

RAMSEY COUNTY
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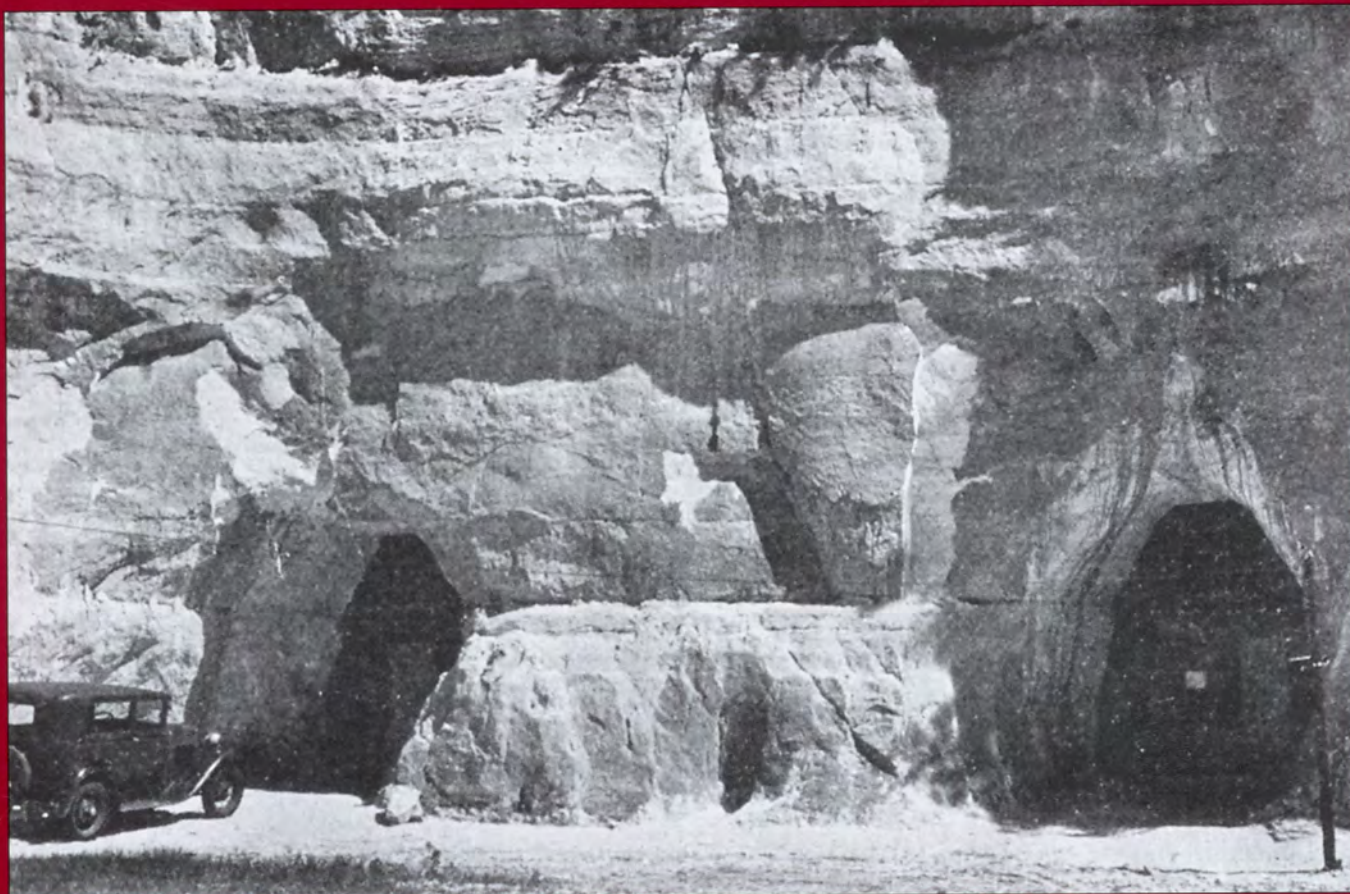
Alfred Adler and his 1937
Lecture at the St. Paul
Women's City Club

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St. Paul Underground

The University Farm Experimental Cave and
St. Paul as the Blue Cheese Capital of the World

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Caves like these in the Twin Cities bluffs along the Mississippi River were used for ripening the Roquefort-like cheese that almost caused an international incident with France. See article about Minnesota's Blue Cheese beginning on page 4. Photo from the National Butter and Cheese Journal, January 10, 1935.

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RAMSEY COUNTY History

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A Message from the Editorial Board

This issue of *Ramsey County History* opens with Greg Brick's absorbing examination of how and why agricultural researchers at the University of Minnesota produced a Roquefort-like blue cheese in the caves on St. Paul's West Side from the 1930s to the 1950s. Many local people know that in the days before modern refrigeration, St. Paul's pioneer brewers had taken advantage of the constant cool temperatures in the caves to store beer, and some people knew the caves had been used for raising mushrooms, but author Brick introduces us to the little-known world of blue cheese production in these caves.

Additional articles in this issue present Roger A. Ballou's account of a 1937 lecture by the famous psychologist Alfred Adler at the Women's City Club and Susan C. Dowd's research into the mysterious 1902 death of an unidentified, beautiful young woman near the railway station at Dayton's Bluff.

Fall is always a great time for apples. To honor this year's apple season, Ralph Thrane, the resident horticulturalist at the Society's Gibbs Museum in Falcon Heights, contributes a summary of his work in choosing and growing the Heritage apple varieties that have been planted at the Museum. This issue closes with author DeAnne Cherry adding another piece to our ongoing series, "Growing Up in St. Paul," with her recollections of her teenage years living on St. Paul's Avenue in the 1950s.

The Editorial Board of this magazine also wants its readers to be aware that Paul Nelson's article about St. Paul's smallpox epidemic of 1924 that appeared in the Summer issue has caught the eye of a present-day researcher at the Medical School of the University of Minnesota and is being used in conjunction with contemporary studies of this dread disease. Our thanks to Paul for his timely work that may, in a small way, contribute to the future betterment of all.

John M. Lindley, Chair, Editorial Board

A Pillar of Modern Psychology:

Alfred Adler and His 1937 Lectures at the Historic St. Paul Women's City Club

Courage, an optimistic attitude, common sense, and a feeling of being at home upon the crust of the earth will enable us to face advantages and disadvantages with equal firmness.

Alfred Adler

Roger A. Ballou

In the estimation of many, Alfred Adler is one of the pillars of modern psychology.¹ Adler was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1870 and took his medical degree from the University of Vienna in 1895. By the 1920s, Adler had risen to international prominence as a psychiatrist, practitioner, author, and philosopher. Both sides of the Atlantic heralded his work and he fast became an extremely popular public speaker in Western Europe and the United States. Many praised Adler's lectures for their impact on the positive development of children, improved health of the modern family, and need for all people to treat their fellow human beings with compassion and "social interest." On Monday, March 8, 1937, upon the invitation of the St. Paul City Women's Club, Adler brought his message to St. Paul.

The March 5, 1937, edition of the *St. Paul Dispatch* quoted J. C. McKinley, Professor of Neurology and Chair of the Department of Medicine at the University of Minnesota, saying:

The Women's City Club is surely fortunate in being able to secure such a distinguished speaker as Dr. Alfred Adler. His writings in the field of psychiatry have been fundamental contributions to our knowledge. In consequence, his remarks should be welcomed by all socially minded people in our community.²

By 1937, the St. Paul Women's City Club had grown to upwards of 1,000 members. The Club enjoyed its sixth year in its new home at 305 St. Peter Street,

St. Paul, an exemplary building constructed in 1931 which still stands at the intersection of Kellogg Boulevard and St. Peter Street in downtown St. Paul and is

listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Currently the home of the internationally known firm of Wold Architects, the



The Women's City Club at 305 St. Peter Street in downtown St. Paul ca. 1935. Photo by Stanley J. McComb, Minnesota Historical Society collections.

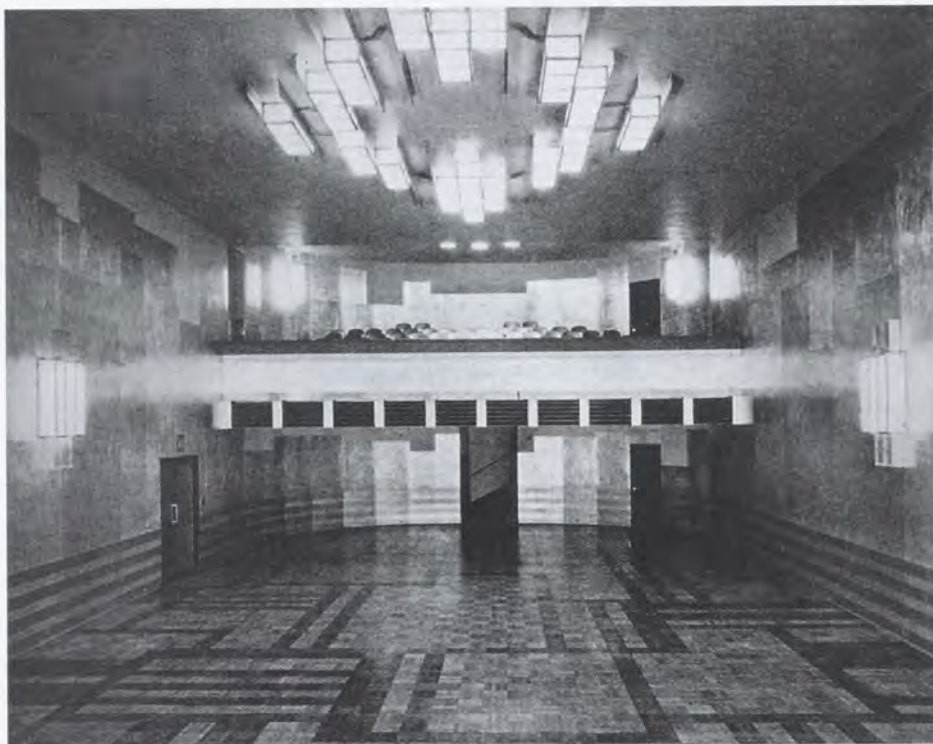
Women's City Club building is recognized as one of St. Paul's earliest and finest examples of Art Deco style.³ From 1931-1972, the City Club building, known to many as the Jenne building for its designer and architect, Magnus Jenne, served as the hub of the St. Paul Women's City Club activities.

“. . . Not Like Other Girls”

Admired throughout the Upper Midwest as an example and leader in what an organized women's club could accomplish, the St. Paul Women's City Club was a key variable in the artistic, civic, and intellectual life of the Twin Cities. Alice M. O'Brien, who became the Club's fifth president in 1930 and was instrumental in the leadership team which financed and built the 305 St. Peter Street building, stated:

At the time, the conventional function of a women's club in the life of a city was well defined. It should have a civic department, an English department for the promotion of culture, a history department, and a welfare department for the good of the city. It should do this and it should do that, but, as someone else has said, "St. Paul is not like other girls." So the St. Paul Women's City Club, reared in a tradition of individuality, incorporated with only one purpose in view—the maintenance of a club house for the comfort and intelligent diversion of its members. It was rightly supposed that this type of organization appealed to open minded women and our power lies in the strength of our 1,000 free thinking members.⁴

In this connection, it comes as no surprise that, among its illustrious list of guests during the 1930s, the St. Paul Women's City Club invited Alfred Adler from New York City to St. Paul to give an address. On the evening of Monday, March 8, 1937, Adler spoke to one of the largest crowds ever assembled in the Women's City Club's picturesque 500-seat auditorium. As noted by *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reporter James Gray who was in the audience that night: "Dr. Alfred Adler discussed what he calls his 'Science of Individual Psychology' Monday evening before the largest audience that has ever trooped into the Women's



The Women's City Club auditorium as it looked two years before Adler spoke there in 1937. Photo from the author.

City Club's modernistic auditorium lured by a great name."⁵

Pioneer in Psychology

Along with Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, Alfred Adler is recognized as one of the great pioneers in modern psychology. Originally a colleague of Freud's in Vienna during the early 1900s, Adler launched his own school of psychological thought starting in 1911. Adler parted ways with Freud in reaction to Freud's extreme emphasis on the sex drive as the core variable in a child's personality development. Although Adler acknowledged the sex drive as a fundamental element in personality formation, he strongly believed that other variables such as a child's family constellation and "social field" hold greater power. Recognizing Adler's impact on modern psychology's turn toward embracing a child's social field as critical in the formation of personality, Victor Frankl noted: "What he achieved and accomplished was no less than a Copernican



Dr. Alfred Adler. Photo from the author.

switch. Beyond this, Alfred Adler may be well regarded as an existential thinker and as a forerunner of the existential-psychiatric movement."⁶

And Abraham Maslow stated: "For me, Alfred Adler becomes more and more correct year by year. As the facts come in, they give stronger and stronger support to his image of human beings. I should say that, in one respect especially, the times have not yet caught up with him. I refer to his holistic emphasis."⁷

Adler named his philosophy and theory of human development "Individual Psychology." While in English "individual" means one or single, in Adler's native German the word conveys a sense of an indivisible and undivided person.⁸ A person can only be appropriately understood when his or her family atmosphere, position in the family constellation, family dynamics, and family history are considered. No part of an individual (body, mind, spirit, or social field) can be analyzed in isolation.

Family Counseling

Adler was one of the first mental health practitioners to provide family counseling, group counseling, and public education to teach psychological concepts to the general public as a way of improving the human condition. By the early 1930s, Adler had founded more than twenty child guidance clinics in the schools of Vienna to help teachers, parents, and children learn how to solve their problems together.

During the early 1930s as the situation for Jewish intellectuals and leaders worsened in Austria under the approaching Nazi regime, Adler and his wife, Raissa, moved to New York City where they took up residency at the Gramercy Park Hotel. Soon after, the Long Island College of Medicine appointed Adler to the position of Chair of Medical Psychology. Adler never slowed for a minute. In addition to his faculty appointment, he continued to operate a private mental health practice in New York City, consulted and lectured across the U.S. and Europe, and published prolifically. During his career, Adler wrote more than 300 books and articles.



Dr. J. C. McKinley. Photo from the author

Adler's constant aim was to teach the layperson psychological concepts, particularly as they related to the development of children, the improvement of family life, and success in the schools. People applauded his public lectures for their simplicity and applicability of easily understood solutions to the challenges of daily living. As summarized by James Gray in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, "Adler talks about the homey crises and conflicts of daily life which are only too familiar. . . . Adler's function has been to translate the ancient wisdom back into the idiom of every day."⁹

One of the most popular public speakers of the 1930s, Adler came to St. Paul in March 1937 after completing a major European lecture tour during which he spoke and consulted at the University of Utrecht in Holland, Uppsala University in Sweden, and the University of Copenhagen.¹⁰ The *St. Paul Dispatch's* March 5, 1937, announcement about Adler's upcoming St. Paul Women's City Club lecture on March 8 reported, "Perhaps no man of science in recent years has commanded more interest from the general public, yet his audiences always include men and women prominent in many branches of science, psychiatrists, philosophers, criminologists, and educators."¹¹

MMPI Created

Adler arrived in St. Paul by train on Monday morning, March 8, 1937. Though accurate hotel records no longer exist, he likely stayed at the St. Paul Hotel. During the 1930s, guests of the St. Paul Women's City Club typically stayed at the St. Paul Hotel.¹²

At noon on March 8, J. C. McKinley hosted a luncheon in Adler's honor at the University of Minnesota. McKinley himself was a preeminent physician and researcher in addition to leading the University's Department of Medicine. Like Adler, McKinley had a strong interest in studying the development of psychopathology.

Whereas Adler had been the creator and founder of child guidance centers in Europe and the U.S., McKinley himself oversaw the development and construction of a thirty-seven-bed psychopathic unit at the University of Minnesota Hospital where mental illness and neurotic behavior were carefully studied. During the 1940s, McKinley was principal developer of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), a leading instrument in the analysis of psychological distress and personality disorders which is still widely used today. Adler and McKinley had many interests in common, particularly the idea that mental illnesses in most cases are preventable with proper childhood intervention and public education:

Having long been convinced that most disasters in politics, crime, and the like are due to mental disorders which could be detected before catastrophes occur, Dr. McKinley aided in legislation concerning psychiatric problems and was influential in the enactment of the Minnesota Psychopathic Personality Law. . . . He is exceedingly popular among the faculty members of the entire University of Minnesota and has helped many to solve difficulties that have arisen in their own families.¹³

At 6:30 p.m. on the evening of March 8, the Women's City Club hosted a dinner in Adler's honor. Mary Rossum, club manager, coordinated the event¹⁴, likely held in the fourth floor dining room. City Club members and invited guests at-



Elsa Laubach Jemne posed by her mural in the Women's City Club in 1932. St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photo, Minnesota Historical Society collections. Caption.

tended the dinner.

As dinner attendees and their guests were finishing their meal in the upstairs dining room, the audience began to fill the auditorium downstairs, entering the City Club through the St. Peter Street doorway into the stylish City Club's Art Deco lobby. No visitor could help notice the vibrant City Club murals in the entry foyer, designed and painted by artist and City Club member Elsa Jemne, wife of building architect Magnus Jemne.¹⁵ One could hypothesize that a bright fire burned in the lobby's fireplace on that bitterly cold evening of March 8, 1937.¹⁶

Three Great Problems

By 8:30 p.m., the dinner party had joined the audience in the first floor auditorium. The room was filled to capacity, with more than 500 in attendance. St. Paul resident and City Club member Ms. Ward L. Beebe came to the lectern to introduce Alfred Adler. The title of his talk was "The Three Great Problems of Life."

Adler commonly lectured to lay audi-

ences on the topic of what he viewed as the three great challenges or "problems," that every human being must confront in order to live a healthy and fulfilled life. Adler contended that all human beings, particularly as they move toward adulthood, face each day the fundamental challenges of occupation and work ("the work task"), social relations in general ("the friendship task"), and love and marriage ("the love task"). In Adler's own words:

To each human being, these three constraints, therefore, pose three problems: first, how to find an occupation that will enable us to survive under the limitations set by the nature of our home planet; second, how to find a position among our fellow human beings so that we can cooperate and share the benefits of cooperation; and third, how to accommodate ourselves to the fact that there are two sexes and the continuance of humankind depends upon the relations between them.¹⁷

Among the news reporters in attendance that evening, James Gray provided

the most comprehensive review of both Adler as a speaker and the message delivered to the Women's City Club audience. In the next day's edition, he offered a lively account of Adler as a public speaker:

He is round of figure and of face. His hands look round, too, as he holds them before him, places them on his hips, or waves them in the random, awkward gestures of a completely unselfconscious person. He might be a small merchant in the corner store or some simple, companionable person with whom one feels entirely at home . . . This is a man whom one feels immediately ready to give one's confidence. There is something casual and confiding about him. He has the dignity of a man who wants very seriously and simply to do a job that he thinks needs to be done.¹⁸

In nearly all public lectures, Adler never missed the opportunity to insert commentary about the concept that he saw as critical to the preservation and advancement of humankind, what he labeled "social interest." By social interest, Adler meant community feeling, or the concern and care for one's fellow human beings. He believed that developing and nurturing social interest in children was one of parents' highest responsibilities. The human family's survival depends upon it. James Gray observed:

For Adler, "The Three Great Problems of Life" (the formal subject of his lecture) are the development in children of social interest, the discovery of congenial work, and the establishment of successful love relationships. But by far the most important is the development of social interest. The whole of an individual's life depends on it. For only if children develop reliable social interest can they expect to make the contribution to their home, their community, or to the race which the unwritten law of human life requires them to make. Children who fail to develop social interest cannot satisfy the secret need of their nature and in their failure turn either toward neurosis or delinquency.¹⁹

In all likelihood, Adler left by train from St. Paul on Wednesday morning,

March 9, 1937, for his return trip to New York. His calendar book indicated that he resumed seeing clients in his Manhattan office on Thursday, March 11.²⁰ At times in life, we unknowingly encounter a person living his or her final days. Standing before us, he or she is full of life, giving no signal that death will soon knock at the door. And so it was with Alfred Adler and his visit to St. Paul.

Adler immediately began to devote significant effort to preparing for an upcoming lecture tour and a series of teaching engagements at universities in England and Scotland. He departed by ship for France in mid-April 1937 and began his tour of the British Isles in early May. His first appearance was a series of lectures at the Archbishop of York's Conference of more than 1,000 clergy in London, followed by appearances in Edinburgh, Exeter, Liverpool, Hull, and Manchester. During the mid-period of this tour, he gave a series of lectures at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland.

On Thursday morning, May 27, 1937, Adler went for his usual morning walk following breakfast at the Caledonia Hotel. He had given his first lectures at the University of Aberdeen in the days prior, and that day he was to resume teaching in the afternoon. Without warning during his morning walk in Aberdeen, Adler collapsed and died of a massive heart attack while strolling down Union Street. He was sixty-seven years old.

The audience at the St. Paul Women's City Club truly had a brush with greatness, just two months before Adler's passing. Time has embossed Adler's many accomplishments to the betterment of humankind. His books may be more widely read today than when he lived. His contributions in the fields of child guidance, parent training, and the education of mental health professionals survive and thrive today, evidenced by the success locally of the Adler Graduate School here in Minnesota, one of a number of Adlerian training centers in Canada, Europe, and the U.S.

Those present in 1937 heard a wise and gifted scholar. It is a tribute to the vision of the St. Paul Women's City Club that its members saw fit to invite him here.

Adler died known and honored, as many great men have died known and honored. But he also died loved, as few great men have ever been loved.

Phyllis Bottome²¹

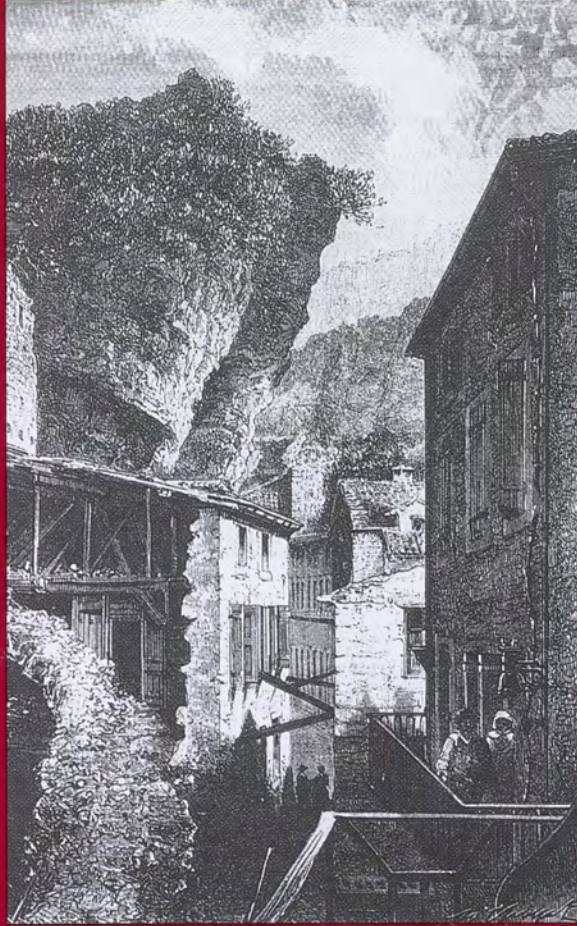
Roger A. Ballou, Ph.D., is dean of Students at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. He offers a special note of gratitude to Thomond R. O'Brien of St. Paul for his assistance in researching this article.

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The celebrated Roquefort caves of France where Roquefort cheese has been ripened since antiquity. Development of a Roquefort-like cheese in the 1930s at the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus, almost caused an international incident with France. See article about Minnesota's Blue Cheese beginning on page 4.

R.C.H.S.
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