

RAMSEY COUNTY  
**History**

A Publication of the Ramsey County Historical Society

Summer, 1990  
Volume 25, Number 2



**FOR HER HONOR'S SAKE.**

There are cases where a brother must interfere in his sister's affairs.

*An acid commentary on the Great Census War of 1890 and the rivalries which have colored the history of St. Paul and Minneapolis. See page 4.*

## RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY

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**On the cover:** The United States census of 1890 sparked virtual warfare in the unceasing rivalry between Minneapolis and St. Paul. This cartoon was published in the *St. Paul News* for June 28, 1890.

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# RAMSEY COUNTY History

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## A MESSAGE TO OUR READERS

In May, 1988, the Board of Directors of the Ramsey County Historical society decided that they should develop a plan to broaden the appeal of *Ramsey County History*, redesign it, expand its coverage of the history of the county, and publish the magazine four times each year.

In bringing change to the look of *Ramsey County History*, the Editorial Board has tried to make sure that the strengths in content and features of its predecessors have not been abandoned. Thus we have the good fortune to be able to publish carefully researched and well written articles on a wide range of topics associated with the colorful history of Ramsey County. And we have added new features, such as "A Matter of Time" and "What's Historic About This Site?"

Throughout this process, the goal always has remained to produce the best possible magazine on the history of Ramsey County with the widest appeal within the resources available. The Editorial Board believes this new format meets those objectives. We hope you agree.

—John L. Lindley, chairman, Editorial Board

# Letters to the Editor

## Wilkin Again

Ronald M. Hubbs' fascinating discussion (Vol. 24, No. 2, *Ramsey County History*) of Alexander Wilkin and the drama surrounding ratification of the Sioux treaties clarifies a letter displayed in the Butler Room at Landmark Center. In it Governor Alexander Ramsey rebukes Henry H. Sibley, territorial delegate to Congress, for lack of news on the ratification. We can better understand that letter, dated May 18, 1852, when Hubbs tells us that Wilkin returned to St. Paul from Washington on May 29, that he played a major role in the drawn-out negotiations, and that they finally were ratified on June 26. Perhaps Hubbs can throw light on the strange postscript to this letter: "If the Sioux treaties were ratified with some modification, it were better for the government to execute them without re-submitting them to the Indians, as persons who have fastened themselves upon them might take advantage of such an occasion to extract terms from the Govt."

—Woodrow Keljik, St. Paul

*This probably refers to the role played by some of the traders who used knavery and deception during the ratification process to extract cash payments for debts they claimed the Sioux owed them.*

—Ronald M. Hubbs

## More About Tunnels

As a long time resident of St. Paul, I have been intrigued by articles that have appeared in the newspapers every few years about the vast system of storm sewer tunnels that have been constructed under the city. They drive trucks through the tunnels and the system seems to be extended over to Minneapolis. It would be nice if you could have someone write an article on the topic. —Dorothy Chaput, St. Paul

*Actually, we do have plans for an article, "St. Paul Underground," which we hope*



*Germania, on her way down. St. Paul Dispatch photograph by A. F. Raymond.*

*to publish next year. Among other things, we would like to ask how, in extending the tunnels to Minneapolis, they got over, under or around the Mississippi.*

## What Happened?

I bought up all that land in St. Peter, and it cost me a bundle. How come they didn't move the capital? —Willis A. Gorman

*Joe Rolette stole the bill transferring the capital to St. Peter and sat on it until too late to pass it. This wasn't the first attempt to move the capital from St. Paul. It was strongly advised during the Great Census War of 1890 and suggested with less heat when the capitol burned down in 1881 (see article beginning on page 4).*

## Wither Germania?

What ever happened to the statue of Germania that was on the Germania Bank Building? —Kim Hansen, Lauderdale

*Anti-German sentiment ran high during World War I. The Germania Bank building's name was changed to the Guardian building and the statue was hauled down. To our best knowledge, it was cut up for scrap metal.*

## Where Was Al?

What sites in St. Paul are associated with Al Capone?

—Delphine Fregeau, Little Canada

*Alvin Karpis and the Barker-Karpis gang were in and out of St. Paul, and John Dillinger shot his way out of an apartment building (still standing) at Lexington and Lincoln avenues, but Al Capone? He seems to have ventured no farther than Wisconsin. Readers?*

## Cemetery "Removed"?

At about the time the German Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Church purchased a lot at 10th and Wabasha in St. Paul for their first church in 1858, they also secured permission to use property on the corner of Victoria and Orchard for burying their dead. They purchased the land there in 1861.

My 81-year-old father, Louis Altman, remembers that the cemetery was still there in the 1920s. Now this land is Orchard Center, a playground. Were there any pictures taken of this cemetery before the stones were destroyed/removed? Was there anything in the St. Paul paper? When was this cemetery "removed"? Do we know who is buried under that playground?

—Nancy Altman Zuber, Roseville

*A check of our photo collection and that at the Minnesota Historical Society turned up no pictures. Microfilm of St. Paul newspapers could be checked for news stories, but you need to have an approximate date. Chapter 306 of state statute regulates cemeteries and burial grounds. There might be records of the cemetery and what happened to its inhabitants at the St. Paul Health Department, which maintains birth and death statistics. Today, reburials require disinterment and reinterment permits.*



*The Minnesota Boat Club below the Wabasha Street bridge around 1890. The old clubhouse was replaced just before World War I and the island, once known as Raspberry Island, is now Navy Island. See story on Page 9.*

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

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