

RAMSEY COUNTY  
**History**  
*A Publication of the Ramsey County Historical Society*

**Spring, 1990**  
Volume 25, Number 1



*James J. Hill's yacht, the Wacouta of St. Paul. See Page 4.*

## RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY

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**On the cover:** The *Wacouta*, James J. Hill's yacht, passing through the locks at the Sault Ste. Marie, seen in the background.

**Acknowledgements:** Except for Page 9, photographs with the articles on James J. Hill and the yacht *Wacouta* are from the James J. Hill Papers in the James J. Hill Reference Library, St. Paul, and used with the library's permission. Photographs on Pages 9, 12, 13 and 27 are from the Minnesota Historical Society's audio-visual collection. The photograph on Page 22 is from the Ramsey County Historical Society's photo collection. The photograph on Page 10 is from the Debs Foundation, Terre Haute, Indiana.

# RAMSEY COUNTY History

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the "new" *Ramsey County History*. In 1987 the Society's Board of Directors established a task force to develop a strategic plan. One of the principal recommendations of that task force was to publish our magazine on a quarterly basis. For that purpose an Editorial Board was established and as a result of their efforts over a two-year planning period, we are proud and happy to present to you, our members and our readers, this new, enlivened format. You will note the additional new features, such as "A Matter of Time," Letters to the Editor, book reviews, descriptions of St. Paul's historic sites and other features.

We hope you will enjoy this new format, and request your comments and reactions to it. We also would like to remind you that we always are looking for manuscripts, for writers and particularly for reminiscences, those colorful and personal accounts of your experiences and memories of St. Paul and Ramsey County. If you would like to contribute to our new magazine, just call the editor.

—William S. Fallon



▲Japanese American (Nisei) soldiers at the Military Intelligence Language School at Fort Snelling were photographed there in October, 1945, after the end of the war. During the war years, when the school operated in great secrecy, the soldiers translated enemy documents, wrote propaganda and participated in military intelligence.

►Home canning and gas rationing were part of the great effort on the home front to conserve everything from food to gasoline, nylon hoisery to rubber. People planted victory gardens and women canned whatever their families could not immediately eat. To keep gas rationed, service stations were open only during daylight hours. The home canning photograph is from the George Luxton collection.



## The 1940s Revisited

The decade of the 1940s was a period of enormous change for America as it moved in a scant ten years from the worst depression in its history to a World War II boom economy; to the down-sizing of the post-war years to the cold war; and finally to the beginning of the greatest economic expansion the country had ever witnessed. The photographs here are among those that have been on display in the Ramsey County Historical Society's exhibit, "Recalling the 1940s," in Landmark Center, St. Paul. While they record events in St. Paul and Ramsey County during those tumultuous years, they are a reflection, as well, of the experience of an entire nation.

In the bomber modification plant at Holman Field and the Military Intelligence Language School at Fort Snelling can be seen Minnesota's special contribution to the effort those years called forth. All photographs are from the Minnesota Historical Society collections.



◀ President Harry S. Truman stood in front of the state capitol on November 3, 1949. War's end brought the nation a new president, a fitful peace and a time to reflect and regroup. The president arrived in St. Paul to help celebrate several centennials: the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Minnesota Territory and the territorial legislature and the founding of the Minnesota Historical Society. St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photograph.



▲ Men leaving the St. Paul armory in July, 1943, were among the more than 304,000 Minnesotans who served in the armed forces during World War II. Some 6,000 never returned.



◀ In the election of 1948 Dewey was expected to beat back Truman's bid for a second term but a funny thing happened on the way to the polls. In this October 7, 1948, view of E. Fourth and Minnesota Streets, a Selby-Lake streetcar passes under a banner flying in front of Republican headquarters. St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photograph.



◀ In downtown St. Paul as the 1940s ended, a crowd gathered after a fire broke out in August, 1949, at Skwere's Cafe, 475 Wabasha, a few doors from the Lyceum theater. ▲ Snyder's Drug Store, 403 Robert Street, advertised a fountain-grill in March, 1949. St. Paul Dispatch-Pioneer Press photographs.



*Henry H. Sibley's house at 417 Woodward, St. Paul, from the 1874 Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Minnesota, published by A. M. Andreas.*

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

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