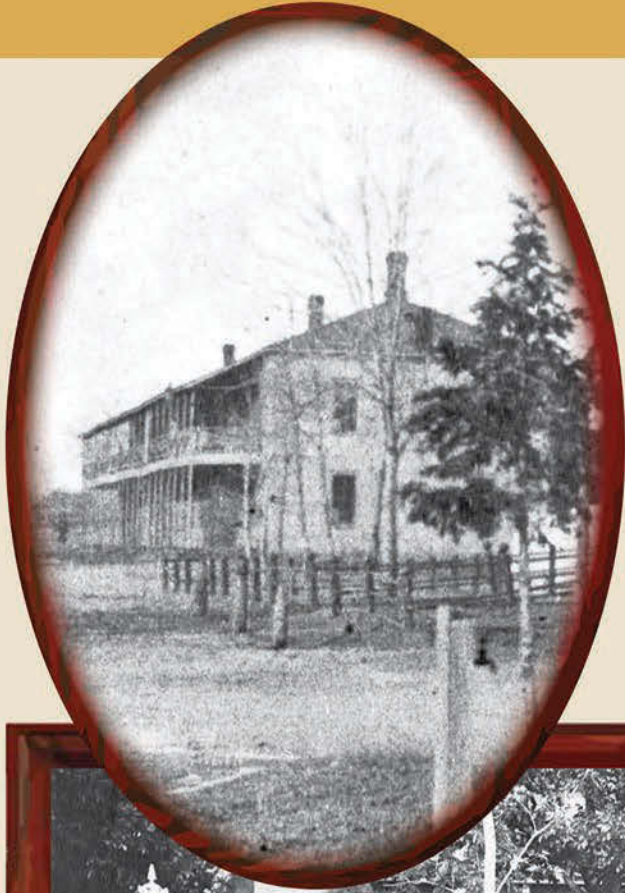


Historical Sleuthing

**Solving the Mysteries of Fort Snelling
through Archaeology**

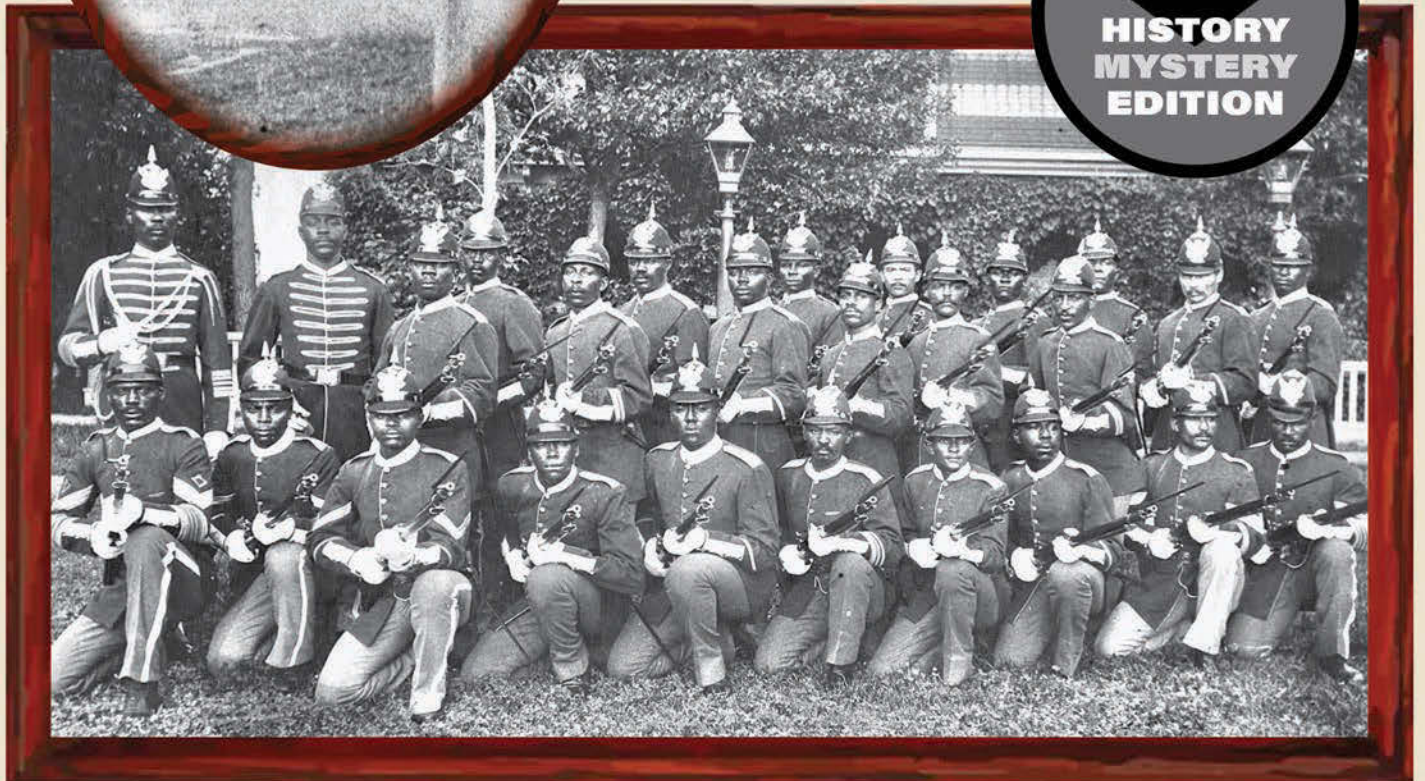
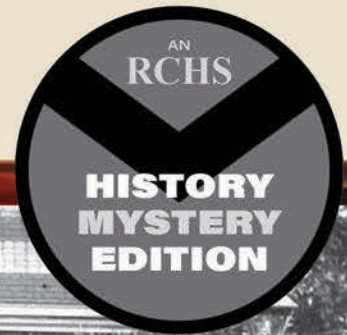
JEREMY L. NIENOW, PAGE 12



A Fort Snelling History Mystery

The Lost Barracks and the Twenty-Fifth US Infantry Regiment

MATT FLUEGER, PAGE 1



By the Numbers . . .

For a few years in the 1880s, the African American Twenty-Fifth US Infantry Regiment was stationed at Fort Snelling:

Number of soldiers from the Twenty-Fifth that arrived in 1882:
206

Number of Twenty-Fifth Infantry companies living at the fort:
4

Number of children born to enlisted men of the Twenty-Fifth in the post hospital (records kept from 1884-88):
8

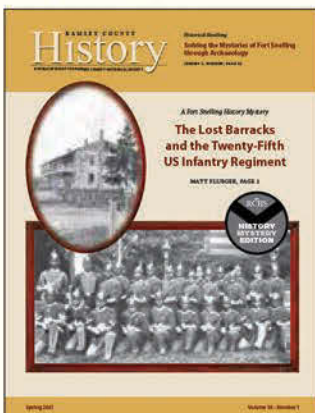
Number of years the Twenty-Fifth spent at the fort:
5½

Number of enlisted men from the Twenty-Fifth buried at Fort Snelling:
9

To learn more about this regiment and the mysterious building in which many of the men lived, see Matt Flueger's article "A Fort Snelling History Mystery: The Lost Barracks and the Twenty-Fifth US Infantry Regiment" on page 1.

SOURCES: John Nankivell, *History of the Twenty-Fifth Regiment, United States Infantry, 1869-1926* and various files at the National Archives. See article endnotes, pages 9-11.

ON THE COVER



Very few images of the 1878 "lost barracks" at Fort Snelling exist (top left photo). This cropped image is one of three that are known today. To see the original image that includes the trader's shop in the foreground, go to page 1. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*

Company I, Twenty-Fifth US Infantry Regiment at Fort Snelling in front of the Commandant's Quarters (1883). *Courtesy of National Archives, photo no. 111-SC-83638.*

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Message from the Editorial Board

We are used to addressing history as a set of immutable facts. But in reality, our view of the historical record changes and shifts, depending on who is telling the story and what new information comes to light. Sometimes it takes a fresh perspective and some old-fashioned sleuthing to uncover what really happened and where it occurred. In this issue, Matt Flueger examines the history of the "lost barracks" of Fort Snelling, where the men of the segregated Twenty-Fifth US Infantry Regiment lived in the late 1800s. He presents some of their stories, and through careful research and comparison of plans and photos, he was able to identify a long-forgotten building, which was destroyed after about ten years of use. Jeremy Nienow shares the meticulous process that he and his team of archaeologists used to uncover the barracks, as well as other buildings and discoveries at the old fort. And Matt Goff has unearthed new information that dispels portions of the enduring myth that Pierre "Pig's Eye" Parrant was the first settler in St. Paul.

The Ramsey County Historical Society Editorial Board has some changes, too. On a personal note, this will be my last message as editorial board chair. Over the last fifteen years, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with two great editors and a wonderful editorial team. Their creative ideas and diligent work have done justice to the legacy of our founding editor, Virginia Brainard Kunz, and have helped extend our reach to perspectives that fully address our amazing heritage.

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.

Book Reviews

From Hurt to Healing

A collaboration by Every Body's In and Irreducible Grace Foundation

St. Paul, MN: Irreducible Grace Foundation, 2021, 56 pages

REVIEWED BY MEREDITH CUMMINGS

Question: What's the best way to move from hurt to healing?

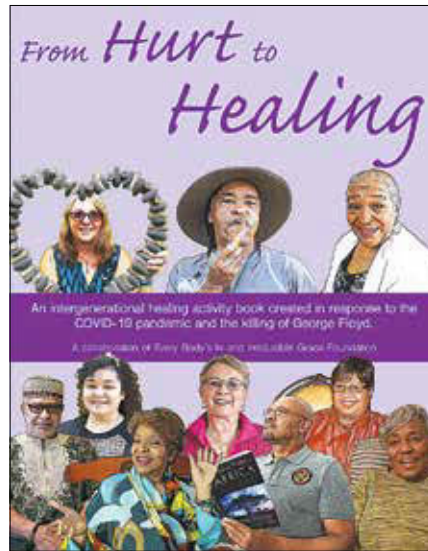
Answers: Help someone; Remember your purpose; Forgive; Create and carve out joy and wonder in your day . . .

This advice from a handful of St. Paul, Minnesota, leaders and elders appears in a one-of-a-kind activity book titled *From Hurt to Healing*, produced and published by two nonprofit organizations—Irreducible Grace Foundation (IGF) and Every Body's In. These legal professionals, teachers and educational administrators, community organizers, and members of various faith communities are Minnesota-born or Rondo-born—having grown up in one of St. Paul's multicultural neighborhoods. A few moved here from other US cities or from different countries as immigrants or refugees. The common thread that connects them is that all have known hurt. Thanks to support from others, they've learned to heal.

Now, as members of Every Body's In, it's their turn to help youth who are, in 2021, experiencing hurt most have never fully known. The COVID pandemic; the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis by a police officer and the resulting trial; continued mistreatment of and assaults against people of color; mass shootings; protests and



Members of the Irreducible Grace Foundation team. Courtesy of Irreducible Grace Foundation.



This new book is available through the Irreducible Grace Foundation at www.igf.com/store.

demonstrations; online school; and normal routines flipped upside down have created unimaginable despair. The adult leaders recognized that when they met with youth belonging to IGF.

The young people were skeptical. Could elders really understand their trauma? How could the two groups close the generational gap? To start, the elders listened while the youth and young adults shared their feelings. Then the younger generation listened, conducting interviews to learn what life was like in the past. Relationships grew. Ideas blossomed, and participants on both sides began to heal as they recognized the "possibilities of a stronger and healthier future." With that came innovation. One of the youth-inspired ideas that developed was this book.

During times of stress, it helps to embrace a calming pastime that takes the mind off the moment in an almost meditative way. The young people brainstormed the concept for the intergenerational activity book, took photographs that were transformed into graphic art, created illustrations, interviewed community elders, wrote biographies, and included stress-relieving activities, word searches, puzzles, writing prompts, family trees, and festival pages to help themselves and others experience moments of peace and celebrate their cultures and communities. As they worked, the bonds between the two groups continued to grow, built upon strengthening respect and understanding.

The book isn't a new concept. There are other self-care, race- or culture-focused workbooks out there for the general population that feature similar ideas, some with advice from national civic leaders or even movie or pop stars. This book, however, focuses in at the most local level, making it very personal and communal.

Does that mean it is meant only for the youth, elders, and greater Rondo community? It shouldn't. These activities offer healing and relaxation for anyone, and if you don't know the members of this particular community, that's okay. *From Hurt to Healing* provides a unique and welcoming opportunity to get to know this vibrant neighborhood and some of its residents. You'll be glad you did.

And, again, there's that common thread—everyone has suffered some level of trauma of late. So, take time for you! Retreat into this book—color, solve a word search, and learn how local individuals coped under challenging circumstances. Certainly, the destruction of the Rondo neighborhood when the interstate cut through it in the 1950s and '60s, the unrest of the Civil Rights era, and other times of strife were not easy to overcome. But the messages and advice in this book are clear—you can get through it, and you might learn something along the way. Just ask Chel, one young person who interviewed elders and created some of the artwork for the project:

I learned about joyful resistance. The outside world changes slowly, and we have to keep fighting for a better world. But we can also create the world we want within our relationships to one another . . . There are many things we can't change, but we can always change how we react and how we treat each other.

That response is a key reason anyone and everyone should spend some time reading about these phenomenal youth and elders and completing the cultural and educational activities in this inspirational collaboration.

Meredith Cummings works with Ramsey County Historical Society and is editor of the organization's quarterly publication Ramsey County History.

Minnesota's Geologist: The Life of Newton Horace Winchell

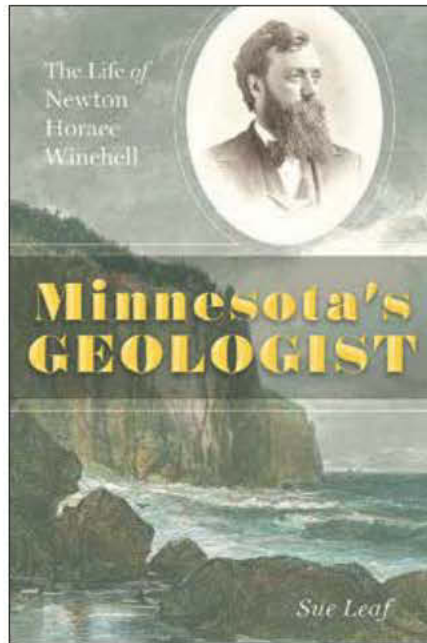
Sue Leaf

Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2020, 280 pages; hardcover, 30 b&w plates, \$29.95

REVIEWED BY PAUL NELSON

Newton Horace Winchell deserves to be remembered. He was probably Minnesota's greatest nineteenth-century scientist, a giant in not only geology but paleontology and archaeology, too. Winchell's *The Geological and Natural History Survey of Minnesota*, produced between 1872 and 1899, runs to thousands of pages. His *The Aborigines of Minnesota: A Report Based on the Collections of Jacob V. Bower, and on the Field Surveys and Notes of Alfred J. Hill and Theodore H. Lewis* is the first attempt at a comprehensive survey of Indigenous peoples in our part of the world. These are foundational works in the understanding of Minnesota's physical and human history. Winchell was also a compelling personality. Thanks to writer Sue Leaf, we now have a full biography of this remarkable figure.

There is drama in the first half of the book as the young Winchell scrambles to find his place in the world. Born in 1839, he left the family farm in Connecticut—presided over by his dreamy father and can-do mother—at age fifteen to escape its poverty and spent much of the next fifteen years teaching school, mostly in rural Michigan. Along the way, he taught himself Latin, Greek, French, biology, and chemistry. He came to geology at age twenty-nine through an elder brother who taught the subject at the University of Michigan. In 1872, Winchell moved to Minneapolis to work for the University of Minnesota and



Minnesota's Geologist: The Life of Newton Horace Winchell by Sue Leaf won a 2021 Minnesota Book Award for nonfiction. The Book Awards is a program of The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library.

undertake a geological survey of the state. He had found his life's work—and Minnesota got far more than it bargained for.

Some of the best parts of the first half of the book track Winchell's adventures in the field (the first love of all geologists) as he roams the state on foot, by boat, and by canoe, gathering rock samples and assembling (first in his mind, later on paper) the patterns of rock wear and glaciation that created the Minnesota we know today. His explorations of the wild country of the Iron Range are particularly entertaining. Along the way, author Leaf doles out the science—elementary geology—in digestible bits. A reader needs no background in geology to follow the story perfectly well.

Once Winchell gets established in his career, the drama drains from the story. Winchell spends most of his time in his office at the university compiling his data,

writing his reports, and advancing his career to national significance. It was completely absorbing for him but not for the reader. This is a problem for the author; at this point, Winchell's career is not much more interesting than that of a great accountant. Leaf handles this by devoting many pages to the lives of Winchell's accomplished wife, Lottie—an educator, a feminist, and a national temperance figure—and their gaggle of precocious children. Some people will find the details of family life interesting; others may want to skim.

Drama picks up again near the end of the book when, in 1899, after twenty-seven years of devoted service, the Regents dismissed the geologist and all of his assistants. Winchell, now nearly sixty and suffering from what we today would call age discrimination, was forced back to scrambling for a dollar—and it did not go well. The scramble ended only in 1906 when the Minnesota Historical Society hired him to investigate the early human history of the state, thus launching a kind of third career for Winchell as archaeologist. This resulted in the monumental, 763-page, profusely illustrated *The Aborigines of Minnesota*. Archaeology in Minnesota and beyond consumed the rest of Winchell's professional life. He died in 1914, leaving an imperishable scholarly legacy.

Minnesota's Geologist is not a geology book but a mostly entertaining biography of a great scientist whose contributions to our state are little remembered. It is a quick and easy read. Those who take it on will get not just Winchell but an introduction to Minnesota geology, portraits of the early University of Minnesota, and a nice sense of family life in late-nineteenth century Minneapolis.

Paul Nelson is an amateur historian living in St. Paul. He is the author of many publications of Minnesota history and a graduate of the University of Minnesota Law School.

Check Out More RCHS Book Reviews Online!

One sure thing about history—there's a lot of it—more than we can print in *Ramsey County History* magazine! We have many talented historians, academics, and lay people who can't get enough of history and have followed their curiosity, interests, and hobbies down paths that lead them to write about their research and the

stories they've encountered along the way. And we have other historians, academics, and lay readers who enjoy reading these tomes and offering thoughtful critiques.

So, enjoy these reviews and those we have online, including Mary Lethert Wingerd's review of *Massacre in Minnesota: The Dakota War of 1862, the Most Violent Ethnic*

Conflict in American History by Gary Clayton Anderson and a review of James A. Stolpestad's 2020 book *Great Northern Iron: James J. Hill's 109-Year Mining Trust*. Learn more at <https://publishing.rchs.com/publishing/books/>.

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RAMSEY COUNTY History

A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

The Ramsey County Historical Society's vision is to innovate, lead, and partner in preserving the knowledge of our community, delivering inspiring history programming, and incorporating 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 preserved the Jane and Heman Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights, which the family acquired in 1849. The original programs at Gibbs Farm (listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974) focused on telling the story of the Gibbs family. In 2000, with the assistance of a Dakota Advisory Council, the site also began interpreting Dakota culture and lifeways. RCHS built additional structures and dedicated outdoor spaces to tell the stories of the remarkable relationship between Jane Gibbs and the Dakota people of *Héyáta Othúnwe* (Cloud Man's Village).

In 1964, the Society began publishing its award-winning magazine, *Ramsey County History*. In 1978, the organization moved its library, archives, and administrative offices to St. Paul's Landmark Center, a restored Federal Courts building on the National Register of Historic Places. An expansion of the Research Center was completed in 2010 to allow greater access to the Society's collection of historical archives and artifacts. In 2016, the Research Center was rededicated as the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center.

RCHS offers a variety of public programming for youth and adults. Visit www.rchs.com for details of upcoming History Revealed programs, summer camps, courthouse and depot tours, and more. RCHS serves 15,000 students annually on field trips or through outreach programs in schools that introduce the Gibbs family and the Dakota people of *Héyáta Othúnwe*. These programs are made possible by donors, members, corporations, and foundations, all of whom we appreciate deeply. If you are not yet a member of RCHS, please join today and help bring history to life for more than 50,000 people every year.

Equity & Inclusion Statement

History informs us, inspires new choices, brings people together, and builds community. Likewise, it can be misused to inspire fear, create division, and perpetuate racism and other injustices. We resolve to present history in accordance with our values of Authenticity, Innovation, Inspiration, Integrity, and Respect. We believe that by doing so, our community will be more informed, more engaged, and will become stronger.

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



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Acknowledging This Sacred Dakota Land

Mnisóta Makhóche, the land where the waters are so clear they reflect the clouds, extends beyond the modern borders of Minnesota and is the ancestral and contemporary homeland of the Dakhóta (Dakota) people. It is also home to the Anishinaabe and other Indigenous peoples, all who make up a vibrant community in Mnisóta Makhóche. The Ramsey County Historical Society acknowledges that its sites are located on and benefit from these sacred Dakota lands.

Dakota people are the first people of Mnisóta Makhóche and have lived here for thousands of years. In the nineteenth century, Dakota lands were greatly diminished by a series of one-sided treaties that continue to benefit the United States government and the descendants of those who immigrated to Minnesota. These treaties were knowingly mistranslated, and land and annuities promised to the Dakota were stolen and never received. In 1862, war broke out between some Dakota and the Governments of the United States and Minnesota. As a result of that war, Governor Alexander Ramsey (namesake of Ramsey County) called for all Dakota people in Minnesota to “be exterminated or driven forever beyond the borders of Minnesota,” their homeland. This codification of genocidal State policy resulted in the violent and forced removal of Dakota people from their homeland, including offering bounties for killing Dakota men, women, and children and years of exterminatory military campaigns.

Yet the Dakota people have survived this attempted genocide and the ongoing attempts to erase their histories and culture through assimilation practices, including sending Dakota children to boarding schools and erasure by omission of Dakota history in curriculum in educational institutions.

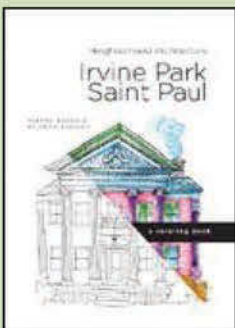
Ramsey County Historical Society is committed to preserving our past, informing our present, and inspiring our future. Part of doing so is acknowledging the painful history and current challenges facing the Dakota people just as we celebrate the contributions of Dakota and other Indigenous peoples.

We pledge to honor the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples of Mnisóta Makhóche by:

- Continuing to share an accurate historical curriculum at Gibbs Farm that covers the seasonal life of the Dakota of Ĥeyáta Othúnwe (Cloud Man’s Village) at Bdé Makhá Ska;
- Developing improved language for signage and curriculum that more accurately describes colonization;
- Providing a platform for Dakota and other Indigenous partners to showcase their work at our physical sites through virtual programming, exhibits, and publications;
- Maintaining relationships with Dakota community members, and organizations;
- Supporting Dakota and other Indigenous-owned businesses;
- Providing space for traditional and contemporary Dakota cultural activities and events;
- And by advocating for the respectful and equitable treatment of Dakota people, culture, and history.

The staff and board of the Ramsey County Historical Society extend their heartfelt thanks to Teresa Peterson, Dakota & Upper Sioux Community citizen; Chris Pexa, PhD, Spirit Lake Dakota Nation; and Šišóka Dúta (Joe Bendickson), Sisseton Wahpeton Oyáte, University of Minnesota—for their support of RCHS and advice regarding this statement.

For references for this statement, please see
<https://www.rchs.com/news/dakota-land-acknowledgement/>



Irvine Park Coloring Book

Jeanne Kosfeld and Richard Kronick have created a unique first book featuring the lovely Irvine Park neighborhood. Color or paint eighteen sketches of homes while learning about the area’s history and architecture.

To order:

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March of the Governors Podcasts

RCHS has introduced a new series of podcasts: “March of the Governors” examines the lives and careers of the governors of the State of Minnesota, one by one.

www.rchs.com/news/rchs-podcasts/

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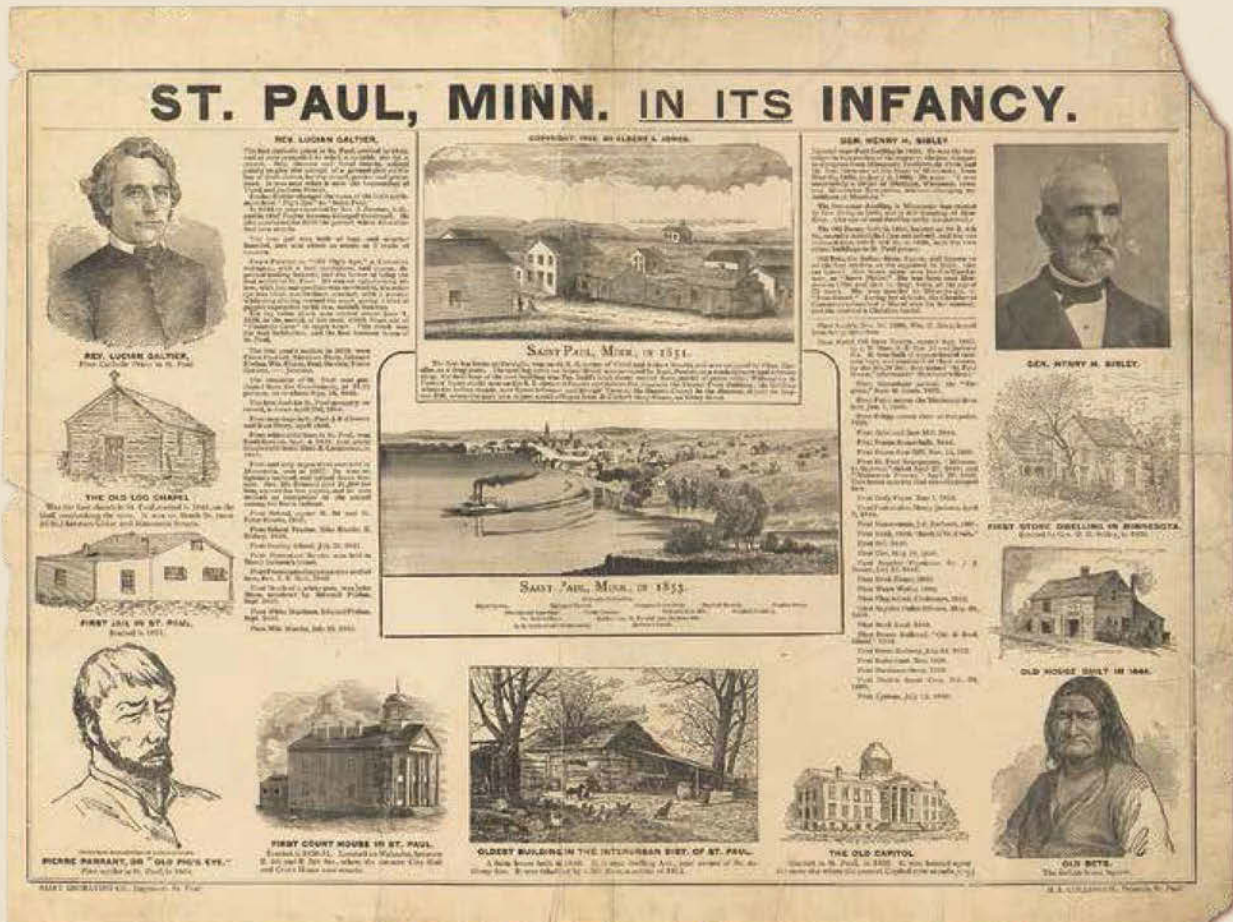
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Correcting Mystery and Myth

Not Everything You've Heard about Pig's Eye Parrant is True

MATTHEW GOFF, PAGE 20



This 1892 broadside, copyrighted by Albert A. Jones and printed by H. L. Collins Co., celebrates St. Paul's many "firsts," including the first governor, school teacher, Protestant church, and even the first murderer. Many facts are true. Others have been questioned, including those related to a man named Pierre Parrant, whose image is illustrated in the bottom left-hand corner. Parrant's narrative has shaped this city's history, but author Matt Goff argues that some of these oft-repeated stories are just that—stories—that should be reconsidered and corrected. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*