

RAMSEY COUNTY
History
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All Under \$11,000—
The Growing Pains of
Two 'Queen Annes'

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The Life and Times of Cloud Man

A Dakota Leader Faces His Changing World

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George Catlin's painting, titled "Sioux Village, Lake Calhoun, near Fort Snelling." This is Cloud Man's village in what is now south Minneapolis as it looked to the artist when he visited Lake Calhoun in the summer of 1836. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of Mrs. Joseph Harrison, Jr. See article beginning on page 4.

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A Message from the Editorial Board

This issue of *Ramsey County History* opens with a groundbreaking biography and analysis of the Mdewakanton Dakota leader Cloud Man (*Mahpiyawicasta*). Written by Mark Dietrich, an author and historian who has published extensively about Native American peoples in Minnesota in the nineteenth century, this study provides as detailed an account as is possible of Cloud Man's life and his work with the Dakota in encouraging his kinsmen to adopt the farming practices of the white pioneers in the 1830s.

Although the records that survive from this time are fragmented and not as extensive as we would like, Dietrich gives us a compelling portrait of Cloud Man as a leader who truly labored for the best interests of the Dakota people, as he understood those interests. Confronted by the dwindling game population in the area around Fort Snelling and the possible starvation of the Dakota living near Lake Calhoun, especially during the winter months, Cloud Man was willing to try the whites' method of farming. For a brief time between 1829 and 1839, this effort achieved limited success, but Cloud Man's leadership role in this experiment has gone largely unacknowledged. Lieutenant Lawrence Taliaferro, the U.S. government's Indian agent at Fort Snelling, called Cloud Man a "good man." Running through Mark Dietrich's study of Cloud Man is the evidence that confirms that judgment of Cloud Man's character.

The Ramsey County Historical Society thanks the members of the Society's Native American Advisory Board (Gary Cavender, Gavrielle Strong, David Larsen, Linda Owen, Roger Buffalohead, Patty Thompson, Yvonne Leith, Lisa Owen, Dale Weston, Michael Scullin, Angela Cavender, and Leonard Wabasha) for their guidance in publishing Dietrich's manuscript and the helpful comments and observations they made prior to its publication.

Rounding out this issue of our magazine is Bob Garland's delightful account of the "growing up" of two adjacent houses that two members of his family, the brothers William and Field Garland, built at 856 and 846 Fairmount in St. Paul in 1890-91. Using architectural plans, building permits, contractors' invoices, and family papers, Garland takes us through all the changes, both in additions and subtractions, from the original plans that occurred during construction and how these changes affected the final layout and cost of the homes. Today both houses are mature members of the city's housing stock, but they continue to demonstrate the high quality of construction that was routinely done in the 1890s.

John M. Lindley, Chair, Editorial Board

Growing Up in St. Paul

All for Under \$11,000: 'Add-Ons,' 'Deductions'— The Growing Pains of Two 'Queen Annes'

Bob Garland

Ramsey County History has recorded many fine stories of young people "growing up in St. Paul." On the theory that buildings as well as people may "grow up," this story tells of the childhood days of two of St. Paul's fine old houses.

In approximately 1890, one William Garland acquired title to Lots 12, 13, and 14, of Block 14 of the Summit Park Addition to St. Paul. The Addition comprised the area from Dale Street to Lexington Avenue, extending three blocks south from Summit Avenue to Goodrich; an additional three blocks north of Summit to Laurel only between Victoria and Lexington; and three more blocks south of Goodrich, only between Grotto and Victoria.

Block 14 of this last six-block parcel included the southeast corner of Victoria and Fairmount, the latter street being called "Owasco" on the plat map prepared by Fowble & Fitz, Land Surveyors, of St. Paul. According to Donald Empson's book, *The Street Where You Live*, Fairmount (also spelled Fairmont in some of the older references) was named as such in 1883 and there is no mention of "Owasco," so perhaps the map is an old one or was not available to Empson.

William Garland planned the construction of two large houses on his new property. One, for himself, would be on Lot 14, the corner lot, now 854/856 Fairmount. The other (now 846 Fairmount) would be on Lot 12, with the vacant Lot 13 comprising the side yards of the two homes. The second house was for William's younger brother Field, with whom he was associated in St. Paul in various businesses. They manufactured trunks and excelsior, a packaging product made from shredded wood. William also represented the Chicago and Northwestern Railway as a land agent, which may have made it even more logical that he would handle the acquisition of the real

estate and the construction of the houses.

The first step in construction was the preparation of plans by Diedrik Omeyer & Martin Thori, architects, of 29 Chamber of Commerce Building, Sixth and Robert, St. Paul. The family papers and records, on which this article is largely based, include an agreement dated December 9, 1890, which provided for architectural and construction supervision services at a cost of \$200. The two houses were to be of two stories plus attics, and were in what we now term the "Queen Anne" style, with the typical decorative

bric-a-brac, high roofs, dormers, and so forth. Both would have large front porches, small back porches, and large, one-story woodsheds, also called summer kitchens, extending from the back of the two-story portions. The exterior siding would be wood and shingles, and the interior walls would be plastered and papered. In addition, each house would have a two-story barn on the alley between Fairmount and Osceola. For William's corner house, access to the barn would be from the alley; however, Field planned a narrow driveway from Fairmount, just east of his house. At the time of construction there were few houses to the west of Victoria Street.

The floor plans with this article show the layout of William's house at 856



Omeyer & Thori, Architect's sketch of William Garland's house at 856 Fairmount Avenue in St. Paul. All drawings and photographs with this article are from the author.

Fairmount. Field's house was substantially a reversed or "mirror image" of these plans, with the two front rooms on the second floor finished as a single, slightly smaller room, and without the porch along the east side of the building. The rooms included in each house a parlor, front hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen and pantries on the first floor; and a bathroom and bedrooms, sometimes termed "chambers," on the second floor.

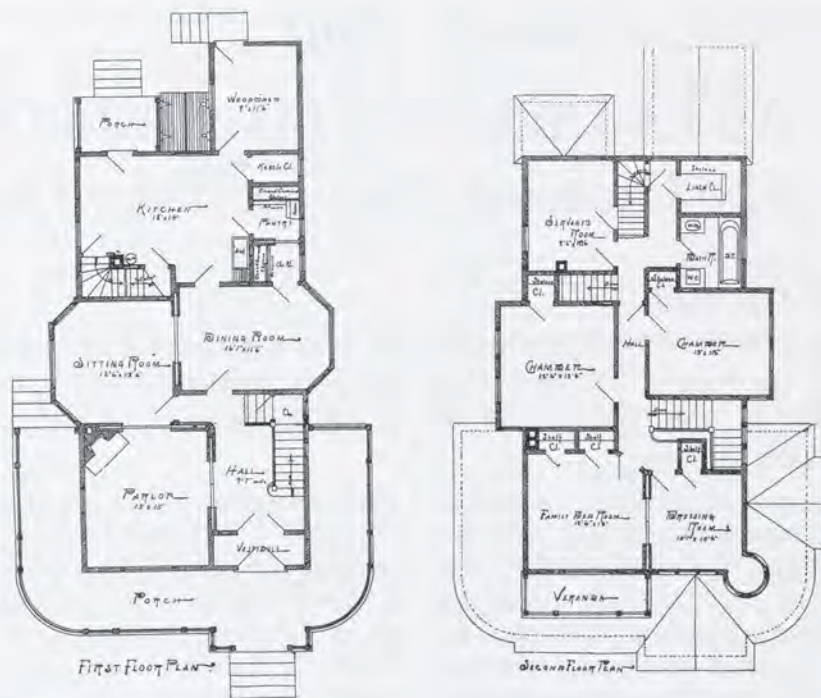
Obviously, the work of the architects must have begun before December, because on November 6, 1890 William entered into an agreement with Carl P. Wildung, contractor, of 323 Von Minden Street, St. Paul. (Von Minden once was a short east/west street east of West Seventh near Western.) The agreement covered the excavation of basements for the two houses, the construction of the limestone foundations, and the posts, girders, joists and boards of the first floor. The contract refers to plans prepared by Omeyer & Thori.

Wildung also was required to box up and close all cellar openings and to do all of this work by November 20th. Probably William wanted construction to continue during the winter of 1890-91 and no doubt work already had started under a verbal agreement, for it appears that Wildung would be a paragon of construction speed in building the two basements in little over a week. For this he was paid \$940.

Building permits were obtained on November 9, 1890. They provided for the two houses, each estimated to cost \$5,000. The main structures were described as being 36 feet wide, 46 1/2 feet long, and 36 feet high. The actual plans show slightly different dimensions, the length including the attached woodshed being 67 1/2 feet.

William and Carl completed their arrangements for the construction of the two houses by entering into a formal Builders Contract on December 6, 1890. The contract was on a preprinted standard form made by the Pioneer Press Co., "printers, stationers, and legal blanks," of St. Paul (still St. Paul's newspaper). The total amount due Wildung for the construction of the two houses was to be \$6,770. Pay-

The floor plan of 856 Fairmount.



ment was to be made in installments as various phases of the work were completed. William was obligated to heat the buildings at the point at which this would be necessary to dry plaster, another indication that winter-spring construction was planned. Martin Thori witnessed the agreement.

William executed additional construction agreements at almost the same time. On December 8, 1890, he contracted with Wolterstorff, Haskell & Co., 208 East Seventh St., St. Paul, for his heating systems. These were two No 16. Register Pattern Economy Steel Furnaces. Heat was by coal and convection air, with registers in the various rooms of the first and second floors. The total cost for both houses of furnaces, heating pipes, dampers, registers, and so forth was \$450, with William's house assigned a slightly larger amount, \$230, because it had six second story rooms instead of five.

On December 11, 1890, William contracted with McQuillan Bros., 179 Western Avenue, St. Paul (another St. Paul firm still in business), for plumbing and gas fitting work, including water and sewer connections, all in compliance with the plans of Omeyer & Thori and the city plumbing ordinance. The gas fitting work

covered lighting and probably the cooking stoves, which were combination gas and wood burning models, one of which was still in use fifty years later. The cost of the work was to be \$594 for the two houses. There was, of course, no electrical contractor, for the houses did not receive electrical service until a number of years after their completion.

It appears that even with the (when reviewed 110 years later) almost unbelievably low costs of construction in 1890-91, William was concerned with his costs. On January 2, 1891, he and Carl Wildung were already agreeing to changes from the architects' plans. Changes were made in the design of the brick chimneys, saving \$60. Wainscoting in the dining rooms was eliminated at a saving of \$50. Two pairs of sliding doors were eliminated from his brother Field's house, saving \$60, a pattern consistent with the overall approach that the second house would be slightly smaller and more modest. Perhaps Field, fifteen years younger, had less money. Other deductions would save another \$215.

There were also, as usual in house building, "add-ons." William wanted sturdy houses and therefore was willing to pay for

2 x 10 second floor joists instead of 2 x 8's, and for 2 x 8 attic floor joists instead of 2 x 6's. This cost a princely \$28, a sum which would not buy one of the joists today.

William splurged in one area. His plan for his own house, on the corner of Victoria and Fairmount, included a typical round "Queen Anne" tower or turret at the northwest corner of the second floor. Under the January 2 agreement, he added "bend" or curved glass for the windows of his turret, at an additional cost of \$30. Strangely, he also specified straight storm windows and screens on the inside of the curved windows costing another \$30, a not very satisfactory sounding-arrangement.

The January 2, 1891 agreement also provided for exterior painting and glazing to be done by R. D. Czeilkowitz at a cost of \$130. A later agreement, signed May 11, 1891 with C. O. Rice & Company of St. Paul, provided for the interior decorating of both houses for a total of \$146.

Construction, including numerous other verbal "change orders," all too familiar to modern home owners, evidently proceeded at an excellent pace, remembering that Wildung's carpenters had no power tools or modern labor saving materials. On June 26, 1891 Carl Wildung gave William statements covering the largely completed job. These included dozens of items not covered by the original contracts, which give a fascinating insight into 1890s detailed building costs. For example, in March William had to pay to have someone "fire" (i.e. operate the heating systems) in the two houses for five and one-half nights to dry the plaster. This set him back a total of \$6.88, or 62 1/2 cents per night per house. Another five nights of this cost him \$4 and that included woodcutting as well. Other labor costs ranged from 17 1/2 to 30 cents per hour, the lowest rate being for someone who had to spend thirteen hours watering newly planted trees. All an excellent argument for the efforts of the Building Trades Unions since 1891.

Material prices were equally low by current standards. For example, an additional 120 feet of cove molding cost 90 cents. Labor and material for two basement toilet enclosures and two oak toilet seats cost a total of \$7.50. Four pairs of

brass hinges cost 40 cents. One 26 x 44-inch stained glass window cost \$16. Construction of a limestone wall along the length of the Victoria Street side of William's lot cost only \$240.

Some of the add-ons may well have been wise investments. For some reason, Field had the basement of 846 Fairmount excavated six inches deeper than specified by the plans. This may be the reason that in the terribly cold winter of 1936, the water line to Field's house did not freeze, while that to William's house did.

Wildung's final billing of June 26, also included the costs of the two barns, \$1,095 and fences, outbuildings, etc. There were add-ons for these buildings as well, including provision for water connections. Horses were to be kept and, apparently, chickens also, and both had to drink.

There were, happily, a few more credits in addition to those covered by the January 2 changes. Among these, Field again economized by leaving out a stained glass window, a saving of \$46. Foregoing a window in the china closets saved \$15, and omitting the moth-protecting cedar lumber from the linen closets saved \$20. One wonders whether Mrs. William and Mrs. Field (who were, strangely enough, mother and daughter) knew of this last change.

Sometime after final completion in late 1891, William, or someone in his office, prepared final cost statements. These separated the costs as between William's house (856 Fairmount) and Field's (846 Fairmount), for during construction William had handled all of the billings and payments as a single account. The detailed statements from Wildung and the other contractors made an accurate division of costs possible, although in several cases William assigned a larger percentage of certain shared cost items to his house instead of dividing them equally. Field's final cost was \$4,919.09 and William's, for a slightly larger and fancier house, was \$6,065.22.

William had less than fifteen years to enjoy his home before he died in 1905. A few years later, as his wife and one of his sons also were deceased, and his other son lived in the west, his remaining daughter, Sue Garland, thought changes

were necessary. She decided to move next door to the home of her uncle/brother-in-law, Field, and to convert 856 Fairmount to a rental duplex, now 854/856. Family tradition is that this was a long and unsatisfactory process, possibly because the remodeling contractor was allowed to live in the building, rent free, while the work was going on. The building also lost its distinctive turret and summer kitchen in the process.

Later, in 1935, the barn at 856 Fairmount was remodeled and enlarged as a home for the author's parents, and became the house at 170 South Victoria Street. At the same time, 854/856 Fairmount received its current basement garage opening on Victoria Street.

Field died in 1924, but Sue Garland continued to live at 846 Fairmount with her cousin/niece Edith Garland until the 1940s when both houses were sold. At about that time, 846 Fairmount lost most of its distinctive wrap-around front porch, but otherwise still appears largely as Omeyer & Thori designed it.

In the year 2001, both houses still look well. This is a credit to Omeyer & Thori, Carl Wildung, McQuillan Brothers, and the other subcontractors and all of their tradesmen, and to their recent and current owners. Perhaps also a little credit is due to the original owners, William, and Field, who started the houses "growing up" in St. Paul.

Sources

Many thanks to the Northwest Architectural Archive of the University of Minnesota's Andersen Library (floor plans); the Minnesota Historical Society (information from the 1890 *St. Paul City Directory*); and the City of St. Paul Office of License, Inspections, and Environmental Protection (building permit information and other good suggestions). The rest of the information comes from our family papers.

Bob Garland is a retired financial executive and a lifelong resident of Ramsey County. His various writings have appeared in technical journals and in the Journal of Irreproducible Results. He also is the author of two novels: Derflinger and R.I.P. 37E.



Field Garland's adjoining, and somewhat less elaborate, house at 846 Fairmount. Photo from the author of article beginning on page 25.

R.C.H.S.
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