

This is a very thorough booklist compiled by Terry Sveine while he was employed by the New Ulm Chamber of Commerce. While all books are not specific to the uprising, they do provide a wonderful list for any reader who has interest in New Ulm and the Brown County, MN area. I have only included those focusing on the Dakota War.

Suggested Reading List on New Ulm, its History and its Famous Citizens.

(These book reviews are my own and, therefore, subject to my own conclusions and viewpoints (11/16/11)
.....Terry Sveine)

“A German Town: A History of New Ulm, Minnesota”

2004

Daniel J. Hoisington

Edinborough Press, www.edinborough.com

At last, a modern, complete history of New Ulm! This work was commissioned by The City of New Ulm

for our 150th Anniversary and is a wonderful, very readable book with enough information to please and amaze every reader. It will serve as a source book for many years to come.

There are many interesting photos, too.

“New Ulm in Word and Picture”

1892 / 1997

J.H.Strasser, author

Don Heinrich Tolzmann, reprint translator and editor, - with Fredric Steinhauser

This 79-page little gem is a great history of early New Ulm and contains some interesting photo-copied pictures of old buildings. It has small excerpts on the Uprising, locust plague and tornado and yet brags up the town's resiliency and enterprising attitude. A fun book!

“A Chronology of New Ulm, Minnesota:1853-1899”

1899 / 1978

J.H. Strasser, author

Elroy Ubl, reprint translator and editor

A very good source for the serious student of New Ulm and/or genealogist. It is primarily a day-by-day listing of city government events and births, deaths and marriages in New Ulm's first 5 decades. (Mr. Strasser was the editor of New Ulm's paper at the time.) The last 1/4th of the book contains many photos from Ubl's own collection. This super resource is hard to find for private ownership but the Public Library has copies.

“New Ulm, Minnesota: J.H. Strasser's History and Chronology”

2002

Don Heinrich Tolzmann, translator and editor

Little Miami Publishing Co. Milford, Ohio

It is a reprint of the very hard to find original with new notes, comments and useful name lists from Tolzmann. In lieu of finding the original, this is an excellent substitute! (The additional commentary and lists may make it worthwhile to have even if you own the original!)

“History of the Minnesota Valley, Including the Explorers and Pioneers of Minnesota” and the “History of the Sioux Massacre”

1882

Rev. Edward D. Neill and Charles S. Bryant (respectively)

This comprehensive (for its time) account covers a wide range of subject matter in its 1,000+ pages.

Geology, geography, economics, native history, county-by-county history, profiles of hundreds of early Settlers, and a deep account of the Dakota War. It is an excellent resource, although it could be hard to find. The New Ulm Library has moved its sole copy onto the general shelf from the research files!

“Over the Earth I Come: The Great Sioux Uprising of 1862”

1992

Duane Schultz

Fictional history of the area, but done accurately in spirit. Some have disputed certain factual aspects of it, but I think it's a great insight into the Dakota mind, viewpoint and experience. A 2-3 day read because you can't put it down! A great place to start for general interest readers and students of history.

- “Historical Notes: A Glimpse at New Ulm’s Past – Vol. I and II”** ca. 1981
 Elroy Ubl
 These two books are a compilation of articles Mr. Ubl wrote for the New Ulm Journal newspaper in the late 1970s and early ‘80s. They are typically 1-3 pages long and deal with a single subject matter or person from New Ulm’s past. He often includes a photo where possible. These are great primers of essential knowledge on New Ulm and serve as an introduction to a wide variety of interests. It’s out of print, but I have seen them available at antique stores, garage sales or E-bay. The Library also has several copies.
- “The Sioux Uprising of 1862” /** 1976
“The Dakota War of 1862” (new edition, with a more “politically correct” name) 2001
 Kenneth Carley
 The best *concise*, narrative account of the war and surrounding time-period period. A must have!
- “Through Dakota Eyes: Narrative Accounts of the Minnesota Indian Wars of 1862”** 1984
 Gary Clayton and Alan Woolworth, editors
 A great account of interviews from the actual participants in the war. A viewpoint primarily of the Dakota Indians. A refreshing, and needed, change of outlook.
- “The Great Sioux Uprising”**
 C.M. Oehler Oxford Press 1959
 Da Capo Press 1997
 The testimonial on the cover says, “It is an admirable work and is destined to become a classic” and I totally agree. Oehler has a style that is intimate without being too cozy. He manages to tell a convoluted story in a logical and flowing manner with insights into the characters of the main people that somehow brings you into the story. An excellent book!
- “The Great Sioux Uprising: Rebellion on the Plains, August - September 1862”**
 Jerry Keenan DaCapo Press 2003
 www.decapopress.com
 This short book is part of the “American Battlefield Series” and is adequate as a short overview of the war. I was disappointed in the little coverage he gives to New Ulm and the 2 photos he uses of New Ulm are wrongly captioned! However, he does add a twist to the typical study in that he gives a short biography of the main players and gives directions to and modern descriptions of some of the famous battlefields.
- “Uprising”** 2007
 Dean Urdahl
 North Star Press
 I have not yet read this, but John Isch from the BCHS Board gives it a good review. It is a fictional history of the Sioux Uprising and is well done. A new type of character, a Confederate soldier sent to “stir up the Indians,” is part of the character mix, as well as a lady who is captured by the Dakota.
- “The Indians Revenge”** 1891
 Alexander Berghold
 This fascinating account by Father Berghold, is a gripping account that tells the story by a person who came to New Ulm shortly after the fact. It’s a good insight into 1860s’ thinking and it is understanding of the Indian’s view. It also has many interesting facts about early New Ulm history.
- “Charles E. Flandrau and the Defense of New Ulm”** 1962 / 2006

edited by Russell W. Fridley, Leota M. Kellett and June D. Holmquist

Brown County Historical Society production

A great, detailed, 62-page book, full of obscure facts on the events directly in New Ulm.

It could be the most detailed account we have of the actual battles in New Ulm.

The paperback reissue in 2006 features the wonderful “2nd Battle of New Ulm” painting by Mike Eischen! It is very accurate (as best as we can determine) and really helps visualize the battle.

“Memory’s Trail”

Grace Lovell May and Wilhelmina Pfaender Loenholdt

1954

As the authors point out, this is not a strict biography of Wilhelm and Catherine Pfaender, but is the story of them and their immediate family told by their descendants. It covers much of early New Ulm history, as the Pfaenders were the leaders of the Turners - the second group of settlers in 1856.

It’s a short and lovingly written book, and easy to read.

“Judge Flandrau in the Defense of New Ulm During the Sioux Outbreak of 1862”

Major Salmon A. Buell

thehistoryhouse@yahoo.com reprint by Mike Joki, L’Anse, MI

/ ca. 2010

This 44-page reprint appears to be for a ceremony honoring Flandrau. It appears that Buell was requested by the MHS to write down his memories of how Flandrau handled the Dakota Conflict. There are many details that I have not seen elsewhere. A good resource that may be hard to find in its original form.

“The Sioux Uprising in Minnesota, 1862: Jacob Nix’s Eyewitness Account”

Jacob Nix

Don Heinrich Tolzmann, reprint editor

ca. 1997

A first hand account of the battle written by the de facto commander of the citizen defenders during the first Battle of New Ulm. It brings you into the action in a memorable manner. It is published in German and English and offers a “not-politically-correct” view held by those who lived through it.

“German Pioneer Accounts of the Great Sioux Uprising of 1862”

Don Heinrich Tolzmann, editor

Little Miami Publishing Co.

2002

Tolzmann has found some first-hand accounts of experiences during the Indian War and has them reprinted. They make for very interesting reading and are quite compelling. He has a forward and afterward with his insightful thoughts on it. A great addition to our knowledge of this time!

“New Ulm Area Defenders of August, 1862 / Dakota Indians and Pioneer Settlers”

edited by Elroy Ubl

A 54-page compilation of names, monuments and military lists. More for the specialist, but a useful source for detail research.

“Index to Claimants for Depredations following the Dakota War of 1862”

Park Genealogical Books www.parkbooks.com

An index to claimants including many New Ulm and area citizens. There is some dispute that this is incomplete, but it is a great starter source and far easier than looking in state and federal records!

“Memories of the Battle of New Ulm”

Don Heinrich Tolzmann

2001

Heritage Books www.heritagebooks.com

A reprised and condensed version of L.A. Fritsche’s “History of Brown County, MN 1916”, that only deals with aspects of the Sioux Uprising/Dakota Conflict. It features a new “full name index”, a wonderful “personal recollections” section, a biography of Fritsche, and Tolzmann’s own conclusion. In lieu of getting at the elusive original, this is an accessible alternative with a focused presentation!

“The Treaty of Traverse des Sioux”

1929

Thomas Hughes

A serious study of the treaty of 1851 that opened up the land in the southern 1/3 of Minnesota. This event was pivotal in the development of the situation that led to New Ulm's founding and the pioneer-Indian struggles that resulted. It also covers early white intrusions into the area and their first settlements. A "must read" for any true student of New Ulm's history. It is still the major work on this event and time frame. Hard to find, though.

"Held in Captivity"

1926/1996

Benedict Juni

This is a 23 page booklet that is his first-hand experience during the Sioux Uprising as a 17-year old boy. It is very gripping and lets one imagine how many other stories like his were normal during these battles! Easily worth the small \$2.00 price.

"The Dakota Indian Internment at Fort Snelling, 1862-1864"

Corinne L. Monjeau-Marz

2005

Prairie Smoke Press, St. Paul, MN

This was a good book that I learned a lot from. She doesn't write much narrative or analysis but the book

consists of many quotes from individuals, then-current newspaper articles, and letters between involved Minnesotans. There are numerous photos of Indians and the camp and the book ends with numerous charts and lists of census materials, all trying to document the Indians and their relationships.

"Dakota Uprising Victims: Gravestones & Stories"

Curtis A. Dahlin

2007

Beaver's Pond Press, Edina, MN www.beaverspondpres.com

This substantial, hardbound book is full of photos and stories behind all of the known gravestones from the Dakota Conflict. Chapter 3 deals with New Ulm and Brown County. Dahlin tells as much of a story as he can about every person he can find info on. This is a great source book and the stories add life to just names on a tombstone or a list of the dead. There are 25 pages on New Ulm and Brown County that are enlightening. It has a good Introduction, Bibliography and Appendix, as well.

"Trail of Tears: Minnesota's Dakota Indian Exile Begins"

Mary Hawker Bakeman and Antona M. Richardson, Editors

2008

Prairie Echoes Press / Park Genealogical Books, Roseville, MN

The editors have gone to great lengths to assemble stories on the entire process of the deportation of the Dakota from their lands to the holding prison at Mankato for those deemed guilty and to Ft. Snelling for the rest of the Indians. There are two separate essays on the progress through New Ulm that are well done.

"The Dakota or Sioux in Minnesota as They Were in 1834"

1908/1986

"Dakota Life in the Upper Midwest"

1986

Samuel W. Pond

Minnesota Historical Society Press

While this book has nothing on New Ulm, per se, I couldn't help but including it in this list. It is Pond's effort to tell the story of the Dakota and their lives, culture and traditions before interaction, and the subsequent changes, with white people. Samuel Pond was a missionary who lived intimately with the Indians for many years and came to know them as few others. He describes many aspects of their lives which help create a deep understanding of what New Ulm's "original inhabitants" were like. The second edition of this book has a forward by famed Indian author, Gary C. Anderson.

“Franz Massopust, German-Bohemian Pathfinder and Founder of New Ulm, Minnesota: 2004

A Tragic Family Saga”

Robert J. Paulson

Park Genealogical Books

Paulson takes great aim to clarify and explain his ancestor’s role in New Ulm’s founding and the tragic tale of that extended family, especially their sufferings in the Dakota Conflict of 1862. While it would particularly appeal to family members, there is ample information on early life in New Ulm for the general reader. Assisting in its 34-page message, are maps, photos, charts and genealogical tables.

“Dakota War Whoop”

Harriet Bishop McConkey

Ross + Haines, Inc. Minneapolis

1863/1970

Written right after the 1862 Conflict, she is quite derogatory to the Indian’s reasons and actions and gives New Ulm a few “slams” as being “God-less” and “wild” due to the Turners’ anti-religion stance. However, she should be credited for a sense of immediacy and passion in her story and one must be careful to understand the author’s outrage when writing this. Several of her stories are exaggerated or half-truths, and would be discredited if written today. It is a good book to help understand what some white contemporaries must have felt - even if the Indians are made to look incompetent and degraded.

“Memories of New Ulm: My Experiences During the Indian Uprising in Minnesota, 1862”

Rudolph Leonhart

Don Heinrich Tolzmann, editor and translator

1880/2005

Edinborough Press www.edinborough.com

This is a 117-page book that is a delight to read. Mr. Leonhart came to New Ulm in 1861 as a teacher and relates stories about his short life in the new, frontier town, including his experiences in the Sioux Uprising and the evacuation of New Ulm. A good book!

“A History of the Minnesota River Valley and The Sioux Uprising of 1862”

Charles Barlett and Edward O’Neill

1882

A super resource for more serious students. Previously unavailable for check-out, it is now able to be checked out of the N.U. Public Library. It is definitely for the specialist in history but, in addition to short pioneer biographies, it covers the region, county by county. If you liked the Louis Fritsche work, you’ll like this one.

“The History of Brown County, Volume 1 and 2”

Louis Fritsche

ca.1916

A super work of factual history and short biographies about the early settler families.

Given the complex nature of the subject, and its small pool of resources, it is a good tool for starting out one’s studies. (Nearly impossible to find for private ownership and until recently, not check-out-able from the research portion of the New Ulm Library.)

“Early Brown County”

Leota M. Kellett

1966 / 2004

Brown County Historical Society

This 19-page wonder is full of good information and is a good place to start one’s research. Mrs. Kellett was the BCHS Archivist for many years and felt a need to put together a handbook for researchers.

There are also 15 pages of maps and photos.

“Joseph R. Brown and His Times”

William E. Lass

1995 / 96

The Henderson Independent, *for the Joseph R. Brown Interpretive Center*

One of my Mankato State history professors writes a nice story of Brown that I bought at the History Center in Henderson. It is a short booklet, about 50 pages, but gives a concise overview of this prolific man, after whom Brown County is named. Although he spent little time in modern Brown County and New Ulm, he was integral to the whole river valley's development of which in turn influenced how New Ulm grew. Worth reading!

“The Peripatetic Joseph R. Brown: The First Minnesotan”

Gareth D. Hiebert and Archie Grahn

1987

New Ulm native, Hiebert, writes a more personal story of Brown than Lass' version that stresses how important Brown was to, not only the Minnesota River valley, but to the State of Minnesota. His subtitle, “The First Minnesotan” sums up Hiebert's focus. This is written in pamphlet form and I made a copy from a friend, so finding this may be a challenge – although it'll be worth it.

“The Leavenworth Rescue Expedition”

Gary Wiltscheck

2011

Brown County Historical Society Press

The very skilled Mr. Wiltscheck tackles a virtually unknown part of New Ulm's history during the U.S.-Dakota War whereby he unravels the ultimately failed attempt to rescue friends and family west of New Ulm on August 19th, 1862. He profiles the many people involved, has discovered the routes they all used (some conjectural, but likely) and ties together a long-missing part of the story. Well-done!

“The Dacotah History Hotel -1859 to 1972”

1988 / 2000

Gareth Heibert

A short, but fact-filled booklet with many photographs of this historic building and business. It is an easy read and quite useable for research or study. It is too bad we lost this treasure. All that remains is a plaque on the Citizens Bank building - and this book!

“Crimson Runs the Prairie”

Aaron Smith

2010

www.wildryebooks.com (self-published)

I have not yet read this but have read an interesting review of it. It is a fictional history centering on the attacks near Lake Shetek during 1862. Several people were cited in the review as having escaped to New Ulm, so there may be a deeper New Ulm connection than would appear. In any case, it is another part of the Dakota Conflict that impacts New Ulm and should be worth reading.

“Interesting Stories of Frontier Life on Lake Hanska”

ca.1935

Ole Synstebj

This small book, which is only available to read in the Brown County Museum and Hanska Library, is the recollections of an original settler in Hanska and he tells about his visits to New Ulm. A delightful first-hand account of early pioneer life in the area.

“Early History Notes”

1994

Gary Wiltscheck

This small book is an unusual study of Sigel Township, south of New Ulm, done in a logical manner that starts with Minnesota prior to 1862, then goes into the Dakota Conflict in New Ulm, general history of Brown County and ends up focusing in on early Sigel. It is easy to read and a good overview. This book is only available from Gary himself in New Ulm at 507-359-9645. Mr. Wiltscheck has also written several fine essays on local history, especially Siegel Township, that are available at the Brown County Museum.

“Soldier, Settler and Sioux: Fort Ridgely and the Minnesota River Valley, 1853-1867”

Paul N. Beck

2000

Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD

Mr. Beck, who studied history at Mankato State and worked at the Harkin Store in the late 1970s, writes a very readable volume on the fort and its impact on the MN River valley, and by extension, New Ulm. Despite having a cover that features Fort Ripley near Brainerd (!) and a few small mistakes, his facts seem accurate. He does not spend too much time retelling tales already covered in other books but rather, he stresses Ft. Ridgely's role on the western frontier's advance by whites and European immigrants.

“New Ulm: Germany in Minnesota”

Lisa Sponholz Black

1994

This 29-page essay for a college degree, asks the question, “How German is New Ulm?”

It is an interesting look at how valid New Ulm's tourism marketing claims are. She does a concise history of New Ulm and tracks the changes as the town steadily grew away from the founding generation's language and customs. Her conclusions are sound and end on a positive note, but it prompts one to think. It is only available at the U of MN, the Brown County Museum and in the New Ulm Library. A unique perspective, worth reading!

Reviewer's note:

I feel that I have been judicious in my listing of possible books on the Sioux Uprising/Dakota Conflict/U.S.-Dakota War, although, admittedly, a great many books are listed here. By the same token, it is easily New Ulm's largest historical event and deserves to be included in any listing of books about New Ulm. There are many more that I don't know about, have not researched, and didn't include here.

This is not to be construed as the complete list on *any* New Ulm subject and I welcome input and suggestions for me to include in this listing and review. Danke schoen

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Videos or other media

“The Dakota Conflict”

This is an excellent 1-hour video, produced by P.B.S. and is available at the Brown County Museum and the Library. It offers an intelligent and balanced view of the fight, from both sides, with many historic photographs. It is a must for anyone interested in this subject!

“Let Them Eat Grass” – from the “How the West Was Lost-II” video series

1995

Discovery Channel / 9KUSA productions

This is an hour-long video of the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 and is very well done. It features more of an Indian point-of-view with many interviews. The only negatives I have are that it uses inaccurate photos to illustrate the point being discussed, but admit that I may be too close to the subject - the average viewer would not know the difference. The other issue -one that is glaringly wrong!- is that near the end, when discussing the leading of the “guilty” Indians from Lower Sioux Agency to Mankato, an Indian man being interviewed said that, “All of New Ulm came out as they passed through that town and clubbed everyone to death.” New Ulm people did NOT club to death 303 Indians!!!!!! I believe that 2 people died, and while that's still a negative, it is not the same as 303 people! Aside from that, it is a good video.

“The 2nd Battle of New Ulm, August 23, 1862”

This is a wonderful painting by Comfrey, MN native, Mike Eischen, that was done in 2004 and the original is in the Brown County Museum. However, see the enlargement on the front yard of the Museum and look for personal size reprints soon to be available from the Museum.

An excellent piece to help you visualize what the battle was like in New Ulm (although the painting needs interpretation to show what you're seeing!)

“The Dakota Conflict” Map

Published by the Mankato, MN Chamber of Commerce, it shows the locations of all of the sites

associated with the battles. It is hard to find, though. The New Ulm Visitor Center *may* have some.

“Evacuation of New Ulm” Map

Custom produced by Terry Sveine and geographers at Gustavus Adolphus University using old maps and first-hand accounts of the route used. Available as an electronic version from Terry Sveine.

“MN River Valley Scenic Byway Interpretive Panels”

In 2011 the MN River Valley Scenic Byway Alliance installed three interpretive panels on New Ulm subjects related to the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862.

***Milford Families** - Tells the story of the “Milford Massacre” from a family viewpoint.

Located at the Milford Monument about 5 miles west of New Ulm on Co. Road 29.

***The 7 Remaining Structures** – This tells of the 7 structures still left in town from before 1862.

Located on the front yard of the Brown County Museum at Center and Broadway.

***Evacuation of New Ulm** – Explains 2,000 people leaving New Ulm to Mankato after the 1862 battles.

Located about 4 miles from New Ulm on Highway 68 on the yard of Earthworks Landscaping.

The **Brown County Historical Society and Museum** (BCHS) has an extensive collection of maps, biographies, photographs, research books and assistance. They have a very nice selection of books, videos and maps for sale. They also have an excellent collection of printed **“Family Histories”** that have been researched and prepared by interested family members about their ancestors. These can save you untold hours of work! Their services are free to members and nominal to non-members. The staff is very knowledgeable (especially the Research Expert, Darla Gebhard) about New Ulm’s past in many aspects.

There have been **several recent essays submitted** for the “Kitty Lieb Historical Essay Contest” about various aspects of local and county-wide history. These are on file at the Museum and must be read there. Check into them, they are often the single best source on specific but their wealth of information might be overwhelming to the casual student of history! Look up www.BrownCountyHistorymnusa.org .

The **New Ulm Public Library** is home to the only collection of its kind in the U.S., the “German Heritage Collection” of books, periodicals and other documents dealing with achievements and contributions made by German Americans to the United States.

The **Minnesota Historical Society**, in St. Paul, also has an amazingly deep collection on the Sioux Uprising and other aspects of New Ulm’s history but this is for the serious student. I would contact the BCHS before going to this source. Try looking at www.mnhs.org where they have plenty of old photos of New Ulm.

Contacts for more information or book purchase locations:

Terry Sveine
New Ulm Convention and Visitor Bureau
1 North Minnesota / P.O. Box 384
New Ulm, MN 56073
e-mail tsveine@newulmtel.net
888-463-9856 or 507-233-4300
www.newulm.com

Brown County Historical Society
2 North Minnesota
New Ulm, MN 56073
507-233-2616
bchs@newulmtel.net
(They have a good selection of historic books.)

New Ulm Public Library
19 North Broadway
New Ulm, MN 56073
507-359-8331
cbaird@tds.lib.mn.us

Bookshelves and Coffeecups
Attn: Jerry Chamberlain
123 North Minnesota
New Ulm, MN 56073
507-359-4600
(Used books in a coffee shop setting.)

Sven and Ole’s Books

Attn: Sven Eelma
2 North Minnesota Street
New Ulm, MN 56073
507-354-6421

www.svenandolesbooks.com (*New and used books, with procurement service.*)

The only structures remaining in New Ulm from before “The U.S.-Dakota War of 1862:”

1. **The Friedrich Kiesling house** 220 North Minnesota
It is the best preserved of all and is currently unused. On the front yard is a historic marker telling the home’s story and a second marker telling about Mr. Kiesling, as well as a full-size plastic profile of Mr. Kiesling. During the War, the house was full of straw ready to be burned by the settlers if the Indians took the town.

2. **The Frederick Forster building** 117 North Broadway
The original brick was stuccoed over and until recently housed an antique store. There is evidence of bullet marks from the War on the north side, behind the smoked glass. Three different interpretive markers are on the site, which are themselves studies in historical interpretation!

3. **The August Schell Brewery** 1860 Schell Road
The original building from 1860 is used now as their office and it’s in good shape externally.

4. **The Frank Erd building** 108 North Minnesota
It has undergone a variety of changes, including stuccoing over the beautiful brickwork. Read the historic plaque on it describing how the women and children gathered in here during the War. Today it is an accounting business, “Larson, Allen.”

5. **The Weddendorf home** 826 North Minnesota
Still a private home with an addition over the years. Apparently the basement has evidence of its age. There’s a nice story about its role in the Uprising in Louis Fritsche’s book!

6. **The Schalk house** 822 North State
A private home but with many additions and moved from its original site on 3rd North and Minnesota where it was during the War.
(As of June, 2008 the metal and granite marker on the front yard was taken down to make it more palatable to potential buyers. It described the historic part of the house and may be reinstalled.)

7. **The Waraju Distillery** Harman Park, 2nd North and Garden Streets
Only the chimney remains of this former liquor distillery that was burned in the War.
An interpretive marker is on the site.

All of these sites are described, with photos, on a plaque located on the front yard of the Museum (as of May, 2012.)