



Ramsey County Historical Society  
"History close to home"  
Landmark Center, 75 W. 5th St.  
St. Paul, MN 55102

# RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY



Volume 16  
Number 2

# Ramsey County History

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*Cover Photo: This photograph of the Yoerg Brewery, nestling up against the bluffs of St. Paul's West Side, was taken in 1933. The brewery was located at Ohio and Ethel streets. Photos with the story on St. Paul's family breweries are from the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society. Sketches for the Montgomery Schuyler story are reproduced from Vol. LXXXIII, Number 497, of Harper's New Monthly Magazine for 1891 (pages 736-755).*

often repeated at that juncture in our history, as to whether there was really such a thing as a true American architecture. He extended this further to complete his probing of the existence of an eastern architecture versus that of a western architecture in this country, and suggested, finally, that out of the efforts to create regional architectural styles would come a truly national architecture.

He observed that:

*"The question whether there is any American architecture is not yet so triumphantly answered that is other than provincial to lay much stress on local differences. The general impression that the Eastern observer derives from Western architecture is the same that American architecture in general makes upon the European observer, and that is that it is a very much emancipated architecture."*

He concluded by noting that "there are among the emancipated practitioners of architecture in the West men who have shown that they can use their liberty wisely, and whose work can be hailed among the hopeful beginnings of a national architecture."

#### Footnotes

1. Vol. LXXXIII, no. 497, pp. 736-755. All quotations from Montgomery Schuyler are from this article, and are thus not cited individually. A collection of Schuyler's writing was published in 1961, entitled *American Architecture and Other Writings* by Montgomery Schuyler, edited by William H. Jordy and Ralph Coe (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard, 1961).
2. "The City House in the West." *Scribner's*, vol. 8 (Sept., 1890), p. 434.
3. Vol. 3, no. 11 (Nov., 1889).
4. These illustrations include the Riley Row at Nina and Laurel by Wilcox and Johnston, extant; the Edgar C. Long House, 318 Summit Avenue by Gilbert & Taylor, extant; the John L. Merriam House (later the Science Museum of Minnesota), 51 University Avenue by Mould and McNichol, probably with Harvey Ellis, razed; the Amherst H. Wilder House, 226 Summit Avenue by Wilcox and Johnston, razed; and the Rugg House, 251 Summit Avenue by Hodgson and Stem, extant.
5. Schuyler refers in his comments to Richardson's Church of the Unity in Springfield (1866-69). However, an examination of this church and the North Congregational Church (1868-73) which was also in Springfield demonstrates that both were influential in Gilbert and Taylor's design. These churches are illustrated in Henry-Russell Hitchcock's *The Architecture of Henry Hobson Richardson and His Times*, 1935, rpt. Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1975, plates 3 and 26.
6. Donald Hoffman. *The Architecture of John Wellborn Root*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973, p. 9.
7. Solon Beman would later design a four-story addition to the building.

## 1910's 'One-horse' Gladstone Recalled

BY LUCILE ARNOLD

*The house has been razed.  
Remaining cement front steps  
lead to friendly ghosts.*

L. Arnold

**F**rost Avenue in Maplewood, which begins at Lake Phalen and ends at the Ramsey County Nursing Home, is a beehive of activity today. This area has the Keller Golf Course, a trailer park, the Gladstone Lumber

*About the Author: Lucile Arnold grew up in Gladstone, began recording her memories of early Maplewood in a creative writing class at Wilder Senior Citizens Center, St. Paul. This is her second contribution to Ramsey County History.*

Mart, Gladstone Baptist Church, Gladstone Improvement Company, Gladstone House, Maplewood Bowl, Maplewood city offices, a large shopping center, the Community Education Center, the Cross Lutheran Church, and apartment houses.

In the 1910 decade, this area was known as Gladstone to the post office and Gloster to the Northern Pacific and Soo Line Railroads, and its population was 250. There was no 1402 Frost Avenue. That was just the house where the Reeves family lived and which later was occupied by the large Miller family, of which I was a member.

A two-lane dirt horse-and-buggy road

served as the main highway. Beginning at Lake Phalen there was a swamp where the trailer park is now, a place to pick pussy willows, the Northern Pacific Roundhouse, the Gladstone Plow Works, and a saloon where most of the men left some of their 23-cent-an-hour starting wage. Fire destroyed the saloon one night. Cause unknown.

The community was like one large family sharing each other's problems. Despite the fact that there was only a part-time volunteer constable, there was little vandalism and thievery. Children knew their parents weren't afraid to spank.

WHEN BABIES were born, the doctor arrived in his car at the house of the mother where a relative or a neighbor was already in attendance. The mother usually stayed in bed for nine days, by which time she supposedly had regained her health.

There was little money for recreation or entertainment in those days, nor was there any radio. There were no interurban sports or chauffeuring mothers. The boys played football, baseball, and kick-the-can, using a tin can and sticks. When the boys didn't have enough baseball players, we girls were allowed to play with them. We also played ante-ante-over and run-sheep-run. We girls swam in Gladstone Lake in makeshift or hand-me-down bathing suits. The boys swam in the nude in one section of the lake because most of them didn't own bathing suits until they were old enough to buy their own.

During the winter, we shoveled the snow-covered lake so we could skate with our clamp skates. A rink with a warming house would have been paradise. We belonged to the LTL (Loyal Temperance Legion) and the 4-H club.

THE LARGEST and most impressive building was the four-room red brick District Number 21 schoolhouse at what is now Frost and Birmingham. It had a belltower and a spiral fire escape on the second floor. Children, and later their children, learned to walk up the fire escape from the outside so they could slide down.

There were two outhouses back of the building, one for the girls and the other for the boys. Teachers could recognize everyone's handwriting so no graffiti appeared on the walls, although the boys carved their initials in their outhouse.

Only two rooms of the school were used as classrooms. Few of us knew our alphabet or numbers before we entered the first grade.

There was no kindergarten. There was a heap of learning, religious training, local entertainment, and dancing that went on in that building. In 1951, after a bitter battle, the school was demolished. A new school costing \$250,000 was erected near the site. It was used for only twenty-five years. Presently the building serves as the Community Educational Center. Few people, even employees, notice the plaque in the entryway dedicated to my father, C.O. Miller, who served as a schoolboard member for twenty-five consecutive years.

Some summers gypsies pitched their tents where the Cross Lutheran Church stands today. The other side of the road was pasture land for the cattle belonging to the Poor House (Ramsey County Home) which is now the Ramsey County Nursing Home. There was a potter's field adjacent to it.

The Northern Pacific and Soo Line Railroads each had their own depot in the vicinity of what is now Clarence and Frost. Then the Northern Pacific Depot was moved near the Soo Line tracks, and one depot served both railroads. It was open twenty-four hours a day with three shifts. There were fifty-two daily passenger and freight trains. J.B. Clark was the daytime agent and telegrapher. His salary was \$45 a month.

UNLIKE TODAY, there was no bridge over the channel between Round Lake and Phalen Lake. Picnickers and swimmers took a train to the East Side Station at East Seventh and Earl streets in St. Paul, then a streetcar to Arcade and Seventh streets, and a Dale and Phalen streetcar to Phalen Park. The service was excellent.

Mrs. Edward Selover, whose husband was a Spanish-American War veteran, had abandoned a musical career for marriage. She conducted a Sunday School in a vacant building, which had once been a meatmarket, next door to her house. She received no pay or recognition, nor did she expect any. She simply thought it was her duty to God and mankind, because she had the talent and time for it. Most of the local children attended the Sunday School, each clutching a penny for supplies. They were warned not to lose it.

The town grew slowly. Without being aware of it, we teenagers helped to make the 1920s roar. Now this area is a modern suburb. The once one-horse town of Gladstone or Gloster, has been swallowed up by Maplewood.



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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 house of the mid-nineteenth century period.*

The Ramsey County Historical Society was founded in 1949. Its chief function is to collect and preserve the history of the city and the county and share that history with the people who live here. The Society is the county's historian. It preserves those things from the past that are the community's treasures — its written records through the Society's library; its historic sites through establishment of the Irvine Park Historic District and its successful efforts to help prevent destruction of the Old Federal Courts Building, now Landmark Center. It shares these records through the publishing of its magazine, brochures, pamphlets, and prints; through conducting historic sites tours of the city, teaching classes, producing exhibits on the history of the city, and maintaining its museum on rural county history. The Gibbs Farm Museum, the oldest remaining farm home in Ramsey County, was acquired by the Society in 1949 and opened to the public in 1954 as a museum which would depict the way of life of an early Minnesota settler. In 1966 the Society moved onto the property a one-room rural country schoolhouse dating from the 1870s. Now restored to the period of the late 1890s, the school is used for classes, meetings, and as the center for a summer schoolhouse program for children.

Society headquarters are located in Landmark Center, an historic Richardsonian Romanesque structure in downtown St. Paul, where it maintains the center's only permanent exhibit, a history of the building during the seventy-five years it was the federal government's headquarters in St. Paul.

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