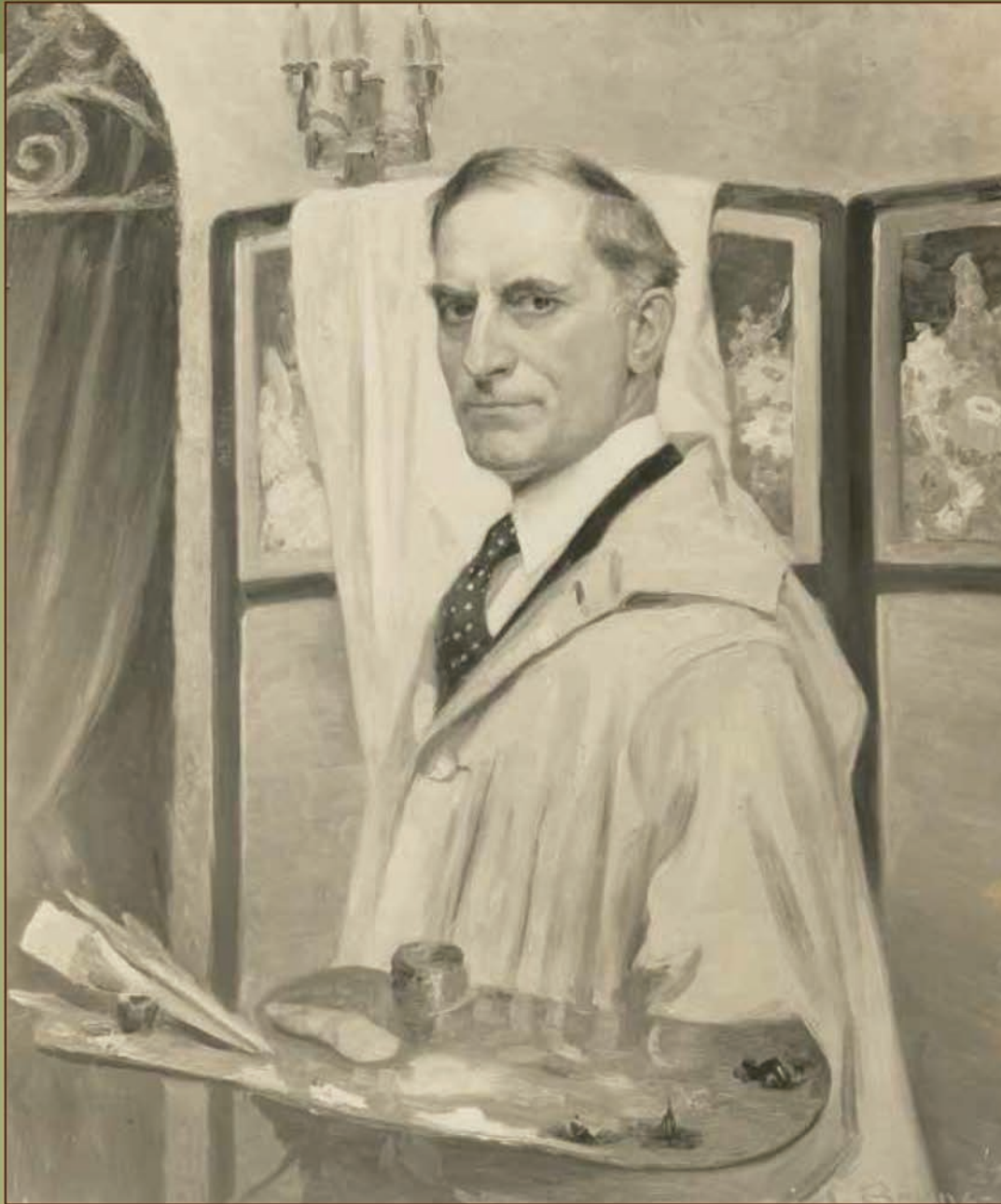


Madame la Doctress in France

**"Dr. Nellie:" One Physician's
Experience Overseas in the Great War**

JOHANNES R. ALLERT, PAGE 12



Carl Bohnen self-portrait

A St. Paul Artist Behind Enemy Lines

Carl Bohnen, World War I, and Americanism

STEVE TRIMBLE, PAGE 1

By the Numbers . . .

In the World War I years,
the number of Minnesotans who

registered for the draft
541,607

were classified as fit for service
400,464

served in the military
118,497

were drafted
76,718

served in Europe
57,413

died in the war (civilians and military)
3,480

served and died from disease
(mostly influenza)
2,175

killed in action
1,432

SOURCES: Franklin F. Holbrook and Livia Appel,
Minnesota in the War with Germany, 2 vols.
(St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1932)
and David Thompson.

ON THE COVER



A black and white photograph of Bohnen's 1937 self-portrait in oil. Photo courtesy of Steve Trimble.

Contents

- 1 *A St. Paul Artist Behind Enemy Lines:*
Carl Bohnen, World War I and Americanism
STEVE TRIMBLE
- 12 *Madame la Doctoresse in France:*
"Dr. Nellie:" A Physician's Experience in the Great War
JOHANNES R. ALLERT
- 21 *"A Distinction Highly Prized and Not Easily Won:"*
Upholding the Amateur Ideal at the Minnesota Boat Club
SARAH M. RISSER

Message from the Editorial Board

World War I, then known as the Great War, had an impact on Ramsey County in unexpected ways. Steve Trimble explores how Carl Bohnen, a well-known local artist, journeyed to Germany in 1914 to further his career and was subsequently caught up in that conflict. Further, his experiences after he returned to St. Paul in the summer of 1917 highlights the anti-German sentiment in Minnesota at the time. Dr. Nellie Barsness was the first woman doctor to graduate from the University of Minnesota medical school and later practiced in St. Paul. As profiled by Johannes Allert, the U.S. Army would not enlist women who volunteered as doctors, but the French military gladly accepted her service. Thus she was able to help many soldiers deal with traumatic injuries during her time overseas. On a lighter note, this issue also shows how Ramsey County residents have been using the Mississippi River for recreation for generations. Sarah Risser traces the early history of the Minnesota Boat Club, which established its headquarters on Raspberry Island in 1870. Although the Club went through some challenging times, Risser shows that rowing on the Mississippi persisted through the years because dedicated amateurs have always valued their sport.

Anne Cowie
Chair, Editorial Board

The Ramsey County Historical Society thanks Board Member James A. Stolpestad and affiliate AHS Legacy Fund for supporting the updated design of this magazine. Publication of Ramsey County History is also supported in part by a gift from Clara M. Claussen and Frieda H. Claussen in memory of Henry H. Cowie Jr. and by a contribution from the late Reuel D. Harmon.

“A Distinction Highly Prized and Not Easily Won”

Upholding the Amateur Ideal at the Minnesota Boat Club

SARAH M. RISSER

John W. L. Corning was one of a number of enterprising young men drawn to St. Paul in the late 1860s and '70s who saw lucrative business and financial opportunities in Minnesota's untapped natural resources and growing transportation network. Corning arrived from New York in 1868 to work for the rapidly growing wholesale druggists, Noyes Brothers. Corning had in his possession a new, fragile, paper single rowing shell, which he shipped by the safest, if not the most direct route. He sent it down the Atlantic Coast to New Orleans and then by barge up the Mississippi River.

A crowd gathered on the Wabasha Street Bridge to watch him launch his delicate boat on the Mississippi for the first time, skeptical that he could stay afloat in such a narrow and tippy vessel. He did, and the crowd was delighted. Rowing was enjoying a nationwide surge in popularity. If the sport established a foothold in the rough and tumble frontier town of St. Paul, it would be a welcome addition, opening new opportunities to embrace athleticism, and the heady new national trend would undoubtedly add a bit of Eastern sophistication to the city.

Excitement over Rowing

Corning kept his rowing shell in a warehouse at the foot of Jackson Street until he and a small group of up-and-comers organized The Minnesota Boat Club (MBC) on March 1, 1870, the first formal athletic organization in the state. The founding members were aspiring young businessmen, bankers, and lawyers, most of whom were in their twenties.¹ Over half of the club's first members were recent arrivals to St. Paul. Many had attended colleges on the East Coast where rowing was popular.² Ambitious and optimistic, the founders of the MBC intended to take full advantage of the post-Civil War eco-

nomie expansion that, together with extended railroad lines, offered promising business opportunities in the city.

Members housed their small fleet in a 45' x 15' floating boathouse moored to the foot of the Robert Street Bridge below the St. Paul & Sioux City Railroad's freight depot.³ This first boathouse was little more than a leaky scow and it has been said that during MBC's early years, members got as much exercise pumping water out of their rickety boathouse as they did handling an oar.

As MBC's first members logged miles in small boats on the Mississippi and refined their technique, national excitement for rowing grew to an all-time high. Enthusiasm had been building through the 1860s, due to the rise of professional rowers who had become national celebrities and were considered the folk heroes of the day. The professionals filled a need for public entertainment, racing for prize money ranging anywhere from \$25 for beginners in heavy work boats to \$5,000 or more for a contest with an experienced oarsman. By the early 1870s, interest in amateur rowing was following a similar trend with the rapid westward expansion of new clubs. According to historian Thomas Mendenhall, the burgeoning interest in rowing was a historical accident. Cities were expanding and people had more leisure and greater affluence. The railroad and the telegraph worked to make rowing regional, bringing competitors and crowds together, broadcasting results, and producing a half-dozen sporting weeklies to stimulate rivalry and delight the fans.⁴

Before 1872, the boundary between professionals and amateurs was unclear. Throughout the 1850s, amateurs occasionally entered a professional race to vie for the purse. As the sport grew in popularity throughout the 1860s, professionals came under increasing pressure to



Above, from top to bottom:

J. W. L. Corning, one of the founders of the Minnesota Boat Club. *All photos in this article are courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society unless otherwise noted.*

Edward H. Cutler, a founder of MBC.

Charles P. Noyes, another founder of MBC.



Above, from top to bottom:
 Thomas Dillon O'Brien,
 MBC member.
 Leavitt Corning, son of
 J.W. L. Corning, an enthu-
 siastic member of MBC.
 James D. Denegre,
 another strong supporter
 of MBC.
 Edwin A. Jaggard helped
 solicit funds for MBC.

entertain the public. This, in turn, attracted professional gamblers who were willing and able to boost public interest by setting the odds. These gamblers soon became linked to a number of race-fixing scandals. They were accused of manipulating rather than simply estimating odds and tainting the image of professional rowing.⁵ Tensions grew between money-making professionals and amateurs who wanted the sport to be enjoyed and appreciated exclusively for its beauty and required skill. Things came to a head at the Schuylkill River Navy's Amateur Regatta on June 13 and 14, 1872, in Philadelphia, a regatta so popular that it required heats to be staged for the first time.⁶ At this regatta, the amateur status of many race entrants was called into question, causing confusion and drawing attention to the need to clearly demarcate the boundary between amateurs and professionals. This prompted the formation of the National Association of Amateur Oarsmen (NAAO) in the fall of 1872.

What Is an Amateur?

The NAAO's first order of business was to clearly define an amateur oarsman. Its definition was anchored by the requirement that an amateur's livelihood must be such that it would prevent him from training on a full-time basis as a professional would.⁷ This American definition was less restrictive than the English definition, which disqualified any mechanic, artisan, or laborer—essentially anyone who worked with their hands. In England, amateur rowing was to remain an activity primarily for “gentlemen,” while in America rowing for pleasure was to be available to anyone, regardless of how they earned their living.⁸ Both definitions implied that amateurs had a loftier relationship with rowing, engaging in the sport exclusively for its beauty, pleasure, and need for refined technique. To be an amateur was to avoid associating with greed, corruption, or the base desire for money—in other words, to pursue an activity for the “better class.”

The portrayal of an amateur, depicted as one who held a pure and authentic relationship with the sport of rowing, would have resonated with MBC's first members, who prided themselves on upright citizenship and social standing. To be a club member implied being in possession of so-

cial as well as athletic capital. James D. Denegre, president of the Minnesota Boat Club in 1905, described the social climate of the club's early days: “In the 70s and the first part of the 80s, it was not only the leading rowing club of the West, but also an exclusive and representative social organization. To wear its colors was a coveted badge of special preferment as well as a much-prized athletic distinction.”⁹ Writing for *The Razoo*, a quarterly periodical, in 1903, Leavitt Corning underscored the upright social distinction that MBC membership bestowed:

For to be a Boat Club Member in the old days was to be a member of the Best Man's Club in St Paul. To see his name on the membership rolls of the “Minnesotas” was a distinction highly prized and not easily won. It was not only a badge of social distinction but of real manhood—an indication of recognition of the Manly Quality in a man by other men who were competent to judge and This Spirit with its accompanying demand for absolutely clean sport was a characteristic of the Club throughout its history right up to the time of its last competitions with other Clubs in 1897.¹⁰

By 1874, MBC had the financial means to lease land on the west half of Raspberry Island and build their first boathouse at a cost of \$2,200. Raspberry Island was considered an exceedingly advantageous location, accessible from downtown St. Paul via a short walk over the Wabasha Street Bridge.¹¹ In 1874, the island was undeveloped and natural, with plenty of mature shade trees, offering an escape from the dust and commotion of the city. It was considered an oasis, one that could be further transformed into something magical, which it frequently would be in the years to come, for celebrations and exclusive moonlit parties. Eventually MBC would install a running track and tennis courts allowing members to enjoy a variety of sports and leisure activities, fostering a country-club atmosphere.

With their new boat house, MBC had nearly everything required of a highly competitive amateur rowing club. Its active membership had almost quadrupled, it had 18 boats in its inventory, and the men were rowing and training on

a regular basis. The club was restricted only by the absence of other established rowing clubs within close proximity to St. Paul. Aside from the occasional single scull or straight-four challenge with Red Wing or Stillwater, MBC had no one to race. To compensate for its lack of competitors and to showcase members' athleticism, MBC organized its first annual intra-club Fourth-of-July Regatta in 1874, an event that immediately became an annual tradition, anchoring St. Paul's Independence Day celebrations.

An Independence Day Tradition

The regatta on the nation's birthday featured the same line-up of races every year: junior and senior singles, doubles, and fours. Crews would line up near the Wabasha Street Bridge, within sight of the boathouse balcony, race one mile upstream, turn 180 degrees around a stake, and then power back down to the bridge. This out and back racecourse was typical in the 1870s, allowing spectators to view both the start and the finish of each race. After the races, the mayor and other prominent citizens would make witty speeches and bestow trophies and medals on the winners.

Each year, the club invited a select group to Raspberry Island to enjoy the 4th of July Regatta from the shelter of the boathouse balcony or shaded lawn of Raspberry Island. The Great Western Band or Siebert's Band would set up in a grove on the south side of an erected pavilion to further enliven the three- to four-hour event. Both Raspberry Island and the regatta's course were situated so that the general public—those without an invitation—could spectate from the Wabasha Street Bridge, the High Bridge, or the bluffs along Third Avenue. The regatta never failed to draw crowds of people willing to stand for hours in the hot sun to watch the races. Throughout most of the 1870s, the annual Independence Day Regatta remained MBC's most important athletic event.

In October of 1877, a formal opportunity to compete against other established clubs opened up. That year a group of recent graduates of eastern colleges, who had returned to their western homes with enthusiasm for rowing, organized the Mississippi Valley Amateur Rowing Association (MVARA). Thirteen Midwestern clubs, all on par with MBC in terms of their equipment



and boathouses, joined the new association and sent athletes to its first annual regatta in Peoria, Illinois, in June of 1878.¹² MBC embraced the opportunity to gain valuable racing experience and solidify its standing as a competitive amateur athletic club by sending its fastest crews to MVARA's annual regatta each year through 1885.

Motivated to be competitive throughout the region, the men of MBC prided themselves on mastering the sport, which required the development of both physical stamina and refined technique. To become proficient took consistent practice. The club's most competitive rowers dedicated themselves to training on the water multiple times a week, the number of practice sessions increasing in the lead-up to important regattas. On May 20, 1882, Michael J. Boyle, a new MBC member, described on-the-water challenges in an entry from his journal:

. . . I broke an outrigger when we were a quarter of a mile up the river: we floated back and then took out the gig and pulled two miles. I am extremely awkward in a boat and will take much practice for me to do the thing smoothly.

Writing again on June 1, 1882, Boyle reported:

My hands are getting pretty well hardened but that portion of my anatomy which comes in contact with the sliding seat was decidedly sore to night [*sic*].¹³

Through the mid-1880s, MBC produced a number of competitive oarsmen while continuing to build its social capital by drawing ever

The Wabasha Bridge, left, provided a convenient spot in 1895 for spectators to watch races on the Mississippi River in front of the Minnesota Boat Club's clubhouse and dock, center, on Raspberry Island.

Celebrating Athleticism

Founded in 1870 and incorporated in 1873, the Minnesota Boat Club (MBC) was the first formal athletic organization in Minnesota, predating the establishment of the St. Paul Athletic Club, the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota, and the Town & Country Club. During MBC's early years, it was as much a social as an athletic institution, attracting members of social prominence. The Club's subset of active members—those who engaged in competitive rowing—were known to have both social and athletic capital, however. These men were admired not only for their social standing, but also for their stamina and muscularity.

MBC's competitive rowers were typically young businessmen, lawyers, doctors, or railroad managers with employment obligations that limited the amount of time they could train on the water. Consequently, MBC's rowers attributed their fitness and strength entirely to their dedication to the Club and to their sport, whereas their Canadian counterparts, who worked as farmers, loggers, or blacksmiths, developed their physical prowess at their jobs.

Because competitive rowing was one of the first spectator sports in St. Paul, the Club's Fourth of July Regatta drew thousands of people to watch and cheer for these local athletes as they raced on the Mississippi River. The regatta also provided the perfect opportunity for the Club to showcase and celebrate its members' athleticism. When the club retained ex-professional sculler John A. Kennedy as their trainer in 1890, the emphasis on strong, athletic bodies became even more pronounced. By 1893, Kennedy had coached his athletes into top form. They were now highly competitive racers and produced a streak of wins that brought the Club a national reputation. The victorious oarsmen of the Minnesota Boat Club were some of St. Paul's first athletic celebrities.



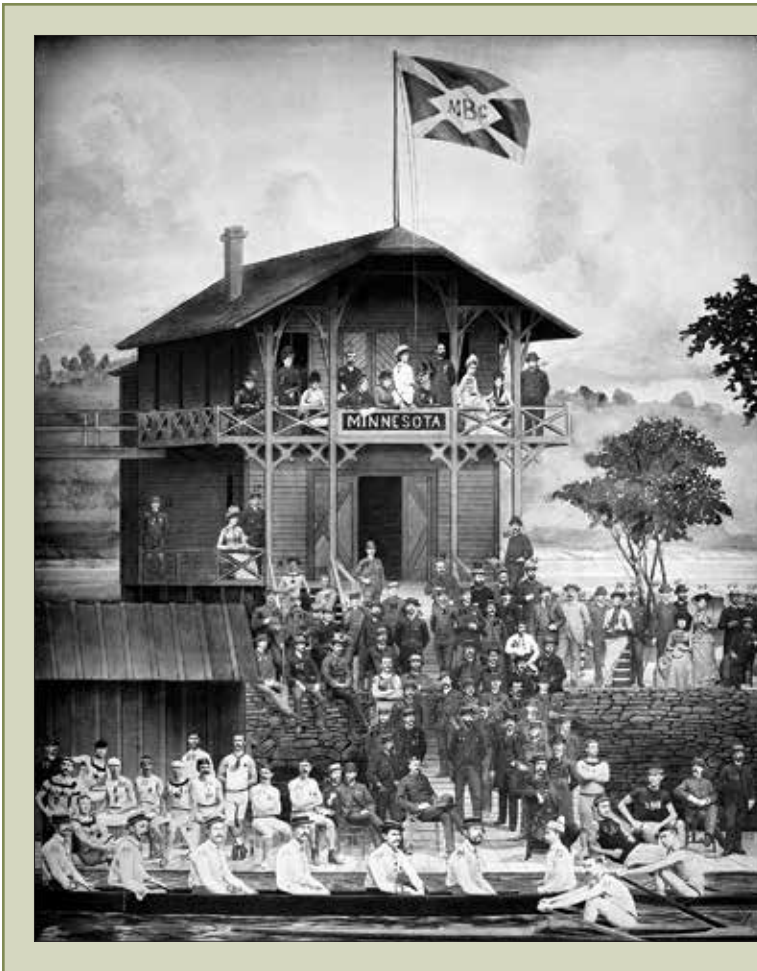
An unidentified MBC rower shows off his muscularity. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

more prominent St. Paul citizens into its fold as non-competing members. Leadership positions in 1884 and 1885 were held by Cass Gilbert, George C. Squires, Dr. Adolphus F. Schiffmann (a dentist), Colonel Warren Granger, Thomas Dillon O'Brien, and Arthur B. Driscoll. In 1885, local photographer, Charles A. Zimmerman, took what would become a famous portrait of the club, considered at the time one of the most accomplished pieces of photography. In order to capture the striking image of the boathouse and its members, Zimmerman kept a sketch of the boathouse in his mind while he took individual pictures of the members and their wives and daughters. He then arranged the individual images in groups so that they appear to be posing all together.¹⁴ The image (see page 25) includes, in addition to many others, Mrs. Charles E. Flandrau, Cass Gilbert, Thomas O'Brien, Lucius Pond Ordway, and William R. Merriam.¹⁵

A Flip of a Coin

The club's untarnished commitment to amateur rowing was called into question for the first time at the 1885 Fourth of July Regatta. MBC members Norman Wright and Dr. Adolphus F. Schiffman, considered the club's fastest oarsmen, were to compete against each other in the senior single for the Jilson Badge. Norman Wright had been the club's first president and was highly regarded for his long-term commitment to the sport.¹⁶ Wright had been the state's champion single sculler in 1875 and continued to enjoy a reputation for being one of Minnesota's fastest single scullers. Prior to his race with Schiffmann, he had competed in the senior four and knew he would not be able to optimize his performance in the single. Neither Wright nor Schiffmann felt strongly about the outcome of the senior single race and in a moment of levity decided to flip a penny to decide who would win. According to the *Razoo*, Schiffmann said the toss was done more in the spirit of fun than seriousness.¹⁷

The penny flip was witnessed by many and widely understood to have come up as a light-hearted joke in the boathouse. Members were aware that the result of the senior single had been predetermined and did not wager money on the race. Upon hearing of the incident, MBC's President, Colonel Warren Granger had a very



Numbered Identifications for Charles A. Zimmerman's Minnesota Boat Club Photograph (about 1885). Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Mrs. James Wall | 36. E. T. Ozmun | 71. Edward Rice Jr. |
| 2. Mrs. George Acker | 37. Tilden R. Selmes | 72. W. D. Cornish |
| 3. Mrs. C. P. Marvin | 38. Mary Hammond | 73. George H. Ranney |
| 4. George Squires | 39. D. E. Fogarty | 74. John J. O'Leary |
| 5. Nellie Haynes | 40. William H. Lightner | 75. Fred P. Wright |
| 6. - Beals | 41. James Demy Gribben | 76. J. W. L. Corning |
| 7. Mrs. C. E. Flandrau | 42. Jennie McLaren | 77. Dr. A. McLaren |
| 8. Mrs. J. N. Granger | 43. Carrie Knox | 78. A. B. Driscoll |
| 9. James N. Granger | 44. S. R. McMasters | 79. Harry G. Foster |
| 10. Helen Gotzian | 45. Cal Wethery | 80. Charles P. Marvin |
| 11. Annie Rice | 46. A. F. Jacassy | 81. W. H. Hyndman |
| 12. Charles P. Noyes | 47. J. H. Skinner | 82. Hunt Butler |
| 13. William Dawson Jr. | 48. Sprig Hall | 83. Charles T. Corning |
| 14. Mrs. J. W. Rogers | 49. A. S. Hall | 84. Eugene C. Bell |
| 15. J. Willington Rogers | 50. Fred E. Bird | 85. John J. Parker |
| 16. Luther Newport | 51. Adolphus F. Schiffmann | 86. Norman Wright |
| 17. O. P. Lampher | 52. Dudley B. Finch | 87. L. W. Rundlett |
| 18. William Corlies | 53. F. G. Ingersoll | 88. John J. Watson |
| 19. Kenneth Clark | 54. L. P. Ordway | 89. F. B. Jilson |
| 20. Col. H. P. Rugg | 55. William Rhodes | 90. James F. Faulkner |
| 21. Bernard Dassel | 56. Charles E. Wright | 91. Lewis S. Bigelow |
| 22. Theodore Schurmeier | 57. Kingland Smith | 92. Cass Gilbert |
| 23. Charles P. Gilbert | 58. Henry C. James | 93. Thomas D. O'Brien |
| 24. Warren Granger | 59. C. D. O'Brien | 94. James K. Taylor |
| 25. George L. Becker | 60. John White | 95. William M. Becker |
| 26. Clarence Johnston | 61. C. W. Gordon | 96. George James |
| 27. Harry S. Johnson | 62. James P. Elmer | 97. W. S. Getty |
| 28. F. W. McCutcheon | 63. Stanley Proudfit | 98. John J. Jackson |
| 29. Robert A. Bethune | 64. Dr. James C. Markoe | 99. Percy W. Parker |
| 30. George S. Acker | 65. J. M. L. MacDonald | 100. George L. Bigelow |
| 31. Alfred B. Johnson | 66. E. H. Cutler | 101. Michael J. Boyle |
| 32. Sherman Finch | 67. Henry A. Boardman | 102. James C. Moore |
| 33. Walter P. Morgan | 68. Edward Kopper | 103. Theodore B. Meyers |
| 34. Roger S. Kennedy | 69. Capt. C. S. Bunker | 104. Unknown |
| 35. William R. Merriam | 70. Stanford Newel | |

different reaction. He was outraged. He felt the incident betrayed an interest in gambling that was not in line with the club's commitment to amateur rowing. Granger called a formal investigative committee of the board to question Wright and Schiffmann.

Both men readily admitted to the coin toss not believing it was a serious offence or that any serious result would follow. The committee's response stunned the two men: the coin toss was not appropriate behavior for an amateur rower—coin tossing and any man who demeaned the club's standards by determining race outcomes by the flip of a coin had no place at MBC. The committee summarily requested both men resign, threatening to expel them otherwise. Norman Wright wrote a letter to the board asking them to reconsider. He felt their verdict was reached under an egregious misunderstanding and that he and Dr. Schiffmann had been treated unfairly. The club stood by its de-

cision, believing it underscored MBC's unwavering commitment to clean rowing. MBC would not allow gambling in any form to taint the amateur ideal upon which they prided themselves.

The St. Paul Boat Club

By the end of 1885, the popularity of rowing in St. Paul was at an all-time high. A new contingent of young men who had been educated in eastern colleges where "rowing is popularly supposed to be as much a part of the curriculum as Greek, Latin or hazing," filed articles of incorporation on July 26, 1885, organizing the St. Paul Boat Club.¹⁸ The newcomers quickly positioned themselves for active competitive rowing.¹⁹ The club took out a ten-and-a-half-year lease for 200 feet of

Charles A. Zimmerman's celebrated photo from the mid-1880s of members and friends of the Minnesota Boat Club. The accompanying list identifies this who's who among St. Paul's social elite. The maroon and white flag of the Club flies above the boathouse.



A Minnesota Boat Club pin.

property on Raspberry Island directly to the east of the Minnesota Boat Club at a cost of \$1,050.²⁰

The addition of a second rowing club infused the city with the tension and excitement of a rivalry. Regattas suddenly became more interesting to watch. As the St. Paul Boat Club first took to the water, its relationship with MBC was considered friendly but intense. The spirit of good fellowship was emphasized at St. Paul Boat Club's first banquet when the young men raised a glass to toast MBC. The guests were on their feet when the sentiment was delivered and it was received with prolonged cheers.²¹

Immediately after the St. Paul Boat Club was established, they joined the Minnesota Boat Club and the Winnipeg Rowing club to form the first international amateur rowing association, The Minnesota and Winnipeg Association, on March 16, 1886. Racing opportunities for Minnesota's oarsmen were now at their most organized and formal. The new association distinguished itself further by including a section in its founding constitution that created a dedicated Status Committee to proactively deal with any question or concern about the amateur status of entrants. The Status Committee was given full power to bar any crew or man from any regatta or race who may not, within the strictly technical definition, be considered an amateur. The Status Committee was given further power to interpret the definition of the word "amateur." Its members would be permanently appointed, rather than elected, to address the possibility that unworthy men might be placed in such a responsible position. This marked the first time Minnesota clubs formally addressed the issue of amateur.

John Kennedy's Impact

The St. Paul Boat Club decided to disband and merge with MBC in late 1890. Earlier that year, MBC had retained ex-professional sculler, John A. Kennedy, as their seasonal trainer, a man with nearly twenty years' experience of professional racing, training crews, and rigging rowing shells. He was passionate about the sport and confident that he could turn the men of MBC into some of the most successful oarsmen in the country.

Kennedy had a reputation for coaching his athletes' physical form while, at the same time,

instilling a strong sense of courage and determination. He coached a strong, slow, stroke with an emphasis on power and subscribed to what he called the "all-in-one-piece" theory where the beginning of the stroke merged seamlessly with the recovery.

Kennedy taught his crews to handle their oars firmly but without violence, slipping the blade in rather than grabbing at the water. He taught his men how to effectively engage their legs as soon as the blade was anchored and their back was "on." Kennedy was quoted in the June 14, 1891 *St. Paul Daily Globe* saying: "rowing brings all muscles into play, models them beautifully and makes a man of the puny boy and a tension-spring hero of the paunch-weighted domestic man." By 1893, Kennedy had his men in top form, trained to consistently race at potential, and that year proved to be MBC's most victorious, defined by an outright winning streak that earned the club and their coach a national reputation.

During the summer of 1895, a series of events checked the run on MBC's sustained athletic and social prominence. MBC intended to send an eight-oared crew to compete at NAAO's Saratoga regatta in mid-July; however, their racing shell had recently been damaged and needed to be replaced. Instead of calling on its own members to secure funds needed for a new boat and travel expenses, MBC placed a series of notices in the *St. Paul Daily Globe*, appealing to the citizens of St. Paul to contribute \$1,000, of which \$700 would be spent on a new shell and \$300 to pay for travel expenses: "All who are interested in athletics and especially those who take pride in the record of our local oarsmen, should open a willing purse."²²

Donations trickled in but not quickly enough, prompting MBC members Edwin A. Jaggard (b. 1859, in Massachusetts; lawyer and later a judge) and John J. Parker (b. 1858, in England; came to St. Paul in 1869; life insurance broker) to call on James J. Hill. Hill graciously received them at his Summit Avenue residence and, after hearing more about their situation, readily wrote a check for \$200. The oarsmen were quoted in the July 11, 1895 *St. Paul Daily Globe*: "Mr. Hill's manner made [us] feel there is reward somewhere for those who undertake a generally thankless public duty." With Hill's donation, the team had collected \$570.00, enough

to cover their travel expenses. The Duluth Boat Club stepped in, graciously offering to loan MBC their new eight-oared shell, enabling the men of MBC to race at Saratoga.²³

MBC's public appeal for donations was not received graciously by everyone. Some felt it inappropriate for an exclusive social and athletic club to call on the public for charity. The club came under fire in the July 11, 1895 edition of *The Broad Axe*:

... Who are these young men so anxious to render glorious our fair city? What have they done to build up St. Paul? We have seen them day by day at practice and always thought them gentlemen with no work and plenty money. If they are poor, they certainly deserve our pity and severe punishment for misapplying such muscle as they may possess. If they are rich, they should put their hands in their own pockets. . . . Boat racing can be done by amateurs if they can afford it or it can be done professionally. There is no such a thing as charity sport now. Let these young men go to work and earn money if they have it not or let them secure a backer. They deserve no alms. We have been grossly deceived . . .²⁴

MBC's Canadian rivals, Winnipeg and newly formed Rat Portage Rowing Club, also sent athletes to the 1895 Saratoga regatta. The Rat Portage Rowing Club was the Minnesota and Winnipeg Association's newest member, having joined the previous year.²⁵ Prior to the 1894 Association Regatta, Rat Portage came under scrutiny for allowing T. Des Brisay to compete in the junior four. Des Brisay had rowed for the Minneapolis Lurlines in 1893 and then approached MBC, wondering if the Minnesotas would pay him to row on their behalf.²⁶ When MBC refused, Des Brisay relocated to Canada to join the mounted police and train with the Rat Portage Rowing Club. That Des Brisay sought payment, was seen by MBC as confirmation that he made his living by rowing, and should not be allowed to row in an amateur regatta. After a lengthy negotiation, Des Brisay was allowed to keep his seat in Rat Portage's Jr 4 with the understanding that the Association would soon pass more stringent rules regarding the admission of men who had previously rowed



The MBC's winning eight at the races in Geneva, Wisconsin, in 1893. Coach John Kennedy sits in the center. The coxswain is Wade Hampton Yardley, stripped shirt, and left to right, the rowers are Archibald S. Wright, George O. Nettleton, Percy Houghton, W. N. Armstrong, E. G. Halbert, L. M. Mabon, T. L. Wann, and A. H. Paget.

as professionals. At this same 1894 regatta, Rat Portage's brawny, young, twenty-three-year-old "Long" John Hackett enjoyed a stunning victory in the senior single sculls, eliciting feelings of pride. The Minnesota and Winnipeg Association believed they had one of the fastest amateur scullers in the country in their ranks.

The Canadian teams dominated the 1895 Saratoga regatta. Winnipeg won the senior four-oared race and set a new course record.²⁷ Rat Portage Rowing Club's Hackett easily won the single scull race but was disqualified on a foul. And MBC finished a disheartening last place in the eight having been easily out-pulled by the Bohemian Boat Club of New York and the Triton Boat Club of Newark, New Jersey.

The 1895 Upset

MBC's defeat at Saratoga left them with little confidence in their prospects for success at the upcoming 1895 Minnesota and Winnipeg Association Regatta, which was to be held at Lake Minnetonka. They had concentrated on the eight in training, leaving little time to practice the senior four, the Association's signature event. While MBC was well-coached and experienced, the club's competitive rowers were working professionals such as lawyers or businessmen and men of independent means. Their Canadian rivals, on the other hand, worked their muscles not only training and racing, but also earning their livelihoods as farmers, loggers, and blacksmiths. Never had MBC entered a regatta with their chances of winning so slight.

Further darkening the clouds over the 1895 Minnesota and Winnipeg Association Regatta, the Minnesota and Duluth Boat Clubs called on the Association's Status Committee to investigate

An MBC ribbon from 1891. Photo courtesy of the Ramsey County Historical Society.





This photo shows a doubles race on the Mississippi during MBC's Fourth of July Regatta, probably in 1895. Spectators watched from the shoreline, a steamboat tied in front of the West Publishing and Booth Cold Storage buildings, and nearby train cars.

the amateur status of two of Rat Portage's athletes. MBC renewed its 1894 charges against Des Brisay, and both MBC and Duluth brought new charges against Rat Portage's top sculler, John L. Hackett, who allegedly challenged professionals E. G. Rogers and Jacob Gaudaur of Toronto to a race at the NAAO Saratoga regatta for a \$1,000 purse. The champions refused, which was interpreted by some as a tacit acknowledgement of Hackett's superiority. The Minnesota clubs felt that the challenge alone betrayed Hackett's professional status.

The Association's Status Committee met on the evening of August 8 at the lakeside Hotel Lafayette to determine whether the Rat Portage men should be ruled out and prohibited from competing. Rat Portage believed any protest against Hackett to be a great injustice; the same charges had been brought against Hackett at Saratoga a few weeks prior, and the NAAO readily dismissed them. After wrestling for more than three hours, the meeting broke up in a row at midnight. According to the August 9, 1895 *Minneapolis Tribune*, "the air was blue with expressions that the executive committee used to argue its points." The rift between the Minnesota and the Canadian clubs was so deep that it seemed possible the Association would disband and reform without Rat Portage. MBC declared that it would row under protest, and that if the protests were not allowed they would withdraw and form the nucleus of a new association.

Attention focused on the differences between the Canadian and the Minnesotan crews'

livelihoods and whether manual labor, typical of a Canadian oarsman, afforded an unfair advantage on the water:

Those fellows who work on farms in the summer and in lath factories in winter, went on that lake yesterday and rowed against the scions of the first families in St. Paul who are as unfamiliar with manual labor as it is possible to be, and yet the flabby constitution of the rowing association contains no rule that draws a distinction between these men. They are all amateurs according to that moth-eaten "con" and the big wood cutter with his big feet and long arms is as much an amateur as the young fellow who devotes only two weeks to training previous to a regatta. And these are the reasons why the regatta this year is a failure.²⁸

The Winnipeg and Rat Portage oarsmen, referred to by the press as "brawny blacksmiths" and "haulers of logs," felt the rules of Minnesota society excluded them from the parties and gatherings at the Hotel Lafayette. The Canadian oarsmen socialized amongst themselves: "They hung around on the outside with a broad grin expressive of the sentiment—if we can't dance and attend swell receptions in white pants, we can scull a shell, and you know it."²⁹ In a provocative show of defiance the Canadians hauled down MBC's cherry-and-white-colored flags flying over the Hotel Lafayette and raised their national flag. The next day,

MBC's senior four beat Winnipeg in an unexpected upset. Feeling emboldened by their surprise win, MBC retaliated by hauling down the Canadian Red Ensign, returning their cherry-and-white flags, and adding further insult by drowning the Canadians' flag in the waters of Lake Minnetonka. As the August 11, 1895 issue of the *St. Paul Daily Globe* reported: "The men of the red and blue simply stuffed their hands in their trouser pockets and walked away with the mute eloquence of the Canadian anguish of defeat in the face of certain victory."

A Revised Definition of Amateur

After the regatta was over, the Status Committee met again, ultimately agreeing to revise the Minnesota and Winnipeg Association's constitution to adopt a new provision more narrowly defining the difference between an amateur and a professional. The Association's new definition of amateur excluded any athlete who earned his living by manual labor. The new bylaws were framed to conform more closely to the rule which governed rowing on English waters and to prevent colonization and to avoid "aquatic tramps," men who go from one section of the country to another ready to enter any club for the sake of rowing in a regatta. With these changes, the Minnesota and Winnipeg Association now had the most exclusive definition of amateur in the country.

The revised definition of *amateur* didn't sit well with everyone. The August 15, 1895 edition of *The Princeton Union* criticized:

The St. Paul scow-polers who rejoice in the glorious title of the Minnesota Boat Club have decided that manual labor is sufficient cause to bar a man from entering a race in which they are contestants. These silk stocking bloods would be out of place in any contest more violent and exciting than jackstraws.

The Winnipeg Rowing Club also took issue with the definition, making it clear that they could stand any amount of defeat if it came to them fairly at the hands of better crews. They protested against what they called "being jockeyed out of a race by a clique that is so wildly assertive of its amateur standing as the MBC in

a manner that would not be tolerated on any Canadian lake, stream or river for an instant."³⁰ In contrast, the Rat Portage men accepted the situation expressing themselves as satisfied with the new definition. Des Brisay would be employed as a bookkeeper and Hackett would go into the professional ranks.

Within less than five years of the adoption of the Minnesota and Winnipeg Association's revised constitution, the era of professional rowing came to an end. Race-fixing scandals contributed significantly to its demise, but other sports such as baseball, basketball, and football were becoming relatively more popular. Ball sports had the advantage of being easier to stage and watch. They were played in stadiums, which allowed money to be collected at the gate and managers to realize greater profit.

The history of rowing stands apart from that of other sports. Typically, sports progressively change over time. Initially they are enjoyed casually for fun and exercise. Then a hierarchy develops based on ability with the paid professionals, who are part of the entertainment industry, at the top. Baseball, football, and basketball are examples of this progression. Rowing's development followed the inverse of this typical pattern. It was the professionals who first captured the public's attention and fostered interest and improvements in technique with unpaid amateurs following their lead. In addition, the era of the professional rower was extremely short-lived, coming to a close by the end of the 1890s.

The demise of professional rowing coincided with a marked decline in amateur rowing in Minnesota. The Spanish-American War (1898) and the subsequent U.S. involvement in armed conflict in the Philippines along with growing interest in leisure sports such as golf contributed to a steep drop in membership which, in turn, drained club coffers. By the end of 1897, the Minnesota Boat Club could no longer afford to retain Coach John A. Kennedy and the Minnesota and Winnipeg Association had disbanded and would remain dormant until eventually being revived by the Duluth Boat Club in 1906.³¹

The men of MBC continued to train and race throughout the first decades of the 1900s, although in smaller numbers and, at times, with



Trainer John A. Kennedy, far left with cap, coaching his eight-oared crew from the coxswain's seat on the Mississippi River, probably in 1895. The oarsmen, left to right, are probably Percy Houghton, J. H. Simpson, Nathaniel Langford, H. P. Bend, Lester Mabon, A. L. Buffington, James D. Denegre, and T. L. Wann.

less formal coaching. They and the Duluth Club were the only Minnesota rowing clubs that remained active in the early twentieth century. As they continued to pursue their sport, although in a much less formal capacity, the social distinction conferred by being a privileged amateur rower on the Mississippi quietly passed from the scene.

With the coming of increased prosperity in the 1950s, people once again had more leisure time and money to invest in rowing. By 1957, MBC had established a robust schoolboy rowing program populated largely by students from

South St. Paul High School under the guidance and coaching of long-time rower Karl Twedt. Women entered the fray in 1967 when crews from MBC, Minneapolis, Duluth, and Milwaukee competed in their first eight-oared race on Duluth's Lake Superior course.

Today, 150 years after John W. L. Corning introduced St. Paul to his single paper rowing shell under the Wabasha Street Bridge, the Minnesota Boat Club continues to carry on the storied tradition of training and racing on the Mississippi River. Twenty-first century rowers understand that theirs is not a popular spectator sport, nor does it present any opportunity for financial profit. Yet, in their own way, today's rowers continue to embrace the amateur ideal: that dedication to training, refining their technique, and the sheer beauty of the sport is its own reward.

A St. Paul resident, Sarah Risser stroked her eight-oared crew as a college student at Wesleyan University in Connecticut and has been a competitive master-class rower in the Twin Cities since 2009. More recently, she has become keenly interested in the history of rowing in St. Paul and throughout Minnesota.

NOTES

1. The oldest founding member was Stanford Newel, age 31, who arrived in St. Paul in 1865 after earning degrees from Yale and Harvard Law School. The youngest member was J. Dock Dean, the son of a banker, one of only two founding members born in St. Paul.

2. The original founding members of the MBC: George S. Acker (b. St. Paul, 1847; subsequently a partner of Hill, Griggs & Co.); Charles T. Corning (b. Brooklyn, N.Y., 1843; arrived in St. Paul in 1869. He organized the St. Paul foundry known as Corning and Depew, 1871); John W. L. Corning (b. Brooklyn N.Y., 1844; arrived in St. Paul in 1868 to join Noyes Brothers—renamed Noyes Brothers & Cutler in 1871—where he worked for 17 years before establishing Greiner & Corning, manufacturers of fireproof material in 1895); Edward H. Cutler (b. Boston, Mass., 1848; moved to Minnesota in his youth when his family sought a change in climate for his sick brother; educated by private tutors on a farm near St. Paul, “The Oaks” and joined Noyes Brothers as a wholesale druggist in 1870, becoming a partner in the renamed firm in 1871); J. Dock Dean (b. Minn., 1853; at 17, Dean was the youngest founding member of the MBC. He became a banker); James Perry Gribben (b. Mt. Vernon, Ohio, 1845; arrived in St. Paul to work in the lum-

ber business in 1867; president of Gribben Lumber Co. in 1893); E.W. Johnson (unverified b. 1850, Ohio); Stanford Newel (b. Providence, R.I., 1839; educated at Yale and Harvard Law School; arrived in St. Paul in May 1864); Charles Phelps Noyes (b. 1842, Lyme, Conn.; arrived in St. Paul in 1868; founder of Noyes Brothers, wholesale drug manufacture); and Norman Wright.

3. In a letter published by the *New York Herald* on April 1, 1872, John W. L. Corning reported that MBC's membership was at the constitutionally set limit, 20, and the club was in possession of a small fleet including one six-oared lapstreak barge, one four-oared paper shell, one double wooden boat, two single scull wooden boats, and four single scull paper boats. They also had a paper working boat on order from Troy, N.Y. In rowing, shells are categorized by the number of pairs of oars used to row them; hence singles, doubles, fours, and eights.

4. Thomas Corwin Mendenhall, *A Short History of American Rowing* (Boston: Charles River Books, 1981), 21.

5. Mendenhall, 17.

6. Mendenhall, 22. Eastern Pennsylvania's Schuylkill River flows into the Delaware River at Philadelphia.

7. NAAO's definition of "amateur": "One who does not enter into an open competition; or for either stake, public or admission money or entrance fee; or compete with or against a professional for any prize; who has never taught, pursued, or assisted in the pursuit of athletic exercises as a means of livelihood; whose membership of any rowing or any other athletic club was not brought about, or does not continue, because of any mutual agreement or understanding, expressed or implied, whereby his becoming or continuing a member of such club would be of any pecuniary benefit to him whatever, direct or indirect; who has never been employed in any occupation involving any use of the oar or pifflie; who rows for pleasure or recreation only, and during his leisure hours. Who does not abandon or neglect his usual business of occupation for the purpose of training, and who shall otherwise conform to the rules and regulations of this association."

8. Mendenhall, 23.

9. James D. Denegre, "THE MINNESOTA BOAT CLUB: What It Has Been, What It Is, and What It Hopes to Be," *The Razoo*, 1:9 (November 27, 1905): 1.

10. Leavitt Corning, *The Razoo*, 1:3 (February 3, 1903): 10.

11. For more detail on the natural and economic history of the Upper Mississippi River and the history of the Minnesota Boat Club, see Jim Miller, "Singles, Doubles and Pairs, Fours and Quads—Life on the Mississippi: The 132 Years of the Minnesota Boat Club and Its Rich History," *Ramsey County History*, 37:2 (Summer 2002), 4–10.

12. The original members of the MVARA: Modoc Rowing Club, St. Louis; Farragut Boat Club, Chicago; Minnesota Boat Club, St. Paul; Chicago Barge Club, Chicago; University Boat Club, St. Louis; Peoria Boat Club, Peoria; Burlington Boating Association, Burlington, Iowa; Sylvan Boat Club, Moline, Ill.; Milwaukee Boat Club, Milwaukee; Riverdale Rowing and Athletic Club, Calumet, Ill.; Madison Boat Club, Madison, Wis.; Lurline Boat Club, Minneapolis; and Mitchell Rowing Association, Milwaukee.

13. Michael J. Boyle Papers, 1876–1890, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minn.

14. Leavitt Corning, *The Razoo*, 1:3 (February 3, 1903): 8. The MBC first admitted women to its membership in 1971.

15. Charles E. Flandrau (b. 1828 in New York City) came to Minnesota in 1858 where he practiced law and served as a judge. His wife was the former Rebecca B. Riddle. Cass Gilbert (b. 1859 in Ohio) moved to Minnesota with his family in 1868. He was the architect of the current Minnesota Capitol and many other famous buildings. Thomas Dillon O'Brien (b. 1859 in Wisconsin) came to St. Paul with his family in 1864. He became a prominent St. Paul lawyer and later associate justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court. Lucius P. Ordway (b. 1862 in Providence, R.I.) came to St. Paul in 1883 and became very successful in the plumbing business and then was an early investor in the Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing Company (now 3M). William R. Merriam (b. 1849 in New York state)

came to St. Paul in 1861. He became a successful banker, railroad investor, and later served in the Minnesota legislature and as governor from 1889 to 1893.

16. Norman Wright was born in Ohio in 1846 but grew up in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. His father was a real estate investor who owned property in Minnesota, which led the Wrights to relocate to St. Paul around 1870 (U.S. Census). Norman Wright appears in the 1875 *City Directory* as a cashier at the Pioneer Press Company. Later he is identified in 1883 in the *St. Paul Daily Globe* as a real estate investor from Poughkeepsie. He died there in 1935.

17. Leavitt Corning, *The Razoo*, 1:3 (February 3, 1903): 11.

18. "The St. Paul Boat Club," *St. Paul Daily Globe*, November 22, 1885, p. 5. Collegiate rowing was growing quickly during the early 1880s. In 1878, the Rowing Association of American Colleges was formed by Harvard, Brown, Amherst and Bowdoin. By 1883 Columbia, Cornell, Penn, Princeton, Rutgers, and Wesleyan had also joined.

19. Founding members of the St. Paul Boat Club were President: William E. Bramhall (b. 1856, in New York), lawyer; 1st Vice President: F. E. McArthur; 2nd Vice President: J. Walter Stevens (b. 1856, Massachusetts), architect; Treasurer: A. M. Peabody; Secretary: Charles E. Bean (b. 1855 in Wisconsin), physician; Commodore: Charles Frederick (Fred) Sibley (b. 1860 in Minnesota), banker; Captain, E. Lincoln Shackford (b. 1842 in Maine), paper merchant; Lieutenant: L. W. Clark; Ensign: William A. Frost (b. 1854 in Brunswick, Canada), pharmacist; Directors: Bramhall, Peabody, C. E. Dean, Sibley, George W. Hayes (b. 1841 in New York, insurance broker), C. M. Freeman, and Hermann Scheffer (b. 1860 in Wisconsin, a banker).

20. *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, August 21, 1885 and *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, December 20, 1885.

21. *Saint Paul Daily Globe*, December 20, 1885.

22. *St. Paul Daily Globe*, July 7, 1895.

23. MBC's Eight Oared Crew: Percy Houghton, stroke; J. H. Simpson, 7-seat; N. P. Langford, 6-seat; Lester Mabon, 5-seat; H. P. Bend, 4-seat; A. L. Buffington, 3-seat; J. D. Denegre, 2-seat; T. L. Wann, bow; W. H. Yardley, coxswain; C. M. Bend, substitute.

24. *The Broad Axe* was a weekly newspaper published on the St. Paul's West Side between 1891 and 1903. Initially it was strongly Democratic in its editorial positions, but by 1894 it had taken a Populist political stance.

25. The Rat Portage Rowing Club, today's Kenora Rowing Club, was formed in 1890 and joined the Minnesota and Winnipeg Association in 1894.

26. *Duluth Evening Herald*, July 20, 1894.

27. Athletes rowing in the Winnipeg Four: C. L. Marks, stroke; J. C. Waugh 3-seat; W. J. K. Osborne 2-seat; J. C. G. Armytage bow.

28. *St. Paul Daily Globe*, August 10, 1895.

29. Ibid.

30. *St. Paul Daily Globe*, August 16, 1895.

31. After leaving St. Paul, John A. Kennedy went on to a successful coaching career at Yale University, which was a source of great pride for the men of MBC.

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY

President

Chad P. Roberts

Founding Editor (1964-2006)

Virginia Brainard Kunz

Editor

John M. Lindley

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Board of Directors

Jo Anne Driscoll

Chair

Jerry Woelfel

First Vice Chair

Mari Oyanagi Eggum

Second Vice Chair

Susan McNeely

Secretary

Kenneth H. Johnson

Treasurer

James Miller

Immediate Past Chair

Jo Emerson, Thomas Fabel, Martin Fallon, Tim Glines, John Guthmann, Susan Handley, Richard B. Heydinger, Jr., Judy Kishel, David Kristal, Carl Kuhrmeyer, Robert W. Mairs, Jeffrey Martin, Father Kevin M. McDonough, Jonathan H. Morgan, Robert Muschewske, Chad P. Roberts, Roxanne Sands, George T. Stephenson, James A. Stolpestad, Chris Taylor.

Editorial Board

Anne Cowie, *chair*, James B. Bell, Thomas H. Boyd, John Diers, Martin Fallon, John Guthmann, Lisa L. Heinrich, John M. Lindley, Jeffrey Martin, James Miller, John Milton, Laurie M. Murphy, Robert Muschewske, Paul D. Nelson, Richard H. Nicholson, Jay Pfaender, David Riehle, Chad P. Roberts, Steve Trimble, Mary Lethert Wingerd.

Honorary Advisory Board

William Fallon, William Finney, George Latimer, Joseph S. Micallef, Marvin J. Pertzik, James Reagan.

Ramsey County Commissioners

Commissioner Jim McDonough, Chair

Commissioner Toni Carter

Commissioner Blake Huffman

Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire

Commissioner Rafael Ortega

Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt

Commissioner Janice Rettman

Ryan T. O'Connor, Manager, Ramsey County

Ramsey County History is published quarterly by the Ramsey County Historical Society, 323 Landmark Center, 75 W. Fifth Street, St. Paul, MN 55102 (651-222-0701). Printed in U.S.A. Copyright © 2018, Ramsey County Historical Society. ISSN Number 0485-9758.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission from the publisher.

The Society assumes no responsibility for statements made by contributors. Email address: info@rchs.com; website address: www.rchs.com

RAMSEY COUNTY History

A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preserving our past, informing our present, inspiring our future.

*The mission statement of the Ramsey County Historical Society
adopted by the Board of Directors on January 25, 2016.*

The Ramsey County Historical Society's vision is to be widely recognized as an innovator, leader, and partner in preserving the knowledge of our community, delivering inspiring history programming, and using local history in education. Our mission of *preserving our past, informing our present, inspiring our future* guides this vision.

The Society began in 1949 when a group of citizens acquired and preserved the Jane and Heman Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights, which the family had acquired in 1849. Following five years of restoration work, the Society opened the Gibbs Farm museum (listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974). Originally programs focused on telling the story of the pioneer life of the Gibbs family. In 2000, with the assistance of a Dakota Advisory Council, the historic site also began interpreting Dakota culture and lifeways, building additional structures, and dedicating outdoor spaces to tell these stories. The remarkable relationship of Jane Gibbs with the Dakota during her childhood in the 1830s and again as an adult encouraged RCHS to expand its interpretation of the Gibbs farm to both pioneer and Dakota life.

In 1964, the Society began publishing its award-winning magazine, *Ramsey County History*. In 1978, an expanded commitment from Ramsey County enabled the organization to move its library, archives, and administrative offices to downtown St. Paul's Landmark Center, a restored Federal Courts building on the National Register of Historic Places. An additional expansion of the Research Center was completed in 2010 to better serve the public and allow greater access to the Society's vast collection of historical archives and artifacts. In 2016, due to an endowment gift of \$1 million, the Research Center was rededicated as the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center.

RCHS has continuously focused on ensuring it serves Ramsey County's diverse citizenry. As part of this ongoing effort, please check the RCHS website at www.rchs.com for the opening of an impactful new exhibit, "Selma 70," the publication of the Lower-town Interpretive Plan, and other scheduled events and programs at Gibbs, Landmark, and elsewhere in the community.

R.C.H.S.
RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY








Pathways to Dakota & Pioneer Life
Experience | Understand | Grow

Rewards for Amateur Oarsmen



The Citizens Cup, left, and the Mayors Cup were presented to the winners of the Junior and Senior Four-Oared races at the Minnesota Boat Club's annual Fourth of July Regatta. Both cups were given to the Minnesota Boat Club in 1877. The elaborate engraving on each cup is visible in these photos and it includes the names and dates of some of the winners of these cups.

Photos of the trophies by Sarah Risser, courtesy of Bruce Kessel, captain of the Minnesota Boat Club.

The Ramsey County Historical Society publishes a wide variety of award-winning books, DVDs and digital content on historical subjects for children and adults.

Our recent publications include a ground-breaking study of Fort Snelling during the Civil War and the Dakota Conflict, *Fort Snelling and the Civil War*; the history and restoration of *Custom House*, the Art Deco-style Post Office in Lowertown; and in partnership with TPT, *North Star: Civil War Stories*, a film on the experiences of African-American Minnesotans who fought in the Civil War, (available as a DVD).

Past issues of *Ramsey County History* and other digital content is available on the website.

To order or explore more about our magazines, films and publications, see the website at www.rchs.com or call RCHS at 651-222-0701.

<https://publishing.rchs.com/>
651-222-0701

R.C.H.S.
RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Published by the Ramsey County Historical Society
323 Landmark Center
75 West Fifth Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

U.S. Postage
PAID
Twin Cities, MN
Permit #3989

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Dr. Nellie N. Barsness in uniform shortly before her 1918 departure from New York for service with the Women's Overseas Hospital U.S.A. in France. For more on Dr. Nellie and her experiences at the front, see Johannes Allert's article on page 12.