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The Other Librarian

Clara Baldwin and the Public Library

Movement in Minnesota

— Page 4



Clara F. Baldwin in 1936, shortly before her retirement from her position as the director of the Division of Libraries in the Minnesota Department of Education. She was a long-time leader in the Public Library movement in Minnesota whose career is profiled in this issue. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

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RAMSEY COUNTY History

Volume 42, Number 3

Fall 2007

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN JULY 2003:

The Ramsey County Historical Society shall discover, collect, preserve and interpret the history of the county for the general public, recreate the historical context in which we live and work, and make available the historical resources of the county. The Society's major responsibility is its stewardship over this history.

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A Message from the Editorial Board

The theme for this issue is the creativity of diverse Ramsey county residents as they responded to change. Bob Garland adds an important chapter to Minnesota women's history with his account of Clara F. Baldwin, who headed the drive to build a library system in greater Minnesota as its population grew. From the time she graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1892, Baldwin worked to make books accessible to all Minnesotans. As state librarian from 1900 to 1936, she first oversaw the development of traveling libraries, then a comprehensive system of local libraries. James Brown follows an earlier article for this magazine with more lively reminiscences of growing up in the 1920s and '30s in Frogtown, which was then a vital neighborhood near the state capitol that included African-American residents. His early relationships and activities, followed by his education on racism at the neighborhood barbershop, make a compelling read. And Anne Beiser Allen tells the intriguing story of Rev. Henry B. Whipple's election as the first Episcopal bishop of Minnesota in 1859, as that denomination was expanding in the new state. We hope you enjoy reading it all.

Anne Cowie
Chair, Editorial Board

Creating a Diocese

The Election of Minnesota's First Episcopal Bishop

Anne Beiser Allen

On the morning of June 29, 1859, approximately fifty delegates from twenty-two Episcopal parishes in the new diocese of Minnesota gathered in St. Paul's Church at Olive and Ninth streets in St. Paul to choose their first bishop.¹

Minnesota was changing rapidly from a frontier region to one filled with farms, towns, and industry. Its population had mushroomed following the signing of the 1851 treaty in which Dakota Indian leaders ceded nearly 1.5 million acres of land in the southern half of the state to the U.S. government. In 1849, there were barely 4,000 white people in the region; by 1859 there were over 150,000, with more arriving every day. Towns sprang up almost overnight. The new settlers brought their religious yearnings with them, and visiting preachers received a warm welcome, whatever their denomination. In 1850, the Episcopal priest James Lloyd Breck had founded a three-man Associated Mission in St. Paul. Within a year, a parish known as Christ Church had formed around the mission and built a board-and-batten neo-Gothic church on Cedar Street between Third (now Kellogg Boulevard) and Fourth. A missionary society, led by both clergy and laity, was set up "to assist in the erection and completion of churches throughout the territory."²

By 1857 nineteen Episcopal churches had been founded in Minnesota, and several others were in the early stages of formation. There were nearly 400 official communicants among their congregations, most of them leaders of their communities.³ These churches were under the supervision of the church's missionary bishop of the Northwest, the Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper, who was responsible for a broad area ranging from Kansas to Wisconsin. Now, with Minnesota on the brink of statehood and the number of churches steadily growing, Minnesota's Episcopal

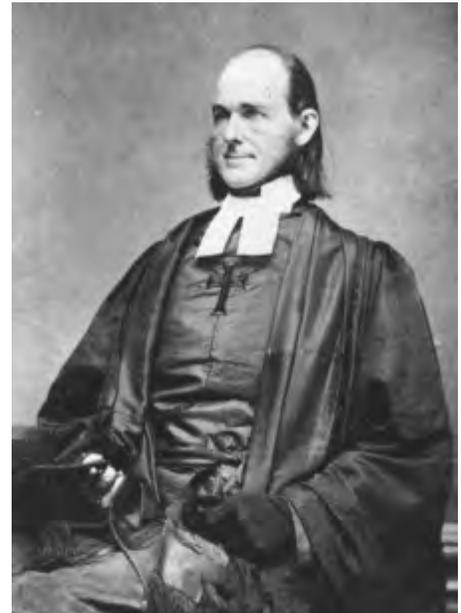
church leaders felt it was time to begin organizing an independent diocese.

Episcopal Church Polity

Although the Episcopal Church retains many of the forms of the ancient Roman Catholic Church from which it derives, there are important differences in its governance. When the Church of England severed its connection with Rome in the 1500s, it continued to operate in a system of local parishes, gathered into dioceses governed by bishops under the archbishop of Canterbury. In 1789, the American Church, influenced by the republican philosophy of the late eighteenth century, abandoned the mother church's authoritarian structure. Instead, it set up a bicameral governing body, the General Convention, with a House of Delegates consisting of elected lay and clergy delegates from each diocese, and a House of Bishops consisting of all bishops in the church. The General Convention meets every three years to decide issues of importance to the national church as a whole. Each individual diocese sets its own operating rules, however, and the bishop of that diocese, along with an elected standing committee that is composed of clergy and lay representatives, governs the diocese more or less independently. Each priest (minister) serving in the diocese is licensed by, and serves at the discretion of, the diocesan bishop.

For a new diocese to be established in the United States, Episcopal Church law requires that representatives of both clerical and lay leadership convene to draw up a constitution for the diocese

and elect a bishop to govern it. Both the diocese and its bishop-elect must then receive a vote of approval from the national General Convention in order to become a legitimate part of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America. Thus, in September 1857, a convention had been held at Christ Church in St. Paul, at which a diocesan constitution was drawn up and approved. Further organizational details were settled in 1858, but the election of a bishop had been put off



James Lloyd Breck (1818–1876), Episcopal priest and missionary. Educated in Philadelphia by William Muhlenberg, a High Churchman whose fascination with liturgy predated the Oxford Movement, Breck dreamed of founding missions based on the medieval monastic model. In 1844 he founded Nashotah House in Wisconsin. Six years later, he came to St. Paul, where his Associate Mission was the first Episcopal establishment in Minnesota. After an unsuccessful attempt to organize a mission among the Ojibwe, Breck moved to Faribault in 1857 and founded Seabury Theological School. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

until 1859. Now it was time to choose the man whose name would be presented to the General Convention's planned meeting in Richmond, Virginia, in October, at which time he would be consecrated the first bishop of Minnesota.

Delegates arrived from Christ Church and the newly completed St. Paul's Church in St. Paul; Holy Trinity in St. Anthony (now part of Minneapolis); Gethsemane and St. Mark's in Minneapolis; Holy Communion in St. Peter; St. Peter's in Shakopee; St. John's in St. Cloud; Ascension in Stillwater; St. Paul's in Winona; Grace in Sauk Rapids; St. Luke's in Hastings; St. John's in Chanhassan; Trinity in St. Alban's; St. John's in Hassan; Christ in Red Wing; Trinity in Stockton; St. John's in Minnetonka; Trinity in Orono; St. Columba at Gull Lake; and Trinity in Anoka.

The Clergy Leaders

They were a diverse and highly respected group of men. Nineteen of them were ordained ministers. Ezekiel Gear, aged 66, had served as army chaplain at Fort Snelling since 1837; lame, feisty and garrulous, he was revered as the diocese's elder statesman. James Lloyd Breck was a visionary who had recently moved his mission's headquarters to Faribault, where he was organizing a theological school. Breck was a strong proponent of the High Church movement, which laid a strong emphasis on liturgical worship and called for the restoration of many of the Roman Catholic liturgical practices that had been abandoned in the church's early, more Protestant era. A vocal member of the opposing Low Church or evangelical party, which advocated personal conversion and was opposed what was seen as the trappings of Catholicism, was Jacob S. Chamberlain, the missionary son-in-law of Bishop Philander Chase, the diocesan in Illinois. Arriving in Minnesota in 1852, Chamberlain had established his headquarters at St. Anthony's Falls and traveled widely in the lower Minnesota River valley, preaching and organizing missions. Dr. Andrew Bell Paterson, rector of St. Paul's Church in St. Paul since 1857, came from a wealthy family in New Jersey; his "Lowertown" faction tended to favor Low Church views, in opposition to Breck's faction

centered on Christ Church in the "Uppertown." Ebenezer Steele Peake had joined Breck's Associated Mission in 1856 and was responsible for the mission's Indian work, which he supervised from his home in Crow Wing. Solon Manney was the army chaplain at Fort Ripley. Other clergy delegates included Edward P. Gray, Ezra Jones, David Knickerbacker, Joseph Russell, Joshua Sweet, John V. Van Ingen, Timothy Wilcoxson, John Williamson, Charles Woodward, Mark Olds, John A. Fitch, Edward R. Welles, Dudley Chase, and Benjamin Evans.

The Lay Leaders

The thirty-plus lay delegates were also a distinguished group. There was Isaac Atwater of Gethsemane Church, a lawyer and newspaper editor who served on the state Supreme Court and the university's first board of regents. His fellow delegate from Gethsemane, Henry T. Welles, was an entrepreneur in lumber, railroads, and real estate who had been elected the first mayor of Minneapolis in 1855. Harwood Iglehart of St. Paul's was a wealthy lawyer and real estate speculator from Maryland whose name is preserved in St. Paul's Iglehart Avenue. Captain Napoleon Jackson Tecumseh Dana was a retired army officer who had supervised the construction of Fort Ripley before going into banking. One of the founders of St. Paul's Church, he served on its vestry and had donated the lots on which the church was built. Henry Lambert, a lawyer from New York, was one of the first wardens at Christ Church. Eli T. Wilder of Minneapolis was a judge; Loomis White of St. Paul was a real estate salesman and banker; Charles W. Wooley of St. Paul was a prosperous merchant from Iowa. Representing the Ojibwe mission at Gull Lake was an Ottawa Indian from Canada named John Johnson Enmegabowh, who had come to Minnesota in 1839, joined the Episcopal Church, and had been preaching Christianity to the Ojibwe for nearly twenty years. Enmegabowh would be ordained as a deacon by Bishop Kemper at the convention's end.⁴

These men gathered in the nave of St. Paul's Church, which had been built over the past two years to serve St. Paul's



The Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper (1789–1870), missionary bishop of the Northwest from 1835 to 1859, whose district included Minnesota until 1857. Born in Pleasant Valley, New York, Kemper oversaw the organization of the Diocese of Minnesota and the election of Rev. Henry Benjamin Whipple as its first bishop. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Lowertown, a growing area positioned a short distance downriver from the city's earlier settlement. Despite recurrent financial problems caused by recessions and bank failures in 1857 and 1859, the parish had managed to scrape together enough money, with generous donations from friends in the eastern states, to complete the building and pay off its debt on the eve of the convention. The smell of new wood from its recently installed pews scented the mid-summer air as the delegates knelt to ask God's blessing on their endeavors.

After formally consecrating the new church, Bishop Kemper called the meeting to order at 3 pm. In his opening address, the seventy-year-old bishop announced that, having served for nearly twenty-five years as missionary bishop, he intended to resign his post at General Convention in October. Thereafter, he would serve only as bishop of Wisconsin. He planned to visit Kansas "before July has elapsed," and would "attend to a few urgent calls" in Minnesota before that. But his jurisdiction in the diocese would cease in October, following the consecration of the bishop "you expect to elect this week."

The implication was clear. There must



Located at Olive and Ninth streets, St. Paul's Church was founded in the capital city's Lower-town neighborhood in 1856. The conventions of 1858 and 1859, which completed the work of organizing the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota and elected the Rev. Henry Benjamin Whipple its first bishop, were held at St. Paul's. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

be no further delay in choosing a bishop to run the new diocese.

The Election Process Begins

Jacob Chamberlain promptly moved that the election begin. His motion was tabled to allow for discussion of the new bishop's salary. Chamberlain's proposal of \$2,000 a year was rejected in favor of Henry Welles's proposal of \$1,500. Then the credentials of several new parishes were accepted.

At last, at 4:30, the convention proceeded to the business of electing a bishop. After a brief prayer, a representative of the clergy who were present read out their ballot of nominees. Of the five names presented to the laity for consideration, two stood out: Dr. Andrew Paterson, rector of St. Paul's, and Dr. John Ireland Tucker, author of a popular hymnal, who had been endorsed by Bishop Horatio Potter of New York. When the clergy

vote was taken, Dr. Tucker received eleven votes out of the eighteen that had been cast; Paterson received three; Alexander Vinton two; Abram Littlejohn one; and Henry Benjamin Whipple one.⁵

The convention then adjourned for the day, to allow the laity to decide whether or not to accept the clergy's nominee. It was soon apparent that they did not. Tucker's support was strongest among the High Church clergy associated with James Lloyd Breck. Paterson, with the support of the evangelical clergy, was more popular among the laity. Voting by parish rather than individually, the laity gave Tucker ten votes and Paterson eleven.

When the delegates reconvened the following morning, a second ballot was taken among the clergy. Tucker again received eleven votes. This time Paterson received six and Henry Whipple one.

The laity again voted ten parishes for Tucker to eleven for Paterson.

It had been agreed beforehand that if

a candidate failed to be elected by both laity and clergy (voting separately) after two ballots, his name would be dropped from consideration. Two formal ballots had been taken on two successive days, and Tucker had been eliminated. Paterson, however, did not appear to have sufficient support among his fellow clergymen to be elected. When the results of the second vote were reported, Solon Manney asked for a brief adjournment to allow the clergy to discuss their options.

Deadlock at the Convention

The eighteen clergymen retired to Captain Dana's nearby home, gathering in the parlor to discuss their dilemma. Several other names were proposed, but none of them seemed feasible. As the diocesan historian, George Tanner, later observed, "It was a critical moment in the history of the Diocese . . . the work of the church was suffering. . . . To a large extent every clergyman seemed free to do what was right in his own eyes, to organize work on lines of his own choosing without any visible bond of unity." A bishop was needed, but whom could they agree on?⁶

The men knelt briefly in prayer. When they finished, Solon Manney got to his feet and observed that he had noticed, in both ballots, that someone had written in the name of Henry Benjamin Whipple. Could the man who had cast that vote explain it?

Dr. Paterson admitted that, unwilling to cast a vote for his own candidacy and yet not satisfied that his rival was sufficiently worthy, he had recalled an incident that took place during his recent visit to Chicago. A fellow clergyman had asked him whom Minnesota would choose as its first bishop. When Paterson admitted that he didn't know, the man said no one was more fitted to be a bishop than Henry Whipple, the young rector of Chicago's Holy Communion Church. After visiting Holy Communion, Paterson was impressed by what he saw and heard. Whipple, he told his fellow clergymen, had arrived in Chicago two years earlier with the mandate to form a "free" church, one which would not fund its budget in the usual manner by renting pews, among the city's railroad workers. The young clergyman had not only suc-

ceeded in organizing a viable parish in that short time, but had even acquired a church building to house it.

Ezekiel Gear then recalled having met Whipple in 1856, when the young priest came to Minnesota to visit his brother John, a land agent in Crow Wing. Gear had been impressed by Whipple's genial manner and his beautiful speaking voice. He had been corresponding with Whipple, trying to persuade him to become rector of one of Minnesota's new churches. James Lloyd Breck admitted that he had also been in correspondence with Whipple for several years, receiving money Whipple had collected for the Associated Mission's work. An informal ballot was taken, and it was decided to present Whipple's name to the laity when the convention resumed.

The Election of Henry B. Whipple

When the convention resumed, Whipple received fourteen votes from the clergy to Paterson's four. Judge Wilder requested permission for the lay delegates to withdraw for consultation, and they too trooped over to Captain Dana's house. Captain Dana told the group that he was familiar with Whipple's reputation as an energetic and congenial clergyman. He reminded them that the members of St. Paul's had seriously considered inviting Whipple to be their rector in 1856, before choosing Dr. Paterson instead. He described Whipple's work at his first parish in Rome, New York, and later in Chicago. The lay delegates were convinced. Returning to the church, they cast a unanimous vote for Henry Whipple. Harwood Iglehart suggested that the convention make the vote unanimous, and the clergy agreed. A committee was then appointed to inform Whipple of his election.

Word spread quickly. Whipple had not yet received the official letter from the Minnesota diocese when his friend and fellow clergyman Robert Clarkson, rector of Chicago's St. James Church, came up to him after services, put his arm around Whipple's shoulders and congratulated him on becoming Bishop of Minnesota.

A dumbfounded Whipple wrote in his diary that evening, "May God help me!"⁷

Born in upstate New York, the 37-



The Rev. Dr. Andrew Bell Paterson (1815–1876), rector of St. Paul's Church, was one of the leading candidates for election as the first Episcopal bishop of Minnesota. When the election process became stalemated, Reverend Paterson nominated Henry Whipple for bishop. Born to a wealthy family in New Jersey, Paterson first visited Minnesota in 1849 and contributed two-thirds of the money for the construction of Christ Church in St. Paul. In 1857 he became rector of St. Paul's. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

year-old Henry Whipple had come to the ministry rather late in life after several years as a merchant and political activist. Ill health had put an end to his formal education in 1840, and his financial position as the father of two had forced him to take his theological training under the private tutelage of W.D. Wilson, then rector of Christ Church in Sherburne but destined to become one of the founders of Cornell University. Following his ordination, Whipple was called to Zion Church in Rome, New York, in 1849, where he turned a "feeble" parish into a thriving religious community and raised money to build a new church. He left in 1857 to organize the Church of the Holy Communion in Chicago.

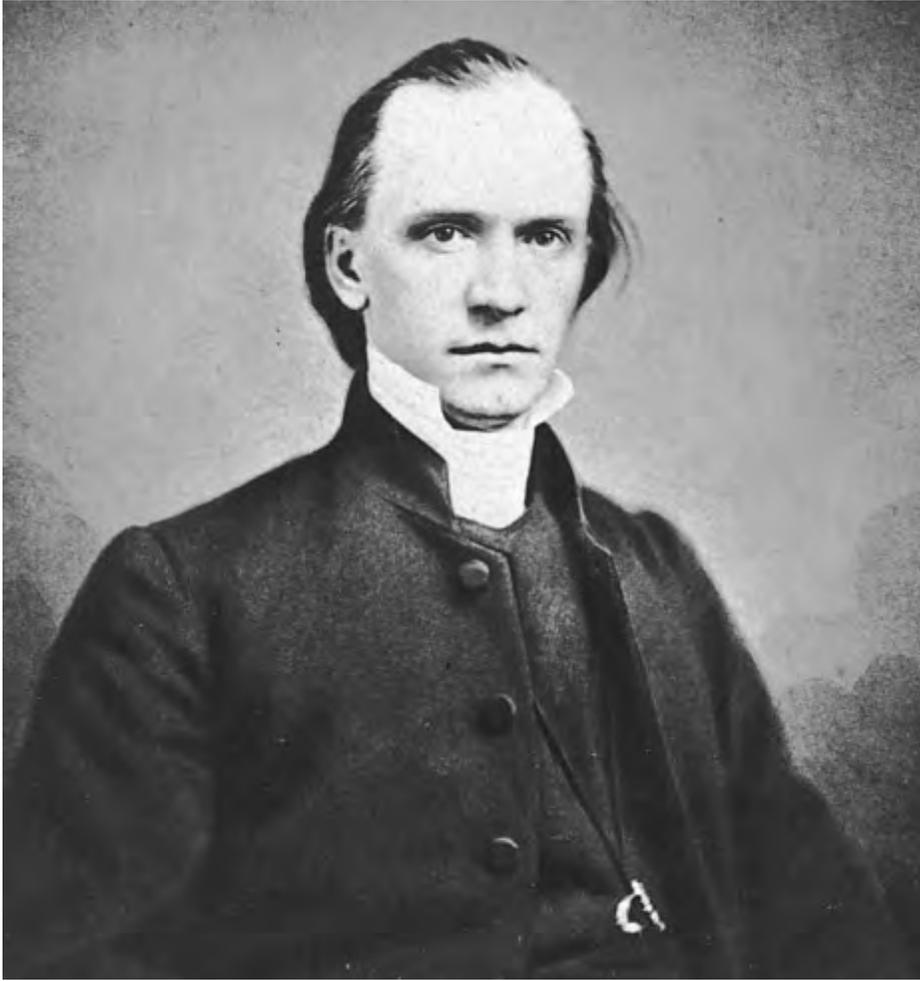
As bishop of Minnesota, Whipple would be called upon to use the skills he had learned in Rome and Chicago, along with those he had acquired earlier as a district worker with New York's Democratic party, to organize a diocese covering nearly eighty thousand square miles, with few roads, widely scattered settle-

ments, and few modern conveniences. At his consecration in Richmond that fall, Bishop Kemper also urged him not to forget the needs of the nearly seventeen thousand "wandering Indians" who lived in his new diocese. It was a tall order, but Henry Whipple had always liked a challenge.

As a preacher, organizer, fund-raiser and peacemaker, Henry Whipple had few peers. Establishing his headquarters at Faribault, he built a cathedral and expanded Breck's tiny Seabury mission into a highly respected educational complex comprising Seabury Theological School, Shattuck School, and St. Mary's Hall. He supervised the establishment of over 150 churches and supported missions among the state's Dakota and Ojibwe. Despite years of bronchial problems and frequent operations for recurrent nasal polyps, his voice retained a powerful beauty that "seemed to reach and search the very souls of those that heard it."⁸ His tall, erect figure, deep-set eyes and flowing hair led one English reporter to describe him as having "the figure of a sirdar and the face



The Rev. Dr. John Ireland Tucker (1819–1895) was another leading candidate for election as the first Episcopal bishop in Minnesota. Photo from Doctor Tucker, Priest-Musician: A Sketch Which Contains the Doings and Thinkings of the Rev. John Ireland Tucker, S.T.D., Including a Brief Converse about the Rise and Progress of Church Music in America by Christopher W. Knauff (New York: A.D.F. Randolph Co., 1897). Our thanks to anglicanhistory.org for supplying this photo source.



The Rev. Henry Benjamin Whipple was thirty-seven years old in 1859, when he was elected first Episcopal bishop of Minnesota. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

of a saint.”⁹ A colleague described him as “ninety-nine parts St. John, one part New York politician,” a man who combined “the wisdom of the serpent with the gentleness of the dove.”¹⁰

During his forty-two years in office, the diocese grew to 11,495 confirmed members in 160 active congregations, with perhaps three times that number attending services each Sunday.¹¹ He attended international conferences of the Anglican Communion in London, persuaded the American church to establish missions in Cuba and Puerto Rico, and, as a member of the secular Peabody Education Committee, helped to oversee the development of schools for former slaves in the south after the Civil War.

Whipple became most widely known, however, as an outspoken advocate for America’s Native American population.

Here his record is more controversial. Like most nineteenth century “Friends of the Indian,” he hoped to see the Native Americans assimilated into the majority culture, as European immigrants had been. In addition to overseeing mission work serving the Ojibwe and Dakotah in his diocese, Bishop Whipple attended numerous national conferences and served on several government commissions. He made thousands of speeches on Indian policy, and his reputation spread well beyond America’s borders.

In his letter of acceptance in 1859, Whipple told the Minnesota diocesan delegates that he believed their call to him “was from God.”¹² By the end of his ministry, the members of his diocese apparently agreed with that assessment. Even the state’s non-Episcopalians regarded him as one of Minnesota’s living legends.

The *Minneapolis Times* reported his death on September 16, 1901, on its front page, giving it equal coverage with the funeral of President William McKinley.

Today, the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota claims 28,000 baptized members in 127 congregations.¹³ Seabury Theological School moved to Evanston, Illinois, in 1933, becoming a partner in Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. Shattuck and St. Mary’s merged in 1984, but the school continues to maintain a high reputation, drawing students from all over the world. As the Diocese of Minnesota celebrates the 150th anniversary of its founding, Episcopalians across the state take understandable pride in the achievements of their first bishop, Henry Benjamin Whipple.

Anne Beiser Allen is the author of And the Wilderness Shall Blossom: Henry Benjamin Whipple, Churchman, Educator, Advocate for the Indians to be published by Afton Historical Society Press in the fall of 2007.

Notes

1. Most of the details regarding the events of the 1859 convention are taken from George C. Tanner, *Fifty Years of Church Work in the Diocese of Minnesota, 1857–1907* (St. Paul: W.C. Pope, 1909), 286–293.

2. Tanner, 32, 48–49.

3. Tanner, 160–161, 297.

4. Much of the information on the lay delegates comes from the 1860 U.S. Census and from Tanner’s book.

5. As a deacon, the Rev. Mark Olds did not qualify to vote. He was subsequently ordained priest in 1861.

6. Tanner, 288–289. Captain Dana’s home later became the Roman Catholic Orphanage (Tanner, p. 146).

7. Whipple’s diaries are in the Henry B. Whipple Papers, 1833–1934 at the Minnesota History Center, St. Paul, Minn., box 43. Whipple describes his reaction to his election as bishop on page 27 of his autobiography, *Lights and Shadows of a Long Episcopate; Being Reminiscences and Recollections of the Right Reverend Henry Benjamin Whipple, D.D., LL. D., Bishop of Minnesota* (New York, Macmillan, 1901).

8. *The Church Record*, vol. 25, no. 10 (October 1901): 31.

9. An unidentified newspaper from Cambridge, England, quoted in Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge, *History of Rice and Steele Counties* (Chicago: H.C. Cooper Jr. & Co., 1910), 282.

10. Charles L. Slattery, *Certain American Faces* (New York: E.C. Dutton, 1918), 102.

11. This does not include the nearly 4,000 communicants in the Diocese of Duluth, which operated independently from 1895 to 1944. Statistics are from Tanner, p. 297, and the 1909 U.S. Census report on churches in the United States.

12. Whipple Papers, Minnesota History Center, box 2.

13. Statistics are from the Minnesota Episcopal diocesan newspaper, *Soundings*, Spring 2007.



A postcard view from about 1909 showing the Carnegie Library in Spring Valley, Minnesota. For more on Clara F. Baldwin and her role in the Public Library movement in Minnesota, see Robert Garland's article beginning on page 4. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

R.C.H.S.
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