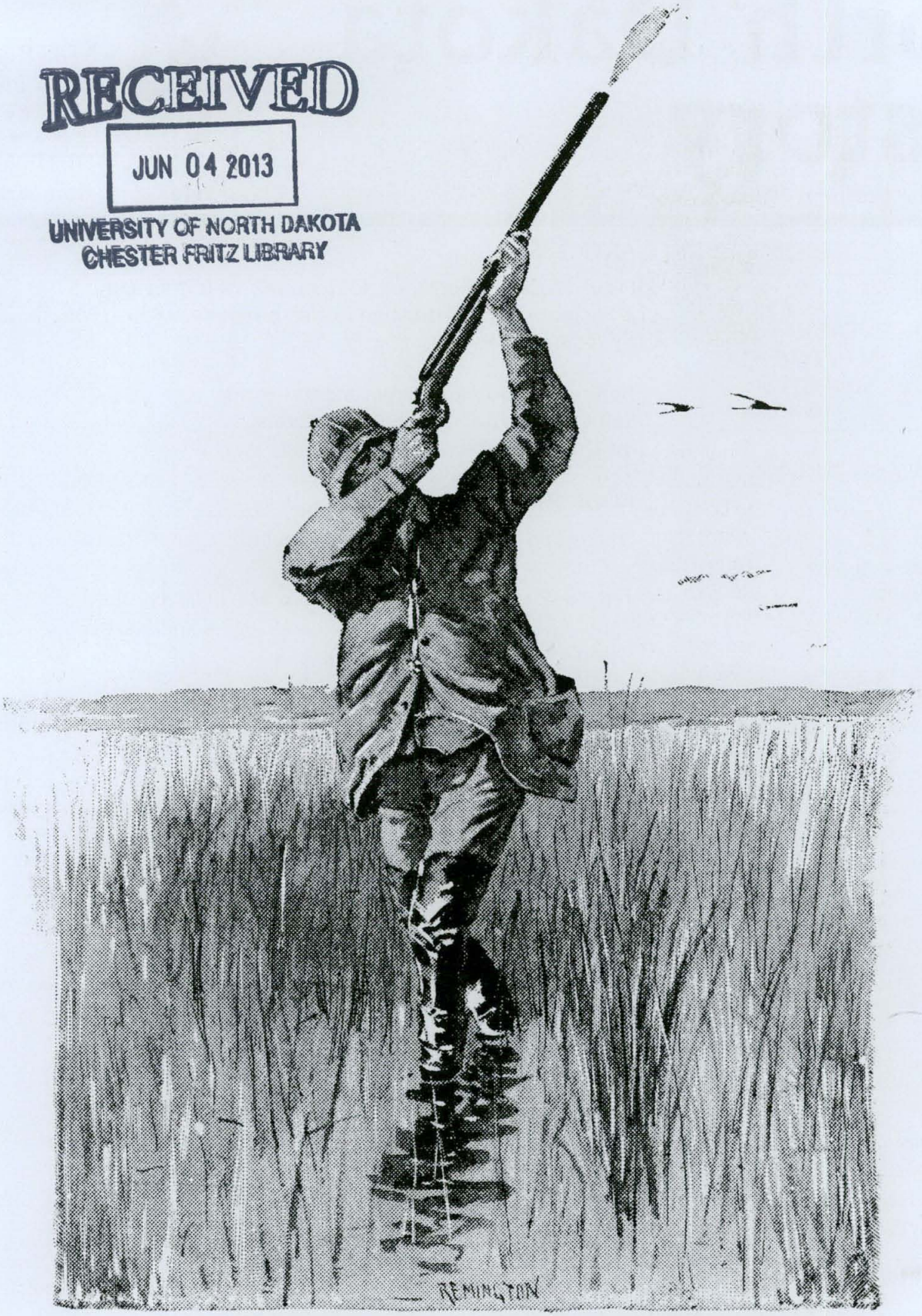


"MARK—LEFT."

From Theodore Roosevelt to the Izaak Walton League:

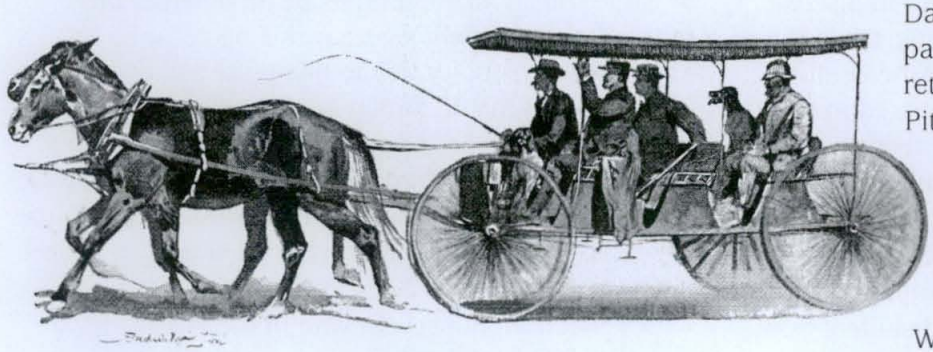
A Social History of Hunting in North Dakota, 1880-1950

By Jonathan Wagner

"The pursuit of wildlife is one of the best, if not the chief recreational activity of many of our citizens. . . . It brushes the cobwebs out of tired brains, puts new life and vigor into flabby muscles, and sets aright frayed and tattered nerves."[1] So wrote North Dakota's State Game and Fish Commissioner William J. Lowe in January 1946. Theodore Roosevelt, North Dakota's favorite adopted son and best-known hunter, would have concurred with that sentiment. Indeed, Lowe's language (clearing the mind, settling the nerves, investing vigor in flabby muscles) sounds very much like Roosevelt himself. However, the Dakota Territory in which Roosevelt chased deer on horseback across unfenced prairie and down lonely badlands coulees differed significantly from Lowe's modernizing, mid-twentieth-century state. In the three generations after Roosevelt hunted and ranched in the Medora area, North Dakota experienced profound changes in its political institutions, economic system, and social life. As a social activity, hunting reflected the changes affecting society as a whole.

Between 1880 and 1950 hunting in North Dakota changed from an incidental activity most often associated with frontier survival to a full-fledged, leisure-time hobby or sport. Two developments help explain this transformation: first, the impact of modernization with its attendant technological innovations, and second, changes in the idea of the west and the spread of the mythic West frontier ideal among those taking to North Dakota's fields. The impact of these developments can be traced over a series of sub-periods: the ranching/farming frontier of 1880-1900, the Progressive period from 1900 to the end of the First World War; the economically depressed and drought-stricken 1920s and 1930s; and finally the years of World War II and their aftermath, into the late 1940s and 1950s.

Harper's Weekly in August 1894 published an article by the well-known Western artist Frederic Remington entitled "Stubble and Slough in Dakota." The article describes his trip by private railroad car to hunt ducks and prairie chickens near Valley City and Devils Lake, North Dakota. In addition to Remington the party included a military officer, two retired generals, a "phlebotomist from Pittsburgh who had shot all over the earth," and three Harvard students. Remington illustrated his description of the dude hunting party with a number of images, including "A Dakota Chicken Wagon" and the heroic hunter on the facing page.



A DAKOTA CHICKEN-WAGON.

Hunting on the Ranching/Farming Frontier, 1880-1900

In the decades on either side of North Dakota statehood, the nation was experiencing great and rapid change. America's industrialization took off; the country's population grew exponentially, and urbanization increased. Although distant from the nation's centers of political and economic power, North Dakota was influenced by national trends, while significant differences still set the new state apart from much of the rest of the country.

In 1890 the superintendant of the United States Census officially announced the end of the frontier line (defined as a point beyond which the population density was less than two persons per square mile). At the same time that this physical frontier was officially closed, changes were occurring in another Western frontier, what historian Robert Athearn has labeled "the West of the mind, of the spirit."[2] The idea of the frontier West rose in the nineteenth century in conjunction with the Romantic nature theme celebrated in American literature by writers like Henry David Thoreau and in art by the Hudson River School of landscape painting.

By the century's end, this vision was tied to the so-called "mythic West," that complex set of beliefs which defined America's trans-Mississippi West as the country's most authentic frontier, a unique place of breathtaking beauty, abundant resources, personal freedom, equality, and open spaces, where a man could discover his connection to nature and his own essence. Throughout the Romantic frontier's evolution and into its Mythic West stage, hunting and hunters frequently embodied the ideal. One early example is James Fennimore Cooper's prototype fictional hero Natty Bumpo, the Deerslayer in the Leatherstocking Tales.[3] In this early view of the frontier the supply of game was assumed to be inexhaustible. With game so plentiful, every hunter could kill as much as he was able, without worry about the supply. In a sense, every hunter, whatever his wealth or status, could hunt like a European aristocrat. By the turn of the century however, as the physical frontier was declared to be at an end, the uneasy belief began to grow that this great West, the hunter's paradise, was also fading.

In North Dakota, older views of western abundance could still be sustained. North Dakota's population remained low by national standards, and greater distances separated the scattered settlers from towns and one another. In many ways North Dakota at the end of the nineteenth century remained a frontier where life was more undeveloped and less tempered by the conveniences characteristic of the country's older, more thoroughly settled parts. Here, huntable prey still abounded. Although the last mass buffalo hunts had ceased by the early 1880s, other exotic big game species, including elk, deer, bear, pronghorn antelope, mountain lions, and big horn sheep, still existed in significant numbers in North Dakota's West. Ed Lenneville, an old-time Dickinson native later recalled:

> Antelope roamed the western North Dakota prairies by countless thousands. The number of these beautiful animals which were here in the early '80's is unbelievable. Sometimes a herd on the move would take hours to pass a given point.[4]

Even if in the less-rugged, more-settled eastern part of the state the larger game animals suffered serious attrition before Roosevelt's time, the general state-wide conditions for smaller game continued to be favorable. Pioneers routinely described flocks of pinnated and sharp-tailed grouse in terms of hundreds rather than dozens. Migratory waterfowl—geese and ducks—of many different species were available in huge numbers each fall and spring.

Three kinds of hunters appeared in North Dakota in the final decades of the nineteenth century: the dude hunter, the market hunter, and the utilitarian hunter. Each reflected the frontier but in different ways; each would develop or disappear as the society which produced them modernized. Although he could be local, the most representative dude types came from without, traveling to North Dakota to pursue its wild game. Whether home-grown or not, the dude hunted for pleasure, as a hobbyist seeking entertainment. On the other hand, the market hunter pursued game for money. He harvested game as a farmer or rancher would gather in his wheat or cattle. He could sometimes be an outsider but more often a resident who saw killing game as an alternative or supplement to tilling the soil or raising cattle. Finally, the utilitarian hunter killed neither for sport nor money but to provide food for himself and his family or to protect his property from depredation. Hunting remained for him an incidental activity, often necessary, but nearly always overshadowed by more pressing obligations.

Theodore Roosevelt, who first came to the badlands as a twenty-five-year-old in September 1883, best represents the dude hunter.

SHSND 10557-Box 6, file 10-004

Theodore Roosevelt wearing a hunting outfit and holding a rifle, 1884. The transformation of Roosevelt the dude hunter into President Roosevelt, the conservationist, is similar to the transformation of hunting itself.

Scion of a prominent and wealthy New York family, he had many interests, two of his special passions being natural history and hunting. Thus, when he detrained at Medora, he entered a time and place especially suited to his particular interests. Finding the hunting and frontier life to be as exciting and challenging as he had imagined, he became quickly enamored with "Dakota." He had discovered his own version of the mythic West, a place where he could find "regeneration through regression."[5] Moreover, afflicted by what Athearn has called "a terminal case of cowboyitis," the eastern dude stayed on to ranch.[6]

Roosevelt detailed his North Dakota hunting successes in his *Hunting Trips of a Ranchman*. Typical for the age of Andrew Carnegie and James J. Hill, Roosevelt hunted unfettered by any human restraint. No fences, no seasonal restrictions, no bag limits, no time constraints, no choice of prey limited the cowboy from Oyster Bay. Throughout the elaborately detailed accounts of both his planned and spontaneous hunting ventures, there is much braggadocio and no inkling of any awareness of excess. For example, in his chapter on hunting grouse, he describes a grouse hunting trip in which he and his brother, with two pointing dogs, undertook in the summer of 1885. He concluded the account by complaining that the dogs had become prematurely tired by "careless" hunting, which had forced the Roosevelt brothers to cut short their efforts "with yet a good hour of daylight left." "Nevertheless," Roosevelt concluded, "we had in our wagon when we came in at night, a hundred and five grouse, of which sixty-two had fallen to my brother's gun, and forty-three to mine."[7]

Roosevelt was not unique among dude hunters in his appetite for killing game. Lenneville, the Dickinson native, also recalled that;

> In the early 1890's a group of New York bankers came to Dickinson every fall in their private cars to shoot deer and other big game. They employed local guides and spent from three to four weeks in the Bad Lands. The number of heads of game that they took out was never known but many four-horse loads of bear, deer, and some mountain sheep, also known as big horn, were loaded into their refrigerator cars.[8]

Home-grown dudes committed excesses as well. Hunting in October 1899, Dr. W.F. Sihler of Ramsay County described his party's success in these words:

> Five of us were driving home at sundown from a duck hunt. All as once we saw a huge string of ducks heading for a barley field and as it got dark we moved over to the field. By the time we got squared away it was moonlight and the birds were so hungry they did not fly away even when we started shooting. After several minutes of volleying our shotguns, we picked up our birds and headed into Grand Harbor. We had a full buggy and when we unloaded at the old storage shack we counted about 270 ducks.[9]

Whether New York bankers or leisured locals like Dr. Sihler, the dudes hunted solely for sport, for the thrill of the chase. In this fundamental way the dudes differed from the market hunters with whom they shared the field.

Major market hunting existed in the Dakotas well before the 1880s. Indeed, market hunters contributed disproportionately to the destruction of the bison during the 1870s. With the bison gone, they turned their sights on the remaining game, most notably the new state's deer and game birds. Serious market hunters, whom Roosevelt detested as crass, unsportsmanlike fellows, went about their work single-mindedly. According to one observer, they "were a fanatic lot who used nets, traps, lights, super sized guns, dogs and any other equipment" useful for harvesting their quarry.[10] Their success rate was remarkable. Referring to market hunting in the 1890s, Lenneville complained that in the badlands

> The white and black tailed deer were hunted by meat hunters and sold in the towns by the wagon load. Many hunters took only the saddles or hind quarters and thousands . . . were sold at three dollars per saddle.

And he concluded in the same testimonial that western grouse were also killed "in season and out" by the thousands to be "sold on the market, served in hotels and shipped to eastern markets."[11]

If market hunting was a full-time business for some, other North Dakota residents moonlighted at it. Ruben Humes, a Stark County youth, explained how he earned money on the side by shooting grouse in the fall with his .22 rifle. First he would find a large cottonwood tree near some bullberries and build a blind beneath it. Crawling into the blind, he waited for the grouse to come. "Sometimes," he explained:

> Hundreds of them would light in the cottonwood tree. I shot the grouse that were on the lower branches and worked up. I shot the grouse in the head and as long as they tumbled to the ground the other grouse would not fly away. . . . Some mornings I would kill as high as 50 chickens.

These he then sold "for fifteen cents each in Dickinson" where they were packed up and shipped east.[12]

The third group of hunters, those opportunistic folk who harvested game intermittently for their own private use, normally hunted out of necessity or when the opportunity to harvest game ready-at-hand seemed too advantageous to pass up. Unlike the dudes, they seldom hunted simply for fun; like the market hunters their hunting usually

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A bison hunter, the quintessential market hunter, taking robes and tongues near Smokey Butte, Montana Territory, 1879. L.A. Huffman photograph

occurred as part of a day's labor. There are frequent frontier testimonials that confirm the survival-based, utilitarian, and spontaneous nature of such early settler hunting. Steele County homesteader William Northrup recalled:

> We seldom thought of going hunting, for the wild geese ducks and prairie chickens were plentiful. Our barn was built below the bank of the lake within gun range of the water. If mother wanted ducks for dinner we would take a gun with us when we did the morning chores at the barn. We seldom failed to get two or three mallards at a shot.[13]

Moreover, hunting could be quite spontaneous. "I'll never forget the night," James Vail, an early Sergeant County resident, recounted:

> Aunt Clara Fenton had invited me down to have some of the tapioca pudding which I so thoroughly enjoyed and while at the table we heard the honking of a big flock of geese. Uncle Chan grabbed his gun and brought down two fine birds that fell just at our feet.[14]

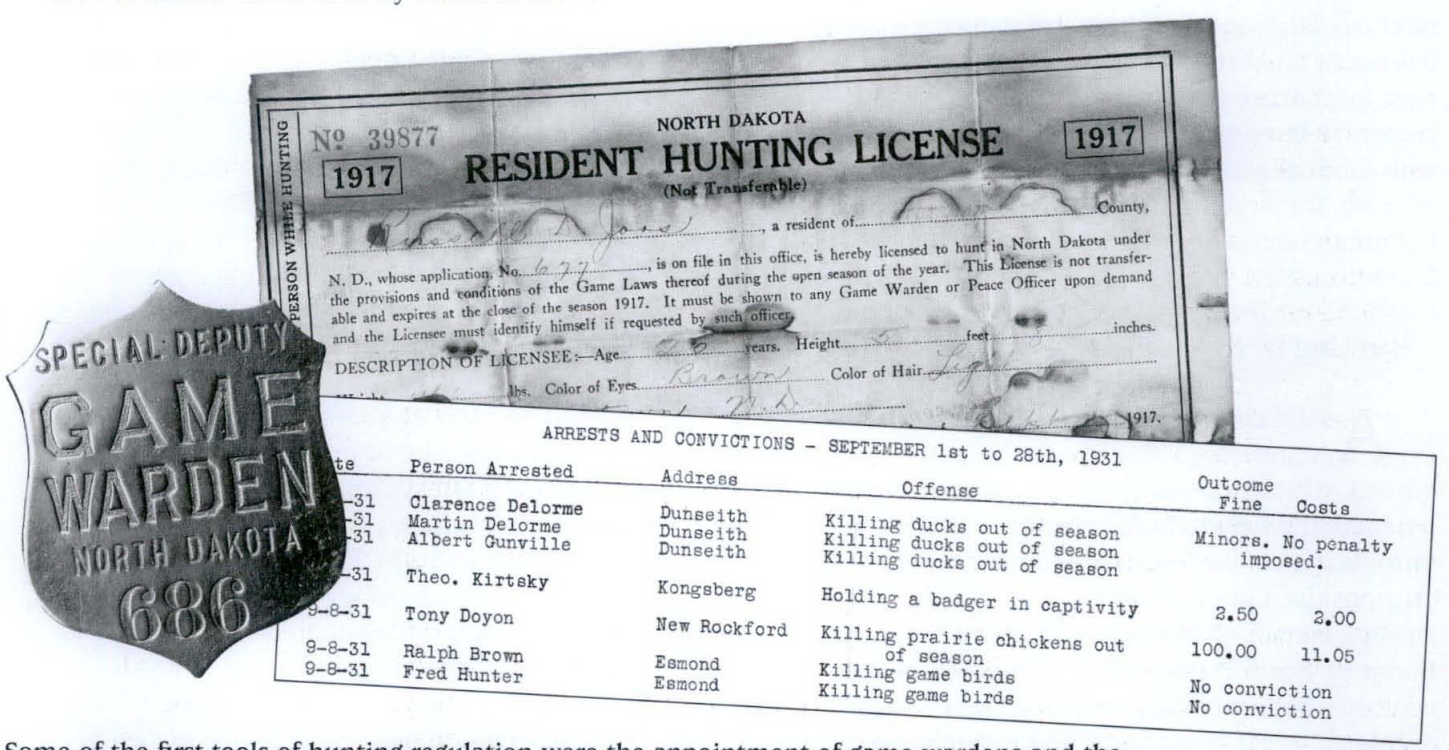
The hunting techniques of the non-dude, non-professional hunters also reflected hunting's ancillary status, for they often hunted with antiquated, unorthodox, or jerry-rigged devices. Usher Burdick's account of how, in the late 1880s, he, a preadolescent, and his four-year-older brother employed their father's Civil War blunderbuss to shoot ducks is illustrative:

> The old musket had been loaded for some time with a strong load and it was the worst kicking gun in the country. . . . We were aware that this gun would do some kicking when we fired at the ducks so we took some precautions. My brother Len got down behind the gun to take proper aim and I turned my back to his and dug my heels in the mud. We were now ready. Len whistled and up the ducks swarmed. 'Boom' went the old musket and 'Boom' we went also. Len was kicked clear over me and when we righted ourselves we found the gun about six feet to our right. . . . We gathered up 16 nice mallards.[15]

D.L. O'Connor, a homesteader from Eddy County, recounted several goose hunting techniques. One was

> to take pieces of newspaper and scatter them on the stubble fields and lay down in the middle underneath them . . . the geese flying over would see the paper and settle down thinking the newspaper were geese. When we were well surrounded . . . we started shooting. Of course, we didn't always have ammunition, then we would resort to fish hooks baited with corn or other large grains.[16]

Two fundamental causes determined hunting's spontaneity and lack of structure in the 1880s and 1890s. First, the absence of governmental supervision provided little guidance. Nevertheless, beginning in the 1890s some controls were instituted. For example, in 1891 it was made illegal to kill buffalos, elk, deer, or pronghorn antelope between the first day of January and the first day of September. Five years later the state legislature empowered the governor to appoint a state game warden to enforce the game protection laws. The next year, 1897, the first hunting license was introduced.[17] The existence of a game warden and a license requirement, however, did not solve the problem of unauthorized and excessive taking of game animals. As the state's game warden himself confessed in his first yearly report, "I found it next to impossible to enforce the game laws." He was unable to do so because he had no funds, the state's legislature having failed to provide the monies



Some of the first tools of hunting regulation were the appointment of game wardens and the requirement for hunting licenses. This license is for the year 1917. The 1920 warden's badge belonged to Arnold H. Benson, who served as a warden in Nelson County. When a warden discovered a hunter not carrying a license, the hunter's name could end up in the monthly report of arrests and convictions published in *North Dakota Outdoors*. This list is from the October 1931 issue.

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to pay his deputies, print licenses, or provide synopses of the game laws.[18]

The second reason for hunting's late-nineteenth-century non-structure derived from the nature of pioneering life. In such a world with its demanding work routines, pioneers normally had little time for anything but work. During the 1930s Works Progress Administration workers interviewed some of North Dakota's original homesteaders. A random sampling of interviews conducted in twenty five counties confirms this work-dominated mindset among North Dakota's pioneers. The sample included results from 220 interviews in which the pioneers were asked what they did for recreation when they were homesteading.[19] The most frequent responses included: church activities (29), visiting neighbors (28), card playing (29), dancing (55), baseball (19), picnics and parties (19), and most common of all, with more than a quarter of the respondents, "none" (59). Only eighteen individuals (or a little over 8 percent), all farmers or ranchers, listed hunting as their recreation.

Although homesteaders gathered together more frequently than might have been expected in the early years, group recreation was not a normal daily activity on the North Dakota frontier. Hunting, however, was carried out not only as part of a daily routine, but also by individuals frequently acting alone. It appears highly unlikely that only 8 percent of those interviewed about their homesteading experience did not at one time or another kill game to provide food for themselves or their families. The failure to recognize hunting as recreation, nevertheless, accords with the reality of every day life on the North Dakota frontier. The homesteaders, after all, were not dudes but utilitarians, and hunting represented not a game but a necessity.

Hunting in the Progressive Period, 1900-1918

As the country recovered from the 1890s depression, it experienced renewed economic growth, which not only greatly expanded the general population's wealth, but also ameliorated life by introducing conveniences and labor-saving machinery. This positive national climate directly affected North Dakota, launching the state's so-called Second Great Boom.[20] North Dakota also participated in the new century's political efforts to end abuses of power, to reform social institutions, and to apply scientific efficiency to the country's problems by utilizing government as problem-solver. North Dakota's participation in the Progressive Movement came in the guise of increased populism and the Nonpartisan League, founded in 1915.

Another national trend influencing North Dakota involved major social changes, many of which were inspired by the new amenities and devices produced in the economic upswing. No two industrial products would be more important than the automobile and tractor. More precisely, in North Dakota the automobile attacked rural isolation but also helped corrode rural institutions.[21] Providing new freedom and accessibility to the state's residents, the car quickly became a necessity. Indeed, on the eve of World War I, with one car for every forty-five people, "the state ranked fifth nationally in automobiles per capita."[22]

The tractor's impact in North Dakota was nearly as great, for tractors transformed the whole process of agriculture, making it more productive and less physically demanding.[23] Tractors also reduced the amount of land left unplowed for grazing, increasing the loss of game habitat. By the beginning of World War I, North Dakota shared with Iowa, Minnesota, and the other Plains states national leadership in utilizing tractors.[24] The introduction of cars and tractors initiated an economic and social transformation that would end North Dakota's own physical frontier and initiate hunting's transformation as well.

The transformation to sport hunting, however, did not occur overnight. Although bag limits had been established for many species by 1900, individuals as a rule paid little attention to them. In 1903, for example, the state game warden complained that "the limit of birds is exceeded whenever it is possible to do so, and it is impossible for wardens to keep track of this class of hunters."[25] Testimonials to the continuation of seemingly limitless game and hunting excesses were common. For example, W.F. Dick, a Killdeer resident, described conditions in 1904:

> It would be hard for some to believe the actual truth of the amount of prairie chickens at that time (1904). We did not hunt them; they were thick enough so you only had to shoot them. . . .We had a house built into the side of a hill and I have stood on top of that house before breakfast with a shotgun and shot all we wanted as they flew over.[26]

An irritated Wishek hunter complained in October 1907 how one member of his duck-hunting party used 102 shells to kill 125 ducks.[27] These freewheeling conditions allowed individuals to kill dozens of grouse

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The automobile transformed hunting by increasing the distance hunters could roam in search of game. It also provided a handy backdrop for displaying the day's catch. Here, Horace Hardy and Holten A. Smith stand near a car draped with the birds they have shot near Steele, North Dakota, in about 1920.

or hundreds of ducks and geese during a single outing.

New technology available to hunters after 1900 increased hunter efficiency. In his report for 1907-1908, the state's game warden for District One pointed out two developments in particular that made legislation regulating hunting more pressing than ever. First, he cited the improvements in the killing power of firearms: "Not longer than thirty years ago, most of the shooting was done with a muzzle loader." This inefficient weapon was eclipsed first by the breech loader, next by the six-shot repeating rifle and finally the automatic gun, "which fired three times more rapidly than the repeater." The second improvement, the introduction of the automobile, allowed the hunter to venture to places formerly inaccessible, thus making "it impossible for wild game to have many retreats where safety is assured." To balance the hunter's augmented power, the warden pleaded for more stringent laws to protect game.[28]

North Dakota's new boom, combined with technological advancements, led some residents to a sense that the unlimited West was in danger of disappearing here as it was elsewhere. A belief spread that new energies had to be generated and new programs adopted both to arrest the decline in the state's game animals and to preserve hunting's future. The state government began to intervene more aggressively to regulate hunters and hunting. The creation of the State Game and Fish Board of Control in 1909 marked "the first step in establishing a permanent agency of game law enforcement."[29] In the new effort under the new board, two themes emerged. First, it was deemed necessary to intervene to stop the excessive levels of killing by introducing more restrictive bag limits and closing or limiting open seasons. For example, the law of 1901, which limited the hunter to taking five deer per day, was changed in 1909 to two deer. In 1913, because the deer herd continued to decline, the season was closed entirely and not reopened until 1921.[30] For sharp-tailed grouse the twenty-five-a-day limit introduced first in 1887 was reduced in 1909 to ten per day. Eight years later that limit was reduced further to five.

In the same period the state launched its invigorated campaign to control hunting, the Progressive-era federal government lent its regulatory support. Washington passed three landmark pieces of legislation between 1900 and 1920. First, the

Lacey Act of 1900 sought to protect game and wild animals by making it a crime to poach game in one state and sell them in another state. Specifically, the law prohibited the transportation of illegally captured or prohibited animals across state lines. In 1913 the Weeks-McLean Act moved to regulate the killing of migratory game birds by empowering the United States Secretary of Agriculture to set hunting regulations nationwide. It prohibited not only spring hunting but the marketing of migratory birds. Four years later this act was superseded by the Migratory Bird Treaty of 1918, a convention which extended Weeks-McLean by including Canada in the regulation of seasons and the prohibition of selling or killing of out-of-season migratory birds.

Far less obvious than these national or state statutory regulations, a second theme emerged. Less prohibitive and more proactive than the regulations just described, it involved the first tentative efforts to manage the state's game by establishing state-owned game farms and by introducing new game animals into the state. The state's Game and Fish Board acquired three properties between 1917 and 1921 for raising game animals. In addition, seven years earlier it had purchased and released Chinese pheasants in different parts of the state.[31] These modest acts represented the beginnings of an active state commitment to nurture and conserve the state's game animals on the one hand, while promoting hunting as a leisure activity on the other.

As these policies and laws came into existence, a new attitude toward and definition of hunting emerged as well. To begin with, the argument against the unregulated slaughter of the state's game animals often included a defense of hunting those same animals. In such a defense, apologists depicted hunting not as a way to feed the family or protect one's cattle from marauding wolves. Rather, hunting's future needed to be preserved for other less mundane reasons than survival. Enter here the force of the romantic, mythic Western frontier ideal. In the new defense, hunting became more than killing animals; it became a multi-dimensional outdoor sport. In 1908, the state game warden described the new dimensions in this fashion: "It is very gratifying to note that there is among sportsmen a growing appreciation of the value of exhilarating air, the pleasures of the chase, the beauties of nature and pleasant associations which gives the size of the bag a secondary place."[32]

As Athearn notes in *The Mystic West*, enthusiastic liberals who endorsed President Woodrow Wilson's new freedom and Theodore Roosevelt's progressivism were seeking to retain the rewards earned from benefits bestowed by the recent industrial advance, but at the same time they were seeking somehow to retain the individual freedom so thoroughly woven into the country's traditions. To them, as to the ordinary man on the street, the West was the repository of freedom and individualism, perhaps the last stronghold of those qualities. Somehow the frontier ambience had to be preserved "as a sacred

While hunting on the frontier had for centuries been characterized by few limits to the take, by the 1930s the sportsman's creed, as written in this cartoon, called on the hunter to "shoot carefully," "take only your share," and "don't always take the limit." Hunting enthusiasts often depicted hunting as a way of preserving the frontier virtues against an industrializing world, but a new sense of limits changed the definition of those frontier virtues. The sportsman and his son are not dressed as frontier hunters, but as solidly middle-class citizens. From *North Dakota Outdoors*, October 1938.

bulwark against profane industrialism."[33] Individual freedom also meant that hunting not be limited only to the rich and powerful—upper-class and aristocratic hunters in Europe also proclaimed the healthy pleasures of hunting—but be available as a public good for all citizens. Nevertheless, before hunting could become a mass leisure-time activity, hunters would have to cope with the difficulties of the post-war years and the Great Depression.

Hunting in the 1920s and the Great Depression

Even as reliance on the automobile and the spreading use of telephones facilitated social relations, troubled times began on the Northern Plains. A major agricultural recession began shortly after the Great War. Frequent drought and lower grain prices in the 1920s lead to a continuing crisis, and the arrival the Great Depression affected a weakened North Dakota economy and society profoundly. For nine of the eleven years between 1929 and 1939 the state had to face severe drought, dust storms, weather extremes, grasshopper hordes, and failed crops.

During the 1930s, two factors helped the state to survive. The first was the citizens' dogged determination to carry on despite adversities, similar to the frontier spirit that had maintained so many during the state's infancy. This determination was further expanded by the more recently developed tradition of group solidarity, a legacy of the cooperative movements that grew so rapidly in the troubled 1920s. The second factor was the massive help afforded North Dakota by President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. As a result of federal initiatives, half of the state's total population (about 330,000 persons) was on relief by the mid-thirties.[34] Acceptance of such relief established the precedent for an extended federal presence in North Dakota. Later, when Washington began to promote federally supported conservation projects, both the idea and reality of a federal partnership already existed.[35]

The Depression-era belief that planning and conserving were necessary to avoid disaster spread among the state's general population and also affected its hunters. Indeed, the identical problem faced both: scarcity and failing resources. Thus, as the human population suffered in the 1920s and 1930s, so also did the state's game animals. To begin with, North Dakota's deer herd had dwindled almost to extinction.[36] Well before World War I, the state's game managers recognized the crisis and attempted to reverse it by reducing hunting harvests. For example, the deer season again was closed entirely from 1923 to 1931. After that, it was alternately opened and closed every other year until the 1940s.[37] Although the grouse population had fared better than the deer, concerns about its future also prompted limitations on harvests. In the 1930s the daily bag limit on sharp-tailed grouse was reduced from five to three and the length of the open season shortened from thirty-two days in 1927 to five-and-a-half days in 1936. For waterfowl, the reductions in numbers during the1920s and early 1930s appeared every bit as extreme as what had occurred in the state's deer herd. However, for migratory waterfowl the drastic reduction followed less from over-hunting or the plowing up of habitat than from the drought. As prairie lakes and sloughs dried up, the ducks and geese simply disappeared.[38]

The greatest boost in federal assistance to conservation and hunting was the passage in 1937 of the Pittman-Robertson Act, which provided funds to restore wildlife habitat. The need to preserve and restore habitat can be seen through U.S. Department of Agriculture census reports on the number of farms and the land classified as farmland in North Dakota. Not all land listed as farmland was immediately plowed, but the impact on wildlife habitat was substantial. During the sixty years following statehood, the percentage of land in the state classified as farmland increased from about 17 percent to 91 percent.

Year	Number of Farms	Land in Farms (acres)
1890	27,611	7,660,333
1900	45,882	15,552,640
1910	74,360	28,426,650
1920	77,690	36,214,751
1930	73,975	38,657,894
1940	73,962	37,936,136
1950	65,410	41,194,044

By 1935 the combined effects of ineffective controls, past hunting's excesses, and the era's pervasive drought presented hunting advocates with a severe crisis. The number of hunting licenses purchased during the decade dramatized hunting's precarious state. In 1928, for example, 41,432 North Dakotans purchased licenses to hunt game birds. Seven years later in 1935, that number had fallen by nearly half to 23,383. Nonresident license figures were even more telling, with 263 issued in 1928 and only 15 in 1935.[39] Deeming drastic measures essential for reversing the decline, pro-hunting forces launched

massive program to rally support for their cause and to save the animals. This campaign combined the efforts of federal agencies, state departments, and local societies. With restoration and preservation as the main themes, the campaign sought to return North Dakota's wildlife to sustainable levels and thus to preserve what had been gradually evolving for the past generation and was thought to be nearly permanently lost, namely, the privilege and opportunity to hunt as sportsmen.

From the onset, the state's Game and Fish Department led the battle for hunting's future. Although hampered by meager funding, the agency went on the offensive. It endeavored to tighten up existing hunting regulations, enforce the laws against violators more vigorously, expand earlier efforts at releasing pheasants and Hungarian partridges, and launch a program of varmint control aimed specifically at protecting the state's game birds. To rally public support, it created a Junior Game Wardens League to enlist the state's youth in the conservation movement, and it established a monthly publication for educating the public on the agency's work. The first issue of the department's *North Dakota Outdoors*, a "simple five page bulletin," appeared in August 1931.[40]

To complement the Game and Fish Department efforts, private initiatives promoted conservation and hunting during the Dirty Thirties as well. The two best-known nationally affiliated initiatives in North Dakota were the Izaak Walton League and the North Dakota Wildlife Federation. Established originally in Chicago in 1922 to "save outdoor America for future generations," the Izaak Walton League began operations in North Dakota in 1927, with thirteen chapters and about 500 members.[41] By 1928 the league had expanded to thirty-six chapters and nearly 2,000 members. Its constitution pledged the membership to support conservation, advocate obedience to the game laws, and "develop character building and spiritual development of our people, especially our boys and girls."[42] In its conservation program, the League emphasized practical conservation acts. Hence, "the first great activity of the Mandan Chapter" was "the introduction of Chinese Ring neck Pheasants in the territory around Mandan."[43] Founded in Carrington in 1935, the North Dakota Wildlife Federation was likewise constituted to do all in its "power by personal and organized efforts to preserve the wildlife in North Dakota and in North America."[44] More precisely, it lobbied to see that appropriate game officials were promoted, beneficial legislation enacted, and the state's game preserved. The North Dakota Wildlife Federation represented the mythic West in action.

Usually, but not always, affiliated with national or state agencies, local sportsmen's clubs proliferated as well during North Dakota's Depression. They too arose in response to hunting's dire predicament and developed specific agendas to improve habitat and protect game animals. One of the most popular programs was predator control, and no predator received more club attention in the 1930s than the wily crow. Vilified repeatedly in *North Dakota Outdoors* as a certifiable enemy of North Dakota's other birds, the State Game and Fish Department appealed in May 1932 to the sportsmen's groups throughout the state to wage war on crows. And so they did. For example, the Minot Sportsmen's Association laid a bounty of ten cents on adult crows, five cents on fledglings, and two cents on crow eggs; the Oakes Sportsmen's Club divided the membership into two anti-crow teams and condemned the loosing team with its fewer dead crows to provide the winners with a banquet.[45] To strengthen further the crow-hunting resolve, *North Dakota Outdoors* published an article praising the crow as table fare. Delicious in stews, soups, and sandwiches, crow could even rival squab if "taken just before flying age." Recipes to prove these contentions were provided.[46] Eating crow assumed a new meaning.

Although state government and local sportsmen's associations formed a strong basis for the conservation movement, the Depression severely limited their ability to act. Significantly reversing past wildlife losses and engineering major new conservation programs would have required resources beyond the state's capacity to provide. Not surprisingly, during the same period that Roosevelt's New Deal came to the aid of the state's banks, farmers, and unemployed, the federal government stepped in to assist North Dakota's conservationists. The greatest boost in federal assistance to both conservation and hunting occurred with the passage in 1937 of the Federal Aid to Wildlife Protection Act. Known as the Pittman-Robertson Act, this piece of enlightened legislation levied a federal excise tax on all sporting arms and ammunition to raise funds "for the purpose of restoring wildlife habitat and otherwise aiding in the preservation and utilization of wildlife resources."[47] Under Pittman-Robertson, North Dakota received its first $11,491 in 1939 for acquiring 480 acres of land to augment an existing state refuge. Pittman-Robertson would stimulate two crucial developments for the future of the state's game and its hunters. First, it would

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Women in North Dakota also hunted. Medora Vallambrosa, Marquise de Morès, riding side saddle, above, hunted regularly with her husband. Many people considered her a better shot than the Marquis. As hunting developed as an organized sport, however, it was considered as an activity largely for sportsmen rather than sportswomen. The composition of the various sportsmen's groups and conservationist clubs reflected this. For example, executive officers of the Izaak Walton League and the North Dakota Wildlife Federation were entirely men. Game-violator lists published regularly in *North Dakota Outdoors* only occasionally included females.[48]

Evidence of women hunters can be found in the collections of the State Historical Society of North Dakota. One scrapbook in the collections records the life of Aurelia Mae DeArton and Melvin H. Bemis, who married at Stanley, North Dakota, on June 30, 1909. Both had attended the University of North Dakota, and Aurelia Mae taught school while Melvin was the stationmaster in Concrete, North Dakota, for the new Northern Dakota Railway. Mel and Mae moved to Minneapolis in about 1941. Mae died in 1954, and Mel later prepared a series of scrapbooks to commemorate their life. The caption for the hunting photo below reads in part: "Mae loved to hunt and was a good shot. Her little 410 bagged many a pheasant. She went with Mel on almost all of his small game hunting trips. Deer hunting was too strenuous, so she let Mel bring home the venison. The covers of these books are made from deer Mel shot."

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NORTH DAKOTA'S FIRST WOMAN GAME WARDEN KNEW 'TEDDY' ROOSEVELT AND HELPED PROTECT THE WILDLIFE IN THE AREA HE LOVED SO WELL has been invited to be one of the pioneers in attendance at the Memorial Park dedication at Medora June 4. She is Mrs. Elizabeth Roberts of Dickinson.

She served for 30 years in the active capacity of game warden in this western part of the state and her appointment was renewed in 1946 by the game and fish department. The most publicized event of her game warden work, she recalls, was the time she arrested two women and two men for illegal shooting of grouse. They turned out to be wanted persons who had burglarized a Spearfish, S. D., store and stolen six guns.

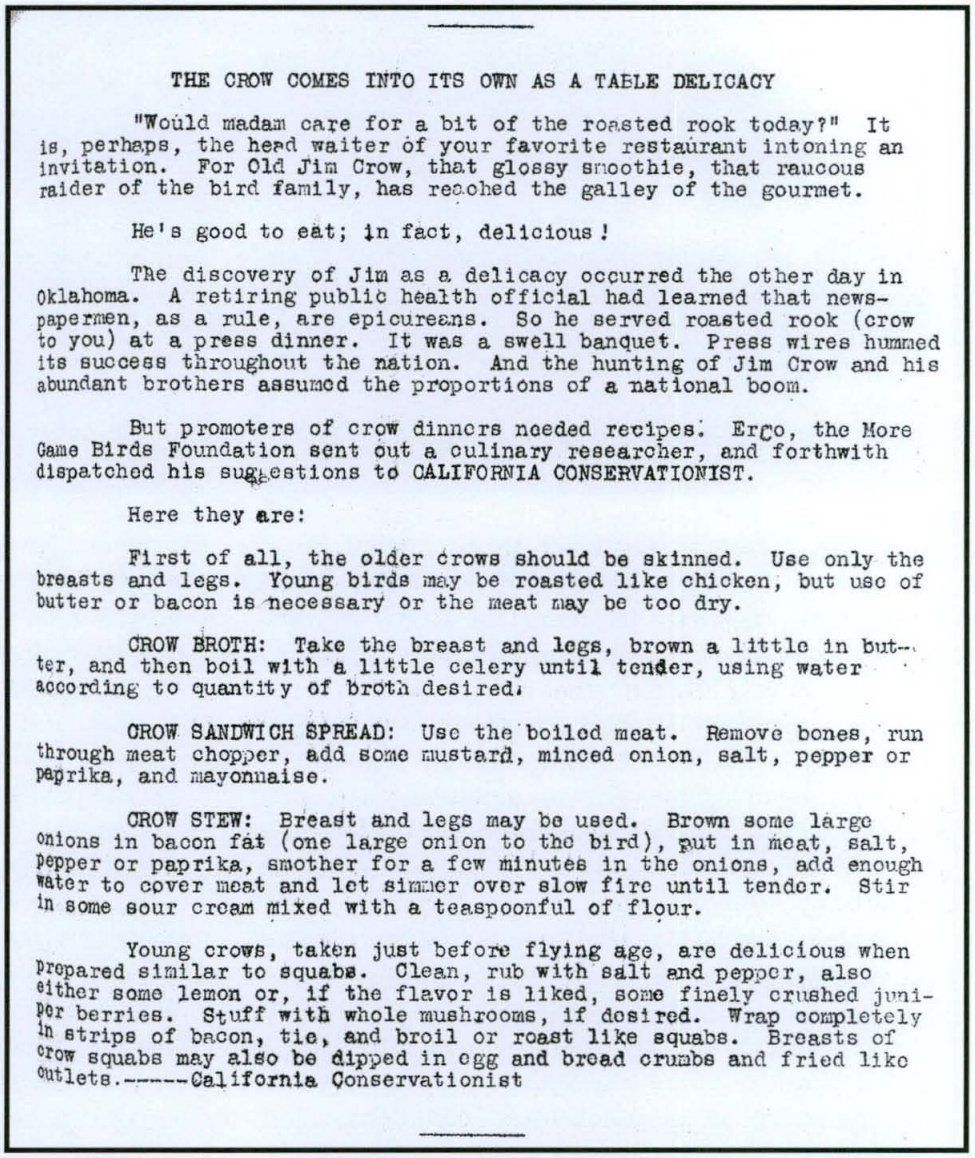
Mrs. Roberts came to Dakota Territory in 1882, living first at the Custer Trail ranch seven miles south of Medora and stayed in this western area, is now a Dickinson resident.

Another scrapbook, that of Katherine Pelissier, contains this clipping from the May 19, 1949, *Dickinson Press* about her sister Elizabeth Roberts. Roberts was recognized by the Game and Fish Department as an honorary game warden. See the back cover for more about the Roberts family.

"Mae loved to hunt and was a good shot."

greatly expand the purview and activities of the State Game and Fish Department as that agency became increasingly involved in land acquisition, resource management, and habitat restoration. It would also initiate the beginnings of scientific game management.

The growth of scientifically-based conservation and game management, the application of game laws regulating the transport and sale of wild animals, plus the drastic decline of the state's game animals during the 1930s profoundly affected North Dakota hunting. To start with, market hunting all but ceased to exist, for game was no longer available in quantities to make defiance of the law and harvesting profitable. The drastic decline of wildlife during the decade also affected utilitarian hunting. Although such hunting occurred in North Dakota during the drought years, how often and how widely it was practiced has not been documented. Such hunting appears to have enjoyed a measure of both public and private toleration because of the period's dire conditions. Nevertheless, unlicensed and out-of-season utilitarian hunting was never publicly condoned. Instead, Depression-era conservationist clubs and governmental agencies promoted hunting for sport; that is, hunting as fully autonomous recreation. Successful and dedicated hunters were now more than those who killed game skillfully and often; they also understood the necessity of limiting the kill to preserve the game; they could hunt and not kill and still enjoy the experience of having been "again, if only for a few brief hours, carefree children of nature."[49]



THE CROW COMES INTO ITS OWN AS A TABLE DELICACY

"Would madam care for a bit of the roasted rook today?" It is, perhaps, the head waiter of your favorite restaurant intoning an invitation. For Old Jim Crow, that glossy smoothie, that raucous raider of the bird family, has reached the galley of the gourmet.

He's good to eat; in fact, delicious!

The discovery of Jim as a delicacy occurred the other day in Oklahoma. A retiring public health official had learned that newspapermen, as a rule, are epicureans. So he served roasted rook (crow to you) at a press dinner. It was a swell banquet. Press wires hummed its success throughout the nation. And the hunting of Jim Crow and his abundant brothers assumed the proportions of a national boom.

But promoters of crow dinners needed recipes. Erco, the More Game Birds Foundation sent out a culinary researcher, and forthwith dispatched his suggestions to CALIFORNIA CONSERVATIONIST.

Here they are:

First of all, the older crows should be skinned. Use only the breasts and legs. Young birds may be roasted like chicken, but use of butter or bacon is necessary or the meat may be too dry.

CROW BROTH: Take the breast and legs, brown a little in butter, and then boil with a little celery until tender, using water according to quantity of broth desired.

CROW SANDWICH SPREAD: Use the boiled meat. Remove bones, run through meat chopper, add some mustard, minced onion, salt, pepper or paprika, and mayonnaise.

CROW STEW: Breast and legs may be used. Brown some large onions in bacon fat (one large onion to the bird), put in meat, salt, pepper or paprika, smother for a few minutes in the onions, add enough water to cover meat and let simmer over slow fire until tender. Stir in some sour cream mixed with a teaspoonful of flour.

Young crows, taken just before flying age, are delicious when prepared similar to squabs. Clean, rub with salt and pepper, also either some lemon or, if the flavor is liked, some finely crushed juniper berries. Stuff with whole mushrooms, if desired. Wrap completely in strips of bacon, tie, and broil or roast like squabs. Breasts of crow squabs may also be dipped in egg and bread crumbs and fried like cutlets.------California Conservationist

The Game and Fish Department and other sportsmen's groups waged a long-running campaign against crows, vilified as the killer of other game birds. In August 1936 *North Dakota Outdoors* published almost a page of food recipes for crow, asserting that the bird was "good to eat; in fact, delicious!" Whether any readers actually tried eating crow is unknown.

As the economic crisis and dust storms continued, this back-to-nature theme became more alluring. For some, hunting offered a way to recreate a romantic past. In October 1933 the Game and Fish Department's monthly published an article entitled "The Still Hunter" that articulated this theme by describing the sport hunter transformed into a child of nature, pursuing game as in the very beginning:

> The still-hunter trusts to beating wild nature at her own game. He enters the wilderness haunts with all the stealth of his aboriginal ancestors. . . . The still hunter skirts the hardwood ridges noiselessly, his moccasined feet resting on the moss-covered rock or fallen tree trunk with a light sureness that suggest simian prehensile powers . . . The things he sees and hears are full of meaning . . . The turned leaf . . . the sharply defined footprint in the black muck at the edge of the spring

> . . . the broken branch and nibbled bough, the cracking of a stick far off under the forest arches. . . .The still hunter is king of the forest. At night he sleeps with the spirits of his primal ancestors. To him the trees talk and the waters whisper. Old mother earth with all her burden of years is young again and smiles as she did on the first man. Freedom and power is his song, freedom and power.[50]

By 1939 North Dakota hunters had not only redefined themselves but they had become organized as never before. As hunting had been reconfigured to appear as sport, entertainment, or even escape to the romantic past, hunters had begun to communicate and to work together in new and varied ways. With a new definition as hunters and a better sense of group solidarity, North Dakota's hunters lacked only more leisure time to hunt, and the wealth to support such leisure activity, to complete their transformation to the modern hunter ideal. These two necessary conditions would be fulfilled in the following two decades.

Hunting during World War II and into the 1950s

The war years and the decade after 1945 contrasted dramatically with the lean 1920s and 1930s. As in the rest of the country, North Dakota's depression vanished as the Dirty Thirties concluded. The new prosperity slowed the out-migration and stabilized the state's population at around 625,000. Agriculture experienced a dramatic comeback. Farm size increased as surviving farmers bought up the lands of those who had failed. Growth in farm size in turn supported increased mechanization. Larger, more efficient farms meant increased output and higher farm incomes. The non-agricultural population experienced rising living standards and enhanced disposable income as well. In short, the new prosperity changed life's tenor for many of the state's residents: abundance and comfort had replaced Depression scarcity and struggle.

The drought's end and the return of prosperity improved the conditions for North Dakota's wildlife. Waterfowl, upland game birds, and even the state's deer herd rebounded from Depression-era lows. From a nadir in 1935 the country's waterfowl experienced five successive expanding years thereafter. In January 1940, for example, *North Dakota Outdoors* reported in an article entitled "The Ducks Come Back" that "the ducks have more than doubled their number since 1935 and are climbing back to a safe and stable population."[51] While the campaign to save waterfowl hunting progressed, the state's Game and Fish Department completed the introduction of two non-native game birds into the state. The success of the Chinese pheasant and Hungarian partridge experiments is reflected in the history of their open seasons. Held in 1931, two decades after the Game and Fish Department purchased the first birds, the initial open season on pheasants lasted a day and a half and included only three of the state's counties. Gradually thereafter the length of the opportunity to shoot pheasants increased and more areas of the state were opened to hunters. In 1942, for example, the season's length was set at fifty-seven days, and in 1944 that period more than doubled to 136 days.[52] The Hungarian partridge adopted even more quickly than the pheasant. North Dakota held an open season on Huns in 1934, about a decade after the Game and Fish Department's initial efforts to introduce them into the state.[53] Following the pheasant example, the first season lasted only a day and a half. Thereafter the periods of open hunting expanded gradually until in the early 1940s seasons lasting several weeks and open throughout the state became common. Like the larger, more gaudy pheasant, the diminutive bird from Eastern Europe seemed to have justified the Game and Fish Department's original decision to address the decline of the native grouse by introducing other like species from without.[54]

Although the state's deer received less attention than the game birds, their expansion in the two decades after 1940 was equally impressive. Deer seasons continued to alternate between open and closed throughout the 1940s, but the number of licensed deer hunters increased steadily over Depression figures, and the overall deer harvest grew as well. For example, in 1935 licensed hunters numbered 3,144 and the number deer harvested was 1,540. A decade later 15,240 licenses were sold and 5,000 deer taken. In the 1950s the increases were even more dramatic, with significantly more hunters afield and more animals killed. Between 1940 and 1960 deer hunter totals increased tenfold; the number of deer harvested twentyfold.[55] By the 1950s North Dakota's deer herd had been rescued from oblivion.

The recovery of North Dakota's game animals induced greater numbers of both resident and non-resident hunters to take to the state's fields in the 1940s and 1950s. Both the greater availability of game and more abundant hunters, both functions of the previous decade's conservation movement, now contributed to advance that movement even further.

Indeed, North Dakota's conservation efforts increased by leaps and bounds after prosperity returned. The same scientific influences intruding into the state's agriculture with new fertilizers, hybrid plants, and ever more sophisticated farm machinery now began to appear in game management. The new scientific tone in game management became particularly evident in the programs that the North Dakota Game and Fish Department pursued with federal Pittman-Robertson support.

After the first land purchases under Pittman-Robertson in 1939, the Game and Fish Department launched a series of different initiatives, many of which were research-oriented. Designed to provide more extensive information on animal behavior, they would, in turn, guide more rational management. The first such effort involved a mid-summer roadside count of upland game birds. Cooperating with district game wardens, Pittman-Robertson research teams drove the state's back roads in the early morning and late afternoon, conducting a census of grouse, pheasants and partridge.[56] Begun in the late winter of 1941, a second, even more innovative, Pittman-Robertson-supported survey involved an aerial census of the state's big game. Flying a total of 10,000 miles and covering about a sixth of the state's total area during the survey, the two biologists who carried out the project recorded sightings of almost 13,500 deer, antelope, bison, and elk. This aerial survey represented a national first and provided the Game and Fish Department with the most complete information on the size of the state's big game population collected to that time.[57]

Other less dramatic but equally effective Pittman-Robertson initiatives during the 1940s and 1950s followed. Augmented federal funding, which in 1953 alone provided North Dakota with nearly $150,000, facilitated such efforts. Some funds were apportioned to purchase land for public shooting areas while others supported research programs into such widely divergent subjects as animal food preferences, soil composition, water levels and predator control.[58] A particularly ambitious and significant federally supported new initiative dealt with habitat restoration. In response to extensive wildlife losses caused by severe winter storms, North Dakota began a program

Aerial surveys of game populations by the Game and Fish Department began in 1941. This drawing of an aerial survey is from the April 1954 issue of *North Dakota Outdoors*.

Habitat protection was increasingly recognized as essential for the preservation of game. In November 1938 *North Dakota Outdoors* published this cartoon (above) emphasizing the importance of not burning wetlands desiccated in the 1930s drought. By May 1965 the impact of wetland drainage in pothole country was becoming clear, and a campaign in *North Dakota Outdoors* to preserve duck habitat was in full swing.

in the early 1950s to create favorable habitat by planting trees and shrubs on privately owned land.[59]

The growth of scientific game management and the expansion of North Dakota's Game and Fish Department during the 1940s and 1950s were paralleled by corresponding development among the state's private sportsmen's clubs and conservation-minded associations. For example, the North Dakota Wildlife Federation had increased significantly from its foundation in 1935. By 1947 it could claim seventy-four affiliated chapters in forty-three counties.[60] Six years later the figures for affiliated Wildlife Federation local clubs had grown to ninety-one.[61] Membership numbers had reached 8,000. Continuing its campaign for "the restoration of all forms of wildlife," Federation members saw themselves as "shock troops" fighting the battle to preserve "the finest of all recreations, that heritage of the past – the privilege of participating in the harvest of game."[62]

Although less extensive than the Wildlife Federation, the Izaak Walton League also engaged in the struggle to preserve wildlife and sport hunting. In the 1950s the League's conservationist activities varied from raising money to pay rewards for convicting game offenders, to offering a weekly radio program out of Bismarck on conservation, to members acting as ex-officio game wardens. The League's successful reintroduction of the wild turkey into North Dakota best illustrates the intensity of its conservation commitment.[63] Beginning in 1951 and relying exclusively upon its own funds and labor, the League built the raising pens, purchased the feed, lined up the farmers willing to look after the birds, and bought the first eggs and adult turkeys. Releasing birds into select areas of North Dakota commenced in 1952.[64] Over the next five years, the League's raise-and-release program gained momentum. By 1958 enough wild turkeys existed in North Dakota to permit the state's first wild turkey hunting season.

Engaged in as much for man's enjoyment as for wildlife's well-being, the activities of the Izaak Walton League implied that conservationists had enough leisure not only to meet to devise beneficial works but also adequate time away from work to enjoy the fruits of their efforts afield. That was indeed the case. America in the late 1940s and 1950s entered upon an age of increasing abundance, shorter work weeks, and newly developed leisure opportunities.[65] Awareness of abundant leisure time caused some to be concerned that such idle time would be wasted or misspent. Addressing the issue of leisure in *North Dakota Outdoors*, the University of North Dakota's director of teacher training in the Department of Physical Education L.R. Marti claimed too much free time represented "one of the outstanding social problems" of the age. Sounding like a Puritan from an earlier age, he insisted it was imperative to provide "leisure time activities that are morally and socially acceptable

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While *North Dakota Outdoors* might think it necessary to dedicate an entire issue in 1962 to the necessary preparation for a hunting trip, North Dakota farmers like Arthur A. Link and his father-in-law, Roy Johnson, could engage in this successful 1954 antelope hunt with much less elaborate preparation.

and that will bring real self satisfaction and result in social advancement." Hunting, the director concluded, qualified as such an activity.[66]

The recognition of hunting as a legitimate leisure-time activity meant it would be interpreted as fundamentally different from the usual humdrum activities of the normal daily work routine. Being special, it required the same kind of careful preparation and enactment that other leisure activities such as golf, skiing, or camping demanded. For example, in 1962, *North Dakota Outdoors* dedicated an entire issue to the pleasure of hunting, detailing some of the necessary preparations for a successful, leisure-time hunt. To begin with, the hunter needed to be in shape before venturing into the field. According to the Game and Fish Department's medical expert, that meant he should "lose 15 to 20 pounds of excess fat several weeks or even months, prior to the hunt."[67] Once fit to be in the field, he should make sure to have nutritious, easily prepared food on hand. Appropriate victuals for the duck blind or deer camp included powdered or dried potatoes, soups, milk, or coffee and "'heat-and-eat' canned prepared meals such as spaghetti, beans, [or] stews"[68] Following food came equipment. Besides the appropriate weaponry, the leisured hunter needed correct clothing (preferably drab and lightweight) and other accoutrements, including lunchbox, binoculars, snake bite kit, flashlight, "a couple of screw drivers," and a shovel. This latter tool would enable hunters to bury "their cans and other trash" and permit them "to get their cars out of the snow or mud before calling the landowner for help."[69]

Conclusion

In the period between Roosevelt's escapades in the Bad Lands and the Izaak Walton League's turkey plantings, hunting in North Dakota underwent profound changes. Originally an activity pursued by different groups for fundamentally different reasons, it became a complex modern leisure pastime. Uncontrolled, unstructured, and undefined at the time of statehood, hunting was systematically transformed into a closely regulated, scientifically conceived, bureaucratically administered feature of modern life. These alterations occurred in conjunction with the broad, contemporaneous changes transforming North Dakota from a frontier world to a modern state, from a society of self-reliant homesteaders to an interdependent social network, from independent agricultural producers to a modern industrialized agriculture dominated by agro-business. In short, hunting altered as North Dakota modernized, becoming in the process more socially, economically, and politically sophisticated. By 1950 hunting had become a full-fledged leisure activity, sharing with other modern leisure activities an entertainment, escapist element. Just like camping or attending a baseball game, it had become a form of relief from normal work routines and daily stresses. What distinguished hunting from other modern leisure activities such as sports or theatre-going was its connection to the land and the animals living on that land.

Part of this connection is the romantic idea of the hunter moving across the landscape as a natural creature, in tune with the game being pursued. It reflects the ideal of the mythic West, a state removed from the present, when man could be like the cowboys or hunters and trappers of yesteryear. Urban hunters throughout the United States frequently expressed this common nature affinity. Roosevelt certainly did. This affinity is what Louis Warren describes in his passage on dude hunters escaping from Silver City, New Mexico, in 1916, to camp and hunt in the mountains nearby. For them, Warren wrote, "Hunting was a re-enactment of arcadian ideals often associated with the frontier myth, a romantic counterpoint to the industrial and urban world of Silver City itself."[70]

Because modern hunting exhibits affinity for nature prior to civilization or modernization, an affinity for the time when man was just another animal among animals, it has always been and still is not only unique but anomalous. That hunting has evolved to its present state as primitive nature has increasingly receded exhibits the fundamental irony of this anomaly. Hunting's history in North Dakota has shown that as the frontier disappeared and modernization advanced, hunting was forced to adapt the tools of civilization and modernization to survive. More specifically, the adoption of scientific game management, itself a child of modernization, guaranteed the existence of the state's game animals. In preserving the animals and their homes, as we have seen, it preserved hunting. Thus, conservationists and hunters united behind the state's Game and Fish Department to support the restoration and conservation goals and, in so doing, ensure the existence of the enough of the pre-modern world to guarantee hunting's future.

The traditions established in the mid-twentieth century are still in place today. Whether meat hunters,

fun seekers engaging in a sport/hobby, or nature enthusiasts pursuing a romantic myth, contemporary North Dakota hunters continue to reflect the force of modernization.[71] When they take to the state's fields or waters, they do so more often than not accompanied by a plethora of gadgets. They chase their quarry not on horseback or with stone boats; they shoot their game not from housetops or with authentic civil war muskets; they hunt not during daily chores or when eating tapioca pudding. No indeed: modern hunters pursue game on their days off from work using human scent repressors, global positioning units, walkie-talkies, hearing enhancing devices, robo ducks, battery-heated socks, and even camo underwear. Not a few of these gadget-encumbered moderns like to imagine they are living a throwback to the mythic past when the Still Hunter prowled the woods and fields.

Author

A dedicated pheasant hunter and Labrador Retriever enthusiast, Jonathan Wagner grew up in Ohio. He earned a B.A. in history from Maine's Bowdoin College, an M. A. in history from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Ph. D. in history and a J. D. from the University of Wisconsin. The former history professor spent twelve years at the University of Winnipeg and twenty-three years at Minot State University. He has produced four book-length manuscripts and numerous scholarly articles, including several in previous editions of *North Dakota History*. Retired from MSU in 2006, he resides in Mercer, North Dakota.t

The moment when the hunter raises a gun as a flock of birds rises in the air is one of the thrills that ties hunters to the sport.

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