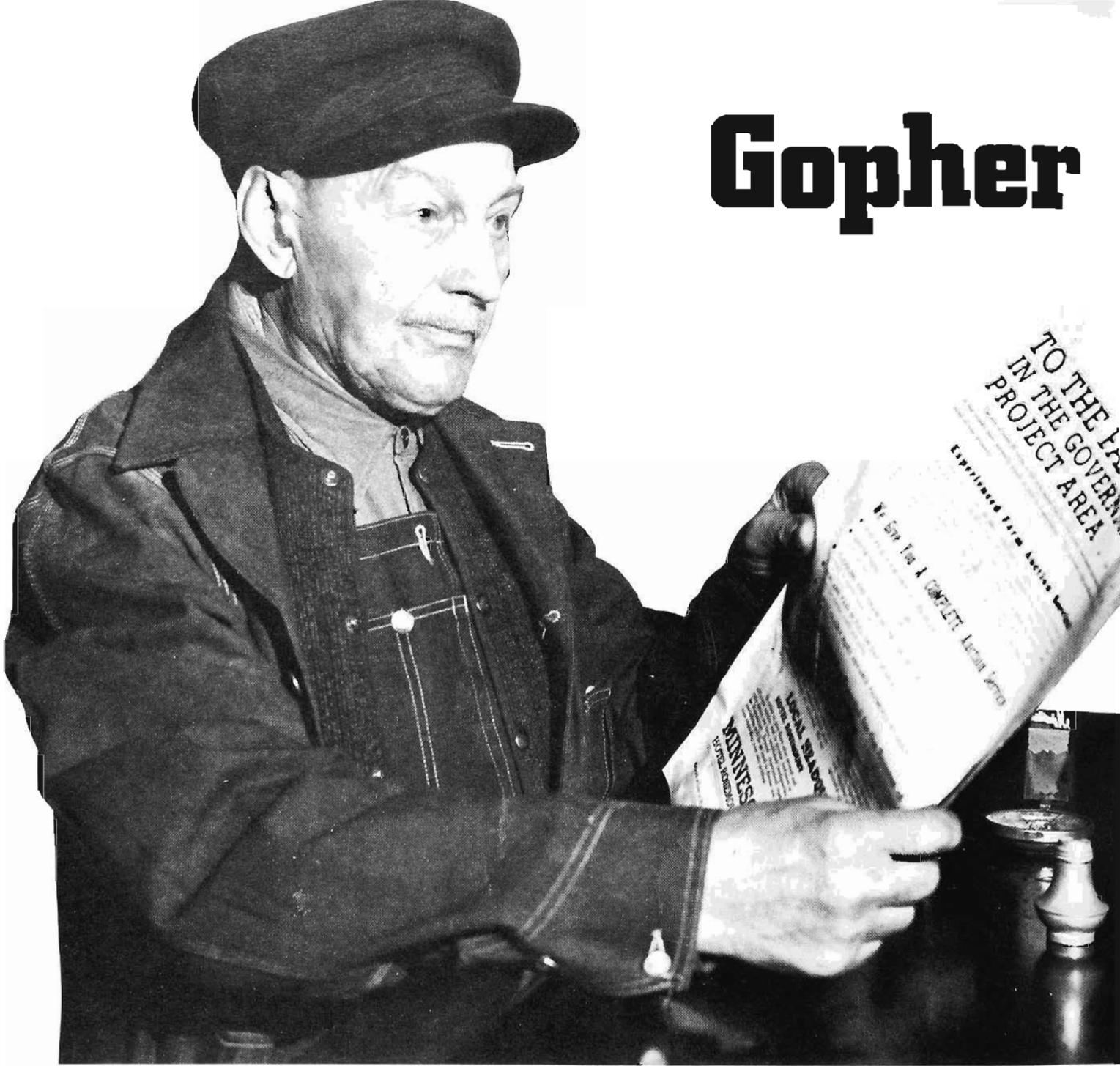


Gopher



DISPLACED Rosemount farmer, Charles Johnson, learns about auctions.

Ordnance Works Condemnation, Construction, and Community Response

Patricia L. Dooley

"THE FIRST THING I remember is there was a rumor around that they would be taking some land. I think they thought it would be for an airport . . . so, they didn't think there was very much land involved. Then we would see these cars going back and forth on the roads, sort of stopping and looking over the land so everybody was sort of wondering whose land they might decide to take." Such was an early awareness in the spring of 1942 that Rosemount, Minnesota, would play a special role in World War II home-front history. After the Japanese attacked the United States on

December 7, 1941, communities across the nation quickly became involved in myriad activities designed to help meet the great demands created by the country's involvement in the conflict.¹

Rumors turned to reality at a public meeting on March 31, 1942, when government officials announced that an 11,500-acre area adjacent to Rosemount, a small farming community about 15 miles south of downtown St. Paul, was to be acquired by the United States War Department, not for an airfield, but for a munitions plant called Gopher Ordnance Works (GOW). A few days later, the *Dakota County Tribune's* banner headline, "Arms Plant Coming," further spread the news, heralding a period of upheaval in the Rosemount area that would span the war years and leave signs that are still visible in the community.²

Like other places selected for federal defense projects, Rosemount became a war-boom community, where rapid physical, economic, and social change would bring prosperity to some, but hardship to others. The War Department had ordered the plant's construction to begin as soon as possible: within a few weeks, the site's nearly 100 farm owners and their families vacated their property, commencing condemnation litigation in the United States District Court that would drag on for more than five years; work to prepare the site for construction of the industrial "city without homes" commenced after the site's occupants began leaving; and Rosemount area residents and local agencies prepared for the onslaught of thousands of

¹ Transcript of interview of Mary McAndrews (Mrs. John) Hynes by Teresa Seliga and Helen Davis, June 30, 1976, p. 1. This interview was part of the Dakota County Oral History Project, completed in 1976; copies of tapes and transcripts cited in this article are in the audio-visual collection of the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS), St. Paul, unless otherwise noted. For scholarly and popular works on World War II home front history, see, for example, Richard Polenberg, ed., *America at War: The Home Front 1941-1945* (New York, 1968); Richard R. Lingeman, *Don't You Know There's a War On? The American Home Front 1941-1945* (New York, 1970); "The Home Front—World War II," in *American History Illustrated*, July, 1979, p. 4; A. Russell Buchanan, *The United States and World War II*, vol. 2, 314-335 (New York, 1964); and A. A. Hoehling, *Home Front, U.S.A.* (New York, 1966). Also useful for researchers interested in home front history are the newspaper, oral history, picture, and manuscript collections in MHS.

² *Dakota County Tribune* (Farmington), April 3, 1942, p. 1, hereafter cited as *Tribune*. This weekly paper, edited and published by Ham Clay, Sr., carried many human interest and "hard" news stories on Gopher Ordnance Works (GOW); until the GOW administrative offices were established, it was often the only source of regular information on GOW available in Rosemount. In the spring of 1942, the plant was not yet publicly called "Gopher Ordnance Works," and little information was available to the public because of military censorship.

Ms. Dooley, who is manager of historic sites operations for the MHS division of field services, historic sites, and archaeology, is the recent winner of a doctoral fellowship from the Silha Center for Media Ethics and Law at the University of Minnesota.



THE MAIN STREET of
Rosemount, looking north on
old Highway 218 about 1942

workers who soon arrived to take the new jobs available at the plant.³

Part of a massive defense program that produced enough materials to supply the country's armed forces and those of its allies, Gopher Ordnance Works was earmarked to become an important supplier of smokeless gunpowder. But, contrary to the optimistic plans of War Department leaders, the plant's existence was erratic from its inception, and by the end of the war some were calling it a boondoggle. In interpreting World War II, historians have rarely looked beyond the achievements of such war production programs as GOW to their failures, and to their varied effects on communities around the nation. A review of the Minnesota plant's history illuminates America's World War II defense production programs and their effect on communities and citizens around the nation who played a role during this troubled period.⁴

THE GROUNDWORK for the World War II defense production programs that encompassed Gopher Ordnance Works was laid in the mid-1930s by the United States military establishment. The implementation of such programs, however, was stalled until deteriorating diplomatic relations in Europe and the Pacific gained public attention, and isolationism slowly loosened its grip on American public opinion. During 1939 President Franklin D. Roosevelt increasingly urged Congress, the War Department, and American industry to step up their defense efforts; by early 1940, con-

gressional requests for defense funds had increased dramatically. Roosevelt interpreted his election that year as a mandate for the continuation of such efforts.⁵

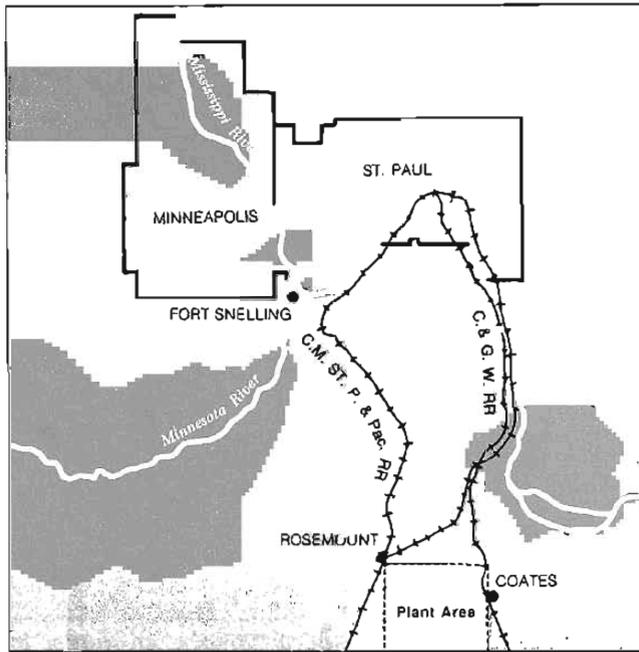
Despite the earlier planning of the mid-1930s, Con-

³ For a classic study of a war boom community, Seneca, Illinois, see Robert J. Havighurst and H. Certhon Morgan, *The Social History of a War-Boom Community* (New York, 1951).

⁴ For background information on U.S. war production, see Ralph Elberton Smith, *The Army and Economic Mobilization*, the fifth volume in the subseries entitled *The War Department of the series The United States Army in World War II* (Washington, D.C., 1959). For information on government-financed and owned industrial facilities such as GOW, see p. 437-444 and 496-502.

For comments on historical analysis of the national war production, see Thomas C. Cochran, *The Great Depression and World War II, 1929-1945*, 167 (Clenview, Ill., 1968). Historian Theodore C. Blegen, in *Minnesota, A History of the State*, 546 (Revised ed., St. Paul, 1975), wrote about "vast ordnance plants in Minnesota at New Brighton and Rosemount" and other industrial firms, "backed by government contracts, [that] played important roles in the joint effort," but although historically accurate in a broad sense, this is an oversimplification.

⁵ Smith, *The Army*, 438-440. For background on war production programs from 1939 to 1940, see Gerald D. Nash, *The Great Depression and World War II: Organizing America, 1933-1945*, 101-115 (New York, 1979); Robert A. Devine, *The Reluctant Belligerent: American Entry into World War II*, 75-135 (New York, 1968); Robert L. Snyder, *The War - A Concise History, 1939-1945*, 229-245 (New York, 1964); and Adolph A. Hoehling, *America's Road to War: 1939-1941* (New York, 1970).



gress's new appropriations threw the War Department officials into a crisis requiring nothing short of an industrial revolution. To speed their progress, military and government personnel joined with business, industry, and labor leaders to cut red tape and eliminate existing legal and economic barriers. The resulting 18 months of war production preparations before Pearl Harbor "played a crucial if not a decisive part in the outcome of the war."⁶

In May, 1940, President Roosevelt invited representatives from American industry to join the Council on National Defense's newly formed advisory committee, charging them with the task of marshalling the country's industrial resources. William S. Knudsen, a high-ranking automotive executive, was named the group's top official, and he assembled a team that worked closely with the army, navy, and treasury departments. According to Knudsen, he and his group "couldn't buy anything; we could merely act as intermediaries for the Army and Navy procurement offices, and with what experience we had we could advise

⁶ Smith, *The Army*, 437.

⁷ Speech by William S. Knudsen to the Council of State Governments, January 22, 1941, p. 4, Defense File, in Governor Harold E. Stassen Papers, MHS. The Advisory Committee to the Council on National Defense was just one of many federal and state groups set up to help manage the country's war production programs; in December, 1940, it was renamed the Office of Production Management, and Knudsen was appointed its chief.

⁸ Smith, *The Army*, 437.

⁹ Smith, *The Army*, 437-439, 496-501.

¹⁰ George W. Garlid, "Minneapolis Unit of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies," in *Minnesota History*, 41:268 (Summer, 1969).

them as to responsible people who could do the work we wanted done."⁷

One of the most ominous problems facing planners like Knudsen in 1940 was the scarcity of certain commodities such as gunpowder, which in peacetime were used in very small amounts. Later, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson was to recall the desperate situation he and his colleagues were in that year: "We didn't have enough powder in the whole United States to last the men we now have overseas for anything like a day's fighting. And, what is worse, we didn't have powder plants or facilities to make it; they had all been destroyed after the last war."⁸

To overcome these shortages, the War Department began planning the construction of huge factories that would produce the needed materials and equipment. Typically called government-owned, contractor-operated (GOCO) plants, such facilities were financed and owned by the federal government, but constructed and operated by private contractors. Companies serving as prime contractors for such projects were reimbursed for their services on a cost-plus-fixed-fee basis. Construction of the country's first World War II GOCO plants began early in 1940; by February, 1941, there were 21 in various stages of completion; and by the end of the war, about 216 such facilities were located around the nation.⁹

MINNESOTA was a bastion of isolationism in the two decades between the world wars. As public sentiment slowly shifted, so too did public opinion in the North Star State, but as late as 1940, enough isolationist sentiment still existed so that Governor Harold E. Stassen, who sympathized with the victims of the European and Pacific aggressors, was careful not to come out too strongly in favor of the country's involvement.¹⁰

Despite this ambivalence, when the federal government began awarding defense contracts, Stassen and other Minnesotans united behind a middle-western movement that stemmed from its members' belief that their region was not getting its fair share. In August, 1940, Stassen was invited to Kansas City to speak to business, farm, and labor leaders from nine states. This group supported the new defense program but argued in a resolution submitted to the White House that the Middle West should reap a larger share of the nation's defense dollars: "These nine states and their hundreds of communities are resolved that they are not going to be reduced to a position of agricultural slavery. This great middle western area is already seeing . . . its raw materials and its skilled labor and its great untapped reservoirs of farm boys . . . drained off into other sections for their further enrichment. . . . The middle west insists that . . . this area shall receive its just and proper share of the outlays of public funds.

This is not a cry for pork. It is the voice of the middle west asking for justice . . . giving each man and woman . . . a particular job to do so that all may be busy and all will feel they have a part in the defense of America."¹¹

Earlier that summer, Stassen appointed Ernest L. Olrich, president of the Munsingwear Company in Minneapolis, as the state's defense co-ordinator. In December, the governor wrote Minnesota Senators Henrik Shipstead and Joseph H. Ball: "Minnesota is not securing her full share of national defense contracts. Some of our companies have secured some pretty good contracts and some of our building contractors are engaged . . . in other parts of the country, but there have not been very many contracts of a nature to cause new employment within the state."¹²

Early in 1941, after meeting with Olrich in Washington, several members of the state's congressional delegation had urged Stassen to appoint a full-time lobbyist to work in the nation's capital, and Herbert L. Miller, executive director of the Minnesota Resources Commission, filled the newly created post. Miller reported to Stassen, Olrich, and the state legislature on the progress recently made in three key defense production areas: prime, subcontractual, and federally controlled projects. He recommended that state officials focus their efforts primarily on convincing the War Department to select Minnesota locations for some of the federally owned war plants; he told of several currently being considered for the state, including ammonia, TNT, sulphuric acid, bomber assembly, and smokeless powder plants, and a manganese plant on the Cuyuna Range.¹³

The lobbyist reassured state officials, "Washington is now quite cognizant of the dissatisfaction which exists in this State so far as its portion of defense business secured to date is concerned," and this recognition may have played a role in boosting the state's defense business: federal dollars spent in Minnesota for prime contracts rose from about \$500,000 in mid-1940 to \$40 million in March, 1941. On August 28, 1941, ground was broken at New Brighton for the first of Minnesota's COCO plants, Twin Cities Ordnance.¹⁴

THE War Department's new plants needed lots of land. By the end of the war the government's real estate holdings had increased from 2 to 46 million acres, an area larger than New England's six states combined. Acquisition of sites was transacted either through purchase, condemnation, or lease, and as locations were chosen, many people lost their homes, and in some cases, whole communities were swallowed up.¹⁵

Especially important in the selection process were the physical characteristics of each site; its geographical vulnerability to enemy attack; proximity to trans-



CONSTRUCTION work moved rapidly, as shown in this October, 1942, view of sewer building; note the barn and farmhouse in the distance.

portation routes, power sources, raw materials, and labor supplies; and, of less importance, the distribution

¹¹ Richard W. Robbins to Stassen, telegram, dated August 23, 1940, and "Resolutions Adopted by Midwest Defense Conference," August 30, 1940, both in Stassen Papers.

¹² President of the St. Paul Association of Commerce to Olrich, July 1, 1940, and Stassen to Shipstead and Ball, December 10, 1940, both in Stassen Papers.

¹³ Ball to Stassen, January 10, 1941; Congressman H. Carl Andersen to Stassen, January 13, 1941; Congressman Melvin J. Maas to Stassen, telegram, January 10, 1941; Osborne Kolden to Stassen, January 22, 1941 — all in Stassen Papers. See also "Report on State Efforts to Secure Defense Business for Minnesota Industries," [1941?], 2, 8-10, Stassen Papers. In this report, Miller said prime contracts could best be secured for Minnesota through the direct lobbying efforts of private contractors themselves; further, he had suggested to the Office of Production Management that the country's federal reserve banks should be designated clearinghouses to ease the distribution of subcontracts. His suggestion resulted in the Minneapolis district federal reserve bank being the first defense contract service office established.

¹⁴ "Report on State Efforts," 7; Miller to Stassen, the State Legislature and the State Defense Coordinator, April 3, 1941; National Defense Series Report No. 1, "Minnesota National Defense Program, Army, Navy and U.S. Maritime Commission Awards and Contracts," July 17, 1940 — all in Stassen Papers; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, August 29, 1941, p. 1; other sites considered were Malta Bend, Missouri, and Anoka, Minnesota; Memorandum from Office of the Chief of Ordnance to Executive Officer, Office of Under Secretary of War, March 19, 1942, in contract files, National Archives Record Group (NARG) 156, Washington, D.C.

¹⁵ Smith, *The Army*, 441-444.

of other plants around the country and pressure from state and local officials.¹⁶

To aid in site selection the War Department sometimes hired private real estate experts to inspect plant sites under consideration. Late in 1941 a Chicago realtor, J. C. Ellington, was asked to evaluate the suitability of a 21,760-acre area near Rosemount. Ellington's report said the site was being considered for shell loading, ammonia, TNT, sulphuric acid, and smokeless powder munitions facilities. In evaluating the site's assets, he gave important information on such subjects as the state's population (one-third lived within a 30-mile radius of Rosemount) and the available water supply (less than seven miles from the Mississippi River). He noted that the area had no improved highways that would have to be removed; that its land was mainly level or rolling and suitable for building construction; that two major railroads, the Milwaukee Road and the Great Western, had lines close to the site; that a Northern Natural Gas pipeline crossed the land; and that Northern States Power Company had high-tension electrical lines nearby.¹⁷

By early February, 1942, the Ordnance Department had settled on the Rosemount site for its new facility, but the other parties involved continued their selection activities during February and early March. Finally the news leaked to the press that Minnesota had been selected for a second federal munitions facility. In March, 1942, Rosemount was named as the home of Minnesota's second major federally owned project, Gopher Ordnance Works.¹⁸

The decision reached, the War Department began negotiations to purchase the 11,500-acre site from 84

owners, who, because construction was scheduled to begin in a few weeks, had to move as soon as possible. Except for several parcels used for country schools, all of the property to be acquired for the plant was farm land, and the owners were notified by letter to attend a March 31 meeting in nearby Farmington. At an emotionally charged gathering packed with the site's occupants and others interested in the news of what was to happen, War Department real estate manager J. Wesley White explained that the government needed rich, level land for its new project. He pleaded with the farmers for co-operation, explaining that government land appraisers had begun inspecting their property and were preparing appraisals. In a few weeks, each farm owner was to be visited by a government negotiator who would make a single offer for both his land and buildings. Criteria used to determine each farm's worth included the age and type of its buildings; its location, soil quality, and recent crop records; and the sums other farms in the area had recently been sold for. A group of the site's landowners had invited Elmer J. Ryan, a Rosemount attorney and future Minnesota Supreme Court justice, to speak on their behalf at a meeting described as "orderly in every way with no outbursts of bitter feeling."¹⁹

That such a large chunk of countryside was needed for the government's munitions project was a shock, and, although some were said to be happy to sell out, many grieved at the loss of their homes. The *Dakota County Tribune* printed emotional stories of the farmers' plight, such as one which said that the eyes of several old-timers brimmed with tears as they spoke of how they and their ancestors had built their farms up over the years. Others, such as displaced farmer Emmett C. Carroll, found their world changing overnight a bitter pill to swallow: "All of a sudden in the spring of 1942 the world seemed to fall apart when the news came to us that the federal government was coming in to take not only our farm but all of the surrounding farms. . . . It was a rude . . . awakening to the people of a rural community that had never been disturbed. Life was so tranquil and peaceful. All of a sudden it was just blown to smithereens and we had no foundation. . . . It was a horrible feeling."²⁰

In addition to the personal losses experienced by the landowners, great inconvenience and financial stress resulted from the acquisition process. Within several weeks ten displaced farmers had bought new homes, but others had a harder time and were forced to move temporarily in with relatives. Decisions on what to pay for the new farms were difficult because they had no idea how much they would be reimbursed for their old ones. Real estate agents were common visitors that month, and one COW farmer recalled he was visited by 23 one afternoon. Others claimed that when it was

¹⁶ Smith, *The Army*, 498; Byron Fairchild and Jonathan Grossman, *The Army and Industrial Manpower*, 101, volume 6 in *The War Department* subseries described in note 4 above; see especially p. 101-128. Governmental agencies concerned with site selection included the War Department's Site Location Board, the Ordnance Department's industrial services and real estate divisions, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Under Secretary of War's office, and the plant site board of the War Production Board, among others.

¹⁷ Ellington to Lt. Colonel J. P. Harris, December 6, 1941, contract files, NARG 156.

¹⁸ A map of the proposed Dakota County site in contracts file, NARG 156 has penciled in "Approved Col. Harris 2/21/42." Other memos in NARG 156 files reveal that other agencies were still considering the proposed site after this date: examples include one issued March 7, 1942, by the Construction Division, Engineering Branch, Plant Section of the Ordnance Department, and another by the Chief of Engineers of the War Department, March 10, 1942. See also *St. Paul Dispatch*, March 10, 1942, p. 1.

¹⁹ *Tribune*, April 10, 1942, p. 1.

²⁰ *Tribune*, April 10, 1942, p. 1; transcript of interview of Emmett Carroll by Teresa Seliga and Helen Davis, June 22, 1976, p. 1.



"But I KNOW he lived there ten months ago!"

THIS CARTOON from the *GOW employees' magazine* showed how quickly farmers were moved out.

general knowledge that many people would be searching for new farms, the price of land skyrocketed.²¹

Moving all farm machinery, tools, animals, and household items to new farms in such a short period was an enormous task for which no one was reimbursed. One farmer recalled the difficulties involved in getting his herd of Holstein to his new place: "We had until, I think, around the latter part of April to clear the land. Very short notice. And this isn't as easy as the average person might think now because we didn't have any truck of our own. . . . We moved the cattle over to the new farm on hoof. We drove them just like we did in old times and we had to time that drive so that we didn't wind up driving the cattle across the Milwaukee tracks when the 10:10 came through Rosemount 'cause we knew that was right on schedule. . . . There was a couple of us on horseback and one followed with a car and others on foot . . . everything else we moved with a hayrack. We pulled it with a tractor."²²

IN MID-APRIL the government appraisers began their expected visits to landowners to tell them how much Washington would offer for their property. Some of the

farmers opted to accept their offers immediately, but most considered the appraisals too low, refusing to accept them. About a hundred of them gathered one Sunday afternoon early in May at St. John's Lutheran School in the nearby Rich Valley area to protest the "grossly unjust prices." Commenting further on the group's general feeling that the government's offers were stingy, co-chairman Julius F. Walkow asserted, "All we ask is fair treatment. Why should the government take good land for nothing?"²³

Speakers at the group's first meeting said that the average price offered per acre was \$60, with a third of the land appraised at \$22.50 an acre. Mrs. Catherine Pilcher complained that her 240-acre farm had been valued at \$35 an acre, despite her payment of \$90 an acre for one of its 80-acre sections 15 years before. Group co-chairman Ralph McMenemy, who had recently visited the Twin Cities Ordnance plant at New Brighton, reported that the government had paid \$100 to one of the landowners there for a farm he described as full of scrub oak and swamps. Some accused the government appraisers of making unauthorized inspections of their farms, and others said the appraisers had treated them disrespectfully. One woman described the negotiator's reaction to her family's disappointment: "When we objected to the price . . . they said we should be glad they weren't taking a son, or the men in the family didn't have to go into the service. We should be happy it was just the land we were losing."²⁴

Sympathetic community agencies, public officials, and individuals searched for ways to help the farmers. Among these were the Dakota County War Board and a group of county farmers who convinced the Capitol City Credit Association of South St. Paul to establish a new office in Farmington where the displaced farmers could secure short-term loans. Others offered moral support, such as a Farmington man whose angry letter to the *Tribune* likened the negotiators to Hitler storm troopers, claiming they had "swooped down," and "issued orders for all to get ready to leave on very short notice." Syndicated columnist Bill Higgins compared the wages to be paid at the plant to the government's appraisals: "Some of the best farm land . . . must be sacrificed. . . . But the owners believe federal appraisers are taking that 'sacrifice' too literally. . . . Just this week we talked to a 19-year-old boy who will

²¹ Carroll interview, 1; transcript of interview of John and Ruth McBrien by Tom Copeland, June 29, 1976, p. 5; transcript of interview of Harold LeVander by Teresa Seliga and Helen Davis, July 6, 1976, p. 3; see also *Tribune*, April 10, 1942, p. 1.

²² Carroll interview, 2.

²³ *Tribune*, April 24, May 8, 1942, both p. 1.

²⁴ *Tribune*, May 8, 1942, p. 1; Hynes, interview, 4.

work as a common laborer. . . . He signed up at 92½ cents an hour. If the government can afford that kind of wages for wheelbarrow jockeys, it can certainly afford to do better than \$75 an acre for the land."²⁵

Congressman Joseph P. O'Hara of Minnesota's Second District appeared at one of the farmers' meetings, pledging his support and offering to do what he could to coax the government into boosting its appraisals. O'Hara had recently met with Colonel John J. O'Brien, chief of the Ordnance Department's real estate branch, to discuss the Rosemount appraisals. In response to O'Hara's visit, O'Brien traveled from Washington to Rosemount several weeks later to inspect the farms, examine the appraisals, and meet with the farmers. At a meeting at the St. Paul Hotel, O'Brien told the group he would not be able to change the appraisals, but admitted that the gap between the figures of the two parties was wider in the Rosemount case than in any of the other 75 land acquisition projects he had been involved in. O'Brien said that the

²⁵ *Tribune*, April 3, 24, 1942, both p. 1, and May 8, 22, 1942, both p. 6.

²⁶ *Tribune*, May 15, 22, 1942, both p. 1.

²⁷ The final action taken in this long series of legal proceedings transpired October 31, 1947: see U.S. Attorney Victor E. Anderson to the U.S. Attorney General, November 7, 1947, File no. 33-24-379-1, U.S. Department of Justice Records, in Federal Record Center, Arlington, Va. (hereafter cited as USDJR). See also *Dispatch*, April 27, 1943, April 11, 1944, both p. 13; Civil Case Number 326, United States District Court Records, in Federal Record Center, Kansas City, Mo.

²⁸ *Tribune*, May 15, 1942, p. 1. The attorneys are named in the McBrien interview, 2: according to the *Pioneer Press*, April 13, 1944, p. 14, about nine other law firms were involved in the various cases. Correspondence between the U.S. Attorney staff in St. Paul and the U.S. Attorney General's staff in USDJR reveals that St. Paul staff often made recommendations, but all final decisions rested in Washington.

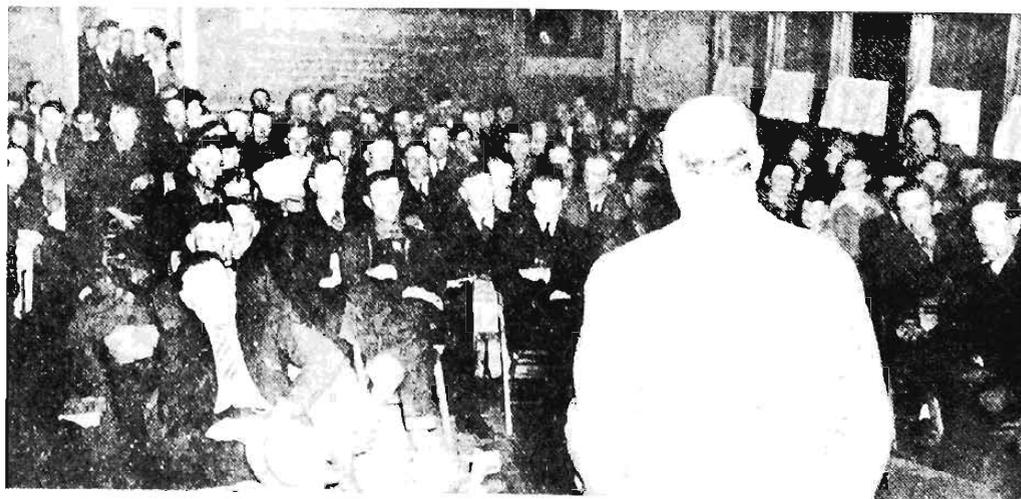
farmers' only hope for improved awards was to take the arguments to court.²⁶

FORCED by the farmers' unwillingness to accept the April, 1942, offers, the government commenced condemnation litigation that dragged on in the federal courts for five years. The farmers were asking for nearly a million and a half dollars for their land, whereas the government valued the property at about \$700,000. The first step in the long process was the appointment of a three-person condemnation commission to examine 70 of the government's 84 original appraisals. Following the commission's hearings and its awards announcement, the farmers and the government became adversaries in a law case entitled "U.S.A. versus the Owners of 11,500 Acres More or Less of Land in Dakota County, Minnesota."²⁷

At their May, 1942, meeting the displaced farmers discussed their need for legal counsel, and three attorneys ended up taking the majority of their cases: future Minnesota Governor Harold LeVander and David Grannis, Sr., both attorneys in South St. Paul, and John McBrien of Reitz and McBrien in Farmington. The federal government was represented by the U.S. attorney general's staff in St. Paul, including Victor E. Anderson, his assistant, Carl J. Eastvold, and Theodore H. Wangenstein, who worked under the supervision of the attorney general's lands division staff in Washington, D.C.²⁸

Throughout both the commission hearings and jury trials, the two parties presented testimony from expert witnesses that focused on the value of the farms just before the site was acquired for the plant in 1942. Attorneys for the government staunchly defended the original appraisals, while the farmers' attorneys contended that not only were the tracts worth more than the government claimed, but that their clients had suffered additional damages for which they deserved

CONGRESSMAN
Joseph P. O'Hara,
meeting with a group
of displaced Rosemount
farmers



compensation. "They didn't have the payment for the relocation costs and for the inconvenience and the upset and all that so these farmers were put at a substantial inconvenience and certainly didn't make any profit whatsoever. They lost money, by the time it was said and done, when they were all relocated."²⁹

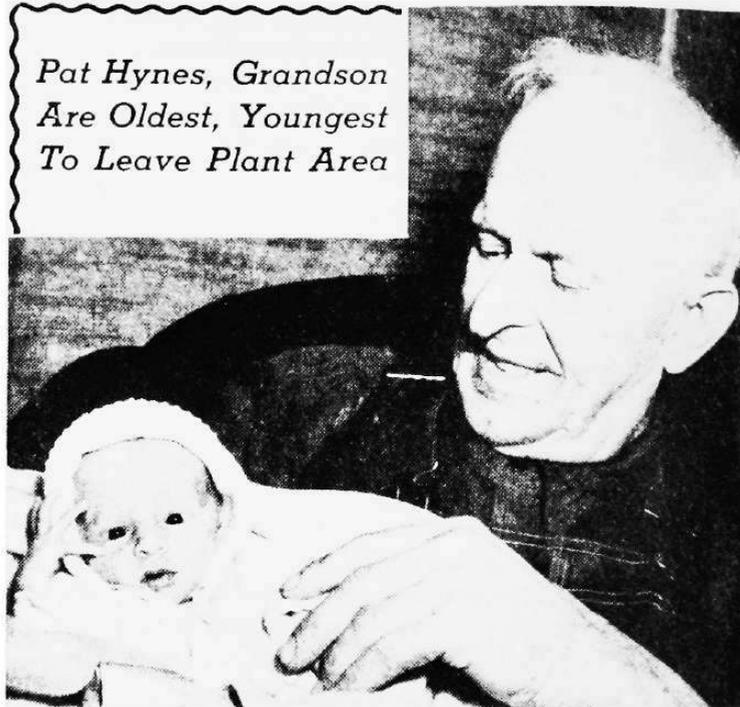
Defense attorney McBrien contended that the only farms sold in the Rosemount area in previous years had been poor ones, so the appraisers had only low figures to start with. He further suggested that the particular group of appraisers chosen by the government influenced the valuations: "They were . . . accustomed to appraising under rather distressed situations. During the period from the depths of the depression on, the farms sales were those that were forced to sell, and these appraisers worked for the federal land bank or for the department of rural credits. . . . They were appraising distressed situations, ultra-conservative. They were hired to make that kind of appraisal."³⁰

After about six months of deliberations, the court-appointed condemnation commission announced awards that were favorable to the farmers: in every case but one, the commission recommended increasing amounts to the farmers from 10 to 160 percent, with an average increase of 31 percent. Government officials vigorously protested the awards: Victor Anderson urged the attorney general to appeal those cases where the awards had been boosted by 20 percent or more, and he further suggested, "Possibly it would be advisable to file an appeal in every tract because if we appeal in the tracts over 20% no doubt the land owners would appeal in the remaining tracts." The Washington staff concurred, and the government filed appeals in each case where the commission had recommended a higher award than the original appraisal. As a result, the cases were slated to be tried in front of juries as soon as they could be scheduled on the court calendar.³¹

Several of the landowners asked the court to dismiss the government's appeals, a move which, according to Eastvold, was a "trial balloon put up by the other property holders." Such requests for dismissal were denied by the court, and the first of the cases was scheduled to be heard in federal court beginning in April, 1944.³²

The U.S. attorney general's staff instructed Anderson to discuss with the displaced landowners and their lawyers any offers they made for out-of-court settlements; as a result, during the following months, the two sides went back and forth on a number of the cases. Eventually, 24 of the 70 cases were settled out of court, but in most instances both sides were reluctant to budge from their positions. Occasionally, the two parties were only a few hundred dollars apart, and the government's St. Paul attorneys sometimes took a softer position than their Washington counterparts on the

*Pat Hynes, Grandson
Are Oldest, Youngest
To Leave Plant Area*



THE HUMAN side of GOW displacement

question of whether to accept the offers for settlement. For example, the government and former landowner Maurice Murphy were \$500 apart. "The difference," wrote Anderson, ". . . is so close that this office is of the opinion that serious consideration should be given to the acceptance of such counter-offer . . . and that in any event we should be authorized to counter-offer with half the difference." But the final decisions were made in Washington, and Anderson's recommendations were sometimes overruled. In the Murphy case, the Washington office quickly wired Anderson: "Proposed increase in authorization for settlement tract sixty-two rejected. Proceed to trial unless settlement not exceeding \$11,500 can be obtained."³³

THE FIRST of the cases finally went to trial on April 11, 1944. Cases were heard in small batches of four or five during the rest of that year. Once again, testimony from both sides described the property and its value — the farmers asking for increases, and the government seeking to hold the line. Attorney LeVander spoke of

²⁹ LeVander interview, 4.

³⁰ McBrien interview, 6.

³¹ Document, "No. 326 — Rosemount"; T. H. Wangenstein to Norman M. Littell, September 15, 1943; J. Edward Williams to Victor E. Anderson, September 27, 1943 — all in USDJR.

³² *Dispatch*, February 7, p. 1, April 11, p. 13, 1944.

³³ Williams to Anderson, September 27, 1943, May 26, 1944, and Anderson to Williams, May 24, 1944 — all in USDJR; *Dispatch*, January 18, 1945, p. 7.

the efforts he and his associates made on behalf of the defendants: "We tried very conscientiously to get all of the information and . . . did an enormous amount of work preparing them for trial. We got witnesses who were familiar with farming. . . . We tried to present as complete and full a story with maps, and visual exhibits with the testimony of the owners. . . . We had the jury down there to view the property, so they had a chance to understand what our testimony was by having viewed it themselves. . . . we felt that we had an obligation to these people to do the best we could and . . . I think we did about as good as could be expected under all the circumstances."³⁴

Most of the farmers were inexperienced courtroom witnesses, and one Rosemount woman told how testifying appeared to affect her neighbors: "How they were teased and ridiculed by the government lawyers. It was no fun. . . . They just broke down and cried." Despite such difficulties, the farmers became capable witnesses, and as months went by their testimony was said to be increasingly effective. An esprit de corps developed among the group: "It got to be a whole summer experience for the farmers. . . . They got acquainted. The last ones who were on got to know and had heard enough so that they were pretty well prepared. The first ones were caught a little bit more. . . . They were necessarily good witnesses because they knew what the score was. They'd lived on

³⁴ Courtroom testimony was not transcribed; the only court records available for research are the various legal documents filed by attorneys for both parties. See also Le-Vander interview, 5.

³⁵ Transcript of interview of Mrs. Anna Wachter by Nancy Pilgrim and Helen Davis, June 23, 1976, p. 2; Le-Vander interview, 6.

³⁶ Anderson to Littell, April 29, May 4, 1944, and Williams to Anderson, May 3, 1944 – all in USDJR.

the farms all their lives and they were the best ones to describe what they had and what they'd produced and what kind of land they had."³⁵

The juries' verdicts were difficult to predict, some coming in very high, while others proved to be much lower than defendants hoped for. The verdicts in the first set of cases were announced late in April and were among the most favorable received: in each of the five cases heard, the jury recommended increasing the amounts farmers received from 74 to 144 percent. Anderson wrote to his superiors that "these verdicts were excessive and we thought the jury went awry"; Washington concurred, instructing Anderson to file motions for new trials in all five cases.³⁶

The next set of verdicts proved a setback for the farmers, coming in considerably lower than the 1943 condemnation commission awards. Speculating on what may have influenced the conduct of the various juries, attorney McBrien commented on one of his cases, "argued to the jury on D-Day. I remember it very vividly, because Judge [Gunnar H.] Nordbye had started court with a prayer for the success of the forces. . . . [and] in a spirit of lack of modesty, I successfully used that as part of my argument . . . praised the fact that we were living in a country which when it was engaged in mortal conflict, still had a system of law where the people could go to [court] . . . [and] there were very few countries in the world wherein the government wouldn't just take it and the rest would be damned. I was told that it was an effective argument." McBrien also recalled why another jury may not have been so sympathetic: "Unfortunately, little things showed up. . . . The group that went poor were all members of one family. . . . They had five cases tried together and I think that was a technical error in retrospect because it gave the government attorneys a chance to argue 'This family's

"ROLLING grain fields" of 1941 were displaced a year later by the newly erected GOW plant.



getting all this money,' and somehow it was remarked . . . that these young men were not in the service. That hurt that case."³⁷

When the final verdicts were in, both sides claimed victory – the farmers because the jury awards totalled just over a million dollars, a sum about \$300,000 more than the government's original appraisals, and the government because the farmers had received much less than they hoped for. The farmers' attorneys called it a hollow victory for their clients, for although many had received more than if they had not gone to court, some still felt cheated and demoralized. As one later commented: "We went all through the process of fighting again . . . and in my own instance this jury awarded me \$14,800. It was way below what I paid for this [new] farm, but we just felt that we couldn't fight this any more, so I settled reluctantly and most all the others did the same. . . . We knew we were licked. It was too costly to go any farther so it doesn't leave me with very happy memories of what our federal government did to [us] people there southeast of Rosemount when they wanted that plant area."³⁸

WHILE THE LEGAL disputes between the government and the Dakota County farmers were being played out in court, the Rosemount farmland was being transformed into an industrial complex of massive proportions. The town was swamped with thousands of workers who came to take the jobs offered there. As soon as the farmers started vacating their homes in early May, work began to prepare the site for construction: telephone, telegraph, and teletype lines were installed; and on May 27 all of the roads on the plant site were closed to public traffic.³⁹

Negotiations between the War Department and the project's chief contractor, the E. I. du Pont de Ne-

mours Company (Du Pont), resulted in final contracts signed June 12. The plant was scheduled to begin the production of cannon and rifle powder in January, 1943, and as a result, the rush to build the hundreds of structures and other necessary installations began immediately.⁴⁰

If all went according to schedule within the next year, the Rosemount farmland would become a large and complex industrial community, with six manufacturing lines and areas for dehydrating, mixing, granulating, drying, blending, and packing cannon and rifle powder. In addition, the plant's construction plans included powder magazines, laboratories, ballistic ranges, power plants, railroads, roads, walks, fences, and storage areas, as well as areas for car repairs, carpentry, blacksmithing, sheet-metal work, pipe fitting, welding, and millwright and electrical work. Also among the new structures scheduled soon to replace the site's farmhouses were a variety of administrative buildings, staff residences, cafeterias and canteens,

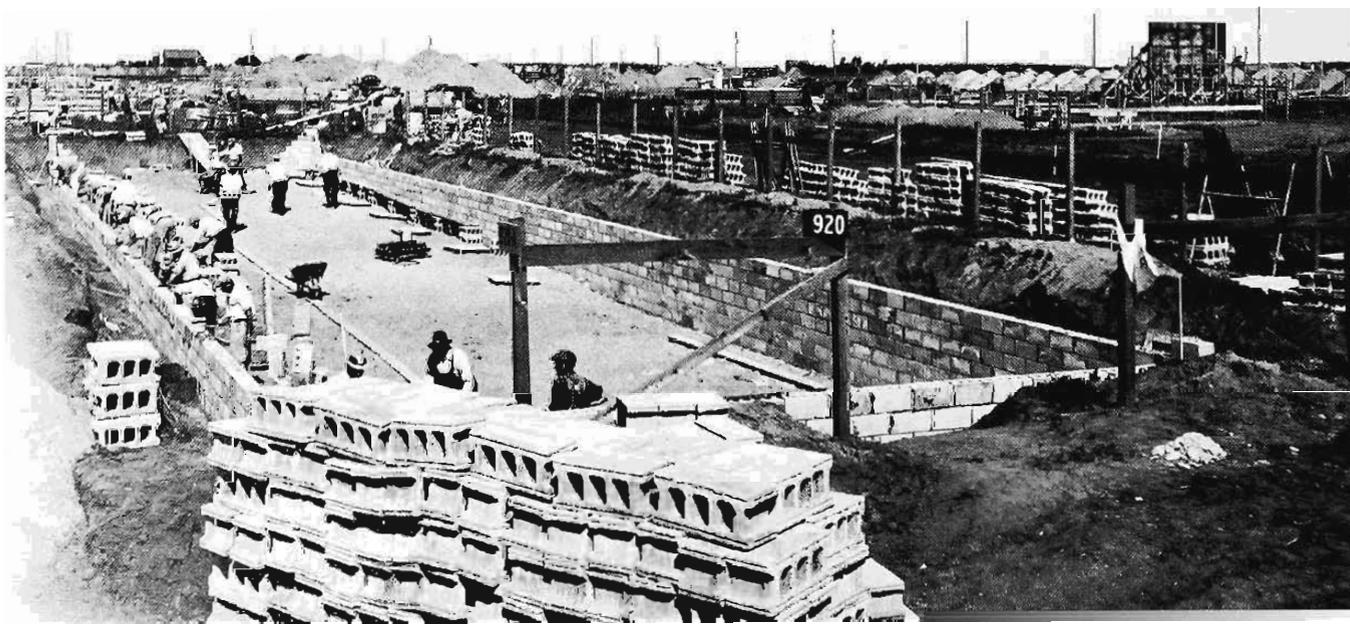
³⁷ Anderson to Littell, April 29, 1944, USDJR: McBrien interview, 11.

³⁸ *Dispatch*, November 30, 1944, p. 11, January 18, 1945, p. 7; McBrien interview, 11; LeVander interview, 12; Carroll interview, 6. By January, 1945, when all but one of the 84 cases had been settled either through direct purchase, out-of-court settlement, or jury verdicts, the condemned land had cost the government a total of \$1,008,674.

³⁹ "Gopher Ordnance Works. Basic History." Volume 1, p. 3, (April–October, 1942) Office of the Chief of Ordnance, history file, NARG 156 (hereafter cited as "Basic History," along with the volume number and date). Early in the war, President Roosevelt ordered historical records prepared to document all plants such as GOW: 13 volumes, usually quarterly, were thus prepared for GOW by department officials.

⁴⁰ Here and two paragraphs below, see "Basic History," 1:1–5 (April–October, 1942).

A PROGRESS photograph in July, 1942, shows how quickly buildings like this GOW storehouse went up.



medical buildings, and security headquarters. To protect the plant against internal and external threats of "sabotage, espionage, and natural hazards," a crew of 500 security people was to be hired. The site was to be surrounded by a ring of 30 guard towers located at strategic points along 10 miles of patrol roads, and 11 cars equipped with radios for communication with nearby Fort Snelling would patrol the site.

Plant officials first recruited construction workers from the Twin Cities and later from a wider area. By May 31, Du Pont employed about 3,000 workers on construction jobs; their numbers increased until employment peaked in mid-September at 19,428 workers. Du Pont subcontracted with local firms for the site's excavation and concrete jobs, railroad line construction, and work on the plant's boilers, sprinkler systems, roofs, and ventilating equipment, among other things.

IN ROSEMOUNT the Gopher Ordnance Works' announcement triggered an immediate response from community leaders, who took aggressive steps to meet the challenges created by the thousands soon to flood the area. On April 2, members of the Rosemount Commercial Club convened to discuss predictable concerns such as housing and water supply shortages, sanitation problems, and traffic jams. *Dakota County Tribune* owner and editor, Ham Clay, Sr., traveled to New Brighton, Minnesota, and Baraboo, Wisconsin, to see what changes were caused there by the construction of war plants. Clay reported to his readers that housing shortages, escalating rent and consumer goods prices, sewer facility and water supply shortages, sanitation problems, crowded schools, "hell-raisers," and a lack of enough manpower to help out in local businesses were common in those communities; he urged Rosemount officials to increase local police protection, to enact strict ordinances regulating the location of trailer homes, and to provide plenty of recreational diversions for plant workers.⁴¹

The Rosemount Village Council responded to this by passing ordinances regulating trailer camps; limiting the issuance of building permits; hiring additional constables; appointing a health inspector; and discouraging the sale of liquor licenses through a hefty increase in the licensing fee. On the county level, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners met with state health department officials and the county nurse to discuss the predicted health and sanitation problems. The county attorney and auditor wrote the War Department,

⁴¹ *Tribune*, April 10, p. 1, 6, April 17, p. 6, both 1942.

⁴² Rosemount Village Council Minutes, April 14, June 2, and August 11, 1942, originals in Rosemount town hall; *Tribune*, May 22, p. 5, June 26, p. 1, both 1942.

⁴³ *Tribune*, April 24, May 8, 22, June 5, July 3, 10, 24, December 4, 1942, all on p. 1; Carroll interview, 4.

ANTLERS PARK

ON LAKE MARION

NOW OPEN FOR

TRAILER CAMP

SHADE TREES GALORE

It's always cool here inside and outside

- RUNNING WATER, TOILETS
- LARGE CLUB AND RECREATION ROOM
- HOT AND COLD SHOWERS
- EXTRA GOOD WINTER ACCOMMODATIONS
- GOOD FISHING, BATHING BEACH, BOATS FOR RENT, BAIT
- REFRESHMENTS AND ICE CREAM

LOCATED ONLY 10 MILES TO ROSEMOUNT
ON GOOD HIGHWAY.

ALSO—Good winter home on Orchard Lake for sale or rent, 6 room house, barn, chicken coop, garage, with four acres of land.

George H. Warweg

OWNER AND MANAGER.

ADVERTISEMENTS such as this appeared frequently in Rosemount area newspapers.

urging officials to give county workers first chance at GOW jobs.⁴²

In an effort to offset the anticipated housing shortages, the Rosemount Commercial Club, Mayor Edward J. McDonald, attorney Elmer J. Ryan, and U.S. Senator Joseph H. Ball urged the government to designate the county a federal defense area, which would make it eligible for housing funds. Homeowners sought to create new rental property by remodeling and redecorating their homes; special government defense area houses were built for Du Pont executives and other plant officials; trailer camps sprang up in Rosemount, Farmington, Lakeville, and on farms in the area; and, to help war workers find accommodations, a local chapter of a women's civil defense organization called the Victory Aides published a special housing section in the weekly county paper.⁴³



A TRAFFIC jam of homeward-bound plant workers

To provide the public with information on accommodations and civilian defense, the Rosemount Village Council and county civilian defense office opened the War Information Bureau in mid-June. The local building boom included existing businesses, as proprietors remodeled and expanded their facilities to meet the new demands: Al's Cafe in Rosemount was freshly painted and papered and extra dining space added; the Hagemester brothers' local meat and grocery market expanded into an adjoining building; and lunch and soft-drink counters soon appeared across the road from GOW to accommodate construction workers.⁴⁴

To help ease the transportation problems the Rosemount passenger depot was enlarged and a station in nearby Coates, closed for the last 20 years, was remodeled and opened; new bus lines were routed to the area from St. Paul and Minneapolis, and the Jefferson Bus Company added vehicles to its routes from towns south of Rosemount. Car pooling was encouraged, and the state patrol assigned extra officers to highways in the area to help manage the traffic.⁴⁵

As Rosemount became a new community with its streets and business establishments bustling with activity, local Rural Electrification Association manager, C. H. Gelder, told of the transformation of the GOW site: "Great changes have taken place there and nearly all of the familiar land marks are gone. No more are the fine dairy farms and beautiful acres of crop lands. Instead, the ground has nearly everywhere been torn up with huge holes and excavations for buildings. Even the roads which we have known for so long are being torn up and soon not even a trace of them will remain. In place of them there will be streets connecting hundreds

of buildings and railroad tracks everywhere are being laid to provide for the transportation of raw materials and manufactured goods."⁴⁶

The high wages paid at the plant boosted the local economy because workers had more money to spend, and some of it was spent in town. A Rosemount merchant described the effects on him: "As far as my own business goes, I know it was a break for me. . . . Gopher Ordnance Works brought people in [and] they were getting paid every week and they spent their money in town. . . . Not many started a savings account, they just spent it as soon as they got it. It had been so long since they'd had any money they didn't know how to handle it." Another area citizen asserted that the Rosemount liquor store "got rich as a hoot owl," because plant workers cashed their checks there on Friday nights, spending a portion on the premises. Additional capital flooded the economy when local businesses were awarded subcontracts by Du Pont.⁴⁷

But not all the economic effects were beneficial to the community. Wartime rent and price inflation, already present, were further aggravated, as were scarcities of consumer goods. The federal government imposed price and rent controls to counteract such trends. The increased supply of money in the Rosemount economy put pressure on businesses to enlarge their inventories, and for some local proprietors, such pressures were difficult to adjust to: "It took a fair amount of time to get used to that many people all at once and have an inventory. . . . They were from all parts of the country . . . [and] wanted merchandise that we didn't have and it was during the war and merchandise was hard to get." Rosemount merchants and farmers had difficulty competing with GOW for workers because of the higher wages paid there, and farmers complained so loudly that GOW announced that it would no longer hire farm workers. One Rosemount mother lamented that the high school girls had been spoiled by the \$100 per month they earned at plant jobs requiring no experience.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *Tribune*, June 12, p. 10, 19, p. 1, July 3, p. 8, all in 1942.

⁴⁵ *Tribune*, April 24, May 8, July 3, 17, all on p. 1, and July 31, p. 6, 1942; "Basic History," 1:5 (April-October, 1942). By July, the predicted traffic jams had commenced, with traffic increasing from a daily average of 1,141 automobiles to 3,062.

⁴⁶ *Tribune*, July 3, 31, 1942, both p. 1, November 12, 1942, p. 6; H. J. Geraghty interview by Robert Gottsch, May 12, 1976.

⁴⁷ Geraghty interview; Zeph B. Case interview by Kim Foster and Teresa Seliga, June 29, 1976; *Tribune*, April 24, p. 1, May 15, p. 1, May 29, p. 10, all in 1942, and November 12, 1943, p. 6.

⁴⁸ *Tribune*, May 1, December 25, 1942, both on p. 1, and November 12, 1943, p. 6; Geraghty interview.

Dakota County's loss of tax revenues on the 11,500 acres was another problem that community leaders needed to resolve, and the county's coffers were further strained from increased bills for repairing the county's overused roads. Plant workers often brought their families with them when they migrated to Rosemount; as a result, enrollments increased, overcrowding area schools, which were short of both teachers and classroom materials. Local officials later received federal aid to help ease these burdens.⁴⁹

THE WAR DEPARTMENT'S hopes for a January, 1943, GOW opening were undermined from the very start by a series of problems. One was the exceptionally wet summer of 1942 when precipitation from May 1 to October 1 was the heaviest on record, causing impassable roads, soil erosion, and drainage difficulties. Other delays in acquisition of construction materials and equipment pushed the opening date back to October 12, 1943, when plant officials succeeded in convincing the Ordnance Department to improve their priority rating from AA-4 to AA-3.⁵⁰

When the plant was about 73 percent complete in March, 1943, further trouble about the uncertain nature of its future loomed as stories circulated among workers. Officials urged workers to quash the gossip, but early in April, part of the construction was halted, and employees were laid off. A few days later, Minnesota First District Congressman August H. Andresen announced that he had been informed by a War Department general that GOW would soon be placed on a standby status, to be operated only on an emergency basis. On April 16, the War Department announced that some of the GOW land would be leased to bidders interested in using it for farming purposes. Finally, in July the department gave belated credence to the gossip by placing the entire Rosemount plant (along with seven other plants around the country) on a standby status. Officials said GOW was not needed because the nation's other powder manufacturing

plants were producing more than originally anticipated, and the current demand for artillery explosives was lower than expected.⁵¹

The giant war plant stood idle for the remainder of 1943, and in January, 1944, work started to dismantle and ship much of its equipment and materials to other defense installations. Life in Rosemount returned to normal as thousands of workers, trailer homes, and traffic jams disappeared, although some workers stayed on to carry out dismantling operations and administrative and security services.⁵²

But Rosemount's restored tranquility was short-lived. The War Department announced in July, 1944, that GOW's standby order was to be removed, and it was to be refitted once again for powder production scheduled to begin as soon as possible. The "unexpectedly heavy use of artillery by American forces on the Italian and other fronts" forced the government to lift the standby order, and engineers hoped the plant would be ready for powder production in January, 1945. In December it was announced that a \$60 million expansion program designed to double GOW's production capabilities was to be launched, and the plant's commanding officer underscored the importance of the project by asserting, "Hell, the war is far from over. The hard fighting is still to come and Eisenhower is crying for ammunition."⁵³

To meet the plant's new labor demands, the War Manpower Commission planned a recruitment program to begin in October, and management further worked to ease the labor shortage by using women in as many nonmanual jobs as possible, by utilizing machines instead of people, and by co-operating with area transportation companies and the War Housing Administration to ease workers' difficulties in those areas.⁵⁴

Throughout the rest of the war, plant officials had trouble attracting workers for GOW jobs, and when powder production finally began early in 1945, they intensified their recruitment efforts. Local newspapers, broadcasting stations, and public figures such as former Governor Stassen and the mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul were invited to help. Front-page coverage and editorials in major Twin Cities dailies supported the cause. After Germany collapsed in April, 1945, two of the plant's three scheduled production lines were once again placed on standby status, but cannon and rifle powder manufacturing continued to support the war in the Pacific. The labor shortage problems continued, however, and looking for help in their recruitment program, plant officials invited 60 newspaper editors for a thorough tour of their facility. Following the tour, editorials and articles stressing the importance of GOW's programs appeared, such as one which said, "Men and women are being asked to fill that crew

⁴⁹ *Tribune*, June 19, p. 5, 26, p. 6, July 31, p. 1, all in 1942, and February 12, p. 1, 1943.

⁵⁰ "Basic History," 1:3, 4, 7, 8 (April-October, 1942), 2:1 (January-March, 1943).

⁵¹ "Basic History," 2:2 (January-March, 1943); *The Powderkeg*, March, 1943, p. 4, a monthly newsletter published by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for GOW workers; *Dispatch*, April 10, 14, p. 1, July 20, p. 20, 1943; *Pioneer Press*, April 12, p. 20, April 16, p. 1, 1943.

⁵² *Dispatch*, January 25, 1944, p. 20; *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune*, November 12, 1944, sec. 2, p. 6.

⁵³ *Dispatch*, July 24, p. 1, December 6, p. 1, 1944; *Pioneer Press*, September 13, 1944, p. 9; "Basic History," 8:5, 6 (July-September, 1944).

⁵⁴ Here and below, see "Basic History," 13:2, 10, and exhibit A (January-March, 1945).

for weighty reasons and important purposes. What good will it be to man our battleships and cruisers if we cannot man Rosemount?"

Such efforts to staff GOW adequately met with failure, and the plant's projected production quotas were never met. In the final months of the war, work at GOW slowly lost momentum. The final order to close the plant was issued August 13, 1945, the day before the Japanese signed their unconditional surrender. But not until October 10, 1945, was the last lot of cannon powder packed.⁵⁵

WHETHER OR NOT GOW powder ever made it to the front lines in Europe or the Pacific is not known, but, ironically, by the end of the war the Rosemount plant had become the government's third most expensive, costing over \$115 million. When GOW was dismantled in 1945, its surplus equipment and materials were liquidated by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Two years later the GOW site was deeded to the University of Minnesota, and since then, in addition to a portion of it being rented to farmers, the land and its remaining structures have been used for a variety of university-sponsored research projects and other programs conducted by private and government institutions leasing space on the site.⁵⁶

Throughout the war and ever since, public sentiment in Rosemount has been mixed on COW. Commenting on the reactions of her neighbors to the coming of GOW, one Rosemount woman said: "For being such a big thing, the people took it rather calmly, and made the best of it. They figured it was war time and I suppose they were all happy they didn't lose sons. . . . Things are different during war time." When the plant was first idled in 1943, some residents were glad that life had returned to normal, but others lamented that the plant had not become a more permanent factor in the local economy and that the loss of 84 productive farms for an empty war plant was not a beneficial exchange for the community.⁵⁷

The cynicism felt by some of the displaced farmers was further aggravated by the erratic history of the plant. One member of that group recalled: "The thing that really galls all of us people that were ordered out . . . is the fact that they never really needed the plant. . . . It was a waste. They did manufacture some powder, but if any of it was actually used in the

war effort I don't know of it." Such sentiments may have been exacerbated by reports of waste and mismanagement. One Rosemount man, who hauled gasoline to one company hired to lay railroad tracks at GOW and to another tearing them up, said that the track layers would ask him when making a delivery, "Are they getting close?" The track dismantlers would ask if they were catching up with them.⁵⁸

Accusations of mismanagement at COW and other plants that closed around the country had reached War Department officials, and Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson responded to the House Committee on Military Affairs: "The closing of these plants had, no doubt, brought inconvenience and dislocation to local communities, and has directed public attention to idleness which may be inappropriately termed 'waste.' Had these facilities not been courageously conceived, planned, and constructed, and had the fortunes of war continued to be adverse, the great destruction and waste of both manpower and money caused by having too little too late would have brought such tremendous suffering that the present inactivities fade into insignificance."⁵⁹ Americans have thus been asked to accept the failures of the United States military establishment because of the tremendous uncertainty of the country's future during the war years, but such acceptance should not prevent the story of such failures from being told along with the successes.

⁵⁵ "Basic History," 13:4, 10 (January-March, 1945): *Pioneer Press*, August 13, 1945, p. 1.

⁵⁶ Smith, *The Army*, 501; "Basic History," 13:4 (October-December, 1945): *The Rosemount Research Center of the University of Minnesota*, a pamphlet published by the Center, University of Minnesota, [1948]; *The Land* (a bimonthly periodical published in Mankato), August 28, 1980, p. 12.

⁵⁷ Hynes interview, 9; *Tribune*, November 12, 1943, p. 6.

⁵⁸ Carroll interview, 3; transcript of interview of Art Fisher by Teresa Seliga, *et al.*, June 22, 1976, p. 4.

⁵⁹ *Dispatch*, July 20, 1943, p. 20.

PHOTOGRAPHS on p. 218 and 224 are from the University of Minnesota's Rosemount Research Center; those on p. 220 and 223 are from *The Propellant* (semimonthly publication for GOW employees), February 26, 1943, p. 6; and those on p. 221, 222, 225, and 226 are from the *Dakota County Tribune*, May 15, p. 11, April 10, p. 1, July 24, p. 4, July 31, p. 1, all 1942. Other pictures are in the MHS audio-visual library.



Copyright of **Minnesota History** is the property of the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, or email articles, however, for individual use.

To request permission for educational or commercial use, [contact us](#).