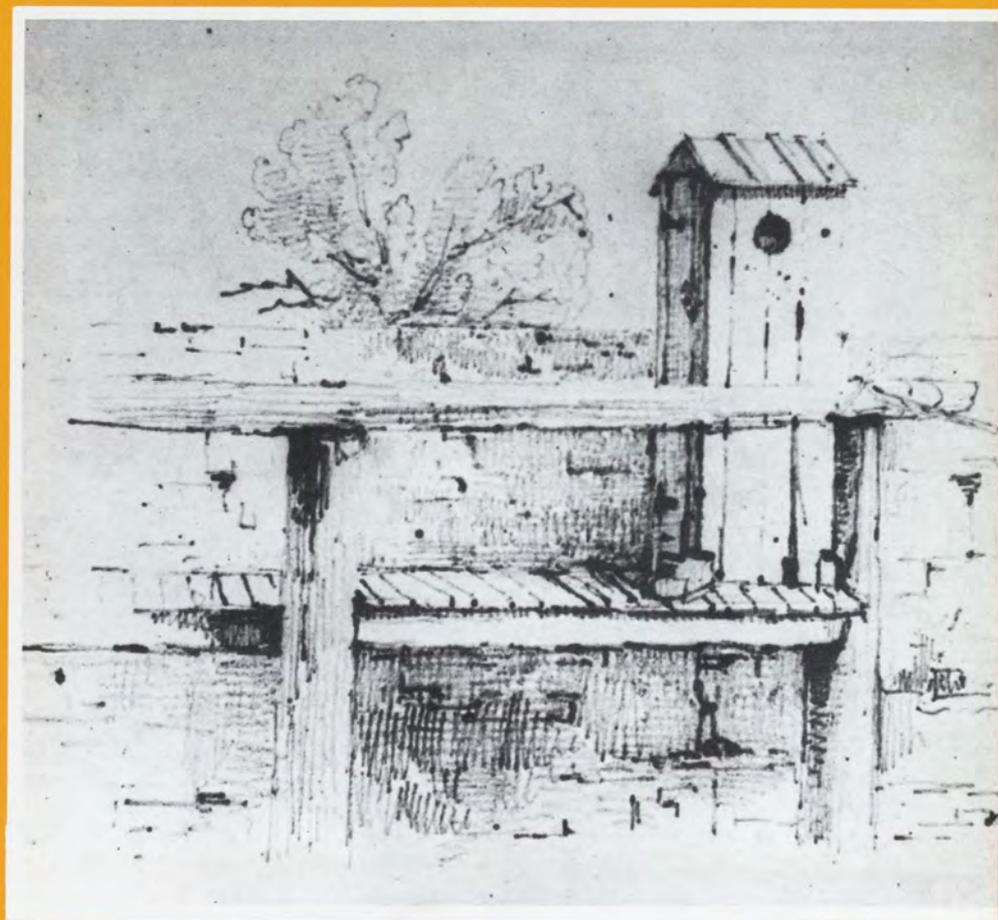


# RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY



Spring

1969

Volume 6

Number 1

# Ramsey County History

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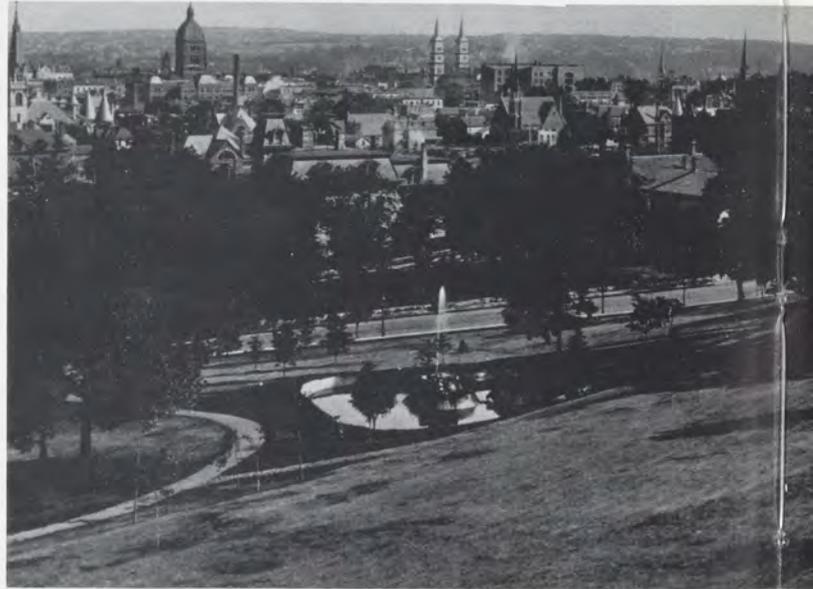
*ON THE COVER:* This sketch by Seth Eastman shows a sentry box at Fort Snelling. Eastman is known today as one of the great painters of the old Northwest and particularly the Mississippi river valley. What is not so well known is that he was an army officer who served four stints as commandant of Fort Snelling, then became a brigadier general after the outbreak of the Civil War.

*ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:* Unless otherwise indicated, pictures in this issue are from the Picture Department of the Minnesota Historical Society. The editor is indebted to Eugene Becker and Dorothy Gimmestad for their help.



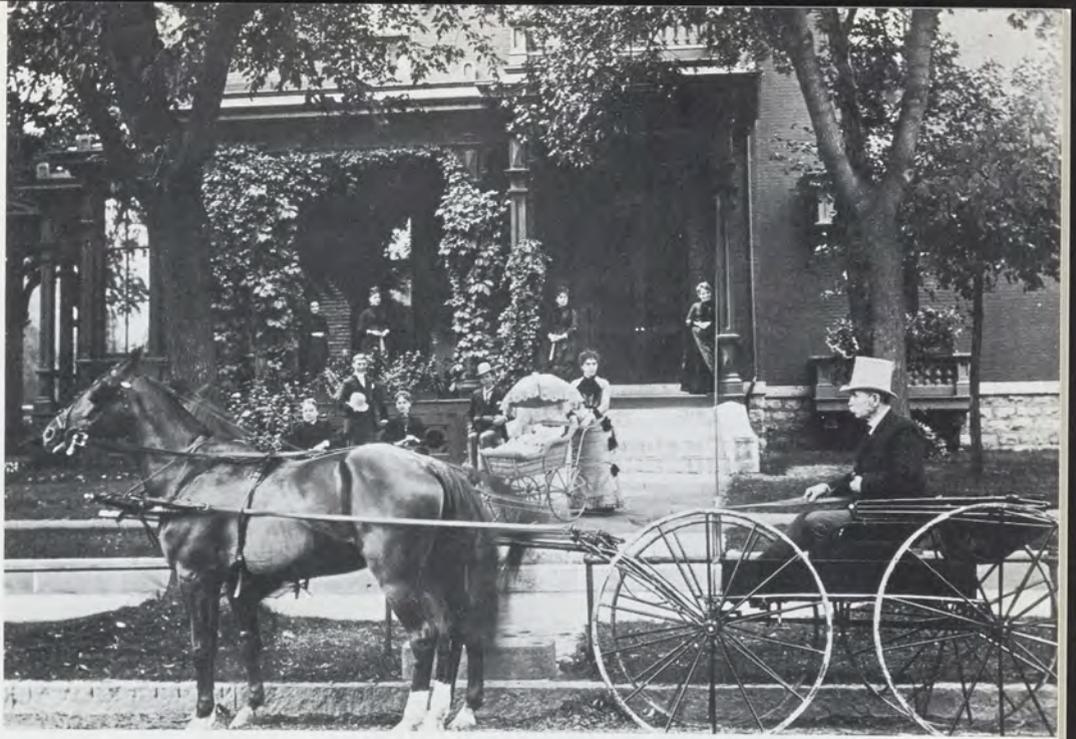
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IN ALL ITS Victorian glory, the mansion of Norman Kittson stands (above) at Summit and Selby, the site of the St. Paul Cathedral. And a family (far right) poses decorously for a picture. Fountains added to the city's beauty. At right, the spacious sweep of lawn photographed from the old Merriam mansion now is part of the auto-glutted capitol approach. At far right is Summit Park and its fountain, photographed from the Kittson mansion. Below is the fountain in what once was Central Park, now the parking lot behind the Centennial building near the capitol. In the center is the old fountain in Rice Park. At right is a typical Victorian parlor, proving that yesterday's beloved clutter would be today's nightmare.



*icturesque*  
*St.*  
*Paul*

capturing of an era on  
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St. Paul during the 1890's  
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years seem to have had a  
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ly by T. W. Ingersoll.





### THE GIBBS HOUSE

*Headquarters of the Ramsey County Historical Society, 2097 Larpenteur Avenue West, St. Paul, Minnesota.*

THE Ramsey County Historical Society was founded in 1949. During the following years the Society, believing that a sense of history is of great importance in giving a new, mobile generation a knowledge of its roots in the past, acquired the 100-year-old farm home which had belonged to Heman R. Gibbs. The Society restored the Gibbs House and in 1954 opened it to the public as a museum which would depict the way of life of an early Minnesota settler.

In 1958, the Society erected a barn behind the farm house which is maintained as an agricultural museum to display the tools and other implements used by the men who broke up the prairie soil and farmed with horse and oxen. In 1966, the Society moved to its museum property a one-room rural schoolhouse, dating from the 1870's. The white frame school came from near Milan, Minnesota. Now restored to the period of the late 1890's, the school actually is used for classes and meetings. In the basement beneath the school building, the Society has its office, library and collections. In 1968, the Society acquired from the University of Minnesota the use of the white barn adjoining the Society's property. Here is housed a collection of carriages and sleighs which once belonged to James J. Hill.

Today, in addition to maintaining the Gibbs property, the Ramsey County Historical Society is active in the preservation of historic sites in Ramsey county, conducts tours, prepares pamphlets and other publications, organizes demonstrations of pioneer crafts and maintains a Speakers' Bureau for schools and organizations. It is the Society's hope that through its work the rich heritage of the sturdy men and women who were the pioneers of Ramsey County will be preserved for future generations.