

RAMSEY COUNTY
History
A Publication of the Ramsey County Historical Society

Aches and Pains of
Property Owners:
Taxes, Fees, 1856–1904

Page 17

Fall, 2000

Volume 35, Number 3

All the Frailties of Human Nature
The Ramsey County Attorney's Office
and Its Colorful 150-Year History

—Page 4



Pierce Butler, Ramsey County attorney from 1892 to 1896 and future associate justice of the United States Supreme Court, with Henry G. Hardy, left, a clerk, and S. C. Donnelly, right, an assistant county attorney. This photo, from the Ramsey County Attorney's Office, probably was taken when the office was located in the 1880s Ramsey County Courthouse at Fourth and Wabasha in downtown St. Paul. See the article on the history of the Ramsey County Attorney's Office beginning on page 4.

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A Message from the Editorial Board

In 1999 Ramsey County celebrated its sesquicentennial anniversary of its founding. As part of the effort to look back at the county's past 150 years, this issue of our magazine opens with Anne E. Cowie's history of the Ramsey County Attorney's Office. Trained as an attorney and as a historian, Anne Cowie captures the changes that have taken place in this office over the years and highlights some of the flamboyant individuals who have served as Ramsey County attorney. She also focuses on some of the most interesting and important cases, such as the trial of T. Eugene Thompson, handled by the county attorneys since 1849. What emerges from this study is a greater appreciation of how the work of the Ramsey County Attorney's Office has changed since frontier times and how successful those elected to the office of county attorney have been in adjusting to these changes.

In our second article in this issue, Leo J. Harris, attorney, author and historian, writes about the practical operation of the law for two St. Paul property owners, Martin and Sarah Flanagan. The Flanagans owned two small lots on Broadway Street (which no longer exists due to the construction of Interstate I-94) in downtown St. Paul between 1856 and 1904. Harris's perspective is very different from that of Anne Cowie because he analyzes the Flanagan's real and personal property tax receipts and other legal records to determine the financial consequences of St. Paul property laws for a family of modest circumstances. Over time the Flanagan property on Broadway went from being a lot in a frontier town to a homestead in a prosperous city to being part of a St. Paul slum. One of the most fascinating parts of this story is the way in which the Flanagans found their taxes and assessments increased as St. Paul gradually improved its streets with grading, paving and building sidewalks in the late nineteenth century. This is a circumstance many readers of the present century can certainly understand and appreciate. The Flanagans' experience cries out with the feeling of "the more things change, the more they remain the same."

Finally, historian and author Rhoda Gilman unravels the tangled identity of Cloud Man.

John M. Lindley, Chair, Editorial Board

Was That Really Cloud Man?

The Pitfalls of Research: Two Leaders, Same Name

Editor's Note: The following letter from Rhoda Gilman, respected Minnesota historian, writer, and former editor of the Minnesota Historical Society's quarterly magazine, *Minnesota History*, underscores some of the perils of historical research but also provides us with more fascinating information about the Mdewakanton Dakota Chief Cloud Man and his times. Her following comments are addressed to the article, "The Two Worlds of Jane Gibbs," by Julie Humann, which was published in the Spring, 2000, issue of *Ramsey County History* and included a sketch of Cloud Man.

After noting that she has had "a particular interest in Cloud Man and the [Seth] Eastman family," Rhoda Gilman offers "a few amendments and additions." They enrich our knowledge of the Mdewakanton Dakota leader who figured so importantly in the life of the young Jane De Bow (Stevens) Gibbs during the 1830s when she lived near his village at Lake Calhoun.

Rhoda Gilman noted that her "most important amendment concerns the portrait of Cloud Man by Frank Mayer [on page eight of the magazine]:

There were actually two Dakota leaders of the same name. They lived at about the same time and both were involved with Lawrence Taliaferro and with the missionaries. The one who headed the farming village at Lake Calhoun was Mdewakanton; there also was a Sisseton Cloud Man who lived near Lac Qui Parle. The picture [published with Julie Humann's article and] sketched by Frank Mayer is almost certainly the Sisseton Cloud Man. Mayer attended the treaty-making at Traverse des Sioux in 1851 and since the treaty was with the Sisseton and Wahpeton, [the Sisseton] Cloud Man was there and signed the treaty.



Cloud Man. Frank B. Mayer papers, Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois.

Although Little Crow and a few Mdewakanton from Kaposia were also at Traverse des Sioux, as observers, there is no reason to think that the Mdewakanton Cloud Man, who then lived at Good Road's village, was with them. He did attend the later negotiations at Mendota, and he signed the treaty made there (where his name is translated as "Man of the Sky"). By that time, however, Mayer had left Minnesota.

The Lake Calhoun Cloud Man also had a third daughter (Hushes Still the Night) who was married to the Columbia Fur Company fur trader, Daniel Lamont. Their child, Jane Lamont, was raised in the families of [Gideon and Samuel Pond] and eventually married their nephew, Starr Titus.

The best source I have found for information on Cloud Man and the Lake Calhoun band is *Two Volunteer Missionaries Among the Dakota* (1893) by Samuel Pond, Jr. The aban-

donment of the village [at Lake Calhoun] was due to conflict with the Ojibwa, but the immediate cause was a fierce attack by warriors from Lake Calhoun on an unsuspecting band of Ojibwa who were returning to their homes. The attack, not led by Cloud Man, was in revenge for a supposed murder by the Ojibwa. Rightly fearing reprisal from their enemies, the members of the band moved to safer places in the Minnesota Valley.

I would like to clarify the statement [on page 6 in the second column] that "the traders were able to keep the Santee perpetually in debt to them." This implies a plot by traders who *wanted* to extend credit to Indian hunters. In fact, they complained about it constantly, yet any trader who refused credit to his customers would immediately have been out of business. It was just the way the system worked. Smaller traders were themselves in debt to larger traders and to the big fur companies. The entire industry operated on credit.

Ramsey County History is most grateful to Rhoda Gilman for sharing with us her research and her knowledge of a complicated aspect of our state's history.

We have asked the Newberry Library to search the Frank B. Mayer papers for more on Cloud Man. Watch for the Newberry's report in a future issue.

No. 431 FA

City Treasurer's Office,

St. Paul, Sept 15 1886

Received of Martin Flanagan the sum of \$ 487.25 Dollars
payment in full for the following assessments made by the Board of Public Works on the hereinafter
described property, situated in the City of St. Paul, to-wit:

Name of Improvement.	DESCRIPTION.	LOT	BLK.	ADDITION	Original Assessment.	INTEREST.	TOTAL.
Broadway Sewing	Shop	3		S. C. Dayton's Improvement	10.00		
"	"	6		do	130.00		
"	"	7		do	130.00		\$ 360.00
Iron Store	"	3		do	40.75		
"	"	6		do	40.75		
"	"	7		do	40.75		121.75
							\$ 487.25

George Rep... City Treasurer.
Per... Deputy.

Martin Flanagan's receipt for his 1886 Public Works assessments. Flanagan family papers. See article beginning on page 17.

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

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