

A BGES' Civil War and Indian Wars
Field University Program:
**Little Crow's Rebellion and
the 1862 Minnesota Massacres**
Presented by Neil Mangum
July 12-20, 2024; from Minneapolis, MN

As the American Civil War increased in intensity, the Lincoln Administration drew upon the different loyal states for additional regiments to man the war effort. Minnesota had previously provided the 1st Minnesota to the cause, and they would earn eternal fame at Gettysburg in 1863. Now efforts were afoot to field and supply the 2nd Minnesota. With state attention focused on bringing resources and manpower together for that purpose, an uneasy treaty commitment was coming due.

An 1851 treaty had committed the white man to provide regular welfare payments to support the Dakota Sioux tribes in Minnesota. As the Indians came to claim their stipends, the treasure train had not yet arrived. Indians unhappy with the delay rioted within the Sioux agency, destroying and looting sutler shops that refused to provide credit in the absence of the government money train. The Indians then went on the warpath, murdering settlers along the Minnesota River. With more than 500 men, women, and children slaughtered, the United States Army set out in pursuit.

This tour is that war. As it progressed, a familiar name, Maj. General John Pope, arises. Following his defeat at Second Manassas, Pope has been replaced as commander of the Army of Virginia and now arrives in Minnesota to oversee the suppression of the Indian rebellion.

Friday, July 12, 2024

Check in to the headquarters hotel in Minneapolis. Neil Magnum, your tour leader, and Len Riedel will meet you in the lobby at 7 p.m. and distribute readings and other information about the program.

You should arrange dinner on your own. Your hotel is included.

Saturday, July 13, 2024

Bags out by 9 a.m., and mount up at 9:15 a.m. Our first stop at Historic Fort Snelling is driven by their schedule; today they open at 10 a.m. They have a reconstructed fort and a superb National Park Service Visitors Center. There are many important stories there, and Snelling is a staging area for military operations in Minnesota. The

most significant connection may be the story of Dred Scott, the famous enslaved individual at the center of the infamous Dred Scott Decision of 1857.

We will depart at noon and make a stop for lunch. Afterward, we drive to Le Sueur; the name should be familiar to you. It contains a famous packaging plant for vegetables that you see under that brand in grocery stores. One never knows where destiny lurks, and we will drive past the home of Doctor William Mayo, founder of the internationally recognized Mayo Clinic, now found throughout the world.

Heading on to St. Peter, we will visit the 1851 Treaty History Center Museum and the Traverse des Sioux State Historic Site. Our afternoon's penultimate event comes as we reach Mankato. Here, the aftermath of the uprising is played out with the execution of 38 death warrants in the largest mass execution in U.S history. The state's changing values are reflected in a change in interpretation that faults the marauding Indians and reframes them as victims of unrestrained white intrusion and subsequent oppression. Throughout the tours, you will see alternate interpretative markers reflecting this theme. It makes for excellent discussion.

A stop in at a town with a familiar name for grocery shoppers Le Sueur precedes our overnight stop at New Ulm.

Hotel, breakfast, and lunch are provided, with dinner on your own.

Sunday July 14, 2024

Bags out at 8, with departure at 8:15. Before getting deeply into the 1862 uprising, we will go to LaSalle, the site where in 1876 the outlaw Younger Brothers are captured following an attempted bank robbery in Northfield.

We return to New Ulm, where the entire historic area is a part of a key battle in the Dakota War. Streets were barricaded and buildings used in defense. We will walk the downtown, followed by a driving tour of the town, and then close at the Milford Massacre site.

Our day ends at Fort Ridgely, a spot attacked twice during the Dakota War. Here we will visit the Lower Sioux Agency, where the uprising began, and then the Redwood Ferry Crossing, where the renegades ambushed unsuspecting arrivals—the war was joined.

We will overnight at Redwood Falls. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, and hotel are included.

Monday July 15, 2024

Bags out at 8 and depart at 8:15. As we move into the Minnesota countryside, you will get some sense of the war. Our first stop will be at the site of the "Battle" of Birch Coulee. The walking trail, in summer growth, will show many of the features of

prairie and Indian combat. We will then move to a series of battle sites near and around Woodlake. We move on to the other Indian agency known as the Upper Sioux Agency, where again the nature of the relationship between the Federal government and the indigenous tribes is revealed.

Our day ends with a visit to Camp Release near Montevideo. Here the Dakota War ended with the surrender of a large portion of the Indians and the release of 269 hostages, mostly women and children.

We will continue on to Jamestown, North Dakota, where we overnight. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included.

Tuesday July 16, 2024

Bags out at 8 a.m., and we depart at 8:15 a.m. As the primary uprising had been suppressed, the Indians who had not surrendered fled into the Dakotas where they were pursued. We start today with fights in 1863 between General Sibley and the Inkpaduta Sioux near Dawson. We then go to fights near Big Mound, Dead Buffalo Lake, and Stony Lake. We finish the day in Mandan after visiting the North Dakota History Center in Bismarck.

Breakfast, lunch, and lodging are included.

Wednesday July 17, 2024

Leave your bags as we will be here two more nights. Departing at 8:30 a.m., our first stop is the remarkable Fort Abraham Lincoln site where our primary reason for stopping is to see the On-A-Slant Indian Village, which is on the Lewis and Clark Trail. We will visit the Fort Rice site where army expeditions in both 1863 and 1864 staged in their operations. From here we continue to Fort Yates, where Sitting Bull initially was buried. We also will see a monument to Sacajawea and, finally, the legendary Gall's Grave at St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Cemetery. We then head back to Mandan.

Breakfast, lunch, and hotel are included.

Thursday July 18, 2024

We are excited about today, as we made the decision to include all the sites that were important to the uprising. Today is devoted to the sites that were too hard to do the first time we did this program; we added a day, and so you will get to visit the Kildeer Battlefield, site of one of the first fights between Sitting Bull and American soldiers.

We will then head to the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site. A trip to Fort Mandan follows that. This important site is where Lewis and Clark spent the

winter of 1804–1805. We will finish this day at Fort Clark, where there are remains of an early Mandan Earthen village.

Breakfast, lunch, dinner, and the hotel are included.

Friday, July 19, 2024

Bags out at 8 AM with a departure at 8:15 AM. En route back to Minneapolis, we visit the well preserved Whitestone Hill. Here, General Sully defeated the Yanktonai and Hunkpatina Sioux in September 1863. We will also make stops at the Fort Ransom State Historic Site, an 1867-to-1872 fort; and Fort Abercrombie, which was besieged by the Dakota Sioux for six weeks during the 1862 war. We will be ending the day at Alexandria, Minnesota.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included along with the room.

Saturday, July 20, 2024

Today we return to where we started a week ago. Our 8:15 departure will bring us back to Minneapolis. Our first stop is at the Acton Monument near Grove City. Perhaps no stop will better display the ambivalence that two camps of historical interpretation have concerning the Dakota War. A state monument notes the incident involving four Dakota youths that started the Dakota War, while nearby we discover the revisionist interpretation of the incident.

Moving on, we will stop at the Acton battlefield where, in September 1862, members of the 9th Minnesota encountered Little Crow and his warriors. In Hutchinson, we will visit Little Crow's marker, a fitting finish to an interesting and rarely studied aspect of America's Civil War and the interface between Native Americans and the United States.

We should arrive in Minneapolis by 2 p.m., and flights home after 4 p.m. would work for people who fly in. A great trip that is truly a unique offering.

Breakfast and lunch are included.

About the Faculty:

Neil Mangum, one of the nation's foremost historians, is an expert on frontier life. A retired National Park Service official, he served as superintendent at the Little Big Horn National Battlefield as it transitioned from Custer National Battlefield. Neil is author of [*Battle of the Rosebud: Prelude to the Little Big Horn*](#). He has a following, and most people on this trip will have traveled with him before, which makes this event even nicer.

Hotel Information:

Your registration fee includes eight nights, single or double occupancy lodging. The hotels will be announced in early 2024.

Transportation:

The arrival airport is Minneapolis–St. Paul. Amtrak services the Twin Cities. We will make arrangements to leave your POV at the headquarters hotel in Minneapolis.

Recommended Reading:

You will be provided with maps upon arrival. The following books are suggested to enhance your readiness for the program.

Gary Clayton Anderson: [*Little Crow: Spokesman for the Sioux*](#)

Gary Clayton Anderson: [*Through Dakota Eyes: Narrative Accounts of the Minnesota Indian War of 1862*](#)

John Cristgau: [*Birch Coulee: The Epic Battle of the Dakota War*](#)

Asa Wilder Daniels: [*Reminiscences of the Little Crow Uprising*](#)

Gregory Michno: [*Dakota Dawn: The Decisive First Week of the Sioux Uprising, August 17–24, 1862*](#)

Registration Form
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Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Registration includes 8 nights' lodging, 8 breakfasts, 8 lunches, and 4 dinners; a map package; the academic program; support of a professional historian and a tour director; and all admissions and ground transportation. We will also provide snacks, bottled water, and a limited selection of sodas.

_____ Current BGES member \$3,200 single

_____ Current BGES member \$2,800 per person double occupancy

_____ Non-BGES member \$3,350 single

_____ Non-BGES member \$2,950 double occupancy per person

_____ I am not a member but would like to join so that I can get the member's rate; or I am a member who is past-due to renew. Please accept my membership donation of \$_____ (must be \$75 or more, which is tax-deductible; see blueandgrayeducation.org for levels).

_____ I am sending a deposit of \$600 per person and/or memberships.

Total enclosed is \$ _____. I will pay the balance due before the event.

_____ Check enclosed

Charge my (circle one) MC VISA AMEXP Discover \$ _____

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Exp: _____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____

Mail to BGES Seminars, P.O. Box 1176, Chatham, VA 24531; or fax credit cards to 434-432-0596. You may also register online at www.blueandgrayeducation.org.