



Long Prairie River in central Minnesota (fall). Courtesy Sandy Archives.



“Notre Terre Minnesota”

Revised and With Illustrations

by John H. Sandy

From the boundless prairies where amber wheat sways,
To the mighty Mississippi waters born at Lake Itasca's
shore.

The North Star, a beacon bright in the midnight sky, hidden
paths revealed amidst glimmering rays,
Shows the way for those who journey north seeking
bountiful lands and native lore.



*Lake Itasca, source of Mississippi River, northern Minnesota.
Courtesy, U.S.G.S.*

Minnesota, Minnesota, the land of ancient glaciers and
mighty mastodons of yore in sight,
On nature's eternal watch, your deep blue waters flow.
The northland a vast wilderness ever so pure, leaves of
scarlet maple and yellow aspen delight,
Your enchanting fields, lakes, and forests forever aglow.

The history of our people begins with captivating stories
and life experiences, so right,
Character instilled by endless streams of Up North
memories.

A tale once told of an old mariner's dream of the majestic
cliffs of Duluth in sight,
Of daring French voyageurs and bold Nordic pioneers we
revere through the centuries.



Painting depicting Voyageurs, French and French-Canadian men engaged in fur trading, traveling in a birchbark canoe on a river in the region which later became the state of Minnesota. *Canoe Manned by Voyageurs Passing a Waterfall*, Francis Ann Hopkins, 1869, National Archives of Canada.

Minnesota, Minnesota, the land of ancient glaciers and
mighty mastodons of yore in sight,
On nature's eternal watch, your deep blue waters flow.
The northland a vast wilderness ever so pure, leaves of
scarlet maple and yellow aspen delight,
Your enchanting fields, lakes, and forests forever aglow.

A loon's eerie call at dawn awakens the magical waters of
Otter Tail,
As an Arctic blast by dusk sweeps the land, a feathery
whiteness settles on low meadows and high
morainic peaks.

In darkness, busy beavers on Kabetogama build dams on
rushing streams, their lodges of mud and sticks ever so
swell,
Ponds imagined by the spirit of nature grow wide and
deep, rippling, lush waters beckon wild creatures to come
and seek.



The loon is a common bird on Minnesota lakes. Photo by Scott Rando. Courtesy National Park Service.

Minnesota, Minnesota, the land of ancient glaciers and
mighty mastodons of yore in sight,
On nature's eternal watch, your deep blue waters flow.
The northland a vast wilderness ever so pure, leaves of
scarlet maple and yellow aspen delight,
Your enchanting fields, lakes, and forests forever aglow.

A variety of cultures and enduring traditions shape our
great pride,
Through songs, Ojibwe and Dakota share visions of hope
and wisdom wrapped in elders' minds.
We savor lutefisk and wurst, grandma's old country
creations, a feast at table side,
While berries picked in fertile gardens and gifts from wild
nature, always hearty seasonal finds.



Ojibwe Village. Courtesy National Park Service.

Minnesota, Minnesota, the land of ancient glaciers and
mighty mastodons of yore in sight,
On nature's eternal watch, your deep blue waters flow.
The northland a vast wilderness ever so pure, leaves of
scarlet maple and yellow aspen delight,
Your enchanting fields, lakes, and forests forever aglow.

Minnesota, Minnesota, the land of ancient glaciers and
mighty mastodons of yore in sight,
On nature's eternal watch, your deep blue waters flow.
The northland a vast wilderness ever so pure,
leaves of scarlet maple and yellow aspen delight, Your
enchanting fields, lakes, and forests forever aglow.



Long Prairie River in central Minnesota (summer). Courtesy Sandy Archives.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

For many years, John Sandy was head of Rodgers Library for Science and Engineering at The University of Alabama. Decades earlier, he lived in a rural region of central Minnesota.

© 2024 John Sandy