

RAMSEY COUNTY  
**History**  
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*Members of the Junior League of St. Paul rehearsing for the 1936 Junior League Cabaret, one of the League's more entertaining fund raisers. Left to right are Mrs. John Driscoll, Molly Turner, Betty Evans, Betty Scandrett, Betty Fobes, Edith Shull, Clotilde Irvine, Mrs. Thomas Wheeler, Alice Bartles and Betty Rugg. See article on the Junior League's seventy-five years of service to the community beginning on page 4.*



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# RAMSEY COUNTY History

Volume 27, Number 2 Summer, 1992

## CONTENTS

- 3 Letters
- 4 The Junior League's First 75 Years  
Follies, 'Friendly Visiting' and Women's Changing Roles  
*Garneth O. Peterson*
- 12 Hope Chests and Honeymoons—  
Marriages in America Still Wedded to Tradition  
*Tamara Truer*
- 14-15 A Home Wedding for the 'Timid Bride'
- 16 Growing Up in St. Paul  
'Father Begged Feed for His Animals'  
*Margaret Manship*
- 21 A Matter of Time
- 25 Books, Etc.
- 27 What's Historic About This Site?  
The Cyrus B. Cobb House In White Bear Lake

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## A Message from the Editorial Board

In the early 1960s, a few schools on the cutting edge of higher education began to give special attention to the issue of race relations, and the contributions of racial and ethnic groups in national and local history. By the early 1970s, the contributions of women and the lives of average citizens, aside from those in the labor movement, were also singled out as subfields deserving special focus in the curriculum. However, those fields have long been recognized by state and county historical societies as worthy of attention. When the Editorial Board set about to expand the size of *Ramsey County History* and enhance its scholarly depth and breadth, the magazine already had a tradition of articles in these fields, which we determined to continue.

This issue contains three articles which contribute to the field of women's and family history. Scheduled for future issues are two articles in the areas of minority and ethnic history: the contributions of the Mexican and Jewish American communities to the history of St. Paul, as well as an article on the High Bridge, that vital link to the West Side, a neighborhood that was home to both communities.

—Thomas C. Buckley, member of the Editorial Board



# A Matter of Time

## 1852 140 YEARS AGO

► America was in the throes of election year balloting in June of 1852. The Democrats held their convention in Baltimore, Maryland, where fights erupted among Georgia and Mississippi delegates over who would be nominated. For three days delegates struggled to nominate a candidate for president. Leading candidates were Lewis Cass, William Marcy, James Buchanan and Stephen A. Douglas. However, when the convention ended, Franklin Pierce had emerged as the winner, with William King as his running mate. The Whigs selected General Winfield Scott.

Pierce won. He assumed the presidency during a period of prosperity such as the United States had never before known. Rail lines were stretching out toward the west where farmers were growing more and more wheat for Eastern and European markets; Texas and the states north of the Ohio river had become the center of an enormous grazing industry. Southern planters were expanding their cotton production. New industries were growing rapidly in the East and the rising incomes in the West and South had created a rich market for manufactured goods.

Minnesota had become a territory in 1849 and was sharing in the boom, as settlers poured into St. Paul from steamboats that docked daily at the Upper and Lower Landings. The effect on St. Paul was immediate and startling. Within one three-week period the village doubled in size, as seventy new buildings were erected.

The impact on the Native American people of the region was tragic, however, as they failed to share in the general prosperity. By 1852 negotiations had been completed for the ceding of their land so that it could be opened to white settlement. In March of that year, the

*Minnesota Pioneer* reported, there was talk of a gathering of Minnesota residents for the purpose of urging the federal government to ratify the Treaties of Traverse des Sioux, Mendota and Pembina. Several leading citizens, including James M. Goodhue, the *Pioneer's* editor, drafted an address and memorial to the United States Senate proposing the ratification.

► Meanwhile, in St. Paul, a new horse boat ferry was to begin operating from the Lower Landing.

► And there were other matters of interest. It appears, the *Minnesota Pioneer* observed in a front page story, that divorce was becoming a movement in married circles. The Supreme Court, the newspaper reported, in its current term had "untied several hard knots by permitting the dissolution of marriage ties."

► Perhaps there was no connection between the two events, but the *Pioneer* also announced that "concrete plans have been established to create the Minnesota Female Institution. The Reverend Benjamin F. Hoyt, the Connecticut-born Methodist preacher, chaired a meeting of the Friends of Education and J. W. Bass was appointed secretary of the organization. Messrs. Oakes, Edward Duffield Neill and Bass were appointed to supervise construction of the building.

► Out in New York, a ticket to an Italian opera at Castle Garden cost about 50 cents. On the other hand, admission to Barnum's American Museum, with its 100 some trained animals and a tightrope walker, was 35 cents for adults and 12 1/2 cents for children under ten years of age. In St. Paul, fine calf boots were selling for \$6 but the best bargains were listed at \$4. A room in a boarding house cost \$3 a week. Whiskey by the barrel was 25 to 28 cents a gallon and coffee cost 11 cents a pound.

## 1892 100 YEARS AGO

► From France came news so alarming that the article about it spanned half a page in the *Pioneer Press*. The lease on the casino at Monte Carlo was due to expire, the paper reported, and the Prince of Monaco had refused to renew it.

► It was an election year again in the United States, and President Benjamin Harrison was in Rochester, New York, in May to speak at a ceremony dedicating a soldiers' and sailors' monument. His running mate: Whitney Reed of New York. Harrison, the grandson of William Henry Harrison, ninth president of the United States, was running for his second term on the Republican ticket. He lost this one to Grover Cleveland, the Democratic nominee who was seeking his second non-consecutive term of office, the only president to do so. Harrison had defeated Cleveland in the 1884 campaign, but in 1892 discontented Western and Middle Western farmers had flocked to the new populist party. Cleveland won with 277 electoral votes to Harrison's 145.

► The two-masted schooner, *James A. Fisher*, which sank in quicksand off the New Jersey coast in 1843, will soon be afloat again, the *San Francisco Chronicle* announced in June, 1892. The vessel is in remarkably good condition, the newspaper added. According to the account, the *Fisher* sank so quickly that the crew's clothing and the ship's entire cargo were lost, as were the captain and several crew members who froze to death.

► Disastrous fires and storms struck the Midwest that spring. In Superior, Wisconsin, nineteen families were homeless after fire wiped out the Allouze block, site of the finest apartment houses in the city. Estimated losses were to reach \$120,000. And in Owatonna, Kelly Robson & Co. suffered \$25,000 in damages



in a fire that apparently started when spilled oil came in contact with open flames from a heater. There were no injuries, and the stock was partially insured. Over in Minneapolis, the McMullen and Company's saw mill at the foot of Third Avenue Southeast burned down, taking the life of watchman Timothy Girard. Damages were set at \$90,000. Off in Kansas, a tornado a mile-and-a-half long swept through two counties, demolishing trees, barns, farm houses and entire villages and killing at least twenty-eight people.

► Out in Browns Valley, Minnesota, the saddening aspects of white settlement of Indian lands was being played out. The federal government's special allotting agent, H. S. Morris, announced that Sisseton reservation lands, ceded by the Sisseton and Wahpeton bands, were ready for settlers. According to the *Daily Pioneer Press*, 5,000 homesteads of 160 acres each were available, with filing fees set at \$2.

► In Janesville, Wisconsin, a bizarre rain of fish startled farmers a few miles north of the town. The fish were small, none more than two inches in length, but they fell by the thousands, according to news reports, in the course of a rain storm. When the storm ended, the ground was covered with common "shiner" minnows which the farmers gathered up for bait.

► The African American people of St. Paul, along with other African Americans throughout the nation, set aside a Tuesday in May as a day of fasting and prayer to forward their goal of achieving full rights as citizens "for the colored man," the *Pioneer Press* announced. Special services were scheduled at Pilgrim Baptist Church and at Turner Hall.

► Tragedy struck in St. Paul in June when Joseph L. Forepaugh put an end to his life. His body was found near the Selby Avenue bridge, a bullet in his head and a revolver in his hand. The former senior member of the firm of Forepaugh and Tarbox, he had been missing from his home at 320 Summit Avenue. Forepaugh was fifty-two years of age. He left an estate of more than \$300,000.

► Tickets for an evening at the

Metropolitan Opera House in St. Paul, according to the *Pioneer Press*, cost 15, 25 and 50 cents.

► "Ganative," the "wonderful Spanish remedy," was selling with a written guarantee to cure all nervous diseases, including weak memory, loss of brain power and headaches. Dr. Leslie E. Kelley was promoting his "Double Chloride of Gold Remedies" as a cure for "liquor, opium and tobacco habits."

► Fur coats sold, on the installment plan, for \$40 to \$70 and an eleven-room house a block from the courthouse could be rented for \$50 a month.

## 1917 75 YEARS AGO

► With World War I in its third year, the Somme front in France was the scene of the greatest battle in two years. The Germans were retreating after the British and French ripped open the enemy's entire line along a sixty-mile front. Officers of a Dutch freighter reported spotting a "baby" German submarine near the Scilly Islands off Land's End in southwestern England. It was believed to be the type used for blockades.

► The Associated Press reported from Washington, D. C., that twenty-three states became "bone dry" at midnight on July 1, the hour the Reed amendment took effect. This was the amendment that prohibited the shipment of liquor into any territory where its manufacture or sale is prohibited.

► California established the first aerial fire fighting company in the world in San Diego. The city bought two 100-horsepower air planes to carry powerful chemical fire extinguishers.

► The Twin Cities experienced their hottest day of the year—so far—on June 1 when temperatures stood at 89 degrees. Previous high was May 18 at 86 degrees. It had cooled off by July 9, however, when the maximum was 74 degrees and the minimum 62. Light winds were from the east in a cloudy sky.

► Commencement week at the University of Minnesota began May 29, with President Northrup giving the address. Field day followed the next day with young people competing in various athletic events.

► Ty Cobb hit a home run with the bases loaded in the fifth inning of the second game of a double header between Detroit and St. Louis. And the Boston Braves' Hank Gawdy retired from baseball to train with the Ohio National Guard.

► A 1914 seven-passenger Studebaker "in fine condition" was advertised for "\$375 cash or trade for a new Ford." Coffee was priced at 63 cents for three pounds; two cans of pork and beans sold for 25 cents; "quality" steaks were 18 cents a pound; a pack of cigarettes 25 cents.

## 1942 50 YEARS AGO

► War news dominated the headlines again. The British began a third bombing raid over Essen, Germany, forty-eight hours after the Germans had bombed London. More than 1,000 bombers took part in the Essen raid. The Germans, meanwhile, had launched a third offensive in Russia, its target a predominantly agricultural region of the Ukraine. A fleet of United States bombers attacked oil installations on Roumania's Black Sea coast in an attempt to diminish Hitler's "gas tank." A new armor-plated Japanese bomber, with a speed of 240 miles an hour, was controlling the skies over northern Australia. And a U. S. bomber on a photo trip destroyed a German submarine off the eastern seaboard. Crew members reported that there seemed to be no survivors.

► A tragic event in American history appeared in newspaper accounts for the spring of 1942. The papers reported that the army's evacuation of Japanese American residents from the Pacific coast had neared the half-way mark as Lieutenant General John I. Dewitt ordered the removal of an additional 5,100 Japanese from three southern California counties. This brought the total number of Japanese removed to 45,318, out of an estimated total of 112,000.

► Meat rationing was announced in Washington. Headlines in the St. Paul newspapers reported allowances of 2½ pounds of meat per person per week. Hamburger cost 19½ cents a pound. "High quality" fur coats were advertised at \$66; a 1942 Ford with radio and heater



was \$1,000, and a 1941 Dodge Luxury Liner Sedan was listed at \$899. Rooms with board were \$8.50 a week, and an unfurnished house could be rented for \$26.50. For those who needed to travel, round trip bus fare to Chicago was \$11.90; to New York, \$32.40. This was at a time when wool sweaters cost \$2.19.

## 1967 25 YEARS AGO

► The build-up in southeast Asia continued. Premier Nguyen Cao of South Vietnam announced that an additional 600,000 United States troops would be needed to counter increased North Vietnamese insurgency. U. S. ground forces currently numbered 462,000.

► At the same time, half a dozen senators warned the Johnson administration that further increased military activity against North Vietnam might foreclose the last possibility of a peaceful settlement and bring Communist China and the Soviet Union into the war. Senator John Cooper was reported to believe that a reduction in bombing would serve as a new peace initiative.

► Back in the Twin Cities, more than 600 people staged a fifteen-minute protest against the cities' new rent controls.

► Lou Spadia, who joined the 49ers as an office boy in 1946, became president of the club as part of a realignment of duties in the organization.

► Mickey Mantle made a triumphant entrance into the exclusive 500 Club, whose membership so far had been limited to six. Ahead of Mantle was Mel Ott with 511, Ted Williams with 521, Jimmy Fox with 534, Willie Mays with 546 and Babe Ruth with 714.

► At the movies, George C. Scott and Peter O'Toole were starring in "The Bible"; Mary Tyler Moore, Carol Channing and James Fox in "Thoroughly Modern Millie"; Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in "The Taming of the Shrew."

*Adapted from research compiled by Theresa Beskar, James Egan, Nancy Farrell, Kevin Herras, Robb Larsen, James Lehtola, Paul Nagel, Dean Severn, James J. Tschida, Angela Williams and James Young, history students of Professor Thomas C. Buckley at the University of Minnesota.*



*Wedding gifts set out for the guests' inspection. However, Godey's Lady's Book objected to such lavish displays.*

### *Weddings from page 13*

dings held in St. Paul in the early twentieth century:

1915 . . . The marriage of Miss Helen Aberle, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Aberle, and Fred Z. Salomon of St. Louis, Mo., took place at the home of the bride's parents at 7 p.m. yesterday. A small company of friends witnessed the ceremony, which was performed by Rabbi Isaac L. Rypins . . . The bride was married in her traveling suit of blue gabardine. She wore a small blue straw hat . . . Prior to the ceremony, the "Meditation from Thais" was played on the organ and violin. The processional was the wedding march from "Lohengrin." During the ceremony, Gounod's "Ave Marie" was played. The recessional was Mendelssohn's march . . . An improvised altar of palms, ferns, bridal wreath and vases of snapdragons, flanked on either side by a tall cathedral taper burning in a single candlestick, had been erected in the drawing room, and there the nuptial vows were spoken.

1921 . . . The home of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford J. Menz was the scene of a prettily appointed wedding Wednesday evening, when Mrs. Menz's sister, Miss Hazel Margaret Willis, was married to Harry Buell Fullmer. The ceremony was performed in the living room before the fireplace which was banked with palms and tall vases of peonies. Lighted tapers in silver candelabra and baskets of peonies tied with pink tulle adorned the mantle . . . Rev. Peter Clare of Minneapolis performed the ceremony in

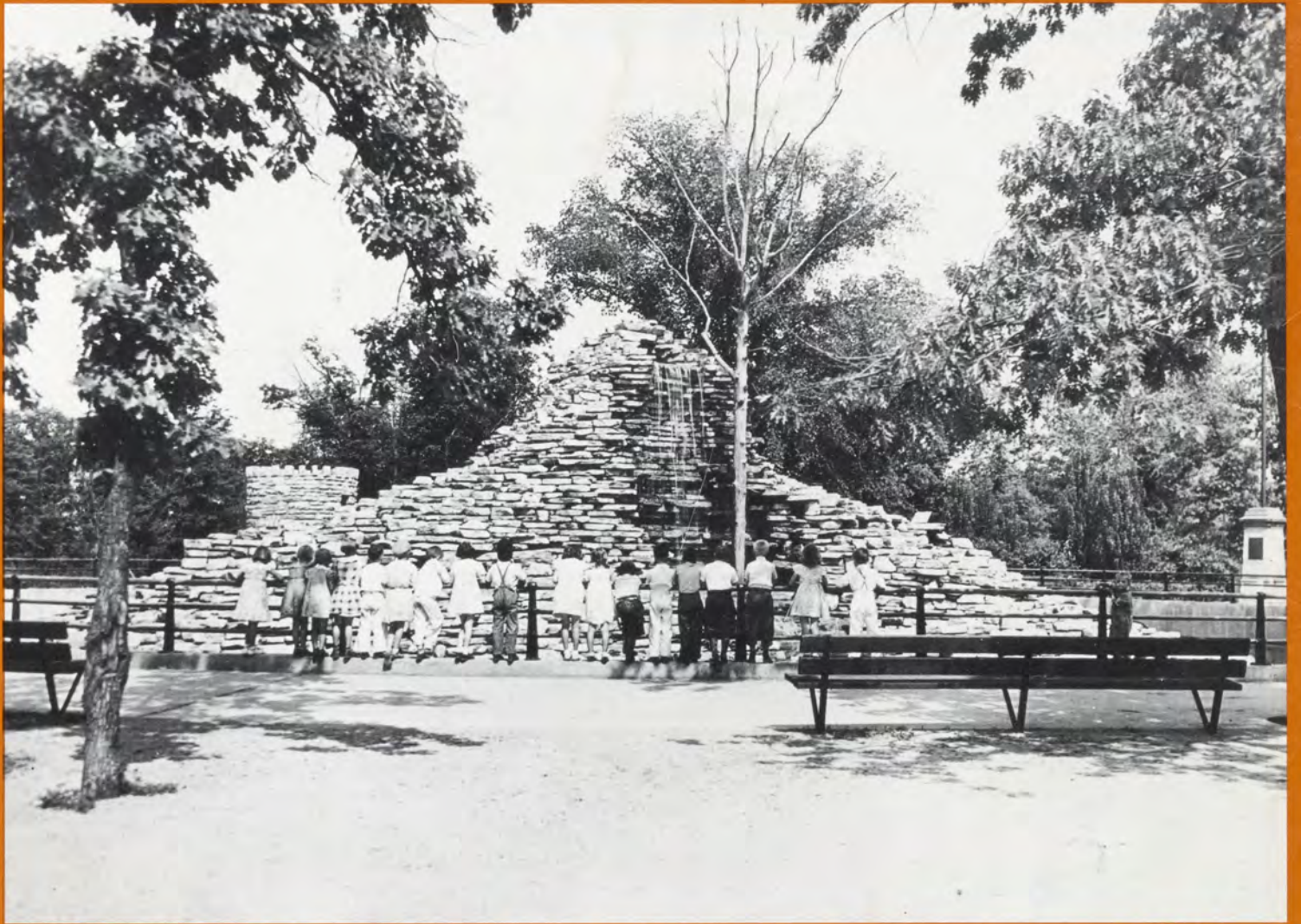
the presence of relatives and immediate friends . . . The bride, who entered alone, wore a frock of imported white organdie over white satin . . . A pink color scheme was carried out in the dining room . . . Mr. and Mrs. Fullmer left for a trip on the Great Lakes and points in the east. The bride's traveling costume was a sport suit of heather mixture Jersey with which she is wearing an amber felt hat embroidered in Harding blue.

Whether a wedding was held at home, or, as the twentieth century progressed, more commonly in a church, the role of the wedding gifts was the greatest change. Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, wedding guests usually were not expected to bring gifts, although some cultures did have a tradition of giving money to the couple. The families provided whatever help the couple needed for their new life, as evidenced by the hope chest. However, by the turn-of-the-century gift giving was not only expected, but was seen as a statement of the wealth of the giver and as a tribute to the bride and her family.

Gifts were seldom of a practical nature, but stressed luxury and leisure. They centered around kitchen or dining items for the bride's use in these exclusively feminine territories of entertaining in the home. One turn-of-the-century bride received, among other gifts, a chocolate pitcher, a cut glass berry dish, a pair of painted cologne bottles, silver sugar tongs and a bonbon spoon.

As can be seen by the photos, gifts were lavishly displayed during the wedding





Visitors lining the railing at Monkey Island, the Como Zoo's enduringly popular attraction. This photograph was taken around 1940. See the article on *Growing Up in St. Paul*, beginning on page 16.

**R.C.H.S.**  
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