

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY



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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.

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THE GIBBS HOUSE

at 2097 West Larpenteur Avenue, Falcon Heights, is owned and maintained by the Ramsey County Historical Society as a restored farm 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.