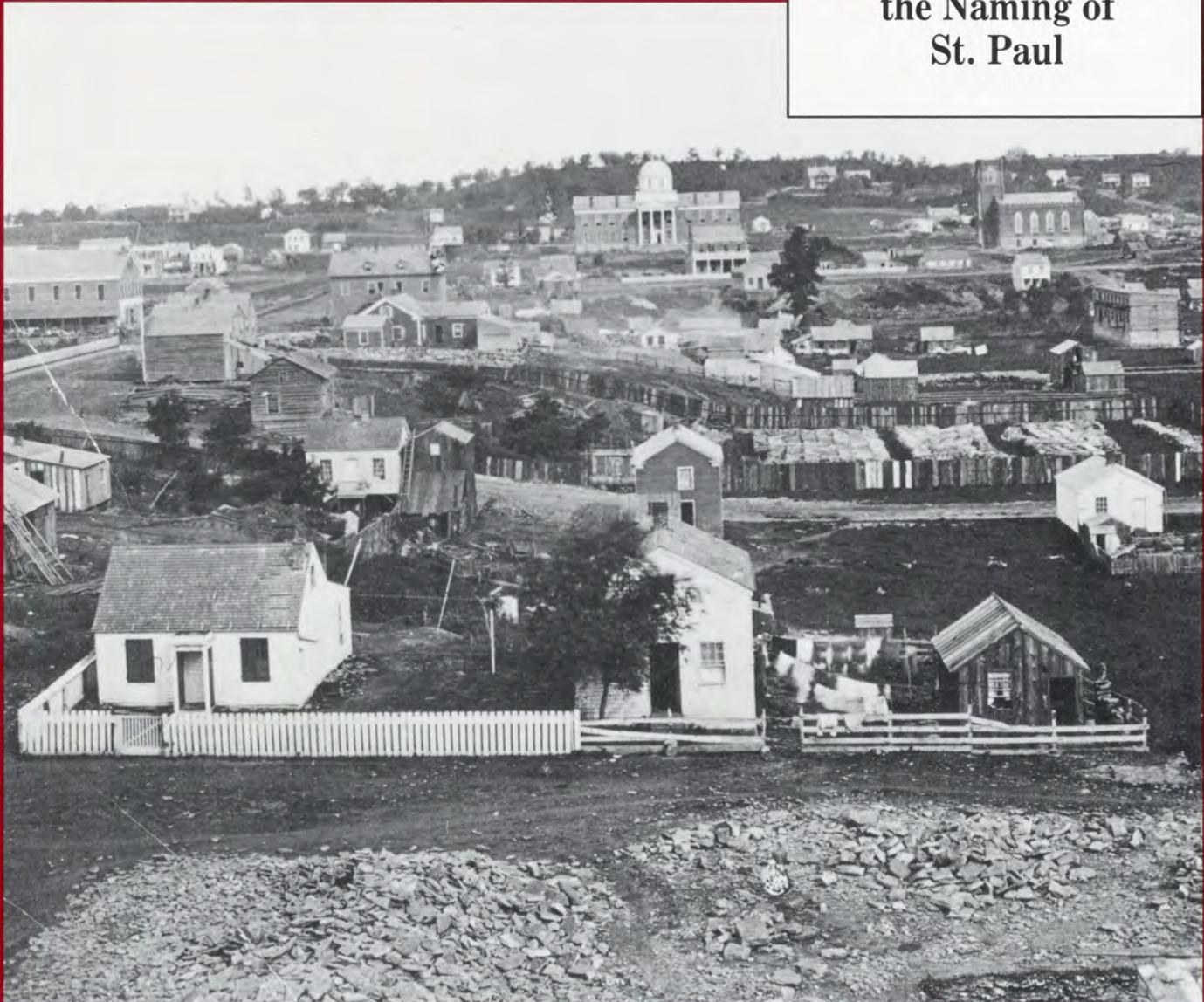


RAMSEY COUNTY
History
A Publication of the Ramsey County Historical Society

Fall, 1991
Volume 26, Number 3

Special Issue:
150th Anniversary of
the Naming of
St. Paul



St. Paul in 1857. This is one of nine panoramic views shot that year by B. F. Upton from the roof of the Ramsey County Courthouse at Fourth and Wabasha streets. In this view to the north, the building with the pillars and the dome is the territorial capitol at Tenth and Wabasha streets. The articles beginning on page 4 are published in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the naming of St. Paul and trace the early history of the settlement on the Mississippi that once was known as Pig's Eye.

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On the Cover: St. Paul was the capital of the Territory of Minnesota, when this view was photographed by B. F. Upton from the roof of the Ramsey County Courthouse in 1857. See articles on St. Paul's early years beginning on page 4.

Acknowledgements: The photograph on page 3 is from the Ramsey County Historical Society's photo collection. The map on page 10 was created by the design firm of Rummel, Dubs and Hill. Photographs of the Davern house in 1990 on page 23, the Daverns on page 24, Dr. Colvin on page 27 and the Colvin house on page 28 are from the author's collection. The Fuller family photograph on page 25 is from the H. B. Fuller Company. All other photographs in this issue are from the audio-visual collections of the Minnesota Historical Society.

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Publication of *Ramsey County History* is supported in part by a gift from Clara M. Claussen and Frieda H. Claussen in memory of Henry H. Cowie, Jr.

A Message from the Editorial Board

Four members of the Society's Board of Directors and Editorial Board have had the good fortune to serve on the St. Paul History Sub-committee for the writing of *Saint Paul—The First 150 Years*. The sub-committee came together under the auspices of The Saint Paul Foundation to assist the book's author, Virginia Brainard Kunz, with comment and criticism of her manuscript that celebrates the history and cultural diversity of the people of St. Paul. The opinions of the committee members were as varied as their ethnicity. The group included representatives from the Native American, Southeast Asian, African American and Mexican American communities of Ramsey County, as well as those of European ancestry.

The book that Virginia Kunz wrote reflects the experiences of their people and their vision for St. Paul and its cultural richness. Featured in this issue of *Ramsey County History* is a section of the book along with special articles on "Pig's Eye" Parrant, Abraham Perry's family and the Davern house, an early farm house set within an Irish community in what is now Highland Park. Together they all contribute to the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the naming of St. Paul.

—John M. Lindley, chairman, Editorial Board

A Matter of Time

1851 140 YEARS AGO

► Two women described as “frail” were arrested in New York after “promenading Broadway attired in short satin dresses and full Bloomer costume.” In default of \$300 for bail, they were taken to jail, which, the *New York Times* observed, should “operate materially against the respectable portion of our community wearing the new and so-called fashionable costume in the public thoroughfares of this great Metropolis.”

Bloomers, that “sensible costume for females,” which consisted of a small jacket and a short skirt worn over full trousers, were introduced by Amelia Jenks Bloomer in the 1840s. An American reformer who championed women’s rights, Amelia Bloomer also wrote and lectured on slavery and temperance. Her newspaper, the *Lily*, started in 1849, was the first to be published for and by women. She set another pioneering example for women when she served as deputy for her husband, who was postmaster in Seneca Falls, New York.

► Newspapers from Liberia reported the “steady prosperity” of the African colony. The United States brig, *Perry*, arriving from Monrovia announced that the slave trade on the south coast is “on its last legs” and that farther north it is “already nearly extinct.”

► A report on the latest European styles in women’s clothing in 1851 and 1852 could be ordered from New York for \$1.50 a copy or five copies “sent by express” for \$6. The report includes costumes “of all nations,” along with diagrams and directions.

► In an era when hygiene and sanitation were sometime things, Lyon’s Magnetic Powder and Pills was advertised as “poisonless yet it kills with ease the bed-bugs, roaches, ants and fleas.”

1891 100 YEARS AGO

► In London, the Liberal Federation proposed that the House of Lords be abolished. Members of that body, composed almost exclusively of the aristocracy, expressed shock and indignation. There were claims, however, that the House of Lords was almost extinct from disuse, anyway, since attendance at its meetings averaged around forty, out of 600–700 members. Clearly, the proposal came to naught.

► In New York, that October of 1891, hundreds of people were said to be loitering about the home of Grover Cleveland, hoping for a glimpse of the baby girl born to the former president and his wife. Cleveland was running for re-election. His bid gained some ground when Charles T. O’Ferrall, of New York’s House of Representatives, declared that Cleveland’s nomination on the Democratic ticket was “the right move for the Democratic party.”

► From Ellendale, North Dakota, came reports of an immense prairie fire with much of the country west of the Missouri River in flames. N. L. Sherman reported that a fire raged in Emmon County “for several days and burned over a region 300 miles long and 200 wide, destroying immense quantities of hay belonging to farmers, ranchers and Indians; also, burning and stampeding beyond recovery many valuable herds of horses, cattle and sheep, and probably resulting in the loss of many human lives,” although no actual reports of deaths had been received.

► In St. Paul, the Minnesota Supreme Court overturned the rulings of lower courts and found the dealing in grain futures illegal and void. The finding is one of great importance, the *New York Times* observed, “since two of the largest

boards of trade are located in Minneapolis and Duluth, the operators of which may now repudiate their contracts with impunity when on the wrong side of the marker, unless they deal in real wheat, oats and other commodities.”

► In the meantime, the steamer *Winslow*, belonging to the Erie and Western Transportation Company, was burning in Duluth harbor. The fires were described as out of control, and no effort was being made to save the ship or whatever remained in its hold, as Duluth had no fire tugs. Berthed in the St. Paul and Duluth slip, she was towed out into the harbor when firefighting efforts were deemed useless. Most of the cargo apparently had already been unloaded.

1916 75 YEARS AGO

► London was under air attack as World War I ground on. A fourth Zeppelin was brought down, the victim of anti-aircraft fire, as the Germans staged another raid on the city. “The spectacle of the descending blazing mass was witnessed by thousands of Londoners who showed their satisfaction by loud cheering,” one newspaper reported.

► Woodrow Wilson was in the midst of a contentious re-election campaign and vigorously opposed by former President Theodore Roosevelt, who was supporting the Republican candidate, Charles Evans Hughes. Roosevelt labeled Wilson’s chief policy one of “vacillation.” Wild applause greeted Roosevelt’s declaration that, had he been president when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed, “I would have instantly taken possession of every German ship in this country and then I would have said, ‘Now we will discuss not what we will give but what we will give back.’”

► Back home, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reported on October 2 that 575 officers and enlisted men of the First Battalion, First Minnesota Field Artillery, had left, in the midst of a gale to patrol along the Mexican border. The paper said that a large crowd gave the troops an enthusiastic send-off.

The enthusiasm apparently didn't rub off on three soldiers from St. Paul. They slipped through a narrow window as the train slowed in Dwight, Kansas. Taken into custody, they were sentenced to terms ranging from eleven days to six months.

► The *Pioneer Press* for October 3 reported a tragic story. On St. Paul's West Side, a mother continued to call out for her dead day-old baby, while the father, lacking the necessary funds for burial, brought the body to the Central Police Station, seeking help. The baby, the paper reported, would be buried "by the county unless other means can be found." Unemployed for three months, the father had spent the last of his money to pay a doctor's bill for a son he never saw alive.

► Swift and Company at South St. Paul offered a 2½ cent raise to more than 2,500 workers at the plant and to others connected with local branches of other packing companies. Company officials in Chicago were quick to point out that the raise wasn't offered in the face of threatened labor unrest. In all, 60,000 workers were to benefit, at a cost to the companies of more than \$4 million.

► Louis W. Hill was named chairman of the revived St. Paul Winter Carnival and predicted that it would be the biggest of its kind in the nation. "Marching clubs are coming from all over the West," he announced. Because of the great number of visitors expected in St. Paul, he said, "it will be necessary to provide continuous indoor entertainment in the auditorium and to give visiting marching clubs an opportunity to compete with each other."

► The estate of Louis Hill's father, James J. Hill, who died that year, totaled \$100 million, according to reports out of St. Paul. Included were bank stocks valued at \$24,812,000; \$70,000 in railroad stocks; and \$4,449,000 in cash.

1941 50 YEARS AGO

► Winston Churchill told the British House of Commons, in October, 1941, that the tide of battle in the Atlantic was turning in favor of the British, but the Nazis still enjoyed enormous superiority on land. Only in the air, Churchill declared, did Britain maintain the initiative. Meanwhile, in Czechoslovakia, Premier General Alois Elias and two retired generals were executed. They were among the eighty-eight victims of Gestapo leader Reinhard Heydrich's summary justice, as the German Reich celebrated the third anniversary of the dismemberment of the Czech state.

► Back in St. Paul, Northwest Airlines was ordered to pay Ramsey County \$18,266 in taxes and penalties. The airline was charged with delinquency in the payment of its 1939 personal property taxes.

► Republican Joseph H. Ball had his own problems. The Democrats were attempting to oust him from his senate seat.

► St. Paul's budget for 1942 was approved in October. It included raises for most city employees, even while it reflected a \$232,073 decrease over 1941.

► Thousands of women "eager to be better cooks and homemakers" crowded into the city auditorium on an October afternoon to attend the first session of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch's* 13th Annual Cooking and Homemaking School. Men were special guests at the school's closing session, "a gala party" which included distribution of "many valuable prizes" and a fashion show "depicting what's new in the women's world as men see it."

► Grant Dunne, the Minneapolis labor leader who helped organize the Minneapolis truck drivers into "one of the most powerful labor organizations in the country," committed suicide in his Minneapolis apartment October 4. He was scheduled to go on trial in a matter of days on charges of sedition.

1966 25 YEARS AGO

► The Vietnam War made headlines on October 9 when the United States air force fought through Communist MIGs

to blast a North Vietnam fuel dump on the outskirts of Hanoi.

► Echoes of an older war sounded in Germany. After spending twenty years in prison for war crimes, Albert Speer, former Nazi minister for armaments, and Walter Schirach, the first leader of the Hitler Youth Movement, were released from Spandau prison. Their families picked them up in Mercedes limousines. They left behind Rudolf Hess, Hitler's former deputy, the last remaining Nazi prisoner in Allied hands. Some 400 people demanding Hess' release, as well, stoned police and broke through barricades outside the prison.

► Hurricane Inez swept across the Florida Keys at speeds of 110 miles per hour on its way out to sea over the Gulf of Mexico. Three elderly residents of Miami Beach died of heart attacks as they prepared their homes for the storm, and several ships, including a Coast Guard cutter were damaged or run aground by the storm.

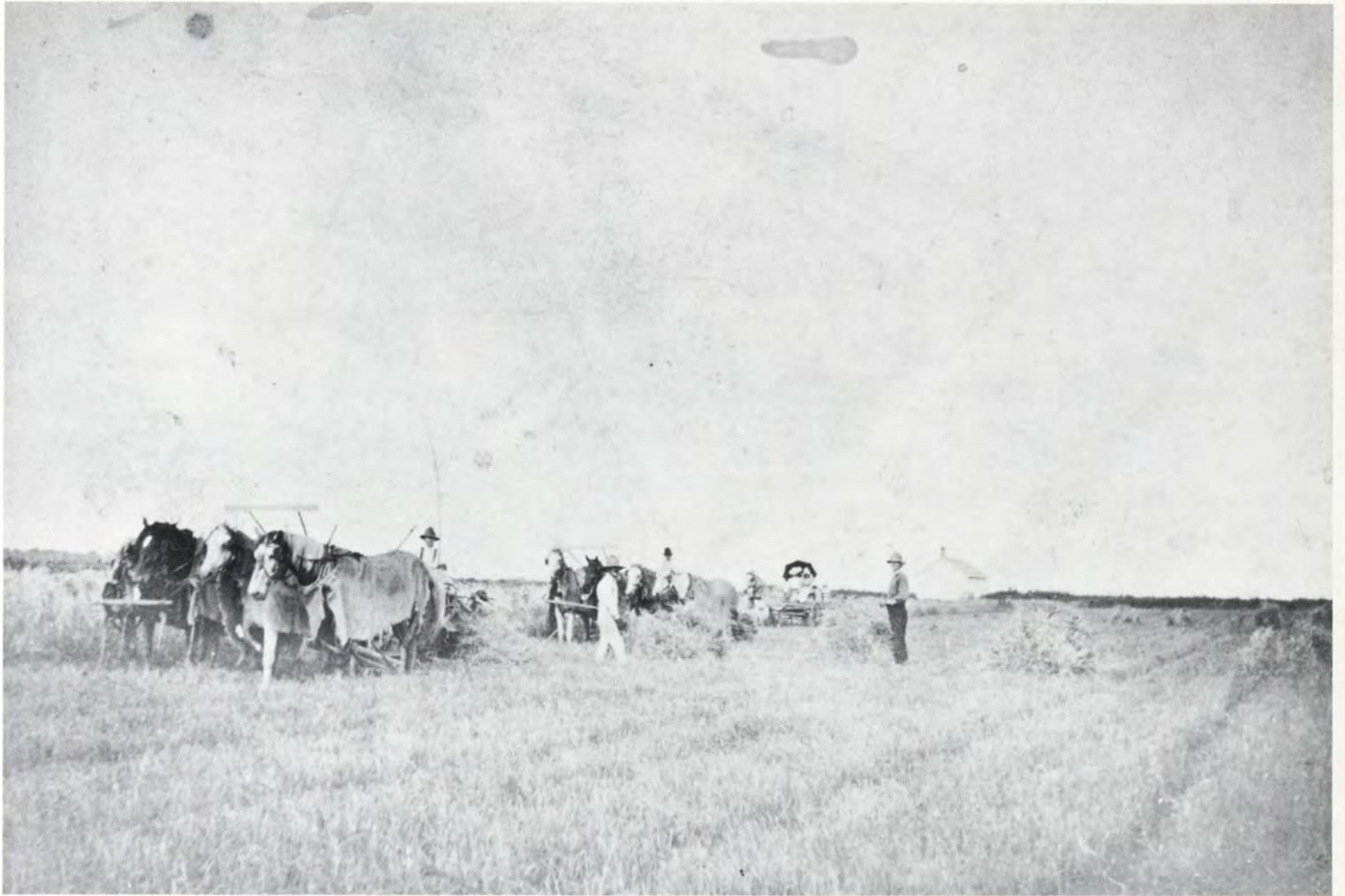
► In Minnesota, Republicans accused Governor Karl Rolvaag's administration of "attempting to conceal information about its handling of two controversial insurance company insolvency cases."

► Minnesota's state income tax revenue was up 12 percent from 1965, Commissioner Rolland F. Hatfield announced.

► Dr. George O. Berry, the first African American to serve on the St. Paul Board of Education, was sworn in on October 3. He had won the unanimous endorsement of the St. Paul school committee, which had reviewed fifty-four applications for the position.

► The Minnesota Twins arrived home after the final game of the 1966 season. They had finished the season in second place, with an 89-73 record. Sam Mele, manager said, "These guys showed me something this year. They could have folded after the first half of the season. But they went down swinging like true champions."

Adapted from research by Carrie Krbecek, Allan H. Charney and John Western, students of Professor Thomas C. Buckley at the University of Minnesota.



The Davern family working in the field north of their farm house, late in the nineteenth century. Today, this field is a residential neighborhood southwest of Montreal and Snelling avenues. See the article page 22 on the families and the homes of the Daverns, who were among the Irish immigrants who settled in what is now Highland Park in 1849, and on the Colvins who followed them.

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

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