

# RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY



**FALL/WINTER  
1978**

**Volume 14  
Number 1**



# Ramsey County History

Published by the  
RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Editor: Virginia Brainard Kunz

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*ON THE COVER: Derham Hall, the first building on the College of St. Catherine campus, photographed in 1905.*

*ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Pictures on pages 3-18 were loaned to the Society by the College of St. Catherine. The drawing on page 19 was given to the Society by the John B. Hilton family. The photograph on page 20 was loaned by James H. Skinner's granddaughter, Mrs. Paul Guenzel.*



The McHugh family home in Langdon, North Dakota, 1898.

## The Dynamic Sister Antonia And the College of St. Catherine

*By Sister Karen Kennelly*

In a magnanimous gesture that bespoke resignation to fate, if not overwhelming conviction, a spokesman for the people of Minnesota declared himself ready, in 1891, to welcome to the state a college for young women. The times demanded it, admitted the editor of the *Northwestern Chronicle*, and if there remained a serious "physiological question regarding the undeveloped and therefore uncomplicated state of the average woman's brain as compared with man's," still, it was

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best to accept the fact that the world had thrown open its doors to women; under such circumstances, was not an educated woman to be preferred to her uneducated sister? Were not the most highly educated "the free-est from silly sentimentality, the most even tempered, the most severely simple in their manner of life?" The education of the future would need to help women move into the spheres of business, of literature, of science, or art so lately open to them. Accordingly, the Sisters of St. Joseph, "well-known throughout the northwest for the admirable work they have done both in connection with charitable institutions and education," were to be congratulated on their plans to introduce in St. Paul a "new feature . . . , a regular collegiate department for young women who wish to pursue the more advanced studies."<sup>1</sup>

To establish such an institution was indeed an unusual undertaking in Minnesota in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Possibilities for women's education beyond high school were still limited; moreover, few

women were taking advantage of those that did exist. Only 109 women (an average of 5 per year) earned degrees from the University of Minnesota between 1869 and 1890, the first twenty-one years of its existence. Six of the nine private colleges functioning in the state by the end of the century accepted women but of these only Hamline University and Carleton were attracting women in significant numbers.<sup>2</sup> No single-sex institution had as yet been created for women, whereas there were three for men.

How Minnesota came to have not one but four colleges dedicated solely to the higher education of women by 1915 is a story of corporate woman-power in the form of Catholic religious communities, and of a handful of extraordinary individuals — Ellen Ireland, Anna McHugh, Matilda Tracy, and Mary Molloy, among others — whose unique talents gave concrete shape to the dreams of their sisters. The products of those dreams were the colleges of St. Benedict, St. Scholastica, St. Theresa and St. Catherine.<sup>3</sup>

The roots of the future College of St. Catherine went back to the landing at St. Paul of four Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Louis Missouri, in 1851, just two years after Minnesota became a territory and seven years before statehood.<sup>4</sup> In their long black habits, the women were a startling curiosity to some inhabitants of frontier St. Paul, but an extremely welcome sight to Bishop Joseph Cretin who had assumed responsibility for the newly-created diocese only nine months earlier. As bishop of a sprawling territory which included the present states of Minnesota and North and South Dakota as far west as the Missouri River, he was expected to minister to the spiritual needs of an estimated 25,000 Indians as well as to a scattered population of several thousand whites and the 20,000 immigrants, many from Catholic countries, who were expected to arrive in Minnesota in the coming months. With no schools to serve the Catholic population, Bishop Cretin anxiously sent desperate appeals to sources on both sides of the Atlantic for personnel and funds.

FIRST AMONG THOSE to respond to his appeals were the four sisters, three originally from France and speaking very little English. They arrived at St. Paul the night of November 2, 1851, and less than a week later they received their first pupil, Mary Ellen Rice, a boarding student.

Her father, the fur-trader and later United



Sister Antonia in 1908.

States senator, Henry M. Rice, brought along bed, bedding, and other bare necessities for her room in an old shed behind the former log church on Bench Street. Here the sisters ate, slept, and taught. The next month a second boarder, Major Abram Fridley's daughter, Mary, joined Miss Rice and the dozen or so day students who also had enrolled. Major Fridley, who had been appointed Indian agent for the Winnebago at Long Prairie, had met the sisters on the steamboat. This chance encounter no doubt encouraged him to leave his daughter with the sisters to be educated. Then, too, there were few other schools in the territory. "We had a well attended school, as it was the only (*sic*) one," Sister Frances Joseph Ivory recalled in 1894; the sisters, she added, "Had very happy times, yet some days we did not taste food, until night."<sup>5</sup>

As the sole American in the original group, Sister Frances Joseph went on to help with the establishment of St. Joseph Sisters in New York and Missouri. Meanwhile, the mother house in St. Louis continued to send women to help with the work of teaching begun at St. Joseph Academy, as the first school was soon named. Several sisters went north to Winnebago territory where the "School was grown up men and women," all Winnebago Indians. By 1853 the sisters had opened St. Anthony Mission in present-day Minneapolis and were

teaching thirty or forty boarders there; a second free school, in St. Paul, accommodated about thirty day students.

Young women from St. Paul soon joined the religious community formed by the 1851 band. Among them were Ellen Ireland and her cousin, Ellen Howard. The Irelands — Richard, Judith, and their six children, plus four orphaned children of Richard's sister, Anastasia Howard — had emigrated from Ireland to St. Paul six months after the arrival of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Within days of the Irelands' arrival, the two Ellens, then 10 years old, were enrolled in St. Joseph Academy. They went on to become the school's first graduates, the first entrants into the sisters' tiny St. Paul community, and, with Eliza Ireland, Ellen's younger sister, the nucleus of a dynamic group of religious educators in the new state of Minnesota.

THE MOST VIVID recollections of the nineteenth century academy, seemingly an unlikely forerunner of a college, come from sister Wilfrida (Kate) Hogan who described in a series of reminiscent letters her boarding school experiences in the 1870s. Her mother's ambition, Kate later recalled, was "to give her daughters a good education in the finishing

school sense. 'Polish' in [my mother's] judgment meant music, painting artificial fruit and flowers, birds in worsted work, and all kinds of needlework. To this might be added a study of Astronomy that in gazing at the stars at night we might be able to locate at least some of the constellations."<sup>6</sup> In actual fact, the curriculum exported to St. Paul from St. Louis went beyond plain sewing, needlework, and the three R's, to history, geography, Latin, vocal and instrumental music, mathematics, rhetoric, and the natural sciences, including botany, physics, chemistry, and astronomy. Classes were taught in both English and French.

Having visited her sister frequently at the Benedictine Boarding School in Shakopee and at St. Joseph's, Kate Hogan was a fairly sophisticated pupil by the time she arrived at the academy. Each visit to her sister had given her new insights into boarding life. However, her knowledge had its limits, for no boarder ever crossed the threshold of the sisters' living quarters: "Its mysteries were never fathomed and years passed without one of the girls getting a peep into that secret cloister or knowing just what the nuns did when they

A history class in Derham Hall.



were by themselves."

The mysteries of convent life which so intrigued Kate and her peers consisted of a well-ordered discipline of prayer and work. It was a way of life that remained unchanged for 100 years, then disappeared forever in the radical changes in convent life during the 1950s. The sisters generally rose at 5 a.m., the rising bell answered with as energetic an exchange of the monastic greeting "Benedicamus Domino, Deo Gratias" as could be managed at that hour. A short period of vocal prayer in chapel at 5:25 preceded a half-hour of silent meditation, after which all celebrated mass. Having thus reflected on the gospel message, and having shared in a common act of intercession, worship, and thanksgiving, the sisters ate breakfast together in silence. While one of them read aloud from the lives of the saints, others served those at table. Before going off to school, the sisters did work in the dining room and kitchen, sweeping, dusting, and caring for the needs of the boarders. A short period of prayer and reading followed the noon meal; all gathered again for the evening meal, preceded by another half-hour of meditation and the rosary. Everyone not otherwise occupied gathered after supper for an hour or so of conversation and whatever simple amusements struck their fancy. Night prayers ended the day at 9 p.m., after which a strict silence was observed. Highpoints of the liturgical year — Christmas, Easter, Pentecost — and important Saints' Days were occasions for more elaborate celebration of the mass, conversation at meals, and special food.

Those living in this manner had committed themselves to lives of poverty, chastity, and obedience: they promised before witnesses to hold all their possessions in common and to live in community with one another and in the service of their neighbor.

THE SISTERS' WAY of life seemed strange to people who had no personal acquaintance with them. For adult women to choose not to marry and raise families was a matter for particular concern and even mild resentment among frontier Minnesotans. "Just as if women were not already scarce enough for wives and mothers," complained the *St. Paul Daily Press* for September 12, 1872, "the Roman Catholics are building a nunnery [at Detroit Lakes]."

Fortunately for the cause of women's colleges, doubts as to the legitimacy of the religious life did not deter the women who followed Sister Seraphine (Ellen) Ireland and

#### Academic

THE Academic course consists of two sections: The Classical and the English Scientific. Students admitted to the Academic course may follow either one of these sections during the four years required for the completion of the course.

The Classical Languages, Mathematics, Sciences, History and English Literature constitute the program of studies in the Classical section. The English Scientific course is designed for those who wish to omit the study of Greek and Latin, and to devote special attention to the Sciences and Modern Languages.

Those who desire to perfect themselves in the French, German, Italian or Spanish language and literature will find competent instructors in those branches at St. Catherine's College.

#### Collegiate

ON completing the Academic course students are admitted into the Collegiate Department, in which they follow a comprehensive course of advanced studies.



Summary of curriculum in St. Catherine's introductory catalog, 1904.

her cousin into the St. Paul community. Drawn by the personal lives of the sisters and convinced that God meant them to take up this way of life, a small but steady number of women joined the pioneer group from year to year. By 1900 more than 300 women had entered the St. Paul community and committed themselves permanently to it. "The watchword" of the pioneer group, observed Sister Wilfrida, "was 'Progress.' Build, increase in number, spread out, and strive for the means of doing so. This we did, and we are still striving, it is now part of our life."<sup>8</sup>

Directing the work of the sisters in St. Paul for nearly half a century was Sister Seraphine whose unusual capacities as a teacher and administrator were recognized by the mother house in St. Louis. In 1882 she was appointed provincial supervisor in St. Paul, a position she retained for nearly forty years. In 1868 a younger sister, Eliza, who took the name of Sister St. John, had joined the community. Twenty-four years of age, she had graduated from the Academy and had taught in Minneapolis for several years before becoming a sister. Meanwhile, John Ireland, Ellen's senior by four years, had pioneered in the priesthood in Minnesota, much as the two Ellens had in the sisterhood. He had begun his seminary training in France a year and a half after the family settled in St. Paul. Ordained by Bishop Grace in the old St. Paul Cathedral in 1861, he moved on to the episcopacy, first as coadjutor

to Grace and ultimately as archbishop of St. Paul (1888). This brother, two sisters and a cousin formed a truly formidable dynasty, one that was nowhere more bold and successful in realizing its ambitions than in the advancement of Catholic education in general and women's education in particular.

SINCE WOMEN did nearly all of the teaching in parochial as well as public schools, Archbishop Ireland rightfully regarded women religious as crucial to his intentions of increasing a number of Catholic schools and making them the equal of public schools in teaching secular subjects and promoting American citizenship. Moreover, he had a healthy respect for his own sisters' abilities and for those of other women.

In a rhetorical flourish worthy of the occasion, the Sisters of St. Joseph's fiftieth jubilee in the state in 1901, Ireland declared that to the sisters' "hearts and hands we entrust the children of the Church, especially the daughters of the Church."<sup>9</sup> His further claim in this address that he was "a firm believer in the higher education of women" flew in the face of some of the hierarchy who had opposed admitting women to the new Catholic University of America when it was established in 1889, and who even had objected to the location of Trinity College for women several blocks away. Influenced by his col-

league, Bishop John Lancaster Spalding, Ireland discussed a college for women with Sister Seraphine as early as 1887, just two years after the diocese opened St. Paul Seminary for men.<sup>10</sup>

Financial reverses, rather than a lack of interest, delayed for more than a decade the plans for a college alluded to in the 1891 *Northwestern Chronicle*. Crop failures and the Panic of 1893 led to a quick reversal of fortunes for St. Joseph Academy. Its boarding students were to have provided a nucleus for the new college, but in 1895 enrollment declined to only thirty or thirty-five boarders, compared with more than a hundred a decade earlier. The sisters took to the streets peddling the Catholic Home Calendar to help pay community debts;<sup>11</sup> land acquired for the new college had to sold. After several years, improvement in Academy fortunes and two gestures by the archbishop revived the old plans; he assigned rights to a special edition of his essays, *The Church and Modern Society*, to the sisters for a college fund, and he advised a local wheat farmer, Hugh Derham, to designate the college as the recipient of a \$20,000 gift he was prepared to give to some worthy Catholic charity. The sisters again took to peddling, this time books in place of calendars; some \$60,000 was raised. This sum added to Derham's gift and a loan made it possible to break ground for the new school in 1903, at a site the archbishop had selected. Total building costs came to just under \$190,000.<sup>12</sup> In recognition of Hugh Derham's \$20,000 contribution, the sisters named the building Derham Hall after him.

An advance party of several sisters came out from St. Joseph Academy the day after Christmas, 1904, to put the four-story brick building in readiness for the staff and seventy boarders who were to transfer from the Academy after the first of the year.<sup>13</sup>

An initial *Announcement* or abbreviated catalog circulated in anticipation of a September, 1904, opening, had declared that "this new house of higher studies is the culmination of the labors and dreams of many years on the part of the Sisterhood of St. Joseph in St. Paul."<sup>14</sup> The generalities of the college description reflected the uncertainties which still marked the new institution: "On completing the Academic College preparatory course students are admitted into the Collegiate department, in which they follow a comprehensive course of advanced studies." As yet, the College of St. Catherine, so-named

Anna McHugh at 16.



at the archbishop's suggestion after the scholar-saint of Alexandria, was in actuality a small preparatory school with a handful of young women of varying ages and a largely undefined course of studies. A college worthy of the title still lay in the future.

THAT A STANDARD, four-year liberal arts college evolved from these uncertain beginnings as quickly as it did was largely due to the genius of Sister Antonia (Anna) McHugh. Twenty years younger than Sister Seraphine, she had first contacted the Sisters of St. Joseph at the age of 12 when her parents brought her from their home, in Langdon, North Dakota, to the Academy to receive religious instructions in preparation for her first communion. Born in Omaha, Nebraska, May 17, 1873, to Rose Welch and Patrick McHugh, Annie had an itinerant frontier childhood that involved a dozen moves in as many years.<sup>15</sup> Small wonder the Annie McHugh of later convent years traveled so unhesitatingly and with such self-confidence in the process of building a college.

After stays in Deadwood, Custer, and Grafton, Patrick McHugh came finally to Langdon where, over a period of eighteen years, the rest of his seven children were born in the substantial frame house he soon acquired. He won election to the territorial legislature, serving three terms in that body and four after statehood. He began a successful deeds and abstract business, and eventually served as mayor, bank director, and postmaster in the frontier town.<sup>16</sup>

Childhood experiences in the Dakotas, in the 1870s and 80s taught Annie to confront all manner of people and situations with curiosity rather than fear and to associate the idea of education with people, travel, and events, as much as with book learning and schools. She came, also, to conceive of a woman's work in an expansive way, not just in the religious precepts taught by her grandmother and mother but in their personal examples of courage and generosity.

Men, on the other hand, were a constant and ever-present influence in her childhood: the train conductors and brakemen passing through Deadwood; the miners boarding at her father's hotel; the men who did the heavy work there; her four younger brothers; her father's many friends and business partners; and, above all, Patrick McHugh himself.

BETWEEN ANNIE'S STAYS in boarding schools from age 12 to 16, Patrick McHugh took her with him on his business and political



Sister Antonia's father, Patrick McHugh.

travels. The years from 1885 to 1887 were filled with meetings, speeches, and correspondence, first to defeat rivals for the county seat and then to influence the Great Northern Railroad to extend its tracks seventy-five miles to Langdon. These McHugh victories suggest comparison with incidents such as the one in which daughter Annie, as Sister Antonia, delayed the crack "400" en route to Chicago from St. Paul in order to accommodate two sisters who had forgotten their tickets back at the college.<sup>17</sup>

It was Mrs. McHugh who had insisted on a convent education for Annie, a desire to which her husband acceded by taking Annie first to St. Joseph Academy in St. Paul, and then to the more accessible St. Mary's Academy in Winnipeg. A half-century later, one of her teachers at St. Mary's identified young Annie's outstanding traits rather predictably as "practical piety, application to study and generosity."<sup>18</sup> She noted also a certain "outspokenness which was proverbial among her companions; her frankness was of a nature to abash those who were not lovers of the truth." A genuine daughter of Irish immigrants, Annie also had impressed this former mentor with her national pride as an Irish-American. The teacher remembered the "enthusiasm, vehemence even" with which Annie gave vent to patriotic feelings. During a public entertainment, the enthusiasm of the





Rose McHugh, Sister Antonia's mother.

audience was so aroused by her expression and gestures as she recited "Erin go Bragh" (in which were often repeated "Raise up the Green, tear down the Red") that the applauding audience declared the young lady to be a born orator.

A photograph taken about this time shows an oval-faced girl wearing glasses, her thick brown hair arranged in a puff of curls above her forehead. Apart from some soberness induced by a photographer's studio, her expression bespeaks a self-possession and forthrightness that accord well with her high school teacher's recollections.

Annie emerged from her four years of boarding school accomplished in fine needlework, and with an excellent command of French and a lifetime love for art and music. She also had learned much more about her religion, and carried away fond memories of friends, teachers, and favorite books, especially Steele's *Fourteen Weeks in Botany* and her geology textbook. She also could say with perfect truth what M. Carey Thomas, a pioneering president of Bryn Mawr, was to remark referring to her own childhood in New England in the 1850s and 60s: "Throughout my girlhood I had never known a woman who had gone to college nor seen any one who had seen a woman who had gone to college."<sup>19</sup>

Unlike M. Carey Thomas, who also had probably never seen a nun during her youth,

Annie McHugh had been closely exposed to sisters, both Sisters of St. Joseph in St. Paul and Gray Nuns in Winnipeg, during her most impressionable years. The result of these contacts, and of the mysterious attractions which seem to accompany any significant vocational choice, was that when she returned home in the summer of 1889 she asked that she be allowed to join the Gray Nuns.

HER PARENTS HAD NOT foreseen this outcome of convent education. Her father was not unalterably opposed, but he persuaded her to stay home a year until the other children were a little older, especially since her mother was expecting their sixth child in November and needed Annie's help. But his seemingly contradictory decision to take his daughter with him that summer to the constitutional convention at Bismarck, and then on to Yellowstone in September, was perhaps not without ulterior motives on his part.

Despite the excitement of the trip, which she later called "the first big thrill of my life," the year's delay left Annie just as determined to enter the convent. The Gray Nuns, however, required a relatively large dowry of \$700. For this reason, she made inquiries of the Sisters of St. Joseph and they welcomed her into their novitiate, then located at St. Joseph Academy, on November 29, 1890.

Possessed of a better education than most of the twenty-two other women who entered the St. Joseph community the same year, Annie soon adapted herself to a routine which included teaching both the other novices and the academy girls as well as the usual religious instructions and exercises of the novitiate. The life was hard but satisfying. Seemingly never in serious doubt about the rightness of her decision, Annie, who took the name of Sister Antonia, made her permanent vows in 1898.

A VISIT HOME to Langdon the summer of 1898, after an absence of nearly eight years, enabled her to get re-acquainted with her brothers and sister, Robert, Frank, John, and Roderick, aged 20, 14, 12, and 9 respectively, and little Rose, born the fall Annie left for St. Paul. A family portrait taken on this occasion captures the mood of a peaceful family scene. It was the last time they would all be together. Within a few years a series of family tragedies shattered the Langdon household and left Sister Antonia with an acute sense of family responsibility which remained with her the rest of her life. First her father died suddenly in 1902 at the age of 56. This loss,

together with a streetcar mishap that befell Mrs. McHugh shortly afterward, had an unsettling effect on the mother. The shame of having dissipated the family estate through several unwise investments after his father's death seemingly induced the eldest son, Robert, to leave home in 1904 or 1905. He left behind a wife, a girl from California whom he apparently met during his military service days, and never was heard from again. Then there was the growing realization that little Rose, apparently suffering the effects of an accident in infancy, never would be a normal child.

Having done what she could to help her mother through the crises that befell the family from 1902 to 1904,<sup>20</sup> Sister Antonia turned her energies to the task of opening the new college. She and twenty-six other sisters staffed Derham Hall, as the preparatory school was named. Classes, attended by the seventy boarders who had transferred from St. Joseph Academy, began the first week of January, 1905. After the founding of St. Catherine's, St. Joseph Academy took no more boarding students.

Records for the college are less complete than those for Derham Hall. Consequently, it is difficult to determine exactly how the collegiate department moved from nonexistence to full-fledged accredited college status in the decade from 1906 to 1916. There is no doubt that Sister Antonia played a key role in the process. In anticipation of college teaching she had begun work toward a bachelor degree at the University of Chicago by completing several correspondence courses in 1902 and 1903 and attending four successive seminars from 1905 to 1908. Finally, attendance for a full year was arranged and by December, 1908, she had earned bachelor's degrees in education and philosophy, the latter with honors. In August, 1909, she received a master's degree in philosophy.

For Sister Antonia, then in her mid-30s, matriculating at Chicago involved much more than a mechanical accumulation of credits and degrees. Classes at the university were small, and exposure year after year to that remarkable series of scholar-teachers whom President William Rainey Harper had gathered at the ten-year-old institution left a profound

**McHugh family portrait taken in the 1890's. Left to right, standing: John, Sister Antonia, Pat, Frank. Seated: Father, Mother. Front, seated: Roderick, Rose.**



impression on the Minnesota nun. She later recalled Dean Salisbury, whose favorite classroom retort, "perfectly true, perfectly general and perfectly meaningless," found its way into her own teaching vocabulary.<sup>21</sup> His intolerance of mediocrity, evident regard for each student's potential, and knowledge of geography and geology all sank deep into her consciousness.

THERE WERE WOMEN, too, on the Chicago faculty — Ethel Terry in chemistry, Myra Reynolds and Geneva Myoter in English, and Elizabeth Wallace, teacher of French and dean of women. Their influence struck Sister Antonia especially in later years as she realized that out of one class of fifteen taught by Elizabeth Wallace had come four deans of women and one college president. The proportion of sexes at the co-educational institution was also worthy of note. On the undergraduate level, women had come to outnumber men almost two to one, yielding the predominance of numbers to men only in the bachelor of science degrees. Sister Antonia emerged from Chicago confirmed in her belief that women could accomplish great things, and college for women could and ought to be a gathering of scholars, great men and women, so wholeheartedly dedicated to the spread of knowledge that they drew students into a mutual striving for learning. President Harper had come to the University of Chicago during the first decade of its existence "to do something new and different."<sup>22</sup> There seemed to her no good reason why she, too, could not contribute something new to education in the Northwest.

Once graduated from Chicago and back amid the rough realities of St. Paul, Sister Antonia was, as before, just one of the teachers, rather than an official of the college. Still, no one took her lightly even then. Room 12, Derham Hall, where she taught history, Bible and geography, became the "hub of the universe" to students frequenting it for classes, talk, and advice. One of her students later described the scene:

"The room itself radiated personality. In the center there was a great polished space marked off by the circle of classroom chairs through which no one ever walked. More interesting were the huge and thriving ferns on tall stands, ivy carried home from Mount Vernon, *passee-partout* pictures of the Dying Gaul, the Reading from Homer, Achilles, the Mona Lisa . . . That Mona

Lisa — students often saw the same nonspecific smile on the placid face in the plain brown rocker below it. There was a tall case filled with filing boxes for thousands of mounted pictures which were a never-failing source of wonder — they were almost as explicit as the history teacher. Maps small and large sharpened up the poor student for the brisk examinations on the wide world's face."<sup>23</sup>

Other students recalled her homely dicta, oft-repeated in the manner of all genuine folklore: "Energize yourself." "Only horses were meant to hang their heads." "The only thing wrong with that book is that the covers are too far apart." "Self-pity is a destructive force." "Fill your minds with real things and there will be no room for trivialities." "She who would be a woman must avoid mediocrity!"<sup>24</sup>

Prophets are seldom appreciated in their own country. It was someone from outside the ranks of the sisters, Archbishop Ireland, who persuaded his sister, then superior of the St. Paul congregation, to appoint Sister Antonia dean of the struggling young college in 1914. Sister Antonia was, in a very great sense, the archbishop's protege. Attracted by her outspokenness, wit, and obvious intelligence, Ireland had pointed her out to Sister Seraphine as a candidate for graduate study and had launched her University of Chicago career with a letter of introduction to his good friend, President Harper.<sup>25</sup>

THE ARCHBISHOP'S DECISION and community acquiescence in it proved to be momentous for the first women's college in Minnesota. Ireland continued to be referred to as the institution's founder. Catalogs designated the school as being "conducted" by the Sisters of St. Joseph and "directed" by his grace, the Archbishop of St. Paul, and a paragraph on his founder's role was inserted following his death in 1918. But if Ireland was in some sense the founder, Sister Antonia McHugh was the builder. First as dean and then as president, over a period of twenty-three years, she propelled the institution from virtually nothing to a fully accredited liberal arts college. Under her direction the college very soon acquired a lay board of trustees and, in time, a distinguished faculty and an outstanding library. Six major buildings went up during the course of her administration. By the time of her retirement the college had produced more than 1,000 graduates, and last,



World War I brochure for the college.

but far from least, had merited a chapter of that exclusive national honor society, Phi Beta Kappa.

Curriculum was the first area to reflect the new dean's energy and background. Under her direction the fourteen main subjects outlined in the original catalog were retained but new courses and prerequisites markedly expanded or up-graded work in chemistry, mathematics, history, English and French. Drastic revisions in botany, geology, and geography aligned St. Catherine offerings with those of the University of Chicago.

It was an age of debate over the extent to which women's colleges should adapt their academic programs to their special clientele. Sister Antonia took the position that providing women with a college education equal to that of men meant providing them with an identical curriculum. Beginning with the 1910 catalog, St. Catherine's unique dedication to women's education was highlighted by a quotation drawn from Archbishop Ireland's essays:

"Beyond a doubt, the sphere of women's

activities has widened; woman's influence reaches much farther than ever before: and for such new conditions she should be prepared by an intellectual training higher and more thorough than has heretofore been necessary."<sup>26</sup>

At the same time, those few concessions to women's supposed needs which already had been incorporated into the program were reduced in importance. Physiology and hygiene courses, originally required of all freshmen, were merged with a non-credit physical education requirement, and the college ignored tentative efforts by other women's institutions to introduce courses aimed directly at women. Some of these experiments were interesting attempts at developing a new feminist-oriented program. Such, for example, was the course offered in 1908 by the Ursuline nuns at the College of New Rochelle in New York. This course aimed at presenting in concise, attractive form "All the legal knowledge necessary to the welfare of the average woman," general principles being illustrated "by references to celebrated cases where imperfect legal knowledge in the case of women has caused hardship and injustice."<sup>27</sup>

WHETHER FOR REASONS of unpopularity among students or uncertainty among teachers, offerings of this nature were short-lived. They had no counterparts at St. Catherine's where concerns with curriculums tended to focus on the central issues of implementing a standard liberal arts program.

In 1911 elective courses were introduced and the concept of concentration on a major field of study encouraged. With these improvements, St. Catherine's soon was included on the "accredited list" of the University of Minnesota, enhancing the recruitment of more promising students. However, the struggle to overcome anonymity as a college continued to be a challenge. Sister Antonia exhibited all the qualities of her future administrative style in a recruitment incident in 1911 following some summer contacts she had made in Omaha. A high school senior home from Oberlin's preparatory school became interested in St. Catherine's through talking with Sister Antonia, but when she made inquiries through the University of Minnesota, the registrar replied that he "had never heard of it." The dean's retaliation was direct, personal, and effective. She dashed over to the University and called the matter to the attention of her old Chicago mentor, Dr. Vincent,

who was then president. The registrar thereafter remembered that St. Catherine's was a college located in St. Paul, Minnesota.<sup>28</sup>

Sister Antonia's approach to the problem of accreditation by North Central Association had more far-reaching effects. Lack of sufficient endowment funds had been an insurmountable obstacle to the approval of colleges conducted by religious communities of women. With a sure sense of the realities and politics of the situation, Sister Antonia met with the heads of the other Catholic colleges and proposed that they try to convince North Central that the lives of the sisters, who served without pay, represented the equivalent of a cash endowment for the institutions they staffed. With the help of Professor Charles H. Judd, an old friend and teacher from Chicago, she successfully presented this idea at the 1916 North Central meeting. St. Catherine's was accredited.<sup>29</sup>

Closely related to the entire accreditation process was faculty development. By the time Sister Antonia became dean, two sisters had bachelor degrees and three others had masters. Their teaching was supplemented by that of lecturers from the faculty of the University, St. Paul Seminary, and the College of St. Thomas — all men. Clearly, the boast made by the Reverend P. F. O'Brien on November 25, 1906, had more the ring of prophecy than of accomplished fact. Father O'Brien, redoubtable classicist, in the first of a series of annual St. Catherine's Day addresses, declared somewhat prematurely,

"In other places of education it is the teachers who grasp the reputation. The ladies' colleges of the country, even Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, and Vassar, have to complete their efficiency by the adventitious aid of the sterner sex. It is the specific note of our Catholic colleges for women that the work is substantially done by members of their own sex."<sup>30</sup>

THE FIVE SISTERS who did have degrees covered a good spectrum of fields (English, Latin, Greek, history, and biology). Moreover, teachers of music had done advanced study, as had the principal art instructor who had spent two years in Europe. Sister Antonia had been forced by increased administrative responsibilities to abandon her own pursuit of a doctorate. Instead, she turned her full attention to furthering the education of other, younger, sisters.

By June of 1916, one of the college's 1914 graduates and three other sisters had received

their master of arts degrees; by the fall of 1917, four more had theirs; by 1920, an additional five, a pace which became commonplace in the community.

From 1926 to 1936, ten sisters earned doctor of philosophy degrees from the universities of Minnesota, Chicago, Columbia, and Michigan, the Catholic University of America, from Munich, and from Louvain. Two other sisters completed master's degrees at Oxford, while several others spent a year or more studying in England and France. This range of universities was indicative of the emancipated views held by Sister Antonia regarding the proper education of nuns.

At the same time distinguished lay professors and priests joined the faculty until, by 1935, they constituted one-fifth of the total. Nearly nine-tenths of the total faculty, then, were women, of whom a majority were members of the Congregation of St. Joseph.

For Sister Antonia, faculty development was a task to which she gave personal, sustained attention for more than twenty years. Nothing in the history of the college, unless it was the financing of five new buildings between 1914 and 1935, illustrates more compellingly the extent to which the mutual support of the sisters was crucial to the emergence of a viable college. Unlike the early independent colleges of Protestant origin, Catholic institutions of higher education generally had no official church sponsorship or direct source of ecclesiastical income. All the more important, therefore, were the group resources which communities like the Sisters of St. Joseph were able to bring to the task.

Still, capital expenditures necessary for college expansion and Sister Antonia's plans for the education of the sisters and the building of a library involved insupportable financial burdens for a congregation whose members were paid \$25 per month as parochial school teachers!<sup>31</sup> Faced with curtailing her plans or seeking outside funding, the dean characteristically became the first women's college official in Minnesota to approach foundations for support. It was a task for which Sister Antonia was admirably suited by reason of physique and personality. With her "erect carriage, large clear grey eyes that seemed to reflect a deep penetration into any matter under consideration, a clear voice, and a complete command of words," she could make a very effective appeal. Somehow she conveyed the impression of living in a "world

of wide horizons and high resolve."<sup>32</sup> It seemed to those whom she approached, whether corporation executives or parents of a prospective student, that no school headed by her could be mediocre.

IN 1918, SHE PERSUADED the general education board of the Rockefeller Foundation, then headed by Dr. Vincent, to grant St. Catherine's \$100,000, contingent upon raising a matching sum double that amount. The total was to be used for an endowment. This grant was realized in 1921 after an unusual direct contribution to the college by the Archdiocese of St. Paul. This was the share Archbishop Dowling allotted to St. Catherine's from the education fund collected in memory of the late Archbishop Ireland.

In 1926 a second gift of \$100,000 from the general education board facilitated construction of the college's science building, Mendel Hall. Important library accessions were made possible through grants of \$25,000 and \$15,000 from the Carnegie Corporation. Strengthening of science and allied health areas was greatly aided in 1929 by a further endowment grant of \$300,000 from the general education board.

All in all, it was a record of foundation giving which compared favorably with that achieved by the men college presidents among Sister Antonia's Minnesota peers.

As with curriculum and faculty development, Sister Antonia worked out financial plans with the close collaboration of Sister Ste Helene (Florence) Guthrie. This remarkable woman had joined the community in 1909 when she was 26. She graduated from St. Joseph Academy, had earned a bachelor of arts degree at the University of Minnesota, and had taught in the public schools for two years. After assignment to St. Catherine's in 1911, she completed a master of arts degree in English and later studied for a year at Oxford. Sister Ste Helene enjoyed the complete and well-deserved confidence of Sister Antonia as faculty member, department chairman and registrar, and, finally, as dean when Sister Antonia was officially named president in 1929.

With Sister Ste Helene's help and advice, and undaunted by lack of precedent in other Catholic women's colleges, Sister Antonia cultivated lay support in the form of a board of trustees organized in 1920. During the hiatus between Ireland's death and the arrival of his replacement, Archbishop Dowling, Marion LeRoy Burton, president of the

University of Minnesota, chaired the board. Melvin Haggerty, dean of the University's college of education, began a long and valuable board tenure a few years later, as did also other University faculty members such as Richard E. Burton, Charles Bird, and Martin Ruud. They were joined by distinguished regional churchmen and business leaders — both men and women.

THE SISTERS with whom Sister Antonia lived at St. Catherine's shared with her the hopes and apprehensions connected with each step of the financial path. Their prayers were solicited as approach to this or that donor was anticipated. The sisters who accompanied her to New York and elsewhere returned to report the news of each trip. On one occasion, for example, she spilled biscuits from her voluminous purse in the hallowed board rooms of the Rockefeller Foundation. "Well," she explained to startled onlookers, "You wonder if I am stealing biscuits from the people of New York, but I am not; you know our girls waste a great deal of bread. They like these hard water rolls, but they break them, and eat only half of them, and so I feel it is a great waste. We were invited out to dinner yesterday, and our hostess took us to the \_\_\_\_\_ Hotel, and they served these size rolls with our dinner. It is exactly the size that I think we should have, so I am bringing them home so that our baker can make them that size, and thereby lessen our waste of bread."<sup>33</sup>

Her account of just what she intended to do with the \$300,000 which she was requesting from the foundation for health and science programs followed quite naturally (and successfully) from her explanation of why she was carrying biscuits around in her purse.

All these comings and goings did not appear to some critics to fit the picture of a woman of propriety, much less a religious. Fortunately, the Congregation of St. Joseph was capable of tolerance. As Sister Wilfrida philosophized in 1921, "it takes all kinds of people to make a world, and it takes all kinds of people to do the different *phases* of work in a community."<sup>34</sup>

Encountering the European administrator of foreign exchange scholarships while waiting for a channel crossing from Calais during her second trip to Europe in 1932, she "had a good talk" with the official. She "pointed out that for the most part St. Catherine's was paying exchange fees to benefit Vassar and Wellesley." "He was amazed,"



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## We'd Like You at The College of St. Catherine

**WE WANT THE HIGHEST TYPE** of young people in this part of the country. If you can meet our requirements, we should like to enroll you for entrance this fall. This is a real college. There is work, plenty of it; but there is play, too—good wholesome play.

Perhaps there is a graduate of this college living near you. Permit us to send you the name and address. You may care to make personal inquiries.

Have you studied our catalogue carefully?

SISTER ANTONIA  
*President*

The College of St. Catherine  
St. Paul, Minn.

Post card sent to prospective applicants in 1921.

Sister Antonia reported in a letter to Sister Ste Helene, "when he went over the list to find that every full scholarship had been awarded on the Atlantic seaboard. We are to have dinner at his home on our return [to the continent] on July 12."<sup>35</sup>

SISTER ANTONIA had an amazing sense of what she wanted and how to get the job done. Acquisition of a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa in 1937 proved the point as few other accomplishments did. When she became dean, only the University and Carleton College had persuaded the country's most venerable and prestigious honor society to grant them local chapters. Convinced that such recognition would be advantageous both for the college and for its graduates, Sister Antonia lost no time plotting her strategy. This is evident from the hand-written notes on the college's copy of the Phi Beta Kappa *Key* for May, 1921, and from correspondence during October and November of the same year.<sup>36</sup> The necessary endorsements were sought from institutions that already were members of the society: Carleton and the University of Minnesota; the universities of North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Michigan; Columbia; Western Reserve; Smith; and, of course, Chicago. Despite the good offices of President Burton

of Michigan, Wallace Buttrick from Carnegie, and her old Chicago friends, Vincent and Angell, she had to abandon the 1921 effort for lack of enough backers.

There the matter rested until the mid-1930s when she entrusted preparations for a Phi Beta Kappa review to Sister Jeanne Marie (Ruth) Bonnett, one of the most intellectually gifted alumnae the college had produced. Back at St. Catherine's a full decade after completing doctoral studies at the University of Louvain in Belgium, Sister Jeanne Marie drew on her expertise in psychology and education and on the college's records to produce a 138-page report that stressed the strengths of the young institution. She followed this with an appointment in New York with Dr. W. A. Schrimmer, then president of Phi Beta Kappa, to refute rumors that Catholic colleges curtailed academic freedom or suffered from "in-breeding" of faculty.<sup>37</sup> Her persuasiveness and the cogency of the report smoothed the way for an on-site review in December 1936. This culminated in a vote early the next year to admit St. Catherine's to membership and the Gamma chapter of Minnesota was installed shortly thereafter.

Sadly enough, news of the coveted Phi Beta

Kappa affiliation came on the heels of Sister Antonia's retirement from the presidency after she suffered a stroke in February of 1936. Previous bouts of ill health had given warning, yet no one, least of all herself, fully anticipated the abrupt curtailment of her responsibility. Largely as a result of her pragmatic and forthright style of leadership, the college had evolved into a first-rank Catholic liberal arts institution with significant programs in those professional fields then most accessible to women.

AT THE PEAK of her active career, Sister Antonia had brought to the institution the luster of her own accomplishments: participation in the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection (1930); papal honors in the form of the "Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice" decoration (1931); presidency of the Minnesota Association of Colleges; chairmanship of the National Catholic Educational Association Conference of Colleges for Women; and executive positions in the American Association of Colleges; an honorary doctorate from the University of Minnesota in 1936. A University of Chicago Distinguished Alumni citation came later, in 1943.

Through some personal magic all her own, Sister Antonia had infused into the college the practicality and the drive of the midwest pioneer, an attitude which is captured in a remark she made to Sister Ste Helen about the English ladies who had feted her during a stay in Rome: "they have many good qualities but they are not doing a blessed thing for anyone."<sup>39</sup>

After her retirement, Sister Antonia continued to take keen interest in the welfare of the college and in the accomplishments and the simple personal concerns of its alumnae.<sup>40</sup>

Far from lapsing into the routine of a semi-invalid, which partial paralysis might well have induced, she filled her last seven years with a daily round of mass, prayers, and meals with the college sisters, a faithful sister-companion supplying the necessary physical assistance. Reading and an extensive correspondence helped fill her long days, varied from time to time by coast-to-coast train travel to renew professional and family contacts. She received numerous visitors in her quarters in Whitby Hall, sometimes relatives or sisters stopping by to borrow books from her private collection or simply to chat, and sometimes off-campus friends. Among the latter was President Lotus I.

Coffman and his wife from the University of Minnesota and Sister Antonia's old friend, the New England novelist Mary Ellen Chase. One of Miss Chase's most popular works, *A Goodly Fellowship*, had publicized in a unique way the college and the faculty which Sister Antonia had gathered there.<sup>41</sup>

THE UNACCUSTOMED LEISURE forced upon her by physical weakness gave Sister Antonia time for reflection on the turning points of her life. Choice of the religious life was one of these, a decision which she did not regret, even though living it out had not always been easy. To her niece she confided that, "poverty is nothing. Chastity is nothing. But obedience!" Looking back on her attendance at the University of Chicago instead of Harvard, where she had wanted to go, she concluded that "limitations are our greatest blessings." It was a relief to be spared the constant worries of college building. Still, she missed the matching of wits and challenges the job had entailed and, as she called it, "the luxury" of losing her temper.<sup>42</sup>

Family obligations, fraught with anxieties during her busy days as dean and president, now took the form of a motherly interest in nieces, nephews, and cousins. Her sister, Rose, under Sister Antonia's legal guardianship after the death of Mrs. McHugh in 1929, was safe and happy in the care of religious in Iowa. Rod, her junior by sixteen years and to whom she had been a second mother since his enrollment at St. Thomas academy at age 12, died in 1935, leaving a wife and six children. With one of these she developed the loving relationship of an aunt with a teenage niece in boarding school. Family money concerns had been a problem in earlier years, so much so that she had written in anguish to Rod in 1924, "I don't know what to do about mamma. If there is no way of saving her from herself we shall send her ten thousand from [father's loan]. I dread to think of her having nothing in a short time."<sup>43</sup> These cares had resolved themselves with her mother's death.

Certain less ingratiating character traits were softened when Sister Antonia removed herself from office. A natural impatience with ineptitude or even with the prudent reservations of others called upon to implement policies ("such nonsense! don't be a baby!") yielded to greater tolerance. She had made more than a few enemies over the span of a hard-hitting and long administrative career — "you know, she'd call people jackasses if they did this or that or objected to this or that."



Her last years now saw reconciliation to many of these people.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, illness led to some distortion of judgment and to a sensitivity of emotions which occasionally resulted in alienation of friends. It was a trying time, in which she often was not completely her old self.

Finally the end came with another stroke, gradual loss of speech, and death, all mercifully within the space of one week, October 4-11, 1944. She had lived as a Sister of St. Joseph for fifty-four years, all of them in St. Paul, laboring zealously to educate women.

Her sisters in religion and a large crowd of relatives, friends, faculty, and students laid her body to rest in Calvary Cemetery. For some it seemed impossible to visualize the College of St. Catherine without Sister Antonia.

"To me," an alumna had written her in 1936, "the St. Joseph community and St. Catherine's has meant *you*."<sup>45</sup> But her work was bigger than herself and outlasted her in the lives of those she knew and affected so deeply, in the college she founded, and in the religious community within which she realized her genius.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>*Northwestern Chronicle* (St. Paul, 1867-1903, XXV, No. 21 April 10, 1891), p. 4. Archives of the St. Paul Catholic Historical Society (housed at the St. Paul Seminary) in bound volumes and microfilm.

<sup>2</sup>Accurate statistics of this kind are difficult to obtain; those used here for the University of Minnesota are derived from Elwin Bird Johnson, *Forty Years of the University of Minnesota (1868-1910)* (Minnesota, 1910), pp. 243f; for the other colleges mentioned, see Henry L. Osborn, *Alumni Record of Hamline University* (St. Paul, 1924), and Merrill E. Jarchow, *Private Liberal Arts Colleges in Minnesota, Their History and Contributions* (Minnesota, 1973).

<sup>3</sup>St. Theresa was founded in 1907, St. Benedict in 1913, and St. Scholastica in 1912.

<sup>4</sup>Hurley, Sister Helen Angela, *On Good Ground* (Minnesota, 1951) traces the growth of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in Minnesota and North and South Dakota.

<sup>5</sup>Letter of October 29, 1894, to Sister Ignatius Loyola Cox, Sisters of St. Joseph St. Paul Archives (hereafter abbreviated as St. Paul Archives); see Hurly, *On Good Ground*, p. 290, for a discussion of the circumstances under which this letter was written and for reference to its published version.

<sup>6</sup>Letters to Sister Lucida Savage, Sisters of St. Joseph, St. Louis Archives, undated (about 1920 and not later than 1921), a typewritten transcription of this series of nine letters is available in St. Paul Archives and has been used for this study.

<sup>7</sup>Hogan to Savage, St. Paul Archives.

<sup>8</sup>*Book II (1886-1949)*, St. Paul Archives (statistics for the years 1858-1885 are entered in the back of this ledger-sized volume, pp. 146-151); Hogan to Savage, St. Paul Archives.

<sup>9</sup>"Sermon on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Sisters of St. Joseph in St. Paul, Minnesota," published in a modified version under the title, "A Catholic Sisterhood in the Northwest," in *Church and Modern Society* (2 vols., New York, 1903), vol. 11, 279-301, quoted passage p. 293.

<sup>10</sup>Plans for a college at this early date are alluded to in Sister Wilfreda Hogan's letters; her observations are corroborated by the *Northwestern Chronicle* 1891 editorial mentioned above, as well as by an article in the *Chronicle* XXV, No. 39 (August 14, 1891), p. 5, describing residential lots being sold by the Sisters of St. Joseph in the "Midway district" (four square blocks bordered by Cleveland Avenue on the west and Prior on the east, with Jefferson as the south border). Proceeds were to finance a "new academy for young ladies" of which a collegiate department was to be a unique feature.

<sup>11</sup>Memories of the hardships of the 1890s are part of St. Joseph community folklore; as with other events of the period, Sister Wilfreda Hogan's letters supply descriptive detail.

<sup>12</sup>Ledger J. St. Paul Archives, accounts for 1903-1906.

<sup>13</sup>A priceless description of the first week of the new college's existence comes from Sister Bridget Bohan, undated interview (1949 or 1951) transcribed by Sister Alice Smith, College of St. Catherine Archives. Sister Bridget was a member of the first small group that arrived December 26 to prepare Derham Hall for occupancy, and served as superior of the sisters who began the school. Another early document is *Annals of C.S.C., 1906*, a composition book with handwritten entries filling approximately 100 pages and providing a month-by-month account of events in the new school. Author probably is Sister Clara Graham who taught English at Derham Hall; the account was discontinued with the appearance of the first issue of the college magazine, *Ariston*, in November, 1906.

<sup>14</sup>College of St. Catherine Archives.

<sup>15</sup>The most valuable single source on Sister Antonia's childhood are notes collected on scraps of paper and on the pages of an appointment book by Sister Beata Galvin around 1943-44. These notes, kept in the St. Paul Archives, were the basis for an essay entitled, "Recollections of a Pioneer Childhood," a seven-page typewritten manuscript evidently composed by Sister Beata and kept in the College of St. Catherine Archives. The recent article by Anne Condon Collopy and Mabel Meta Frey, "A Woman for Today: Mother Antonia McHugh," *College of St. Catherine Alumnae News* (SCAN), XLIX (Winter, 1974), pp. 6-13, is derivative from "Recollections" but also adds some new information.

<sup>16</sup>"The Story of Cavalier County," *The Northern Review* (Grand Forks, North Dakota), May, 1903, pp. 9-45, especially pp. 16-19; see also Mrs. John Forrest, "The Passing of the Pioneer: An Account of the Life of the Honorable Patrick McHugh," undated (1925) typewritten manuscript, St. Paul Archives.

<sup>17</sup>McHugh victories were recollected later by persons who watched daughter Annie, then Sister Antonia, in action; another such incident was Sister Antonia's response to the decision of the City of St. Paul to extend Prior Avenue through campus in 1925. She hurriedly advanced plans to construct Mendel Hall by securing funds from the Rockefeller Foundation and completing building plans. Within seven months of groundbreaking the summer of 1927, this four-story building stood astride the threatened Prior Avenue route. See Collopy-Frey, "A Woman for Today," p. 7; and interview with Sister Alice Smith, September 17, 1974, Oral History Collection, College of St. Catherine.

<sup>18</sup>Sister M. Joseph Callasanz to Sister Beata Galvin, April 4, 1944, St. Paul Archives.

<sup>19</sup>"The College Woman," pamphlet (New York, 1901), p. 1.

<sup>20</sup>Among other things, Sister Antonia confirmed with a family lawyer arrangements whereby interest payments on a loan which Patrick McHugh had made to St. Joseph Academy would constitute a regular income for her mother. A series of seven letters to her brother Roderick in the 1920s alludes to these and other provisions. These letters are in the possession of Sister Antonia's niece, Roderick's daughter, Antonia (Tono) McLean.

<sup>21</sup>Sister Antonia McHugh, "What Makes Chicago Great," *The University of Chicago Magazine*, XXVI (December, 1933), pp. 64-67, see also Charles Buzicky, "Mother Antonia's Impossible Dream: The College of St. Catherine," SCAN, XLIX (F II, 1973), pp. 5-12, especially pp. 7-8.

<sup>22</sup>McHugh, "What Makes Chicago Great," p. 65.

<sup>23</sup>Hurley, *On Good Ground*, p. 240.

<sup>24</sup>Galvin, notes, St. Paul Archives.

<sup>25</sup>McHugh, "What Makes Chicago Great," p. 65.

<sup>26</sup>Ireland, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

<sup>27</sup>O'Neill, Sister Mary Berenice, *An Evaluation of the Curricula of a Selected Group of Catholic Women's Colleges* (Missouri, 1942), p. 95.

<sup>28</sup>Galvin, notes, St. Paul Archives.

<sup>29</sup>Hurley, *On Good Ground*, p. 244; *Proceedings of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools*, XXI (1916), p. 70; letter Judd to McHugh, College of St. Catherine Archives.

<sup>30</sup>*Ariston*, 1:2 (Winter, 1906), p. 4; bound volume, College of St. Catherine Archives. Sister Teresa Toomey, "Chapters for a History of the College of St. Catherine," typewritten manuscript, College of St. Catherine Archives, pp. 3-4, 13-14, provides a more extended character sketch of the Reverend O'Brien and other early faculty members.

<sup>31</sup>*Ledger K*, St. Paul Archives, records salaries for the years just before World War I; these had not changed markedly by the 1920s.

<sup>32</sup>Toomey, "Chapters for a History," p. 15.

<sup>33</sup>Harvey, Sister Ann, interview transcribed by Sister Beata Galvin around 1943-1944, St. Paul Archives, p. 6. A copy of this interview also has been deposited in the College of St. Catherine Oral History Collection. Sister Ann accompanied Sister Antonia on the fund-raising trip which is described.

<sup>34</sup>Hogan, St. Paul Archives, italics in original.

<sup>35</sup>Letter, Sister Antonia to Sister Ste Helene Guthrie, June 9, 1932, College of St. Catherine Archives.

<sup>36</sup>College of St. Catherine Archives.

<sup>37</sup>Fogarty, Sister James Agnes, interview April 19, 1974, Oral History Collection; *General Report* (1935), College of St. Catherine Archives.

<sup>38</sup>Haley, "Great Contributors to Education: Mother Antonia," Interdepartmental Conference, May 6, 1934 (College of St. Catherine), St. Paul Archives.

<sup>39</sup>Letter of March 30, 1932, College of St. Catherine Archives.

<sup>40</sup>The range of professions chosen by St. Catherine alumnae, as well as their careers as wives and mothers, was a source of keen interest to Sister Antonia. This range was broad for a generation in which the overwhelming majority of college-educated women in the Midwest went into high school teaching; at least 21 per cent of all graduates from 1913 to 1935 engaged in post-graduate study. In contrast, less than 5 per cent of the women graduates of a nearby co-educational college pursued such study during a comparable period (College of St. Catherine alumnae records; Osborn, *Alumni Record of Hamline University*).

<sup>41</sup>Chase, *A Goodly Fellowship* (New York, 1939), chapter 9; Fogarty, interview April 19, 1974.

<sup>42</sup>Galvin, notes, St. Paul Archives; recollections shared by niece, Tono McLean, with the author.

<sup>43</sup>Sister Antonia to Roderick McHugh, letter in possession of Tono McLean.

<sup>44</sup>Haley and Fogarty, interviews of December 14, 1973, and April 19, 1974, Oral History Collection.

<sup>45</sup>"Lou" to Sister Antonia, undated letter (1936), College of St. Catherine Archives.



### THE GIBBS HOUSE

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

THE Ramsey County Historical Society was founded in 1949. During the following years the Society, believing that a sense of history is of great importance in giving a new, mobile generation a knowledge of its roots in the past, acquired the 100-year-old farm home which had belonged to Heman R. Gibbs. The Society restored the Gibbs House and in 1954 opened it to the public as a museum which would depict the way of life of an early Minnesota settler.

In 1958, the Society erected a barn behind the farm house which is maintained as an agricultural museum to display the tools and other implements used by the men who broke up the prairie soil and farmed with horse and oxen. In 1966, the Society moved to its museum property a one-room rural schoolhouse, dating from the 1870's. The white frame school came from near Milan, Minnesota. Now restored to the period of the late 1890's, the school actually is used for classes and meetings.

Headquarters of the Ramsey County Historical Society will be located in the Old Federal Courts Building in downtown St. Paul, an historic building of neo-Romanesque architecture which the Society, with other groups, fought to save from demolition. The Society presently has its offices at the Gibbs Farm. The Society is active in identification of historic sites in the city and county, and conducts an educational program which includes the teaching and demonstration of old arts and crafts. It is one of the few county historical societies in the country to engage in an extensive publishing program in local history.