

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

The African-American  
Community and the Cuba  
Pageant of 1898

Page 15

Winter, 1999

Volume 33, Number 4

*Timber, Steel, Law, Politics*

*St. Paul's Pioneering Lawyers—Page 4*



*The signing of the Briand-Kellogg Pact in Paris on August 27, 1928. Frank B. Kellogg is seated at the table. This copy of a painting of the historic event is from the Minnesota Historical Society. See article beginning on page 4.*

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# RAMSEY COUNTY History

Volume 33, Number 4

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## A Message from the Editorial Board

The winter issue of *Ramsey County History* opens with a fascinating account of how some pioneering lawyers who were involved in cases relating to the timber and steel industries helped shape and change the practice of law and politics in Minnesota. Written by Samuel H. Morgan, a retired St. Paul attorney, this article ranges from President Theodore Roosevelt persuading Frank B. Kellogg and Cordenio A. Severance to represent the government in key anti-trust cases in the first decade of this century to the great 1962 election recount involving incumbent governor Elmer L. Anderson and his challenger, lieutenant governor Karl F. Rolvaag.

David Riehle's article examining the reaction of the African-American community in St. Paul to the fighting in Cuba in 1898 reminds us that the struggle of African-Americans in Minnesota to obtain full civil rights didn't begin in the 1960s. By using information culled from the pages of St. Paul's articulate and influential African-American newspaper, *The Appeal*, Riehle demonstrates that the decision to go to war with Spain in 1898 brought out complex reactions from the local African-American community. What Riehle finds in the coverage of the pageant in *The Appeal* is clear-cut ambivalence as to the meaning of the war for the civil rights of African-Americans in St. Paul.

*John M. Lindley, Chair, Editorial Board*

## More About the Life and Times of Frank B. Kellogg

**B**orn in Pottsdam, New York, on December 22, 1856, Frank Billings Kellogg and his parents, brother and sister moved to Olmstead County, Minnesota, in 1865. Late in life Kellogg offered the only explanation he had for his parents' choice of Minnesota: "I do not know how or why they chose Olmstead County, but that was the goal of their pilgrimage."

Kellogg's father bought a farm outside Rochester and there, working on the farm, young Frank grew to adulthood. Although he attended the local one-room school during each winter until he was fourteen, Kellogg's formal education was minimal and he was very much aware throughout his life of his lack of schooling. In 1875 he moved to Rochester and began to study law in the office of H. A. Echoldt. By dint of his own hard study, and help from Echoldt, Kellogg was admitted to the Bar in 1877.

In his first case as an attorney, a local farmer offered Kellogg \$3 to represent him in a case before a justice of the peace in a town fifteen miles away. As part of their agreement, the farmer would provide Kellogg with transportation out and back. Kellogg took the case and won, but on the way home one of his horses became sick and could go no further. Kellogg walked the remaining ten miles to Rochester.

To supplement his modest income as a lawyer, Kellogg ran for and won election as city attorney for Rochester. Then, with his income more certain, he married Clara M. Cook in 1886. They had no children.

In 1887 Kellogg agreed to represent a group of local farmers and their township in a complex case involving the issuance of bonds to help build a local railroad. The farmers claimed the bonds had not been properly authorized, but they and the township had little money to afford legal counsel. Despite the uncertainty of a fee for his services and his relative inexperience as a lawyer, Kellogg won the case because prior to the trial he had sought the help of a distant cousin, Cushman K. Davis, then a lead-

ing lawyer in St. Paul.

Because the Minnesota Legislature had elected Davis in 1886 to represent the state in the United States Senate, he and law partner Cordenio A. Severance realized that their firm would need another lawyer. The following year, Kellogg moved to St. Paul and the three men formed the law partnership of Davis, Kellogg, and Severance. The men prospered. Kellogg became legal counsel to several large corporations, work that helped him establish connections with such key business leaders of the day as James J. Hill. Acting as Hill's lawyer, Kellogg was in Washington in 1897 when Senator Davis introduced him to the then-assistant secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt.

In 1905, after he had become president of the United States, Roosevelt appointed Kellogg a special assistant attorney general to prosecute the General Paper Company, which the Roosevelt administration believed was a monopolistic combination of newsprint manufacturers in Minnesota and Wisconsin. When Kellogg won the case the following year, he became a public figure.

Kellogg served as president of the American Bar Association (1912-1913) and ran, in 1916, as a Republican for the U. S. Senate. He won handily. There he supported America's entry into World War I, but in 1919 he took a position of moderate reservations on the question of whether the Senate should ratify the Treaty of Versailles and the Covenant for the League of Nations. His efforts to find a compromise failed. He also lost his re-election bid in 1922.

President Warren G. Harding gave Kellogg his first opportunity to serve as a diplomat by appointing him as a delegate to the Fifth International Conference of American States in Santiago, Chile, in 1923. Then President Calvin Coolidge appointed him ambassador to Great Britain. While in London as ambassador, Kellogg participated in conferences that developed the Dawes Plan for payment of German reparations for World War I.

In March, 1925, President Coolidge asked Kellogg to succeed Charles Evans Hughes as secretary of state. During his four years in this demanding position, Kellogg dealt successively with a number of difficult issues in Mexico, Nicaragua, and China. Kellogg persuaded Coolidge to appoint Dwight W. Morrow ambassador to Mexico. Morrow did an admirable job of resolving several disputes concerning U. S.-Mexican relations. In Nicaragua Kellogg applied a consistent approach of non-intervention during a period of political turmoil there.

In April, 1927, the French Foreign Minister, Aristide Briand, proposed that his country and the United States complete an agreement that would renounce war as an instrument of national policy. Initially, Kellogg was cool to the idea because he feared it might lead to entanglement in France's efforts to achieve greater security from its more populous and more industrialized European neighbor, Germany. However, supporters of the peace movement in the United States prodded Kellogg into action, and in late December he responded to Briand with an alternative proposal: a multilateral pact instead of a bilateral one.

After further discussion and clarification of questions, such as the right of self-defense of any of the signatories, leaders from sixty-two nations signed the Pact of Paris on August 27, 1928. Although many in the United States were skeptical of the treaty's effectiveness in the event of actual hostilities involving one or more of the signatory countries, the Kellogg-Briand Pact was the crowning achievement of Kellogg's service as Secretary of State.

Kellogg left office in March of 1929, but he soon returned to public service as a judge of the Permanent Court of International Justice (World Court) at The Hague. He served for five years (1930-1935) before resigning due to ill health. In 1935 he returned from The Netherlands to St. Paul, where he died on December 21, 1937.

*John M. Lindley*

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*The four-act pageant presented as  
a benefit for the American League of Min-  
nesota in November, 1898. See Dave  
Riehle's article about St. Paul's African-  
American community and the Spanish-  
American War beginning on page 15.*

## R.C.H.S.

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