



Dakota Life in the Upper Midwest

Samuel W. Pond

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In 1834 Samuel W. Pond and his brother Gideon built a cabin near Cloud Man's village of the Dakota Indians on the shore of Lake Calhoun--now present-day Minneapolis--intending to preach Christianity to the Indians. The brothers were to spend nearly twenty years learning the Dakota language and observing how the Indians lived.

In the 1860s and 1870s, after the Dakota had fought a disastrous war with the whites who had taken their land, Samuel Pond recorded his recollections of the Indians "to show what manner of people the Dakotas were . . . while they still retained the customs of their ancestors."

Pond's work, first published in 1908, is now considered a classic. Gary Clayton Anderson's introduction discusses Pond's career and the effects of his background on this work, "unrivaled today for its discussion of Dakota material culture and social, political, religious, and economic institutions."



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