



RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY

Ramsey County Historical Society
"History close to home"
Landmark Center, 75 W. 5th St.
St. Paul, MN 55102

Special
125th City
130th County
Birthday
Anniversary
Issue

Volume 15
Number 1



Ramsey County History

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ON THE COVER: Steamboats tie up at St. Paul's Lower Levee at the foot of Jackson Street in 1859. Two of them were owned by Louis Robert: the "Time and Tide" and the "Jeannette Roberts," second from right. An "s" was added in anglicizing the name.

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Red River Ox Carts at Cheritree and Farwell's Hardware Store on Third Street, 1857.

Murders Mar the Dawning of 1854

Editor's Note: Nowhere is the record of a city's history more immediate or livelier than in the contemporary accounts published in the newspapers of the period. This year of 1979 marks the 125th anniversary of the chartering of the City of St. Paul in 1854, and the 130th anniversary of the creation of Ramsey County in 1849, the year Minnesota became a territory. For this anniversary issue of Ramsey County History, the author has surveyed the newspapers for 1854 and drawn from their pages their own accounts of some of the events of that year.

By Robert Orr Baker

The year 1854 opened under the pall cast by the first premeditated murders in the history of St. Paul and of Ramsey County.

Under a baldly-stated headline, "Foul Murder," the *Minnesota Pioneer* told the dreadful story in its issue of January 5:

"On Monday night the 26th two of our citizens were assaulted near the corner of Roberts and Fifth Streets, by some person or persons who approached them from behind

and felled them to the earth with a sling shot. Both men had their skulls fractured in several places by the blows, from the effect of which they have since died. Mr. John Clark, one of the wounded men, expired on Friday morning the 30th and Mr. Phillip Hall, the other one, Wednesday morning, the 5th.

"This is the first case of premeditated murder that has occurred in our city, and the wanton barbarity of the act shows that we have among us some of the most depraved of our race."

The event of course brought the clergymen of the city to their pulpits. Preaching to his First Presbyterian Church congregation and to all others who chose to hear him, the Reverend Edward Duffield Neill dwelt upon "the sad occurrences which have recently

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taken place, [and set forth] in forcible terms the necessity for a stronger moral power to preserve our city from the danger and disgrace which seems to await it."

Over in the Baptist Church, the Reverend Mr. Cressey preached to his own full house on "the dire effects of evil associations." According to the *Pioneer*, he "appealed with much earnestness to young men to shun the haunts of vice and dissipation. The theatre, the rum shop, the gambling houses and the houses of ill fame were the themes which he addressed himself to the audience, depicting in glowing colors the ultimate end of those who patronize these infernal pits of all that is loathsome and polluting."

Such was the effect of the murders on the community that the same issue of the *Pioneer* carried the following advertisement:

PUBLIC MEETING

There will be a meeting of the friends of law and order Friday evening, January 6, at 6 1-2 o'clock, at the Court House, to make enquiries into the late murders committed in our streets.

Signed,
MANY CITIZENS.

PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT perhaps served as a diversion from this melancholy event. On the evening of January 5 City Hall was comfortably filled by an "intelligent and appreciative audience" gathered to hear the

An 1851 daguerrotype of St. Paul with scratches across the metal. The log house, right, stands on the northeast corner of Third and Robert streets. Next to it is a confectionary and tobacco shop. The frame building houses a bookstore. In the distance is First Baptist Church on what is now Mears Park.

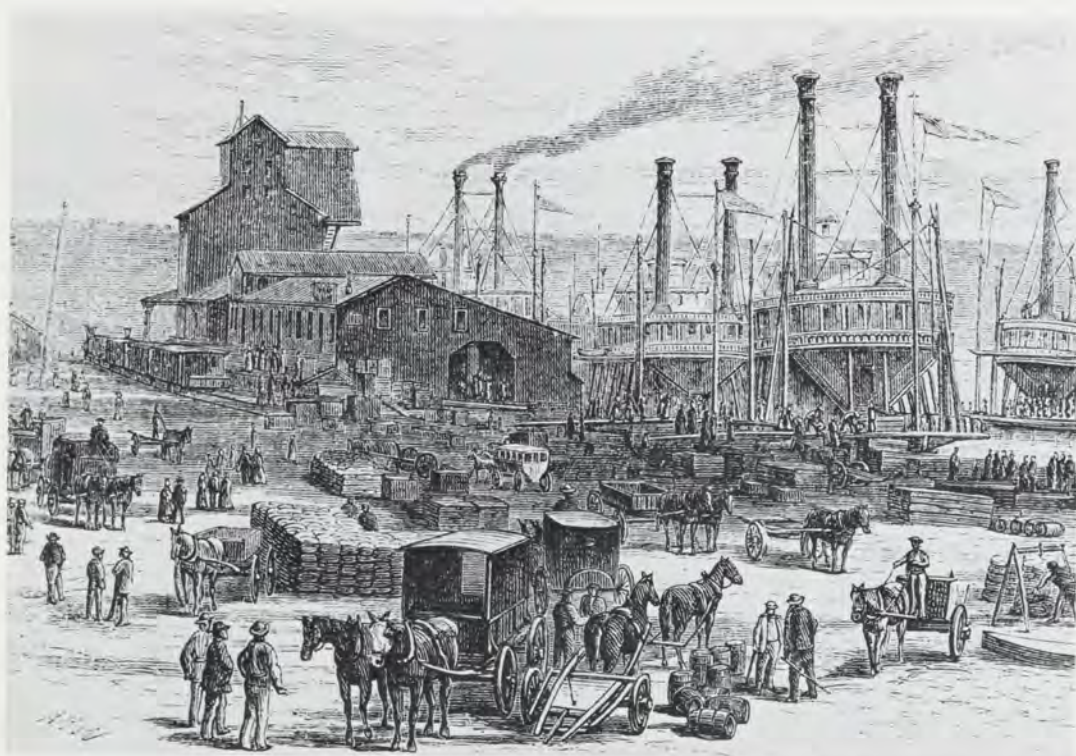


Edward Duffield Neill

amateur musicians who composed the Philharmonic Society. The concert was a benefit for a Professor Collins, who "having been at great expense in preparing to give musical instruction during the winter and having failed in procuring a class," was the presumably grateful recipient of the proceeds.

The territorial legislature was in session in January of 1854. No doubt to encourage citizen participation in the legislative process, Willoughby and Powers announced that they would "run a line of Four Horse omnibus between the principal Hotels and the Capitol during the session."





A steel engraving of the bustling Lower Landing as it looked in 1853 when steamboat travel on the Upper Mississippi was beginning to boom.

The governor, Willis A. Gorman, in his message, called the attention of lawmakers to "the propriety of considering the best means to organize a few independent companies of militia." Two or three companies would have a salutary influence upon the Indian population of the Territory, he suggested, and St. Paul would no doubt participate.

Dr. David Day, a resident since 1849, gave notice to his legislative colleagues that he intended to introduce a bill granting a city charter to the town of St. Paul. This proposal inspired editorial comment from the *Minnesota Pioneer*: "We cannot disguise the fact that the affairs of our corporation, under the present charter, have been most woefully neglected, to use the mildest expression we can on the subject."

COUNTY GOVERNMENT, on the other hand, had been functioning for five years, ever since 1849 when Ramsey County and eight other counties were created by the territorial legislature. St. Paul was designated the county seat and incorporated as a town on November 1, 1849. Three weeks later the first election of county officers took place and a register of deeds, a sheriff, a treasurer, three county commissioners, and a probate judge were all elected.

A jail, the first in Minnesota except for the lock-up at Fort Snelling, was built — it was a

miserable log structure — and Dr. Day published a notice offering \$10 to anyone who devised a plan for a courthouse. There being little competition, Day himself won his own premium and the courthouse was completed in 1851. The first system of public schools also was organized by the county's officials and a zealous and adventurous young woman named Harriet Bishop hired as teacher.

With the Mississippi frozen solid in 1854 and the community isolated for the winter, legislators and the city's residents had little news from the outside world. James Crawford Burbank, the local expressman, had been detained by ice for five days, but he now had arrived in St. Paul with a full load of express items from Galena, Illinois, and announced he would be leaving the next day for another trip. Burbank expressed the thought that travel would be good because of the recent snow fall. His customers were informed that he intended to make the trip to Galena every three weeks.

WINTER ARRANGEMENTS for their stage line for passengers and packages were advertised by Jesse M. Ayres & Co., with departure "from St. Paul on Monday at 9 a.m. arriving at Shakopee the same evening.



Leaving Henderson Wednesday morning, for the Upper Minnesota [River]. Leaves Mankato for Fort Ridgley Thursday morning and returns to St. Paul Saturday evening." Thus, a round trip of six days.

One of the most important issues in this frontier community was the availability of alcoholic beverages. To deal with this always vexing problem a temperance meeting was called at the Court House, where a large and enthusiastic crowd convened "for the purpose of giving an expression of opinion in reference to the bill now before the Legislature of the Territory for the suppression of the traffic in intoxicating drinks."

St. Paul and its businesses were prospering. The population in 1854 was 4,000, but new settlers arrived weekly and the four daily newspapers continually set forth the great advantages the town and the Territory pos-

Old Third Street, now Kellogg Boulevard. Large building is the Bernheimer Block, built in 1859. It was the oldest section of the Tilden Produce plant. Some of the building remains today, incorporated into the new YWCA. Armory Hall, where the Pioneer Guard enlisted in the Civil War, was on the third floor, and the scene, also, of parties, balls, plays, even high-wheel bike demonstrations.

sessed for the immigrant. Borup and Oakes, the first bankers in the Minnesota Territory, reported a 400 per cent increase in their operations over the previous year. St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Company, founded the previous year, had "prospects that were very flattering for the receipts in one month were more than was anticipated for one year." In May, 1854, Parker Paine, whose banking interests would eventually become the First National Bank of St. Paul, arrived with his family to reside in the city with the blessing of

the *Minnesotian* and its prediction that he "would prove a valuable acquisition to the solid men of St. Paul," which indeed he did.

HOPING to shake off the rigors of the Minnesota winter, the Irish population, on a windy St. Patrick's day, "threaded the streets in their gay regalia, with a band of music, and so disported themselves as to reflect upon the occasion as well as on their native and adopted country." Sixty of the sons of Erin took dinner at the St. Paul House (the 1854 version of Bob Gallivan's), where "wit, songs and speeches, with a plentiful supply of good things for the inner man, ended the festivities."

As if an augury of the future, in St. Paul's first election early in April all the city officers save one and the entire Board of Aldermen were Democrats. The bearded David Olmstead was elected mayor. So what else is new?

With ice long since out of the Mississippi and warm weather at hand, the *Daily Minnesotian* advocated public baths and suggested that someone found such an establishment, not only as "a source of great comfort to us all, but also for the wearied and dust-stained traveler," of whom there were many. The Mississippi at that time was clean enough to use for this purpose so the editorialist suggested that all the entrepreneur needed was a building.

PERHAPS THIS PLEA for individual cleanliness persuaded the City Council to adopt an ordinance creating a Board of Health — "not that any sickness of an alarming

character is prevailing among us, but owing to the fact that in the present filthy condition of many of our streets, vacant lots and back yards, we are liable to be overtaken by such a calamity at any moment."

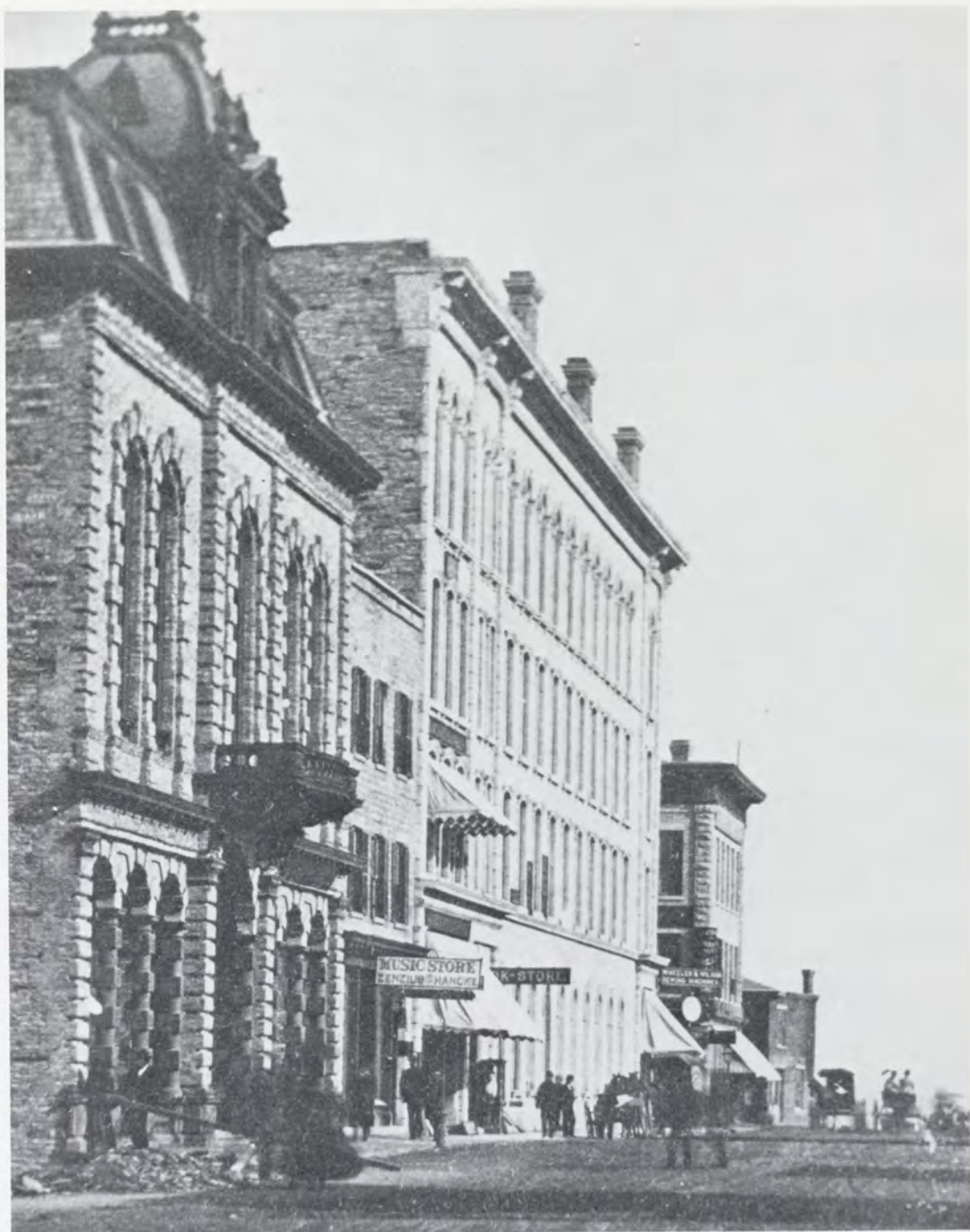
Harriet Bishop opened her school for the summer term with tuition from \$3 to \$5. The Fashionable Dancing Academy, under the direction of Prof. De Gray Bennie, advertised for students to whom he would give instruction "in the theory and rudiments of this elegant accomplishment and most requisite branch of refinement and education."

The *Daily Minnesotian* paused on June 15 to editorialize on the city's prospects. To reassure its citizens and to advertise St. Paul, the *Minnesotian* quoted from the *Metropolitan*, "a newspaper now published in Washington City":

"The capital of Minnesota Territory, although unheard and unknown of six years ago, is now attracting the attention of the merchant, the manufacturer, the capitalist, and the speculator... The future of St. Paul can be easily foretold, situated as it is at the head of navigation on the Mississippi, it must command the trade of the whole country north and northwest of it. The Minnesota

The St. Paul House built by Jacob W. Bass at Third and Jackson streets in 1849. Then it was the only public house in town. A popular community gathering place, it expanded down the block and took on a new name, the Merchants Hotel.





River flowing into the Mississippi six miles above St. Paul is navigable one hundred and fifty miles, but not for the large class of boats that reach St. Paul.

"St. Paul must then be the point of transshipment for the future thousands who are to people the magnificent valley of the Minnesota. Is it difficult then to predict that in ten years it will be the largest city on the Mississippi north of St. Louis?"

The Opera House, left, built in 1866 on the east side of Wabasha. Beyond it on the corner of Third and Wabasha is the McQuillan building, the site today of the Radisson Hotel. Across Third Street is Ingersoll Hall on Bridge Square.

The arrival of the sternwheeler, the "Galena", two days later must have punctured this glittering bubble. Nine passengers were deathly ill with the much-dreaded cholera.

"A CHANGE OF DIET, together with an immoderate use of stimulants, were the causes that led to their attack," the *Daily Pioneer* reported reassuringly. "One of the patients when we were at the levee, was lying in a canoe on shore, enveloped in blankets, surrounded by a number who seemed to be endeavoring by all the means in their power, to resuscitate the invalid who was just sinking into a state of insensibility to pain, which usually precedes dissolution in cases where the patient is prostrated by the disease. We entertain no fears that it will prevail here as an epidemic. But in case it should visit us, we advise our readers, to diet sparingly, and above all things not to give way to unnecessary and groundless fears."

"Dr. A. Sergeant of Meadville, Pa. one of the patients landed from the Galena, died Saturday morning at nine o'clock at Dr. Goodrich's office in this city, whither he had been conveyed. His family resides in Meadville, Pa. As we write his remains are being enclosed in a zinc coffin and immersed in alcohol, for conveyance to his former home."

Not surprisingly, the Oakland Cemetery Association had been established and was flourishing but its trustees were not about to let anyone in free. In an advertisement in the *Minnesotian*, the Executive Committee served notice that if persons who had buried friends there without purchasing lots did not come forward and pay for them, the deceased would be exhumed and removed to a common burial ground in the cemetery.

THIRTY-TWO DAYS after leaving Traverse des Sioux a Red River Ox Cart train of 187 carts laden with furs arrived in the city late in July. The drivers would reload their carts with supplies to carry back with them for the ensuing year, and they would find that the St. Paul markets had livestock for sale: "Beef on foot, 8 cents per lb. Cows, \$30 & \$50. Work Oxen from \$90 & \$150 per yoke." "On foot" was literal. Live animals were purchased, driven back along the trail, and butchered as needed. So much for refrigeration.

Fresh meat was advertized also: "Retail Beef, 8c & 12c. Mutton, 10c. & 12. Pork, 17½. Veal, 12½, Chickens \$3.20 per dozen."

General grocery provision were to be had at: "Pork, \$17.50 & \$18.00 per bbl. Hams, 11c. lb., Lard 12½c., Flour Superfine, \$6.25 extra, \$7.00 per barrel. Corn meal 75c. Potatoes 30 & 35 [cents per] bushel. Butter, 154c. & 25c. per lb. Cheese 12½c. lb. Eggs 15c. doz. Oats 45c. Corn 70c. & 75c. and Barley 65c."

In the midst of these concerns over such mundane matters, the editor of the *Pioneer*, ever alert to international events, excited the minds of his readers with a stirring account of the battle of Balaclava and the charge of the Light Brigade.

"It seems that the charge of the cavalry that precipitated so many into certain destruction was the result of a mistake, or at least, a misconception of orders arising from the esprit de corps that induced the cavalry to attempt some brilliant exploit to retrieve the secondary part they played in the battle of Alma. In short, misconstruing an order from the Commander-in-Chief, conveyed by Captain Nolan, Lords Lucan and Cardigan rode the light horse over a plain a mile and a half in length, and exposed to a cross fire, full at a Russian battery of 30 guns. The attempt was madness and the result destruction."

ALSO CONCERNED with the fate of Israel, as we are today, the *Pioneer's* editor quotes a unique solution then in circulation, under the heading of "Palestine":

"For nearly two centuries has the Hebrew race been scattered, persecuted, and despised. Scriptural prophecy, to the letter, has been fulfilled. Through suffering and sorrow, they have remained true to the faith of Abraham. The day of their redemption manifestly draws

John R. Irvine



nigh. It will not come by conquest, and the charge of arms, but by the peaceful intervention of money and diplomatic skill. What the Crusaders failed to do, the wealth of a millionaire may accomplish. Turkey is in a serious quandary. Friends or enemies will not save, and are sure to destroy her. It is said that Rothschild has offered her a loan, provided a mortgage was given on Palestine. This proposition will probably be accepted. The mortgage will be foreclosed, and the Holy Land again be inhabited by Jews. We may expect the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and the assembling from all quarters of the earth, of the chosen people to go up and inhabit the land of Canaan, made sacred by the sepulchres of their forefathers."

How fleeting was the fame of presidents in that era can be seen in the death of President Millard Fillmore's half brother, C.D. Fillmore who had arrived in St. Paul in 1852. His death was due to "dysentery, in its most malignant type." No mention is made of his famous half-brother. C.D. Fillmore is extolled as a prominent and enterprising citizen taking an active part in all public and private enterprises "calculated to advance the interests of St. Paul and Minnesota."

Despite the heat of August J.R. Irvine was advertising "IRVINE HALL"

The above large and spacious hall is in the attic story of the new and commodious warehouse recently erected by J.R. Irvine, at the Upper Levee. Its length being 80 feet by 24 wide. It is high, airy well finished and easy of access, and will now be let for Concerts, Exhibitions, Balls, Public Assemblies, &c., on reasonable terms. Apply to

J.R. IRVINE & CO.

THE LIFE OF THE workingman could be perilous on the edge of the frontier, as we see in a newspaper account of the building of Central Presbyterian Church. "While workmen were placing the center-piece of stucco work, weighing one thousand pounds, it fell, breaking the scaffolding and precipitating the workmen to the floor. Fortunately no one was seriously injured."

Eventually the church was dedicated:

"To the untiring exertions of their Pastor, Rev. Mr. Riheldaffer, ever since he has been among them, the members of his congregation are indebted for the event consummated yesterday — the dedication of their new and beautiful Church to Divine Worship. It affords us a pleasure to mark the onward progress of a man, Divine or layman, through difficulties, and surely those he has been

called on to surmount were of no ordinary character.

"When he came among us there were few of his faith in St. Paul; and they with few exceptions, of limited means. Relying for help and strength upon 'Him that sent him' he was not discouraged. Week after week would he preach the Word to a meagre congregation and by example as well as by precept, teach the beauties of the faith he professed. In 1852 he visited those of his belief in the States and procured assistance to build a church, and yesterday had the pleasure of dedicating as beautiful an edifice to the service of God as there is in the city. His congregation is rapidly increasing, and he enjoys the good will of all saint and sinner, for his modest demeanor, his unaffected manners and unvarying kindnesses cannot help but convince all of his sincerity. We learn that the Dedication sermon, as all had a right to expect from Mr. Riheldaffer, was eloquent and delivered with power."

The cosmopolitan atmosphere for which St. Paul is well-known today was not lacking then. The following notice appeared in the September 4, 1854, issue of the *Daily Pioneer*.

"THE YOUNG LADIES desiring to join the French Class which has been started by a French Lady at the Rice House, are invited to call immediately at that place between 10 and 11 o'clock A.M. on Tuesday, Thursdays and Saturdays."

The early French settlers of the county and the city were conscious of the intrusion of other groups, and in particular the colorful and irrepressible Irish. On September 21, the *Daily Minnesotian* quotes the editor of the *Irish American* who exhorts his fellow citizens of Irish birth, "1. To vote ever and consider all political questions as Americans purely and not as Irishmen; 2. To be circumspect and inoffensive at the polls, browbeating or otherwise giving just cause of offense to none; and 3. To abstain utterly and scrupulously from all intoxicating beverages on the day of election."

He also warns them to "avoid all porterhouse, bar room and street squabbles and collisions," and to studiously avoid street preachers, "to hear whom if you go, you will most assuredly get irritated and insulted," and to remember that, "as citizens or inhabitants

(Text continued on Page 14)



First Presbyterian Church faces the river on Third and St. Peter. The small building, lower center, is a feed store at Fourth and Wabasha, the Lowry location today, and the site of the city-county courthouse is a vacant lot piled with stone and lumber.

of these United States, common modesty and delicacy should operate to prevent us from bringing ourselves, by brawls or otherwise prominently or notoriously before the public."

Photography was in its infancy in St. Paul, as elsewhere at this time. Whitney's Gallery struck a typical 1850's chord with its Biblical allusions and its amusingly lugubrious approach.

There is a reaper whose name is Death, and since no one can tell when he will thrust his sickle and cut us off from life, now is the time to have your Picture taken at Whitney's Gallery — where as good a Daguerreotype can be procured as at any other establishment in the World. It is a fact conceded by all that for beauty of finish, and life-like expression, his prices are unsurpassed. Always on hand, a good assortment of Locketts and Pins plain and Fancy Cases. Call and see.

'That thou doest, do quickly.'

The city was not without a variety of intellectual and cultural activities, as seen in the advertisement for:

DRAMATIC READINGS

Scenes from

SHAKESPEARE, SHERIDAN, AND

Other English Poets.

At the Court House, By Mrs. Ellet,
on Tuesday evening, 7½ o'clock.

Another recreational element disrupted the peace on their Sundays:

"FIGHTS ON SUNDAY are becoming entirely of too frequent occurrence," the

Pioneer's editor declared, "and it behooves every good citizen to lend a helping hand to our efficient Marshall in preserving the quiet of the city. It is impossible for him to be all over the city at once, and if our citizens would do as indicated, St. Paul might continue to hold the good name for peace and quiet she so enjoys."

He also was worried about the forthcoming winter and in another editorial he initiated the action that would procure adequate facilities to fight the terrifying and destructive fires that with monotonous regularity wiped out entire sections of the city:

"Inasmuch as winter is at hand, would it not be well for our citizens to see to it, that before navigation closes, we procure a good fire engine, with the necessary hose, in order to guard against fire. Heretofore, St. Paul has been fortunate in rarely and lightly visited by the devouring element. But this is no reason why we should not be prepared to resist its attacks hereafter. Our city is now more compact than it has ever been, and the buildings being chiefly of wood, were a fire to break out, the destruction of property would be great. We venture the assertion that there is not a town in the United States of half the size of our city that has not a well organized fire

department — and yet our citizens rest indolently, without taking any precaution against the inroads of destructive fires.

“The City Council last spring passed an Ordinance creating fire limits within the city. This was well enough, and would have been of some avail, had not the same Board, at a subsequent meeting repealed the act they had previously passed. It is to be hoped that our property holders, and all others interested, will at once, arouse and see to the procurement of the necessary apparatus and thorough organizing of an energetic and efficient Fire Department. There is no time to lose. In five or six weeks the river will be closed, and then, it will be too late.”

St. Paul's first institution of higher learning, the College of St. Paul, founded by Edward Duffield Neill, opened for business on the first floor of the Baldwin School. Tuition for a term of ten weeks was \$3. Latin and Greek was offered for \$2 more, and an additional dollar was charged for fuel during the winter term.

THE ENORMITY of the immigration problem can be seen in the newspaper accounts of more than 1,500 passengers arriving within one week. The “Galena,”

alone, arrived with more than 500, provoking the following article in the October 20 issue of the *Pioneer*:

“[The ‘Galena’s’] freight list was also full, showing no diminution in trade since the opening of navigation. It is the intention of the Packet Company to put the Royal Arch on the line, to supply the place of the Nominee. Passengers who arrived in the city by the Galena state that the quantity of freight below, awaiting shipment to this city is immense; and it is confidently believed that, were the number of boats plying between this city and points below double their number, they would have plenty to do until the close of navigation.

“Capitalists of St. Paul, why will you let this golden harvest you might reap, be garnered by others? We sincerely trust that another season will see our city the possessor of a first rate line of boats.

“We are pleased to see that most of the passengers arriving in the Territory are good

The Sherman House at Fourth and Sibley, known as “the best two-dollar a day” house in the country. It was established by Marshall Sherman, St. Paul’s first Congressional Medal of Honor winner who distinguished himself at Gettysburg.





The City Hall with the Baldwin School next to it on the right. This is the site today of Landmark Center.

substantial farmers. Already those who have arrived this season more than double the number of any preceding year, and the rush is unabated. There is room and land for all."

But there was no room, at least not in St. Paul. The *Pioneer* reported that, "Yesterday morning six steamers lay at our levees, all having arrived on Sunday or Saturday night — bringing with them upwards of ten hundred passengers besides an immense amount of freight... Among the things now most needed in our city are a few more good hotels and boarding houses. On Sunday night after the arrival of the boats, nearly half of the passengers were compelled, for want of sleeping apartments, to return to the boats — all our hotels being crowded to running over. It is indispensable to the well being of our city that the strangers who are flowing hither, should have good accommodations. If our capitalists would erect but three or four good hotels they would not only find it pays well, but at the same time they would add materially to the wealth of the city."

"Even in St. Paul", the newspapers noted, "the headquarters of the lumbering interests in Minnesota, is suffering immensely by the

scarcity of the article for building purposes. We know of some twenty or thirty buildings that are stopped for want of it."

A rise in the Mississippi River in June had enabled most of the lumbermen to get their logs into the main streams and over St. Anthony Falls.

"The breaking of all the booms above has caused the logs to come in so fast that the boom pond was filled," the *Pioneer* reported. Even this boom gave way and a thousand logs broke out. While a number of rafts of both logs and sawed timber were ready to start down the river, the demand for logs along the river was so great that few rafts were expected to reach St. Louis.

A YEAR EARLIER, St. Paul's first Catholic Bishop, the Right Reverend Joseph Cretin, decided to build a hospital, and Henry M. Rice donated the land. In 1854 the hospital opened.

"We sauntered through this magnificent monument to the benevolence and Christianity of our Catholic fellow citizens," one visitor

reported, "and, were surprised to see it built with such great attention to the comfort and convenience of the sick and distressed, who may happen to be inmates of that building. For our part, we would prefer the pleasure that flows from a knowledge of the fact of being of real service to our fellow creatures than in all the high sounding praise received by the warrior, the statesman, or the divine, upon the battlefield, the forum or the pulpit. Bishop Cretin deserves and will receive the warm wishes of every right thinking man in the community. We learn that in the Spring there will be a reinforcement of the Sisters of Charity from below, when this edifice will be given into the hands of those self-denying votaries of the cross".

St. Joseph's Hospital, the first in Minnesota, still occupies Rice's gift of the original ten acres on Exchange Street.

The *Pioneer's* editor had not abandoned his crusade for fire-fighting equipment. Commenting on the suggestions for a night watch, he had this to say:

"Some of our citizens are mooted the propriety of establishing a night watch this winter for the purpose of guarding against

fires, &c. This is all very well, but had they the past season procured a couple of good fire engines, with sufficient hose, it would have been of more practical benefit to them than the employment of fifty watchmen, and the expense would have been no greater."

OUR PRESENT CONCERN for oil, gas, electricity has an interesting parallel in 1854 when the citizen's interest was in the whale oil advertized for sale by the enterprising J.R. Irvine.

LIGHT LIGHT.

Just received 20 Bbls.

Extra Refined bleached Whale Oil.

A fine article for winter use, for sale at
J.R. IRVINE & Co.

Upper Landing.

If the quantity advertised was St. Paul's allocation for the winter of 1854-55, that was all there was. With the river frozen over, new supplies could not be made until spring. This was seven years before the discovery of

(Continued on Page 19)

Dog train just in from Pembina, photographed at Seven Corners. Behind drivers Tarbell and Campbell is House of Hope Presbyterian Church's first building. Houses, including the Haupt-Smith residence (see page 18), line Summit Avenue, background.







Some houses dating from St. Paul's early years still remain. The William R. Marshall house (left, above) on Irvine Park is being restored today, and the Haupt-Smith house (left, below) still stands on Summit. So does William Dahl's little house (right, below) at Thirteenth and Jackson. Long-since vanished, the mansion of John S. Prince at Eighth and Lafayette (above) was one of the elegant residences that once clustered in Lowertown.

petroleum and its by-product, kerosene, in Titusville, Pennsylvania.

An ethnically-conscious community learned what some of its inhabitants were planning for winter.

"We are pleased to hear," the *Pioneer* announced on November 8, "that our German fellow citizens are about establishing, in connection with their Literary and Reading Society, a singing club, in which to while away the long winter evenings. As a class, there is no better musical talent in the world than that of the Germans, and being of very social dispositions, we are gratified that they have selected this innocent amusement to 'drive dull care away'."

The crusade for fire-fighting equipment by the editor of the *Pioneer* finally bore fruit: "The Committee appointed to solicit donations from our citizens for the purpose of



starting a Hook and Ladder Company will call upon them today," the newspaper announced. "We trust their call will be promptly and cheerfully responded to. As St. Paul now is, should a fire occur, we have no means for its extinguishment and it is the duty of every citizen to contribute to the support of a Fire Department to the extent of his ability. Next year we hope to see efficient measures taken to procure engines, hose, &c. so that when fires do occur, the means will be at hand for their speedy subjugation."



St. Paul's Market House, built in the early 1880s on Seventh street, between Wabasha and St. Peter. It replaced the earlier Market House of the 1850s where Sally St. Clair's variety theater played.

NOT TO BE OUTDONE by the Germans and their literary and singing clubs, or perhaps seeking more active interests, the city's young men planned for a winter social season that would relieve the strains and frustrations caused by isolation, intense cold, and the freezing of the river. Announcing that they were, "GLAD TO HEAR IT," the papers said, "We understand that it is contemplated

Henry M. Rice



by some of our city beaux to get up a series of balls, one for each week during the coming winter. There is something about these social gatherings we have always liked and when properly managed, in our opinion, that they can be conducive of nothing but good."

The achievements of the sons of two well-known Irish families were proudly chronicled in another news item on "St. Paul boys in Rome: Our townsmen, Messrs. Jno. O'Gorman and Richard Ireland, each have a son in Rome preparing for the ministry. Recent letters state that these lads, out of classes of 40 each, are No. 1 in scholarship. Thus demonstrating that Minnesota is not only the climate for fruits and vegetables — but also for brains.

Back home in St. Paul "Father McManus... pronounced the first sermon in the Irish language ever delivered in Minnesota, at the Catholic chapel. It is spoken of by competent judges as a masterly effort."

Not to be outdone, the Reverend S. Anderson, of the Scandinavian Church, conducted morning and evening services in the "Scandinavian language."



The Market Street Methodist Church on Market, across from Rice Park. This is the parking lot of the St. Paul Hotel today.

BUSINESS COULD NOT come to a complete halt with the freezing of the Mississippi. Communication down-river had to be kept open, and James C. Burbank placed the following advertisement in the November 22 *Daily Minnesotian*:

EXPRESS NOTICE

On Monday the 27th Inst. MR. BURBANK will leave for Galena, the first trip over-land Express this season. Messengers will be dispatched weekly during the close of navigation. Office at the corner of Bench and Third Streets, opposite Post Office.

From this humble beginning Burbank built a network of stage and coach roads throughout the Northwest.

As part of the 1854 version of the concern for fuel and for holding its costs down, "the City Council at their meeting on Tuesday evening passed an ordinance regulating the measurement and sale of Fire Wood within the city limits. This is an act of simple justice to the pockets of the citizens, which has been urged by all the newspapers for some weeks, and by the citizens in their private capacity. It will be further noticed that John M. Lamb has been appointed Inspector and measurer of wood, and we trust he will be obeyed and respected accordingly. The Council have

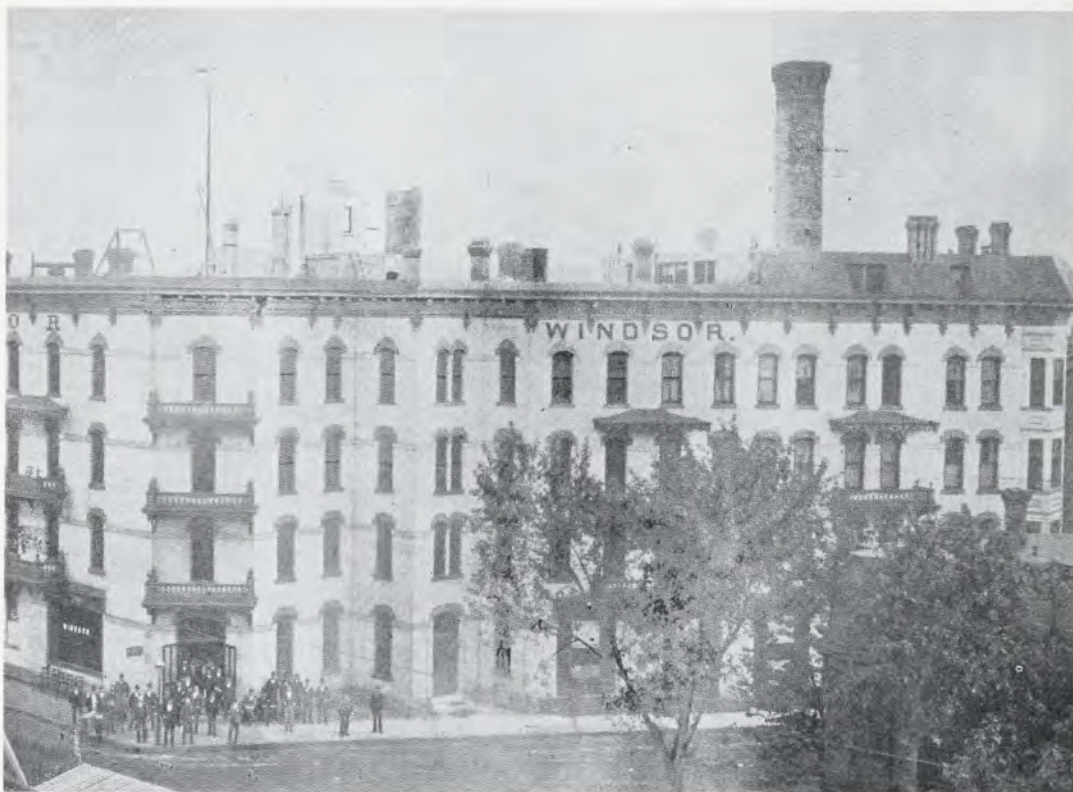
done nothing since its existence of more importance to the citizens generally than this."

Obviously recognizing St. Paul as a trade center, the Hudson's Bay Company appointed William Dahl as its general agent for Minnesota. "This is a good appointment," the *Daily Pioneer* declared, "and from his known energy he will give satisfaction to those who favor him with their confidence."

The home built by William Dahl on the northern fringe of the city would become the last remaining residence in Lowertown's once fine residential district.

As the year 1854 opened on a somber note, so it closed on a happy one, full of excitement over what apparently would be the "gayest winter ever passed in Minnesota."

"On the 27th inst. that whole souled caterer to the appetites of his guests, James Bruce, gives a Masonic Ball," the *Daily Pioneer* announced on December 20. "He is worthy and well qualified, and from what he tells us, we doubt not he will be duly and truly prepared to receive all who may favor him with their presence, All whether of the Fraternity or not, will be welcome.



The Fifth and Wabasha corner of the Windsor Hotel which earlier occupied the site of the present St. Paul Hotel.

"The German Reading Society of this city will give one of their unique entertainments, a waltzing party at the City Hall, on the 5th of January. The object being to procure a library, is highly meritorious, and we doubt not that many of our citizens will give them the meed of encouragement they deserve.

"On Tuesday evening the ladies of the 1st Presbyterian Church have an entertainment at the Baldwin School House; and the following evening the ladies of the Baptist Church wish to see their friends at City Hall."

By the end of 1854, Saint Paul had become an important trading center and the Board of Trade was organized. One of its purposes would be "the centralization of trade to St. Paul, aiding in the establishment of steamboat lines, and the opening of good roads, to which access to the city can be had. Such being the objects and aims of this organization seeking to gather strength from the united efforts of the business men of this community and having in view the present as well as the future of our city and Territory, it commends itself to the interests of all, and is but one of the steps which we hope to see taken, in order to advance the true interests of the City of Saint Paul and the Territory of Minnesota."

And in recognition of its newly-found status as a city, a subscription was soon under

way to procure funds for that universal symbol of civic enterprise and progress, the town clock, which would be installed the following year.

Willis A. Gorman, governor of the Territory, proclaimed December 21 as Thanksgiving Day and "requested all persons to abstain from their usual occupations on that day, and manifest in some fit way their obligations to the Great Ruler of the Universe for his goodness to us as a people individually and collectively."

Indeed, there was much for which the city could be thankful. Within the past twelve months St. Paul had had its First City Election, First Railroad Excursion, the First Daily Papers, First Incorporation of the City, First Election of the Mayor, First Organization of the Police Force, First Board of Trade, First Hook and Ladder Company, First Meeting of the Legislature in the Capitol, First Incorporation of the Masons, First Bridge Company, First Baker, First Wagon Maker, First Railroad Ticket Agent, and First Dress Making establishment. The frontier was receding before on-rushing civilization.



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THE GIBBS HOUSE

at 2097 West Larpenteur Avenue, Falcon Heights, is owned and maintained by the Ramsey County Historical Society as a restored farm house of the mid-nineteenth century period.

The Ramsey County Historical Society was founded in 1949. Its chief function is to collect and preserve the history of the city and the county and share that history with the people who live here. The Society is the county's historian. It preserves those things from the past that are the community's treasures — its written records through the Society's library; its historic sites through establishment of the Irvine Park Historic District and its successful efforts to help prevent destruction of the Old Federal Courts Building, now Landmark Center. It shares these records through the publishing of its magazine, brochures, pamphlets, and prints; through conducting historic sites tours of the city, teaching classes, producing exhibits on the history of the city, and maintaining its museum on rural county history. The Gibbs Farm Museum, the oldest remaining farm home in Ramsey County, was acquired by the Society in 1949 and opened to the public in 1954 as a museum which would depict the way of life of an early Minnesota settler. In 1966 the Society moved onto the property a one-room rural country schoolhouse dating from the 1870s. Now restored to the period of the late 1890s, the school is used for classes, meetings, and as the center for a summer schoolhouse program for children.

Society headquarters are located in Landmark Center, an historic Richardsonian Romanesque structure in downtown St. Paul, where it maintains the center's only permanent exhibit, a history of the building during the seventy-five years it was the federal government's headquarters in St. Paul.

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