrails and tongues were eaten, and that the steaks
and hindquarters were left to rot. Also, buffalo that had died as
a result of freezing were preferred over fresh-killed meat. Henry
tells us that the early trappers who came to Les Grandes Fourches
were in a continual state of alarm, and that they kept a constant
watch, day and night, for the warring Sioux. In addition to this
danger, there were a tremendous amount of mosquitoes and woodlice
at the forks. Despite these obstacles, Henry's party carried on
quite an extensive fur trapping business. For the season of 1805-6
alone they rendered to the Northwest Fur Company 342 beavers, 24
black bears, 310 wolves, 171 foxes of all types, 75 raccoons, 35
minks, 27 otters, and 6 buffalo robes, in addition to many other
minor animal furs.15

On September 12, 1807 Alexander Henry sent a William Henry,
his cousin, with T. Véandré, interpreter, and seven other men to
the Les Grandes Fourches site to build a permanent fur trading post.
By 1808, the site had become a regular trading post of the Northwest
Fur Company, but a small one.17 (It was by a provision in the Jay
Treaty of 1794 that Henry was permitted to trap and trade in the
territory of the United States. This treaty permitted both countries

15 Coues, 150, 197, 240, 281.
16 Ibid., 424.
17 Ass, 32.
to trade freely across the boundary line.) Despite the fact that an abundance of furs was taken out of the region, settlement failed to materialize because of the fact that the fur trade itself was a mobile type of life which took the trappers out into the wilderness for months at a time.

For a period of about nine years after 1808 there are no written records in the history of the site. Then in 1817 Major Stephen A. Long and a party of surveyors came to the region to map it for the United States government in order to help determine the exact location of the international boundary line. Although Long's party did not pass directly through the site of Les Grandes Fourches, the fact that he passed near it is important because he became well acquainted with the area. His official report, published in the form of government bulletins, and which had a wide circulation because they were printed in eastern newspapers, attracted Americans' attention to this region for the first time. This report was very favorable and should have encouraged settlement in the area.

But a number of factors produced the opposite effect. One was the unfortunate loss of a printed report telling of the growth of fine, top quality wheat in Dakota. Another was an unfavorable report made by a certain General Hazen, of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, who was sent out in 1815 to the region of the Dakotas to ascertain the economic assets of the area with an eye to possible

18 Aas, 32.
19 Arnold, 124.
settlement. His report, which was circulated in the east through the press, described the area of the central and upper midwest as an arid and uninhabitable desert. As a result, many of the settlers were discouraged from settling in the territory, and either bypassed or completely ignored the plains region in favor of either the mountain states or California, where it was known that there was gold, silver, and fertile fruit valleys.

Lack of any political organization was also a hindrance. Before 1849 the region of the Dakotas was unorganized territory. From 1804 to 1861 the Dakotas were in no less than five territories, each of which had a governor but no legislatures until the last one in 1861. Between the years 1804-12 the Dakotas were a part of the Louisiana Territory; from 1812-49 Missouri Territory; in the years 1849-61 the eastern section was in Minnesota Territory and the western part in Nebraska Territory. Dakota Territory was organized in 1861 and included both Dakotas, the larger part of Montana, and much of Wyoming. During the years 1804-1861 settlers were unable to obtain titles to any land that they desired because the area had not yet been surveyed. At the time of the formation of Dakota Territory the Civil War was in progress and the energies of the nation were absorbed in directions other than the settlement of new frontiers. In 1863, with the formation of Idaho Territory, Montana and Wyoming were taken out of Dakota Territory and placed in the former.

20 Aas, 51.
21 Gillette, 5; Aas, 51.
The people who were here came as a result of the work of such enterprising concerns as the American Fur Company of John Jacob Astor. The Astor company established fur-trading posts at both Les Grandes Fourches and Pembina as early as 1829. The building of this post was a part of an attempt to prevent all illegal trading and smuggling between Canadian concerns and American individuals, and vice versa. As a result of the insect destruction of 1873-4, however, many of the early settlers were more than disheartened, and their expressions of disappointment easily found their way into the newspapers all over the east. Immigration up to this period was almost negligible.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century a considerable amount of trade sprang up between St. Paul and Fort Garry (present Winnipeg and old Fort Maurepas). The nearest base of supplies for the Red river area was at St. Paul. The Red River Oxcart trail connected the Canadian and American points, and the site of Les Grandes Fourches early became a landmark on the trail. Supplies were transported in a conveyance known as the Red River Oxcart, which was built entirely of wood and held together with wooden pegs. These carts travelled over fairly well-defined trails. The forks were a focus for a number of these trails. One of them touched the site at Belmont (visible evidence of it can still be seen in the southeast corner of Lincoln Park) and crossed the present city there. Three concerns had trading posts at Les Grandes Fourches.

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These were the Northwest Fur Company, the American Fur Company, and the Hudson's Bay Company. The latter set up its post at the forks in 1811. These posts were a haven for small hunting and fishing parties, as well as for travelers in the Red River Oxcarts coming from either Pembina or St. Paul.

During the year of 1868, Les Grandes Fourches became the division point on the Fort Abercombie to Fort Garry mail route. One rider from Fort Abercombie (fifteen miles north of the present city of Wahpeton) would bring the mail as far as the forks and pick up the return mail, while the rider coming down from Fort Garry would bring mail from Canada and relay the Fort Abercombie mail back to Fort Garry. The mode of transportation varied with the season of the year. During the winter months it was dogsled, and pony the rest of the year.

On June 15, 1870, the United States government officially established a post office at Les Grandes Fourches. It was at this time that the site took on its present Anglocized name. Sanford C. Cady was selected as the first postmaster, and the first post office was a log cabin situated where the water works first stood in what is now Lincoln Park. During the first year of its existence there were about ten patrons, which was just about all the people that claimed the Grand Forks site as their official residence. No salary was attached to the position of postmaster at this time. Cady held the job for one year. Then John Stewart took over the position, and the post office was transferred to the Griggs, Walsh,

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23 Aas, 37; Arnold, 54, 56.
24 Arnold, 89-94, passim.
and McCormack store, which had been established in the site some-
time during the year 1871, on Third Street.\textsuperscript{25}

During the years 1871, four big events took place which were to affect the future course of the Grand Forks settlement. The first of these was the construction of a telegraph line following the river road from Fargo townsite to Pembina and Fort Garry. This was the first line to be put up in the North Dakota area. The second big event was the completion of the Northern Pacific railroad as far west as Moorhead, Minnesota. The third event was almost simultaneous with the second, and that was the inauguration of the first stage line along the river route. Daily service was provided by the stages, and the carrying of the mail was transferred to this newer, more expedient method of transportation. The fourth was the publication of an official report released by the United States Signal Service in 1872 covering a survey that was conducted in Dakota Territory in 1870.

This report was even more glowing that the long report of 1820\textsuperscript{26} and did much to refute the bad impression of this region created years ago by Gen. Hazen. It was pointed out that Grand Forks lay in the same latitude as the most populous and prosperous states of the east; the climate was continental and not damp; the air was pure, dry, and devoid of humidity during the winter months; and the cold air was not penetrating; there was less snow than in

\textsuperscript{25} Aas, 42.

\textsuperscript{26} Hagerty, 59.
regions east or south of the Dakotas. The Signal Service investigation further revealed that the area of the Dakotas was not in the track of extensive cyclones, and that "northwester" blizzards were merely high winds accompanied by driving snow, which was a compliment of every prairie area north of the 38th parallel. "... in the winter months Dakota enjoys more sunny days ... than any of the Atlantic or lake states." From this wealth of evidence the Signal Service investigators drew some very sound and convincing conclusions concerning the Grand Forks area. Medical testimony in the report emphasized that anyone living in the Dakotas would not have heat conducted from his body because of the dryness of the air. Doctors on the survey pointed out that the climate of the Red River Valley was especially favorable for treatment of pulmonary, bronchial, and malarial diseases. Agricultural experts were quick to point out that the area around Grand Forks was no more endangered by late and early frosts than any other state in the same parallel. The dryness of the air enabled vegetation to resist light frosts. Absence of moisture allowed the temperature to fall below the freezing point without producing frost. This type of dry air does not generate rust, smut, and insects. Fever and ague were unknown as originating in the region. The site of Grand Forks is less than one thousand feet above sea level (it is actually eight hundred and thirty feet). This favorable report plus the fact that the wheat-producing lands of southern and western Minnesota were fast playing

27 Hagerty, 59.
28 Ibid., 40-62, passim.
out, further encouraged settlement in Dakota, and Grand Forks.

Meanwhile, the extension of more modern methods of transportation to the area. Under the influence of the Empire Builder, James J. Hill, had been felt by the settlement of Grand Forks. A partner in the firm of Hill, Griggs, and Company, a shipping and warehouse concern in St. Paul, he had made a trip to Fort Garry by dogsled during the winter of 1869, following the route of the mail carriers. His observations concerning the Red River, and particularly the forks, of the Red and Red Lake rivers had impressed him so much that he immediately recommended the two streams as important avenues of commerce. On the return trip to St. Paul he dispatched Captain Alexander Griggs, one of his boatmen and partners, to examine the area more completely. In order to accomplish his mission, Griggs built a flatboat at Fort Abercrombie. Upon arriving at the mouth of the Red Lake River in 1870, he erected a cabin of logs and then returned to St. Paul where he built the steamer Selkirk. This boat he sailed and portaged to Grand Forks, where it continued to ply the Red river until almost the twentieth century.

In 1871 Griggs built a frame house near his cabin, at the foot of present Kittson Avenue. Nearby he also helped erect a store mentioned earlier in the chapter. However, during the course of the years 1871-72 there was very little building done, as it was very difficult to get the proper supplies shipped into the forks from the nearest railroad terminal at Crookston, at a respectable

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29 W. L. Dudley, City of Grand Forks: Illustrated (Grand Forks, 1897), 7.
cost. The number of inhabitants at this time was so small that any resident might have been acquainted with them all. By the close of 1871 there were hardly more than fifty persons at the Grand Forks settlement, and two years later there were less than two hundred persons. The only people at the forks, before 1870, were those men connected with the fur trade, transportation interests, mail carrying, or members of military posts. Some members of these groups did a little farming as a sideline, but there was no organized form of agriculture until several years later. Almost every building in Grand Forks during these early years was built of wood. Brick was used only in the construction of chimneys. A two-story frame house, of about six or seven rooms, could be purchased for only fifteen hundred dollars in 1878. According to the United States census of 1870, the population composition of Grand Forks and of Dakota Territory was almost entirely native born. Of the entire population, 18% were born in Canada, and 68% in Dakota Territory. This particular census only surveyed Dakota Territory in general, and did not take up the individual cities within the territory. French ancestry predominated, but there were many Scotch and English mixtures, too.

Almost from the time of the first fur trading posts, the social life of the forks revolved around the bois brulés, voyageurs, couriers

30 Arnold, 105.
31 Ibid., 103-8, passim; Federal Census Reports for the Year 1870 (Washington, 1871).
32 Arnold, 129.
33 Federal Census Reports for the Year 1870 (Washington, 1871).
des bois, liquor, and the nearby Indians. Trappers and traders would come to the general store of the post which was first operated by the Northwest Fur Company in order to purchase their supplies. This usually took up the better part of two or three weeks, which allowed for much merriment at the meeting of old friends and the making of new ones. Many trappers fell in love with the Indian maidens who would be selling their wares outside the walls of the post. Liquor was perhaps the chief item of value in bartering with the Indians. By 1870, the situation as described above had changed very little. Usually the life of the settlement ran from an extreme of being strictly mercenary to one of drunken brawls, with no middle ground for culture or refinement. Grand Forks was said to be the only point in the immediate region where a drink of "forty-rod" (a blend of rum, whiskey, and brandy) could be readily obtained. As such, it early became a favorite stopping place for station-keepers, teamsters, trappers, and half-breeds.

Husking bees and house raisings during the day and social dances in the home at night were favorite pastimes during the early days of the settlement. At any of these events the musicians performed only for pleasure, never for money or profit. The Griggs family piano, which was brought to the settlement in 1872, and the only one at the time, often enlivened various social get-togethers.

34 Voyageurs were the boatmen of the fur trade; couriers des bois were those who took the short cut through the woods rather than follow the streams; bois brûlés were half-breeds—it means burnt wood.

35 Arnold, 20-28, passim.
From 1870 until the turn of the century, a man in Grand Forks could entertain his girlfriend for an entire evening on about fifty cents. All social dances were free, and refreshments were also generally free. About the only time that any money was spent was on food at a cafe, or at a pie supper in the church. At the time of the opening of Stewart House, the town's first hotel, in 1872, George B. Winship, who later started the Grand Forks Herald, made the statement that people would travel from as far as Pembina and Gr Georgetown, the latter ten miles north of Fargo, in order to give the place a housewarming. Said Winship: "In those days it was no task at all to travel 100 miles in a Red River cart to attend a social function."37

On Sunday February 11, 1872, in Alexander Griggs' house, the first religious service in the settlement was held by an itinerant Presbyterian minister. In 1874, the Methodist organization sent a regular minister to Grand Forks with instructions to establish a regular church in the townsite. Organization of the church had taken place before his coming. The members had decided that it was most practical to build a schoolhouse which could be used for religious services as well, rather than to build a separate church edifice. It is of interest to note that in order to raise finances with which to purchase building supplies and labor, the congregation sponsored a dance over Budge and Eshelman's saloon on Third Street. After completion of the building, one person, the preacher, would

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36 C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950. Mr. Hurd is a pioneer of seventy-two years in Grand Forks, having plastered most of the university buildings and private homes in the city.

37 Arnold, 146.
preach on Sundays and teach classes during the week. Almost everyone attended these religious services. Occasionally a priest from Pembina would conduct services in the schoolhouse for the Catholic citizens of the settlement.

Meanwhile, as early as the summer of 1872, an effort was made to establish a separate school in the settlement. In the process of trying to get organized, however, two rival factions developed. These factions proceeded to dispute over the proposed schoolhouse location. By the fall of 1874 subscriptions for a school had been received to the amount of five hundred dollars, in addition to work pledges. When spring came around in 1875 a schoolhouse costing only four hundred and sixty-five dollars had been built. This was the building used by the Methodist church, and partially financed by the dance proceeds. At the same time another school grew as a result of the factional dispute of 1872. It was finished late in the summer of 1875 and stood where the Episcopal church now stands. It was financed by private subscriptions, also. The first mentioned school was taught by Mrs. J. B. Fisher and the Reeves and Freeman children attended it. The latter school was taught by George Ames and was attended by the Griggs' children. The first school was located in the south end of Lincoln Park.

On July 2, 1875, George H. Walsh issued the first number of the Grand Forks Plaindealer, the town's first paper. It remained as a weekly until 1882 when it was transformed into a daily. The

38 Arnold, 110-16, passim; Aas, 46.
39 Aas, 46. (413 First Avenue North, then known as Alpha Avenue)
40 Arnold, 115, (428 Reeves-Drive).
weekly continued, too, however. About four years later, George B. Winship published the first edition of the Grand Forks Herald, also a weekly for several years. The Herald did not become a daily until 1884. Both of these papers for the first four or five years were very small in size, about the size of a tabloid newspaper, and were filled up with almost entirely local news and advertisements.

On October 26, 1875, Griggs filed a plat of the original townsite, covering ninety acres of his claim. The following spring, Frank Viets filed the plat of the first addition. The village of Grand Forks was organized in 1878, with George H. Walsh as President, R. W. Cutts as clerk, W. A. Brown, John McRae, William Budge, and Frank Viets as trustees. The original townsite of Grand Forks was laid out by a civil engineer by the name of Hector Bruce. In planning the town, Bruce was influenced immensely by the course of the river and the route of the stage-road, which paralleled the river. This stage-road had already determined the location of Third Street. Because of Bruce's conclusions, and plans, there was irregularity in lots and blocks to additions as they were added to the border of the original townsite. At the time of incorporation, the mercantile interests of the Hudson's Bay Company were withdrawn from Grand Forks. The reason for this sudden departure is not quite clear. One theory is that they were in trouble over an act of allegedly selling whiskey to the Indians. Another idea was

41 Thomas J. Walsh to writer, December 10, 1950; Arnold, 118; Gillette, 7.

42 Dudley, 8.

43 Aas, 53. (A map of the original townsite will be found in Appendix A.)
that they desired to follow a policy of doing business strictly in Canada. The latter reason sounds the most plausible because of the complications that could easily have arisen from doing business in a foreign country. 44

By the year 1880, Grand Forks had its first railroad. The St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba (present Great Northern) had crossed the Red river at East Grand Forks, Minnesota, in that year. By 1883 it had reached the western fringe of Grand Forks County. The population had grown to seventeen hundred and five by this time, 45 and in the next chapter we shall see how this small frontier town handled itself in a social and recreational way between the years 1880-1910. Particular interest will be paid to influences originating within the city itself, as well as those from without affecting the course of civic life.

44 Aas, 43-44.

45 Gillette, 7, 138.
CHAPTER II

Recreational Life

From 1880 to 1900, the people of Grand Forks promoted their own social and leisure-time activities. Their spare time was limited because the building of a new city required a lot of work. Much of the time that the citizens spent in recreational activities was spent within the four walls of the home. Many of the activities were intended to be of a cultural and intellectual nature rather than solely for fun or thrills.

One form of home recreation for the youth was to have the parents read to them, which was also incidental education for them during the months when there was no school. In addition to reading the newspapers and magazines to the children the parents would try to explain the news, advertising, and stories that appeared in them. During the period of the eighties the two newspapers of Grand Forks, the Plaindealer and the Herald, were within the reach of at least 35,000 readers. The actual circulation of these two papers was estimated to be in the neighborhood of 5000 copies. Several popular national magazines were subscribed to, also. Music was another favorite home recreation. This pastime usually took one of two forms, listening to instruments or actively taking part in group

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2. Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.
singing. On the appreciation level the music most generally followed either a classical, religious, or a folk tune theme.

Next to the home in importance as social units providing for the community's recreation were the church and the school. It was in these institutions that the public listened to debates and lyceum lectures. The school and the church were often utilized as centers for both organizational and public banquets. The old pioneers still living in Grand Forks say that it was not at all unusual to see the Ladies' Aid Society of the church, and the Parent-Teacher meetings used as forums for discussion of cultural problems. Often at these gatherings the central theme would be a discussion of some author, poet, or musical composer such as Carlyle, Shelley, or Beethoven. Debates between teams composed of the town's leading citizens and some prominent outsiders such as the mayor of Fargo and territorial representatives were almost as exciting to many of the early residents as a big league baseball game would be to many of us today.

It is true of course that the actual resources offered by these two institutions were meagre during the eighties and nineties. However, it is said that often many of these events sponsored by the church and school were not attended by the less educated because usually only the most intellectually minded and better educated people were interested enough to attend.

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3 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. Walter Caniff to writer, July 15, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Mr. R. G. Geiland to writer, July 10, 1950; Mr. William B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950. Mr. Caniff is a pioneer painter in Grand Forks, having painted many of the homes in the city during the nineties. Mr. Lander came to the city in 1878 and saw that there was no land office in the frontier settlement, and set up the first one that year. Mr. Geiland is a pioneer resident of sixty-two years. Mr. Allen is the present political and historical editor of the Herald.

4 Ibid.
As early as 1885 the working and business men formed into small groups known as social clubs. This was particularly true of the women. Between 1885-90 there were no less than twenty-one small neighborhood clubs organized. In many cases these early social clubs were small study or discussion groups in which the men and women of the neighborhood would gather to study and discuss literature and music. Because of the nature of their interests, these clubs early had a loose connection with each other through informal exchanges. Often, too, some members would belong to more than one club, thus aiding the spreading of common club interests between clubs. Study groups like the Monday, Mother's, S. I.; Nebas, Atheneum, Tourist, Current Topics, Wise and Otherwise, Fortnightly, Golden Rod, and Riverside Park clubs would pool their individual resources for the purchase of books and sheets of music. These materials were used not only at club meetings, but were also circulated among the members' families, and at other clubs' meetings.

As foreigners began to migrate into the city, during the late eighties and early nineties, new clubs were formed. One such club

5 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. Walter Caniff to writer, July 15, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Mr. R. G. Geiland to writer, July 10, 1950; Mr. William B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950; Mrs. Dora B. Fury to writer March 28, 1951; Miss Ramona Houx to writer, March 24, 1951; Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904; Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, November 19, 1885. Mrs. Fury and Miss Houx are present members of the Grand Forks Federation of Women's clubs.

was Scandia which did everything mentioned above plus trying to perpetuate Scandinavian culture. 7

As the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, the chief interests of these clubs were still in the fields of literature, art, and music. However, after the discussion and study of the topic for the evening, or the presentation of a paper, there was usually an hour or so of social entertainment. During the nineties a favorite party game for both men and women was "A Musical Romance." This game was played with heart-shaped cards upon which short sentences identifying the popular songs of the day would be written. Identification was made by writing the titles on a separate sheet of paper which was passed among the guests. The favorite first prize for ladies in this game was a silver heart, while for the men it was a silver thermometer. Another popular game during this period was "Spider's Web." In this game a series of long streamers of several colors were strung across the room from chandelier to chandelier. The object was to determine who would be supper, or luncheon, partners. Each gentleman and each lady would choose an end of a streamer and unravel the strands until they met. 8

Meanwhile, during the ten years between 1880–90 the city of Grand Forks had grown from 1705 to 4979, and by 1900 it had reached a total of 7652. 9

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7 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, November 26, 1885; December 17, 1885. A more complete discussion of the cultural aspects of these clubs will be found below in Chapter III.

8 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, December 16, 1899.

With the city growing as fast as this, the members of the various social clubs saw that only through united action could any real amount of achievement be attained. Club women of the city accordingly got together early in 1890 and formed the Grand Forks Federation of Women's Clubs. This federation was a union of most of the neighborhood social organizations. The principle objective was to promote and advance the leisure and cultural interests of the membership. The board of directors for this union included two delegates from each member club. Aside from their immediate concern with the membership, the association performed somewhat the function of a pressure group for the promotion of better reading facilities for the entire city.  

(This aspect of their history will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.) The women of these social clubs also raised money. Just before the turn of the century they had begun to promote an annual Social Fair, or bazaar. At these gatherings the various guilds and clubs of the federation sold many useful articles such as laces, linens, doilies, embroidery, crocheted articles, scarfs, quilts, art works painted in the home, and many other items of home handicraft.

Of all the social agencies sponsoring activities for the entertainment of the general public, perhaps the University of

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10 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, October 3, 1890; December 16, 1899; Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904.

11 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, December 4, 1899.
Dakota was the most successful. As early as 1886, when the university had been in operation for only two years, it was offering the citizens of Grand Forks an educational form of recreation. Beginning on February 24, 1886, public receptions were held every week, usually on a Saturday. The program generally consisted of a lecture by one of the professors, a musical and literary program by some of the students, and an inspection hour in which the guests would look over the university, which consisted of only one building at this time. The public was especially interested in the museum and the library. By 1899, students rather than the faculty were the major performers in the program; it was not uncommon for a prominent athlete to give the main lecture of the evening. Parents especially appear to have approved the change, and, according to the newspapers, so did the public as a whole.

Meanwhile, the young men of the city over twenty-one years of age were participating in activities sponsored by the Young Men's Christian Association, which was organized in Grand Forks in 1886. The original membership in the "Y" was about fifty, and by 1897,

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12 In 1886 there were two Universities of Dakota, one at Grand Forks and one at Vermillion, and it was not until statehood in 1889 that the differentiation North and South was applied to the individual schools.

13 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, February 25, 1886; Grand Forks Saturday Plaindealer, November 18, 1899; Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, November 27, 1899; Dudley, 16, 20.

14 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, December 11, 1899.

although it had become a well-organized institution, it still had less than 100 members. The original "Y" was located over the Chicago Music store on South Third Street, but in 1892 it was moved to new quarters in the basement of the Security Block on the corner of Third Street and Alpha Avenue. In its new location it had a gymnasium containing a home-made springboard, a large canvas bag filled with straw (which was used as a tumbling mat), parallel bars, a gym horse, dumbbells, and Indian clubs. Besides this inside gym, the YMCA had an enclosed park for baseball and football. Young boys below sixteen did not come under the influence of the "Y" until 1904, when the new building in its present location was completed.

In addition to the sports facilities already mentioned, the "Y" provided the city's youth with literature, including the daily newspapers of the town, national magazines, and books, all of which were maintained in the YMCA library. A public assembly room was provided for the members, too, in order that they might attend special Sunday services, public lyceums, and educational lectures sponsored by the organization. Every winter the association produced a fair. Both boys and girls would participate and display skilled handicraft of their own making. A pet show simulated the livestock exhibits of a regular fair. Midway entertainment consisted

16 Mr. James H. Turner to writer, May 10, 1951. Mr. Turner has been a member of the Grand Forks YMCA since 1895. See also, William W. Trushenski, "Summer Recreational Facilities in Grand Forks, North Dakota," a Master's Thesis at the University of North Dakota, 1948, 29.


18 Mr. L. H. Egstrom to writer, October 28, 1950. Mr. Egstrom is the present General Secretary of the Grand Forks YMCA.
of tumbling acts, a penny arcade, and the dispensing of pink lemonade.  

Another social unit somewhat distinct from those already discussed was a men's recreation club, the Pioneer Club. This club was the oldest such organization in the Upper Midwest. The rooms of this club were furnished to the point of lavishness, in the Victorian style. Among its social and recreational offerings were a reading room, chess room, billiard room, and a smoking room. People from all parts of the state and the Upper Midwest were attracted to the organization, although to be an official member one had to be an actual pioneer of the city of Grand Forks. The Pioneer Club required that the men attending its public functions to wear the very best suit they possessed. The amusing thing about this was that the individual was branded, as most of the city's men had only one suit which they could wear for dress, according to the old pioneers. These old-timers used to pass the quip around "His wedding date is stamped on his suit." The only suit was usually the suit that the man was married in. Practically all of the businessmen of the town were members of the organization, but the aggregate membership never exceeded a hundred.


20 The term Upper Midwest as used here and throughout, the entire thesis refers to the area of the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Montana.


22 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Aas, 59.
members, even after 1910 when the town had twelve thousand.\(^{23}\)

It is of interest to note that sporting activities appeared early in the city's history, with racing events being popular as early as 1882; trapshooting in 1886; semi-professional baseball in 1887; football in 1892; tennis in 1895; and several other sports such as hockey, curling, and lacrosse. The last mentioned sports received only minor notice throughout the period 1880-1914. The first popular organized sporting activity in Grand Forks was perhaps racing. The Grand Forks Racing Association was formed in 1882. It built a race track at the end of the pavement on the road that later became known as Broadway, then Selkirk, and today is University Avenue.\(^{25}\) The track was located in the immediate vicinity of the present University Memorial Stadium and was rented in 1885 by the Grand Forks Driving Club, which was organized during the summer of the latter year, and took the place of the Grand Forks Racing Association. The 1885 racing organization was a non-profit social club and, according to its charter, the main purpose of its existence was the promotion of good sportsmanship on the turf and the encouragement of anything that pertained to the securing of a good set of race horses for Grand Forks. The cost of membership was low, being only five dollars per year. These membership fees were used

\(^{23}\) Street paving at this time was planking, or boards nailed down to posts driven in the ground. A more complete discussion of paving will be found below in Chapter IV.

\(^{24}\) Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Aas, 59.

\(^{25}\) Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 16, 1885 (The charter for the Grand Forks Driving Club is found on page one of this issue).
to purchase race horses and to contribute to grounds upkeep. Each member had his own key to the driving park. Among the fifteen charter members were William Budge, J. P. Bray, Alexander Griggs, George B. Winship, and M. A. Walsh. This organization was replaced in 1887 by the Grand Forks Trotting Association which was set up for the purpose of obtaining racing events for the Dakota Territorial Fair to be held in the city that year. In 1890, this organization offered a special prize of fifty dollars to the winner of the farmer's wagon race. This race was peculiar in that it was run over a half-mile stretch in a buckboard, less the box.

Of course, the average Grand Forks resident had little to do with these racing activities, but there were few people who did not ride or drive for pleasure, at least occasionally. During the months when there was no snow or ice on the streets and roads, at least 100 teams and hacks were rented out by livery stables for Sunday drives around town. In the winter months they were hitched to sleighs. The most prominent stable from the eighties until early in 1905 was Bacon and Van Alstine's. It not only offered style, safety, and speed (according to an advertisement in an out-of-town publication) but provided facilities for boarding thirty-five to fifty head of horses. Types of vehicles that this stable had for

26 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 16, 1885.
27 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 27, 1887; Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, August 24, 1890
28 W. B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950.
hire included hacks, broughams, stanhope, victorias, traps, run-
abouts, and carry-all. Practically all of these conveyances had
rubber tires, and were available to the general public at all times,
night or day. There was a suitable carriage for any occasion.
For example, if it were a nice sunny day a stanhope was available
for a sporting ride in the countryside. Without the livery stable,
most of the courting of girls and the Sunday pleasure drives, would
have been done in the old family buckboard. In other words, the
livery stable served those people who could not afford to own a
brougham, or any of the more expensive types of carriages.

A semi-professional baseball team was formed in Grand Forks
during the spring of 1887, and played a regular schedule of games
three times a week during the summer of that year. The team was a
member of the Red River Valley League, which also included teams
from Fergus Falls, Minnesota, Fargo, and Wahpeton, North Dakota.
This league and the Grand Forks team, was formed at the same time
that major league baseball was proving itself successful in the east
and middle west. The Grand Forks team was capitalized at $1250
which included the purchase of eleven players, uniforms, and the
construction of a ball park. The park was located across the street
from the Belmont school and was enclosed with a high board fence.

29 "Grand Forks, North Dakota," Northwestern Journal of Pro-
gress, Special extra number (Chicago, 1902), 9. Grand Forks Evening
Press, December 6, 1905; Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, May 7, 1951.

30 According to the records of the custodian at Central High
School, Belmont school was built in 1883-4, in two sections. Mr.
James H. Turner to writer, May 10, 1951.
The seating capacity of the stadium was approximately 500. The seats were collapsible bleachers much like the temporary seats used in modern gymnasiums for basketball contests. Much of the material used in building the park was donated by the various merchants in town, and the greater portion of the labor was contributed by the players themselves. Players salaries were based on the percentage of the gate receipts. The visiting team collected sixty per cent while the home team received the balance. The reason for this arrangement was to encourage the home team to draw out the crowds. After the team had collected its share, the proceeds were divided up among the players according to their position on the field, with pitchers receiving the most followed by the catcher, infielders, and outfielders. Often the local merchants put up bonus awards for extra base hits, strikeouts, and exceptional fielding plays. When not actively playing the players had jobs around town to fill out their required income needs. Mr. E. J. Lander of the city was elected the league's first secretary, and W. L. Wilder was the team's first manager.\textsuperscript{31}

Up until the First World War, the relationship between the town and its ball team was quite close. Ninety per cent of the players were local products; the team was actually, therefore, a community team. The element of personal acquaintance between

\textsuperscript{31} Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Mr. Walter Caniff to writer, July 15, 1950; Mr. W. B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950; Grand Forks Weekly \textit{Plaidealer}, April 28, 1887.
participant and spectator added much to the enthusiasm and support of the game. At the end of the first season in 1887, Grand Forks was in second place with twenty-five victories and eleven defeats. In 1895 the league was completely reorganized and made fully professional, and the name was changed to the Northern League. Winnipeg, Duluth, Superior, and Crookston were added to the circuit, and Fergus Falls and Wahpeton were dropped. Games were now played every day except Sunday. Transportation between towns was by railroad.

During the same year that organized baseball first entered Grand Forks, the practice of pool selling on the sport made its appearance in the city. This type of gambling was especially prevalent during the eighties. These pool tickets were accepted by the populace as a very common and ordinary thing, even though they were illegal. More often than not the tickets were sold not on the actual result of the game, but upon the performance of a specific player or a specific play. The price of these chances usually ran from twenty-five cents and up.

The University of North Dakota provided the first football game in the city in 1892. In fact, it was the only football team in the state until 1894, when Fargo Agricultural College outfitted

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32 Mr. O. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Mr. Walter Caniff to writer, July 15, 1950; Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, April 6, 1895; Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, September 10, 1887.

33 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 28, 1887.
a team. It is of interest to note that North Dakota had scheduled
game with Hamline University for Thanksgiving day, 1893, but that
the game was postponed until spring because of the lateness of the
season. By 1900, the university was playing a full schedule of
games with such schools as the University of Minnesota, Pillsbury
Academy, Macalister College, Fargo Agricultural College, Carleton
College, the University of South Dakota, and Central High School
of St. Paul, Minnesota. It is especially interesting that the
sports analysts in the local press considered the St. Paul high
school team the second strongest opponent of the University of North
Dakota in 1900, the University of Minnesota being rated as the
strongest. High school football did not take place in Grand Forks
until 1903. Until that time it was considered by the board of
education to be too expensive for anything below collegiate level
to sponsor. 34

A tennis club was organized in Grand Forks in 1895, and many
matches were played between professionals and amateurs from all
over the state as well as from many sections outside of the state.
During the summer of 1910, Grand Forks was host to the state tourna­
ment, which was really a regional contest, drawing competition from
Minnesota, South Dakota, Manitoba, and even from far-away Pennsylvania.

34 Neil Johnston to writer, April 16, 1951. Mr. Johnston is a
pioneer of the city, having settled here in 1883. He is also a prep
graduate of the University of North Dakota, graduating in 1895. See
also, Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, November 18, 1893; Ibid., Nov­
ember 20, 1893; Ibid., October 27, 1900; Ibid., September 30, 1903.

35 Grand Forks Daily Herald, July 17, 1910.
Curling, the winter ice sport so popular in northern Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Canada, never became popular in Grand Forks. The Bonspiel of January 28, 1905 was perhaps the only time the sport showed real life in the city. Hockey was a favorite sport with the young boys of the town, but never became a professional sport until after 1920. Newspaper comments on the game referred to it as "boys playing shinny on the river." Central Park, in 1906, had a hockey rink, which was used somewhat as the present Park Board League uses it today. Lacrosse was popular in the same sense that hockey was, and was played only in the back lots and streets of the city. According to opinions of the old-timers and an article published in the Daily Plaindealer, the most popular sport in Grand Forks, from 1890-1900, as far as the spectators were concerned, was baseball. Boxing and wrestling were never really popular because they were looked upon by the churches with jaundiced eyes, particularly after the entrance of the motion picture into the city in 1904.

In 1910 the era of Billy Sundayism was sweeping the country, and was especially strong in North Dakota. On July 10, 1910 the Grand Forks Federation of Churches issued the following statement of policy regarding the showing of athletic films:

36 Mr. W. B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950.

37 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, November 11, 1899; Grand Forks Evening Press November 22, 1906; December 10, 1906; January 20, 1907.

38 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, May 7, 1951.

39 Ibid.; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Mr. Walter Caniff to writer, July 15, 1950; Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, July 16, 1890.
The churches of Grand Forks will tonight join the crusade against the showing of the Jeffries-Johnson prize fight pictures .... It is probable that other churches in the state will follow the lead of the local churches .... Churches in North Dakota believing that the showing of these pictures will have a demoralizing effect on the youth of the community ....

There were also several non-professional sporting clubs which had considerable popularity. The most active and the most popular was a trap-shooting club, the Grand Forks Gun Club, which was organized in 1886. It included most of the businessmen of the town. Clay birds were provided free of charge, and the shoots were usually conducted in the afternoons and often lasted until dark. Prizes were awarded and were varied, but the most common award was a turkey. Enthusiasm in the activities of this club lasted until the outbreak of World War I.

In addition to social clubs and sporting events, an annual fair was an event of importance in the city after 1886. Early that year the citizens of Grand Forks subscribed $5000 to sponsor the Dakota Territorial Fair, but Huron put up more and received the contract; that is, the southern four agreed to produce the fair with less outside financial aid than her competitors. (The city receiving the contract got supplemental money from the United States Bureau of Agriculture, Dakota Division, the official sponsor of these fairs.) Even though Grand Forks lost the contract the largest

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40 Grand Forks Daily Herald, July 10, 1910.

41 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, November 22, 1899.
Livestock and agricultural show that had ever been exhibited in the Dakota area to that date was put on at Grand Forks during the summer of 1886, by the Grand Forks Agricultural Exposition, organized that year. This first fair in the city, which ran from September 19 to 21, 1886, was in reality the first Grand Forks County Fair. Three wooden buildings were erected on the oval of the racing track in Eshelman Park (now University Memorial Stadium) to house the livestock, agricultural exhibits, and mechanical arts. The balance of the displays were either housed in tents or open-air booths. Fortunately, every day was fair and clear. The overall attendance was estimated at about 11,000 people. Besides livestock, there were large displays of agricultural implements, mechanical and industrial arts exhibits, farm products, new and improved inventions, dairy products, and domestic handiwork. Concessions and a midway were limited to two liquor stands, two restaurants, a few chance games, and a pool selling booth.

The Plaindealer emphasized the exhibits and hardly mentioned the sideshow attractions, except in paid advertisements. The press exerted its energies towards securing a maximum number of exhibits from the people of the area. Early editions of the Grand Forks Plaindealer praised the agricultural fair as a service to the public. It observed that a fair was educational in that it was a forum where an interplay of ideas might be exchanged, thus leading to the

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42 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, January 26, 1886; August 5, 1886; August 12, 1886; Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, January 28, 1886.
improvement of all farming, industry, and life of the territory.

From a recreational standpoint, the press publicized the fact that the annual county fair would be the only recreative celebration of the year for the vast majority of people, especially the farmers living out of town.  

The next two years, 1887-88, Grand Forks got the Territorial Fair, in competitive bidding with Fargo, Bismarck, Aberdeen, and Yankton. In addition to the buildings used for the Agricultural Exposition of the previous year, a separate wooden building called the "Main Building," was erected for the display of home and handi­crafts. The estimated opening-day attendance was 4000 people. This fair, like the one the year before was a three day exposition lasting from September 23 to 25. Features of the 1887 fair were the exhibition of sixty-and eighty-pound squashes grown in the city of Grand Forks; six-foot millet; twenty-nine pound cabbages, and sixteen different varieties of potatoes grown in the Red River valley. Main Building housed hardware, saddles, musical instruments, furs, clothing, and furniture. The main feature in Machinery Hall was the new J. I. Case steam engine which was reputed to have operated on eight barrels of water and one tender of coal (about a half ton) per day. Other displays in Machinery Hall included plows, harrows, seeders, and feed mills. The fair board offered $1000 in premiums

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43 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, August 12, 1886.

44 Ibid., September 29, 1887.
for the 1887 exposition. Prizes were awarded for the best livestock, agricultural, and domestic handicrafts exhibits. Grand Forks had only one first prize that year; it was ten dollars to ninety-one year old Mrs. L. X. Thompson for the best sewing project. She had sewn some Irish and lace handkerchiefs without the use of spectacles. The Dakota Territorial Fair for 1887 closed with an "Equestrian" race between a girl from Devils Lake and a professional from Chicago. They rode two horses (Romanride) at one time over a half-mile stretch on the race track. The professional won with a time of 2:09 minutes.

An interesting, though not very significant, sidelight preceding the 1887 Territorial Fair was the so-called Winship scandal. It should be borne in mind that this aspersion was related to Winship's campaign for public office as a territorial councilman from Grand Forks County, and that it was the Plaindealer, rival to Winship's Herald, which insisted on making a lot out of it. Several months before the fair was to open, the publicity, advertising, and programs were contracted out to the local print shops in Grand Forks. George B. Winship of the Herald had received the contract to print the premium lists for the fair; he was to print 10,000 copies for a price of $300. Actually, he only printed between 6,000 and 7,000 copies, in addition to adding inserts and charging for them also, which was over the contract rate. The charge for

45 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, September 29, 1887.

46 Ibid.
this extra work, along with the regularly assigned work, was placed at the rate of 10,000 copies instead of the actual amount printed. The bill which Winship submitted to the Bureau of Agriculture requested a payment of $360. The Plaindealer declared that there had been some sort of an agreement between the two parties to cut the number of copies down to 7,000, but with the understanding that the government would pay for only 7,000, not 10,000. Nothing was mentioned about the adding of inserts. In the end, "Honest George," as Winship was derisively called by the Plaindealer, reimbursed the Bureau of Agriculture for sixty dollars and accepted a pro-rated fee for the amount of work he actually did a few days before the fair opened its gates to the public.

In the fall elections, Winship lost the race to his Democratic opponent, George Walsh.

The Territorial Fair of 1888 was pretty much a duplicate of the one in 1887, with one or two exceptions. For the first time side-light attractions began to draw the people's interests away from the exhibits. A sham battle, in which two infantry squads lined up in military formations and demonstrated a battle of the Civil War, took place under the direction of the Grand Forks post of the Grand Army of the Republic. Racing events, as a fair attraction, proved popular for the first time at the 1888 exposition. It was during the course of this show that James J. Hill and Norman Kittson

47 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, September 8, 1887.
48 Ibid., September 22, 1887.
49 Ibid., November 10, 1887.
began to import some excellent breeds of race horses into the city for the fair, and future racing events. The races that were held during this exposition, and thereafter, were considered by local enthusiasts to be on a par with those in any other part of the country. 50 From 1888 until 1903 County Fairs were held in Grand Forks only intermittently and not at regular yearly intervals. 51

On June 29, 1903, the Grand Forks Fair Association which succeeded the Grand Forks County Agricultural Society, moved the site of the fairgrounds from Eshelman Park to its present location north of the city, which was the D. A. Dinnie farm, between the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific railroad tracks. 52 It was this society that sponsored the Red River Valley exposition of 1903.

The Great Red River Valley Exposition was held in Grand Forks from September 24-25, 1903, and was sponsored by the Red River Valley Agricultural Society, a regional society set up in 1901, which was really a branch of the Grand Forks County Agricultural Society. The business places closed shop completely on the last day of the fair in order that everyone might attend. School children were allowed a half day holiday on the first day. Some interesting amusement features were the pony races, a two-mile automobile race, a parachute drop, a balloon ascension, and a football game between Grand Forks and Grafton High Schools. 53 The Northern Pacific Railroad ran trains to the new grounds from town every hour. 54 Although

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50 Grand Forks Daily Herald, September 22, 1888.
51 Mr. James H. Turner to writer, May 10, 1951.
52 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, June 30, 1903.
53 Ibid., September 24, 1903.
the main stress was on the midway attractions. An exhibit of the Swift Packing Company attracted considerable attention. It demonstrated that there was no waste in slaughtered animals. Even a phonographic recording of the squeal had been taken at the slaughter pens.55

On May 6, 1905, a meeting was held in the office of Fréd G. Wells and Company in Grand Forks for the purpose of securing the annual North Dakota State Fair for the city.56 Bids for the construction of a horse barn, cow barn, poultry building, and a wing to the Exposition Building, which had been moved from Eshelman Park, were accepted by the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the North Dakota State Fair Association on July 15, 1905, as was a bill from the Plaindealer Publishing Company of Grand Forks for envelopes and letterheads to advertise the fair.57

On August 10, 1905, this same committee awarded the midway concessions contract to the T. I. Cash Company of St. Paul, who were to offer such attractions as a balloonist, acrobatic acts, and a high diver. The person making the balloon ascension was to be awarded $500.00.58

The Pain Pyrotechnic Company of Chicago was to provide the fair with four days of fireworks displays. In their displays they were to produce pictures in fire of Governor E. Y. Sarles, President Theodore Roosevelt, and the mayor of Grand Forks, George Enuis.59

55 *Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer*, September 24, 1903.
56 Kaupp, 19.
57 Ibid., 21.
58 Ibid., 21.
59 Ibid., 22.
The fair opened on August 29, and closed on September 2. Fifteen thousand dollars in exhibit prizes and premiums were given away. The Great Northern and Northern Pacific railways offered half-fare tickets to all passengers going to the fair, and gave free transportation to the ministers of the town. Complimentary tickets for the entire fair were awarded all railroad employees and members of the clergy.

On July 2, 1906, the Grand Forks County Agricultural Society merged with the North Dakota State Fair Association, for purposes of better cooperation in the production of better fairs in the future. The 1907 fair saw 11,000 patrons pass through the turnstiles on opening day. The main feature of this exposition was racing. On the afternoon of the first day a horse relay race of 8 half mile laps was put on. In this event were used, twelve horses, three for every mile. In the evening an auto race between a Gale one-cylinder and a Cadillac was staged. The Gale won the mile race with a time of 2:15\frac{1}{2} minutes. Another attraction of the 1907 fair was the appearance of Barney Oldfield and his first racing automobile.

Practically every State Fair after 1907 featured the "one big attraction" idea, plus a few small supporting attractions as its main drawingcard, with the exhibit features of the show greatly

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60 Grand Forks Evening Press, August 14, 1905.
61 State Fair Association Official Minutes, MSS., August 17, 1905, 44.
62 Ibid., July 2, 1906, 53.
63 Kaupp, 26.
64 Grand Forks Daily Herald, July 24, 1907.
subordinated. For example, at the 1911 fair the feature attraction was the showing of the first heavier-than-air flying machine in the Upper Midwest. The Wright brothers, Wilbur and Orville, accompanied one of their first planes to this fair. By 1916, the dirt track auto racer was the outstanding drawing card for the Grand Forks Fair, and the North Dakota State Fair. Many famous drivers drove on the local track including such name drivers as George Clark, Eddie Hearne, Bill Endicott, John Raimey, Fred Horey, Irvin Hoffman, and Cliff Woodbury. Some of the types of cars that were driven in these races were Number 2 and 8 Briscoes, Sweeny Specials, Maxwells, Deusenbergs, Cases, Mais Specials, and Flates. Harness racing was still popular, but one day was set aside strictly for auto racing.

Because of the financial aid granted to the 1905 fair in Grand Forks by the North Dakota State Legislature, other cities in the state began competition with Grand Forks for the honor of presenting the annual State Fair. By statutory law, the State Legislature in 1913, authorized the fair to be held in Grand Forks on odd numbered years, and in Fargo on even numbered years. In 1920, a general admission charge was placed at the gate for the first time. The rates of admission were set at fifty cents for adults and

65 Official Minutes, May 20, 1911, 112-14.
67 Laws of North Dakota (Devils Lake, 1913), 52.
twenty-five cents for children.68

During the nineties, and up until about 1905 Grand Forks promoted what was known as Street Fairs. These fairs were events usually lasting two or three days. Each merchant had his own display in a booth on the sidewalk in front of his store. The promoter behind this scheme was the Grand Forks Street Fair Association, which was an appendage of the city Commercial Club, or the present Chamber of Commerce.69 For all practical purposes these fairs were nothing more than cheap carnivals, as the emphasis was placed on the midway part of the event. As a general rule, most of these street fairs were good from a business man's point of view as he would sell a tremendous volume of goods from his fair booth, but from a practical viewpoint the street fair was a graft outfit. Mr. Charles J. Hurd says that their main stress was always on gambling and taking the people's money out of town.70 Perhaps the best example of one of these fairs was the Ferari Carnival which exhibited its wares on the streets of Grand Forks during the early part of August, 1905. It was a relatively large outfit for the time, as it offered five free acts, ten shows, and 200 performing wild animals. Their main feature was a Dog, Pony, and Monkey circus.71

69 Grand Forks Evening Press, August 1, 1905; City of Grand Forks, 52; Kaupp, 16.
70 C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.
71 Grand Forks Evening Press, August 10, 1905.
To some extent the early fairs and carnivals were beneficial and educational to the people of Grand Forks, as they would being in many exhibits, such as the wild animal shows, not common to the Red River Valley. At practically all of these early shows one ticket would admit the customer to everything on the lot, including sideshows as well as the main event. Pioneers of the city say that this policy held true until the advent of the North Dakota State Fair in 1905. Perhaps the outstanding criticism of all fairs that were held in Grand Forks after 1900, was the fact that they generally offered only one main attraction as a crowd-drawing feature. The balance of the midway and grandstand shows were only mediocre.

Until 1890 no specific provisions had been made concerning public parks, but that year North Dakota State Legislature authorized the cities to receive land for park purposes. Expenditures toward improvement and development were to be derived from gifts, grants, or any legitimate device that the city might wish to utilize. No provision was made in the law for the purchase of park sites in the event that no gifts or grants were made. Then in 1905 the North Dakota State Legislature authorized the cities of the state to set up park commissions. However, no organized parks were

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72 Grand Forks Weekly Plainealer, June 25, 1885.

73 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Mr. Walter Caniff to writer, July 15, 1950.

74 Mr. W. B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950.

75 Compiled Laws of the State of North Dakota (1913), 991. Youth Recreation Survey (Grand Forks, 1935), 16.
created in the city for fifteen years after this authorization was granted. According to the law these commissions were to have general supervisory powers over the parks created within the cities. In addition they could exercise the right of eminent domain, carry out the necessary police powers within the park and authorize a tax levy not to exceed two mills on the dollar. The legislature authorized these park commissions also to bond a city in order that the city might be able to purchase and develop park sites. 76 "In April, 1905, with the ink barely dry on the State Act, the City Council of Grand Forks created and appointed the Grand Forks Park Commission. . . ." 77

Tree-lined river banks provided a natural setting for the city's parks. The sites of most of the parks are sites of historical significance. Central Park was created by municipal purchase in 1905 at a cost of $5,000. Situated at the south end of Third Street it has an area of 19.01 acres and was noted primarily for its beautifully-lit flower gardens until about 1919. After 1919, it became principally a playground and a place to hear band concerts, but no facilities were provided for organized sports, and picknicking was discouraged. The big feature for the children between 1910-14 was the outdoor skating-rink, which was lighted for winter night skating, and the toboggan slides. The Red River forms the eastern

76 Compiled Laws (1913), 992. Youth Recreation Survey, 6-16, passim.

77 Youth Recreation Survey, 16.
and southern boundaries of Central Park. Lincoln Park was purchased in 1909 for $14,200. This park was the original Grand Forks town and Country Club. The area of this park, the city's largest, is 124.1 acres and is situated at the southern edge of the city. The chief center of interest in this park is its historical significance. The club house is one of the landmarks of the old Red River Oxcart Trail. "The kitchen is a part of the old log building known as the Stewart House, one of the old stage stations, and hence the first post office in Grand Forks." Lincoln Park contained the only municipal golf course in the city during the period 1909-1920 and it had excellent picnic facilities. Riverside Park was purchased in 1909 for $6,000. A tourist cabin court was located in the park in 1910, but no effort was ever made to cater to a tourist trade. The area of Riverside Park is 38.59 acres. It is located along the banks of the Red river in the northeast section of the city. The park has a picnic ground, but its chief service from 1910-20 was its children's playground. It had baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and numerous park toys, such as teeters and swings. University Park was the third site to be purchased by the city in 1909, with the ultimate aim in mind to make it a recreational playground for the children, but this was never realized until after 1920. Its

78 Trushenski, 26, 48; Youth Recreation Survey, 16; North Dakota, A Guide to the Northern Prairie State (Fargo, 1938), 153.

79 Youth Recreation Survey, 17.

80 Trushenski, 53.

81 Ibid., 48; Youth Recreation Survey, 17.
total acreage is only 18.2 acres.  

Public interest in the activities of children was manifested in the gigantic Fourth of July celebration of 1890. Every child who appeared in front of the courthouse by 5:45 A.M. blowing either a horn, fife, whistle, or beating a kettle, and riding on a goat, cow, mule, or a horse, which would be pulling any type of a funny rig, would be rewarded. The object of this performance was to have the children parade down the main street of town making all the noise they could. Their reward was twelve "nigger chasers," twelve packages of torpedoes, two packages of fire crackers, and one cannon firecracker. The general program for the adults included races, parades, baseball games, fifteen cornet bands, fireworks, and free excursion trains. The excursion trains were used to transport the people back and forth from the fairgrounds and the baseball park.

So far the discussion has been centered around those social agencies which principally originated within the city limits of Grand Forks. Most of them were of a non-profit nature with a few scattered exceptions such as the commercial fairs. Grand Forks however, had its commercialized entertainment and social recreation centers as early as 1884.

The Parlor Roller Rink was a very popular place during the eighties and nineties for the holding of public functions. It was

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82 *Youth Recreation Survey*, 18.

83 *Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer*, July 1, 1890.

84 *Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer*, December 23, 1884.
located in the vicinity of the present City Veteran's Housing Unit on First Avenue North, and was built in 1884. Not only was a commercial roller rink located in the building, but the rink itself was used at least once a week for public social dances and parties. An article in the Plaindealer tells that a dance was held there on July 3, 1885, sponsored by a public organization, the various firemen's units of the city. In addition, St. Michael's Catholic Church had helped to organize and sponsor it. The ladies of the church furnished and served the refreshments for the occasion.

Commercialized recreation took a firm grip early in the twentieth century with the entrance of a bowling alley in 1902, a billiard room, or pool hall, in 1903, and the motion picture theatre in 1904. As these leisure-time activities entered the city of Grand Forks, the people tended to be drawn further away from the orbits of the home and the church for recreational activities. These new outlets for the citizens were ones which neither the church nor the home could fulfill, because this type of recreation was more expensive and required commercial business backing in order to finance it. The older social units tended to deplore the growth of these

85 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.
86 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, June 18, 1885; Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.
87 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 9, 1885.
89 J. M. Gillette, Social Economics of North Dakota (Minneapolis, 1942), 138.
new commercial ventures which they associated with evil influences. This shift to the pool hall and the bowling alley was not merely an economic one, but a social one as well. These activities drew in the laboring men who actually couldn't afford to participate with perhaps the exception of the movies because wages and family budgets were not geared to meet these new recreative luxuries. Most of these newer activities failed to appeal to the wealthier people, or if they did, they had the facilities installed in their own homes.

There were other commercialized recreational agencies and activities during the period 1880-1920 which were not discussed in this chapter because of their more direct relationship with the theme of the next chapter. Some of these agencies were the Metropolitan Opera House, the public lyceum, and the communal plays produced by the University of North Dakota. However, it has been the intention of Chapter II to point out that the general trend of recreational activities was to become more commercialized as the city grew. By 1910, in fact, the trend was definitely marked.
CHAPTER III

Cultural Life

From the very beginning some citizens of Grand Forks were interested in enriching their cultural and intellectual life by promoting the fine arts. Practically every social club, church, and educational institution in the city urged and sponsored such activities as literary societies, musical productions, presentation of community plays, and the production of local art. ¹

The most common, and undoubtedly the most popular, medium of literary expression to reach the hands of Grand Forks' citizens before 1890 was the newspaper. Before 1890, books were very expensive to buy in the city because of high transportation cost. ² It goes without saying that cultural interests were not the foremost objectives of the newspaper as their main reason for existing was to make money. It was only natural that they would become community boosters. In its issue of August 6, 1885, The Weekly Plaindealer declared that it was "more of a city enterprise than it is a personal one. It will make dollars for Grand Forks where it will fail to make cents for its proprietors." In promoting the region, the newspapers used factual propaganda, and urged improvement of the home, the farm, and the town. In addition, the press

¹ Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904; Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Mr. Walter Caniff to writer, July 15, 1950.

² Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, December 16, 1894.
publicized every civic issue of importance in its editorial columns.

From the date of its first publication, in 1875, the declared policy of the Grand Forks Plaindealer was to present its readers first with timely topics on how to live a better life, then emphasize local, state, regional, national, and international news in that order. An observer from the Minneapolis Tribune, who was visiting in Grand Forks in the early eighties, commented on the fact that the Plaindealer was the finest newspaper in content and plant west of Minneapolis. This same observer felt that both the Plaindealer and the Herald had very healthy circulations for a frontier town. As was mentioned earlier in Chapter II, the estimated circulation of the two was around 5,000 copies per day, as early as 1885.

In 1881 the Plaindealer lost its files in a fire. It took the paper almost a year to recover, but it then became a daily, with the weekly continuing. After 1890 it was the only Democratic daily in North Dakota. In the fall of 1884 the Plaindealer had another fire which caused damages estimated at $19,000. Although the plant

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3 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, August 6, 1885.


5 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, August 6, 1885.

was completely destroyed, the records, fortunately, were salvaged this time, and the paper moved to a room over a drug store and continued operations with temporary material lent by George B. Winship, of the Herald. Between this time and the end of the following year the Plaindealer's circulation doubled, reaching a figure of 2800. On January 1, 1886, the Plaindealer lowered its subscription rates from a dollar and a half to one dollar per year, cash in advance. By the end of 1886, the paper was reaching thirty-five towns and cities with a combined population of 30,000 people on the same day of publication. By 1900, when Grand Forks' population was 7652, the paper had a daily circulation of 3390 copies. Concomitant with this large volume of trade, the Plaindealer reduced in size from eight to four pages. E. C. Carruth, manager of the Plaindealer, explained in an editorial on January 2, 1900 that this reduction was necessary in view of the dullness of the season. Manager Carruth further explained that many of the contract advertisements had expired, and therefore there was no need for the extra pages. The general news section was not reduced, but was better organized, as it was no longer spread all over the paper. (However, in scanning later editions, the writer noted, the paper never again rose to an eight-page daily until 1905). In 1905, the Plaindealer merged with the Evening Press, a new company formed.

7 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, November 26, 1885; December 17, 1885; Arnold, 141; Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904.

8 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, December 18, 1899; January 2, 1900; Census Reports, I., pt. 1. (Washington, 1901), 298.

9 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, January 2, 1900; scattered issues throughout the balance of the year.
that year. The Plaindealer-Evening Press was discontinued in 1908 when it was purchased by the Herald. 10

In 1880, just a year after it made its initial appearance, the Grand Forks Herald was a folio of four pages, each page being eight columns wide and a little over twenty-three inches in length. During the first two years of its existence the Herald was a weekly, but in 1881 it began publication as a semi-weekly, and by November of that same year was transformed into a daily, the weekly continuing. From the very first number in 1879, the Herald was a Republican organ believing in the soundness of the protective doctrine. 11

By 1905, the city of Grand Forks enjoyed the circulation of three daily newspapers (Plaindealer-Evening Press, Herald, and Evening Times), four weeklies (Plaindealer, Herald, Times, and Normanden), one monthly, the Herald, and numerous university publications, such as the Dakota Student, published by the students of the University of North Dakota. The Evening Times was somewhat unique in that it was the only newspaper west of the Twin Cities using a perfecting color press. The Times merged with the Herald after World War I. 12

Newspaper make-up during the period of the eighties and nineties was somewhat interesting in that sports items, especially baseball, were classified with the general news section and received


front-page preference. It was the custom of the daily newspapers to publish the names of all hotel arrivals on the front page, too. General business advertisements, such as store bargains, ran in the same unchanged form for days on end in all of the early papers. Patent medicines occupied a fairly large block of newspaper space until 1900. These remedies were advertised in the form of testimonials, such as the one for Swift's Specific, which would show a Civil War veteran receiving almost 100% relief from gout, if not cured from the disease by using Swift's product. The Peruna Company was another example. Practically all of these companies would send free medical treatises on diseases upon request. Beer advertisements called the reader's attention to the fact that purchases could be made by mail. The Chicago Music Store, which also handled the White Sewing-Machine Agency, advertised in 1885 that it was willing to trade its sewing-machines for firewood, dry or green. The A. G. Johnson Company constantly advertised that anyone could purchase any item in their store at the customer's own price. Want ads, as now known, were not used in the local newspapers until 1890.

13 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, July 1, 1890.
14 Ibid., 1884-1900.
15 Ibid., July 1, 1890.
16 Ibid., July 16, 1890.
17 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 16, 1885.
18 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, July 1, 1890.
Previous to this, most items that would appear in that section of the paper were advertised on separate handbills posted in the windows of the newspaper office, and distributed around town. Real estate notices were usually posted in the windows of the Land Office or windows of the various dealers, such as that of E. J. Lander.

Out-of-state newspapers circulated in Grand Forks as early as 1886. One of the most prominent was James Gordon Bennett's New York Weekly Herald, which could be had in the city at a cost of only a dollar per year. The Minneapolis Tribune was also popular in Grand Forks but lacked the circulation of Bennett's paper. Unfortunately, exact figures on the amount of subscriptions for these out of state papers are lacking, making it almost impossible to analyze the exact popularity of the two papers. Popular periodical literature did not circulate in the city in large numbers until after 1890. According to Mr. C. J. Hurd, the most popular magazine in Grand Forks from 1885 to 1914, was the Saturday Evening Post.

Meanwhile, a minority group in Grand Forks, the Scandinavians, gathered together and discussed the idea of how they could best preserve their own particular national culture and literature. The result was the formation of a semi-weekly Norwegian language newspaper.

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19 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, October 28, 1886; January 20, 1887.

20 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, October 28, 1886; July 1, 1890.

21 Ibid., August 6, 1885; July 1, 1890.

22 Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904; Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.

23 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; May 7, 1951.
newspaper called the Normanden. At the time of its establishment, in 1887, it was a very strong advocate of temperance. After 1890, it became the official spokesman for the Farmers' Alliance movement in North Dakota and Minnesota. In 1893, the Scandinavians organized their own cultural society, Scandia, which held as its main purpose "the perpetuation of stimuli which would create a Scandinavian interest in contemporary American problems, as well as the preservation of the Scandinavian language, literature, and other homeland cultural interests." The means by which Scandia achieved this goal were lectures, debates, discussion groups, reading, editing of a Scandinavian paper (Scandia at this time took over the publication of the Grand Forks Normanden), and the formation of a library. This library contained Norwegian and Swedish literature, as well as works from other countries, particularly of America. Later in the same year, this new Scandinavian society implemented other means by which they could better themselves culturally and intellectually in their new American homes. They formed a boarding club which was a place where Scandinavian men of the town could congregate and read, as well as study the language of their adopted country. Both the men and women members organized a chorus, and the men organized a separate glee club in addition. Monthly dues of

24 Alex M. Tollefson, "History of the Norwegian Settlement in Grand Forks County," a Master's Thesis at the University of North Dakota, 1917, 84-85, passim.

25 Charter of Scandia as translated by Alex M. Tollefson, "Thesis."
only twenty-five cents, covered the cost of new and used books that the association bought from time to time. (At this time there were about 2,200 Scandinavians in Grand Forks of which 880 claimed membership in Scandia).  

For a period of over thirty years after its debut in Grand Forks, Scandia played the most important role in developing the social and intellectual life of the city's Scandinavian population. During the period from 1893-1920, it sponsored numerous literary programs, concerts, and celebrations of all kinds for the pleasure of the non-Scandinavian element and the cultural growth of their own people. By 1920, their library had over 500 volumes, all purchased by the monthly twenty-five cent contributions.  

Allied with, and closely related to, Scandia was another minority cultural group known as "The Sons of Norway." Lodge #21 of this organization was formed in Grand Forks during the year 1903. The functions of this lodge were both fraternal and cultural; it provided its members with a fraternal insurance plan, gave them some of the social and political endowments of Norway, and cooperated closely with Scandia in preserving the Norwegian language. It was through the records of the "Sons of Norway" that the history of the Norwegian immigration in Grand Forks was preserved. In addition, it provided information and bulletins on the labor situation, and its conditions in the United States, for the newly-arrived immigrants in the Normanden.


27 Axel M. Tollefson, "Norwegians in the Red River Valley," Collections of the State Historical Society (Grand Forks, 1925), 188.  

A movement for a public library for Grand Forks was begun in 1884 through the formation of small neighborhood social clubs and study groups. Unluckily, lack of good leadership failed to give this desire any real impetus or stimulation. Professor Henry Montgomery of the university saved the movement from complete disintegration in the fall of 1886 by volunteering his services. It was under Montgomery's leadership that the Grand Forks Literary and Social Association was formed. The Association honored him by electing him their first president. According to the code of principles formulated by the organization, the main purpose was the study and promotion of good literature in the home, and the provision for the best means of disseminating it to the most people. The means was the individual club of each neighborhood. This move by Professor Montgomery coincided with the organization of the Young Men's Christian Association in the same year. Almost immediately, the "Y" lent its full support to the efforts of the people in obtaining good books and sources of information. The first major objective of the YMCA was to establish a public library for Grand Forks. Failure to secure enough funds, however, with which to rent, build or supply a library building had allowed the movement to slip out of the "Y's" hands temporarily.

In 1890 the press took up the fight for a free public library. The point most stressed in the newspapers was the benefit of a free library to the youth of the community. The funds-raising campaign

29 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, October 28, 1886.

30 Mr. James H. Turner to writer, May 10, 1951; Mr. L. H. Egstrom to writer, October 28, 1950.
proved to be non-productive, but the campaigners took some consolation in the fact that the local book store reduced its book prices as a result of the drive. Beginning early in November of that year, the new sales policy of the F. W. Iddings Book Store was to offer special bargain prices after six o'clock every evening.\textsuperscript{31}

The first successful library association was formed in 1892 by a group of spirited women from the Grand Forks Federation of Women's Clubs, who pledged themselves to subscribe five dollars each for the purchase of books.\textsuperscript{32} On November 11, 1897, ten clubs of the Federation voted unanimously to support a drive aimed at the establishment of a public library to replace their informal literary association formed by Professor Montgomery in 1886. It was felt by the Federation that their literary association was primarily benefiting only those women who belonged to the various social clubs. Almost simultaneously, two other independent social clubs of the city organized a campaign for the establishment of a Mother's and Children's library. These efforts bore early fruit despite the fact that the results were infinitesimally small. The first successful effort to collect funds was a lecture on December 7, 1897, which netted the Federation \$9.20 towards the library. Until about November 10, 1898, lectures and social dances were the chief sources of revenue for the fund. By that time the collections for the year

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{31} Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, November 1, 1890; November 5, 1890; November 10, 1890.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904; Morning edition, November 26, 1935.
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totalled only $246.72; all which had been raised by local effort with no attempts made to solicit any outside donations, or to seek any type of special legislation for a city library appropriation. 33

In 1899, the State Legislature enacted a law specifying that once a city held a deposit of $400 in the city treasury for the establishment of a library, from individual and group contributions, or other sources of donation, the city was to donate $200 annually towards the maintenance of the public library. The law also authorized the municipality to levy a tax for the maintenance of the library once it was established. According to the 1899 law, a library board of five members was to be appointed by the school board. 34

By January, 1900, $661.72 had been donated personally by the town's citizens to the Grand Forks library fund. On January 6, 1900 the Grand Forks Federation of Women's Clubs voted to present the city council with the $400 library deposit for the establishment of the first official Grand Forks Public Library. By April 8, the building committee of the library board had rooms ready for occupancy by the library. They were located over E. J. Lander's real estate offices. The doors were opened to the public for the first time on

33 Minutes of the Library Board and Library Association (Combined), from November 11, 1897, to May 16, 1900. (On file in the Grand Forks Public Library, Librarians Office.)

34 Minutes of the Library Board and Library Association (Combined), from January 6, 1900 to October 3, 1902; Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, January 23, 1900; The Compiled Laws of the State of North Dakota (Bismarck, 1913), 961.
Saturday, May 5, 1900. Eleven days after the initial opening the Grand Forks Federation of Women's Clubs turned over to the library board the balance of its treasury, $292.72. W. L. Wilder was elected the board's first president, and immediately organized a subscription campaign for funds with which to purchase a lot and build a regular library building. By January 7, 1902, the subscriptions amounted to $4000, and on April 4th, of the same year, President Wilder purchased a lot on the corner of Fifth Street and Alpha Avenue at a cost of $1500. At the time of this purchase a contract bid of $18,970 was accepted for the construction of a building.

Early in 1903, when the construction was just getting well underway President Wilder and several of the town's leading citizens, including R. B. Griffith, contracted the Carnegie Foundation for aid in financing the local venture. After a considerable amount of correspondence the Foundation agreed to donate $20,000 towards the project, on the condition that the city would make an annual appropriation of $2,000 towards maintenance of the place, as was Carnegie's usual procedure in helping local libraries.35

Within the first seven months of the library's existence the book circulation was in excess of 14,000. Over a fifth of the town's population of 7,652 36 was registered with the library. On January 8, 1905, the library was opened for use on Sundays for the

35 Minutes of the Library Board and Library Association (Combined), from January 6, 1900 to October 3, 1902; Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904.

first time. That year the circulation climbed to an average of seven books per registrant, and the total registration jumped from approximately one-fifth to over a quarter of the population, which was now in excess of 10,000.  

As yet, there was no separate children's library. Juvenile works were placed in the stacks with adult books. The first children's room was added in 1910. At first it was only a corner of the main reading-room, but about a year later it was moved to its present position in the basement of the building. The children's story hour was initiated in the basement room December 5, 1913.

It is of interest to note that before the Grand Forks Public Library was founded the University of North Dakota Library was the largest in the state. The original library at the university had 500 volumes, with 2,000 more being added in 1888. By 1897, the total number of works was 5,000. Within the next six years 3,000 more items were added, and in 1904, Judge John Cochrane donated 5,000 volumes of legal works, valued at $10,000. The number of collections progressively increased until by 1915 there were 53,000 volumes. The university library has been in three locations. At

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38 J. M. Gillette, Social Economics of North Dakota (Minneapolis, 1942), 140.
39 Youth Recreation Survey, 40-2.
40 Andrew A. Wilson, "Grand Forks Children's Library," a seminar report submitted at the University of North Dakota, May, 1950, 1.
41 Ibid., 1.
first it was housed in a single room about thirty feet by fifty feet in the west section of the second floor of Main Building. In 1899, it gained the west half of the north section of the second floor in the same building, and by 1902 it occupied the entire second floor. Andrew Carnegie donated $30,000 to the university in 1908 which covered most of the cost of construction of the new Carnegie Library (present Commons). The library moved to this new location in 1909, and remained there until it moved to its present location in 1929. The university library had no chief librarian, as an occupation, until 1899. Usually some professor was named by the president to be responsible for the library with some supervised student help. Until 1890 Webster Merrifield looked after the library, and between 1890-99 Horace E. Woodworth acted in that capacity. The first official librarian was Elizabeth M. Bratt, who was not trained for the work, but held the position from 1899-1901, when the first experienced librarian was hired in the person of Marion Evans Twiss, who held the office until March, 1904. Between this time and 1914 there was a succession of librarians, about every two years. Perhaps the most notable of these was Charles H. Compton, who at present is librarian at the St. Louis Public Library. He was librarian at the university from 1908 to 1910.

The university library has always been open to the public, and used considerably by the public.42

According to the Grand Forks Herald, four-fifths of the homes in the city possessed some type of a musical instrument by 1900. The writer in talking to several of the pioneers, discovered that there were less than 100 pianos or organs and that most of the musical instruments before 1900 were of the harmonica and Jew's harp type. The exact number of brass, woodwind, and string instruments owned by individuals could not be accurately ascertained, but an approximate estimate would place it at about seventy-five to a hundred. Most of the latter type of instruments were owned by civic organizations, schools, the university, and social clubs.

During the nineties the city maintained a military band which performed at all civic and public events. It was reputed to be one of the favorite music organizations of the Upper Midwest. Not only did it perform in town, but it won distinctions regularly at all of the fairs in North and South Dakota and Minnesota. At this same time, instrumental music in which those other than professionals or especially-talented individuals might participate, found its expression through the formation of small organizational bands sponsored by the businessmen, social clubs, and fraternal organizations. Altogether there were eight such bands, Knights of Pythias, Grand

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43 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, May 7, 1951; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951; Mr. James H. Turner to writer, May 10, 1951.

44 This information is based upon information received by the writer from the three pioneers cited in the above footnote.

Army of the Republic, Pioneer Club, Ontario Store, Masonic Lodge, Grand Forks Cadets, University of North Dakota, and Central High School. Perhaps the most popular of these, before the turn of the century was the Ontario Store band led by R. B. Griffith. This musical organization was made up exclusively of employees from the store.46

Interest in local development of good music appreciation and production and supplemented with outside artists was stimulated in Grand Forks as early as 1881. The Bjarne Male Chorus was organized under the leadership of H. N. Fremstad on July 3, 1881. Fremstad was a native of Norway and had been a student of music in his native land. The year 1884 is especially remembered by the organization as the arrival of some trained singers from Norway added greatly to the efficiency of the chorus. Bjarne was a member and a participant in the Scandinavian musical festival in Minneapolis in 1891 and in Chicago in 1893.48 At its thirty-fifth anniversary celebration in 1916 the chorus had thirty-five members.49 Meanwhile, by 1890, practically all of the churches of Grand Forks maintained choirs in which everyone was encouraged to participate.50 In 1897, the Grand Forks Choral Union was organized. This group spent most of its time in the study of choruses and oratorios, but did produce

46 Dudley, 34.
48 Ibid., 94.
49 Ibid., 95.
50 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, November 22, 1899.
some winter concerts. In 1907 the name of the choral union was changed to that of Grand Forks Oratorio Society. The old choral union put on its production in the Metropolitan Theatre, but after 1908 the Oratorio Society put on an annual music festival in the spring of the year, known as the May Music Festival in the new city auditorium (present roller rink) which was completed that year. The society was assisted every year by the presence of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Emil Oberhoffer, from 1908 until 1911. In addition there were other supporting casts of outside artists such as the noted cello soloist Carlo Fischer who appeared during the 1908 festival. One unique thing about these festivals was the printed program. The main portion was a reproduction of the characters' parts. This device was purposely designed to help the audience not only follow the story, but to aid them in gaining a clearer perception of the story's plot. The music conservatory of Wesley College was another aid to the Grand Forks Oratorio Society. During the 1910 festival, Wesley College was instrumental in securing the appearance of Miss Nellie Mitchell, an outstanding Australian opera star, who at that time, was considered by contemporary authoritative music critics, which evidence

51 Dudley, 34.
53 Selected programs from the May Music Festival of the Grand Forks Oratorio Society from 1907 to 1909. (found in University of North Dakota Library).
is now supported by Professor Hywel C. Rowland of the university, to be the greatest contralto of all times at that time. Miss Mitchell used the stage name of Madame Melba, a name which she took from her home town of Melbourne. After her appearance in Grand Forks she was awarded the equivalency of knighthood by King George V, later that year.\textsuperscript{54}

At the same time that these public musical performances were taking place programs known as recitals were going on in the homes of Grand Forks. A program from one of these recitals usually consisted of a variety of instrumental and vocal selections from both the standard and local composers. A small fee was usually charged as a symbol of recognition for the local performers. Mrs. Wallace Remington, who had studied abroad, was one of the most talented local musicians. She was in almost constant demand, both for performance and guidance.\textsuperscript{55}

The first "opera" house the Stratford theater, was built in early 1890. It was located in the block, now occupied by McDonald's Clothing Store.\textsuperscript{56} The type of productions that were presented at this first theatre were almost all classical musicales according to the city's pioneers. Emmit Race, a nationally known

\textsuperscript{54} Grand Forks Daily Herald, July 20, 1910; Professor Hywel C. Rowland to writer, May 18, 1951. Professor Rowland is a music professor at the University of North Dakota at present.

\textsuperscript{55} Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, December 25, 1895; November 22, 1899; January 5, 1901; Grand Forks Evening Press, December 15, 1906.

\textsuperscript{56} Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, July 17, 1890.
violinist during the period of the nineties, performed in this theatre. 57 Pioneer Charles J. Hurd has informed the writer that the nearest approach to jazz music in any of these early musical productions was the music of Sir Harry Lauder, who performed many times in Grand Forks during the last decade of the nineteenth century. 58

The Gotzian Theatre (known as the Metropolitan after 1897) was built in the 100 block on South Third Street, in the fall of 1890. It had a stage forty-seven feet by twenty-four feet which could be raised and lowered as needed. The seating capacity was 500 people. A notable feature of this building was that it had five exits, which made it possible to clear the house in one and half minutes. This theatre was first opened to the public on November 10, 1890, and featured as its first attraction the Abbott Opera Company. 59 Admission prices were most liberal, and summer prices were only fifty cents; Saturday matinees throughout the year featured any seat in the house for only a quarter. Such plays as Boccaccio, Dimes of Normandy, The Beggar Student, and Black Pattie's "Troubadors" were seen at these rates. 60 From 1900 on, the stage theatres of Grand Forks were presenting a well balanced program containing several selections of farces, musicals, and melodramas

57 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951; Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, August 15, 1890.

58 Mr. C. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.

59 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, October 1, 1890; Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951.

60 Ibid., October 16, 1890; Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.
filled with pathos and mirth. Popular plays and performers at the
turn of the century were: Hotel Topsy Turvy, Human Hearts, and Black
Pattie's "Troubadors." Press comment on Hotel Topsy Turvy was
rather ironical in that the reporter writing up the account felt
that the play lacked any of the merits of a good farce, but comment­
ing that it did provide action sufficient enough to keep the audience
from being bored. 61

The motion picture theatre made its entrance into Grand Forks
during the summer of 1904. 62 Between this time and 1910 there was
only one theatre of this type, the Foto-Play House. 63 After 1910,
the Metropolitan Theatre presented movies along with stage plays.
Motion pictures at the "Met" would usually be shown on a Monday or
a Tuesday. At this time the motion picture was coming to the fore­
front as a prominent source of cultural entertainment in Grand
Forks. Particular attention was paid to the interests of women and
children. The most popular type of movies at this time in the city
were comedies and travelogues. 65

In 1911, local drama was very popular in Grand Forks. Leader­
ship for its production came from the University of North Dakota,
particularly from the newly formed Dakota Playmakers, which was

61 Grand Forks Saturday Plaindealer, November 18, 1899.
62 Ibid., August 23, 1904.
63 Ibid.; Grand Forks Evening Press, September 11, 1905; Grand
Forks Daily Herald, July 10, 1910.
64 Grand Forks Daily Herald, July 10, 1910.
65 Ibid., July 12, 1910; Golden Anniversary edition, June 26,
founded during the course of that year. The association very quickly outgrew its purely academic form and scope, as the students earnestly desired to produce a genuinely native drama through writing and acting. The type of drama which the Dakota Playmakers produced inspired some of the local townspeople, as well, to produce drama which was representative of their own life and people.

This distinct and unique contribution to American drama came to Grand Forks under the inspiring leadership of Professor Frederick H. Koch. It was he who originated the idea of producing drama out in the open air in a natural theatre bordered by a stream. From this idea he built the Bankside Theatre, which was so-named because it was located on the banks of the English Coulee, which flowed through the university campus. The stage was an island in the middle of the coulee, and the auditorium was the banks along the stream. A natural bend of the water course rounded out the front of the stage, while the opposite bank provided an amphitheatre. Nearly 3000 spectators could be accommodated in the Bankside amphitheatre. This was the first theatre in the United States to utilize the curves of a stream to separate the stage from the auditorium according to Zena Trinka. Entrances on the stage could be made by water, which was not only convenient but picturesque. Thus, through the co-operation of the University of North Dakota and the townspeople of Grand Forks a distinct contribution was made to American drama.

by the creation of an art known as "communal playmaking." 67

Next to the theatre, Lyceum courses were very important forms of entertainment and enlightenment for some of the citizens of Grand Forks during the period of the nineties and early 1900's. These lyceums were valuable as a source of education and cultural information. The nature of the topics and the speakers selected amply illustrates the line of thought, among the townspeople in these early days. Speakers on morals and ethics as prescribed by the Christian religion were the most popular. The best illustration of this was in 1890, when the Grand Forks Lyceum Association hired an agnostic speaker for the summer session. All sorts of abusive condemnation were poured upon the association by practically every religious organization in town. The particular speaker was the nationally known University of Kansas professor, J. E. Remsberg, who had been delivering his famous lecture "False Claims" all over the nation. This same lecture was to be presented to the Grand Forks audience. The press had this to say about him: "He stands next to Ingersoll in the agnostic field." 68 The situation was made more galling for the churches and their affiliated organizations when it was announced that all of the receipts were to be donated to the city hospital, which was backed by the Lutheran church. The hospital refused to accept the donation under any condition:


The ladies of the North Dakota Hospital [the present Grand Forks Deaconess Hospital] are not in any way responsible for the announcement of Prof. Remsberg's lecture. This association is composed of Christian women who would not only discontinue the lecture, but would refuse to accept funds derived from such a source.

In the opinion of Charles Hurd, and most of the other pioneers of the city, the lyceums were a complete failure as an educational device because they failed to reach the average man. They did however benefit the university students. The cost of admission to these lyceum courses was extremely low, as a person could subscribe to an entire course for only one dollar, which entitled him to see six musicals, hear five lectures, and attend three recitals, or a total of fourteen performances altogether.

During the period of the late eighties, under the presidency of Homer Sprague, a series of informal Sunday lectures was inaugurated at the university in addition to the regular Saturday night public receptions. These lectures were based upon an analysis of the great moral and religious poetry in the English language and would usually last from an hour to two hours. Everything that might be related to sectarianism was avoided. Attendance at these lectures was purely voluntary on the part of the students, and anyone from town could attend if he so desired. President Sprague


70 Ibid.; Grand Forks Daily Herald, October 2, 1915; W. B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950; Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950. Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951.
gave the lectures himself, and no preparatory work was necessary in order to enjoy and benefit from these talks. 

In addition to attending lyceums and university lectures, debating and the resolving of problems on all phases of life were important factors in the early cultural tastes of the people. In the seventies and eighties these activities were carried on at the schoolhouse, as no other building at the time was large enough to handle the crowds. After the construction of the Gotzian Theatre, lectures and debates were held there.

Enthusiasm for original art came to the city at a very early date. Leadership for presentation and production came from the local citizens and the university. In the home and in the church art was with the city from about 1880, but it never reached its zenith until the period of the nineties.

Probably no one did much to stimulate a genuine interest in the development and appreciation of original art work as did Mrs. Frank Gilby in 1895. For a number of years she taught classes, and individuals, in oils, water colors, pastels, china painting, and crayon works. Many of her lessons were given free, and most of her courses were very reasonable, usually charging only for the cost of supplies used in the course. In addition to her value as

71 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, December 22, 1887.
72 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. Niel Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951.
an instructor of art, she provided Grand Forks with many fine pieces of art, both her own originals and pieces from her collection. Many of these are seen today in private homes, public offices, and the city library. Mrs. Gilby was equally at home with landscapes, figures, flowers, descriptive, and decorative painting.

Particular interest was shown in the development of the new art of amateur photography in the nineties, and many of the pictures taken by local amateurs compared quite favorably with those of the eastern professionals. The outstanding amateur photographer in Grand Forks was George F. Blackburn, who in 1894 exhibited his works at the National Photographers exhibition in St. Louis, and won first prize, a gold medal. Blackburn was a very versatile person and did equally good work with fullsize (life-size) portraits in pastel, crayon, and water color.

Near the close of the nineteenth century, the churches of Grand Forks were taking the initiative in promoting art exhibits. Although many fine pieces of original, local art were sold at these exhibits, the purpose of these shows was not to sell, but to exhibit, for the appreciative values of art. During the winter of 1899, the Presbyterian church sponsored such a show with the emphasis on locally produced water colors, passe partous, prints, colored photographs, and a few choice carbons. A few were put up for sale.


75 Dudley, 31.
Actually, many of these pieces of local ingenuity sold for as low as five cents a copy. There was usually a limit of only one piece to a customer at most of these exhibits, however. Art became subordinated to the work of the new Art Department of the university, in fact this department became the guidance center for local artists.

In this chapter it has been the intent to survey and indicate those cultural influences that were the most important in the development of the social life of the people of Grand Forks. Chapter IV will deal with the problem of social life as surveyed from the angle of service institutions.

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76 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, November, 1899.

CHAPTER IV

Institutional History

Organized education came to the settlement of Grand Forks almost the same time that the townsite plat was filed in October, 1871, a full three years before the settlement was incorporated as a village. The first school, costing only $465, was a two-room frame building located where the present courthouse now stands. \(^1\) Ten years later, the school population of the village had reached approximately 700, and as a result, the first school schoolhouse had been completely outgrown. \(^3\) In 1882, a large two-story brick structure was completed on the corner of Fourth Street and International Avenue (the latter is now known as Second Avenue North). This building became known as Central School and the same year it was completed the first high school courses were offered in Grand Forks. The old school was moved across the street from its original location in 1883 and was changed into the Park House Hotel. \(^4\) From this date until 1900 public education in North Dakota was confined mostly to the elementary, or common, school. One of the chief reasons for this was that as the child grew older he was needed more and more to help on the farm, particularly since the harvest season

\(^1\) Chapter I.
\(^2\) Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.
\(^3\) Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (Washington, 1885), 813.
\(^4\) Arnold, 140.
usually fell during the school year, as did the planting season. Moreover, most people in this region in the 1880's believed that once a child could read, write, and cipher, he was educated. As a result, they were reluctant to vote taxes for high school support. Another factor which one must consider was the lack of teacher-training institutions in the area. Practically every teacher received his training at a teachers' institute, until the offering of normal courses at the university after 1887. (See below page 76) Institute training, however, was primarily concerned only with the problems of the elementary grades. (The teachers' institute will be discussed more in detail below, page 74.)

In 1899, a new school law was passed by the legislature which provided that each county would receive state aid for educational purposes in proportion to its total school population. The language of this law meant that where property value was high and the school population sparse, that area would be compelled to receive less money than the amount actually collected in taxes. Likewise, those counties where the school population was high and the property value low, would receive more than they collected. In commenting upon this law, the Plaindealer argued that the city of Grand Forks benefited from its law in that both the property value and the school population were high in the city. Appended to the 1899 law was a

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5 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Mr. W. B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950.
6 Revised Codes of North Dakota (n.p., 1899), 246-7.
7 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, November 24, 1899.
special provision creating the Grand Forks Independent School District, too. The local school board was then reorganized to include one member from each of the six political wards, plus one member at large. A new course of study was installed shortly after the reorganization which provided for twelve years of work. Only those students who had completed the subjects known as the common school branches were admitted to the high school.

As a result of these new laws, particularly the appropriation act, several things took place in Grand Forks during 1900: a rapid school building program followed; special classes were introduced for those students who needed special help, and new courses such as domestic science and manual training were added to the curriculum. The special help classes were especially designed for those who were unable to attend school the whole term because of obligations at home, or on the farm. The building program at the turn of the century resulted in the completion of three new schools and an addition to an old one by 1905. Washington School, located on the corner of Sixth Street and Fifth Avenue North was completed in 1899; Winship and Wilder Schools were completed by 1904; and an addition to the state's larger grade school, Belmont, was finished in 1905. By 1919, Roosevelt and the original Lincoln School were built, giving the city its six grade schools. Central School, until the building of the new school in 1919, functioned as a junior and senior high

school and handled also a few of the lower grades. Thus, in a period of twenty years, 1899 to 1919, a tremendous outlay of money was voted by the taxpayers of Grand Forks for the expansion and improvement of their educational system.

Half a million dollars have been invested in the public school buildings and their grounds and equipment; and the educational institutions located there, with their endowment, represent an investment of over $3,000,000. There is expended annually in the operation of these institutions over $250,000, and the 3500 persons engaged in educational work, and teachers and students mean to the city an annual expenditure of $700,000.

Despite these facts and figures pointing to a real improvement in the educational system, the late Professor J. M. Gillette of the University of North Dakota was pointed out that in 1910 enrollment in the elementary grades fell off about fifty-four per cent in the second grade, and that in the eighth grade less than a quarter of those children who started school were still in school. Furthermore, only nine per cent ever reached the high school, and that of those only one and a half per cent, reached the senior year. This was because the prevalence of child labor in Grand Forks; fifty-eight per cent of the age group from ten to fifteen were gainfully employed. A secondary reason, was that there was still no uniform course of study, nor any uniform textbooks, which Gillette

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9 Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904; Grand Forks an Educational Center (Grand Forks, 1910), 6.

10 Helen J. Sullivan, Know Your North Dakota (Bismarck, 1931), 2. This was a book put out by the State Department of Public Instruction, and covered the history of North Dakota schools up to 1930, with particular emphasis upon the period of high school expansion from 1900 to 1919.
believed created a dislike for school on the part of the school-age children. Education up until 1910 in Grand Forks, as elsewhere in the country, was concentrated upon the college preparatory student. In the grades, particular stress was put upon the mastery of the basic fundamentals of reading, writing, and arithmetic, with special attention being given to orthography.

Teacher-training took place at the County Teachers' Institute until the opening of the University Normal School in 1887, and even then were quite prominent until 1900 when the University and small normal schools were taking up most of the teacher training candidates.

According to the law, every teacher was required to attend at least one institute a month or forfeit a portion of her salary as a penalty.

At least one Saturday in each month which the public schools may be in progress shall be devoted in each township institutes or model schools, and normal instruction and matters relating to methods of teaching, organizing, classifying, and governing schools, and for the improvement of teachers, and two Saturdays may be used, at the discretion of the township board. Each teacher shall attend the full session of each institute in the township or forfeit one day's wages for every day's absence therefrom, unless by sickness of the teacher.

What was offered at these institutes must have been rather limited, as the funds allocated by law barely covered materials and transportation of the institute teachers. The law of 1885 provided for

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11 Gillette, 175-9, passim.


13 Ibid.

14 The Annotated Revised Codes of the Territory of Dakota, 1883 (St. Paul, 1885), 582.
an average of twelve dollars per day for these training sessions.

There is hereby appropriated out of the funds in the territorial treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of six hundred dollars each year as an institute fund, which shall be used exclusively in employing persons of learning, ability, skill, and experience as conductors of teachers' institutes. . . . of this fund not more than sixty dollars shall be paid for the expenses of any one institute in a year. . . No institute aided by this fund shall continue for less than five days. 15

In actual practice, less than half of the teachers in Grand Forks County ever attended an institute held in the city of Grand Forks. The reasons most cited for this lack of attendance were the existing meager salaries of the teachers and a general unwillingness to improve their professional status. 16 However, this may be, it was through the work of one of these institutes that approval for reduction of the school term from ten to nine months was gained. 17 In 1887, another forfeiture was added to penalize those who refused to attend institute meetings. In addition to losing pay, a loss of their teaching certificate would result if they failed to attend. The county superintendent was charged with carrying out this phase of the law. 18 A contemporary report indicates that on the average most of the institutes that were held in Grand Forks usually lasted from twelve to fourteen days. 19 These county

16 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 23, 1885.
17 Ibid., June 24, 1886.
18 Ibid., July 14, 1887.
19 Ibid., July 7, 1887.
Institutes were held annually thereafter to the present date (1951), but received less and less attention, as far as high school instructors were concerned, after 1900 because of the expansion of the university's Normal College, and the growth of small normal schools such as the one at Mayville throughout the state. With the expansion of the latter, high school instructors were required to have at least four years of college instruction, but an elementary teacher could teach on her high school diploma, provided she followed her high school work up with at least six weeks work at some normal school. The high school diploma was valid as a teacher's certificate for two years, and could be renewed annually by attending a summer session at a normal school.

The first parochial high school in Grand Forks was St. Bernard's Ursuline Academy, which was started in 1885 by the parishioners of St. Michael's Catholic church. This school was a three-story building located on the corner of Cheyenne Avenue (present Fourth Avenue North) and Sixteenth Street. The building was of solid brick and contained room space for six class rooms, eight dormitories, three dining rooms, a kitchen, and a laundry. All studies at St. Bernard's were elective according to contemporary newspaper accounts, and were designed for the students' most common needs. An example of their

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20 Raymond W. Bangs, "County Teachers' Institutes in North Dakota," a Master's Thesis at the University of North Dakota, 1947, 37, 70.

21 Supplement to the Compiled Laws of North Dakota, 1913-1925 (Rochester, N.Y., 1926), 391-8, passim.
The course of study was the great variety of subjects in reading, grammar, and geography. According to contemporary opinion, the basis philosophy of this school was learning through reasoning and questioning, or the Socratic method of teaching in all their classes. Father Louis L'Hiver of St. Michael's was the first principal of this school. Meanwhile, the elementary parochial school was held in the priest's parsonage, which was located where Washington School now stands, on the corner of Sixth Street and Fifth Avenue North. This elementary school was the beginning of St. Michael's School, on which the construction work began in 1885. Present day St. Michael's School, however, was built and started by Monsignor Joseph Lemieux. The doors were opened for registration on September 11, 1916, when 242 pupils enrolled. In November, 1917 St. Bernard's was changed to the name of St. James by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

The University of North Dakota antedates North Dakota statehood by almost six years, and was a part of Grand Forks life only twelve years after the incorporation of the townsit, and two years after incorporation as a village. On February 27, 1883, the Territorial Legislature passed an act which provided for the establishment of a university at Grand Forks. The university was

22 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, May 7, 1885; August 20, 1885; W. L. Dudley, City of Grand Forks Illustrated (Grand Forks, 1897), 17.

23 Sister Ann Le Clair, "Catholicism Comes to Grand Forks," a Master's Thesis at the University of North Dakota, 1948, 83, 120, 124, 130.

24 Special Laws of Dakota Territory (n.p., 1883), XL, Section 1.
designated six years later by the first state legislature as the official University of North Dakota. 25

During the first three years of its existence, the university was more like the old English Classical School of Boston than a university. At that time it offered no professional courses, or even college courses. The main objective in the beginning was to prepare students for college work. No courses were offered in law, engineering, or medicine, and the only social studies course was political geography of Europe and North America. 26 The core of the curriculum was the classics, in which such subjects as Gray's Elegy, Goldsmith's Traveller, Caesar's Gallic Wars, selections from Xenophon's Anabasis, Euclid, and the mental and normal sciences were studied. 27 In 1885, courses in mathematics, languages, English, and bookkeeping were added. The first professional course was added late in 1886, with the creation of the medical department. Military science was added in 1887 for both sexes. The military offerings at this time were built around physical exercises, although muskets had been ordered at the time the course was initiated. 28 Meanwhile, when the fall semester opened in 1887, three main courses of study were offered on a collegiate level; Classical, Scientific, and

25 Revised Codes of North Dakota (n.p., 1899), 258.
28 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, September 3, 1885; December 22, 1887.
Normal. Special attention was given to the training of teachers at this time, due to the extreme shortage of good, qualified high school and elementary instructors in the area. The college preparatory course, however, was still the predominant offering.29

During the winter of the same year, the university added correspondence courses to its curriculum. Subjects that could be pursued by correspondence were arranged by topics, books, and pages, which the student would purchase from the university and have sent to him. The student, however, was required to come to Grand Forks at regular examination time in order to take the tests for the courses he was pursuing by correspondence. This departure in curriculum practice was originally designed for those students who had to leave early and enter late, usually because of harvest duties.30 From 1887 to 1899 there were no real departures from this college curriculum, with the exception of a gradual expansion of the liberal arts program. In 1899, a College of Law was established with quarters in the Clifford Building in downtown Grand Forks. The Harvard and Columbia method of case studies was used.31 Later in the same year, Engineering, Mining, Commerce, and Pharmacy were offered at the university.32 The medical department was changed into a two year

29 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, September 15, 1887.
30 Ibid., December 22, 1887.
32 Ibid., 20.
medical college during the fall of 1905, with the school of pharmacy being dropped. Under this new arrangement it was made possible for a student to pursue a combination of two years of specific medical work, which in turn made him eligible for admission into the third year of medical school in any medical college in the country. The first course in journalism was offered in 1905, and nursing was added to the medical curriculum in 1909.

Meanwhile, in 1910, Wesley College, a Methodist foundation (see below) affiliated with the University of North Dakota since 1905, undertook the establishment of a music conservatory as a public service to the people of Grand Forks. The general policy of this project was that the instructors were to be paid only a stipulated salary and were to hold no percentage interest on the student's tuition. Instruction was offered strictly on a scholarship basis, which placed no tax upon the teacher as she received a set salary but upon the college who financed the scholarship.

When the University of Dakota at Grand Forks first opened its doors to students it was housed in a single building four stories high, which now is referred to as "Old Main." On the opening day, September 8, 1884, there were seventy-nine students, of which only one was a college student. The rest were classed as "Specials" because they were taking the preparatory course offered by the

33 Grand Forks Evening Press, September 12, 1905.
34 Dakota Student, September, 1905; February 22, 1936.
The university performed the function of a high school until 1895, because of the slow development of the territorial and state high school systems. By December, 1884, the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba (present Great Northern) Railway built a special flag station on the campus for the convenience of patrons. There was no bus line to the University in those days. Not even a sidewalk or board walk broke the turf between the campus and the Kedney warehouse. To get to the school meant either to walk or take the Great Northern train. A five cent railway ticket...38

A steam heating plant was installed in "Old Main" early in the winter of 1884. The steam was produced by a wood-burner. The buildings at this time were lighted by kerosene lamps. Bath facilities were provided from the beginning, although the baths were taken in small tin tubs located in a room next to the boiler room in the basement of "Old Main." Each student brought his own bedding, towels, toilet soap and 'table napkins'. Originally, the men's dormitory was located on the fourth floor of "Old Main" until Neil and Daniel Johnston built a shack south of the railroad.

36 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, September 3, 1885; January 21, 1886; Dakota Student, Anniversary edition, February 22, 1936; Dudley, 16.

37 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, December 4, 1884.

38 Dakota Student, April 13, 1951; Mr. Neil Johnston, one of the early graduates of the University Prep School, to writer, April 15, 1951. Mr. Johnston came to Grand Forks from Ontario in 1883.

39 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, December 4, 1884.

40 Dakota Student, May, 1892; February 22, 1936; April 13, 1951.

41 Ibid., May, 1892.
tracks in 1892. A water main and plumbing facilities were added to the campus in 1886. The second building, on the campus, the Ladies' Dormitory (Davis Hall), was built in 1887.

On June 16, 1887, a tornado struck Grand Forks, and all but destroyed the town. The university was particularly hard hit; the entire west wing of Main Building was demolished. This was the section containing the library and the museum. The museum was considered very valuable as Professor Henry Montgomery had spent a considerable amount of time traveling over Dakota Territory collecting many rare birds and rocks that were native to the area. Most of these specimens were either lost or completely destroyed. Of those that were salvaged, many were picked up as far away as three-quarters of a mile from the building housing the museum. Many specimens were never found. Recovery from this disaster was rapid, however, and the building was back in use by December 1887.

In 1901, the college of electrical, mining, and mechanical engineering, and Budge Hall (men's dormitory), were opened. The Mechanics Art building was constructed in 1902, and in 1903 a home for the president was built. A combination gymnasium and assembly

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42 Dakota Student, May, 1892; April 13, 1951.
43 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, January 21, 1886.
44 Ibid., September 15, 1887; Dakota Student, April 13, 1951; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951.
45 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, December 22, 1887.
46 Dakota Student, January, 1901; Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904.
47 Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904; Dakota Student, February, 1903.
Igym) was added to the campus in 1907, to be followed the next year by Woodworth Hall. The latter was completely destroyed by fire during the winter of 1948. In 1910, the University Commons (present library) was ready for use, and after World War I (1918) the present Law and Chemistry buildings were built.

Meanwhile, the student population gradually climbed, although the second year saw the figure remain at seventy-nine, but twenty-eight of these were now enrolled as regular college students.

At the turn of the century, the university had an enrollment of four hundred students, and by 1915 there were 962, all on a college level. From an original faculty of seven in 1884 the number had increased by 1900 to forty-five. Tuition was free in all departments until 1899 when a fee of fifty dollars per year was charged for admission into the College of Law, which had an enrollment of fifty students by 1902. The only costs to the student in the early days was for such incidental things as books, materials, and the cost of room and board. The former was five dollars and the latter only three dollars a week in 1887.

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50 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, August 27, 1885.
53 Ibid.
54 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, September 15, 1887; Dakota Student, April 13, 1951; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951.
degree was awarded in 1889, and the first Master of Arts in 1897.\(^{55}\)

The First Doctor of Philosophy degree was conferred in 1910, and
the total cost per student was only $161 per year that year.\(^{56}\)

Rev. William Blackburn was elected by the Board of Regents
as the University's first president. He served only one year, as
the regents refused to re-elect him because of his training as a
Methodist minister and as such it was felt that he was much more
fitted to teach and administer a denominational college rather than
a non-sectarian university.\(^{57}\) For a period of a little over three
years, Professor Henry Montgomery, who was also vice-president of
the university, acted as president until the installation of Homer
L. Sprague, Ph.D., late in 1887. Dr. Sprague received his Bachelor's
degree at Yale University, Master's at Cornell, and his doctorate
at New York University. Before accepting the presidency of the
University of Dakota at Grand Forks, Sprague was prominent nation-
ally as a lecturer and writer. His most noted lecture was "John
Milton as an Educator." The most noteworthy contribution to come
from his pen were two editions of Milton's \textit{Paradise Lost} prepared
especially for school use.\(^{58}\) For two years, (1895-97) during the
Sprague regime, the university was maintained solely by popular


\(^{56}\) \textit{Ibid.}; \textit{Grand Forks Herald}, Silver Anniversary edition, June
25, 1904.

\(^{57}\) A more complete discussion of the Blackburn issue will be
found below in Chapter V.

\(^{58}\) \textit{Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer}, October 6, 1887.
subscriptions. The reason for this was Governor Roger Allin’s veto of the 1895 university appropriation bill, which if it had been passed would have provided the institution with $5,000. (The depression and many crop failures the past two or three years were the governor’s reasons for vetoing the bill). Professor Webster Merrifield was installed as the third president of the university in 1897, and was very active in getting a fixed annual appropriation bill passed in the State Legislature. This fixed appropriation was passed in 1899. It provided that two-fifths of a mill on the assessed valuation of the state as the source of the university expense monies.

It was Webster Merrifield who made the University of North Dakota a real university, as he was responsible for the addition of practically all of the professional courses, physical structures, and means by which the institution could be adequately financed. The Anniversary edition of the Dakota Student comments that President Merrifield was perhaps the only one of the original and early professors that had any real faith in the University of North Dakota, that it would someday be an institution of higher learning on even standards with the better colleges and universities in the East. In 1903, Merrifield added to his list of credits the honors system which was a device by which credit for quality as well as quantity of work was recognized. Under this system it was possible for a student to obtain the Bachelor’s degree in three

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years instead of four. It is still in force at the University of North Dakota, which claims to be the inventor of it. The fourth and last president of the university in this period under discussion, Frank L. McVey, assumed office in 1909 and was installed in the fall of 1910. He continued the expansion program of Merrifield's, and by 1914, the university had a new athletic field (with wooden bleachers), which had a quarter-mile cinder track, football gridiron, and a baseball diamond. The baseball diamond was detached from the football field, and lay between the stadium and University Avenue.

Extra-curricular life at the university, during most of the years from 1884 to 1914, revolved around the weekly receptions, two literary societies, (Adelphia and Per Gradus, both organized in 1885) an athletic club, and the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association, which had branches on the campus. Also, there were services held every Sunday in the university chapel (present Business Office). The University YWCA dates from 1885, eighteen years before the establishment of a regular "Y" downtown.

The University "YW" was led by Mrs. E. J. Babcock, wife of Professor Grand Forks, North Dakota," Northwestern Journal of Progress (Chicago, 1902), 20; Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 25, 1904.


63 Ibid.
The "YM" never had any office at the university as did the "YW". The Dakota Student, the university newspaper published by the students, first came out in 1886 as a small tabloid magazine called the University News. In the beginning it was a monthly publication. The name was changed to Dakota Student in 1888 and became a weekly in 1906. The paper was generally divided into sections related to college interests, a literary section, news from the alumni, editorials, and local news. Commercial advertising entered this student publication in 1892.

The first vocational school in the city was the Northwestern Normal College and Commercial Institute, which was founded in 1888. Originally, it was located on Belmont Avenue one-half mile south of Belmont School. A unique feature of this school was that a student could enter a class at anytime during the year. The rooms in this school resembled model offices, and the course of study included bookkeeping, Gregg and Eclectic shorthand, touch typing, telegraphy, commercial law, business arithmetic, banking, penmanship, correspondence, grammar, spelling, elocution, oratory, music, physical culture, and delsarte. Rather surprisingly this college had a conservatory of music, the only one in the state until the nineties. Actual business transactions gave the students practical experience. The college operated both day and night and

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64 Mrs. Eleanor Healy Booth, 1919, Graduate of the university, present Secretary of the Grand Forks YWCA to writer, March 2, 1951.

65 Dakota Student, February 22, 1936.

66 Ibid., May, 1892.

67 Dudley, 17.
specialized in individual attention to each student. The Northwestern Normal College and Commercial Institute was the only business college in the Northwest as late as 1902, containing a complete business and banking department. During that year a total of a hundred fifty persons patronized the institution.68

Wesley College was established in 1891 by the Wesleyan Foundation at Wahpeton, North Dakota as the Red River Valley University. It took on its present name when it moved to Grand Forks in 1902. It was, and still is, a private college, privately endowed. In 1905, however, agreement was made between Wesley College and the University of North Dakota whereby university students could get university credit for music and speech courses pursued at the former institution. The main course of study at Wesley was religion, but it made for itself a reputation in the field of music (see above this chapter and chapter III). In addition, Wesley College performed the functions of a preparatory school where students could take courses beyond the eighth grade. This was particularly true until the state's high school system became better developed after 1900. From 1900 to date the institution has concentrated on religion, music, and speech, the latter added to the curriculum after World War I. In Grand Forks, the Wesleyans built their campus and two buildings (Corwin and Sayre Halls) in the west end of town directly across the street from the University of North Dakota campus. Sayre Hall was built in 1908, and Corwin in 1910. Robertson addition was built in 1929.69

68 Northwestern Journal of Progress, 11.
69 Mrs. Esther H. Frye to writer, April 14, 1951. Mrs. Frye is the current registrar at Wesley College.
The Scandinavians of the area formed a corporation in 1892 known as The Grand Forks College. The site of this school was the location of the present Aaker's Business College, in the Clifford Building. The main courses of this school were a preparatory course for those who had not completed the eighth grade in the common schools, a normal course for a first grade teacher's certificate, and a preparatory course for further college work. For the first academic year, 1892-3, the college enrolled 201 students, of which 140 were North Dakotans, sixty were Minnesotans, and one was an Iowan. At the end of the second academic year there were six graduates. Unfortunately, Grand Forks College was never able to pay off its initial debt. This was partially because of crop failures during the late nineties, and to the inability of the subscribers to meet their pledges. An attempt was made to finance the college through the churches and the newspapers of Grand Forks, but this was only partly successful. In 1894, the corporation was sold to a concern in Crookston, who continued to operate the institution under the same name and with the same courses of study. The Scandinavians regained control of the college in 1900 when the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Synod formed a corporation for the purchase. The actual purchase took place in 1904. Under the sponsorship of the church one of the main objectives of the college

70 Tollefson, Collections, 178.
72 Ibid., 72-6, passim.
was to prepare students for further religious work at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. The latter arrangement lasted for seven years, when in 1911 the institution was removed from Grand Forks because of a change in districts by the church synod.73

The church held a very prominent position in the city, and the religious services conducted in the church were considered by many of the town's leading citizens, such as R. B. Griffith, to be the foremost Sunday social and recreational activity. Even during the week, a church festivity, such as a bazaar, supper, or prayer meeting, held precedence over most other social affairs, such as the theatre and social dances. This was particularly true because in the church, aside from the home, was one of the chief gathering centers for people until the late nineties, with the possible exception of the saloons and the one theatre that the town had until after 1890. After 1890, the old settlers say that it was just about evenly divided between the church and the theatre with the theatre having a great appeal during the week. One thing was certain, and that was that a religious service was always held whatever the weather conditions prevailing at the time might be, or whether or not the heating plant of the church was functioning properly or not.

73 Tollefson, Collections, 179.

74 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Reverand G. K. Zimmerman to writer, July 15, 1950. Rev. Zimmerman is the present pastor of the First Baptist Church and at the time of the interview was president of the Grand Forks Ministerial Alliance.
The Ladies' Aid Societies of the Grand Forks churches were very influential in promoting many of the Social Fairs mentioned in Chapter II, and the pie suppers and "pot luck" dinners that were held throughout the city. Many of the churches had standing committees on community relief, as well as for the destitute members of their own congregations. In fact, from 1899 until about 1930 the churches of the town were bearing the biggest share of the public relief burden. Their method of dispensing aid to the needy was the typical donation by sacrifice, where several members of the Ladies' Aid Societies would pool their resources and give to the needy family. Sometimes collections would be taken up for the purpose of buying fuel, groceries, or paying for a medical bill.

The seven day revival, of the Billy Sunday type, was very popular during the period of the nineties in Grand Forks. At these revival meetings services would be held every evening of the week for a period of usually one week, but sometimes lasting several weeks. As a result, many outside ministers were sought to conduct these services in the city. Especial attention was devoted to the religious festival known in Grand Forks as the "Week of Prayer." In order for the most people to be able to participate and benefit from this special week, all of the Protestant churches would cooperate and have their congregations meet with the others in one

75 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Reverend G. K. Zimmerman to writer, July 15, 1950. Rev. Zimmerman is the present pastor of the First Baptist Church and at the time of the interview was president of the Grand Forks Ministerial Alliance.

76 Ibid.
church. During the course of the week daytime services would be held in a different church each day, while the evenings would be spent in cottage prayers in the various homes throughout the city. The majority of outside ministers who conducted these revivals and "Weeks of Prayer" came from either St. Paul or Minneapolis. Digests of their sermons were printed in the Daily Plaindealer. From these digests it appears that they extemporized on all of the leading issues of the day, particularly the liquor question. After 1899, the "Week of Prayer" was considered one of the main events of the year.

Grand Forks Deaconess Hospital was built in 1891 as St. Luke’s Hospital, the result of the energy of a Norwegian immigrant, Dr. J. E. Engstad. The hospital was run by Dr. Engstad and a group of doctors for eight years, when lack of funds and subscriptions forced them to sell out to a corporation formed by Reverend I. Tollefson and a group of pastors and farmers. During the first four years under the church-farmer alliance, the hospital admitted 1,430 patients and conducted 730 operations. Of this group eleven religious sects and fourteen nationality groups were represented. Of all these cases not one was contagious, which spoke well for the campaigns conducted by the school and health department of Grand Forks.

77 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, September 16, 1890.
78 Ibid., January 13, 1900.
80 Tollefson, Collections, 181.
Forks: (the health department will be mentioned more in detail in the next chapter). All members of the new corporation, which incidentally changed the name to Grand Forks Deaconess in 1900, were members of the Evangelical Lutheran church. St. Michael's Catholic church started a campaign for another hospital in the city early in 1906. The City of Grand Forks donated $17,500 that year towards the project, and early in 1907 the hospital was opened to the public. The following year St. Michael's built a nursing school, which offered a three-year course, at a cost of $40,632.03.

Although the Presbyterians and the Catholics were the first to hold religious services in Grand Forks, the first denomination to organize in the town were the Methodists. They started a Sunday School in September, 1873. Their first pastor in 1874 taught in the first public school in the settlement. St. Michael's Catholic church began as a mission under the leadership of Father L. F. Simonet in 1877. During the winter of 1878 Father Louis L'hiver built a small frame church and parsonage. The lots for these buildings were donated by Alexander Griggs. The Presbyterian church began as a mission of twenty-five members on April 5, 1879, under the leadership of Reverend I. W. Iddings. The first Norwegian church in Grand Forks was the Zion Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran

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81 Tollefson, Collections, 182.
82 Sister Ann Le Clair, "Catholicism Comes to Grand Forks," a Master's Thesis at the University of North Dakota, 1948, 111, 114.
83 Arnold, 128. (See above Chapter I.)
84 Ibid., 131.
Congregation; which was organized on October 20, 1879. In 1886, the Norwegians organized the Trinity Lutheran Congregation, and on July 28, 1889 they organized the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Congregation which were different from the Zion Lutheran of 1879. Meanwhile, another group of Norwegians had organized the Scandinavian Baptist Congregation in 1885, while still another group organized the Scandinavian Methodist Congregation in the same year.85 The Episcopalian society built a brick church in Grand Forks as early as 1881 on the corner of Fifth Street and Alpha Avenue (the present Federated Church). The Baptist society organized on October 16, 1881 and built a chapel in 1882. By 1897 the Baptists had recruited a membership of 250. The Baptist Boy’s Brigade published a monthly paper, the Bulletin, which was devoted almost solely to the interests of the church. This was Griffith’s church.86 The Children of Israel which was the name selected for the synagogue had a membership of about sixty families when it was organized in 1885. This church included practically all of the Russian Jews in the city, as well as all other Orthodox Jews.87 By 1899 the Christian Science church had joined the list of religious organizations in Grand Forks.88 In 1900, the Christian Science church was built on the model of a Greek

86 Dudley, 19; Arnold, 140.
87 Dudley, 20.
88 Grand Forks Saturday Plaindealer, November 18, 1899.
cross with a large dome in the roof to light the auditorium. The windows were of stained glass, and the ends of the building were gabled. The United Lutheran church was typical of Scandinavian architecture in that the building had a number of turrets. It also had large stained glass windows. Grand Forks had its second Catholic church by 1915. This church was organized and built under the leadership of Bishop Michael J. O'Driscoll. Only the basement was ready by December of that year, but the superstructure was completed two years later. The stained glass windows were gifts of the parishioners and were installed in 1918. The main altar of pure white carrara marble was the gift of M. J. Murphy, an early editor of the Grand Forks Plaindealer. The cost of construction for St. Mary's was $125,000. The church has had only two pastors, M. J. O'Driscoll and Monsignor M. J. Fletcher.

By 1916 Grand Forks had twenty-two churches representing nine denominations. Professor J. M. Gillette of the University of North Dakota conducted a survey and found that over the period from 1880 until 1920 Catholicism was the number one preference of the people when polled as to their religious preference. A distribution of church preferences is shown below in Table I.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHURCH PREFERENCES BY PERCENTAGES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
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<td>1890 48.5 1906 42.4 1916 42.4</td>
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89 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, January 13, 1900.
90 Ibid., Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904.
91 Gillette, 197.
Interest in the establishment of a Young Men's Christian Association began as early as 1885, by a few public spirited young men of the town, who felt that the leisure hours of the town's men were not filled in adequately. The original Grand Forks "Y" rented and furnished a couple of small rooms over the Chicago Music Store on Third Street. The money, books, and labor for this first organization were all donated by the town's citizens, particularly the business men.\textsuperscript{92} The leading contributors to the first "Y" were R. E. Griffith, Sidney Clark, and Joseph E. Clifford. Unfortunately, the YMCA movement was abandoned the following year because of lack of public interest and consequently a lack of funds. (All "Y" funds are voluntary contributions from the local citizens supporting the local institution.) A partial explanation for the lack of co-operation was that the town's citizens apparently misunderstood YMCA goals. Many looked upon it as an agency prating idealism but ignoring practical values.

\textsuperscript{92} Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, March 11, 1886.
In 1892, however, the institution was reorganized under the leadership of Sidney Clark. During the course of the reorganization drive $8000 in subscriptions were collected for the construction of a YMCA building, but the plans were early abandoned because of the 1892 depression. As a result, the "Y" took up quarters in the basement of the Security Block (the spot now occupied by the Von Reuden Barber Shop), and most of the early equipment used in the training of the young men was home-made.93

Perhaps the most zealous secretary to lead the local Y, Harry H. Tuttle, took over the leadership in 1897. The present "Y" building and youth program are a direct result of his leadership and philosophy. Tuttle stressed the development of the individual's personality because from the individual is molded the personality of the group and the community, he felt. Tuttle's application of this principle was a scaled list of activities starting from those involving the participation of only the individual, through small group clubs and organizational presentation such as the winter carnival discussed in Chapter II. Under Tuttle's leadership, and that of those succeeding him, the YMCA spread into the home by meeting the parents there through club activities in which the parents would be invited to serve the refreshments for the occasion, and by meeting them at the organizational activities in the main building downtown. During his administration from 1897-1914, Tuttle never lost sight of the fact that the "Y" was a living and changing

The ideas and opinions expressed in this paragraph are based upon information furnished by the Grand Forks YMCA Secretary's Records, promotional bulletins, and interviews with General Secretary L. H. Eystrom and Mr. James H. Turner, one of the early members of the local "Y". The interviews took place on October 28, 1950 and May 13, 1951, respectively.

Meanwhile, in 1903, a parallel movement for the young women of Grand Forks was beginning to make headway when a group of women from the various churches of the city conducted a survey in order to ascertain the needs of the young girls in town, particularly the immigrant Scandinavian girls. As has been mentioned earlier in this chapter, the university had established a Young Women's Christian Association in 1893 under the leadership of Mrs. E. J. Babcock, but until 1903, no thought was given towards a city YWCA. When it was
learned that a city organization was to be formed, Mrs. Babcock immediately volunteered her services. At the same time, Secretary Tuttle of the YMCA gave his full support. The press of Grand Forks was very co-operative and advertised the venture in its society columns. In the first campaign (1903), volunteer ladies collected about 100 subscriptions for a dollar each. The constitution was framed in 1904, and the organization was moved into the basement of the Security Block, which had just been vacated by the YMCA when it was moved into its present location on 5th street that year. In this first location, the girls had classes of all sorts much like the program of the "YM". Bible study and history was taught and a special course in English for the immigrant girls was provided by Professor H. B. Woodworth. Vespers were held every Sunday evening at four O'clock. In 1907, the YWCA bought a small house located where Goebbel Motors now stands. In 1911, being cramped for space, they sold their building on Fourth Street and rented rooms over E. J. Lander's offices at 414½ De Mers Avenue. At this time the high school girls' physical culture class was conducted at the "YW."

Meanwhile, in 1908, little girls under sixteen were organized into sewing groups. Before 1908 the stress had been on teen-age girls and young women. Campfire groups were organized in 1912, and in 1919 the Campfire girls became the Girls Reserves. The high school girls of the YWCA edited the first-school newspaper the Centralian, at Central in 1921.96

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96 Mrs. Eleanor Healy Booth to writer, March 2, 1951. Mrs. Booth is the daughter of Doctor J. E. Healy, and is at present General Secretary of the Grand Forks YWCA; L. H. Egstrom to writer, October 28, 1950; Youth Recreation Survey, 27-8; Grand Forks Herald, October 30, 1950; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951.
The YWCA was like the YMCA in that it, too, placed its emphasis upon the individual within a club, class, or interest group. Both organizations waived payment of dues if such payment created a hardship and both institutions were especially interested in youth in the age group from twelve to thirty-five.\(^7\)

The Red Cross and the Salvation Army were two other charitable and social-work organizations that came to Grand Forks at an early date in the city's history. The Red Cross was formed in Grand Forks as the Red Cross Society on July 6, 1898 in the auditorium of St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal church. Their immediate aim was to work in co-operation with St. Luke's hospital by supplying them with cheese-cloth for bandages, absorbent cotton, and chloroform. The first officers of the Grand Forks organization were: Mrs. C. C. Gowran, president; Mrs. E. Smith, Secretary; and Mrs. L. O. Fiset, Treasurer. A canvassing committee was appointed at the first meeting with instructions to cover the town for subscriptions, and at the second meeting on July 12, 1898 collections of $181.55 were reported. At this same meeting supplies for Manila was voted, as well as to Cuba. On July 26, 1898 $100 was voted for aid to yellow fever sufferers. Two days later a box of magazines were shipped to Manila. Throughout the remainder of the Spanish-American War, the Grand Forks Red Cross Society sent supplies and reading materials to the soldiers overseas. On the return of First North Dakota Infantry September 29, 1899, the society, which was founded by a church organization was

\(^7\) Mrs. E. H. Booth to writer, March 2, 1951.
disbanded, and Grand Forks County never had another Red Cross unit until March 17, 1917, at which time it was reorganized in the city.  

The Salvation Army was organized in Grand Forks during the spring of 1894. The office here was designed to be the district headquarters of the national unit, which district embraced the northern half of North Dakota, a portion of Montana, and a part of Manitoba. Immediately a training school was set up in Grand Forks for the training of officers. These training courses usually lasted from three to six months. During the Spanish-American War they performed canteen services as well as many of the same duties as the Red Cross Society, plus sending chaplains overseas. Between 1900-1917 their main duties were connected with relief to the needy and their religious services. They received a high commendation from the public for their relief work.  

Service clubs came to the city about thirty-five years after the founding of the townsite. There was one exception, the Chamber of Commerce, which grew out of the old Pioneer Club. The latter, as was mentioned in Chapter II, was founded in 1882, and the change of name to Commercial Club took place in 1904. It was during the First World War that the term Chamber of Commerce was applied. The

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original aim of the chamber was to get better lumber and flour prices for farmers of the area. In a social way, the Chamber of Commerce never did much above the sponsoring of smokers, stag parties, and annual banquets. A subsidiary club, Rotary, was organized in the city in 1905, while Kiwanis and the Lions came after 1920.

In this chapter, the discussion has centered around a history of the growth and development of the major institutions in Grand Forks, and their relationship to the social life of its people. In Chapter V, Services (public and private), Civic Growth, and Points of Social Agitation will be discussed.

100 Mr. W. J. Leonard to writer, May 19, 1951. (Present Chamber President); Grand Forks Herald, August 20, 1939.
CHAPTER V

Services, Civic Growth, and Points of Social Agitation

Public Services and public improvements, under the sponsorship of the community and the city government, came to Grand Forks as early as 1882. Generally speaking, the era of backyard wells, bucket brigades, and dirt roads were relatively short in the city, although it was true that many of these frontier features lingered with the city until as late as 1900. Essentially, however, the foundations for progressive improvement were laid early. It shall be the purpose of this chapter to point out the early and rapid development of these services in relation to the rapidly expanding population and the concomitant issues that grew out of the rapid growth of the city.

In July, 1882 the citizens voted bonds amounting to $45,000 for the construction of a public water works, the improvement of the town's streets, and the purchase of a steam fire engine.¹ The chief justification for this action by the public was a demand for protection from fire hazards.² The first public water system was finished and the pipes laid in 1885, with the first two mains being confined strictly to the business section of the city, which included

¹ H. V. Arnold, The Early History of Grand Forks, North Dakota (Larimore, 1918), 142.
² Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, January 29, 1885.
the two streets of DeMers Avenue and Third Street. On Third Street the main was five blocks long, and on De Mers the same length. The intake pipe was laid along the bottom of the Red Lake river and entered the pumping pit through a tunnel near Third Street and Franklin Avenue. This first pumping pit was located between Second and Third Streets and Franklin and Gertrude Avenues. Dimensions of this first pit were forty feet deep and sixteen feet in diameter. The tunneling from the river to the pit was completed on June 18, 1885. On October 26, 1887 the city council of Grand Forks accepted an agreement with a Minneapolis concern to install a triple cylinder, triple plunger pump in the water works pit; it was capable of pumping a capacity of 2,500,000 gallons of water per twenty-four hours.

Early in 1887, the business men of the city (they were the only ones benefiting from the services in their places of work) started a movement for lower water rates by petitioning the city council on the subject. A special committee was set up by the council to investigate the matter. Their conclusions were that a lower rate was not necessary because too many people were careless and wasted water by allowing it to run when not really needed, just to keep the pipes from freezing. The business men replied through

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3 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, January 29, 1885.
4 Ibid., June 18, 1885.
5 Ibid., October 27, 1887.
6 Proceedings of the City Council of Grand Forks, North Dakota, February 2, 1887, 1.
the editorial columns of the Plaindealer that the conclusions of
the city's fathers were not entirely correct. They argued that
more water was wasted by leaky and faulty water mains, and an in-
efficient pumping system, than by the little trickles that were
allowed to run from the faucet. Evidence to support the latter
contention was brought out in the fact that every time a water main
broke down in the town it took the town anywhere from two to six
weeks to repair the damage. In the meantime the town suffered from
lack of water both for domestic uses and fire purposes.7 The
council's answer to this charge was the installation of water meters
at strategic points throughout the city. This action was supposed
to be the answer to the people's original complaint that the water
rates were too high. The meters, however, tended to prove that the
rates were too low, and that they should actually be increased.
Although there was considerable public opposition, the press support-
ed the maintenance of the meters as the only feasible plan of water
rate control, and in 1888 they were installed in every building
having city water.8

Extension of the original water mains into the residential
sections began in 1890 when bids for a main extending from Third
Street to Minnesota Avenue and thence west to Fifth Street were

7 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 4, 1887.
8 Ibid., October 27, 1887.
9 Proceedings of the City Council, February 10, 1888, 1.
accepted by the city council early in November of that year. Between 1890 and 1909 only a few more lines were laid in the residential area, but in the latter year a petition was read and accepted by the city council to extend the main to First Avenue from Minnesota Avenue, and thence to Cottonwood and Garfield, where the main would run down Garfield to Second Avenue. Also, the same year, a main was extended from Third Street up International Avenue to Eshelman Street and thence to Kent Avenue. By 1909 the Grand Forks public water works had a pumping capacity of 7,500,000 gallons of water per day, but the city was only consuming 700,000 gallons per day. The new filter, which had been installed in 1908, held one million gallons. At this time the water test by chemists at the University of North Dakota was begun. This test took place once a month, and the results of each test were published in the Herald. An ordinance was passed March 2, 1910, giving the city authority to issue $16,000 in bonds for installation of eight, ten, twelve, and sixteen inch water mains to replace the old four inch ones installed in 1885. From 1910 on, the water system expanded rapidly into every part of the city until by 1920 practically every residence at least had access to a water main.

10 Proceedings of the City Council, November 2, 1890, 2.
11 Ibid., May 3, 1909, 2:9, 1.
12 History of the Red River Valley Past and Present, II (Grand Forks and Chicago, 1909), 629.
14 North Dakota, a Guide to the Northern Prairie State (Fargo, 1938) 2; A. V. Overn, “Grand Forks, North Dakota,” Encyclopaedia Americana, III (Chicago, 1948), 125.
As in every town in the United States, the first fire department in Grand Forks was the first settler. From the time of settlement in 1871 until 1893 services rendered in this department were voluntary. These volunteer firemen were paid by the call, which usually amounted to one or two dollars. The city government furnished the companies with all operational equipment and firewood with which to keep the halls warm. Between 1880-86, the running expenses of the department were met by contributions from the volunteer members and from citizens of the town. In 1886, the Minneapolis City Council awarded a ten-dollar premium to the Grand Forks company (there were two companies in 1886) that put the first stream of water on any and every fire. 15 The bucket brigade type of fire department remained with the city until 1882 when a hook and ladder company was formed. Its equipment consisted of a two-wheeled cart upon which two small ladders and a coil of hose were mounted. These carts were pushed entirely by manpower. As an organization, the men would practice running exercises every morning up and down Third Street, pushing their carts and carrying buckets of water. 16 In actual practice, these early firemen more often than not were unable to cope with a fire that got any start at all. For example, a fire starting from an over-heated stove broke out on December 18, 1882, destroying every building on the east side of Third Street in the block south of De Mers Avenue. The heat was so intense that it

15 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. W. B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951; W. F. Newe to writer, May 21, 1951; Mr. Newark is the present Fire Chief. Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, November 19, 1886.

16 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951; Mr. W. B. Allen to writer, July 8, 1950.
cracked window panes in buildings on the west side of the street. Even if the firemen arrived in a reasonable amount of time they were usually unable to localize the fire, or save a building so that it would be usable again. In 1890 horses replaced men as power for pulling the carts and hose wagons. The first brick fire hall was built on the site of the present fire hall in 1894. Chemical and steam engines replaced the horse drawn fire wagons in 1907. Meanwhile, with the gradual extension of the city's water system, fire hydrants were placed at strategic corners. At first they were all located in the business section, but by 1910 there were a total of 137 in service, one at every corner. Fifty-three of these hydrants were six inches in diameter and eighty-two were four inches.

According to the original Fire Ordinance of the City of Grand Forks the Chief of the Fire Department and the Superintendent of the Water Works were the same man. On September 3, 1899, the office of Superintendent of Water Works was abolished, thus wiping out the office of Fire Chief, too. On November 9th of the same year, the office of Fire Chief was created separately with a fixed salary of $360 per year payable monthly. The ordinance creating this office stipulated that upon taking office the Fire Chief must deposit

17 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, June 11, 1885.
18 Council Proceedings, April 10, 1890; Red River Valley Past and Present, 628; North Dakota, a Guide, 2; Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951.
19 The Municipal Charter Act and the Ordinances of the City of Grand Forks, County of Grand Forks, State of North Dakota (Revised, 1968), Chapter 11, Section 12, No. 1.
20 Ibid., Ordinance Number 27, September 3, 1889.
a bond of $500. An office of Superintendent of Electric Fire
Alarms was created on June 11, 1891. The duties of this officer in
addition to inspecting the city's fire alarm system, which had been
installed the previous year to replace the old blue vitriol alarms,
was to inspect all chimneys and stove pipes within the corporate
limits of the city. This job required a bond of $1,000. In 1893,
the salary of the Fire Chief was raised sixty dollars per month,
and the first time that the firemen were authorized regular pay was
on March 8, 1893 when they were allowed fifty dollars per month.
On May 1, 1900 the fire department was fully professionalized and
placed on regular salary basis, the chief's salary was $1680 and
the firemen's was $780.

From the time of settlement until the winter of 1886 the streets
and homes of Grand Forks were lighted by kerosene lamps for the most
part. A lighttender would make the rounds every night and light the
lamps on the streets, which were located on every corner in the
business section, and every other corner in the residential section.
In December, 1886, the city advanced to the gaslight stage, under
the leadership of Alexander Griggs. A special city ordinance

21 The Municipal Charter Act and the Ordinances of the City of
Grand Forks, County of Grand Forks, State of North Dakota (Revised,
1908), Chapter II, Section 12, No. 32, November 9, 1889.
22 Ibid., Ordinance No. 47, June 11, 1891; Grand Forks Daily
Plaindealer, November 10, 1890.
23 Ibid., Ordinance No. 65, March 8, 1893.
24 Ibid., Ordinance No. 242, February 8, 1908.
25 C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.
26 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, December 2, 1886.
allowed him to set up the first gas light company in the city on December 11, 1886. The concern was strictly a home institution and went by the name of Dakota Gas and Light Company. The tank of this first gas company was thirty-six and one-half feet in diameter and fourteen feet deep. The walls of the tank were of solid brick and concrete. Capacity output of Griggs' plant was 200,000 cubic feet of gas every twenty-four hours. The first mains were confined to both sides of Third Street and De Mers Avenue.

Grand Forks received the first benefits of this gas plant on December 12, 1887. Practically every corner on the two streets mentioned had at least one gas lamp, some had two. Griggs had a private lamp in front of his house. The demand was so great that Griggs promised an extension of the main the following spring. The extensions were made as promised, but they were still confined to the business area. In 1890 gas mains were extended across the river to East Grand Forks.

Less than a year after the installation of gas-light service, electric lights were in use on a few of the principle corners in the business section of town. The Grand Forks Incandescent Light Company was chartered by municipal ordinance in March, 1887.

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27 Ordinances of the City, No. 1., December 11, 1886.
28 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, June 9, 1887.
29 Ibid., June 30, 1887.
30 Ibid., December 8, 1887.
31 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.
32 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, November 2, 1890.
33 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, September 1, 1887.
34 Ordinances of the City, No. 7, March 3, 1887.
service, however, was not utilized by private consumers until after 1890, because gas-lights were much cheaper. In the fall of 1890, the Red River Gas and Electric Company was chartered, which consolidated the interests of the Griggs' company with those of the Grand Forks Incandescent Company. By city ordinance this new company was to light the streets, parks, public buildings, and residential places. The most interesting feature of this ordinance was that the city of Grand Forks was to construct, maintain, and control the complete electric light plant. The plant was located in an addition built to the water works. A city electrician appointed by the mayor for a period of two years was placed in charge of the plant, as well as of all lamps and outdoor electric appliances owned and operated by the city. For his services, the city electrician was to receive a salary of $1020 per year. An Electric Light Committee was appointed jointly by the mayor and the city electrician to act as a council for the electric light plant. This committee was composed of five alderman of the city council. The chief inspector of all electrical appliances was the fire chief. Up until 1900, most electric lighting was confined to the street corners, public buildings, and business places, but after 1907 electricity was in most homes.

Another public service which early made its appearance in Grand Forks was the forecasting of weather conditions. The Northwestern Signal Service which was organized in 1887, received telegraphic

35 Ordinances of the City, No. 94, September 27, 1890.

36 North Dakota, a Guide, 2.
weather reports, and relayed them on to the public by a system oflags. These flags were raised on a mast which had been constructed
at the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba freight depot. Two flags
were hung at a time, one indicating the probable temperature and
the other climatic conditions, such as rain, wind, and snow.37

The growing commercial importance of Grand Forks is indicated
by the entrance of the lines of the Western Union Telegraph Company
to the city during the spring of 1887, from Fargo, and the con-
struction of a local telephone exchange in 1890.38 These services
did much to relieve the congestion of the past on private and
business lines of communication. Up to 1887, the newspapers, and
other agencies requiring wire service, had their own private lines
(telegraph.)39 The first telephone exchange was municipally owned,
but in 1903 a private company, the Tri-State Telephone Company, re-
ceived a franchise from the city government to operate the telephone
system in the city. Under the provisions of the ordinance awarding
this franchise, operation was to be supervised by the city through
the city engineer, however. The 1903 rate schedule is interesting
in that it shows that as more telephones were put into use the higher th
service rate became. No rate was charged until 200 instruments were
placed in service; when the number exceeded 200 but was less than
500 the rates were thirty dollars per year for places of business

37 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, February 24, 1887.
38 Ibid., April 21, 1887; July 23, 1890.
and twenty dollars per year for residences; when the number of telephones in service reached between 500 and 1,000 the rates were increased to thirty-six dollars and twenty-four dollars per year, respectively; and when 1,000 to 2,000 were in use the rates were forty-eight and thirty dollars per year. By 1907 there were reported to be 1,500 telephones in service. In 1910 the company changed its name to the Northwestern Telephone Exchange, and is today a part of the Northwest Bell Telephone Company.

On April 20, 1887 the city council of Grand Forks awarded the first street railway franchise in the city to Messrs. William O'Mulcahy and M. L. McCormack of New York City. The franchise granted the company the right to lay tracks and operate streetcars on Belmont, Division, International Avenues, and Third Street. The franchise was granted on the grounds that work would be started within ninety days and that at least one mile of track would be laid at the end of one year. Tracy R. Bangs, alone in the council, opposed the measure on the grounds that it would be a detriment to the town and a burden on the city's taxpayers. This street railway system, which was to have been a horse car line, was never built as the press, council minutes, city ordinances, and the present operator of the city transit system attest. In fact, the only thing

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40 Ordinances of the City, No. 154, May 7, 1903; No. 175, February 17, 1905.

41 Grand Forks Evening Times September 23, 1907.

42 Grand Forks Daily Herald, July 31, 1910.

43 Council Proceedings, April 20, 1887, 1.
mentioned about it was the item in the Plaindealer commenting upon
the granting of the franchise, which was also covered in the
Council Proceedings for that date.44 On May 5, 1892, another street
railway franchise was awarded by the Grand Forks city council:

There is hereby granted to the Grand Forks Electric Street
Railway Company, its successors and assigns, the authority,
right, and privilege to build, equip, maintain and operate
electric street railway lines, with double or single tracks,
with all necessary side tracks and switches, poles, wires,
conduits and appliances, over, along, and upon the streets
and avenues in the City of Grand Forks... 45

This franchise evidently fell through, too, as there is no support-
ing evidence that any lines were ever built.46 A third franchise
was awarded on April 11, 1904. It was the most specific of the
three:

An ordinance granting to Leslie Stinson, A. G. Schultheis,
Wm. Budge, E. J. Babcock and R. B. Griffith, and their
assigns, permission to construct and operate a street
railway along certain streets in the city of Grand Forks
and to the University of North Dakota, and establishing
regulations and conditions under which said street rail-
way shall be constructed and operated.47

Fulfillment of this franchise took place during the summer and fall
of 1904, when the University-City Center line was built. The
original route was from Third Street and Alpha Avenue along Alpha

44 Council Proceedings, May 5, 1887, 4; Grand Forks Weekly
Plaindealer, May 5, 1887; G. A. Odegaard to writer, April 20, 1951.
Mr. Odegaard is the present manager of the Grand Forks Transportation
Company. He has been associated with the company since 1908.

45 Ordinance of the City of Grand Forks, County of Grand Forks,
State of North Dakota, Ch. 16., Ordinance 56., Section 1., May 5,
1892.

46 D. A. Odegaard to writer, April 20, 1951.

47 Ordinance of the City, Special Franchises, Ordinances 166.,
Preamble, April 11, 1904.
to Eighth Street, over to University Avenue, and thence out to the campus. The first cars were two-man cars and were open. Fares were cash, being five cents for a continuous ride. In 1910, the University line was extended to the south side of town with its southern terminus at Lincoln Park. A line to the State Fair Grounds was also built in that year, and the fare was raised to seven cents. The second and third lines were added in 1913, when the Riverside Park-Walnut Street line and the East Side-Grand Forks line were built. In 1920, the two man cars were replaced with the Bernie one man cars, and loops replaced the Y's at the end of each line. Meanwhile, a special fare system was inaugurated in 1917 which allowed the customer to purchase tokens at the rate of four for a quarter, with the cash fare remaining at seven cents. Also, there was a five cent rate for all children through high school age. They could buy books of twenty-one coupons for a dollar.48

Like most towns in their early days, the streets of Grand Forks grew out of the old trails and wagon roads leading into the area. The first streets to succeed the old dirt oxcart and stage trails were plank streets, which appeared in 1885. The plank paving was made from one inch by four inch boards laid side by side the length of the road. Although fairly good when first installed these were very dangerous as they became full of ruts, and spears often appeared in the street after very little use by heavy wagons. By 1886;

48 Progress Records of the growth and expansion of the Grand Forks Street Railway and Transportation Company, including the lists of all purchases made by the company, MSS., 1904-1951; Mr. O. A. Skaard to writer, April 20, 1951.
the business section and most of the residential part of town were plank paved. While the city was undergoing these initial improvements, an interesting sidelight connected with road improvements entered the picture in 1887, involving the construction of the interstate bridge between the city and East Grand Forks. Public opinion in Grand Forks felt that Polk County, Minnesota, should help bear the burden of building the bridge, but the Polk County Commissioner opposed the idea on grounds that such a bridge would only benefit Grand Forks. On the other hand there were no real residential places in East Grand Forks, so the problem resolved itself logically with the people of Grand Forks building the bridge with some aid from the state of Minnesota.

In 1896 it was decided to rip up the planks and install cedar block paving. The blocks, pile-driven into the ground until an even pavement was attained, were a great improvement over the planks, even though dampness caused them to swell and bulge leaving great humps and dips in the street. In 1908, an attempt to remedy this fault was made by removing this pavement and excavating the street to a greater depth. A concrete base was poured into this excavation and blocks with a creosote and tar base were set in the concrete. These lasted about twice as long as the previous paving, but with time became warped and dangerous, too, so immediately after World

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49 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, July 11, 1950; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951.

50 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 28, 1887.
brick paving was begun. The bricks were laid side by side almost like a brick wall, only on a flat, table-like surface. Many of these brick-paved streets such as Walnut and Chestnut Streets, are still in existence in Grand Forks today, (1951). Asphalt and concrete paving began sometime during the middle and late twenties of this current century. Meanwhile, by 1910 over eight and a half miles of paving had been laid in Grand Forks, over half of which was creosoted blocks. By 1919, Grand Forks had twenty-five miles of paved streets. The first sidewalks were a continuation of old foot-trails and were made of the same materials (planks), as the first streets. Sidewalks remained in that stage until after the turn of the century. During the summer of 1905 the sidewalks on De Mers Avenue were being replaced with stone walks. By 1919 most of the city's sidewalks had been replaced with stone walks, with a few exceptions in the residential areas.

The early form of justice in Grand Forks all too often fell into one of three unorganized categories. Some unfortunates might be tarred and feathered by a mob before they could be placed in safety in a jail, or in extreme cases lynched. Not infrequently undesirable characters were ordered out of town by the civic
officials without trial, although there were local police officers and a district court easily available. Actually, there was very little confinement recorded, except for cases involving insanity.\(^55\)

The most prominent adult crime during the eighties and nineties was vagrancy. Pan-handling was particularly flagrant. According to the contemporary news accounts, and some of the city's pioneers, hobos frequented the roads leading into the town, posing as cripples. On one occasion a tramp sneaked into the kitchen of the Griggs' house and stole a whole ham. His companions were hidden in a lumber pile alongside the railroad tracks, whence he went after stealing the meat. In most such cases, the violators were merely ordered out of town, without being fined or jailed.\(^58\)

In November, 1886, the wife of a Manitoba railroad conductor was raped by a Negro, who was caught shortly after the crime and lodged in the jail. A lynch mob formed early and dragged him out of the jail, down Third Street to the railroad trestle crossing the Red river, and hanged him, although he had already expired as a result of being pulled by the rope from the jail to the bridge.\(^59\)

\(^{55}\) Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, October 27, 1887.

\(^{56}\) Ibid., July 25, 1887; Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Mr. Neil Johnston to writer, April 15, 1951.

\(^{57}\) Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, July 18, 1887.

\(^{58}\) Ibid., August 1, 1887.

\(^{59}\) Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950.
Despite this rather loose way of handling crimes the Grand Forks Police Department was a paid force from the beginning, in 1871, however, at first there were only two officers, the town marshall and his deputy who performed mainly the functions of night watchmen and received fifty dollars a month salary. In 1894, the city council authorized a salary of $720 per year for all police officers, as well as the issue of two complete suits of uniforms per year. The latter salary was the first mention of uniforms or salary in the ordinances of the city. It was not until 1910 that an ordinance was passed creating the office of police matron.

Juvenile delinquency itself was never a major problem in Grand Forks, although the connection of the court procedure with it was the main point of local dispute. According to a survey made in 1929 it was revealed that the people desired a special court for juveniles. From the beginning of the townsite through 1920 the total juvenile population was never more than three and three-tenths per cent delinquent. Of those eighty-five per cent came from poor homes where as harsh treatment, strict discipline, and the refusal of parents and guardians to allow children the enjoyment of legitimate enjoyments was the rule. Stealing was discovered to be the most prevalent offense of Grand Forks children. The lack of a

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60 R. C. Hill to writer, May 23, 1951. Mr. Hill is the present Chief of Police and a pioneer of the city.

61 Ordinances of the City, No. 148, December 12, 1894.

62 Council Proceedings, May 9, 1910, 4.


64 Fowler V. Harper and James M. Reinhardt, Juvenile Court Problems in Grand Forks (n.p., n.d.), 2-6, passim.
Juvenile probation officer until 1915 usually resulted in the delinquent being returned to the same environment from which his offense originated. "The local court does not have the equipment to perform the function adequately or with a reasonable hope for success . . . It has no paid probation staff and must depend entirely upon volunteer or gratuitous probation officers." 65 The blame for this situation was placed upon the University of North Dakota for not properly leading the people of Grand Forks. He pointed out that in the two largest cities in the state there were two state institutions of higher learning staffed with experts in law, criminology, sociology, psychology, and social service, but were reluctant to make them available to the public. 66 State laws were defective from 1890 until 1915, as no juvenile court was provided for at all. An Act of 1911 provided that the district court could be called the juvenile court and that it was proper for that court to have the jurisdiction over all delinquents. 67 An Act of 1915 provided for the appointment by the district judge of a juvenile commissioner who might make temporary orders and conduct hearings. He was to be more of a referee than anything else. 68 The juvenile court failed in Grand Forks mainly because it lacked the proper clinical facilities for diagnosing cases that came before them. The court was in reality a regular criminal court where the

65 Fowler V. Harper and James M. Reinhardt, Juvenile Court Problems in Grand Forks (n.p., n.d.), 2-6, passim, 4.
66 Ibid., 12.
67 Sessions Laws (1911), Chapter 177.
68 Ibid., (1915), Chapter 179.
juveniles were treated as adults. Yet, the juvenile commissioners had no jurisdiction whatsoever over adults connected with or contributing to the delinquency of a minor. The entire problem was left more or less unsolved until after 1920.

From the records available, the Grand Forks Public Health Department agrees to have been created early in 1885, but the present Health Commissioner Marvin Dehn (1951), feels that it may have been earlier. Be that as it may the department received its first publicity in the summer of 1885 when it conducted a clean-up campaign in the town. From the contemporary newspapers, it appeared as though the residents were careless in letting the weeds grow in their yards, and along the streets. Two years later, the North Dakota Medical Association was born in Grand Forks, on August, 31. In 1890 it was this association that initiated a campaign for improved sewage disposal units, during the municipal election campaign of that year. The main argument was that the town lay on high ground, and that because of the perceptible drop of the land as it approached the river, only a scientific sewage system would remedy the situation as sewage drainage was filling up and polluting the river, due to the natural drain towards the river. The issue was carried in the election, and the present system of sewage

69 Harperand Reinhardt, 1-2.
70 Ibid., 9.
71 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, August 6, 1885.
72 Ibid., September 1, 1887.
disposal was inaugurated. Because of a diptheria epidemic in Grand Forks County, during the winter of 1899, the Public Health Department came to the forefront again in press comments. It was pointed out in the press that Grand Forks City was spared from the disease because of the alert and active participation of the department in keeping the city isolated from the disease. This was accomplished by passing out pamphlets and broadsides to the pupils, in the schools who took the information home to their parents.

The Grand Forks Civic League was organized in 1900 as a quasi-auxiliary group of the Health Department. Actually it was a clean-up committee more than anything else. What it really did was to organize campaigns for tidier business places, street improvements and newer methods of city sanitation. This organization was assisted by a Junior League composed of boys who did most of the actual clean-up work.

The expansion of the services and institutions discussed above was made possible only by the rapid expansion of population and settlement in Grand Forks after 1880, particularly during the nineties and early twentieth century. Naturally the city also grew rapidly during this period, and by 1914, the present form of Grand Forks was fairly well established. At the close of 1880 there were a dozen blocks of scattered residences sprawled out in Viets addition.

73 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, July 13, 1890.
74 Ibid., December 13, 1899.
75 Mr. Marvin Dehn to writer, May 24, 1951.
76 Grand Forks Daily Herald, July 17, 1910.
of the city, south of Division Avenue and extending to the mouth of the Red Lake river. West of Fifth Street there were about twenty scattered homes. There were less than a dozen north of International Avenue, and most of these stood on Third Street. The business section of Grand Forks in 1880 lay between the railroad station and Alpha Avenue west to Fourth Street and south to De Mers Avenue. Grand Forks was incorporated as a city under the general laws of Dakota Territory in February, 1881. According to reports of the tenth census the population of the village the year before was seventeen hundred and five.

Building construction moved along at a highly accelerated pace after 1880. During the twenty year period, 1880-1900, Grand Forks took on most of its present form. If any one single year were to be picked out as being particularly outstanding, it would have to be 1882. That year the original St. Michael's Catholic church was built at a cost of $30,000; a roller mill costing 40,000; and the first Great Northern (then St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba) railroad depot, where a frame building eighty by twenty-four feet, the Kedney Warehouse now stands. In addition to these structures, the Northern Pacific (then known as the Duluth and Manitoba) built an elevator; Alexander Griggs had a three story brick block erected; and a total of 132 homes were built that year. Eight years later,

77 Arnold, 139.

78 Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (Washington, 1883), 115.

79 Arnold, 143.
the Great Northern built its present stone depot, much closer to the center of town. On January 22, 1900 Grand Forks was assured of its present Federal Building by United States Senator H. C. Hansbrough. Zena Irma Trinka, in her book North Dakota of Today, notes that the stress was upon interior decoration rather than outside appearance of the home. The owner tried to stress the beauty of his lawn and shrubbery on the outside rather than the building itself. Perhaps the explanation is that there was a great lack of trees and shrubbery in the city except along the river banks. William Budge, as early as 1885, set the example of tree-planting in Grand Forks with the express idea of beautifying the town. Budge urged that everyone plant not only in his own yard but along the streets and avenues of the city as well. Budge further argued that trees cost almost nothing when compared with their relative worth over a period of years.

The rapid settlement of Grand Forks and the Red River Valley was due in large measure to the rapid extension of the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba railroad and the availability of plenty of cheap fertile land. The St. P. M. & M. completed its lines between Hillsboro and Grand Forks in 1880, and by May 1, 1881, the line was completed south to Fargo. The first train from Fargo arrived in Grand Forks on May 9, 1881. The following year, tracks were laid

80 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, July 27, 1890.
81 Ibid., January 22, 1900.
82 Trinka, 25.
83 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, August 13, 1885.
as far north as Winnipeg. Very shortly after the completion of these lines a rapid influx of settlers started to come into the city.

During the five year period, 1880-1885, the mobility of the population of Grand Forks was eighty-eight per cent, and ninety per cent of the population were immigrants. That is, Grand Forks at this time was a typical frontier settlement with a rapidly fluctuating population. Immigrants used the village only as a stopping place on their journey, either to the west, or north into Manitoba. This was particularly true during the two year period, 1880-1882, when Grand Forks was the terminus of the railroad. 85 Of the 1705 people who called the village their home in 1880 only four and eight-tenths per cent were born in North Dakota, or a total of eighty-three persons. Most of these early settlers were men without families. Many of them never intended to stay here, but were adventurers who later moved westward. However, skillful advertising by the townsite's men and the realization that goods could now be shipped to and from many points in the valley to outside America and the world, became one of the leading factors leading to the rise of foreign immigration into the town. History should record the year 1882 as the red-letter year for Grand Forks because that year guaranteed the civic growth of the settlement, and that was the real boom year as far as foreign immigration was concerned. In regard to actual land settlement,

84 Aas, 55, Arnold, 139.

85 Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (Washington, 1883), 115.
the years 1884-1889 were the greatest.66 Meanwhile, of the 1880
population, already fifty-six and a half per cent were foreign born,
with the largest number coming from Canada. Fourteen per cent,
however, were from Norway. The Norwegian population was much higher
than the official census figures showed as the number of children of
parents born in Norway was not listed.87

Contrary to popular belief, Norwegians were among the first
settlers and pioneers in Grand Forks. The first representatives of
this national group settled in the county in the year 1872, along
the Red River in the southeastern part of Grand Forks County,88 and
the first to settle in Grand Forks City were the Thoraldson brothers,
Halvor, Osmund, and Elvird in 1874. They were business men who
operated a general store on Third Street. Two lawyers came to the
city in 1879 and 1880. They were Anthony Hurst and T. J. Fladeland.
By 1896 there was estimated to be 2500 Norwegians in the city of
Grand Forks.90 By 1917 there were 7624 in Grand Forks County possess-
ing 321, 200 acres of land.91 A small section of Grand Forks City
bounded by Sixth and Eighth Avenues North and Twentieth and Twenty-
third Streets North was strictly a Scandinavian community by that
time, and was designated by the townspeople as "Little Norway."92

86 Frank H. Hagerty, An Official Statistical, Historical, and
Political Abstract of the Dakotas (Aberdeen, 1889), 103; Statistics
of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (Wash-
ington, 1883) 116; Arnold, 142; Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer,
August 12, 1886.

87 Tenth Census, 115-116; Aas, 67.
89 Ibid., 54-6, passim.
90 Ibid., 57.
91 Ibid., 107.
92 North Dakota, a Guide, 151.
Figures released by the eleventh census in 1895 were more descriptive than those of twelve years previous for at least two reasons: first, the figures were broken down into many more categories than previously, and, second, building construction was annotated in order to give a much clearer perception of actual growth in the city. Table II, below, shows that the balance between sexes almost reached an equilibrium; that for the first time the native born population exceeded that of the foreign born; that the vast majority of the population were still adults; and that still the majority of people in Grand Forks were young people. Of the adult population 3127 were under forty-four years of age; 1700 were in the age bracket eighteen to forty-four. Table III, below, compares the total number of dwellings in the city in relation to the total population, as well as the average number of persons to each dwelling.

TABLE II

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<th>Foreign</th>
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TABLE III

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</table>


94 Ibid., 942.
By 1900 the population of Grand Forks had increased to 7652. At this census there were only fifty-two more men than women in the city (3852 and 3800 respectively). Fifty-nine per cent of the population was native born at the turn of the century with 4871 being native born as opposed to only 2781 born in foreign countries. The white population numbered 7619 with twenty-eight Negroes, five Chinese, and no Indians or Japanese recorded. 95

Census figures for 1910 show that the population of Grand Forks had increased by 4826 people, or sixty-three per cent over that of 1900. The total population amounted to 12,478. Native-born whites now numbered 8,816 as compared with only 3,607 foreign born whites. Of these 3,531 were of native-born parents, and 5,285 were of foreign parentage. There were forty-nine Negroes and six people who were either yellow or red in racial origin. Table IV, below, lists the countries contributing foreign-born whites, and how many each one contributed to Grand Forks between 1900-1910.

**TABLE IV** 97

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1131</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Canada</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>Roumania</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Canada</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Other Countries</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

95 *Census Reports; I., pt. 1. (Washington, 1901), 298, 633.*

96 *Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910, III (Washington, 1913), 318.*

97 *Ibid., 358.*
The balance of the chapter will be confined to a discussion of the most pertinent local issues, which were to some degree points of social agitation. The most burning of these issues, and the one that probably lasted the longest was the fight over whether or not the town was to have prohibition or local option, in regards to the sale of liquor. In the days before 1890 and the inclusion of a prohibition measure in the North Dakota State Constitution drinking was extremely heavy and carried on with very little regard as to its broad social implications, such as the creation of family poverty and the separation of families. Before 1890 a full water tumbler of whiskey could be purchased across the bar for only a dime, or a dollar for a full quart. In those days the customer mixed his own drinks as the bartender would set the mix and the drink before him. Beer was sold in nickel schooners. It was a most common pastime to place bets on who could drink a quarter (8 quarts) of beer in less than an hour. Mr. Charles J. Hurd did it in forty minutes. One of Hurd's friends drank a fish bowl (approximately 3 quarts) without even stopping to take his breath.98

In 1875 a liquor license in the city of Grand Forks could be purchased for only forty dollars, but four years later the fee was hiked to $200.99 According to the territorial law of 1879 the license fee was set at not less than $200 nor more than $500 per year. Other provisions of this 1879 law stipulated that there was to

98 Mr. C. J. Hurd to writer, October 22, 1950; Gillette, 7.
99 As, 55.
be no gambling on or about the liquor vending premises, or in any premises immediately adjoining. Saloons and taverns were ordered to close by eleven o'clock every night. Nothing was mentioned about selling alcoholic beverages on Sunday. Bartenders were forbidden to sell any drinks to known habitual drunkards under a penalty of loss of license. The law of 1879 ordered that all licenses were to be granted by the county commissioners for a period of one year and no longer, at any one time, or no longer than the first Monday of the January ensuing the date of license issue. Municipal rights under the 1879 law said that a city council could prohibit licensed dealers within the corporate limits of a city or village if a city license fee was not obtained. The city fees were to be no less than fifty dollars nor more than $500. By 1885 there were no less than forty-five saloons in Grand Forks, and one brewery with a daily output of 12,000 barrels of beer per day.

From evidence supplied by the newspapers between 1885-1890, the biggest objection to the saloon keepers was their violation of and non-compliance with regulations; stayed open after hours and sold to anyone and every one, often they were children. It was such tactics that eventually forced prohibition on the industry in North Dakota and caused respectable dealers to be classed in the same category with those not respectable, by the public in general.

100 The Annotated Revised Codes of the Territory of Dakota, 1863 (Saint Paul, 1885), XXXV., Sections 3-4, 529-30.
101 Ibid., Section 2., 529.
102 Ibid., Section 6., 530.
103 Aas, 57.
104 Selected editions of the Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, 1885-1890.
The first negative reaction to the sale of liquor was generally mild. At first suggestions were made for a regulation of the traffic through higher license fees. During the first half of 1887 violent debates and editorials on the issue were frequent occurrences. The proponents of a high liquor license argued that such a fee would make the business more reputable by driving out the undesirable dealers. Those in favor of a low fee countered with the fact that by a high license the county would actually realize less revenue than under a low license policy. It is of interest to note that during the fight over this issue the real answer to the problem, liquor itself, was evaded because both sides realized the potency it had in regard to the non-support of many of the town's families. Both the Plaindealer and the Herald opposed outright prohibition. The editorials in both papers pointed out that the fight over the liquor issue failed to discriminate between the ideal and the real. M. J. Murphy of the Plaindealer, and George B. Winship of the Herald, both argued in their editorials that if the liquor industry was a legitimate industry it should not be taxed any more than any other business, but if it were an illegitimate industry it should not be taxed at all. In defense of low licensing the Plaindealer brought out the following set of facts: that during the year of 1886, alone, the Grand Forks Brewing Company consumed 60,000 bushels of barley. The

105 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, January 6, 1887; Grand Forks Herald, Silver Anniversary edition, June 26, 1904.

106 Ibid.
average price paid for this grain was forty cents a bushel, thus
distributing to the Grand Forks farming area a sum of $28,000. At
the same time, the brewery gave permanent employment to twenty-three
men, who had families averaging six in size. The yearly payroll of
this concern aggregated $12,000, all of which was spent locally.
Local farmers sold 3,000 cords of wood at three dollars per cord
to this organization. For the first seven months of 1886 the beer
product of the brewery was 32,000 kegs, and its scope of business
was extended as far west as Great Falls, Montana Territory.107

By the fall of 1887, the fight had turned towards more drastic
end, complete local option within the city. The press of Grand
Forks conducted a pre-election survey of the town to ascertain
public opinion on the matter. The survey revealed that the public
desired local option only when considered from a moral and an ab­
stract point of view. In order to put this 1887 election fight in
its proper focus, the fact that the Territorial Legislature had
passed a high license bill earlier in the year must be taken into
consideration. Under this new license law Grand Forks dealers had
to pay an annual fee of $800. This fact seems to nullify either
idea, local option or absolute prohibition, so the press concluded.
Returning to the Plaindealer survey, it further discovered that the
citizens of Grand Forks were not opposed to saloons just because they

107 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, October 13, 1887.

108 Ibid., October 6, 1887.
sold liquor, but what they objected to were the incidental factors connected with the saloon, such as gambling and the giving of credit to those people who needed all that they earned in order to support their families. Municipal prohibition or local option, lost in the city elections of 1887, and as a result the temperance men began a fight for prohibition on a county level. The Plaindealer was quick to refute this theory by classifying it as visionary. This statement was qualified in an editorial which stated that it couldn't possibly work where one county employing county prohibition adjoined a wet county. Editor Murphy further elaborated by saying that prohibition in Grand Forks and license in East Grand Forks would be exactly the same thing as having prohibition north of De Mers Avenue and license south of it.

Meanwhile, despite the fact that the electorate had voted against the local option amendment to the city charter in the 1887 elections, the city council on December 14, 1887 passed an ordinance providing penalties for drunkards. For the first offense a fine of twenty-five dollars was to be imposed. The second offense called for a fifty-dollar fine, and if the victim was so unfortunate as to be called up a third time he was to be imprisoned in the city jail for thirty days and placed at hard labor on the streets of the city under the supervision of the street commissioner. If the defendant refused to work he was to be placed on a bread and water diet.

109 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, October 13, 1887.

110 Ibid., December 1, 1887.

111 Proceedings of the City Council of Grand Forks, North Dakota, December 14, 1887, 2.
Shortly, after the passing of this ordinance, the press announced that a group of German scientists had succeeded in making a good stock of brandy out of sawdust. Upon reading this item one of the town's citizens commented: "You may shut an inebriated man out of a gin shop and keep him away from a tavern, but if he can get uproarious on boiled sawdust and dessicated window sills any attempt at reform must necessarily be a failure." R. E. Griffith said before the municipal elections of 1887:

The American saloon, as an institution, is inimical to a free government, a menace to the personal liberties of the citizen, and even presumes to interfere with public servants in the discharge of their official duty, making their tenure of office depend upon how they wink at violators of law.

E. J. Lander commented after the election: "I was in favor of temperance; I knew and acknowledged the evil results of the liquor traffic, but at the same time I was perfectly satisfied that local option would never prohibit."

On July 1, 1890, for the first time since Grand Forks was founded, the prohibitionists won out, when the state constitution, which had a prohibition amendment in it, went into effect. Public sentiment, however, was still in favor of high license rather than outright prohibition. From 1890 on the drive for revision swung over to the side of the liquor interests. Their first aim, on the road back, was to establish package houses (off-sale) in the city.

112 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, December 22, 1887.
113 Ibid., February 3, 1887.
114 Mr. E. J. Lander to writer, October 15, 1950.
115 Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, July 1, 1890.
The press, however, opposed this idea on the grounds that too many dealers would be tempted to transgress the law and sell the liquor by the glass. If liquor were to return, the public and the press wanted it only under the conditions that it would be restricted by the wishes of the municipality.\footnote{116} Twelve days after prohibition went into effect in Grand Forks, East Grand Forks had fourteen new saloons.\footnote{117}

Another issue of local interest, although it was small and pertained to a state rather than purely a community problem, was the Blackburn succession controversy. During the summer of 1885 the Board of Regents of the University of Dakota refused to re-elect President William Blackburn on the grounds that he was by profession and education unfit for the job of university president. In addition, the board concluded that he was unfit to teach anti-denominational classes, and therefore barred him completely from the faculty.\footnote{118} From newspapers accounts of the day it appeared that President Blackburn was a Methodist minister by training, and that he was coloring his teaching with a strong denominational doctrine.\footnote{119} Blackburn was merely a biased man and was unable to separate his religion from his secular ideas. At any rate the board voted three to one to replace him with a lay president. After the vote was taken, Regent

\begin{flushleft}
\footnote{116} Grand Forks \textit{Daily Plaindealer}, July 4, 1890.
\footnote{117} \textit{Ibid.}, July 12, 1890.
\footnote{118} \textit{Ibid.}, August 10, 1885.
\footnote{119} \textit{Ibid.}, July 2, 1885.
\end{flushleft}
James Twamley stated that the principle of secularized education must not be trammeled upon by the church now after 100 years of success. 120

Parallel with the Blackburn issue, university politics aroused great interest among the town's citizens. This issue involved the Board of Regents themselves. The Plaindealer charged that two of the regents, James Twamley and C. E. Teel, were unable to show what and how much fuel had been purchased for the first year of operation. The case rapidly folded when the requisition orders were inspected by a special committee of the Territorial Legislature, and evidence was found lacking that would show the regents at fault, with the exception of procedure in ordering. Actually what the whole issue boiled down to, and what made the townspeople so indignant was the procedure of paying themselves out of someone else's money, whereas the funds collected from tuitions should have been turned into the territorial treasury first, then accept payment from the Territorial Treasurer for their duties. The so-called "fuel" aspect of the issue was only a cloud to cover the real problem. 121

The question of women's suffrage entered municipal politics in 1900, when it was felt that women should be equally represented on boards of education. This was the opinion held by the public because of the association of women with motherhood, and as such would be the better instructors of children. The argument was that women already held positions as public school teachers, therefore, why not

120 Grand Forks Weekly Plaindealer, August 17, 1885.
121 Ibid., June 24, 1885.
allow them to hold positions (elective) on the higher councils of educational policy.\textsuperscript{122} This was a privilege, however, that had to wait until 1917 when a women's suffrage act was passed by the State Legislature, entitling women to vote for all political offices except state and national.\textsuperscript{123}

In this chapter we have seen Grand Forks grow from a small village into the state's second largest city, through local promotional schemes. This chapter has pointed out the rather rapid transition of the village into a relatively modern city in a short space of time, which was in large measure due to the advanced stages of technology at the time the city was developing, as well as the fact that the last stretch of really cheap land lay at the back-door of Grand Forks. Those who stayed saw a future in the city by helping to build it so that it would be one of the chief sources of supply to this newly created hinterland. In conclusion, this chapter has attempted to point out the major social and political issues in the town, most of which were resolved, and when so done, tended to strengthen the community. It is not the province of this paragraph to draw final conclusions and trends, as that will be the topic for the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{122} Grand Forks Daily Plaindealer, February 8, 1900.

\textsuperscript{123} Clement A. Lounsberry, \textit{Early History in North Dakota} (Washington, 1919), 609.
CHAPTER VI

Trends and Conclusions

This study has shown that the general trend of historical events in Grand Forks, North Dakota was unique in that life in the city was a strange mixture of the old western frontier life and the commercialized life of contemporary urban centers at the same time. Being one of the last outposts of the American frontier, Grand Forks benefitted from the fact that improvements and advancements were much more rapid than in the older settlements, because of the advanced stage of technology at the time the townsite was founded.

Recreational life in the town was largely a local consideration, with many of the major activities originating in the home. Simultaneously, however, neighborhood social clubs were formed for the study of literature, music, and the other fine arts. Commercialized fairs, also, made an early appearance in the town. The interesting thing is that the social clubs, primarily, and the fairs, secondarily, started at the time when the population was most mobile in the city. The slow development of public parks for use by both children and adults, appears to have been a natural corollary of a conservative frontier settlement, as most of the town's citizens saw no necessity for them when there were so many vacant lots and fields adjacent to, and in the townsite. The early arrival of sports is significant for three reasons. First, the sporting activities were used by the town's businessmen as promotional schemes to secure early fairs, which the businessmen of the day felt would in turn build the town up. Second, the ascendancy of popularity in commercialized and semi-professionalized sporting activities occurred in Grand Forks at
the same time that such sports were becoming popular in the east. Third, most of the locally sponsored, non-commercial, sports such as hockey were natural to the area because the city had a ready-made rink, the river, as well as the type of climate conditions favorable to the sport. The early appearance of football in the city was attributed to the presence of a university in the town, and the fact that the game at that time was almost entirely a collegiate activity.

Many cultural activities which took place in Grand Forks were a result of the influence of the University of North Dakota, at that time one mile from the city limits. After 1905, the music conservatory of Wesley College added to this influence, by being one of the main promoters in the securing of prominent outside artists. Even so, through such agencies as the Grand Forks Oratorio Society and the theatres the town often provided the skeletal structure for these outside influences to fill in. The Scandinavian immigrants were very important in the city's cultural life as a result of their contribution of Norwegian literature, music, and art to that of native culture. In addition, the Norwegians helped to build culture through the construction of a college which was open to everyone. An agency of cultural communication, the Grand Forks Lyceum was a failure because it failed to appeal to the mass of people. Either the lecturer talked in a language above the level of common understanding, or the topics selected lacked interest appeal, and as such only the better educated benefitted from them. The popularity of the university public reception was rather doubtful as probably no others than the parents and immediate friends of the students actually attended, beside the student body itself. This
might, however, be partially explained by the lack of adequate transportation facilities, as it was 1904 before the first street car line reached the university from town, and even though train service was provided, their schedules did not always conform with the program scheduling of the university. "Communal playmaking," as a contribution to drama, was distinctly a credit to the university rather than the city proper, although the town undoubtedly profited and benefitted from it.

Institutional history in Grand Forks is interesting in view of the fact that institutions grew proportionately as rapid as did the other phases of life in the city. The city had a regular public school within four years after its founding, and a public high school in eleven years. The University of North Dakota was founded near the city only thirteen years after incorporation of the townsite, and a parochial school was built as early as 1885. Education in Grand Forks was unique in that the school year was longer than in most places because of the agricultural makeup of the community area. That is, the seeding and harvest seasons drew many of the boys out of school for a considerable length of time each year. The schools of the city, however, compensated for that by providing special courses, and giving considerable attention and time to those students. This study has suggested that because of the agricultural requirements of the area, the public high school of Grand Forks and other North Dakota cities was slow in developing. Also, because of the shortage of trained teachers, the first professional course to be offered by the university was a Normal course. The fact that Grand Forks had twenty-one churches by 1900 seems to demonstrate that the city was a mixture of many races, as well as sects, but that the predominant
religions, Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Presbyterianism came early and remained at the top. This is significant in that the original racial make-up was challenged but never overtaken, in proportion to the population totals.

The rapid advancement of civic progress was seen in the early formation of a Young Men's Christian Association, the short tenure of plank and block street paving, the introduction of gas into the city in 1887 and electricity in 1892. These improvements plus the introduction of an electric street railway in 1904, in a city of less than 10,000, indicated the visionary, optimistic outlook of the city's leaders. A rigorous climate and an agricultural life in the area accounted for the Norwegian immigration into the Grand Forks region. This was so because of the similarity of the two factors with those in Norway. Partly the immigration was due to the offerings of the United States government of its last sections of cheap land. The City of Grand Forks really had nothing, itself, to offer as an inducement to settlement other than businesses related to settlement and agriculture.

The social issues discussed were really a reflection of regional and national issues on a local level rather than anything purely of local manufacture. The fight to retain the saloon, however, was related to the economic welfare of the community, in that the liquor industry paid out a lot of money to the community through direct wages and purchases. The liquor industry, as such, was perhaps the only one of real economic importance to the community, as the balance of economic life in Grand Forks was tied in with small mercantile, retail businesses.
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