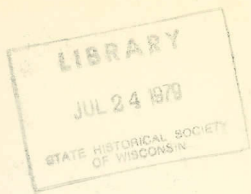


WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY



The State Historical Society of Wisconsin • Vol. 62, No. 3 • Spring, 1979



THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

RICHARD A. ERNEY, *Director*

Officers

WILLIAM HUFFMAN, *President*

JOHN C. GEILFUSS, *First Vice-President*

ROGER E. AXTELL, *Second Vice-President*

F. HARWOOD ORBISON, *Treasurer*

RICHARD A. ERNEY, *Secretary*

THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN is both a state agency and a private membership organization. Founded in 1846—two years before statehood—and chartered in 1853, it is the oldest American historical society to receive continuous public funding. By statute, it is charged with collecting, advancing, and disseminating knowledge of Wisconsin and of the trans-Mississippi West. The Society serves as the archive of the State of Wisconsin; it collects all manner of books, periodicals, maps, manuscripts, relics, newspapers, and aural and graphic materials as they relate to North America; it maintains a museum, library, and research facility in Madison as well as a statewide system of historic sites, school services, area research centers, and affiliated local societies; and it publishes a wide variety of historical materials, both scholarly and popular.

MEMBERSHIP in the Society is open to the public. *Annual membership* is \$15, or \$12.50 for persons over 65 or members of affiliated societies. *Family membership* is \$20, or \$15 for persons over 65 or members of affiliated societies. *Contributing membership* is \$50; *supporting*, \$100; *sustaining*, \$200–500; *patron*, \$500 or more.

THE SOCIETY is governed by a Board of Curators which includes, *ex officio*, the Governor, the Secretary of State, the State Treasurer, the President of the University of Wisconsin, and the President of the Society's Auxiliary. The other thirty-six members of the Board of Curators are elected by the membership. A complete listing of the Curators appears inside the back cover.

The Society is headquartered at 816 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706, at the juncture of State and Park streets on the University of Wisconsin campus. A partial listing of phone numbers (Area Code 608) follows:

General administration	262-3266	Library circulation desk	262-3421
General information	262-3271	Maps	262-9558
Affiliated local societies	262-2316	Membership	262-9613
Archives reading room	262-3338	Microforms reading room	262-9621
Contribution of library materials and artifacts	262-0629	Museum exhibits and services	262-2704
Editorial offices	262-9603	Museum tours	262-9567
Film collections	262-0585	Newspapers reference	262-9584
Genealogical and general reference inquiries	262-9590	Picture and sound collections	262-9581
Government publications and reference	262-2781	Publications orders	262-9613
Historic preservation	262-1339	Public information office	262-9606
Historic sites	262-3271	Sales desk	262-3271
		School services	262-9567
		Speakers bureau	262-3266

ON THE COVER: *Members of the Czech Legion aboard their armored train on the Trans-Siberian Railway, 1918–1920. This issue contains a number of heretofore unpublished documents and photographs by Wisconsin participants in the Russian revolution and civil war. [National Archives photo 111-SC-75877]*



WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

(ISSN 0043-6534)

Published quarterly by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706. Distributed to members as part of their dues. (Annual membership, \$15, or \$12.50 for those over 65 or members of affiliated societies; family membership, \$20, or \$15 for those over 65 or members of affiliated societies; contributing, \$50; supporting, \$100; sustaining, \$200-500; patron, \$500 or more.) Single numbers from Volume 57 forward are \$2. Microfilmed copies available through University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106; reprints of Volumes 1 through 20 and most issues of Volumes 21 through 56 are available from Kraus Reprint Company, Route 100, Millwood, New York 10546. Communications should be addressed to the editor. The Society does not assume responsibility for statements made by contributors. Second-class postage paid at Madison, Wisconsin, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Wisconsin Magazine of History, 816 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706. Copyright © 1979 by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Paid for in part by the Maria L. and Simeon Mills Editorial Fund and by the George B. Burrows Fund.

PAUL H. HASS
EDITOR

WILLIAM C. MARTEN
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

JOHN O. HOLZHUETER
ASSISTANT EDITOR

<hr/>	
Railways and Politics:	
The Russian Diary of George Gibbs, 1917	179
<i>Edited by Joe Michael Feist</i>	
<hr/>	
Steadying Efforts:	
The War at Archangel, 1918-1919	200
<i>By Richard Goldhurst</i>	
<hr/>	
A Wisconsin Man in the Russian Railway Service Corps: Letters of Fayette W. Keeler, 1918-1919	217
<i>Edited by Joe Michael Feist</i>	
<hr/>	
Book Reviews	245
Book Review Index	258
Wisconsin History Checklist	259
Accessions	261
Contributors	264



Novosti from Sovfoto 155301 Restricted

These Russian soldiers, unwilling to fight any longer for the czarist regime, simply turned their backs on the war and went home in the spring of 1917.

Railways and Politics: The Russian Diary of George Gibbs, 1917

Edited by Joe Michael Feist

INTRODUCTION

WHEN the United States entered World War I early in 1917, practically every quarter of American society surged with enthusiasm and a fervent desire to do away with the German menace. But for one of our Allies, crippled and exhausted Russia, the general attitude was much the opposite. Since the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, the Russian people, not unwilling to fight in the beginning, had been a suffering partner with the czarist government in an ineffectual prosecution of the war. The Russian soldier was thrust into battle with little or no training, obsolete weapons, and few supplies. By the early months of 1917, about fifteen million Russians had been mobilized to fight the war; of these, two million had been killed and another four million wounded. Besides these staggering casualties, the Russian war aims were neither understood nor appreciated by the average Russian. Drained materially, physically, and emotionally, the Russian people simply wished to fight no longer.

Although Czar Nicholas II, the Russian emperor, was a weak man, he represented and carried on the tyrannical excesses of three centuries of Romanov rule. As more Russians were killed and maimed, as food became more scarce, as destruction continued unchecked, the czar lost the confidence and respect of his people. The czar's position was

further weakened by the destructive influence of the Siberian monk Rasputin on the royal family, and by the widely believed rumors that Empress Alexandra (who came from a German principality) was a German agent. When bread riots and strikes broke out in Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg) in March, 1917, government troops sent to quell the uprising instead joined the demonstrators. With no base of support, Nicholas abdicated and the Romanov dynasty melted away with hardly a whimper.

The creation of the new "democratic" Russian Provisional government delighted President Woodrow Wilson. Now, said Wilson, the United States had a "fit partner for a league of honor."¹ From the beginning, however, the Provisional government operated with the *authority* to govern Russia, but not the *power*. The power (but not the authority) rested, if anywhere, in the Petrograd Soviet (Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies), an extralegal body through which the Bolsheviks eventually gained control. Russia, therefore, was in the midst of a titanic upheaval when the United States entered the Great War.

The deep-seated conditions which led to the downfall of Nicholas, and which were still brewing in Russia, were simply not grasped by the American government. The Wilson ad-

¹ U.S., Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Russia, 1918* (Washington, 1931), I: 17.



WHi (X3) 34510

George Gibbs, from his passport photograph, 1917.

ministration's primary, perhaps exclusive, concern was Russia's continued participation in the struggle against Germany. Thus, every effort was directed toward that end.

One area of utmost significance was Russia's transportation difficulties, particularly the appalling condition of the Trans-Siberian Railway. This superb engineering achievement, extending almost 5,000 miles from European Russia to the Pacific port of Vladivostok, was the sole means of moving goods manufactured in the United States and Japan westward to Russian forces. In 1917, however, the Trans-Siberian was hampered by a mournful lack of equipment and inefficient operation.

This disturbing condition was brought to the attention of the American government by Major Stanley Washburn, a correspondent for the *London Times* who had covered many battles on the Russian front. To a meeting of the Council of National Defense, Washburn emphasized the military need of keeping the Trans-Siberian in good working order and of keeping Russia in the war. He advocated dispatching a group of American railway experts

to Russia to survey the situation and to demonstrate American support of the Provisional government. After receiving the reluctant approval of the Russians (who accepted the commission only in the hope of gaining equipment) and the acquiescence of President Wilson, Daniel Willard, a railroad man and chairman of the Advisory Commission on National Defense, was requested to name five railway experts to compose the commission. One of these men was George Gibbs.

BORN April 19, 1861, to Francis S. and Eliza Hosmer Gibbs, George Gibbs was the scion of an old and distinguished New England family. His earliest American ancestors had arrived from England in the mid-seventeenth century and, through the years, the family was engaged in shipping and merchant concerns. Oliver Wolcott, Gibbs's great-great-grandfather, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. His grandfather, George Gibbs III, was a noted mineralogist and horticulturist. Francis Sarason Gibbs, his father, was involved in shipping and grain exporting both in the United States and the Orient. "Inherited qualities determined the direction of my career in early life," George Gibbs wrote. "Several generations of Gibbs had been fond of the natural sciences—chemistry and mineralogy; these leanings in my case took the form of a fondness for engineering . . ."²

Gibbs was graduated in 1882 from the Stevens Institute of Technology, where he had been trained in mechanical engineering. To his extreme good fortune, his first work was as laboratory assistant to Thomas Alva Edison, where his duties were chiefly in the electrical and chemical fields. The knowledge gained with Edison would serve him the rest of his life. After a series of positions, Gibbs traveled west to Milwaukee and became chief testing engineer for the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific Railroad Company, and later mechanical engineer for the line.

In 1897 Gibbs's friendship with two singular Americans, George Westinghouse and Samuel Vauclain (of the Baldwin Locomotive

²George Gibbs, *The Gibbs Family of Rhode Island and Some Related Families* (New York, 1933), 45.

Works), led to Gibbs's becoming consulting engineer for the various Westinghouse companies and the Baldwin Works. In the next few years Gibbs was the guiding light behind several important railway engineering projects. He was chief engineer for the design and construction of the electrical work of Pennsylvania Station in New York. He designed the first all-steel passenger car. He was a true pioneer in the development of electric traction concepts, and his engineering expertise was responsible for much of the heavy electric traction installations on American railways. By 1917, therefore, George Gibbs was a natural choice for the Railroad Mission to Russia.

The historical importance of the Gibbs journal lies in the fact that it is immensely revealing of America's perception about revolutionary Russia. Gibbs understood the evils of the czarist regime but could not comprehend the legacy of the Romanovs. That is, he could not fathom the Russian desire for peace in the face of what he perceived to be the obvious threat to mankind posed by Imperial Germany. This clamoring for an end to the war he attributed to "political schemers." He could not comprehend the age-old hope of the Russian peasant to secure land, and his abiding distrust and hatred of harsh landowners. Above all, he did not understand that politically, Russia was an exploring, searching child. Naively, he thought that a public relations campaign could solve Russia's monumental problems. To the sensible, well-educated, and practical Gibbs, the situation was unnerving and baffling. He wished that the Russians would simply get on with the business at hand. Like other Americans of his generation and background, he was consumed by his assignment: in his case, getting the railroads working efficiently. The fact that vastly larger events were evolving around him did not seem to deter his intention of carrying out his mission. "He was very much a Victorian," remarked his niece, Mrs. Joseph (Ann) McGrath, "with a firm sense of right and wrong and duty."³ To be sure, his views on Russia were simplistic—but by no means unique.

³ Telephone interview with Mrs. Joseph McGrath, May 20, 1978.

The entire George Gibbs Collection is housed in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin at Madison. As Gibbs was a bachelor, the collection was acquired by Mrs. McGrath upon Gibbs's death in 1940 and deposited with the Society in 1948. The collection was donated to the Society by Mrs. McGrath in 1978.

The journal was altered only as indicated. Ellipses are used to denote cuts. Finally, it should be noted that the Russian calendar in 1917 was thirteen days behind the calendar used in the West. For example, June 1 according to the Russian calendar was June 13 elsewhere. All dates in the journal follow the New Style, or Western, calendar.

J.M.F.

January, 1918

THE following are notes jotted down during my journey to Russia in the summer of 1917 and preserved in this form for my own amusement and to recall the incidents of an unusual trip. . . .

My connection with the mission was an unsought for honor; the men probably responsible for the suggestion were old friends—Daniel Willard, . . . Mr. Samuel Rea, President of the Pennsylvania Railroad and Samuel Vauclain. . . . The invitation came suddenly and I was urged by these gentlemen to accept. Probably the fact that I had made two visits to Russia in the past influenced them in selecting me. . . .

The trip turned out to be a trying one from many points of view, but its compensation is found in the fact that we accomplished something which was important to our country and that I have many interesting experiences to look back upon.

The Commission, officially known as "The Advisory Railroad Commission to Russia," appointed by Secretary of State [Robert] Lansing on May 4th, 1917, consisted of:

John F. Stevens,
Chairman⁴ *General*
W. L. Darling *Maintenance of Way*

⁴ John F. Stevens was well known for his work in the construction of the Panama Canal and in locating the Great Northern Railroad across the Rocky and Cascade mountains.



National Archives photo 165-WW-133E-2

The Advisory Railroad Commission to Russia, 1918. Left to right: W. L. Darling, Henry Miller, John F. Stevens, John P. Greiner, and George Gibbs.

John Greiner *Bridges and Structures*
 Henry Miller *Transportation*
 George Gibbs *Equipment*

We were accredited to the Russian Government as officers pro tem of the U. S. State Department and carried Diplomatic passports. Our staff comprised:

E. P. Shannon *Secretary*
 Franklin Reading .. *Disbursing Officer*
 Major Stanley
 Washburn⁵ *Military Attache*
 Gene Stevens
 (son of the
 Chairman) *Assistant*
 Two Stenographers [C. A. Decker and
 Leslie Fellows]
 Interpreters [Professor F. A. Golder and
 Eugene Prince]

The Commission left Chicago in a special car on May 8th, traveling over the Soo Line

and the Canadian Pacific Railway to the Pacific coast. We arrived at Vancouver on the morning of the 14th and immediately boarded the steamer *Empress of Asia*. . . . There was a full passenger list, mostly commercial men bound for the East. . . . Count Ilya Tolstoy (son of the famous Tolstoy) was on board. He is a scatter-brained individual, but amusing.

We arrived at Yokohama early on Friday the 25th and were received with much formality by a Japanese delegation of railroad men. . . . [On May 26] we went to Toyko by an electric train and lunched at the Russian Embassy. Mr. Krupinsky, the Ambassador, is an agreeable and highly educated man. . . . He is, of course, of the old regime and is much

⁵ Upon arriving in Petrograd, Washburn was reassigned to the Root Commission. See footnote 7.

saddened by present conditions and uncertain of his tenure of office. . . .⁶

May 29th. Arrived at Tsuruga at 8:00 A.M. A beautiful warm day. We took a long jinrikisha ride around the neighborhood. . . . At 6:00 P.M. we left by the "Russian Volunteer Fleet" steamer *Perza*. . . . It was very crowded—we slept two in a stateroom. . . . [T]here were also a number of Russo-American anarchists [on board]—the fluent-talking, self-seeking kind, going home to stir up trouble and to grasp what they can from the rich. Their way home is paid by the new Government. A good riddance for America, but bad for the "New Russia."

May 31st. Arrived Vladivostok (500 miles) at 8:00 A.M.; weather cold and rainy. Numerous delegations met us at the dock. These were headed by the local representative of the "Council of Workmens' and Soldiers' Deputies"; he was . . . stocky, dressed in a frock coat, with a scarlet band around one arm; he looked like a second-hand clothing dealer on the lower east side of New York. Humbly following in his wake were the Military Governor of the Ussuri Province, the Mayor of Vladivostok, and an Army General, all looking cowed and mortified at their part in the performance. Speeches were made and interpreted. We appear to be welcome.

An amusing incident occurred in connection with the bunch of anarchists we had brought over. . . . They appeared to imagine that the reception which greeted us was intended for them, and they were considerably crestfallen when the delegation passed them by, and more so when told they would have to remain on board for an indefinite time. We heard afterwards that they were given the choice of immediately enlisting in the army to be sent to the front, or of going to work on the roads and the railway; this was not the "freedom" they expected. It seems that these men have been flocking home for weeks. . . .

VLADIVOSTOK is located on the hills which surround a deep-water inlet of the sea, called from its shape the

⁶ B. H. Krupinsky, Russian ambassador to Japan. Krupinsky was saddened by the downfall of Czar Nicholas the previous March.

"Golden Horn." This inlet has its entrance guarded by a large island on which there are strong fortifications. . . . The city is on the west side of the Horn . . . and presents a picturesque appearance with its many domed churches. . . . Since the loss of Port Arthur and Dalny to Japan after the peace treaty in 1905, Vladivostok is the only Russian port on the Pacific, and its importance has also rapidly grown since the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway in 1896. . . .

As there are very poor hotel accommodations, we went immediately to our special train and made it our headquarters during our stay. This train consisted of seven blue cars (the regular equipment color is brown). The "Imperial" train, which is similar but more elaborate, was reserved for the Root party,⁷ which is expected soon. . . .

Prof. A. Mitinsky, the Chief of the Testing Department of the Central [Ways and Communications] Bureau at Petrograd, is in charge and a very efficient, useful, and indefatigable chief he is. . . . Others whom we met in Vladivostok were: Lt. Francis Riggs, Military Attache of the Petrograd Embassy, [and] J. K. Caldwell, American Consul [at Vladivostok]. . . .

Lt. Riggs gave us the first detailed account of the status of our mission to the Russian Government; he said it had been arranged that we should take over complete charge of this port, as regards transportation, but was of the opinion that our advice was not wanted as to the Trans-Siberian or other Russian railways. It seems to be thought in Petrograd that the whole trouble with the Trans-Siberian Line is at Vladivostok and that a mix-up there is responsible for the non-shipment of goods from that port into Russia. We were, of course, adverse to the idea of assuming any administrative duties—at least I was; I did not believe that, whatever the condition of affairs, it would be possible for us to take control of matters in a foreign territory effectively; we would be certain to antagonize someone. . . .

⁷ Former Secretary of State and War Elihu Root was heading a commission to the Provisional government, the purpose of which was simply to express American support of the new government. The arrival of the two commissions in Petrograd only a day apart, however, tended to confuse the situation.



National Archives photo 111-SC-75666

Supplies and war materiel, icebound on barges in Vladivostok harbor, 1918.

May 31st. Vladivostok. After getting our bearings on shore we started out on a special trip around the harbor in a Government launch. . . . The question of freight congestion was especially studied and an appalling situation disclosed. Vast quantities of goods of every kind are on hand. . . . Baled cotton is piled in various open spaces on the hills for miles around; chemicals and explosives are stored in enormous special warehouses erected at various points; motor cars, machinery, household goods, etc. are on hand in thousands of weather-stained boxes, on the docks, in the yards and in any old place. . . . [T]he whole situation shows an entire lack of forethought and co-ordination on the part of the Government, and it is sad to see that so much effort has been expended without accomplishing needed help to the country; in fact, it is a crime. . . .

June 1st. We went this morning to see the extensive car-erecting plant at "First River," which is over the hills to the north of the city. . . . In the afternoon we visited a proposed location for a locomotive-erecting plant, at the north end of the Horn, and made a thorough inspection of the dock and railway facilities, which we found good. . . .

June 2nd. I again went with the Russian officials to the First River plant, to discuss details of extensions. . . . In the evening another conference was had in our car with representatives of the lumber interests. There appears to be some "deal" on regarding the use of Russian lumber, as the plan, which involves building saw-mills and planing mills, is not a good way to expedite the assembly of cars in wartime. I labored to convince the Railway officials that the move was an unwise one but without much success.

June 3rd. A fine, clear, warm day. Our Special left at 7:30 A.M. The U.S. cruiser *Buffalo* with the Root party arrived during the night and is in the harbor.

. . . At Nikolsk, seventy miles north of Vladivostok, the railway divides. [T]he Usuri railway main line [continues] north to Harbarovsk, where it connects with the newly completed Amur River Railway around the northern boundary of Manchuria, and another line turning west, constituting the beginning of the Trans-Siberian. . . . [The commission took the latter route.]

June 4th. At Harbin. . . . This morning we made a thorough inspection of the large railway repair shops. Later an elaborate luncheon was given in our honor by General Horvath,⁸ the Military Governor—a fine old gentleman. . . . Later the Root Commission's special train arrived. . . . They left at 6:50 P.M. We followed at 11:00 P.M. . . .

June 5th. En route; a clear, hot day. . . . Manchuria Station, eight hundred and eighty versts [a verst is 0.6629 miles] east of Harbin, is the western frontier point of the province of that name. . . . The railway layout is particularly good, but we noticed evidence of considerable car congestion; about five hundred loaded cars were laid up. . . . This was the first evidence seen of the hold-up of traffic to points west; the accumulation here was due to the point being the terminal of the Chinese Eastern and the beginning of the Trans-Baikal Railway. . . .

June 6th. We stopped at Chita for an inspection of the locomotive and car repair shops and then proceeded. We also inspected the coal mines a few miles west; quality poor. . . .

The population, strange to say, is still chiefly Mongolian, consisting of Nomads tend-

ing the herds. Section hands are also Chinese. . . . The railway was well kept and rides well, but the ballast is sandy and very dusty. The Root train is only three hours ahead of us, in spite of the delays caused by our numerous stops for inspection, we are doing some fast running.

June 7th. During the night we crossed the Divide between the Pacific and the Arctic oceans. . . .⁹ We have climbed out of the valley of the Ingoda River . . . and have descended into the valley of the Selenga, which flows into Lake Baikal, one of the largest bodies of fresh water (after our Great Lakes) in the world. . . . The water is cold and remarkably clear. We passed the Root train in this section and proceeded around the lower end of the lake at Missovia . . . to Irkutsk. . . .

. . . At this point in our journey we first encountered a really Russian population; . . . we met with crowds of soldiers at all stations. These men seem to be coming and going and their movement greatly congests the railway. They are considerable of a nuisance. . . .

. . . The Root train pulled in before we left, but we got out first. Miinsky was extremely anxious to get to Petrograd ahead of them and, in spite of our remonstrances, he arranged to keep ahead by running like mad to make up time lost at inspection points. . . .

Seven versts west of Irkutsk, at Innokentskia, we reached the terminal of the Trans-Baikal Railway and the beginning of the Tomsk. . . . The railway throughout this section is very crooked and appears unnecessarily so, with about a one per cent ruling gradient. . . .

About one hundred miles west of Irkutsk we passed Chermikova, where there is a large deposit of very good coal. The workings are mostly underground, but we noticed one large open-pit mine near the railway. Coal was being loaded here . . . at the rate of three hundred cars per day; this fact is largely responsible for the congestion of the Trans-Siberian line, requiring all the cars and motive power available. . . .

June 8th. . . . We reached Krasnoyarsk at noon. Large division shops are located

⁸General Dmitri Horvath, or Horvat, was the Russian general manager of the Chinese Eastern Railway, a Russian-controlled line across northern Manchuria, which represented a part of the Trans-Siberian. The railway was built by arrangement with the Chinese in order to save hundreds of miles on the route to Vladivostok. This, in effect, gave Russia virtual control over this area. The Amur line, which follows the Siberian-Manchurian border, was not built until World War I was imminent. Still, in 1917, the Chinese Eastern was the most efficient and quickest route from Vladivostok to the beginning of the regular Trans-Siberian inside Russian territory.

⁹The geographical point south of which rivers flow toward the Pacific and north of which rivers flow toward the Arctic.



there; these we spent time in inspecting. . . .

Early in the morning [of June 9th] we passed the town of Taiga, where a branch railway leads north sixty miles to the city of Tomsk. . . . At Taiga is found the best coal yet developed in Siberia; it was not being actively mined . . . because of labor and other troubles. . . .

June 10th. We arrived at Omsk during the morning. This is a large but unattractive city located in the center of the developed agricultural district of western Asia. . . .

The railway divides here and the double track ends. The southernmost line, which is part of the original Trans-Siberian route, proceeds almost due west . . . to Moscow; the other line west by north through Ekaterinburg and Viatka to Petrograd. We took the latter. . . .

. . . I neglected to say that, since leaving Irkutsk we saw many Austrian "prisoners" at the stations and along the tracks. These men seem to be practically free and walk about and mix with the natives without restraint. They are mostly Czecho-Slovaks from

Bohemia and are said to have deserted from the Austrian army by the thousands.¹⁰

June 11th. . . . I visited our baggage car, to get into my trunk; found the car piled high with bags of sugar and flour, crocks of butter, etc. These are provisions which the train hands have been accumulating along the route for sale in Petrograd. I am told there is a great scarcity of these articles in the Capital and that enormous profits will be realized.

WE arrived at Petrograd at 6:00 P.M. on June 12th, 1917. Were

¹⁰ Possibly as many as eight hundred thousand prisoners were in Siberia at the time of Gibbs's visit. These were mostly Slovaks and Hungarians. There were few Germans. The prisoners were not confined to POW camps and were allowed to hold jobs. Their existence along the Trans-Siberian caused great alarm among the Allies after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk pulled Russia out of the war. It was mistakenly feared that the prisoners were armed and would lead a German takeover of Siberia. Most simply wanted to go home, but the issue was skillfully exploited by anti-Bolshevik leaders.

met at the station by a delegation of railway officials, also by Ambassador Francis¹¹ and his staff, who accompanied us to our hotel. This was a large new structure built around a courtyard and known as the "Select," but the selection I found to be inferior; in fact, I would not risk my reputation in a similar "joint" in my own country. . . . Francis apologized for the character of the place, saying that it had been intended to put us up at the Winter Palace, but that the Root Commission's [impending] arrival had prevented [it]. . . .

June 13th. A beautiful cool day. Went to the American Embassy and had a long conference with Gov. Francis; afterwards lunched with him. Charles R. Crane came in; he was awaiting the arrival of the Root party, of which he is a member. This Commission arrived today.

June 14th. Luncheon at the Embassy to meet [Nikolai] Nekrasov, Minister of Ways and Communications in the Provisional Government. Nekrasov is a fine looking man of about forty; originally from Tomsk, a civil engineer and at one time a professor in the Tomsk University. . . . Is a socialist of the moderate type and evidently now more interested in politics than the railway business. As he is the head of the Department with which we were to have our principal dealings, we had subsequently many conferences with him and found him always most considerate, but long on promises and short in performance. In fact, he had little time for anything except Ministry meetings and schemes for his political advancement. Our arrival, as it later transpired, came in the nick of time to enable him to hold his job.

This evening after dinner we motored out with Gov. Francis to the islands on the northbank of the Neva. . . . The fine residences of the City are in this section. . . . Many of the "palaces" are unoccupied since the Revolution, and I was told any one of them could be had rent free provided the tenant [kept] a sufficient number of servants to guard the premises.

¹¹David R. Francis, U.S. ambassador to Russia. Francis was a businessman and former governor of Missouri. For the ambassador's account of these days, see David R. Francis, *Russia From the American Embassy* (New York, 1970).

This is the season of the "white nights," and longest days of the year. . . . The sun set about 10 P.M. and a very long twilight followed. At midnight the red glow in the west gradually died out and, turning to the east, we saw the sunrise glow begin. It was a most strange and impressive sight. . . .

June 15th. Our daily sessions with the Railway Ministry and staff began. This organization consists of an immense centralized bureau from which the Government railways are directed. It is housed in a number of large buildings . . . along the Fontanka canal. Our conferences were with the head officials and engineers of the various "railways," and our work was divided between Miller, Darling, Greiner and myself to collect data and discuss matters relating to our various specialties. Stevens did not attend these meetings during the first month; in fact, he was ill for the entire time and in the hospital for three weeks. These sessions were laborious and trying because of the difficulty of carrying on a conversation through an interpreter; also because the Russian is the greatest talker on earth and prefers to conduct even the simplest inquiry in committee. . . . It is not surprising, consequently, that most matters get talked to death, rather than acted upon. . . .

June 17th. A fine warm Sunday. Attended service at St. Isaac's Cathedral and in P.M. visited the Hermitage. . . . There is no evidence that any public property has been disturbed since the revolution, but probably the very valuable articles of precious metal and stone have been boxed and specially guarded. . . .

June 21st. . . . We dined at the Donon restaurant with General Poole¹² and Major Banting of the "British Military Equipment Section in Russia"; also with Capt. Riggs. . . . The Englishmen are keenly interested in our mission and were especially anxious that we should bring pressure to bear upon the Railway Ministry to hurry the completion of the Murman (Kola) line. They were very much discouraged over the general situation in Russia, believing it useless for the Allies to furnish more munitions, etc. unless the movement from ports could be expedited. I

¹²Major General F. C. Poole, future commander of Allied forces in the North Russian intervention.

afterwards met the English officers at various times, and also met those of the French Military Section. Both had been manfully struggling for months with the supply question and they were about ready to throw up their hands. . . . I gathered that England and France had contributed the major part of the military supplies of the country . . . under the most discouraging circumstances; the port of Archangel was the only accessible way to reach the country (until the Kola line) and this port had very poor unloading facilities; outrageous delays in shipping constantly occurred and they claimed it was impossible to get the Russians to be forehanded in furnishing men for unloading steamships. . . . I fancy the English were lacking both in tact and patience in dealing with the situation, and this resulted in their being cordially disliked by the Russians. Still, we must give them credit for . . . [keeping] Russia in the game up to this time.

June 22nd. Dined at the American Embassy to meet Nekrasov on the matter of the coal situation. . . . He promised to take measures at once to remedy the deadlock at the Taiga mines. We had spent ten days at the rotten "Select-Hotel," and while I had spoken to Gov. Francis about the necessity of making a change in our headquarters, . . . he had done nothing. I, therefore, . . . [requested Nekrasov] to intercede for us at the "Europe." He was very decent about it and said he would order rooms vacated there for us at once. . . .

June 24th. Comfortably established in the "Europe." We are now in the center of business and official Petrograd and it is possible to reach the Ministry by a pleasant walk. . . .

I had not been in Petrograd for ten years but found it outwardly unchanged; the same city of broad avenues, fine public buildings and immense distances. . . . An enormous number of refugees from Poland and the Baltic provinces recently flocked here, so there are now probably 2,500,000 people in the city. In spite, however, of the resulting congestion, and the consequent difficulties of living, the high prices, scarcity of food and the large numbers of people dependent on charity, the city is one of the most orderly in the world; and all this in face of the fact that there is now no regular police force. Since the Revolu-

tion the only police has been a volunteer organization of citizens, few in number and seldom in evidence. Aside from these abnormal conditions, life in Petrograd is not unpleasant this summer for a sojourner who has money to spend and who is not burdened with a house or apartment. In the case of the latter class, living is very difficult, as servants are scarce and inefficient. . . . The native, however, takes matters cheerfully; his favorite motto is *nichevo*: "What does it matter?" No oppression of anyone has as yet resulted from the Revolution; the nobility have, it is true, fled, but they are mostly living quietly on their estates and, I think, are not badly treated. A general confiscation of landed property is on the program of the Government, so that the future is a dark one for the proprietors, but the evil day has not yet arrived. . . .

. . . Food and commodity "lines" are seen everywhere. . . . [M]any [shops] open for only two or three hours each day. Some, such as shoe shops, advertise "openings" in advance and tickets are distributed to would-be purchasers. Men, women and children stand hours in line waiting for a cigarette shop to open. Sweets are unobtainable except at rare intervals, when the shop which manages to get a supply is mobbed. Vodka and other alcoholic liquors are unobtainable, since the Imperial edict early in the war. This prohibition was certainly a blessing during the revolution and accounts largely for its "peaceful" character. . . .

A WORD as to our reception by the Russians. The arrival of the two Commissions had evidently been looked forward to in official circles as promising timely help, in various directions. We were, consequently, welcome. The Provisional Government had been in office long enough to dispel the first glamour of the supreme power it had obtained to dictate the affairs of the country, and had begun to realize the colossal problem ahead, both in stabilizing the government of a vast country and in conducting a war against an extremely powerful enemy. . . . It was no wonder, therefore, . . . that great things were expected from American



Missouri Historical Society

U.S. Ambassador David R. Francis (in bow tie and boater) in his Ford automobile, probably in Petrograd.

Missions. . . . Our coming had not been advertised, however, and our advent was accompanied by no popular demonstrations; we were received informally by the officials and got down to work without a ripple of popular excitement. This was unfortunate and militated greatly against the fullest success of our Mission. . . .

The Root Commission had a similar experience, although Mr. Root's Ambassadorial function gave his Commission a certain special standing which required the exchange of courtesies with the various Government officials. In fact, other than this the Root Commission had no routine work to perform. I believe that it acquitted itself well. . . .

Our Commission came more into contact with the minor officials and with the public. . . . For instance, while on our trip through Southern Russia [July 5-11] we met many delegations of the local Soviet, and exchanged speeches of welcome; American and the *Amerikantsky* were cheered, our help was asked and our aims were, in a way, appreciated. . . .

These back-platform speeches I believe could have been made a most effective means of countering the growing disorganization of the workers and soldiers. . . . The Root Mis-

sion could, I think, have taken on this program to advantage; we had other important duties to perform and could not give the time to propaganda work.¹³

While speaking of this matter, I may here outline my impressions of the trend of internal affairs. . . . The first widely advertised aim of the March, 1917, Revolution was "freedom," which to the ignorant, easy-going Russian peasants was taken to mean a release from obligation to perform any work or duty; the distribution of the land and money of the rich was shortly to so alter conditions that [in the] meantime it was superfluous to labor to produce anything. This happy state of affairs was accordingly discussed in work hours and out—especially *in*. It became general for each workshop to suspend operations for meetings once or oftener per day. . . . New demands were repeatedly made upon employers, the working time was shortened . . . until the output per man became reduced one-third to one-half. . . . The whole summer was one grand loafing time for the producer.

When I arrived in Petrograd the thing which most impressed and worried me was

¹³ Root did recommend such a public relations campaign upon his return to the United States but events were moving much too rapidly.

the horde of idle soldiery . . . and the systematic attempt which was being made by the street-corner orators to engage their attention. I inquired what was being said by these men and was told that the uselessness of continuing the war was the principal topic. The soldiers were told that the war was wholly for the benefit of the capitalists, that to fight longer would endanger free Russia; "why go to the front and be killed to perpetuate a system in which the people had no interest; better go home and get your share of the land which is to be distributed—and go soon, otherwise you will not have a fair chance, etc." The speeches were listened to quietly. . . .

I was, frankly, alarmed, and had several talks with our Ambassador and the members of the Root Commission, urging that we try to organize a publicity campaign in favor of the war. . . . All agreed as to the desirability of immediate action but none of the Allied Governments woke up sufficiently to do anything. I understood later that Francis had secured permission to spend \$30,000 upon "publicity" and that H. W. Smith,⁴⁴ of the Associated Press, then in Peking, would have charge of the campaign. He did come to Petrograd, but when he heard of the ridiculously small amount of money available, he would not take hold of the job. Therefore, the deadly work of cranks, political schemers and German agents went on all summer. . . .

The Intelligentsia and Bourgeoisie were apathetic to an astonishing degree. . . . This in part is, doubtless, due to national characteristics. . . . Barring the advent of a strong and masterful mind, I do not regard it probable that the country can soon be brought to its senses. In fact, I believe that some constructive help from the outside is essential. . . .

Sunday, July 1st. . . . A Bolshevik procession passed down the Nevsky this morning. It had been repeatedly postponed by order of the authorities, but was finally allowed, provided no arms were carried. Many bands and banners were carried, the latter calling for the suspension of the war. . . . We watched the show from our hotel windows and wit-

nessed an amusing incident. The procession had stopped by a blockade; suddenly, there was a grand scurrying for the side streets; in a moment no one was left in the Nevsky except the band, who could not run with their heavy instruments. In a few moments the people began to come cautiously back and the procession re-formed. We afterwards heard that someone had called out "the Cossacks are coming." . . . No Cossacks came and the scare was consequently short-lived.

We later went to the Kazan Cathedral where a special service in honor of the two commissions was held. It was partly in English (for the first time, we are told, in the history of the Church). . . .

July 2nd. Nekrasov accepts our recommendations as to obtaining new railway equipment from America, and we cabled home advising that we had arranged to send Russia 30,000 cars and 2,500 locomotives, 1,500 of the latter for use on the Trans-Siberian Railway.

July 4th. . . . Reception at our Embassy. In going there I was blocked for one-half hour by a procession of about 20,000 old and invalided soldiers. They passed along silently, no music, and no cheering or other signs of interest on the part of the bystanders. They carried a few banners on which were printed in rude characters the legend, "We want to go home to harvest the crops." It was a pathetic sight.

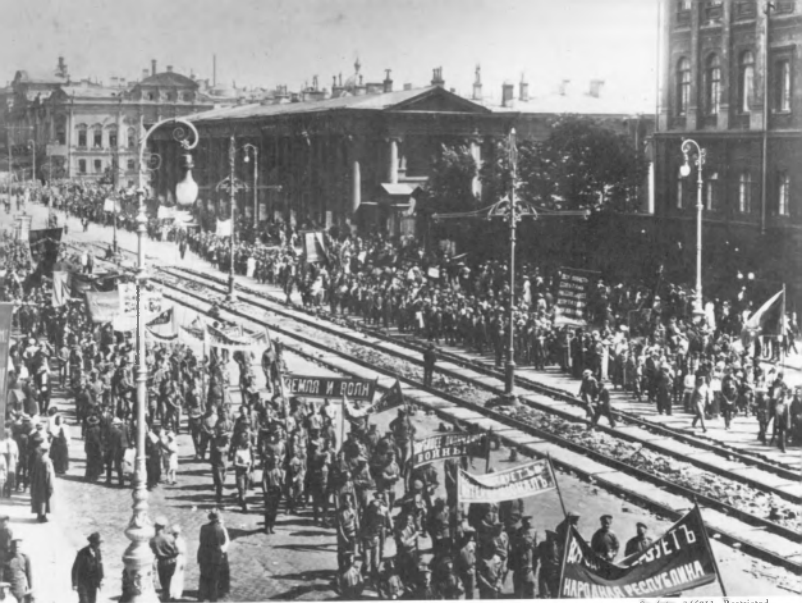
July 5th. Left Petrograd this A.M. by special train for a trip to the South. . . . Stevens was still in the hospital and not able to go with us. . . . The first day was over the famous Nikolaevsk Railway to Moscow—400 miles. . . .

Moscow, July 6th. A cool, cloudy day. Visited . . . local railway officials [and] the shops of the Kazan (private) Railway. These are located in an inconvenient position . . . and they are old and cramped. However, the buildings contain the best equipment [and] machine tools we have yet seen and the shop management is good and progressive—in marked contrast to the shiftless methods of the Government-controlled shops. . . .

July 7th. A fine, cool day, devoted to sight-seeing. . . . [L]eft Moscow at seven P.M. for the south over the Kursk Railway. . . .

July 8th. Arrived at Harkov; a large and prosperous manufacturing city in center of rich farming country. . . . Women were work-

⁴⁴ Gibbs was probably referring to Charles Stevenson Smith, Associated Press correspondent in Peking and later Petrograd. Smith accompanied the Root Mission to Petrograd.



Sovfoto 346811 Restricted

Demonstration in Petrograd, July 1, 1918.

ing in the fields and, as section hands, on the railway; few men anywhere. . . .

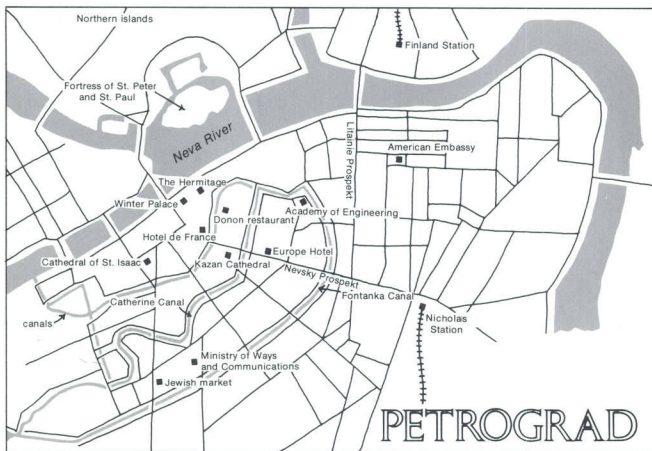
July 9th. A very hot day. We are now in the great Donetz iron and coal region. . . . We . . . visited the shops of the Catherine (Ekaterin) Railway; these are the largest we have seen and are working to full capacity. They are well arranged but equipped with antiquated tools. . . .

En route in the afternoon we passed numerous Red Cross trains packed with sick and wounded soldiers; most of these were from the Roumanian front. We passed several trains going to the front. . . . The men cheered us loudly and seemed . . . contented with their lot. . . .

July 10th. . . . We arrived at Kiev at nine o'clock and at once visited the railway shops. These are extensive but old and badly arranged. . . . Leaving Kiev, we proceeded west-

ward for some hours and then took a new north and south line along the war front. . . .

ARRIVED [next day] at Mogilev, the *stafka* or general army headquarters. . . . We found that Stevens had pulled himself together and had arrived from Petrograd the previous evening. We were met by a large delegation of army officials and escorted in motor cars to the headquarters of General [Alexis] Brusilov, Commander-in-Chief. . . . He was in the midst of the conduct of a successful local offensive and therefore very busy, but he kept us waiting a short time only. He is a wiry and determined little man with a fine head and delicate features. He spoke in French and was most courteous. He . . . asked that we confer with his staff regarding the urgent needs of improved trans-



portation . . . for his army. . . . In the afternoon he made a return call upon us at our train. . . . We were handed maps showing the portions of the front which they wished to rehabilitate at once and a list of equipment and supplies needed. The list was rather an [appalling] one; it included practically everything needed to build and equip many hundreds of miles of railway. They also wished our good offices in getting prompt attention paid to their necessities in the way of military supplies; they showed us lists they had requisitioned and which included everything from medical supplies up to cannon. We said these matters were beyond our province, but we agreed to give the railway list our first attention. . . .

[T]here is another national characteristic which has frequently struck me: the Russian . . . confuses present necessities with future desirables. His plans are, therefore, too elaborate and their object is often defeated. . . . It is rather staggering to have your offer of help met with such hearty acceptance that responsibility for furnishing everything is dumped upon you, and the Russian stands by like a child waiting to be fed. . . .

At 5 p.m. our "special" left for the north. During the early evening we arrived at Vitebsk. . . . I noticed a movement in the crowd toward our train, following a small party. Two or three men boarded one of the forward cars (Mr. Graftio's).¹⁵ . . . Golder, our interpreter, came with the news that Miliukov,¹⁶ the Ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs, was going to ride with us to Petrograd, upon the invitation of Mr. Graftio. After consultation we decided that it would be unwise for us to meet such a well-known political figure . . . but that if Graftio wanted him to ride in his car it was none of our affair. It seems that after Miliukov had retired into the car, his private secretary proceeded to make a political speech in favor of the Cadet party;¹⁷ when Graftio heard of this, however, he immediate-

¹⁵ H. Graftio, Chief of the Electrical Department of the Ministry of Ways and Communications.

¹⁶ Paul N. Miliukov was a dominant figure in the Provisional government before he resigned as foreign minister on May 15. Miliukov was extremely vocal about the prosecution of the war to a victorious conclusion, a view not shared by all others in the government.

¹⁷ The Constitutional Democrats party, known as Kadets or Cadets, was led by Miliukov.

ly stopped the speech and became apprehensive of the possible result of having harbored a man who is at outs with the existing Government officials. . . .

As the evening went on Graftio and the other Railway officials became panic-stricken at the thought of losing their jobs if the news of what they had done leaked out, and they decided to put Miliukov off at a town we were due to reach about midnight. We suggested that . . . Miliukov should not be subjected to indignity and discomfort. However, they insisted and did put him off. . . .

July 12th. Back again in Petrograd. . . . I called upon Gov. Francis, to get any late news. Local matters are floundering along as usual and the Root party is on its way home, via Siberia. . . .

July 16th. The weather has become quite warm and things political are getting mixed; the Cadet members of the Ministry resigned today on account of pressure from the radical elements in the Council of Soldiers' and Workmen's Deputies. They are demanding a majority representation in the Provisional Government. Kerensky¹⁸ is resisting. . . .

July 17th. Beginning of rioting in the streets.¹⁹ This is the long-expected attempt of the Bolsheviks to get control of the government. Armored motor cars are dashing up and down, heavy trucks among the number, filled with armed soldiers. In many cases the trucks carry machine guns and they look wicked. We went about our business, however, during the day, as, apparently, did everyone else; it was difficult to get any clear [idea] of what was happening. I had asked Mrs. Bass and Reading²⁰ to dine with me at the Donon. Afterwards we walked along the Catherine canal to the Nevsky and found the latter filled with great crowds of people, gathered in excited knots at each street corner and in heated discussion. The tram-cars had stopped running and one had a curious feel-

ing of expectancy. We mingled with the crowds all evening, however, without harm or hindrance. As I was tired and found the streets uncomfortable, I left Mrs. B. and Reading at 11 P.M. and turned in.

I was no sooner in bed than shooting of rifles directly under my windows began; this was soon followed by the sput-sput of machine guns, apparently close by. . . . I debated, as I lay in bed, what I should do; the situation interested, but, somehow, did not alarm me. I finally decided to do nothing unless bullets should begin to strike my windows, in which case, if things became too "hot," I could seek shelter in the bath tub. This idea was comforting and I soon fell asleep. . . .

July 18th. All quiet apparently this morning. No cars running but the streets are crowded with pedestrians. We could get no reliable news regarding last night's affairs. It was rumored that many hundreds were killed; others said that there were few casualties. It is somewhat difficult to see how the crowds escaped; unless the rioters and others fired in the air. This was evidently done to a considerable extent, as buildings along the Nevsky . . . show many bullet marks and broken windows. . . . Mrs. Bass and Reading were out in it for part of the night, and once had to lie down in the gutter to escape bullets. When a fusillade occurred the crowd would flock back to see the fun. This sort of performance appears to be typical of Petrograd crowds and I have found difficulty in regarding these street disturbances seriously. . . .

In the A.M. I walked to the Ministry as usual, but found everyone upset there, so I returned at one o'clock; shortly after this shooting began again. . . .

July 19th. Hard rain during the night and much local fighting and disturbance; the Litaivie was the center of the worst. . . . It was lucky I did not go [to the Embassy], as a violent skirmish occurred during the evening between the rioters and the Cossacks. . . . The [Fortress of Peter and Paul], held by the Soviet party, capitulated to-day and the Government troops marched in. The bridges

¹⁸ Alexander Kerensky, prime minister of the Provisional government.

¹⁹ Gibbs was witnessing the "July Days" uprising, a somewhat spontaneous demonstration begun by Petrograd troops who favored a takeover by the Soviet.

²⁰ Mrs. John Bass was an acquaintance of Gibbs's who had come to Petrograd to await the arrival of her husband. Franklin Reading was disbursing officer of the commission.



Tass from Sovfoto 136489A Restricted

Demonstrators in Petrograd under fire from Kerensky police and soldiers, July, 1918.

over the Neva are also open again. All of this is the result of loyal troops arriving from the front. . . . The Government now has matters well in hand and it is reported that Lenin has been arrested. . . .²¹

July 20th. Last night there was more fighting in and around the Winter Palace square. . . . However, the city is returning to its normal aspect. . . .

. . . I feel that the coming winter is going to be a very hard one in Petrograd; it is even possible that the Germans will come in. . . . I have no confidence that the Russian army will hold if the Germans really make up their minds to attack. The Ministry is in a muddle as the result of the late trouble. Now is the time for Kerensky to shake off the Soviet

²¹ More effective than the troops in putting down the revolt was a government-inspired rumor that Lenin was a German agent. Lenin was not arrested but fled to Finland.

menace to his control of affairs, but will he?

It is rumored that Nekrasov will remain in the new Ministry as head of the Department of Justice. He appears to have as many lives as a cat. . . .²²

July 21st. . . . Discouraging news begins to come in from the southwest front; insubordination among certain of the Russian units has allowed the Austro-Germans to gain some important ground. Kerensky has gone again to the front. He is certainly doing his best to hold the army together. . . .

July 23rd. A conference at the Railway Ministry. . . . All sorts of objections were raised to our report, but after a long conference they finally agreed to introduce our new operating method on one division of each

²² Nekrasov became finance minister. This man of nine lives later co-operated with the Soviet government. In 1930, however, he was tried and convicted of sabotage.

railway making up the Trans-Siberian system, if we sent from America superintendents, train despatchers, etc. to instruct them. . . .

July 28th. . . . No answers have been received to letters or cables sent from Vladivostok last June regarding the locomotive-erecting plant; last week we had one cable . . . saying that our recommendations for additional cars and locomotives would be taken under advisement. We have already promised the Russians, by direct authority conferred upon us before we left home, to do certain things for them. . . . [T]his places us in a most awkward position and I, for one, must decline to make any more promises. . . .

August 2nd. . . . We spent last evening . . . at the Railway Headquarters in Conference over our report; all matters are now agreed upon, but the Committee must put its report up to the Provisional Government. . . . This is not likely to expedite matters. . . .

August 3rd. Luncheon at the Embassy. The Ambassador complained to me about Stevens' habit of sending cipher telegrams to Washington over his (Francis') signature; he did not propose to allow this to continue. Some of Stevens' cablegrams were rather hot ones and I think the Ambassador has had a protest from Washington regarding their tone. . . .²³

August 5th-8th. I have been laid up in bed and Doctor in attendance. . . . At last a new Ministry has been formed by Kerensky. . . . The new cabinet has four Cadets (Constitutional Democrats); three (with Kerensky) Social Revolutionists; two (with Nekrasov) Radical Democrats; and three Social Democrats. . . . A belief is expressed in certain quarters that this hodge-podge Ministry will not outlast a week; we shall see.

. . . Between working hours, I walk about the City and sit in the park. I have been amused in watching the "Death Battalion" or women's regiment, drilling on the grounds of the Academy of Engineering. They take the performance quite seriously. This organization, headed by the husky peasant woman Botchkarova, was started to show the Russian soldier how to fight. . . . [T]he fact is that they have really behaved well in a small way at the front. Can't say I like the idea, however. . . .

August 8th. I have had several talks lately with Stevens about the necessity of having a

member of the Commission to go at once to America to straighten out matters with the Department. . . . Stevens agrees that it would be wise to do so and suggests that I go. . . .

August 9th. . . . The American Red Cross delegation, about forty Colonels, Majors, Captains and Lieutenants, arrived yesterday. It is headed by Colonel (Doctor) Billings²⁴ of Chicago, and includes Colonel William B. Thompson and many doctors and civilians, all with military titles; we dubbed the outfit the "Haytian Army" because there were no privates. They have come to fill no clearly defined mission, as far as I can find out; in fact Gov. Francis told me some time ago that he had urged they be not allowed to come, as there were already too many missions from the various allies in Russia. Apparently this Commission imagined there was urgent call for doctors and nurses in Russia; as a matter of fact there is at present a surplus. . . . They do need supplies, however, and the two carloads which the Commission brought will be useful.

This evening we were guests of Colonel Thompson at dinner at the Hotel de France. The Colonel is a very fat and yet energetic person and full of enthusiasm. He had a good dinner topped off by some excellent cigars which he had brought from the United States. He must have a large wad of money, as he told me he had subscribed to a half a million roubles of the new Russian "Victory" loan. . . .

Through Governor Francis I have today arranged for a special car for Greiner and myself on the Trans-Siberian express which leaves next Tuesday the 14th. . . . There is considerable doubt of our getting out of the country without trouble. . . . Tereschenko²⁵ said, however, he would arrange for a special safe-conduct for us. . . .

ON August 10th we called upon Kerensky by appointment to discuss railway matters. The meeting was in

²³ Stevens and Francis apparently had a personality clash and did not get along well.

²⁴ Dr. Frank Billings. Members of the American Red Cross delegation held simulated rank.

²⁵ Michael I. Tereschenko, foreign minister.



WHI (X3) 21516

Women's battalion of the Red Army in front of the Winter Palace just prior to its surrender to the Bolsheviks, October, 1917.

the Winter Palace, where he now lives and has his official headquarters. He occupies the czar's apartment in the northwest wing and our interview took place in the private study, or library, of the czar. This is a moderate size, beautiful and homelike room, lined on all sides to the ceiling with bookshelves and comfortably but not elaborately furnished. The handsomest piece of furniture is a grand piano with a superb marquetry and carved French walnut case. I examined the collection of books with interest; it is a gentleman's library. . . .

Kerensky soon entered in a quick, nervous manner and without formality began the interview, through our interpreter. He speaks no English and little French. He appears to be a very active, neurotic, but tired man of about thirty-six; is tall and has a high and fine forehead surmounted by a growth of coarse black hair, à la pompadour. His eyes

are fine, but shifty and his nose well proportioned, but his mouth and chin are weak. He was dressed in a perfectly plain khaki uniform, without insignia or decorations of any kind, and wore tan-colored high boots. This is the simple costume I have always seen him wear. He has a resonant and pleasing voice and I should judge would be an effective public speaker. Francis had come along with us, as he told me he was unwilling to let Stevens be the spokesman and he, therefore, began by stating our errand and that we were much concerned by the continued delays in getting our program for railway relief and other help from America put into force. Kerensky was evidently more or less familiar with our recommendations, which, he said, had his approval and that all authority had been given to his cabinet to have all things asked for by us carried into an immediate and full effect. . . .

In the p.m. we went to the Fontanka bureau and had a special audience with the new Minister [of Ways and Communications—P. P. Yureneff]. He too spoke of the good work we had done. . . . Later Greiner and I strolled around the Jewish market, which is nearby. It is an interesting place, crowded with soldiers and vendors of all sorts of articles. The soldiers were in many cases selling their uniforms, guns, etc.—a sight not calculated to inspire confidence in general conditions. . . .

August 14th. . . . Greiner, Golder and I left Petrograd at 7:50 p.m. in our private car No. 443, attached to the through Trans-Siberian express. . . .

August 17th. En route; we have been losing time on the schedule since the first day and we hear that the reason is the ex-Czar is being conveyed to Siberia on a special train ahead of us and is making very poor time. . . .²⁶

August 18th. . . . Last evening our train was allowed to pass the ex-Czar's special—a long train bristling with guard troops. He goes only as far as Tiumen where he must disembark on a steamer on the Irtysh river for Tobolsk. . . .²⁷

August 20th. Arrived at Krasnoyarsk this morning. An amusing sequel to the ex-Czar episode occurred here. We found the station crowded, and a moment after the train stopped a delegation of three men entered our car. A wide-eyed and excited man approached me and said in fairly good English, "You have Nicholas, the ex-Czar, with you; we have come for him." I was rather taken aback and stammered, "What do you mean?" He replied that they had been informed Nicholas was with the "American Mission" which was taking him out of the country, a move which they intended to prevent. I, of course, denied any intention of the kind and they hurriedly proceeded to search the car. After this interesting formality was over . . . the spokesman returned, with a disappointing expression of countenance, and demanded our passports. My . . . credentials seemed to satisfy

²⁶ Fearing for the safety of Czar Nicholas and his family, Kerensky had arranged for the move to Tobolsk, in western Siberia. The Czar's train left Petrograd early on the morning of August 14, hours before Gibbs's departure.

²⁷ In fact, the river was the Tura.



Underwood & Underwood photo

Alexander Kerensky, 1917.



National Archives photo 111-SC/75678

Easternmost terminal of the Trans-Siberian Railway, Vladivostok, 1918.

and impress him. As he was leaving us, I said I could perhaps throw some light upon the matter by telling him that we had passed a special train, shortly after crossing the Ural Mountains, which we were informed was carrying the ex-Czar to Tobolsk. To confirm this I handed him a copy of a Russian paper which Golder had bought before leaving Petrograd and which contained an announcement of the departure. . . . This was real news and was immediately read aloud to the great crowd on the station platform. This ended the incident, as far as we were concerned, except that we noticed men carrying bags of bombs stationed at the bridge east of the town; they evidently intended using them in case our train should pass without stopping. . . .

August 23rd. . . . Arrived at Manchuria Station at 8:00 A.M. about twenty-four hours late. Stayed a couple of hours for customs examination. . . . I got into a conversation with one of [the customs officials]. He said they searched particularly for opium and generally found some concealed behind the car panels. Did not search our car, as he thought it unnecessary because our *provodnik* [porter] was too old and stupid for such trade. . . .

I felt a curious sense of relief in being at last out of Russia; we are now in Manchuria and home seems almost in sight!

August 24th. Arrived at Harbin at 9:00 A.M.—a very hot day. Golder woke me, saying that our *provodnik* was either drunk or drugged. . . . We . . . found that during the night the panels under the windows in the

observation car had been unscrewed and put back again very clumsily; our old man is not as dumb as the [customs official] thought; I more than suspect that we have been carrying a cargo of contraband opium with us; however, I shall ask no questions. . . .

[I]t was arranged that our car should be attached to the afternoon "local" for Chang Chun. . . . We also got some definite news of steamer sailings from Japan. It appears that we have just missed a good boat and shall have to wait three or four weeks for another. . . .

September 2nd. Peking. We have spent six delightful days full of interesting incidents, in one of the world's most curious and beautiful cities. It was really the period of this summer's trip which I can look back upon as one of unalloyed pleasure. . . .

September 19th. [Yokohama.] Beautiful day. We sailed on the *Shinyo Maru* . . . at 5 P.M. . . .

October 5th. . . . We arrive at San Francisco. . . . Had no trouble at all at the Custom House; our diplomatic passports took care of us. . . .

October 9th. Am still in San Francisco. Had intended leaving with Mr. and Mrs. Greiner three days ago, but I was suddenly laid up with a fever. . . . Now O.K. again and left this P.M. by the "Overland Limited". . . . Spent one night en route with the family in Milwaukee and arrived in New York on the 15th and thence to Washington next day to make my report to the Government.

GIBBS'S mission to Russia was over and so, to an extent, was a chapter of American foreign relations. A month after Gibbs returned, the Bolsheviks seized power in Petrograd and immediately

began the process of pulling Russia out of the war, a move which the Railroad Commission had sought to prevent. The exhaustive recommendations of the mission were largely passed by in the subsequent chaos of the Russian civil war and the Soviet experiment. However, the American railway operators, which the commission and the Provisional government had requested, were sent to Russia. Known as the Russian Railway Service Corps, these men were a dedicated lot who did their best under trying circumstances.²⁸ And the "constructive help from the outside" which Gibbs advocated did come about in the form of Allied intervention in Russia.²⁹ But the result of intervention which Gibbs undoubtedly hoped for—a return to the sensible days of pre-Bolshevik Russia—did not transpire.

George Gibbs returned to New York and again took up his role as president of Gibbs and Hill Engineering Consultants, a firm established in 1911. His creativity continued in full force, evidenced by his being awarded the Wellington Prize in 1930 from the American Society of Civil Engineers for a paper on rail electrification. A respected, admired, and patriotic American, he died in New York on May 19, 1940, and was buried in the family plot in Newport, Rhode Island.

²⁸ Called by one historian the "forerunner of intervention" in Siberia, the RRSC had a fascinating history. For the story of its veterans' struggle to obtain military discharges, see Joe Michael Feist, "Theirs Not to Reason Why: The Case of the Russian Railway Service Corps," in *Military Affairs*, 42: 1-6 (February, 1978). See also Judson Grenier, "A Minnesota Railroad Man in the Far East, 1917-18," in *Minnesota History*, 38: 310-325 (September, 1965), and the various works on the Siberian intervention.

²⁹ See George F. Kennan, *The Decision to Intervene* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1958); Betty M. Unterberger, *America's Siberian Expedition, 1918-1920* (Durham, North Carolina, 1956); and Leonid I. Strakhovskiy, *Intervention at Archangel* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1944).

Steadying Efforts: The War at Archangel, 1918–1919

By *Richard Goldhurst*

TWO months before World War I ended with an armistice on the Western Front, Woodrow Wilson sent 5,000 American soldiers to the north Russian port of Archangel on the White Sea. He sent another 8,000 troops to Vladivostok on the Bay of the Golden Horn at the eastern tip of Siberia. Long after their buddies in France had gone home, these soldiers continued to fight a savage, now-forgotten war.

Wilson's purpose in sending these troops was born on March 3, 1918, when a Bolshevik delegation, headed by Leon Trotsky, left Brest-Litovsk, a rail center in Byelorussia, with a peace treaty that would presently end the fighting on the Eastern Front. Bolshevik Russia had left the war, and by leaving had freed a million German soldiers for all-out attack on the trenches in France. On March 21 a tremendous German offensive opened along a fifty-mile front, threatening within a few days to unhinge the Allied line at the juncture of the French and British armies. By the end of the month the Germans had advanced almost forty miles in places, and to within a dozen miles of the vital rail center of Amiens. For a time in the spring of 1918 the Allies thought they must lose the war.

It was a desperate situation, and it is not

surprising that it produced desperate initiatives. One of these was a plan for the Allies to intervene in Russia to rally pro-Allied Russians and lead them back to their positions on the deserted Eastern Front.

This plan was born out of the deliberations of the Permanent Military Representatives, an auxiliary committee of the Supreme Allied War Council. From the moment the Allies broached the idea, President Wilson felt that an intervention in Russia was a perilous undertaking. But the Allies eventually persuaded him. Wilson was in some respects persuaded because he thought of this intervention as a lever to manipulate Britain and France at the peace table. In the fourteen months the United States had been at war, Wilson had built up considerable friction between America and the Allies. He had refused to bind himself to the ends the Allies wanted to realize in victory; he had refused to integrate Yanks in decimated Allied divisions; and there was every chance that he would offer magnanimous terms to the defeated Central Powers. United States intervention in Russia became a quid pro quo. If Wilson sanctioned it, the Allied statesmen could hardly deny him later.

He reached the decision to send a regiment to Archangel and two regiments to Siberia on July 6, 1918. He set forth his reasons in an aide-mémoire circulated secretly among the Allies before the State Department published it in August. Wilson said he was sending troops to guard military supplies and "to steady any efforts at self-government or self-

EDITOR'S NOTE: For the full story of this American adventure in Russia, the reader is directed to Richard Goldhurst, *The Midnight War: The American Intervention in Russia, 1918–1920* (New York, 1978), and Ernest Milton Halliday, *The Ignorant Armies* (New York, 1961).

defense in which the Russians themselves may be willing to accept assistance."¹

There were many reasons why the doughboys went to Archangel in the early fall of 1918. There was only one reason why they stayed after the Armistice of November 11: they stayed to intervene in a civil war to see who would govern Russia, the largest country in the world. But to believe that a few thousand soldiers could make a difference in a country where vast distances are the one profound reality was a lunatic plan. The Archangel Province alone was as large as the combined territories of France and Germany, where millions of men in arms had failed to reach a conclusion. However, the spring and summer of 1918 were lunatic times, and lunatic things kept happening.

THE intervention got under way on the night of July 30, when the HMS *Tay* and *Tyne*, subchasers which usually escorted armed trawlers; the HMS *Nairana*, a cruiser with a seaplane launch; the HMS *Attentive*, a light cruiser; the French ship *Amiral Aube*; and the American *Olympia* (Admiral George Dewey's flagship at Manila Bay) left Murmansk conveying four troop transports to Archangel. Aboard the transports were 1,500 Allied troops which included an infantry brigade of Royal Scots, the French 21st Colonial Battalion, a brigade of Canadian artillery, a company of Serbian infantry, and fifty-one sailors and three officers from the *Olympia*, chosen for their marksmanship. The expedition was under the command of Major General Frederick C. Poole, one of His Majesty's most experienced soldiers.

On August 1, when the fleet approached Archangel, a cadre of White Russian officers attacked the Bolshevik garrison. This bold stroke panicked the Reds, who abandoned Archangel without a fight. By the time Poole put his troops ashore on August 2, he was greeted by the new government of the Archangel Province, the Supreme Administration of the Northern Region, headed by Nikolai K. Chaikovskiy, a sixty-seven-year-old world-fa-

mous socialist who pledged his support to the Allied intervention.

Poole immediately pushed the French Colonial Battalion down the Archangel-Moscow Railway. He sent the Royal Scots south along the Dvina River (which liberally translates as the "Big Muddy"). His object was twofold: to take the cities of Vdlogda, 400 miles due south of Archangel on the rail line, and Kotlas, 500 miles southeast of Archangel on the Dvina.

The French battalion advanced twenty miles down the rail line before coming upon the Bolshevik defenses. Veterans of four years of trench warfare, the poilus were duly cautious about charging machine gun emplacements. They began the advance first by circling the Bolshevik left flank, then by circling the right flank, then waiting for the center to drop back. This was a time-consuming process where speed was essential. Moreover, when the Bolsheviks did drop back, they dropped into well-prepared defensive positions.

Two weeks after they had started up the Dvina (the rivers in Archangel flow north), the Royal Scots took Bereznik, a town that commanded the junction between the Vaga and the Dvina; but here Red resistance stiffened. Though ill-trained and badly organized, the Bolos, as the British called the Bolsheviks, turned on their pursuers, aware that no expanding invasion threatened. Poole needed no extraordinary intelligence to realize that his lines of communication were drawn taut. He had put his force on the two blades of a scissors, and the wider the scissors opened, the farther apart the two forces deployed. One force could not support the other. He did not have the reserves or the artillery to dislodge the Bolsheviks from either of these two fronts. He needed reinforcements. He tried to muster these from the White Russian government, which was futile. Poole had to await the arrival of the Yanks.

John J. Pershing had selected the 339th Infantry for North Russian duty principally because its commanding officer, Colonel George Evans Stewart, had served in Arctic Alaska. A second reason was that the regiment, newly arrived in England as part of the 85th Division, was conveniently encamped along the London-Aldershot Canal in Surrey. The 339th was made up of Poles from Ham-

¹ Stanley S. Jados, *Documents on Russian-American Relations: Washington to Eisenhower* (Washington, D.C., 1965), 48.



tramck, woodsmen from Wisconsin, and the scions of millionaires from Grosse Point. Pershing cast with them one battalion of the 310th Engineers, the 337th Field Hospital, and the 337th Ambulance Company—in all, 5,500 officers and men, a hundred of whom died of influenza on the sea journey from the Alder-shot Canal to Archangel.

THE Yanks landed on September 4. Poole sent one battalion by rail to relieve the French on the railroad front, another by the Dvina to reinforce the Royal Scots. He held the third battalion as a floating reserve.

Poole was an overreacher. On the day the Yanks landed, he let czarist officers stage a coup against the Socialist government, hoping these reactionaries would then muster the additional men he needed for what was now a war along a wide front. The coup outraged American Ambassador David R. Francis who, recently repaired to Archangel, undid it on the spot and cabled Washington of his indig-

nation. Washington informed Downing Street that if the British did not leave the Russians to their own devices, the commander-in-chief would withdraw the American contingent. In October, the British replaced Poole with General William Edmund Ironside, later Baron of Archangel, Viceroy of India, and Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Ironside saw that the position staked out by the Allies was precarious. He resolved to dig in until spring rather than try to advance on Vologda, which threatened Moscow, or toward Kotlas, which threatened rail centers. But he had a front of more than 500 miles in a semicircle which ran from Onega, on Onega Bay, to Pinega in the east on the Pinega River, an Arctic stream. This was a longer line than that in France which was manned by several million Britons, French, and Yanks.

Ironside held the front throughout the winter, even when the Bolsheviks mounted three serious and devastating offensives against it. The one anomaly about the war in Archangel was that the weather for the only time in history favored the enemy rather than the Rus-

sians. One of the goals of the Bolsheviks' offensives became the desperately needed shelter. The Allies defended it tenaciously, and when forced to retreat, they torched the shelter in classic scorched-earth fashion. The Yanks and the British burned as many towns in north Russia as later GI's burned in Vietnam.

The allied positions were fortified by blockhouses built by the 310th Engineers. The Engineers erected over 300 of these blockhouses—log cabins, really—of post-and-beam construction with sally ports and machine gun slits. They were strategically placed so that one blockhouse was able to support another under attack. Nothing demolished these positions except a direct hit, although in one of their spring campaigns the Bolsheviks set fire to the fields to drive the Yanks and Royal Scots away.

Outside the dugouts and blockhouses was the cold—bitter cold, as merciless as the clamping paw of a polar bear. In the Arctic, there are at best two hours of light each day from the late fall until the spring. Dentistry was almost impossible. Medical treatment was severely inhibited along the front lines. Mutiny broke out among the White Russians, the French, and even a British relief regiment. The Americans grumbled.

In January, the Bolsheviks launched a well-co-ordinated attack along the Vaga River and drove the American and Canadian units back to the Dvina with serious casualties. Woodrow Wilson, who had been attending the Paris Peace Conference, learned of these losses on the night before he was to return to America aboard the *George Washington*. From shipboard he called off the intervention, cabling Secretary of War Newton D. Baker to inform Congress of his decision. Unfortunately, by January the Arctic weather had frozen the Allies in their place. Neither relief nor evacuation was possible until the ice broke up in the late spring. So the Yanks of the 339th and the Canadians and the British and the French fought on, weathering another Bolo campaign in March that almost drove them under the ice at the harbor itself.

UNDER the command of Brigadier Wilds P. Richardson, another Alaskan veteran, the Yanks began their

evacuation in late May. By August, Richardson and his headquarters had steamed down the Dvina headed for Brest. As these transports moved toward the White Sea, a pervasive melancholy settled on many of the men. Much of Russia is a sad place, a brooding, mysterious plain where in most seasons the noon sky is the color of dirty snow. And it is always sad saying goodbye to a place where good friends have lost their lives.

While they had been in combat, the men of the 339th had kept their morale relatively high, though the American command constantly worried that it would slip. The French were openly contumacious and the British were notoriously drunk; but the Americans, though unhappy about their physical surroundings and bewildered about the cause for which they fought, did not become demoralized. The men fought in small, disparate units, and soldiers will always stick longer for the love of their buddies than they will for the glory of their regiment or the honor of their country. The Americans also fought from defensive positions, which let them give more than they took. Their rifle power and automatic weapons were always adequate for the killing task. As a measure of their morale, the record shows that the 339th suffered only a few self-inflicted wounds and only one suicide (which was not included in the casualty reports).

During the Archangel engagement 109 Americans were killed in action, thirty-five died of wounds received in action, 100 died in drownings or from accidental causes, 305 were wounded, and many were hospitalized with influenza. Though the 339th had disproportionately fewer casualties than the American units on the Western Front, where 83,000 were killed in action and 250,000 were wounded and hospitalized, it fought for a longer and more continuous time than any division in France.

THE pictures which follow were selected from among 255 original glass plate negatives in two separate lots in the Iconographic Collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. These photographs were taken by Lieutenant Robert Colton Johnson, adjutant and chief photographer for



WH: (U6971) 65

Robert Colton Johnson.

the Engineer Corps serving in Archangel, and donated by him to the Society in 1957. Needle-sharp and handsomely composed, they convey a sense of the hardship and strangeness of the "midnight war" fought sixty years ago in Russia.

This photographic and engineering assignment was one of Robert Johnson's first undertakings after graduation in 1918 from the University of Wisconsin engineering college, of which his father, John Butler Johnson, had been the first dean. Robert, the youngest of five children, had been born September 21, 1894, in St. Louis. He came to Madison with his family in 1899. Dean Johnson was killed in a wagon mishap when Robert was only eight, and the family remained in Madison. Young Johnson attended Madison High School, and took part in hockey, long-distance running, and theatricals at the University. His post-college year followed a familiar wartime pattern: marriage (to Dorothy Dexter, also of Madison), and then enlistment. He was joined in his Archangel engineering company by a college friend, Malcolm K. Whyte, who also left a bride behind. (Whyte's wife, Bertha Kitchell Whyte, eventually wrote two books about Wisconsin crafts and craftsmen, while Whyte himself became a successful Milwaukee attorney.)

Back from the war and blessed with abundant energy, Robert Johnson embarked upon

a lively career as an engineer and public servant. He worked in Fond du Lac in the 1920's and 1930's for a construction firm, was state director of the Civil Works Administration from November, 1933, through January, 1934, and was with the state office of the National Recovery Administration from 1936 to 1938. He joined the civil engineer corps of the U.S. Navy Reserves in 1936, and in 1940 was called to active duty. He rose rapidly in the navy, supervising construction on the Virgin Islands, Iwo Jima, and in Occupied Japan—achievements which were rewarded with promotions to rear admiral in 1953 and vice-admiral in 1957. After World War II he again returned to Wisconsin, participating in the postwar construction boom as president of the Seisel Construction Company of Milwaukee from 1949 to 1961. He retired in 1963 and became a construction consultant. In addition to his professional career, Johnson contributed his time and knowledge to the Milwaukee community. He was a member of the Milwaukee expressway commission from its founding in 1953, and was its chairman from 1962 until 1969. He also served as a building consultant for the Milwaukee Performing Arts Center, and was active for thirty-five years on the Wisconsin Board of Architects and Professional Engineers. Much honored by his colleagues in his later years for his professional and civic achievements, he died in Milwaukee on May 26, 1969.

Despite his crowded professional life, Johnson maintained a keen interest in Russian affairs, no doubt kindled by his Archangel experiences. He was not alone in his family as a Russophile. His sister, Marjorie Daw Johnson of Madison, in 1927 wangled a journey there despite the absence of formal diplomatic relations between the United States and the new Soviet Union. The quid pro quo demanded by Russia was unusual: ten pedigreed chickens for use in improving its poultry stock. Miss Johnson, not unlike her brother, met this challenge and conquered both American and Soviet bureaucracies. Her account of her career as a chicken courier to Russia appears in the June-July, 1978, issue of *American Heritage*.

R. G.



WHi (U622) 41

Above: Solombola, a working-class district in the northern part of Archangel—"where the noon sky is the color of dirty snow." Below: American troops parading through Archangel in early September, 1918. When a coup disrupted city services, the Yanks also ran the trolley cars.



WHi (U621) 155



WH: (U621) 172

Colonel George Evans Stewart's staff mapping strategy in their Archangel headquarters.



WH: (U621) 97

Barracks of the U.S. 310th Engineers, Archangel.



WHI (U621) 126

Russian children lining up for leftovers at the U.S. engineers' mess, Archangel.



WHI (U621) 188

Log cabins were indigenous to Scandinavia and North Russia. This building in Archangel was sandbagged by Allied troops to reinforce it against artillery fire.



WHI (U621) 143

Sopwith Camel in British markings, Archangel. On one occasion, an Allied plane bombed an American position, killing three Yanks.



WHI (U621) 63

Motorized transport of the 310th Engineers, Archangel.



A bridge on the Archangel-Moscow Railroad. Both sides in the conflict were supplied by rail; Yank engineers repaired bridges as fast as the Bolsheviks burned them.

WHI (U622) 17



Sleighs, pulled by reindeer or Arctic ponies, supplied the troops at the fronts and in one instance served to evacuate American wounded.

WHI (U622) 43



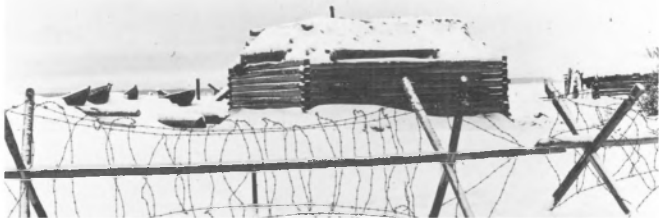
Artillery observation tower, probably on the "railroad front" along the Archangel-Moscow line.

WHI (U621) 202



Artillery blockhouse along the Dvina River, manned by Russians.

WHI (U622) 3



WHI (U621) 38

One of the many blockhouses constructed by the 310th Engineers. It is aproned with barbed wire and supported by another blockhouse at the right.



WHI (U621) 162

Several Russian detachments were recruited by the Allies, including a Slavobritish regiment and a battalion of the French Foreign Legion. Probably these two soldiers are Russians, pictured in their mortar emplacement.



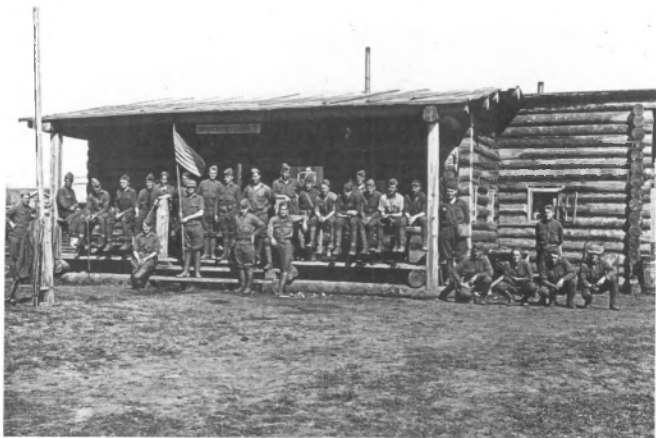
WHI (U621) 142

Captured "Bolo" prisoners. As the war at Archangel wore on, more and more such prisoners came from military units.



WHI (U621) 85

Traitsky Prospekt, the main street of Archangel. The city took the shape of a crescent moon, horns pointing east.



WH: (U621) 158

Yanks resting and recuperating at the Red Eye Saloon, Archangel, during the early days of the fighting.



WH: (U622) 32

*YMCA headquarters, Archangel. One of the "Y" staff members, Ralph Albertson, wrote a firsthand account of the North Russian expedition, *Fighting Without a War* (New York, 1920).*



WHI (U621) 13

The market, Archangel.



WHI (U621) 59

Washday on the Duina River.



WHi (U621) 111

A church in Archangel Province. Every town in North Russia boasted at least one, and Yanks pushing up the Duina swore they had seen the same church three days running.



WHi (U621) 4

Troitsky Cathedral in Archangel, built by Peter the Great, is one of the most beautiful churches in the world.



WHi (U621) 103

Winter hearse, Archangel.



WHI (U622) 77

Troitsky Prospekt, Archangel, showing the city hall at right and a statue of Peter the Great (center).



WHI (U621) 150

British troops arriving in Archangel to relieve the U.S. 339th Infantry in the late spring of 1919. The Americans were irked by the size and prominence of the Union Jack (upper left).

A Wisconsin Man in the Russian Railway Service Corps: Letters of Fayette W. Keeler, 1918-1919

Edited by Joe Michael Feist

INTRODUCTION

CHARGED with examining and offering recommendations for the improvement of Russia's Trans-Siberian Railway, the United States Advisory Railroad Commission departed for Russia in May, 1917. The United States, a new ally with Russia in the First World War, recognized the military importance of the Trans-Siberian in the fight against Germany, and resolved to assist the Russians in correcting any faulty methods of operation. The Trans-Siberian was a vital link in transporting war goods westward to Russian forces at the front. By the middle of 1917, however, the line had all but collapsed, leaving tons of materiel piled up at Vladivostok, its eastern terminus. Moreover, the U.S. government felt that the commission would demonstrate solid American support for the new Russian Provisional government, the czar having been deposed in March, 1917. It was no secret that Russia's will to proceed in the war effort was faltering, and the administration of Woodrow Wilson hoped that a betterment of the country's transportation system would prolong her participation in the war.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I should like to thank Roy Gesley of Palo Alto, California, and Susanne Fleckner of Silver Springs, Maryland, for their assistance in the preparation of this article. My thanks also to Mrs. Louise Keeler Keller and Mrs. Helen Keeler, daughters of Lafayette W. Keeler, for providing me with photographs and information relating to their father. J.M.F.

The Railway Commission, composed of John F. Stevens, George Gibbs, John Greiner, Henry Miller, and W. L. Darling, all distinguished railroad men, arrived at Vladivostok on May 31. Traveling in a special train provided by the Russian government, the commission embarked on an examination of the entire Trans-Siberian. Once in Petrograd, the capital, numerous recommendations were made to the Provisional government's Ministry of Ways and Communication. One suggestion, to which the Russians agreed, was for a contingent of American railway operators to instruct the Russians in American methods of running a railroad. Chairman John F. Stevens requested the State Department to organize the group as a military unit for their service in Siberia.¹ While the other members of the commission returned to the United States, Stevens remained as an advisor to the Ministry of Ways with the task of carrying out commission recommendations.

Back in the United States, Samuel M. Felton, director general of Military Railways, was given the job of raising the outfit that would be known as the Russian Railway Service Corps (RRSC). Felton looked to the Great Northern Railroad and chose its general manager, George H. Emerson, to head the corps. Since it was deemed necessary to

¹ Stevens to Willard (July 30, 1917), in U.S., Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Russia, 1918* (Washington, 1931), III: 194. Hereinafter cited as *FRUS, Russia, 1918*.



WHI (X3) 34802

Vladivostok harbor, 1918.

secure men accustomed to cold weather, Emerson called on the presidents of several northwestern railroads and procured their help in recruitment. Letters and notices were posted, and, in a short while, many railroad men from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and surrounding states had volunteered for military railroad service in Siberia. In general, these notices stated that all the men would be commissioned as officers in the U.S. Army.²

ONE of those who came forward was a thirty-eight-year-old dispatcher on the Great Northern from Superior, Wisconsin. His name was Fayette W. Keeler. He was married and the father of two young girls. His motives for joining, as with so many of the others, were a deep patriotism and an adventurous spirit—the same spirit which had animated his ancestors.

² See, for example, Exhibit A, in U.S., Senate, Committee on Military Affairs, *Russian Railway Service Corps*, S. Rept. 1764, 75th Congress, 3rd Session, 1938, p. 24. Serial Set 10230.

Keeler was descended from Ralph Keeler, who in 1635 was one of the first members of the Massachusetts Bay Colony to leave it and settle in the vicinity of Hartford, Connecticut. After Connecticut was granted a charter by the crown, Ralph Keeler and others were the first proprietors of Ridgefield, Connecticut. Another ancestor, Jeremiah Keeler, fought in the Revolutionary War and, at one point, served as orderly sergeant for General Lafayette. (Many subsequent Keelers therefore bore the name Lafayette or Fayette.)

Fayette W. Keeler was born in Hokah, Minnesota, on July 26, 1879, the son of William Harvey Keeler and Minerva Bacon Keeler. From his parents young Keeler inherited a keen sense of humor and an unquenchable curiosity about his world. Though his formal education ended after the ninth grade, he never stopped challenging his mind. His interest in astronomy led him to grind his own telescopic mirror and lenses and to erect an axis-traction device so he could follow the course of stars for hours. In mathematics, he added his own computations to the book of

logarithms. Once he reached the Far East, he quickly learned both Russian and Japanese. He was an expert in both the operation and the mechanics of telegraphy and wireless radio. And when the chance arose for service to his country that promised stimulating travel, Keeler embraced the opportunity.

The railroad men who responded to the call applied to the Chief of Engineers of the United States Army and were issued commissions by the War Department. Keeler was commissioned a second lieutenant. The corps was also outfitted with uniforms of standard army color. Despite all this, however, the War Department never intended that the RRSC operate as a military unit, since the Russian Provisional government had agreed to pay the men's salaries. By law, no foreign government can pay members of the U.S. military. But an incredible series of blunders on the part of the American government led the men to believe that they were, in fact, in the Army; and only after some time in the Far East did they learn the War Department's conception of their status. After their return, the men sought congressional action to secure honorable discharges and a declaration that they had served in the military. Between 1918 and 1961 twenty-five bills to that effect were introduced in Congress—and all were defeated. The controversy was not resolved until 1973, when a United States Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the surviving veterans of the RRSC.³

The men gathered in St. Paul, Minnesota, in October, 1917, and subsequently traveled to San Francisco. On November 19, the Russian Railway Service Corps boarded the U.S. Army transport *Thomas*, bound for Vladivostok. Corpsmen were accompanied by about seventy-five employees of the Baldwin Locomotive Works who were journeying to Vladivostok to build locomotives and cars for the Trans-Siberian.

Even before the corps left St. Paul, the Bolshevik Revolution toppled Kerensky's Provisional government, which had requested the

men. Notwithstanding the change in government, however, the American ambassador to Russia, David R. Francis, expressed the view that the RRSC should not be turned back and would be useful to whatever faction was in power.⁴

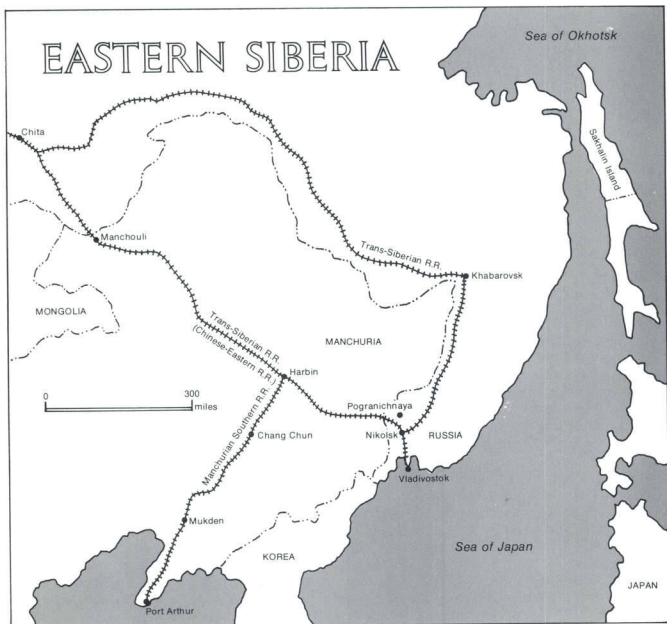
The *Thomas* therefore steamed into a ticklish situation at Vladivostok on December 11. There were no accommodations for the corps, and very little food. The entire city buzzed with the excitement of the revolution. Moreover, the Bolsheviks held the only ice breaker, and the *Thomas* was in danger of being iced in. Stevens, who was in Vladivostok to meet the corps, agreed with the American consul, John Caldwell, that work was impossible for the moment. Consequently, Keeler and the RRSC immediately sailed for Nagasaki, Japan, to await further developments.

THE letters of Fayette W. Keeler paint a significant portrait of life in the Far East during this most chaotic time. The situation into which Keeler and the RRSC were thrust—a Russian civil war, Japanese expansion, and, finally, Allied intervention—was enormously complex. But Keeler was not afraid to reduce the myriad aspects of the Siberian reality into a set of understandable and practical observations and conclusions. As he saw it, his role in helping defeat the Germans was to make the railroads "hum." Those who interfered, such as the Japanese, were obstructionists or worse. The Russians, Keeler thought, were an unpatriotic, flashy lot; the Bolsheviks were nothing more than scoundrels and German agents. To be sure, the letters also reveal Keeler's predictable but colorful reactions to the cultures and customs of China, Japan, and Russia.

These are not the letters of a diplomat or political scientist—and therein lies their value. Keeler was simply a common American viewing a rather uncommon turmoil. His words show the logic, the philosophy, the analytical qualities of an early-twentieth-century American. As Henry Steele Commager has noted, "No philosophy that got much beyond coun-

³ See Joe Michael Feist, "Theirs Not to Reason Why: The Case of the Russian Railway Service Corps," in *Military Affairs*, 42: 1-6 (February, 1978). Much of the personal information is taken from personal communication with Fayette Keeler's daughter, Mrs. Helen K. Sui-h. See footnote 32.

⁴ Francis to State Department (November 13, 1917). *FRUS, Russia, 1918*, III: 208.



mon sense commanded [the American's] interest. . . .⁵ The letters of Fayette Keeler tend to bear him out.

The letters Keeler wrote are now in the possession of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin as part of the Roy L. Martin Papers, which were given by Martin to the Society in 1954. The two men were cousins (their mothers were sisters), and all of the letters published here were written to Roy Martin, who was also a railroad man and who wrote a history of the Wisconsin Central Railway Company. While some of the letters are ex-

clusive notes to Martin, Keeler would at times write one letter and send copies to all his relatives.

Most of these letters were typewritten, and some of the obvious typographical errors have been corrected. The punctuation and paragraphing have been altered slightly in the interest of clarity and readability. Ellipses denote deletions; brackets denote changes in spelling or wording by the editor. The complimentary close of each letter has been deleted.

J.M.F.

⁵ Henry Steele Commager, *The American Mind* (Yale University Press, 1950), 8.

Nagasaki, January 31, 1918

Dear Cousins—

I do not remember when I wrote you last but think it was before we landed here, so will try to give you an account of our doings since then.

As you know, we arrived Nagasaki on Dec. 19th and lay in the harbor awaiting instructions until Sunday Jan. 13 when we were ordered to land. The last man was off the boat at 7:15 A.M. and the old *Thomas* steamed out at 7:45 A.M. bound for good old U.S.A. We rather hated to see her go, as we ate and slept on board for fifty-three days.

Quarters were made for us at the various hotels about town, and the Baldwin Loco. Works contingent had to go to Obama, about forty miles north. There are about seventy-five men in that bunch.

We are put from four to six in a room in this hotel [Nagasaki Hotel], and the rooms are nice and large and airy and have a dandy fireplace, English style, so we are very well situated. When we landed we had to go out in the yard where the carpenters were making our beds, wash stands, and p-pot boxes, and grab them off as soon as they were finished, but as there was a large gang of men working it did not take long. Our beds have no springs but that don't prevent us from sleeping well. There are four in our room, all roundhouse foremen but I, and all of us are [M]asons. One is J. R. Jones, who used to live at N. Fond du Lac and says he knows you. He is all tattooed and is a chunky fellow, and an Englishman. . . . He came from the [Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad] at Valley [Junction, Iowa]. C. M. Winter is also along with this outfit.⁶ We are very well fed and have no kick coming, although it is rather irksome to be here when we are all anxious to be in Russia. Prospects seem much better now about going in, and we all expect to be on the move before many more moons.

We are taking Russian lessons now after a vacation of over a month and are teaching ourselves. We had some Russian refugees who were engaged to teach us but we had to cut them out for economical reasons.⁷ But we

⁶Major C. M. Winter, former superintendent with the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railroad.

are getting along fine. . . . We hold our classes at the YMCA and that gives us good exercise, as it is about a twenty-minute walk there.

I saw a Japanese wedding reception the other day coming home from class. It was headed by a brass band, then a bunch of old men carrying banners, with some kind of inscriptions, then about twenty rickshaws filled with the guests. The bride, who appeared to be a Chinese lady, was in the last one and was all dolled up to beat the band. The procession wound up with another band. They were moving along at a slow pace and a bunch of us overtook them, and just as we came upon the rear band, the leader gurgled something in Japanese to his men and they struck up "We'll Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys," evidently a mark of respect for us. It seemed odd to hear that tune played at a wedding reception. . . . We have physical exercises daily at 7:45 A.M. and I am just getting over from soreness of the muscles from it. We have to get up at 7:15 A.M. now instead of 8:15, which works a great hardship on us. It amuses the Japs to see us go through our contortions.

Was over to visit a Jap passenger boat Sunday, and on our way back the sampan man asked one of our men for an inhale from his pipe. He was smoking Peerless in an old strong pipe. So he took a few good puffs to make it good and handed it over to the sampan man who took, or tried to take, a big inhale and darned nearly tumbled out of the sampan. I managed to recover his oar with the boat hook, and it was about ten minutes before order was finally restored. Mr. Jap sat down in the stern, losing all interest in the proceedings and moaning "Jiama, jiama" for a long time. I don't know what jiama means, but presume is equivalent to "My God." . . .

We were all up to the YMCA to listen to a talk by G. Sherwood Eddy, a great man in the YMCA work.⁸ He was on his way to France and told of his experience over there

⁷The Russian interpreters were not fired for reasons of economy but rather because, as Stevens noted, they were "mischievous political agitators." See Stevens to Lansing (December 15, 1917). *FRUS, Russia, 1918*, III: 211.

⁸Sherwood Eddy, Yale-educated, worked for many years for the YMCA among students throughout Asia, especially India. He was an observer of the European war from 1915-1917 as YMCA secretary with the British army.



Nagasaki, Japan, 1918. Left to right: J. R. Jones, Fayette W. Keeler, Oaki Saku.

previous to this time. It was a good one and I would not have missed it for anything. He was over all the battle fields and saw several battles and gave us a lot of pathetic incidents. . . . I could hear a lot of our men blowing noses. . . .

Please write me as often as possible. You can't understand how welcome letters are to a guy 8,000 miles from home. . . .

While the weeks dragged on the corps remained in Nagasaki waiting for the Siberian situation to stabilize. The Bolsheviks were creating disturbances across Siberia and northern Manchuria. The men of the RRSC, anxious to be at work, obviously shared the view of John F. Stevens. The determined Stevens, angered by the Bolshevik interference in his plans, wired Washington, "We should all go back shortly with man-of-war and 5,000 troops. Time is coming to put [the] fear of God into these people."⁹

Nagasaki, March 4, 1918

My Dear Roy and Sadie—

. . . We have dropped our Russian lessons now and cannot say if we will ever take them up again. I am studying Japanese now for

a pastime. Came across a couple of young draftsmen from the shipyards here who are crazy to extend their limited knowledge of English. So I am teaching them English and they are teaching me Japanese. They were so overjoyed at this good fortune that they invited me to sit with them for a foto, which I did. When I heard one of them trying to describe a baldheaded major as "having no moustache on the top of his head," I decided his knowledge of our classic language could be expanded.

Our chambermaid, Oaki Saku, has quit us and is now making kimonos. She invited me and my only roommate left, Dick Jones, . . . to have tea at her house Saturday, which we did, and had a most enjoyable hour. She wanted our fotos and as we had none, we suggested she accompany us to the studio and we would all three be in it. We did. Dick and I were dressed in kimonos, holding a fan and wearing sandals, and Saku sat on a cushion at my feet, with a tray full of tea-things in front of her. Such scandal! By the way, her name, Saku, means cherry-blossoms in Japanese. . . .

Oh, dear, I wish we were on the move somewhere, Russia, Mesopotamia, Berlin or home, I don't care which, just as long as we move. The insignia of this corps ought to be a circle, as it signifies going nowhere. . . .

Throughout February of 1918, John F. Stevens had been negotiating with General Dmitri Horvat, the anti-Bolshevik general manager of the Chinese Eastern Railway. Although entirely in Chinese territory, the Chinese Eastern was actually a part of the Trans-Siberian system. It was built by the Russians in the 1890's with the consent of the Chinese, in order to save hundreds of miles on the route to Vladivostok. Russian laws were observed all along the Chinese Eastern, and Russian influence dominated. By the end of February, Stevens and Horvat had agreed to the placement of the corps along the Chinese Eastern. Only about half the corps had left Japan for Harbin, however, when the State Department ordered Stevens to hold the remainder of his men in Nagasaki because of a supposed threat from German and Austrian prisoners of war.¹⁰ It was rumored that the

⁹ Stevens to Willard (December 20, 1917), *FRUS, Russia, 1918*, III: 213-214.

¹⁰ See, for example, Morris to Lansing (March 1, 1918), *FRUS, Russia, 1918*, III: 223.

prisoners were escaping in large numbers and were armed. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk—the separate peace between Germany and Bolshevik Russia—further alarmed the State Department with regard to the prisoners. Although the prisoners posed no menace, caution prevailed, and half the corps remained in Nagasaki until July, 1918. Keeler and a few others, however, went to Harbin in April.

Nagasaki, March 30, 1918

My Dear Roy and Sadie—

. . . [On] Washington's Birthday we received the joyful news we were to go to Harbin Manchuria within a week, and we were to go in bunches of fifty per day. Two bunches went and then they got orders to hold the balance here, much to our bitter disappointment. And here we have been ever since doing nothing. The boys at Harbin all write about it being such a nice town that it makes us sore to think we are compelled to stay here. We are getting rather tired of lying around doing nothing.

Since I last wrote you I have had a trip to see a volcano and had a dandy time, putting up at Japanese hotels and eating Japanese food. We had a guide with us and traveled 450 miles and the whole trip, including our meals, only cost us \$4.25 each. How is that for economical . . . touring?

The cherry blossoms are out now and plum blossoms and wisteria also, and dirty old Nagasaki is beginning to put on new clothes and look a little decent. . . .

Harbin, Manchuria, May 24, 1918

My Dear Cousins—

Your joint letter of March 26th was received on April 30, with great rejoicing on my part. . . . Have been here since the 17th of last month. . . . About one hundred of our outfit had gone on before us, and you can take it from me, there was a disappointed bunch of Bolsheviks that was left behind. Was there [Nagasaki] six weeks longer when we received a telegram from Harbin to send me and five others up here, but giving no reasons. This raised another row among those who were left, but there was no help for it. . . . I was wanted to work the wireless between here and Vladivostok and the others were used in the shops.

Left Nagasaki at 11 A.M. and arrived Moji, where we [took] the ferry to the main island at 6 P.M. and had an awful time getting our baggage through the customs as the officials did not want to examine it on Sunday, but after a lot of arguing we finally got them to pass on it and we caught the ferry to Shimonesiki . . . where we got the boat to Korea. . . . We had to answer a lot of questions by the police and immediately went to bed, so as not to be seasick, for the Korean [Straits] are almost always very rough. We had a sea like glass all the way over, and when we woke up we were sliding into the harbor at Pusan, with the water like a mirror and the air nice and crisp and fresh. Korea, translated, means "The Land of the Morning Calm," and if this morning was a sample of the weather there the man who christened it certainly knew his business. . . .

We did not have much time to look around Pusan as we had twenty-three pieces of baggage to look after. . . . [We also] had a large grip with 175,000 rubles and 10,000 yen in paper money, amounting to about \$23,000 in gold, and one of us had to stand watch over this. . . . We took the Manchurian Southern Ry. from Pusan, and you could not tell the difference between that train and one in the United States. The whole thing was made in America and it seemed quite a treat to see one of them again.

The engineer surely handled the train easily. We arrived at Seoul about 8 P.M. and stopped there for about thirty minutes and got a chance to see the Great South Gate, whatever that was.¹⁴ The stationmaster insisted on us going out to see it. . . . The Koreans are a queer lot. They all dress in white and the men wear dinky plug hats, made out of horse hair, and are not ornamental or useful. The women generally go bare-headed, and if they do have anything on their heads it is a tub or pail of something. They looked odd, as we could see them all over the fields working, and dressed in white. It might give you a scare to meet one of them in the dark. . . .

The next morning we arrived at Shingishu on the east bank of the Yalu River, and were

¹⁴ Seoul's Great South Gate, a beautiful arched monument, dates from the city's founding in the 1300's.



WHI (X3) 34796

Koreans, near Vladivostok.

out of Japanese territory; and after we crossed a bridge about a mile long we came to Antung, Manchuria, where our baggage was again put thru the customs, but not opened. It was here that I saw the finest specimen of Chinese manhood I ever saw or ever expect to see. He was the customs officer and had on a dandy new uniform and his features were actually handsome. I believe if I were a woman I would have fallen in love with him on the spot. He talked excellent English and as he passed us in the car I remarked to our boys to that effect and he surprised me by saying: "I ought to. I lived in Chicago ten years and am a Yankee myself." Although we were in Chinese territory, all the stations were policed by the Japanese soldiers to Chang Chun.

We arrived [at] Mukden about dusk and I managed to get a ride in a rickshaw for half an hour. The town is quite large, but there are no street cars there. The hotel and station are fine pieces of architecture, and you

will have to give the Japanese credit for doing things well. You can see their influence all along through Korea, and when you go through Manchuria there is a decided difference in the wagon roads and the towns, but the stations are always kept up in fine shape. Had a dandy supper at Mukden, and next morning we woke up coming into Chang Chun, where we had to change cars for the Chinese Eastern Railroad, or, as the Russians call it, the "Keetaiskaya Vostochnaya Zbelyeznaya Doroga." We met some of our boys stationed there and had a dandy time until 2 p.m. when we took the K.V. for Harbin.

We had a special car with a porter and had a very good time all the way up. It took us nine hours to come 150 miles, and as soon as we got here we got out and had some tea and cakes, and tried to sleep in the car, but it was almost out of the question, as all the switch engines use the whistle when they want a track lined up for them and they give a toot

for each digit in the number. They seemed to have a mania for wanting to go in on No. 17 for [they] did nothing else . . . all night but whistle. . . . It was not very soothing, and as soon as it got light enough I got up and rolled a pill and went over to the station. . . . Pretty soon we met some of our boys who took us to our dining cars where we had breakfast, then later [we] came over to our barracks and got located. There are two buildings here that were formerly occupied by the Bolsheviks [who] were driven out. The building I am in has eighteen beds and both buildings are made of concrete and steel and are electric lighted. The water system is not very good as it is worked by hand pumps. . . . But the place is nice and clean. We have Chink servants to take care of it.

I cannot say that I am stuck on Harbin. We have terrible dust storms here and dust and pulverized horse manure sweep over the town in a dense cloud. I have been caught in several of these "horse-manure blizzards," as our boys call them, and it is no fun, I can assure you.

. . . They have a magnificent Railway Club here and there is something doing there almost all the time—dances, theatres, lectures, etc. Shortly after I arrived here I attended a dance given for the benefit of Orloff's men,¹² and the price was just what you wished to pay. It was not considered good form to ask for any change, and the result [was] I shot 100 rubles in a short time. There was something to pay for every time you turned around, but it was for a good cause, and all of us Americans wanted to make a hit with the Russians, so we did not care. Anyway, a ruble was worth only six cents then.

I guess I will close for this time. . . . I have just returned from Vladivostok where I met Admiral Knight on the *Brooklyn* to arrange for a schedule for working the wireless. Things have not shaped themselves so we can communicate yet, but we expect to do so shortly. . . .¹³

¹² General Orlov was a White Russian, or anti-Bolshevik, leader later associated with the government of Admiral Alexander Kolchak.

¹³ The *Brooklyn* was the flagship of Admiral Austin M. Knight, commander of the United States Asiatic Fleet.

Harbin, Manchuria, June 2, 1918

My Dear Cousins—

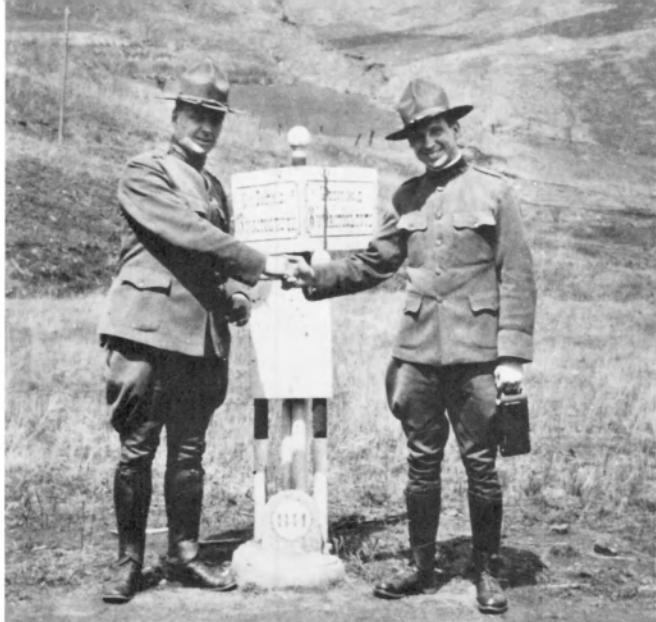
. . . I have not yet started work in the wireless station . . . as my hours have been changed so they do not correspond with the *Brooklyn*, but we expect things to be straightened out shortly. . . . When I do get things working I will be the main guy here as I will be able to get the press news from Cavite or some Japanese station, or else the *Brooklyn*. We get very little news here in the newspapers.

. . . Did I ever tell you about these [Japanese] baths? You go in and get in a tub and pretty soon a girl comes in and pours water over you at about 211 degrees above Fahrenheit, then proceeds to soap you all over, and when you are well lathered, she takes a small soft fibre brush and gives you a good scrubbing. I have been to them on a few occasions when the water system at the Nagasaki Hotel was out of order. It is comical to hear the guys yell and holler when she scrubs you on some sensitive spot, such as under the arms, soles of your feet, etc., etc. Old Bill [Bill Straeck of York, Pennsylvania] was never known to take a bath all the way from Frisco to Nagasaki (via Vladivostok), but when he got hep to these bath houses, if cleanliness is next to godliness, then Bill was some god. . . .

We are going to install the "ABC" system of running trains with the staff system shortly, and then things on the Keetaiskaya Vostochnaya Zhelyeznaya Doroga will hum, no matter how much handicapped by the name.¹⁴ If this political business keeps up we are going to handle a lot of cars. . . .

In the following letter, Keeler gives his impressions of the famed Czech Legion. During World War I the Russian army contained a unit, known as the Druzhina, led by Russian officers, which was manned by Czechs and Slovaks from the Czech colonies inside Russia. Thousands of their brothers, of course, were fighting against them in the Austro-Hungarian army as German allies. These Czechs, however, owed no allegiance to Austria, the very

¹⁴ A method of regulating rail traffic by dividing the route into stretches of track several miles long (blocks). The blocks are assigned to one train at a time, and the entry and exit of trains within each block are controlled by automatic signals.



WHi (X5) 34797

In the best tradition of tourists everywhere, Keeler (left) and his friend J. R. Jones shook hands across the border between Siberia and Manchuria.

nation they considered their oppressor. During the war, therefore, thousands of Czechs in the Austrian army either surrendered or were taken prisoner by the Russians, often in the hope of joining the Druzhina. Before the downfall of the czar this was impossible. After the March revolution, however, the Druzhina was expanded into an entire corps through the addition of these former Austro-Hungarian soldiers.

Throughout 1917, while the Russian army lost all semblance of a fighting unit, the Czech corps retained its morale and discipline. Once the Bolsheviks gained power in November, the Czechs declared themselves a neutral party in the Russian civil war. The following month the Allied governments recognized the Czechs as a regular Allied unit under nominal French command. The Czechs, however, faced the overwhelming forces of the Central

Powers in the Russian Ukraine. The only way for the Czechs to resume the fight, it was reasoned, was to retreat eastward across Siberia to Vladivostok and thence around the world to France. The Soviet government agreed to such a move in March, 1918.

The movement east had scarcely begun when trouble arose. The Soviets feared that, among other things, the Czechs might join some Allied power in a full-scale intervention into Russian affairs. All sorts of confusing announcements were issued by Soviet officials, Czech commanders, and Allied governments. By May, 1918, the situation was extremely tense. The Czechs, spread all across Siberia, realized they were in a precarious position and determined to fight their way to Vladivostok. Whether or not their view was justified is a debated historical question. In any event, clashes between the Czechs and Bolsheviks

erupted all along the Trans-Siberian and continued for several months.¹⁵

What Keeler did not mention in this letter was the arrival of American soldiers in Vladivostok in August, 1918. President Wilson, finally succumbing to the tremendous pressure of the Allied governments, had dispatched a force of some 7,000 under General William Graves. While historians differ in their interpretation of Wilson's move, the main expressed reason in sending the troops was to aid the Czech Legion in reuniting.¹⁶

Harbin, Manchuria, August 22, 1918

My Dear Martha,
My Dear Mother,
My Dear Sister,
My Dear Cousin—

The address might look a little strange but I am writing to each one of the addressees, the last one being Sadie. I got a letter from all of you yesterday and thought I might as well kill four "birds" with one stone.

According to the calendar today is Ma's birthday, but today is August 21st there, and I do not know just how to observe it. Guess the only way is to be good two days, then resume my natural inclinations. This makes me think of Willie Shields, of Elma, [Iowa], one of my playmates, about eight years old. He would never chew tobacco on his ma's birthday, no matter if I *did* have a nice five-cent plug of Spear Head on me. Them was the happy days!

Well! I rather guess we had some time last

¹⁵ For more information on the Czech Legion, see Henry Baerlein, *March of the Seventy Thousand* (London, 1926), and chapter six of George F. Kennan, *Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1920: The Decision to Intervene* (Princeton, 1958).

¹⁶ President Wilson's rationale for ordering American troops to Siberia, his aide-memoire, is quoted in full in Kennan's *Decision to Intervene*, 482-485. A scholarly examination of the entire American venture in Siberia is Betty M. Unterberger's *America's Siberian Expedition, 1918-1920* (Durham, North Carolina, 1956). Unterberger takes the position that Wilson's true aim in Siberia was to inhibit Japanese expansionist policies and maintain the "open door." A differing view can be found in Robert J. Maddox, *The Unknown War With Russia: Wilson's Siberian Intervention* (San Rafael, California, 1977). Maddox contends that Wilson's primary motive was the destruction of the Soviet government. See also Richard Goldhurst, *The Midnight War: American Intervention in Russia, 1918-1920* (New York, 1978).

night. We entertained a large bunch of Czecks, or Czechs . . . and I wish you all had been here. . . . I will try to describe it with the fond hope that Mr. Censor possesses an average heart and will not delete any of it. Anyway, by the time this reaches you the Czecks will have left here and be fighting the Bolsheviks.

At 6:00 P.M. a large number of them assembled on our drill-ground and lined up, we doing the same opposite them. Then both National Anthems were played and I never heard such fine music in all my life. The Czech band was of about thirty pieces, and every man surely knew how to play. After the introduction of our commanding officer and the officer in charge of the Czecks (which, by the way, had all the solemnities of the meeting of the Q. of S. and K. Solomon), we all got busy and mixed in with them. There are a few who speak English, and soon we were having a good time. Our corps bought 3,500 cigarettes and goodness knows how many bottles of lemonade and other soft drinks [and] all kinds of cookies. Hornbeck¹⁷ and I were among those who acted as booze-clerks and my arms have not yet got the soreness out of them on account of pulling corks. The moon was very bright and it was almost as light as day on the grounds. Their band played about fifteen numbers, and I wish you could have heard it. . . . We gave them a cinematograph show in the YMCA building and everyone had the best time imaginable.

You all probably know the story of these men. For the benefit of the ignorant, I will say that they come from the northwestern part of Austria and are connected with the Russians by ties of blood, being of Slavic origin themselves. At the beginning of the war the Russians tried to enter Austria and connect with the Czecks but they got hung up at the Masurian Lakes by von Hindenburg. The Czecks, at the outbreak of hostilities, were put under the command of German officers, and when they were sent to the Galician front they were put in the first lines with the Austrians and Germans held back for use as reserves. At the first opportunity the Czecks surrendered to their cousins, the Russians, by the thousands. After the Russian Revolution

¹⁷ C. E. Hornbeck, former chief dispatcher on the Great Northern, also from Superior, Wisconsin.

they were liberated and helped fight the common enemy, but after the fall of Kerensky they were opposed by the Bolsheviks and have now fought their way east, with the intention of going to France, but they have changed their plans now and are taken in by the Allies and are doing fine work. I wish I could tell you of all the things that are going on around this part of the world, but it would not be policy, and besides, the censor, unless he [was] blind, would not let it get by him. Anyway, will risk saying that things are looking brighter for the old R.R.S. Corps and we are coming to life, and every man Jack will soon have something to do. This is a relief to think of it, after being inactive for nine months.

I wish you could see the Czechs. When they went through their maneuvers . . . it was enough to make the angels weep with envy. We would surely make a very poor showing against them that way. Most of them have families back home. . . . They are men, m-e-n, MEN, all the way through. It fairly makes my blood boil to see these good-for-nothing Russians parading up and down the parks with their gaudy uniforms and swords clanking and dragging in the dirt, indifferent to the fate of their country, and perfectly willing that some one else fight their battles. I have a hunch that the Czechs are going to disarm them, and make them do something or vacate the crockery via the firing squad. They have done that very same thing all along their way, and I would be tickled to death to see them fertilize some of the ground here with them. I guess it is a good thing that we are not fluent talkers, for I honestly believe that if we could talk the language well enough, there would be several dead R.R.Sers and Russians around here. . . .

. . . The chief electrician from the *Suffolk* (a British cruiser) is still here with me to line up the wireless, as I think the Czechs are going to take it from the Russians, then I will probably be working hand in hand with the Czechs and British, unless our troops come here with a signal corps. . . .

Sunday, August 24th. Clear, bright and warm, and the Russian church bells booming out with a very deep sound, which makes it sound kinda peaceful like. Last night we had

the Czechs over again, and they gave us another band concert and some very fine physical exercise stunts. There were a great many in it and one of the features was a human pyramid. They formed one three men high and when the topmost man got his position he pulled Old Glory from his clothes and waved it around. Say! . . .

The Czechs have a little boy with them that they brought all the way from Western Russia. His father and mother were killed by the Germans so they took him with them. He is only twelve years old and is wounded in the leg. Our boys have adopted him and some of them took him down and rigged him out with two miniature R.R.S. uniforms and some clothes, and now he is perfectly satisfied. He performed a signal service to the Czechs once, when the Bolsheviks surprised them. He saw them and turned a machine gun on them and held them back until the Czechs could get a formation and defeat them. He is an expert with this weapon and it is here that he got his wound. The bullet is still there but we are going to have him operated on for its removal.

Guess I will close for this time and add some personal notes. . . . I do not want you to entertain any fears for my safety, for I am as safe as the Crown Prince. Everything is going on smoothly but rapidly here and I would not be surprised to find that this part of the country will occupy parts of the front pages shortly. . . .

Meeleeya Moiy Sadee—Ya booel rahd sluschat eez voee. Which means, in plain English, "I was glad to hear from you." I want to air my profound knowledge of Russian so I thought I would try it out on you. . . .

It has been extremely hot most of the time. . . . One would perspire quite freely in the sun, but once get in the shade it is quite cool. I have been enjoying it because I have not been really thawed out for the past ten years. . . . Have to change underwear each day and uniforms twice a week to smell anyways respectable. . . . The flies are very thick but it is no wonder when you consider the filth that abounds here. The Chinese are very dirty and consequently the flies are numerous. The Russians are too lazy to make any effort to clean up the town, so there you are. . . .



WFF: (X3) 34783

The Czech Legion, lined up in Harbin to greet an arriving Japanese military contingent.

Harbin, Manchuria, August 31, 1918
My Dear Folks—

Things are moving rapidly around Harbin but not as far as we are concerned, although we all hope that something turns up for the R.R.S. to do. It is understood by everyone that our original mission has gone up the spout and we are waiting to see what will be done with us.

Saw two of the Nagasaki boys yesterday that came up from Vladivostok, and they are quartered in a schoolhouse there and sleeping on mattresses. Some of them have been given squads of German and Turkish prisoners to guard while repairing the roads in that vicinity. I wish I had a chance to guard some of them. . . .

You have probably read of the American Engineer Kyle who was captured and held for ransom by some Chinese bandits a few months ago. He was up to our barracks yesterday and was telling some of the men about it, but I

had to work then so missed it. He was held captive for fifty-five days with another man.¹⁸

I am afraid this letter will be somewhat short as I do not know much to tell you. . . . I have to be out at the station at 3:00 P.M. and 11:00 P.M., and with our morning drills of about an hour's duration, I manage to get about three hours and a half of good healthful exercise. Generally get home somewhere around 1:00 A.M. and have to get breakfast and drill by 8:00 A.M. so you see I do not get too much sleep.

We heard last night that Chita was captured by the Czechs and I am going to try to raise Chita on the wireless tonight to see if it is so. . . .¹⁹

¹⁸George A. Kyle and E. J. Pursell, employees of the Siems-Carey Railway, were robbed and kidnapped by Chinese bandits in the province of Honan in March, 1918. They were later released unharmed.

¹⁹Chita had indeed been captured by the Czechs. By this time, Bolshevik power had been overthrown in all of eastern Siberia.

In the next letter Keeler mentions the return of Colonel Emerson after having been "lost for three months." This was not quite the case.

In the March of 1918, Soviet Commissar Leon Trotsky had requested that a group of American railway operators be sent to European Russia to aid the Soviets in revitalizing Russia's railroads. American Ambassador to Russia David R. Francis relayed this request to the State Department. Despite some initial misgivings, as well as the opposition of John Stevens, Emerson and his party left Vladivostok on May 19, 1918, intending to confer with Ambassador Francis on the Soviet proposal.

Upon arriving in Krasnoyarsk, however, Emerson was informed that the Czech uprising would prevent his further movement. Emerson thus became an eyewitness to the Czech-Bolshevik clash, and even offered himself as a mediator at Marinsk, west of Krasnoyarsk. He succeeded in gaining a partial armistice there, enabling him to continue his westward journey. In the following days he repeated his role as a mediator at various points, traveling as far as Omsk before conditions made it clear that he could not reach Francis. He then began the slow journey back to eastern Siberia and Manchuria.²⁰

Harbin, Manchuria, September 4, 1918
My Dear Folks—

... That night [August 2] we entertained the Japanese troops in the YMCA building and everyone had a good time. . . . They put on a movie show for them and had tea, cakes, and cigarettes. The Japanese seemed much delighted at the reception. We were sorry we could not give them anything better, as we owe them something that will be hard to repay. I refer to all the courtesies shown us while in Nagasaki.

Yesterday the Czechs gave a big parade over town, all in marching order. They were eight abreast and it took the column twenty-five minutes to pass us. . . . It surely was a grand sight. . . . They were being reviewed by General Dietrichs.²¹

Colonel Emerson and party is expected to arrive here tonight after having been lost for

three months. We are all going to turn out to meet him in grand style.

There is a strike on the [Chinese Eastern Railway], all the engineers and machinists. . . . This looks like a boneheaded move on their part, as the railroad will be tied up and the Japanese will in all probability glom on to it as a "military necessity," and once they get their lunch hooks on this doroga it is going to be a long, long time before they will let loose of it. They have been wanting it a long time and now is their chance. These fool Russians will have no more jobs than a jackrabbit and I would like to see this very thing turn out that way, so it will teach them a lesson. When the Russian people will wake up and quit drinking tea and promenading around the parks, things will look brighter for the whole outfit.

I had to laugh the other night at the supper-table. We were talking about the Russian officers . . . when someone mentioned having seen one with a monocle. Up spoke a second lieutenant (a roundhouse foreman), bristling with indignation: "Yes, and the #S!@#9 wears it in one eye, too." . . .

Today the telegraphers have gone out on strike and the whole road is tied up. Looks more than ever now as though the Japanese [will] take the road. . . .

We are still having our drills every morning and it will not be long before we are regular soldiers. I am getting so I like it now, but it was a little disagreeable at first. We have a few men who have been in the regular army and know something about the drilling. We should have a regular army man with us to teach us all the movements but it does not look as though we [will] get one. . . .

September 5th. Cold, windy and rainy. Col. Emerson and his party got in shortly after midnight this morning and they have some weird tales to tell. . . . The party included the

²⁰The Druzhina, the forerunner of the Czech Legion, was commanded by Russian officers, one of whom was General Dietrichs. When the Soviets agreed to the Czech movement toward Vladivostok, Dietrichs was one of the few Russians to accompany the Czechs. Of the 70,000 Czechs who made their way eastward to Vladivostok, 57,459 were evacuated in the spring of 1920, together with another 12,000 wives, children, and officials. Some 13,000 members of the Czech Legion died in Russia.

²¹Emerson's lengthy report on his Siberian excursion is to be found in the National Archives, in U.S. Department of State, 1917-1922, File No. 861.77/541.



WHI (X3) 34780

American-made Baldwin locomotive, photographed by Keeler along the Chinese Eastern line in Manchuria.

Assistant Chief Lineman of the [Great Northern Railway], George Haynes by name. . . .

Sept. 7th. . . . I was talking with one of the men that was with Col. Emerson and he told me a few of the things they saw while they were out in the wilds of Siberia with the Czechs. When the Czechs captured prisoners they did not take them with them, if they happened to be Austrians, Germans, or Magyars and bore arms. They held court-martials and shot them shortly afterwards. He had the nerve to see about twenty disposed of in this manner, with a few Bolsheviks in with them. He said when the Bolsheviks, or Russians, would march up to face the firing squad, they would take their medicine like men, without a murmur or flinch. One Russian requested the favor of being allowed to tie his handkerchief over his eyes, and as he was about to do so, thought better of it, threw it away, looked his executioners squarely in the eye and said "Yah gotov" (I am ready) and took what was coming to him. He said it was absolutely disgusting to see the Huns preparing for their dope. They would fall on their knees and whine and beg for mercy, some of them being literally dragged into place. [Emerson's man] could not help but shout out: "Take your

medicine, you Hun sons of bitches! Edith Cavell did not whimper when she was before the same game you now are!" He was "sharply" reprimanded by one of the colonels.²²

When the Bolsheviks managed to take any Czech prisoners, they would cut off their ears, gouge out their eyes, cut off hands and feet, and otherwise unmentionably mutilate them. They do not take any Czech prisoners now. When it is necessary for the Czechs to retreat and leave their wounded on the field, they always see that those wounded men have at least one hand grenade each, and when it is certain they are about to be captured they take the grenade, strike it on the ground beside them, and bingo! No live Czech falls into the hands of the Bolsheviks. . . .

As 1918 wore on, the men of the Russian Railway Service Corps grew more and more angry over the political situation in Manchuria and the resulting interference in their work. Ever since the corps had arrived in the Far East the Japanese government had kept a close

²² Edith Cavell was an English nurse in Brussels during the German occupation. She was executed by the Germans in 1915 for aiding the escape of Allied prisoners.

watch on developments and, in Stevens' opinion, had made every effort to gain control of the railways themselves. Stevens implored that the railroads be taken under joint military control and operated by the RRSC.²³ The Japanese, of course, objected to this plan. While negotiations continued throughout the latter half of 1918, the Japanese poured some 72,000 troops into Manchuria and, for all practical purposes, became the masters of the Chinese Eastern Railway.

Harbin, Manchuria, September 14, 1918
My Dear Folks—

Eleven months ago today I severed my connections with the Big G. [Great Northern] and entered the service of my Uncle Samuel. This is the longest vacation I have ever had since I started to battle with the cruel world to keep bread in the mouths of my wife and babes. . . .

Our Colonel [Emerson] has gone to Vladivostok to attend some kind of conference, the outcome of which will decide the fate of the corps. We have been "fed up" so much on this kind of bunk that we do not pay any attention to it any more. The only way we will be convinced of a change is to see ourselves on the train going somewhere. . . .

Harbin, Manchuria, September 19, 1918
My Dear Folks—

. . . I have been going to the dentist for three days to have a couple of cavities filled and my teeth cleaned. . . . The dentist is the Russian wife of an American here. . . . She has a knack of alleviating your pain when she is working on your teeth by the simple expedient of putting her left arm around your head and putting your head on her ample bosom which rises and falls gently as she works the treadle of the drill, and, to quote O. Khayyam, late member of the Khayyam Tent & Awning Co., "O, wilderness were Paradise now!" . . .

I saw a Russian beat the tar out of a Chinese droshky driver last night, just because the Chink refused to go to one of the suburbs with him and his wife. . . . The Chink was game, though, and stuck by him through it all. You cannot blame the Russian, tho,

for beating the Chink. They are supposed to go where you want them to go.

The striking railway men have gone back to work under the stimulating effects of a proclamation by Gen. Guida, the Czech commander. In his proclamation he gave the men . . . just twelve hours to get busy, and those who still refused to work would be taken out on the prairie and shot. They worked. . . .

A lot of us men are getting some regular army overcoats from the commissary at Vladivostok for \$12.50. They are the same weight and material as our heavy winter coats but are not sheepskin lined. . . .

Sept. 22. The weather has been the same [much rain and cold] ever since I started this letter and if it does not change for the better I will be having flying-mice in my bell-house, which is Russian for "bats in my belfry." . . .

Regarding those overcoats. We now hear we will be unable to get them until we have authority from Washington. Am afraid by the time we get this it will be next summer, and we will not have need of them. . . .

Harbin, Manchuria, September 30, 1918
My Dear Folks—

I have a new job now: that of telegraphing, the wireless having been abandoned for the time being. Started in on first trick a few days ago, but am now on third trick, the force being changed around every week to give all the men a chance to work the day shift.

Might as well describe the dispatchers' office and let you know what we have to contend with. It is about 10 by 14 and most of the room is taken up by the tables. There are two Russian dispatchers, one interpreter, one American instructor, and one operator, making five in all, but as a rule there are about ten people in the room most of the time, all talking at once. The one window is kept closed a great portion of the time, for one thing the Russian *cannot* stand is fresh air. . . . The Russians dearly love to talk on the least provocation, and it is one continual noise here. Trains are run on the staff system, each train being delivered a staff-card issued by the dispatcher. . . . The Russians can read by sound but they usually use the tape machines and it keeps them busy reeling it up, and sometimes it gets all over. . . .

²³ Stevens to Lansing (August 26, 1918), *FRUS, Russia, 1918*, III: 239.



WHI (X3) 34789

Keeler (center, arrow) and fellow members of the Russian Railway Service Corps enjoying a bit of physical training prior to their departure for Vladivostok.

I am learning the Russian telegraph code now, and believe me, it is a lulu. It has to be copied in the Russian script which makes it rather hard. I can copy about eight or nine words a minute, but this is equivalent to about fifteen English words. It is funny to hear them send a word of about twenty letters; it seems as if the guy would *never* get through. I will be glad when I can copy the stuff as fast as it is sent. . . .

Harbin, Manchuria, October 6th, 1918
My Dear Folks—

. . . We have been having quite a social week . . . entertaining the "Tommies" and "Poilus" who have been passing through. We had a large crowd of the English over at the YMCA the earlier part of the week. . . . All of them had seen service in France and Belgium and had a great many stories to relate. What struck me as rather odd was the number of American songs they sang—"Oh! Johnny," "Over There," "They Grow Wild, Simply Wild, Over Me," "There's a Long, Long Trail," and several others. One of their own, "Blighty Is the Place for Me" was rather catchy, and you should have heard them all sing it! . . .

We did not mix in very much with the French as only one or two of us could talk their language, and very few of them could parlevous with us. Several of us, however, managed to get along with them fine through the medium of their "vin blanc," or white wine, so dear to their heart, and of which there happened to be a large supply here. It is almost like vinegar, but as far as I could see, it is not as intoxicating as beer. Maybe it was of inferior quality, but if it was, the Frenchies were too polite to make any mention of it. . . .

We have discontinued our daily morning drill. The boys did not take to it very kindly and the Major who did the drilling was not very popular with us, and we had him going up in the air all the time.²⁴ He used to delight in drilling us before a lot of Czechs, who must have been in agony to control their mirth at seeing such a pitiful spectacle. [The Major] gave us a farewell address that made Washington's Farewell Address to his Army sound like a comic sketch of the slapstick, seltzer-bottle, "who-was-that-woman-I-

²⁴ Major C. T. Spear, former freight agent with the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway Company.

saw-with-you-on-the-street-this-morning" kind. He regretted very much that we did not embrace the golden opportunity afforded us by these drills, etc. etc. etc. Anyway, the drill died a natural death. Every one is elated in consequence. We are wondering what they are going to spring on us next. . . .

Harbin, Manchuria, October 12, 1918

My Dear Folks—

. . . On the night of the tenth we received a bulletin from Vladivostok giving a copy of the German note asking for an armistice, also the note in reply. I would surely like to see the editorials of the leading papers back home. . . . I presume that this note from Germany has some kind of a string to it and is made to trick the people. . . .²⁵

Hinton just came in and said there would be a trainload of German and Austrian prisoners in soon, and I guess I will go down and make faces at them.²⁶ There are also eight more cars of refugees in from Samara. . . .

Some say we are going to be here all winter and some say we are not, so you can take your choice. I have passed the stage when I take any stock in the rumors floating about. About a month ago we were told we would know our fate in ten days. . . . The Colonel made the boast at that time that "he was either going to do something or get off the crockery." Maybe he has an acute case of dysentery, eh? Perhaps someone, just for a joke, put some adhesive around the rim, something like Aunt Jemima's plaster: "The more you try to get it off, the more it sticks the faster." . . .

Harbin, Manchuria, October 15, 1918

My Dear Folks—

. . . Last night we were all down to the station to receive [Roland Morris, U.S. Ambassador to Japan], on his way to China on some business or other. He was accompanied by twenty-five picked privates as a guard, and it surely did our eyes good to see them. . . .

²⁵ By the first days of October, 1918, the German military leaders had concluded that victory was impossible. They therefore appealed directly to President Wilson for a peace based on his Fourteen Points.

²⁶ First Lieutenant G. P. Hinton, former train dispatcher with the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway Company.

I thought the Czechs were a fine bunch of soldiers, but I am now convinced that our own "doughboys" have everything backed off the earth. I was following a few of them on my way to work this noon, and you ought to see the Chinks and Russkies stop and rubber at them after they passed. They were carrying their guns and packs and had on their overcoats and were walking at a good gait, sturdy, substantial, and strong, great big fellows. . . .

So far I have seen American, British, Czech, Russian, and French troops, and expect to see some Italians before long. I forgot to count the Chinese and Japanese.

I am learning to use the Russian typewriter now. . . . I think that in a couple of weeks I will be able to copy the Russian stuff on a machine about as well as I copy the American code. . . . We have a lot of code messages to send here and they are all written in capital letters, and we have found that we are getting them wrong on account of subconsciously [transposing] the Russian characters. When we come across a H, we send it as an N, and a P as an R. . . . As I was telling Pa once, their N is like our B, only you pronounce it like a V. The first 100 years are always the hardest in learning the alphabet. . . .

Oct. 16th. This morning the Ambassador to Japan, Mr. Morris, gave all the boys a dandy talk in the barracks, and told them we did not know what an important factor the R.R.S. had been for the last nine months. . . .

The yellow boys are getting rather chesty around here and it will not be long before they will be told where to head in. . . . The Russians wanted them to run the railroad in preference to us, and now that they have a foothold here, they are giving the Russkies just all they need. . . . If [the Russians] wish to work for the Js. instead of working with us, why, let them hop to it. They will wake up yet. But guess Uncle Sam is watching this situation as closely as anything else. . . .

I forgot to say that Ambassador Morris told the boys that we were going to do what we started out to do and not to forget it. It might be we will be here after peace is declared. The bulletins are getting more favorable every day and it does not look as though it would be a great while before Kaiser Bill will have to give in. We will probably, in any event, be here all winter, for they have repaired a leak



WH: (X3) 34801

These American soldiers served as bodyguards to Roland Morris, U.S. ambassador to Japan.

in the urinal and put in a handful of fresh mothballs. This must mean something. . . .

Oct. 17th. The Italian troop train arrived this morning and the men are a fine looking bunch, with greyish-green uniforms and soft felt hats, with a sassy looking feather stuck in the side, evidently plucked from some fowl enroute. They are a clean, prosperous-looking company. . . .

It is raining tonight and all the boys are getting out the old settlers' sign, and talking over old times back in the States. Some of them are regaling themselves with reminiscences of the time when this organization was being formed. They have now arrived at the time we left St. Paul and are talking about Major S. T. Cantrell who used to be a superintendent somewhere out west, and nicknamed "Little Napoleon" from his bodily and facial resemblance to that celebrity. The day we left he called the whole outfit together in the [Northern Pacific] building, and guards posted at the elevator shafts, and told us we were to leave that night at seven thirty, and to LFT

NOTHING BUT DEATH DETAIN US! BRITR! From the secrecy that was kept at that time one would imagine we were a bunch of the Blue Devils, or the Ladies from Hell, about to "go over the top." . . .²⁷

The boys have come to the conclusion that if peace is declared soon, and we are to remain here for any length of time, the only thing that will induce them to stay is a noise like a lot of stove lids rattling together—meaning, of course, more money.

Sunday, Oct. 20. We got some of our clothing supplies yesterday. I got a serge shirt, a pair of pants and an overcoat. My pants are all right around the waist but they are too darned long and large around the hips. . . . The majority of the boys got all kinds of fits, ranging from perfect fits to epileptic fits. The overcoats are the regulation army coats. . . .

²⁷ The Blue Devils were the American 88th Division; the Ladies from Hell were the British Highland regiments, so called by the Germans they fought against in France.

Harbin, Manchuria, October 26, 1918

My Dear Folks—

. . . We had quite a snow storm the other day. . . It reminded me of our first night when we arrived at Vladivostok, which was in a blizzard. You see the Russian woman at her best in cold weather. Their cheeks are as rosy as apples and they are as healthy as young steers. Presume this is largely on account of wearing no corsets. You might say that I am susceptible to their charms, but if I am, the whole corps is. They all dress sensibly and neatly. They tell us that we will thoroughly enjoy ourselves here this winter as there are sleigh-rides, dances, parties and skating. I am going to mix in with the rest and have a good time. If any one . . . thinks I am running around the streets here with a hymn book and a harp in my hands, he is mistaken. He is also mistaken if he thinks I am also running around with a vodka bottle and a list of the red-light districts in my pockets. . .

The following letter mentions Serbian refugees. Strange as it may seem, hundreds of Serbian refugees turned up in Siberia and Manchuria in October of 1918. According to Carl Ackerman's account in the New York Times, 1,055 Serbians and Montenegrins were discovered living in box cars in the Harbin freight yards. Driven from their homes by the war, they traveled to the Russian city of Odessa and boarded trains on February 19. Although they were promised land by the Russian Provisional government, the Serbians soon became victims of bureaucratic red tape and were shunted from one town to the next. By the time they reached Harbin, 190 had died of starvation and exposure.²⁸

Harbin, October 28, 1918

My Dear Folks—

. . . Shortly after I sat down to work, in blew two men, in leather coats and tortoise rimmed glasses and handed me a lot of press dope to be sent to Vladi and cabled to the *New York Herald* and *World* from there. You can imagine my surprise to have them introduce themselves as Carl W. Ackerman and Herman Bernstein, both writers for the *Sat. Eve. Post*.²⁹ They had a lot of sob-stuff about the Serbian refugees that would make the Kaiser weep if

²⁸ *New York Times*, October 30, 1918.



WHI (X3) 34388

Young Russian woman wearing the uniform of the Russian Railway Service Corps, Manchuria, 1919.

he saw it. Presume you will see some of their articles in the *Post* after a while. I do not know how long they are going to be in this part of the world. Am going to try to have a talk with them regarding what they saw in Belgium and France. Ackerman is a very or-

²⁹ Carl W. Ackerman was a noted reporter and later dean of the Columbia University School of Journalism. In 1917-1918 he was a special writer for the *Saturday Evening Post* in Mexico, Spain, France, and Switzerland. He covered the Siberian intervention for the *New York Times*. His interesting account of these days is *Trailing the Bolsheviks* (New York, 1919). Herman Bernstein, founder of the national Jewish daily *The Day*, was war correspondent for the *New York Herald*.

dinary-looking young fellow. Bernstein, I should imagine, is of Hebrew extraction, from the name and features. Both are dandy fellows.

Well, sir, the Russians are rapidly absorbing our methods of railroading. There is a Russian conductor in here now, giving the Russian dispatcher h— for delaying him twenty minutes up the line. They are both yelling their heads off and cussing each other something scandalous. The interpreter says so. Two months ago they would have thought nothing of a two-hour delay. A favorite cuss word, or phrase, is "chort sdve," meaning, literally, "devils about two." When a man says that, you know he is just about out of patience. The French has "A thousand thunders," but the Russian contents himself with about two devils. . . .

Somewhere in Siberia, November, 1918
[Keeler was stationed in Harbin until
the end of November]

My Dear Folks—

. . . Our friend Ackerman has gone on west and is sending in all kinds of sob stuff about the Serbian refugees. Got a press message from him the other day from Manchuria Station saying he saw girls with their eyes gouged out, and tongues cut out; women with arms broken in two and three places; men and women with big scars across necks and faces caused by being lashed—all done by the Bolsheviks. All of them are ragged, dirty, and nearly starved, but the Red Cross got them pretty well fed up and clothed now. They are on their way to Vladivostok but it is not yet decided where their final destination is. One woman, he says, had her face burned, and, upon questioning her as to the reason, she claimed that the Bolsheviks had thrown her baby in the fire and she got her face burned trying to rescue it, and was pulled away by her friends. I guess Kaiser Bill will have a whole lot to answer for in the hereafter. . . .

Somewhere in Siberia, November 10, 1918
My Dear Folks—

Here it is a year, lacking a day, that we left St. Paul for Russia, filled with high hopes and great ambitions. Today we are practically as far advanced in our work as we were a year ago.

. . . Was down to the passenger station watching the crowds getting on and off trains and came across a Korean who had been in Chicago for fifteen years. . . . We got into conversation and he invited me down to see a Korean geisha dance. We took a droschky and went to this place and had to wait a while until the girls had their performance before other guests, and in the meantime, he ordered a supper for us. We were in a spare room where two little Korean girls were sleeping, as all the other rooms were occupied. In about half an hour they brought us in a regular Korean dinner, and it sure was good. The main thing was a metal dish with a flue through the center, filled with burning charcoal. Around the flue was the container itself, filled with a bubbling mass of vegetables, meats, nuts, eggs, and mushrooms. . . .

We had just got comfortably settled at eating when two geisha girls came in. One carried a large drum resembling an hourglass, with two ends over which skin was stretched, and she beat one end with her hand and the other with a small reed, and made a dickens of a racket, and the other one sang. It was fierce, and I wondered why it did not wake up the kids in the bed, but I guess they were used to it. I do not think the dance is as pretty as the Japanese, but anyway, it was entertaining. The dress is rather odd, making them look like little grandmothers. They did not wear many ornaments and were plainly, though richly, dressed. . . .

Refugees are coming in almost daily and some of them are in a pitiable shape. The Red Cross is grabbing them as soon as they show up and are doing what they can for them. Winter is coming on and it will be all the harder. Tonight's bulletin has an item about some commission in the States forming for the purpose of helping out the Russians. Perhaps it is not my place to say so, but if it were left to me, I would let the Russians fight it out themselves. In Ukraina, where there was a scanty grain supply, we hear that they used two-thirds of it for the manufacture of Vodka. I think this winter will do the whole damned outfit a world of good, even if thousands are starved and frozen to death. If they are like any of the bunch we see around here they will certainly not get much sympathy



WHI (X3) 54788

Serbian refugees disembarking from their train, photographed by Keeler at a railroad siding in Harbin, Manchuria.

from us. They seem to be about the least patriotic people I have ever seen. . . . Give them enough to fill their guts, and vodka to make them smell like a distillery, and the whole country can go to the devil, or what is worse, to the Germans, for all they care. . . .

Although the war ended on November 11, 1918, the Armistice had no effect on the Siberian situation. The American government was not disposed to pull her forces out of the Far East and leave the Japanese in control of the area. American troops and the RRSC remained while negotiations among the Allies on the question of railroad operations continued.

Somewhere in Siberia, November 18, 1918
My Dear Folks—

. . . We had a big dance at the barracks to celebrate the licking of the Huns. The Colonel spread himself by putting on a big show, and at midnight they had a dandy dinner. . . .

Everyone is conjecturing when we will be sent home. Some think that it will be before spring. There is also an opinion that we will be requested to stay here and continue the work we started out to do, but from the looks of things, there will be very few that will stay here, because "grapenuts." Undoubtedly the

majors will stick, for they have a dandy job, \$5,000 per year and nothing to do. We are all looking forward to the time when we will get instructions to get ready to go home, and are hoping to get there in the spring. It seems rather odd, but most of us would rather spend the winter here and get home "when the spring is in the air." . . .

Somewhere in Siberia, November 26, 1918
[Actually, Keeler was in Chang Chun, Manchuria]

My Dear Folks—

. . . I have lost my happy home at the place I have been stationed for the last seven months, and have been transferred 150 miles further south, permanently. I was down here a few days ago to relieve some of the boys, in order that they might go to Harbin and get measured for their new uniforms. . . .

On my first trip down here I rode in Mr. Stevens' private car with his interpreter. . . . It is very well furnished and at one time belonged to the Minister of Ways and Communications at Petrograd before the revolution. Many notables have travelled in this car, among them being Kerensky himself. Being of a rather sentimental turn of mind at the time, I went and lay down on all the

beds, saying: "I have slept in the same bed that Kerensky did." I went to the toilet and thought: "Kerensky himself has sat on this very seat, his hand has taken the toilet paper off this very same hook, and pulled the same chain that I am now pulling." I was still in this same frame of mind as I went out, so I softly closed the door on those hallowed precincts. . . .

[Upon arriving] I met one of our men here who took me to our house. You understand we have a dandy little brick house, with four bedrooms, a dining room, a kitchen and a sleeping room for the Chinese servants. . . .

We have a dandy Chinese cook, a servant, and a coolie to take care of our wants, and their wages are twenty-eight dollars gold per month for all three. I hardly know whether to think I am better off here than at Harbin or not, but am inclined to think I am.

That afternoon the two of us walked over to Chang Chun, about a mile, and took a letter of introduction to the Japanese consul, who gave us an invitation to attend a "victory banquet" at the Yamato Hotel that night. . . .

Referring to my notes I came across the following notation: *Describe the shrew at the telegraph office. Horosho.* She is the telephone clerk there and her business is to collect toll for the use of the line between here and Harbin. The Chinks use it the most and they call up to get the Harbin rate of exchange on yen and rubles. She sits at a table and lets them in to the fone one at a time and never gives them a civil answer, but when one of them comes inside to await his turn, she always slaps them and kicks them, and when they stick their heads through the little window in the door she amuses herself and the rest of the bunch inside by dipping her pen in the ink and snapping ink in their faces. She is in perpetual ill-humor, and the only time I have seen her smile once is today, when she caught a Chink taking a drink out of a water pitcher near her table. I do not mean to say that she smiled at the time, but when she jerked it away from him and threw all the water in his face and heard his cussing, THEN she smiled. She carries a face that Heinz, the pickle man, would be glad to buy, for he could use [her face] to look at the pickles and no vinegar would be necessary.

Saw a couple of Chinks fighting today just because one of them said "Ee-mow!" to the other. They do most of their fighting with their feet, and, as they wear slippers, no damage is done. I learned later that "Ee-mow" is a choice Chinese cuss-word and is used only on special occasions. . . . It has something to do with a deadly insult to your ancestors.

Coming down here the last time, I met a little girl twelve years old on the train and asked for her name and address so I could send her a Christmas card. She seemed tickled to death and we had quite a chat before she got to her home town. Told her I had a little girl about her age and then another, and she asked me if I were not lonesome for them, and you bet I told her I was. . . .

Somewhere in Siberia, December 1, 1918
My Dear Folks—

. . . Yesterday I went over to Chang Chun with another of our men and visited China town. We called on a tailor who speaks English and who promised to take us to a Chinese theatre soon. . . . It was quite an interesting walk through the Chinese section. It is a large business street with nothing in sight except Chinese stores, peddlers, and beggars. I saw all kinds of Chinese tobacco piled up in sheaves in front of the stores. . . . I saw a few beggars and they are about the most repulsive specimens of humanity I have ever seen. They run after you, wringing their hands and whining like a little kid. We came across one lying in front of a store, about ready to die, and they shoved him from one door to another, for it is the law that if anyone dies in front of your house you have to bury him. Naturally, no one wants to go to that expense, so they kick him on to the next door. Presume the game gets rather exciting when the beggar commences to breathe his last, and that bets are sometimes made as to who will be "it." . . .

Somewhere in Siberia, December 6, 1918
My Dear Cousin Roy—

. . . You made mention in your letter of "hardships and sacrifices." Oh, boy! If you could see some of the hardships and sacrifices you would weep with envy. About the only hardship we have to contend with is figuring

out what to do next. Etaw prahvda, as the Russians say.

Since coming to this place I have been a little lonely, for there is absolutely nothing doing here in the shape of excitement, and if we want to have a change we walk over to Chang Chun . . . and sit around the lobby of the Yamato Hotel and listen to the tales of the commercial men who have been in the Far East for several years. It is surely amusing to listen to some of the stuff they spill. . . .

Our work is practically nothing. There are three of us and we are supposed to work three shifts of eight hours each, but there is absolutely no reason for that, for we receive only one or two telegrams per day and send about that number. . . . Arduous as hell, I'll tell the whole world.

We have named our house boy Doctor Ying. He waits on the table and he will always ask us if we want any of the "white medicine," referring to the Russian national drink. So we all make believe we are very sick, and hold our hands to our stomachs and groan dismally, which tickles him to death, and he gets out the "white medicine" for us. Now, do not throw up your mitts in holy horror at the idea of me having vodka with my meals. In fact, that is the only way to drink it, and it does one good in this part of the world. Of course, if you wish to make a hog of yourself and swill it down, it will get you sooner or later. The only time I ever touch it is when I eat. It is as clear as crystal and hath a slightly bitter taste at first, but after one absorbs two or three it tastes rather sweet. I am not saying that the stuff is non-intoxicating, for one *can* get "numb" on it, but be all right the next morning and not have a "hangover" like when stewed on whiskey. . . . The Russians claim it aids digestion and I am not able to prove to the contrary. . . .

Somewhere in Siberia, December 12, 1918
My Dear Folks—

It is a bright, snappy morning, just zero by our thermometer. . . . Might as well tell you about the trip we took to Chinatown last night to give the Chinese red-light district the [once over].

. . . There is a tailor in Chinatown [who] speaks pretty good English so we got him to

take us around. . . . He decided we should begin at the bottom and work up the scale, so he took us to a "No. 3" house, meaning a third-class house. We wound in and out of dark alleys, nearly suffocated from soft-coal smoke, for it was very cold . . . and each room had a stove going full blast with the stovepipe projecting out in the alley just above the windows. . . . Finally we came to a No. 3 house. We walked into a large open court where there were a lot of customers waiting and five or six employees of the place yelling to beat the band. They were "paging" the party waiting, and one could have heard them a mile. There were six of us in the party and we were finally admitted to a room about as large as our kitchen where there were chairs and a table. We sat down and presently a Chinese woman, an old one, brought us some dandy tea and a little dish of sunflower seeds for each of us. The tailor asked to have the girls come in, so she had three come in, very nicely dressed, washed, and combed, and the ages were *nine, ten, and thirteen*. I thought at first they were only kids that lived there, but they were the bread, or I should say, the rice-winners for that particular section of the house. The tailor said they were sold to the house and made to work it out. We sat around a little while, put a couple of yen on the table, and walked out.

We then went a couple of blocks and came to a "No. 2" house. It was much on the same [order], with the exception that the rooms were better furnished, there were more girls, and the place was much cleaner. We went in the room and a Chink called the girls who filed past the door, looked in, and, if they saw no sign of being wanted, passed on. The bunch finally called in three singing girls, the eldest being thirteen, so we sat down and had tea and seeds and cigarettes, and presently a musician came outside the door and started his fiddle and the girls sang. Of all the caterwauling I ever heard, this was the worst. The fiddler sawed away for dear life and the girls screamed at the top of their voices. It made one think of a ward of the violently insane. We stuck around for about ten minutes then started for home, leaving the tailor at his shop. After we got into Japanese territory again we went to a Korean house. There



WHi (X3) 34799

At least four nationalities—American, Russian, Japanese, and Chinese—are represented in Keeler's snapshot of a teahouse in Harbin, Manchuria.

were about a dozen girls there, dressed in their native costumes and one spoke very good English.

I forgot to say that we did not visit a "No. 1" house on account of it being filled up, and we were in a hurry to get back home to meet the ten o'clock passenger. . . .

Keeler's opinion in the following letter that negotiations were about to end was a bit premature. The Inter-Allied Railroad Agreement was not reached until March, 1919.

Somewhere in Siberia, December 22, 1918
My Dear Folks—

. . . It looks now as though negotiations [are] about to close and that we will run the

Chinese Eastern Railway after January first. Negotiations have been [in progress] ever since we landed at Nagasaki and we all hope they will come to an end, one way or another. We are getting tired of idling away our time for apparently nothing.

We may have accomplished one thing, and that was to keep the yellow boys from grabbing anything. Everyone around here loves them about as much as the devil loves holy water. I was talking to a British Sergeant Major the other day and he said he saw with his own eyes the following incident. He happened to go into the freight room of the South Manchuria Railway for something and he saw a crowd of Japanese employees and



WHI (X3) 34782

Japanese soldiers on the railroad station platform, Harbin, Manchuria.

someone in civilian clothes gathered around a Chinese coolie, near a stove. They had the coolie tied down and one of them had a pair of tongs and was holding live coals on the coolie's face, which seemed to tickle the Japanese a great deal. When they saw the British officer they immediately stopped their amusement and took the coolie to another room where the [Englishman] was not allowed to enter. Yet the yellow sons of bitches call themselves civilized.

Don't ever let any one tell you that the Japanese are in the war for humanity's sake. I have heard of a great many instances of extreme cruelty practiced on the poor Chinese until sometimes I wish I were on the scene with my 45. Presume it is a good thing I do not carry it around with me, for I am liable to come upon something some time where my temper would get the better of my discretion. . . . God help the poor Chinks if Japan ever gets a good grip on the celestial kingdom. . . . [The Japanese] are due for a good trim-

ming some day and I hope they will get it from the country they think they have bluffed. You can bet your last kopek that China is looking to Uncle Sam for help in many ways. The Russians hate the Japanese, as the following incident will show. Coming back from the dance at Yaomin we could not get anything better than a third-class car which was filled with Japanese soldiers . . . and several of us managed to get a part of a seat on which a Japanese soldier was sleeping. I sat down next to the aisle and a Russian girl sat between me and the "makahka." She was pretty tired so she made a pillow out of something she was carrying, put it on the Jap's shoulder and settled for a nap. I asked her why she preferred a Japanese to sleep on to an American, and she said that all the Japanese were good for were to be used as a doormat or pillow. I finally convinced her it was poor taste to show her dislike in that manner, so she switched over to me. . . .

Somewhere in Siberia, January 5, 1919
My Dear Folks--

. . . Was up to Harbin for Christmas and had a dandy time. Got there about 11 P.M. on Christmas Eve and there was a big dance on when I got to the barracks. . . . Everyone had on their new uniforms with standing collars and their new shoes and it made me feel like a tramp, but after having a couple of punches I felt as though I were equal to any one there. . . . We had breakfast at nine o'clock and the real dinner at four. . . . After dinner the Colonel gave us a little speech, then we all adjourned to the ball room and everyone that could, and some that could not, sang songs for about an hour. . . . I came back next day wishing I were located there permanently, but this wore off in a day or two. . . .

I do not know much to write about as there is absolutely no news. Hereafter you can look only for short letters, and if anything of interest occurs, I will write long ones. One might as well be out in the Gobi Desert and try to write about what was going on there. . . .

Somewhere in Siberia, February 15, 1919
My Dear Roy--

Just got back last night from Harbin after having been up there for a week, waiting for my second uniform. . . .

The 27th Inf. Band gave all of us RRers a treat there by coming up from Vladi and putting on a minstrel show and concert. Everyone attended and was permitted to bring one Russian friend. I brought two on account of a misunderstanding. . . .

Harbin told us today that they were hiring all the interpreters they could get and that it is "rumored" we will be at work very soon. D-- these rumors. . . .

In March of 1919 the much discussed Inter-Allied Railway Agreement was reached for the operation of the Trans-Siberian and Chinese Eastern railroads. An Inter-Allied Committee, composed of one representative from each of the Allied powers having troops in Siberia, was charged with the general supervision of the railways. In addition, a Technical Board was created to oversee the technical and economic management of the railways, which were placed under the protection of the Allied military forces. Japan and the United States agreed privately that John F. Stevens

would become president of the Technical Board, able to issue orders to the heads of the various railroads. Under this arrangement, the RRSC worked for the Technical Board of the Inter-Allied Committee.

As the historian Betty Unterberger remarks, "The primary concern of the American military forces now became the restoration and protection of the railways" and, in effect, "served to aid the anti-Bolshevik cause." The RRSC and the American military, therefore, "became active participants in the Russian civil war."³⁰

Somewhere in Siberia, March 1, 1919
My Dear Cousins--

. . . We have had another death in our corps at Harbin, making two so far. "Flu" and pneumonia. Just got over a slight attack of the "flu" myself. Was in bed three days but am all right now. It came on me in thirty minutes and was too sick to go to Harbin to the hospital, so broke it up with hot vodkas and cold towels. Was "out of my head" two nights, hollering for the "League of Nations," pocket books, fountain pens, etc., etc. . . .

We are expecting to hear daily that we are going into Siberia. The conference at Vladi is about ended and we certainly should know something soon. If we are to lie around another month I am going to put in my resignation and go home as soon as possible. I have been over here nearly a year--since April 15. Quite a bunch has resigned already and expect to leave for home soon. Expect thirty dispatchers, twenty-four stenogs, and some mechanical men [to arrive soon].

Well, I see I am nearing the end of my paper, so will close. . . .

THIS is the last letter in the Martin Papers, although Keeler probably continued penning notes from the Far East. Soon after the Inter-Allied Railroad Agreement was reached, Keeler was transferred to Pogranichnaya, north of Vladivostok near the Siberian-Manchurian border.

But Keeler's disenchantment with his position, evident throughout his letters, remained

³⁰ Unterberger, *America's Siberian Expedition*, 117.



WHI (X3) 34777

Fayette W. Keeler and a pair of Japanese soldiers in winter gear at Kwan Chenzi, Manchuria, 1919.

strong. The long periods of idleness and the difficulties of working amidst the political turmoil of Siberia weighed heavily on his mind. On May 1, 1919, Keeler's name appeared on a list of officers requesting relief as soon as possible.³¹ The following November 16, Keeler and several other members of the RRSC sailed on the Army transport *Thomas* from Vladivostok for the United States. The entire Russian Railway Service Corps was withdrawn from Siberia in April, 1920, at the same time that American military forces were called home.

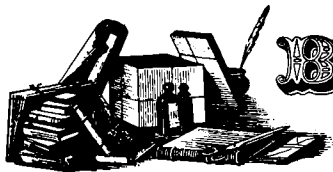
After his return from the Far East, Keeler rejoined the Great Northern Railway. His fascination with radio and telegraphy continued for the rest of his life. He was one of the organizers of the first radio station in Superior (the forerunner of WEBC), taught tele-

graphy for years at the Vocational School in Superior, and guest lectured on methods of grinding lenses at what was then the Superior State Teachers College. During World War II Keeler served in the U.S. Port Security Force of the Coast Guard.

In 1948, after retiring from the Great Northern, Keeler moved to Mesa, Arizona, where he became a licensed ham radio operator, an activity through which he gained many friends throughout the country. He died in Mesa on October 6, 1952, and was buried in Superior. In the words of his daughter, Helen Keeler Smith, he lived "a very full life of learning, teaching, and developing equipment to meet his needs."³² In the process he gained the admiration of many. On the day of his funeral, ham stations nationwide remained silent for one minute in memory of "Pops" Keeler.

³¹ National Archives, Record Group 43, Entry 338, Box 20.

³² Helen Keeler Smith to the editor, April 19, 1978.



BOOK REVIEWS

The Prairie People: Continuity and Change in Potawatomi Indian Culture, 1665-1965. By JAMES A. CLIFTON. (The Regents Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1977. Pp. xx, 529. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, maps, appendices, index. \$22.50.)

This study of the Potawatomi Indians begins in the dim corridors of the prehistoric past and discusses the history and social evolution of these people down to the mid-1960's. In doing so the author includes much that is significant about the history and development of the Midwest and about American-Indian relations. Most books which discuss Indians do so in one of two ways. Either they focus on the ethnological side of things such as kinship relationships, religious rites, and physical artifacts, or they consider the tribesmen and their dealings with the European and American governments. Clifton's book reflects this dichotomy, but rather than using one of these approaches, he attempts to combine them. The result is a model of excellence for the ethnohistory of a single tribe.

The author presents the Potawatomi at the time they first encountered Europeans as including fifty to sixty village-sized bands or groups, each more or less independent and showing little sense of allegiance to the tribe. Although their earliest recorded settlements lay along the eastern shore of lower Michigan, the tribesmen moved frequently because of wars, economic interests, population pressure, and later a conscious policy of territorial expansion.

After discussing archeological evidence for the origin and location of the tribe, Clifton follows its fortunes more or less chronologically. Between 1668 and 1761 the French played a major role in Potawatomi development. After 1761, with British victory in the French and Indian War, the British and Americans functioned as outside forces acting upon the Indians. Following the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, Clifton feels that Americans became the most important non-Indian element in Potawatomi life. By that time the tribe occupied settlements in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. As the United States expanded, tribal boundaries steadily shrank, and during the decades 1837-1847, the Removal Policy forced all but a few scattered remnants out of the Great Lakes region. From there they migrated north and east into Canada or south and west to Iowa and Kansas.

In explaining Potawatomi development, the author notes that the tendency to factionalism and to thinking in village rather than tribal terms explains much of the tribes' early history. In addition, he sees few established Indian leaders or chiefs at first, and traces the evolution of village and band leaders toward having the kinds of power which the whites thought they had. From the 1760's on, Clifton sees the Metis, or partially assimilated mixed-bloods, as playing an increasingly important role in tribal affairs, particularly in terms of trade, warfare, and negotiations. The long-range impact of missionaries, of Indian agents, and, in particular, of traders demonstrates the complexity of Indian-American relations. For

example, the conflict over whether the Indians should move to western Iowa or into Kansas during the removal era resulted from the demands of competing groups of traders and missionaries who wanted to maintain their economic ties or influence within the tribe. Finally, Clifton acknowledges the long-standing determination of many Potawatomi to retain their culture despite the best efforts of traders, missionaries, or agents to turn them into mere copies of the whites.

Clifton's research is wide-ranging, his bibliography thorough, and, except for a few lapses into ethnological jargon, his prose is interesting. Numerous maps clarify points in the text, while illustrations span the years 1600-1972. Aside from a few minor typographical errors, one item found in the notes but not the bibliography, and the author's strong aversion to the "usual racial biases of historians," there is little with which to quarrel. In sum, this book gives the story of the Potawatomi people with accuracy, interest, and feeling. It may be read with anticipation by those interested in Midwestern history and Indian affairs.

ROGER L. NICHOLS

University of Arizona

The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present. By ROBERT F. BERKHOFFER, JR. (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1978. Pp. xvii, 261. Illustrations, notes, index. \$15.00.)

Since the publication in 1968 of Winthrop Jordan's *White Over Black*, there has been a need for a similar book dealing with white thought about the American Indians. Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., has partially filled this gap, for in a work of less than 200 pages of text he has surveyed white ideas about the Indians over the past 500 years. Rather than being a work of original research, this book is a thoughtful, extended essay that synthesizes the secondary literature on the subject—an ambitious task in itself given the voluminous writings about Native Americans.

Berkhofer focuses on the invention and use of the idea of the "Indian," a term which Europeans created to characterize all the native inhabitants of the Americas. Instead of seeing Native Americans as individuals with differing beliefs, values, and practices, Euro-

peans attributed common "Indian" characteristics to them. Berkhofer stresses the fundamental continuity in white thought, which he believes is more important than the discontinuities. He finds several "persisting fundamental images and themes" among the thought of colonists and later white Americans. Whites generalized from the practices of one tribe to all Indians, analyzed the Indians in terms of their lack of white characteristics, and made moral judgments in describing the Indians. The Indian was an ahistorical, unchanging figure who existed in the present in the same ways as he did in the early contact period. He was often portrayed either as the good Indian—free, simple, and innocent—or the bad Indian—licentious, brutal, and deceitful. These images and stereotypes obstructed attempts to understand Native Americans as they really existed.

Berkhofer examines how these images of the Indian have persisted in science, art, and policy despite the political, economic, and intellectual changes that have occurred over the last five centuries. Ranging from Christian theories on the origins of man to modern cultural anthropology, Berkhofer analyzes the scientific image of the Indian. He also explores the continuity of white thought in literature, art, and philosophy and traces ideas about the Indian from the captivity narratives to recent motion pictures. The lengthiest section of the book outlines white policy toward Native Americans from colonization to the "Red Power" movement. Berkhofer works hard to escape the pitfalls of "presentism" and rightly acknowledges that even modern social scientists, artists, and policymakers view the Indian from their own ideological perspective.

A book of this sort, of course, cannot claim to be definitive and complete, for it has to treat briefly many complex subjects. As a result, as Berkhofer himself admits, he has had to emphasize the similarities in the thought of various, differing individuals. This is the book's major shortcoming, for in trying to draw a coherent picture, Berkhofer glosses over some genuine differences among whites and the practical implications of those differences. In a way, to speak of the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of "whites" is very much like characterizing all "Indians" as being alike. The different desires and needs of various whites as well as their different degrees of contact with Native Americans affected their thought. These variations are also an important part of the story of European and

American thought about the Indians, and need to be examined.

In the more than fifty pages of notes, Berkhofer supplies a useful bibliography on the subject of white images of the Indian, but it is difficult to use. The exigencies of printing costs perhaps dictated the placement of the notes at the end of the book, but they would have been easier to use if running heads indicating which pages they referred to had been provided. The book also contains eleven illustrations which were selected with care to reinforce Berkhofer's argument rather than being merely decorative.

Berkhofer has written an important book that ought to be read by anyone interested in American history, not only specialists. He ought to be commended for trying to make sense out of a large and difficult subject which is so vitally tied to the mainstream of American history as a whole. The book does not close the subject, but will provoke further thought and discussion on the question of white attitudes toward Native Americans.

MICHAEL E. STEVENS

*South Carolina
Department of Archives and History*

Norway to America: A History of the Migration. By INGRID SEMMINGSEN. Translated by EINAR HAUGEN. (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1978. Pp. vii, 213. Illustrations, maps, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$12.95.)

This is certainly not the first book to give an account of Norwegian migration to America, but it is a rather special book because it is written by someone who has devoted a career to the study of the subject. Ingrid Semmingsen, professor of history at the University of Oslo, is one of the most respected authorities on nineteenth-century Norwegian emigration and settlement in America. Her two-volume work, *Veien mot vest: Utvandringen fra Norge til Amerika* (The Way West: Emigration from Norway to America) is one of the earlier and most comprehensive treatments of the subject. In addition, she has written numerous articles and has been an important influence in the recent migration research that has taken place in Scandinavia.

This book is the English version of a short account of the migrations written in 1975 for the sesquicentennial commemoration of

the departure of the sloop *Restauration*, which carried the first Norwegian emigrants to America. It is intended to appeal to a wide audience. It does not attempt to provide a complete account of all that happened, nor does it fully relate the migration to the broader themes in Scandinavian and American history of which it was a part. Such aims are disclaimed in the preface. The purpose of the book is to illuminate the most important themes and to provide a basic understanding of the migration. In this it succeeds admirably.

Taken as a whole, the book could be called a narrative account, but when viewed more closely it becomes a series of essays that identifies and enlarges upon important themes. Independent treatment is given to such things as the early slooper migrations, the personalities that organized the first migrations, the rigors of the journey, the image of America, the character of the later mass migrations, the adaptation to American conditions, and the relationship between the emigrants and their homeland. To a certain extent each of the chapters can stand alone.

The basic strength of the book is its ability to synthesize the diverse scholarship that has been undertaken in this field. The migrations have been studied by people representing a wide range of disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities on both sides of the Atlantic. Semmingsen believes that an understanding of history depends upon assimilating the work of others, and she does it effectively here. A look at the notes that apply to each chapter gives an indication of the broadness of the literature incorporated, yet the text moves along smoothly, tying the many ideas to the themes around which the book is constructed. The weakness of the book is its brevity. If one is especially interested in a particular topic, one will get only a taste, which is unfortunate but necessary given the scope of the book.

Norway to America is one of a growing collection of books on Scandinavia and Scandinavian settlement in America published by the University of Minnesota Press. It is an important series, and this is a welcome addition. The book is an introduction to the subject that will be of use to both the uninitiated as well as to those who have read a great deal in this area. It is, in spite of its limited objectives, both interesting and scholarly.

ROBERT C. OSTEGREN

University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Finn Factor in American Labor, Culture and Society. By CARL ROSS. (Parta Printers, Inc., New York Mills, Minnesota, 1977. Pp. xi, 220. Illustrations, notes. \$7.50.)

The appearance of Carl Ross's new work on Finnish Americans brings to mind the earlier, standard, general history of the group by A. William Høglund, *Finnish Immigrants in America, 1880-1920* (1960). While a comparison may be unfair, as Ross is not a professional historian and Høglund is, considering the two studies together does highlight the value of both. The titles and the stated intentions may seem to duplicate one another as comprehensive surveys, but in fact the two are really complementary. Essentially the differences and the significance of the volumes come from the backgrounds of the authors and the times in which they wrote. Høglund's remains after twenty years the major introduction to the group, wide-ranging and restrained, while, having been personally involved in Finnish American economic and social development, Ross writes informatively and dispassionately from his experience in left-wing and business group activities. Ross concentrates dramatically on the polarities within Finnish America, utilizing the scholarly methods of a professional historian.

While Ross does attempt to give his work the scope of the Høglund volume, he does not attend to recent concerns of some academicians. "New" social historians looking for an explanation of how the Finnish family modernized in America, whether the rank and file were socially mobile, or any extended discussion of assimilation or pluralism will be disappointed as the information on these topics is fragmentary. The references to women, however, are suggestive, as this review will show.

The organizational structure of the work is somewhat loose because some chapters, although containing important detail, are not well integrated. The work begins with the earliest Finnish arrivals among the Swedes, and although he asserts the flowering of ethnic identity after the English takeover, the author does not develop this provocative reference or make any further comment on the importance of Finns in colonial America. In addition, while it is essential for Ross to cover the European political background in the chapter labelled the "Suomi Heritage," the section is misplaced in the work—being within rather than preceding the discussion of Finnish American development.

The reason for migration, the economic and social character of the group, the emergence of socialism, temperance, and co-operation are clearly told. The coverage of the Old World background does not speak, however, to the significant assertion of Høglund that two-thirds of all arrivals came from just three provinces. Thus the question of regionalism among the incoming wave, based upon the geography of the homeland, is neglected.

For these reasons *The Finn Factor* does not replace Høglund's work; but it still makes a substantial contribution to Finnish immigration history because of its concentration on the internal politics of the group. Successfully avoiding the dangers of filiopietism, currently so evident among non-professional ethnic history, the work is a well-balanced delineation of the formation of and relationship between the group's major institutional movements: the church, temperance, and particularly socialism. Ross skillfully reveals how this essentially working-class but highly literate group, in part as a result of the early presence of women and the encouragement of Norwegians in the 1880's, fashioned an ethnic community and culture through the successive construction of churches, temperance societies, and fraternal lodges. While weak at the start, all of these organizations enabled later arrivals to better adjust to the new land.

The richest section of the work traces the emergence of Finnish American left-wing organizations which led to an extraordinary segmentation of the group after 1900. This highly distended society resulted from the dissatisfaction of abused mineworkers, the violent strikes, the growth of the Finnish Socialist Federation, the role of the Duluth Work College, and the divisive issues in World War I: the relationship with the newly independent homeland, the loyalty issue, and the Finnish attraction to the radicalism of the IWW. By the early 1920's the Finnish American community was rent with hostilities—from clerics and businessmen on the right to underground Communists on the left. The complete development and growth of group polarities and internal disagreements are well drawn.

A final stated goal of the book is to challenge the theories of assimilation and "melting," which the author attempts in the last chapter dealing with the post-1920 era. But shifting to the first person and admitting that his views on ethnic change are personal and impressionistic, Ross is least successful here. The very active co-operative movement, whose growth in the 1920's and 1930's he describes,

apparently had little effect on maintaining ethnic identity.

On the whole, however, despite weaknesses in dealing with the group in general or in applying or refining assimilation theory, *The Finn Factor* remains a probing analysis of the forces which constituted Finnish America in its lively immigrant era—a topic particularly attractive to Upper Midwestern readers. It is regrettable that such a fine work, with its charming, hand-drawn illustrations, did not have better editorial review or an index.

VICTOR R. GREENE

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

My Name is Million: An Illustrated History of the Poles in America. By W. S. KUNICZAK. (Doubleday and Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1978. Pp. 181. Illustrations. \$12.95.)

Behold! The Polish-Americans. By JOSEPH A. WYTRWAL. (Endurance Press, Detroit, 1977. Pp. xi, 667. Bibliography, index. \$15.00.)

The 1963 publication of Glazer and Moynihan's *Beyond the Melting Pot* is generally regarded as having heralded an era of new scholarly interest in ethnic groups in which they were viewed as enduring subcultures within American society, rather than as mere survivals doomed to be rapidly absorbed into the national life. Since then, many studies, popular and academic, have appeared which document the histories, cultures, and social experiences of the many immigrant peoples and their descendants in America. Such studies, understandably, have usually been devoted to specific organizations and localities, and they have drawn attention to the contributions made by little-known ethnic personalities. Many specific "case studies" of the Polish ethnic historical experience, for example, have been published in *Polish American Studies*, a journal appearing semi-annually since 1944.

Although numbering an estimated twelve to fourteen million members (about 5 per cent of the population), the Polish Americans' collective historical experience has not previously been seriously treated. (Two important works published in 1976, Lopata's *The Polish Americans* and the special bicentennial issue of the journal *The Polish Review*, were heavily sociological in their approach to the

subject.) Thus the appearance of the books reviewed here is an important event in the development of ethnic history study, in that both are initial efforts to synthesize and interpret the historic experience of the Polish people in America in a way that is meaningful to non-Polish and Polish American audiences alike.

Both authors correctly stress that very little of the Polish ethnic experience is known to Americans. The exploits of heroic Poles who helped explore and develop the continent and who fought for American independence are usually ignored, or at most relegated to brief comments in school textbooks. So, too, the massive saga of Polish and East European immigrants, their building of new lives in their adopted land, and their achievements—intellectual and economic—has long escaped the notice of "mainstream" American historians. Americans of all backgrounds are impoverished as long as they are left ignorant of the many ethnic contributions to American life, just as previous generations suffered because subjects like the black experience and the labor movement were not given the attention they deserved by earlier historians.

W. S. Kuniczak, a novelist whose previous work includes the well-received *Thousand Hour Day*, has produced an engrossing short study for the general audience. Profusely illustrated, the book's main strength is a series of short biographical sketches about America's early heroes from Poland. The best of these deal with the Polish settlers in Jamestown, Virginia, between 1608 and 1620, the trio of American revolutionary warriors—Kosciuszko, Pulaski, and Haym Salomon—and the little-known frontiersmen belonging to the Sadowski family. This section deserves the attention of any high school teacher interested in stimulating his students' curiosity about our country's early history.

Joseph Wytrwal's work contrasts with that by Kuniczak, although in some respects it is complementary. Massive in size and more ambitious in subject matter, the study assumes a greater sophistication and familiarity with the Polish experience, which is itself dealt with in an almost encyclopedic fashion. One of its best features is a synopsis of Poland's thousand-year history, whose purpose is to fit the Polish American past into the larger framework of the national experience of the ancestral homeland. Ethnic consciousness, the author implies, is based upon one's identification with this tradition. Other contributions worth noting are forceful chapters on Polish-

Jewish relations, Poles in the American labor movement, and the wartime service and sacrifices made by Polish Americans on behalf of our country. Wyrwal's earlier work dealt with the rise of the Polish fraternal insurance societies, the most important secular organizations ever established within the Polish American community (or Polonia), yet among the least appreciated or studied. In this work, he sums up his earlier findings on the fraternal, about which Kuniczak has little to say.

There are gaps in Wyrwal's compendium. For example, he makes no effort to present systematically the history of Polish immigrant settlement in America, and nowhere does he describe the development of the major population centers of Polonia located in Chicago, Detroit, Buffalo, Milwaukee, western Pennsylvania, Connecticut, central Wisconsin, and New Jersey, to name the most important ones. Nor does the reader learn anything about the institutional, intellectual, or political development of these various communities and their leaders, religious and secular. Thus, for example, Wisconsin readers of either volume will have to search elsewhere for much information about the historically significant Polish communities in the state.

There are other lapses. The reader interested in the "whole story" will not find an overview of Polish American contributions in the arts, sciences or invention, nor any enumeration of Polish American "successes" in business and the professions. Wyrwal views the Polish Americans as a homogeneous, proletarian people, a perspective which may be in fashion today, given the popularity of the "new ethnicity," but which nonetheless is inaccurate. Polish Americans, like other ethnic groups, are widely heterogeneous in educational, professional, and economic attainments, in cultural and political views. (In the same vein, both authors make extensive mention of instances where Poles historically showed concern for the blacks and the native Americans. Years ago, such topics were ignored, with emphasis placed upon documenting Polish ethnic upward mobility. Stressing Polish concern for the downtrodden is an obvious response to the stereotype of the Polish American as racist, and is highly in order. Indeed, the little known story of Thaddeus Kosciuszko's decision to will his entire American estate for the purchase and freeing of slaves and the establishment of their own school is itself worth relating to any class in social studies.)

Wyrwal's sense of hurt is deeper than Kuniczak's: it shows most in his criticism of the American Roman Catholic hierarchy for its chronic failure to raise qualified Polish clergymen to positions of rank in the church. These charges are true enough, but in this case the author's bitterness seems excessive. In the end, the reader is left wondering what Wyrwal understands to be the purpose of membership in any church. Is it fame and prestige along with the temporal power of bishops?

Both authors identify all persons of Polish heritage as automatic members of the group, and Kuniczak, in particular, implies that a cohesive national Polish American community indeed exists. Both these assumptions are dubious, and one wonders why neither author devoted even a bit of space to some theoretical treatment of the literature on these subjects. Kuniczak might also have done a better job in relating the experience of the mass migration of the Polish "millions" to America between the 1880's and the First World War. A post-World War II emigré himself, Kuniczak shows surprisingly little sympathy for their great saga and devotes only seventeen sketchy pages to them. Strongest in penning the stories of individuals, he is less impressive when handling a subject that requires a more sociological perspective is interpreting the experiences of masses of people.

One final complaint: Neither author gives the recognition that is due to previous scholars whose extensive research on Polish American life has made their studies possible. Kuniczak does not cite a single source—to this reviewer an unpardonable slight of all those whose work he has so evidently benefited from. The omission also limits the book's utility for readers who might view *My Name is Million* as a stepping-stone to further study about Polish ethnic history. Wyrwal's book does include a bibliography, but one that is woefully incomplete.

In this review, much, perhaps too much, emphasis has been placed on these books' limitations. Such observations should not obscure their great significance in contributing to future studies of American ethnicity. Both books deserve to be read because they engender pride in the Polish American past, and at the same time present serious yet highly readable overviews of the history of a fascinating yet long-neglected population. Both books are highly recommended.

DONALD E. PIENKOS

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee



USDA—Soil Conservation Service photo

Edwin W. Cole made this aerial photograph of St. Mary's ridge in Jefferson Township, Monroe County, in July, 1937.

The American Farm: A Photographic History. By MAISIE and RICHARD CONRAT. (California Historical Society, San Francisco, and Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1977. Pp. 256. Illustrations, notes, picture credits, \$9.95.)

"... For amber waves of gra-a-a-in. . .," intones a meticulously groomed youthful tenor. It is the opera house finale at a Middle Western theme park set amongst suburban housing tracts, power transmission lines, and a super-highway sprawled across land which little more than yesterday was among the nation's richest agricultural acreage.

As the reality of citified rural America conflicts increasingly with the image of the rippling golden grains that Katherine Lee Bates included in *America the Beautiful*, Maisie

and Richard Conrat set out to produce a photographic essay documenting the history of the American farm "in all its diverse aspects." Their ambitious task, sponsored by the California Historical Society, began to take shape after the team sifted through more than a million photographs and culled about four thousand from over one hundred collections (including the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's fine collection) for further examination. The result of this laborious process is *The American Farm*, consisting of 165 pictures of yeoman, tenant, hired hand, and corporate agriculturist, together with images of the environments in which they produced food and fiber for themselves, their neighbors, and buyers in far-off markets.

The book's eight chapters include the work of eighty photographers: some, such as Doro-

thea Lange, chroniclers of the recent past, and others, like Andrew Larsen Dahl, a photographer of southern Wisconsin farms in the last century. The uniformly sharp black-and-white prints in *The American Farm* are superbly laid out, some complemented by quotations, others allowed to stand alone. The accompanying text is adequate, and decidedly biased against "market-directed and capitalistic" agriculture.

Modern industrial agriculture ("agribusiness"), the Conrats point out, has radically altered or completely eroded many of the economic, social, and cultural institutions of rural America. Particularly in the last two chapters ("Someone Else's Land" and "Survival of the Fit"), and despite their intention to build a book around photographers rather than regions or representative types of photographs, the Conrats illustrate time and again, with an over-reliance on California farm images, how the excesses of modern agriculture have dampened the spirit of man and despoiled the beauty of rural America. While few would argue with the authors that many California agricultural scenes are anything but attractive, the Golden State is hardly unique in that respect. The eye and other senses are treated no more kindly by Illinois soybean farms, Florida dairy empires, Wisconsin vegetable fields, or Georgia peanut ranches.

This photographic history occasionally goes beyond "the many faces of the American farm," as the Conrats allow themselves to stray from barnyard and fence line to marketing and service centers. Unfortunately, the attempt is unsatisfactory. Such centers were necessary extensions of a highly localized farm economy, but the authors failed to exploit fully the opportunity to show and explain the relationship between a rapidly changing agriculture and disintegrating rural economic and social structures. The emergence of twentieth-century transportation and communications systems, linking producers to more distant markets, meant an end for many rural neighborhood centers, which in an earlier era were of critical importance for exchanging goods and services, to say nothing of trading news and gossip.

In contrast to pictures supporting the Conrats' contention that the reality of modern agriculture is uniformly stark, *The American Farm* contains many exceptionally beautiful photographs. Among the most striking is Erwin W. Cole's classic aerial shot of St. Mary's ridge in Monroe County, Wisconsin, in the

late 1950's (selected by the U. S. Soil Conservation Service to represent the state of Wisconsin in the SCS "America the Beautiful" picture series). Cole's camera probed carefully and exquisitely beyond the spire of St. Mary's church, sweeping gently in a southeasterly direction across the meticulously contoured plow lines and carefully strip-cropped fields full of alfalfa and ripened grain. Cole captured perfectly the ideal of a balanced relationship between God, Land, and Man—generations of Weibels, Schmitzes, Brueggens, and Mullenbergs, in the case of St. Mary's ridge. Even there, however, it is questionable how long today's responsible steward can withstand the intense economic pressures to adopt even newer agricultural practices that, in the words of environmental writer Wendell Berry, increasingly substitute energy for knowledge, methodology for care, and technology for morality.

The Conrats' appeal notwithstanding, it seems highly improbable that a well-manicured tenor will ever mount a stage on top of St. Mary's ridge to warble nostalgically about amber grains—and Holsteins—long since replaced by "necessities" of greater importance. Or does it?

DALE E. TRELEVEN

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

From Private Vice to Public Virtue: The Birth Control Movement and American Society Since 1830. By JAMES REED. (Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1978. Pp. v, 456. Photographs, notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$17.95.)

From Private Vice to Public Virtue could be subtitled: "Everything you wanted to know about the birth control movement, but were afraid to ask." James Reed tells us everything he knows about the birth control movement from 1830 to 1975—which is perhaps more than we want to know. With this exhaustive study, whose primary use will likely be as reference, Reed makes it doubtful whether anyone else will feel a compelling need to tackle this subject in the near future.

Reed argues that birth control is mainly a question of "social values and human motives." The emergence of birth control from a private vice practiced by the selfish to a moral imperative in a crowded world was due more

to the changing social context and new sexual norms that evolved as a result of pressures generated by economic and social development than to advances in contraceptive technology or varying strategies of change.

Reed analyzes the efforts and motives of the three key leaders who provided the impetus for the emergence of the birth control movement in the 1920's and 1930's: Margaret Sanger, a feminist and erstwhile anarchist who established birth control clinics and the forerunners of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and believed that contraception fostered autonomy for women; Robert Dickinson, an Ob-Gyn practitioner turned sex researcher who convinced organized medicine that contraception should be a recognized medical service, and believed that birth control facilitated marital sex adjustment and strengthened family life; and Clarence Gamble, heir to the Ivory soap (Proctor and Gamble) fortune, a philanthropist/medical researcher who funded, tested, and organized mass distribution of contraceptives, and believed that birth control was a means of reducing the differential fertility between classes. These three leaders brought birth control out of the closet. The population explosion turned birth control into a public virtue and provided new justification for its use.

Without denigrating the efforts of birth control advocates, the success of the movement in the West was almost inevitable. The fear of overcrowding and the recognition of the world's resources as finite coalesced to make birth control an urgent necessity for everyone rather than a luxury for the wealthy. What has not been accomplished, however, is the implementation of effective birth control programs in the overpopulated nations of the Third World. Reed devotes an entire section to the efforts of Americans to aid the development of effective population control programs in Asia. Their failures stimulated contraceptive research that led to the development of plastic intra-uterine devices.

But Reed skirts the problem posed by these programs: that they were motivated by the quasi-eugenicist desire to reduce the fertility of the "have-nots." The birth control movement will not be a true success until Third World nations decide that it is in their best interests to reduce their fertility. It is not impossible; witness the decline in China's birth rate since 1949. What is required is the altering of economic relations between the industrialized West and the less-developed countries to dispel the belief (and reality) that popula-

tion control programs are a means of perpetuating the economic hegemony of the West.

This volume is tedious in places, and the chapters vary in length and in quality. A short but excellent chapter on the Progressive era argues that the secularization of society and the acceptance of human sexuality as a means of individual self-expression divorced from any larger social necessity or religious purpose provided an impetus for the adoption of birth control by socially ambitious Americans. The biographical chapters, however, are too long, and detract from the more analytical chapters. Unlike many historians, Reed is more adept at writing analysis than description.

Reed succeeds where Linda Gordon does not in *Woman's Body, Woman's Right* (1976), the only other major work on the birth control movement. Gordon's book is highly polemical and is therefore less useful than Reed's balanced and impartial study. As one of the first to examine an important and neglected topic, James Reed is to be commended for his thorough, though overly long, study of the evolution of the birth control movement.

JANET E. HEININGER

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State. By DANIEL YERGIN. (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1977. Pp. xi, 526. Notes, bibliography, index. \$15.00.)

The reader facing another big book on the origins of the Cold War deserves to be rewarded with some new data, fresh insights, and perhaps even an illuminating conceptual framework. Daniel Yergin delivers in all three respects. He erects his structure on a foundation of two polar American perceptions of the Soviet Union. The term "Riga axioms" is his shorthand for the hard-line interpretation of Soviet intentions, formed between the wars and shared by professional diplomats at the listening post in Latvia and by key officials in the State Department. According to this view, Soviet leadership was intransigent, bent on revolutionizing the world, and therefore incapable of orthodox diplomatic give and take. Representing the opposite view, the "Yalta axioms" epitomized President Franklin D. Roosevelt's faith in the Soviet leaders' willingness to bargain diplomatically and to sacrifice ideological purity for the higher goal of advancing Russian national interests.

In his step-by-step tracing of the erosion of the Yalta euphoria, Yergin stresses the preponderance of influence on President Harry Truman from supporters of the Riga axioms. What the author labels "the distinctive Commanding Ideas of American Cold War foreign policy" began to crystallize in 1946 with the triumph of the hard-line view in high official places. To the Riga axioms, policymakers joined the developing doctrine of national security. During 1947, American statecraft abandoned diplomacy after having lost faith in its efficacy as an instrument for composing differences with the Soviet Union. Washington translated the new doctrine of national security into policies of intervention and containment, in effect redefining America's relation to the rest of the world. The climax of this process came in the spring of 1948 after the Soviet coup in Czechoslovakia. There quickly followed Truman's successes in persuading Congress to appropriate funds for the Marshall Plan and to reinstate the draft, his endorsement of the Brussels Pact, the initial planning for NATO, and the Soviet response with the Berlin blockade. Thus, by mid-1948, American policymakers, believing "that the USSR presented an *immediate military* threat to the United States," had expanded their conception of American security needs. As military force became a central concern, Washington rebuilt its arsenal and meshed it with a permanent military economy to achieve a condition of permanent preparedness with the United States heading an anticommunist alliance.

Yergin introduces substantial evidence to support his claim that American leaders misread Soviet intentions and capabilities. Less persuasive is his dogmatic and categorical faulting of American leaders: he judges them rigid and uncompromising, whereas he finds the Soviets only responding defensively to American provocations. It is difficult to square Yergin's certainty about Soviet behavior with his caveat that so long as no Western scholar has access to Soviet archives, we will be unsure about how "Soviet leaders among themselves interpreted and misinterpreted American intentions and capabilities." While he imputes benign international intentions to Soviet leaders, he does criticize their behavior within their own sphere; Americans, in their Greek intervention, he writes, "observed restraints on violence that the Russians ignored" in Eastern Europe. Yergin will prove slippery for those who classify historians of the Cold War as revisionist or orthodox, for his views do not

fit neatly into either of those stereotyped categories. He can legitimately be described as a revisionist if one interprets the term to signify those who argue that unjustified American incitements forced the Soviets into limited defensive countermeasures. But he frequently spells out his differences with leading "revisionists," notably Gabriel and Joyce Kolko. Their open-door explanation, particularly in its economic dimensions, is much too narrow for him.

Yergin's book is not "the definitive work on the Cold War" as proclaimed in the hyperbole of the dust jacket, but it does promise to rank among the select few studies which scholars concerned with the middle 1940's cannot ignore. Following five years after John Gaddis' *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War*, Yergin gained access to additional manuscript collections, diaries, oral histories, and official archives, both in the United States and England. Although his truly impressive research allows him to introduce important new information, he does not supersede Gaddis. One striking contrast in their approaches is Yergin's treatment of American policymaking as the province of a self-contained policy elite, while Gaddis discerns greater interplay among Congress, the wider public, and executive officers. (Yergin's method, it should be added, gives him the opportunity to include some wonderful personality sketches of public men.)

Another difference is Yergin's extension of his account to mid-1948. Perhaps his most original contribution comes in chapter thirteen, wherein he documents his thesis that the aforementioned spring crisis of 1948 served as the forge for rebuilding the American arsenal and rounding out both the mind set and the institutional arrangements for the national security state. The "perhaps" in the previous sentence cloaks a lingering suspicion that Yergin's conception of the national security state may be, at bottom, a striking verbal formulation of deterrence theory and practice, which has long attracted scholarly analysis. And one might argue, further, that Yergin's national security state of 1948 was not a culmination so much as a prelude to the doctrine outlined nearly two years later in NSC-68, the guide to post-Korean War globalism. Criticisms notwithstanding, this is an informative, interesting, and important study.

JOHN A. DENOVO

University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920. By DANIEL T. RODGERS. (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1978. Pp. xv, 300. Notes, index. \$15.00.)

"What new can one say about the work ethic?" That is the question I asked as I picked up this slender (and expensive) volume; but it did not take me long to become engrossed and fascinated by the interesting essays which make up this book. Rodgers has indeed found some new things to say about the work ethic, and even when he uses old stories and familiar material (as he often does) his insights are refreshing and provocative.

This is not so much a book about work as it is a study of ideas about work. More specifically it is about the ideas that some selected northern, middle-class writers and intellectuals had about work. Yet Rodger's book is not a narrow monograph, but a broad and sweeping intellectual history. The book is based on the reading of a great many secondary works and on contemporary periodical articles, tracts, and books with occasional imaginative use of fiction. There is much that is familiar: the industrial efficiency studies of Frederick Taylor; Carrol D. Wright's defense of the factory system; Jane Addams' labor museum; Charlotte Perkins Gilman's scheme for reorganizing housework; S. Weir Mitchell's treatment of neuroathetic women; Henry Ward Beecher, alternating between preaching the gospel of work and urging the need for leisure; and Horatio Alger's tales of luck and pluck. There is also much that is not so familiar: Elbert Hubbard's attempt to follow the lead of William Morris and preserve handicrafts in America; Elwood Worcester's Emmanuel Clinic, which promised to cure the ill and emotionally distressed through repose, prayer, and a little faith healing; William T. Adams, who wrote under the pen name of Oliver Optic and was one of the most prolific and successful authors of boys' books. And there is much more, including chapters on leisure and the feminine version of the work ethic.

The book can be read as a series of interesting and well-written vignettes about work in industrial America, but the book is more important than that, for Rodgers' framework is informed by a major question which he asks in different ways throughout the book: "What happened to work values when work itself was radically remade?" "The work ethic had rested on a set of premises about the common,

everyday work of men that made sense by and large in the North of 1850," Rodgers argues. "Work was an outlet for self expression, a way to impress something of oneself on the material world. Work was a means to independence and self advancement." But the factories and industrialism undermined this sense of work. "As jobs were divided, simplified, and routinized in the quest for efficiency, as outlets for individuality narrowed and skills disappeared, a wedge was driven between art and work, creativity and labor, self and job." To some extent values changed to keep pace with the change in work, but Rodgers argues that there was also a persistence of the old values amid the change. "The outer husk of the work ethic" survived as an abstract ideal independent of work itself. He traces this survival and persistence in a variety of ways and with a variety of sources, including boys' fiction and the pronouncements of Charles W. Eliot of Harvard.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter in the book is on the industrial worker, for here the author tries to deal with the working-class reaction to the work ethic as he does nowhere else in the book. The work ethic, as he makes clear, was essentially a middle-class affair enforced on the worker by the owners and managers. In a passage typical of the insights that crop up in this book, he sees the very architecture of the mills as reflecting the work ethic of the mill owners. The bell towers rose in splendor above the utilitarian mills. "Where clocks and watches remained rare, factory bells served the essential, utilitarian function of ringing the labor force out of bed, into work, and home again at the day's end. . . . In their great clock faces and clanging bells, the towers broadcast the mechanization of work and time, the narrowing and tightening of the injunction to diligence that was at the heart of the industrial transformation of work." But the workers did not give in easily. "By reporting irregularly for work, moving restlessly from job to job, or engaging in slowdowns and work restrictions, industrial laborers stubbornly resisted the new work discipline. . . ." How much did the worker really resist and how much was he also motivated by a desire to work hard in order to get ahead? With great skill and sensitivity Rodgers examines some of the contradictory and admittedly incomplete evidence. "Crisscrossed by deep lines of ethnicity, industry and region, there is nothing uniform about the workforce in industrial America and the evidence about their work behavior is incomplete, often inextricably

mired in prejudice and frequently contradictory." Some workers casually stayed home or went on frequent holidays, others drifted from one job to another; the turnover rate was very high in some industries, especially in the nineteenth century. There was vigorous resistance in many factories in the early twentieth century to the attempts to increase production through efficiency and time studies. At the same time, most immigrants brought with them "some measure of faith in toil itself." Even the American labor movement adopted a portion of the work ethic and praised the dignity of labor and "the worth of those who did the world's real" work. Labor leaders and workers alike were often caught in a dilemma: they talked about pride in work at the same time they were increasingly alienated from it. They fought scientific schemes which reduced men to "mere machines but they defended a fair day's work and they often sought meaning through their work." Their own ambivalence about work, Rodgers argues, provided a wedge which the managers and owners exploited.

There are flaws in this book. Only in one chapter is Rodgers really concerned with the actual interaction between the ideas about work and the workers themselves. Often he depends on a symbolic figure or writer to speak for a large group. To use Harriet Beecher Stowe and Charlotte Perkins Gilman as a way of defining feminist versions of the work ethic is to distort a very complex story. He is really not successful when he tries to create and define a group of "moralists" who promoted and defended the work ethic. These problems aside, this is an exciting book. It is a book that deals sensitively and sanely with an important subject. Rodgers almost always takes into account the complexity, ambiguity, and contradictions; but he is not afraid to make judgments. It is refreshing to find a broad-based intellectual history such as this to go along side the growing shelf of useful but narrow social histories of work.

ALLEN F. DAVIS

Temple University

The American Jeremiad. By SACVAN BERCOVITCH. (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1978. Pp. xvi, 210. Notes, index. \$15.00.)

In *The American Jeremiad*, Sacvan Bercovitch shows how the "political sermon," or

"state-of-the-covenant address," became a major rhetorical mode by which Puritanism has shaped the American identity down to our own time. Departing from Perry Miller's view of the jeremiad as essentially a *lamentation* over America's backsliding and declension, Bercovitch argues that the jeremiad's conventional litany of sins and failures is, in American rhetoric, only "part of a strategy designed to revitalize the errand" of the Puritan Fathers.

The European jeremiad had been merely lamentation at the ills of a corrupt world; it was not devised to heal the traditional Christian world/spirit dichotomy, salvation being relegated wholly to the realm of the sacred. The first-generation American Puritans, however, proclaimed a radical "fusion of secular and sacred history." New England was a "city upon a hill" (like the biblical Jerusalem), not metaphorically but literally. Moreover, personal and corporate salvation became inextricably linked: the theocracy's growth was depicted in the imagery of conversion; in turn, the individual saint's preparation for salvation was seen as "representative" of the destiny of New England.

The American jeremiad, as Bercovitch brilliantly demonstrates, evolved into a vehicle of "socialization" recalling saint and colony alike to their special purpose. The American Puritans saw themselves, prefigured by the Israelites, as the latest stage in the unfolding of God's redemptive history. And as heir to scriptural promises, New England could explain away adversity as ephemeral. Had not God chastened the Israelites with "troubles" and exile only to remind them that His commitment to their nation was irrevocable, that they were still His people? It is in this context of cosmic certainty that Bercovitch locates an "unshakable optimism" beneath the surface gloom and doom of the American jeremiad.

Strife and tribulation became merely signs that God's plan was still at work in New England. The Puritans could comprehend the controversy surrounding the Halfway Covenant (1662) and the threat of King Philip's War (1674) as steps in the "apocalyptic history of America." Confidence in the immutable plan of that history led to a vision of *progress* that granted each generation its purpose within divine history. And the jeremiad proved remarkably adaptable to change. Succeeding generations were exhorted not simply to worship the Fathers but to *improve upon* them as America pressed on to its inevitable destiny. Even as the Puritan theocracy died,

Cotton Mather "internalized" the rhetoric of the jeremiad, defining the inspired individual as the keeper of the Puritan dream. Meanwhile, "the prosaic, industrious eighteenth-century Yankees" found inspiration and justification in "the popular, historical force of the Puritan vision."

Although America became increasingly secular and diverse, the rhetoric of the jeremiad continued to support America's millennial expectations. Jonathan Edwards retained a characteristic American "provincialism" even as he widened the gates of the covenant to include hitherto excluded types during the Great Awakening. Released from European cyclical views of history, Revolutionary leaders yoked Puritan rhetoric (progress and continuity assured by communal suffering and testing) to announce the dawning of a new age of liberty for mankind. The Puritan Fathers themselves replaced biblical heroes in the American imagination, as a secular, political America—the redeemer nation—was invested with the figural significance of a "city upon a hill."

What Bercovitch calls a "ritual of consensus" steered the new nation between courses of "anarchy" and "despotism." The Revolution and its heroes became deified, and America's millennial role became "continuing revolution." But that revolution—celebrated endlessly in the newest form of jeremiad, the July Fourth oration—was held in check by the old Puritan stricture that the "true individual" is "representative" of the chosen community.

In this light, the American jeremiad promoted progressiveness and vitality even as it fostered conformity. It could justify secular Manifest Destiny and what Tocqueville called the "tyranny of the majority," even as it fired the rhetoric of nineteenth-century transcendentalism, abolitionism, and feminism. In both cases, the impetus was to fulfill the "meaning of America." As Bercovitch explains, the "rhetoric of the jeremiad not only allowed for but actually elicited social criticism." But because the banner of "the American dream" became so inclusive, the rhetoric of the jeremiad also precluded the need for truly radical options in America. American rhetoric typically "transform[s] what might have been a search for moral or social alternatives into a call for cultural revitalization."

In a provocative epilogue Bercovitch suggests that, while our major writers from the American Renaissance on have often appeared isolated and alienated from American

values, most are, in the tradition of Cotton Mather, "American Jeremiahs, simultaneously lamenting a declension and celebrating a national dream." Even our most despairing twentieth-century writers, he briefly hints, attack the possibility of any value precisely because they feel so betrayed by America's special promises. Even in this century, however, the American jeremiad remains a force both for reform and control. Martin Luther King, Jr., as Bercovitch mentions, drew on this rhetoric to demand not a frontal assault on the American system, but access for blacks to the American dream. And the Inaugural Address from Roosevelt to Carter is squarely in the tradition of the jeremiad. A self-enclosed, self-defining rhetoric, the American jeremiad is the source of both our arrogance and our idealism, enabling America to adapt to change even as the culture absorbs its critics.

Tough going for the lay reader, *The American Jeremiad* cannot be overlooked by students of American literature, history, theology, or rhetoric. With Bercovitch's recent *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (Yale, 1975), it constitutes the most original and exciting assessment of American Puritanism since the work of Perry Miller.

WESLEY T. MOTT

University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Trans-Appalachian Frontier: People, Societies, and Institutions, 1775-1850. By MALCOLM J. ROHRBOUGH. (Oxford University Press, New York, 1978. Pp. xv, 444. Maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$17.50.)

"This is a book about the first American frontier," states Malcolm J. Rohrbough. "Specifically, it is about the experiences of people, the rise of societies, and the development of institutions on the trans-Appalachian frontier from 1775 to 1850." Thus "the first American frontier" here means the first after the beginning of independence, and the book deals with the successive waves of settlement: 1775-1795, 1795-1815, 1815-1830, and 1830-1850. The book concentrates mainly on institutional development, as the titles of some of the chapters indicate: "The Struggle for Security," "The Search for Stability," "Diversity in Economic Development," "Government and Law on the New Frontier," "Many Societies from

Similar Institutions," "The Urban Dimension," and "The Changing Political Experience." Geographically, the book embraces somewhat more than the transmontane country; it includes a chapter on Florida. It gives only a few pages to Wisconsin, which, of course, enters the story rather late. Wisconsin shares with Illinois and Iowa a chapter on "The Last Frontier of the Old Northwest."

The book derives from a wide range of records and studies in state and local history. It makes use of state documents, manuscripts in the Lyman C. Draper Collection and other state collections, and a large number of newspapers, including obscure and ephemeral ones. It also depends quite heavily on articles in state historical journals and on unpublished theses and dissertations.

In his generalizations drawn from these varied sources the author emphasizes the community aspects of pioneering. The typical frontiersman was no Daniel Boone, he points out: "... from the beginnings of settlement ... life took on an interlocking character ... that belied the simple picture of the individual against the wilderness." The author also stresses the continuity of institutions on the frontier; he discovers no such cultural fault line as Walter Prescott Webb once thought

he had found farther west, along the edge of the Great Plains. "The institutions related to quality of life, cultural matters, and education," Rohrbough observes, "changed less over seventy-five years than any other, except perhaps for the basic structure of government under the county and the Ordinance of 1787." He contrasts the trans-Appalachian West with the trans-Mississippi West by saying the former was a "frontier of abundance" and "of repeated successes" but on the latter "failures equalled successes."

To add vividness to his account, the author inserts occasional vignettes of individual frontiersmen and frontierswomen whose experiences illustrate general themes. Still, much of the book is rather hard to read. It contains too many sentences like the following (with punctuation as in the original): "Statehood, and the diplomatic triumphs and greater security from the Indians achieved by 1795 changed the nature of the political process and, in a sense wrote an end to the early political style on the trans-Appalachian frontier."

RICHARD N. CURRENT

*The University of North Carolina
at Greensboro*

BOOK REVIEWS

Bercovitch, <i>The American Jeremiad</i> , reviewed by Wesley T. Mott	256
Berkhofer, <i>The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present</i> , reviewed by Michael E. Stevens	246
Clifton, <i>The Prairie People: Continuity and Change in Potawatomi Indian Culture, 1665-1965</i> , reviewed by Roger L. Nichols	245
Conrat and Conrat, <i>The American Farm: A Photographic History</i> , reviewed by Dale E. Treleven	251
Kuniczak, <i>My Name is Million: An Illustrated History of the Poles in America</i> , reviewed by Donald E. Pienkos	249
Reed, <i>From Private Vice to Public Virtue: The Birth Control Movement and American Society Since 1830</i> , reviewed by Janet E. Heininger	252
Rodgers, <i>The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920</i> , reviewed by Allen F. Davis	255
Rohrbough, <i>The Trans-Appalachian Frontier: People, Societies, and Institutions, 1775-1850</i> , reviewed by Richard N. Current	257
Ross, <i>The Finn Factor in American Labor, Culture and Society</i> , reviewed by Victor R. Greene	248
Semmingsen, <i>Norway to America: A History of the Migration</i> , reviewed by Robert C. Ostergren	247
Wyrwal, <i>Behold! The Polish-Americans</i> , reviewed by Donald E. Pienkos	249
Yergin, <i>Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State</i> , reviewed by John A. DeNovo	253

Wisconsin History Checklist

Recently published and currently available Wisconsiniana added to the Society's Library are listed below. The compilers, Gerald R. Eggleston, Acquisitions Librarian, and Susan Dorst, Order Librarian, are interested in obtaining information about (or copies of) items that are not widely advertised, such as publications of local historical societies, family histories and genealogies, privately printed works, and histories of churches, institutions, or organizations. Authors and publishers wishing to reach a wider audience and also to perform a valuable bibliographic service are urged to inform the compilers of their publications, including the following information: author, title, location and name of publisher, price, pagination, and address of supplier. Write Susan Dorst, Acquisitions Section.

Bloss, Judith Hribar. *The Hribar Family History*. (Caledonia?, Wisconsin, 1978. 52 leaves. Illus. No price listed. Available from the author, 1501 Waukesha Road, Caledonia, Wisconsin 53108.)

Culver, Edith Dodd. *610 Ellis and the Hospital Children*. (Ashland, Wisconsin, c1978. Pp. 205. Illus. \$9.61. Available from Browzer's Books and Art Shop, 201 Second Street East, Ashland, Wisconsin 54806.) Reminiscences of the author's early life in Ashland. A portion of this book appeared in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, vol. 60, no. 2 (Winter, 1976-1977).

Dresselhaus, Donald E. *I Never Flew Alone*. (Beloit?, Wisconsin, 1978. Pp. 316. Illus. No price listed. Available from the author, 1953 Prairie Avenue, Beloit, Wisconsin 53511.) Autobiography of a Beloit pilot.

Graber, Kathleen Neumann. *The Neumanns: Wisconsin Pioneers, 1848-1978*. (Oshkosh, Wisconsin, 1978. Pp. 147. Illus. \$7.50. Available from the author, 683 Hazel Street, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901.)

History of Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1878-1978: One Hundred Years of Grace. (Westfield?, Wisconsin, 1978. Pp. 11. Illus. No charge. Available from Rev. L. E. Thalacker, Route 1, Box 243, Westfield, Wisconsin 53964.) Cover title is *Centennial of Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1878-1978: One*

Hundred Years of Grace. The church is in Springfield Township, Marquette County.

History of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. (Norwalk?, Wisconsin, 1978. Pp. 59, [39]. Illus. No price listed. Available from St. John's Parish-Summit, Norwalk, Wisconsin 54648.) In addition to the church history, brief family histories of the parish members are included.

The History of St. John's Parish, 1847-1978. (Byron?, Wisconsin, 1978. Pp. [20]. Illus. \$2.00. Available from St. John's Catholic Church, Byron, R.R. #2, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin 54938.) Cover title is *St. John's Church, Byron, Wis. 131st Anniversary, 1847-1978*.

Hutchison, Howard. *Joe McCarthy: Right or Wrong*. (Cincinnati, Ohio, c1978. Pp. 66. \$2.50. Available from Pamphlet Publications, Div. RMA, Box 41372A, Cincinnati, Ohio 45241.)

Jefferson Centennial, 1878-1978. (Jefferson?, Wisconsin, 1978. Pp. 135. Illus. No price listed. Available from Ray Adler, Jefferson, Wisconsin 53549.)

Kuhn, Eleanor G. *The Town Rhine Monument to Civil War Dead*. (Elkhart Lake?, Wisconsin, 1976. Pp. [12]. Illus. No price listed. Available from Otto Ruh, Clerk of Town Rhine, Route 2, Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin 53020.) Cover title is *Town of Rhine, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin, Civil War Memorial Monument*.

Lingard, Harold. *The Lingjerdes From Sogn, Norway: a Brief History of the Lingard Family*. (Arlington?, Virginia, 1978? Pp. [12]. \$1.00. Available from the author, 5821 Fifth Road South, Arlington, Virginia 22204.) Newly enlarged edition of the genealogy of a Dane County family.

Memoirs of Milwaukee County, Wisconsin: Index to Volumes I & II. (Monroe?, Wisconsin, 1978. Pp. 67. No price listed. Available from Wisconsin State Genealogical Society, Inc., Mrs. John M. Irvin, Treasurer, 2109 Twentieth Avenue, Monroe, Wisconsin 53566.) Index by Mrs. Sturges W. Bailey to the 1909 volume edited by Lieutenant Colonel Jerome A. Watrous.

- Montfort: 150 Years, 1827-1977.* (Montfort?, Wisconsin, 1977? Pp. 36. Illus. \$5.00. Available from Jim Christiansen, Montfort, Wisconsin 53569.)
- Morton, W. Markham; Ammann, Thelma (Morton); and Kryder, Ruth (Morton). *Descendants of Francis & Ruth (Powell) Morton from Georgia to Wisconsin (1776-1976).* (Portland?, Oregon, 1976? Pp. 284. Illus. \$12.00. Available from W. Markham Morton, 3020 East Main Street, F-119, Mesa, Arizona 85203.) This is vol. 8, no. 2, of *Mort's Relations*.
- Simon, Roger D. *The City-Building Process: Housing and Services in New Milwaukee Neighborhoods, 1880-1910.* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1978. Pp. 64. Illus. \$8.00. Available from The American Philosophical Society, 104 South Fifth Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106.) The publication is vol. 68, part 5, of the *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*.
- The Storm . . . July 4, 1977.* (Phillips, Wisconsin, 1978? Pp. 79. Illus. No price listed. Available from Barney Slowey, Phillips High School, Phillips, Wisconsin 54555.) Contains pictures and personal interviews about a severe thunderstorm which struck the Phillips area. It was compiled by the community involvement class of Phillips High School.
- Throckmorton, Elizabeth Ann Shepherd. *Ekleberry and Milum Families: Wyandot County, Ohio, Richland County, Wisconsin.* (Stevens Point, Wisconsin, 1978. Pp. 117. \$8.00. Available from the author, 3101 Jefferson Street, Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54481.)
- Wisconsin. State Historical Society. *Guide to Labor Papers in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, compiled by F. Gerald Ham and Margaret Hedstrom. (Madison, Wisconsin, c1978. Pp. 138. Illus. \$5.00. Available from Publication Orders, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706.)

Accessions

Services for microfilming, Xeroxing, and photostating all but certain restricted items in its manuscript collections are provided by the Society. For details write Dr. Josephine L. Harper, Manuscripts Curator.

Manuscript Accessions

Microfilm. Journals, 1836-1856, of Benjamin King (1801-?), a Methodist minister in Massachusetts, containing sermons and entries documenting his travels to prayer meetings and visits with fellow clergymen, and another journal, 1856-1867, of his son Benjamin G. (1841-1866), containing notes on personal and political events including comments on an 1860 Lynn, Massachusetts, shoemaker strike, the Civil War and the effects of the Northern victory, and Lincoln's election and subsequent assassination; loaned for copying by Winifred Woodmansee, Milwaukee.

Papers, 1833-1903, of soldier, editor, diplomat Rufus King (1814-1876) and his son Charles (1844-1933), soldier and novelist, including scattered political correspondence and military and financial records of Rufus, correspondence, diaries, clippings, and miscellaneous items of Charles, and several documents concerning other family members; loaned for copying by Carroll College.

Papers, 1890-1963, 1968, 1974, primarily concerning a home for needy, elderly women operated by the Ladies Benevolent Society of Oshkosh, including financial records, inmate records, minutes, annual reports, and other records; loaned for copying by the society.

Records, 1945-1976, of the Lake to Lake Dairy Cooperative, active in eight east-central Wisconsin counties, including a brief history, minutes, advertising scrapbooks, and scrapbooks of clippings and magazine articles on general affairs of the cooperative including information on pollution of the Neshota River and on a dispute with the National Farmers Organization on milk withholding actions; loaned for copying by the co-operative, Manitowoc.

Minutes, annual reports, and financial statements, 1940-1969, of the Madison Jewish Community Council, Inc. (formerly the Madison Jewish Welfare Council and the Madison Jewish Welfare Fund), sponsors of counselling services, recreational activities, concerts and lectures, and social welfare services helping Jewish aged, transients, and immigrants; loaned for copying by the council.

Records, 1871-1931, of Marion Presbyterian Church, Boscobel, including the confession of faith, constitution, minutes, and lists of offerings, members, baptisms, marriages, and funerals; purchased by the University of Wisconsin-Platteville from the Presbyterian Seminary, University of Dubuque.

Blue books, 1955-1960, published annually on a subscription basis by Media Records, Inc., detailing the amount and type of advertisements that appeared in newspapers in selected cities throughout the United States; presented by the National Broadcasting Company, New York, New York.

Papers, 1960-1966, of the Milwaukee Citizens for Equal Opportunity, a membership organization which worked for racial equal opportunity, including correspondence, minutes, newsletters, and other materials concerning their support of civil rights groups in the South, activities for open housing and against school segregation in Milwaukee, and backing of state fair-housing legislation; loaned for copying by Helen Barnhill, Milwaukee.

Four reports, 1921-1923, 1931, of the Montreal Mining Company, an iron ore mining company operating in Wisconsin and Michigan, concerning housing provided by the company for employees, including maps, photographs, street plans, floor plans, and discussions of financing and construction details; loaned for copying by Gail Hunton, Madison.

Records, 1893-1974, including a dedication pamphlet, minutes, 1913-1923, and account books, 1913-1923, 1930-1955, of the conservative Jewish Moses Montefiore Congregation, Appleton; minutes, 1893-1931, 1940-1948, and a centennial program, 1974, of the Fox River Lodge No. 209, International Order of B'nai B'rith, Appleton; and various records, 1936-1962, of the Appleton chapter of Hadassah; loaned for copying by the Congregation.

Ministerial books, 1854-1960, written in Norwegian and recording baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communion statistics, and brief summaries of the services at Mt. Morris Holden Lutheran Church, Wausara County; loaned for copying by the church, Wautoma.

Papers, 1881-1955 and 1966, of black historian and bibliographer Daniel Murray (1852-1925), consisting primarily of drafts and other materials pertaining to his proposed six-volume "Historical and Biographical Encyclopedia of the Colored Race . . .," plus correspondence, family papers, and other material; presented by Harold Baldwin Murray, Mexico.

Records, 1834-1961, of the Oulu Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bayfield County, written in Finnish and English, including account books, 1905-1953, registers of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, reception of members, and deaths, 1834-1956, and minutebooks, 1903-1961; loaned for copying by the church.

Records, (1866-1963)-1976, of Our Savior's United Church of Christ, Ripon (formerly the First Evangelical Lutheran Church), consisting of registers of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, deaths, communion totals, engagements, and special offerings; early entries are in German; loaned for copying by the church.

Scattered papers, 1829-1925, concerning John E. Perkins (1811-1862), Civil War captain of Company C, Eighth Regiment Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, including information on the school population in Massena, New York, in 1829, 1836 correspondence on Perkins' canal work in Virginia, Civil War materials on Company C and Old Abe, its eagle mascot, and later letters and clippings on Perkins and Old Abe; loaned for copying by Fred Dinkel, Chipewewa Falls.

Records, 1856-1959, of the Perry Lutheran Church, Daleyville, including a minutebook, 1872-1912, and records of deaths, confirmations, baptisms, marriages, communicants, membership, and activities; all entries are in Norwegian; loaned for copying by the church.

Papers, 1940- (1947-1973), of the non-stock corporation which publishes *The Progressive* magazine, consisting primarily of correspondence of editor Morris H. Rubin and others with contributors and readers including many prominent people, plus a small quantity of reorganizational, promotional, and circulation materials; presented by Morris H. Rubin, Madison.

Letters, 1862-1863, from Private Wilhelm Ramthun (ca. 1838-1863), Company K, Second Regiment Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, to his brother in Kewaskum; plus an 1861 baptismal certificate. Included are the original letters written in German Gothic script plus typed transcriptions and English translations prepared by Paul Rood. Loaned for copying by Marilyn Reinhardt, Kewaskum.

Letters, 1801-1807, providing news for publication by Samuel Reif, Philadelphia, editor of the *National Gazette*, written by his father-in-law, William Poyntell, a Philadelphia merchant traveling in Europe, and by William Taylor, a London businessman; loaned for copying by Mrs. C. B. Jackson, Nashotah.

Papers, 1934-1937, 1966-1977, of Annette

Jacobi Roberts, a Milwaukee pacifist and woman's rights activist, including diaries from trips to Russia, Germany, and Austria in 1934, articles about her activities, correspondence with family and friends, and an ancestral chart of the Jacobi family; loaned for copying by Mrs. Roberts.

Papers, 1960-1963, 1967, of Thomas St. Angelo (1889-1967), Republican state assemblyman from Barron County, including a few campaign documents, an obituary, and constituent correspondence; loaned for copying by Mrs. Gloria Saunders and Donald St. Angelo, Richfield, Minnesota.

Records, 1913-1937, of Salem Evangelical Church, Berlin, consisting of registers of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, deaths, communion totals, names of members and pastors, and special offerings; also including the congregation's constitution and narratives written by each pastor at the end of his service; early entries are in German; loaned for copying by Our Savior's United Church of Christ, Ripon.

Scrapbook of historical essays, clippings, photographs, and other items, dated ca. 1913-ca. 1966, on the history of Sun Prairie, primarily compiled in 1935 by members of The Twentieth Century Club, affiliated with the Wisconsin State Federation of Women's Clubs; loaned for copying by the Sun Prairie Public Library.

Additions to the records, 1928-1970, of the Socialist Workers Party, including minutes, printed circulating correspondence and position papers, reports, bulletins to the membership, branch circulars, and a substantial amount of material produced by other Trotskyist groups including the Fieldites, Weisbordites, Oehlerites, the Johnson-Forest Tendency, the Workers Party, and others; loaned for copying by the party and others.

Three letterpress copybooks, 1856-1870, of James G. Souard, Galena, Illinois, containing lists of names and addresses, of notes given and interest paid, and of mineral lands owned in Washington, Franklin, and Crawford counties, and business and personal correspondence including orders for seed and fruit cuttings, letters concerning donations to educational institutions, and letters to family and friends, several of whom lived in France; loaned for copying by the Galena Public Library.

Letterpress copybook, 1909-1910, of W. F. Strasser, superintendent of the Wisconsin Zinc Mining Company which operated a mill and a mine at Hazel Green, consisting of almost

daily reports to Daniel M. Mohr, Chicago, and other business correspondence; loaned for copying by the Galena Public Library.

Records, 1939-1977, of Temple Beth El, Madison, a Reform Jewish synagogue, including minutes, correspondence, bulletins, scrapbooks, membership directories, and other materials; loaned for copying by Rabbi Kenneth D. Roseman.

Records, 1943, 1962-1976, of Temple Shalom, Eau Claire, a synagogue which serves Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox Jews in the Chippewa Valley, consisting of records of the Temple itself, the women's B'nai B'rith, and the men's B'nai B'rith, including information on the controversy over the men's 1972 decision to drop their "male only" membership restriction; loaned for copying by Morton Sipres, Eau Claire.

Registers, 1841-1943, of the United Methodist Church, Platteville, recording baptisms, marriages, and membership, and containing brief histories of the church; loaned for copying by the church.

Records, 1953-1975, of United Steelworkers of America, Local 1533, Beloit, representative of Fairbanks, Morse Engine Division employees, including by-laws, minutes, contracts, form letters from labor affiliates, other correspondence and memoranda, publications, and other documents; loaned for copying by Local 1533.

Minutes, 1932-1942, of the Utopia Club, a black women's social and civic organization in Madison; also including membership records and committee reports; loaned for copying by Harry Allison, Madison.

Papers, 1923-1969, of Albert L. Warner (1903-1971), newspaper and radio reporter, head of the War Department's Bureau of Public Relation's War Intelligence Division during World War II, and later an associate editor of *U.S. News and World Report*, including correspondence, scripts, clipping scrapbooks, story ideas for *U.S. News*, and other materials; presented by Mr. and Mrs. Albert Warner, McLean, Virginia.

Minutes, 1912-1966, of the Wausau Chamber of Commerce, of several divisions of the chamber, and of two predecessor organizations, the Wausau Advancement Association and the Wausau Merchants and Manufacturers Association; loaned for copying by the chamber.

Ministerial book, 1899-1969, written in Norwegian, recording baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communion statistics, and

brief summaries of the services at West Holden Lutheran Church, Waushara County; loaned for copying by Mt. Morris Holden Lutheran Church, Wautoma.

Radio scripts, 1972-1977, from a series broadcast over WHA and the Wisconsin Educational Network by Gerald Bartell of the Wisconsin Arts Council, including interviews and essays promoting arts of all kinds; loaned for copying by Mr. Bartell, Madison.

Records, 1943-1977, of the Wisconsin Cooperative Tobacco Growers Association, Edgerton, consisting of annual reports, audit reports, and minute books, with information on tobacco marketing, grading, taxes, and research on soil and burning grades of various tobacco types; loaned for copying by the association.

Scrapbook of newspaper clippings, 1961-1966, from several Wisconsin papers, concerning open housing and other aspects of the civil rights movement as it relates to housing; collected and presented by the Wisconsin Realtors Association.

Additions to the records of the Wisconsin Surgical Society, consisting of a minute book, 1957-1966, including minutes, reports from the Committee on Ethical Practice, programs of annual meetings, financial reports, and membership records; loaned for copying by the society.

Ministerial book, 1860-1866, of York Evangelical Lutheran Church, Green County, written in Norwegian and English, recording baptisms, confirmations, marriages, deaths, membership, and church activities; loaned for copying by the Blanchardville Lutheran Church.

Ministerial book, 1882-1955, of York Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church, Green County, written in Norwegian, recording baptisms, confirmations, marriages, deaths, communicants, membership, and church activities; loaned for copying by the Blanchardville Lutheran Church.

Tape Recordings. Speeches given by Frank Lloyd Wright (1) at a testimonial dinner, February 10, 1955, organized to help pay Taliesin's Iowa County property taxes, including remarks on the need for personal architecture, on American architecture, and on the architect as a visionary in society; presented anonymously; and (2) at the Merchandise Mart, Chicago, on September 14, 1955, on the inauguration of the Frank Lloyd Wright furniture line; presented by Robert Twombly, New York City.

Contributors



JOE MICHAEL FEIST works in public relations and as a free-lance historical author in the Corpus Christi, Texas, area. He received his masters degree in history from Texas A&M University in 1976. In addition to the documentary articles in this issue of the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, he is the author of "Theirs Not to Reason Why: The Case of the Russian Railway Service Corps," in *Military Affairs*, vol. 42 (February, 1978). Another article, "Bats of War: The Adams Plan," will appear in a forthcoming issue of *American Heritage*. He lives with his wife and infant daughter in Portland, Texas.



RICHARD GOLDHURST, a 1950 graduate of Kenyon College, holds an advanced degree from New York University (1955). He is the author of nine published works, several of which deal with American military history. His last three books are *Many Are the Hearts: The Agony and Triumph of Ulysses S. Grant*; *Pipe Clay and Drill: John J. Pershing and the American Military Mind*; and *The Midnight War: American Intervention in Russia, 1918-1920* (published by McGraw-Hill in 1978). He is a member of the graduate faculty of Fairfield University, a Jesuit institution in Fairfield, Connecticut, where he is working on a book about American grief. Goldhurst is the son of the celebrated writer-humorist Harry Golden, and for twelve years was the associate editor of the *Carolina Israelite*.

Alice E. Smith Fellowship

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin has awarded the Alice E. Smith Fellowship for 1978-1979 to Lois J. Kalloway, a graduate student in the University of Michigan. Ms. Kalloway is writing a doctoral dissertation on Polish-American women in Midwestern cities, 1880-1920, a study which will show how particular urban centers, including Milwaukee, shaped the political, economic, and social roles of women within ethnic enclaves.

The Alice E. Smith Fellowship, which carries an outright grant of \$600, is awarded annually to a woman doing research in American history, with preference given applicants who are doing research in the history of Wisconsin or of the Middle West. The deadline for applications is July 15 of each year. Letters of application, describing in some detail the current research of the applicant, should be addressed to: *Director of Research, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706.*

THE BOARD OF CURATORS

LEE SHERMAN DREYFUS, *Governor of the State*

VEL PHILLIPS, *Secretary of State*

CHARLES P. SMITH, *State Treasurer*

EDWIN YOUNG, *President of the University*

MRS. WADE MOSBY, *President of the Auxiliary*

JOHN ANDERSON, Cable

THOMAS H. BARLAND, Eau Claire

E. DAVID CRONON, Madison

JOHN T. HARRINGTON, Milwaukee

MRS. R. L. HARTZELL, Grantsburg

PAUL E. HASSETT, Madison

MRS. WILLIAM E. HAYES, De Pere

MRS. R. GOERES HAYSEN, Racine

NATHAN S. HEFFERNAN, Madison

MRS. JEAN M. HELLISEN, La Crosse

MRS. FANNIE HICKLIN, Madison

E. E. HOMSTAD, Black River Falls

WILLIAM HUFFMAN, Wisconsin Rapids

MRS. PETER D. HUMLEKER, JR., Fond du Lac

ROBERT H. IRMANN, Beloit

MRS. EDWARD C. JONTS, Fort Atkinson

WILLIAM KIDD, Racine

MRS. HERBERT V. KOHLER, JR., Kohler

MRS. RAYMOND J. KOLTES, Madison

CHARLES R. MC CALLUM, Hubertus

HOWARD W. MEAD, Madison

NEWELL MEYER, Milwaukee

ROBERT B. L. MURPHY, Madison

FREDERICK I. OLSON, Wauwatosa

F. HARWOOD ORBISON, Appleton

JOHN R. PIRK, Madison

DR. LOUIS C. SMITH, Cassville

MRS. WILLIAM H. L. SMYTHE, Milwaukee

WILLIAM F. STARK, Nashotah

CLIFFORD D. SWANSON, Stevens Point

MIL K. SWANTON, Madison

CEDRIC A. VIG, Rhineland

CLARK WILKINSON, Baraboo

The Women's Auxiliary

MRS. WADE MOSBY, Milwaukee, *President*

MRS. DONALD R. KORST, Madison, *Vice-President*

MRS. JOHN C. WILSON, JR., Milwaukee, *Secretary*

MRS. JAMES NOYES, Madison, *Treasurer*

MRS. L. PRENTICE EAGER, JR., Evansville, *Ex Officio*

Fellows

VERNON CARSTENSEN

MERLE CURTI

ALICE E. SMITH

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY SHALL

promote a wider appreciation of the American heritage with particular emphasis on the collection, advancement and dissemination of knowledge of the history of Wisconsin and of the West.

—*Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 44*



WH: (U621) 29

Robert Collon Johnson of Madison photographed this winsome Russian sleigh driver near Archangel in 1918-1919, during his tour of duty with the Allied force sent to intervene in the Russian civil war.

