

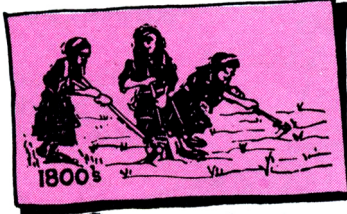
Minnesota's First Farmers

In the Beginning... Native Americans—the Indians who lived here long before white settlers arrived and long before statehood—were the area's first farmers. The two major tribes were the Ojibwe (Chippewa) and the Dakotas (Sioux).

The Ojibwe lived and traveled among the northern lakes and forests of what would later become Minnesota. They hunted wild game, caught fish and harvested wild blueberries, cranberries, plums and other fruits. They tapped maple trees to make maple syrup and maple sugar. In sum-

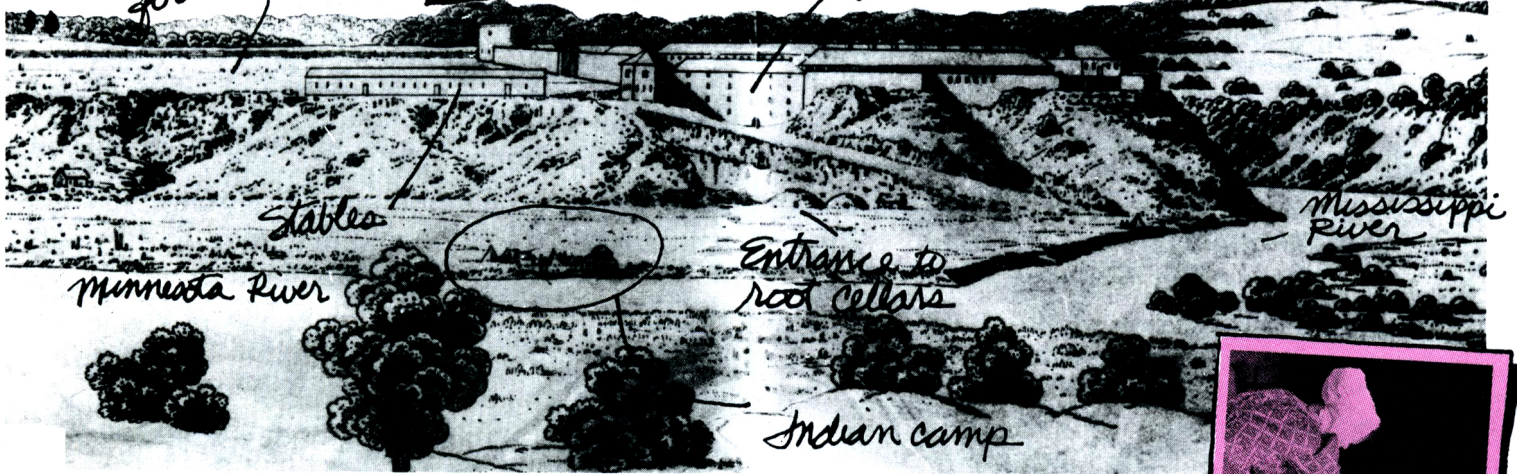
mer Ojibwe women planted corn, pumpkins and squash. There was wild rice to harvest, too.

The Dakotas settled in the south and southwestern plains areas of what is now Minnesota. Dakota villages dotted the Mississippi, Minnesota, St. Croix and Cannon River banks. River water was needed for crops and drinking, and the softer soil along the river banks was easy to till. Dakota men were hunters and warriors; Dakota women were the farmers. Working with bone or wooden hoes, they harvested corn and squash. Most of the food was eaten as it ripened, but some was always stored for winter eating and spring planting.



Food grown for soldiers

Commissary (eating area) for troops



View of Fort Snelling in 1826 shows the joining of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. Original drawing by Peter Rindisbacher. Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

By the early 1820s, many things were changing. Fort Snelling was built on a hill overlooking the spot where the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers meet. A main need at the fort was a steady supply of food. And that meant agriculture! The commanding officer, Colonel Josiah Snelling, ordered that 200 acres of the land beside the Minnesota River be tilled for crops. In 1823, workers harvested wheat, oats, corn and many kinds of garden vegetables.

Soon a lot of agriculture was taking place in the area around Fort Snelling. Native Americans continued to grow and gather foods in the traditional ways of their own tribes. **Squatters** also came along—people who settled on unoccupied land without a legal right to do so. They felt safe near the fort, and soon planted food crops. Both the Native Americans and the squatters traded some of their extra food for other things at the fort.

If you visit Fort Snelling today, what will you see? Many of the old fort buildings are still there, but Colonel Snelling himself wouldn't recognize much of his fort if he could see it now! Many of the 400 acres that were the fort's grounds and gardens are covered by the Veteran's Administration Hospital and the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport! But you can see a bit of the past, too.

Today's Fort Snelling is an Interpretive History Center that lets us glimpse what life was like there about 1827. People dressed in clothing styles of those times tell us about life at the fort. Cooks prepare foods that were served then—bread, many vegetables, blackberry or chokecherry pies. You won't see fresh meat. That was quite rare at the fort. But you might see salt beef or salt pork. Meat was salted to help keep it from spoiling in the days before ice boxes and refrigerators.

Wild game is sometimes cooked at the fort. In the 1820s, soldiers sometimes hunted wild game or caught fish for food, but they often needed permission from Indian chiefs in the area to do it. Trumpeter swans and passenger pigeons were welcome meals at the fort.

Fort Snelling's agriculture in the 1820s was much different than Minnesota agriculture today. But one thing hasn't changed. Wherever there are people to feed...there is agriculture!



Modern day demonstration of early 1800s-style chicken roasting at Fort Snelling.

Photo Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

How's Your History?

Would trumpeter swans and passenger pigeons be game birds in the Fort Snelling area today?

Explain your answer.

Minnesota's First Farmers

The Ojibwe and the Dakota

Long before white settlers arrived and long before statehood, the Ojibwe (sometimes called Anishinabe) and the Dakota Indians were farming.

The Ojibwe lived and traveled among the northern lakes and forests of what would later become Minnesota. They hunted wild game and caught fish. They harvested wild blueberries, cranberries, plums and other fruits. They tapped maple trees to make syrup and sugar. In summer, Ojibwe women planted corn, pumpkins and squash. In autumn, they harvested wild rice.

The Dakota lived in the south and southwestern plains areas of present-day Minnesota. Dakota villages dotted the banks of the Mississippi, Minnesota, St. Croix and Cannon Rivers. River water was needed for crops and drinking, and the softer soil along the river banks was easier to till. Dakota men were hunters and warriors. Dakota women were the farmers. Working with hoes made of bone or wood, they raised corn, squash and

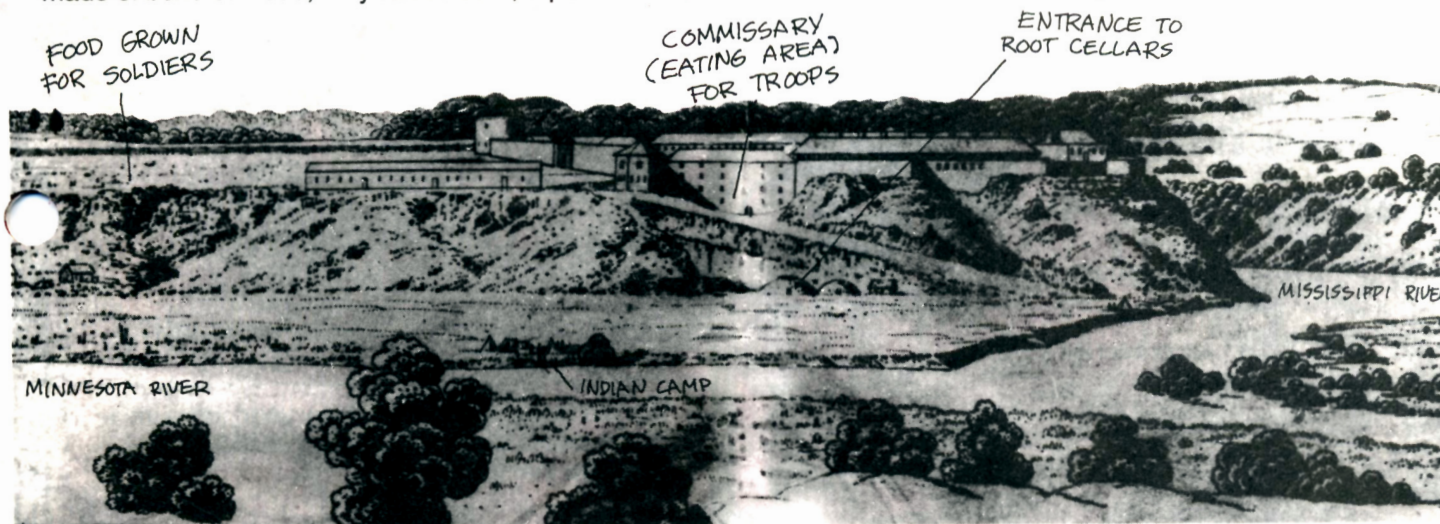
beans. Most of the food was eaten as it ripened, but some was always stored for winter eating and spring planting.

Fort Snelling and Changing Times

By the early 1820s, things were changing. Fort Snelling was built on a hill where the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers meet. A steady supply of food was needed, and that meant agriculture! Colonel Josiah Snelling ordered that 200 acres of land beside the Minnesota

River be tilled for crops. In 1823, the harvest brought wheat, oats, corn and many kinds of vegetables.

In the area around Fort Snelling, Native Americans still grew and gathered foods in their traditional ways. Squatters came along — people who settled without legal rights on vacant land. They settled near the fort where they felt safe. Soon they planted food crops. Both the Native Americans and the squatters traded some of their extra food for other things at the fort.



View of Fort Snelling in 1826 shows the joining of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. Original drawing by Peter Rindlsbacher
Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

Fort Snelling Today: A Glimpse of the Past

Colonel Snelling would not recognize his fort if he could see it today! Some of the historic buildings remain. But the Veterans Administration Hospital and runways for the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport have replaced the fields.

Today's Fort Snelling is an Interpretive History Center. It shows us what life was like around 1827. People dressed in homespun woolen and leather clothing in styles of those times tell us about life at the fort. Cooks make foods that were served then — bread, vegetables, jackberry pies. They sometimes cook wild game. In the 1820s, soldiers hunted wild game or caught fish for food, but they often needed permission from area Indian chiefs to do so. Trumpeter swans and passenger pigeons were

welcome meals in early days, but fresh meat was quite rare. You might see salt beef or salt pork. (Meat was salted to help keep it from spoiling in the days before ice boxes and refrigerators.)

Fort Snelling's agriculture in the 1820s was much different than Minnesota agriculture today. But one thing hasn't changed. Wherever there are people to feed, there is agriculture!

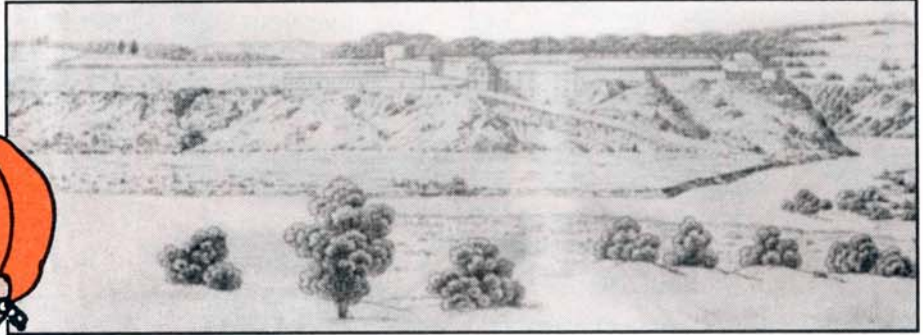


Think Tank

Would trumpeter swans and passenger pigeons be game birds in the Fort Snelling area today?

Minnesota's First Farmers

Long before white settlers arrived and long before statehood, the Ojibwe (sometimes called Anishinabe) and the Dakota Native Americans were farming.



View of Fort Snelling in 1826 shows the joining of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. Original drawing by Peter Rindisbacher.

Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

The Ojibwe

The Ojibwe lived in the northern lakes and forests regions of what would later be Minnesota. They hunted and fished, and harvested wild berries, fruits, and wild rice. They planted corn, pumpkins and squash, and tapped maple trees for tasty maple treats.

The Dakota

The Dakota lived in the southern and southwestern plains of what is now Minnesota. Their villages dotted the banks of the Mississippi, Minnesota, St. Croix and Cannon Rivers. Dakota men hunted for wild animals; Dakota women were the farmers. Working with simple hoes made of bone or wood, they raised corn, squash and beans.

Fort Snelling

By the early 1820's, Fort Snelling had been built on a hill where the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers meet. The troops needed plenty of food, and Colonel Josiah Snelling ordered that 200 acres of land beside the Minnesota River be tilled for crops. In 1823, the harvest brought wheat, oats, corn, potatoes, carrots, turnips, and cabbage.

Wheat into Flour

By the 1830's, hundreds of settlers had moved into the areas along the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers. More and more of the heavy forestland along the rivers was cleared for agriculture.

Wheat became more important, and a grist (grinding) mill built at St. Anthony Falls became a big business. It ground wheat into flour to feed the ever-growing population.

How's Your History?

1. What kinds of things did the settlers learn from the Indians about living and farming in Minnesota?

2. Why was it important for the south and south central Indian villages to be located near rivers? Why was Fort Snelling located near a river?

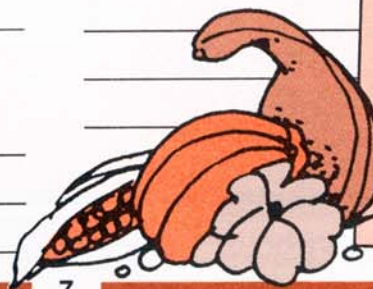
3. What might have happened to Fort Snelling if the crops had failed in those early years?

4. Why would St. Anthony Falls be a good place for a grist mill?

5. Why did Minneapolis become known as "the mill city?"

Did You Know?

Wild rice is not really a rice at all. It is a form of grass, but was mistakenly named "rice" by early explorers. Called "*manoomin*" in the Ojibwe language, it was a staple of their diet, served with most meals. During lean times, it was sometimes the only food.



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Long before white settlers arrived and long before statehood, the Ojibwe (sometimes called Anishinabe) and the Dakota Indians were farming.

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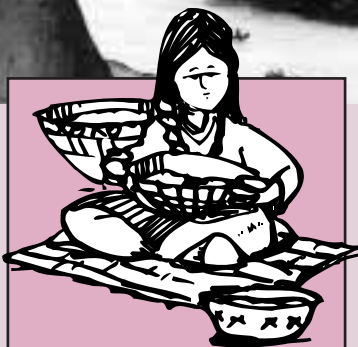
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Illustration Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society



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How's Your History?

1. What kinds of things did the settlers learn from the Indians about living and farming in Minnesota?

2. Why was it important for midwest Indian villages to be near rivers or lakes?

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3. What might have happened to Fort Snelling if the crops had failed in those early years?

Minnesota's First Farmers

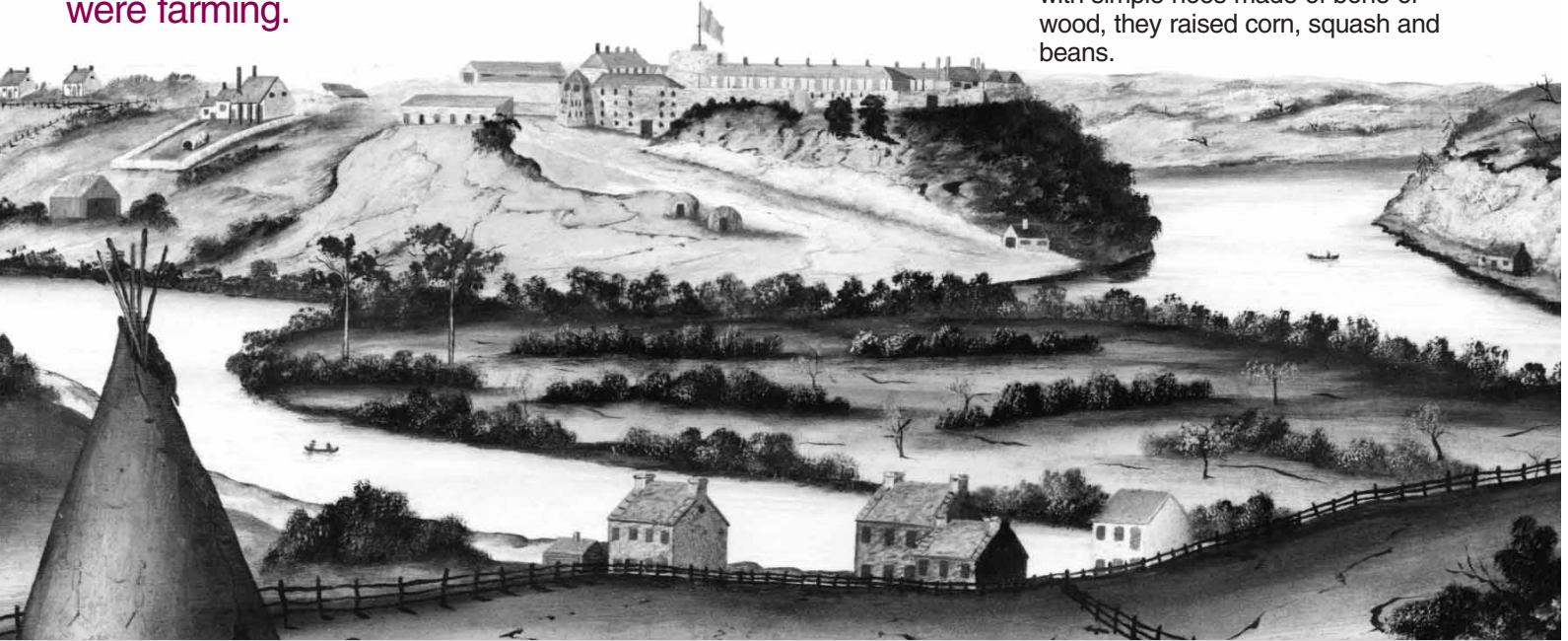
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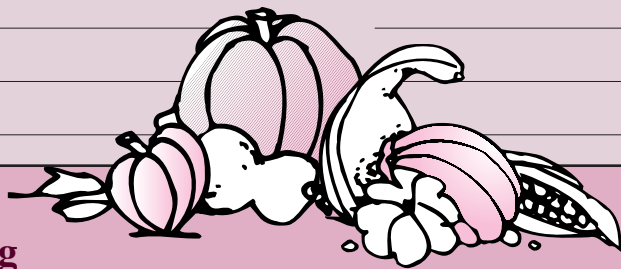
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Fort Snelling was the first farming community by European settlers in the area. This view of the Fort in 1826 shows the joining of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers.

Original drawing by Peter Rindisbacher, Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

1. What did the settlers learn from the Indians about living and farming in Minnesota?
2. Why was it important for midwest Indian villages to be near rivers or lakes?



Gifts That Keep On Giving

American Indian cultures have greatly influenced the food and clothing of people all over the world. Think about it! Experts say about 60 percent of the food the

world depends on today was developed by Indians throughout the Americas centuries ago. Unscramble the letters to name a few!

Foods

zarnie (rcno) _____	topaot _____	eban _____
shqaus _____	ukppmni _____	tmoato _____
flscuonwre _____	ilwd eric _____	eaptun _____
vacaoda _____	laniavl _____	cochoaetl _____

Clothing

snisacom _____	araksp _____	vreaeb tsah _____
shopcon _____	ruf gnihtolc _____	cbkunsik reaalht _____

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1. What did the settlers learn from the Indians about living and farming in Minnesota?
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Feeding People Then and Now

Imagine what it would have been like to be growing up in times of the earliest harvests. Your food would be only what you and your family could find growing wild. Most of every day would be spent hunting animals and searching for berries, nuts and other wild foods. You would often have to move from place to place to find enough food.

Growing and harvesting have changed a lot over time.

A farmer in the early 1800s grew only enough food to feed the immediate family and a few animals.

A farmer in the 1900s grew enough to feed the family, the livestock and five other people.

A farmer in the 1950s grew enough to feed the family, the livestock and 20 other people.

A farmer in the 1990s grows enough to feed the family, the livestock and 129 other people worldwide.

What made the difference over time? _____

Why do our lives depend on harvest? _____

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FARMING GEORGE WASHINGTON'S WAY

Everybody knows George Washington was our first president. Did you know he was also a great farmer? He wanted to produce the food needed to feed his livestock, family and slaves and grow fuel to heat Mount Vernon. He thought of creative new ways to do it all.

Most Virginians just grew tobacco. Washington switched to wheat as his main cash crop. He also grew corn, potatoes, oats and buckwheat. He developed new ways to increase production without draining the soil of its nutrients.

In Washington's time, a farmer's main goal was producing food. Washington also cared about protecting the land for future generations. Farmer Washington was way ahead of his time.

Corn was one of the most important crops grown at Mount Vernon. In George's time, corn was used for all but one of the things below. Cross that one out!

FOOD FOR THE FAMILY AND THE SLAVES
FEED FOR LIVESTOCK
FUEL TO HEAT
ETHANOL FOR FUELING CARS AND TRUCKS

George Washington, Pioneer Farmer: Visit this Web site to read about Washington's 16-sided barn, intercropping and the different ways he controlled weeds in his field!
<http://www.mountvernon.org/pioneer/>

From Wheat to Flour: Minneapolis is “Mill City” USA

By the 1830s hundreds of settlers had moved into the area. The settlers grew much of their own food and did most of their own processing – salting, pickling, preserving, grinding.

As more and more crops were grown in the area, some people started processing businesses. Wheat processing, or grinding wheat into flour, became a big business. For half a century, from 1880 to 1930, Minneapolis led the world in flour milling and earned the nickname “Mill City.”

Minneapolis must thank the mighty Mississippi River for the boom in flour milling. These mills were powered by the Falls of St. Anthony, the only major waterfall on the Mississippi River. The water was turned into power that ran the equipment needed to make flour. Railroads reached across the state and the entire Northern Plains to bring grain to Minneapolis for milling.

How big was flour milling during this time? More than 12 million loaves of bread were made DAILY from the wheat milled at the Washburn A Mill during its heyday between 1880 and 1930. It was the largest flour mill in the world. Every working day, 175 railroad cars of wheat were processed at this one mill. In one year, the Washburn A Mill ground the wheat harvested from 23,000 farms, which extended west to the Rocky Mountains and north into Canada. By 1880, 70 percent of Minnesota’s cultivated land was planted in wheat.



Now your school class can experience what Minneapolis and flour milling was all about over 100 years ago. The Minnesota Historical Society’s new Mill City Museum is an exciting educational center built within the limestone ruins of the Washburn A Mill. Originally built in 1878 and nearly destroyed by fire in 1991, the ruins sit right on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown Minneapolis.



Go to www.millcitymuseum.org for more information.

Upper right: A painting of the Mississippi River near St. Anthony Falls before settlers arrived.
Lower left: A modern look at St. Anthony Falls, showing the uppermost dam on the Mississippi.
The Mill City Museum is on the left side of this photo.

Photos Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.