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Writers Project Research Notes.

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## Benton County.

### Pre-historic

It seems impossible to believe that this county was under water in the pre-historic time. Just exactly how many years no one really knows. After a time the water disappeared and the climate became tropical. As a result plants and trees peculiar to that temperature thrived. Herds of saber-toothed tigers roamed over the land. Then again the climate changed and the ice of the glacial age spread over the country, not only once but two or three times. During this period, the plants and animals were destroyed. Finally the ice melted leaving the lakes and hills. It was this age that made Benton county so rugged and beautiful.

Practically nothing is known about the first people who lived in the state or the county. Scientists say that the quartz workers left evidence that they had been in Little Falls. Where they went after leaving this country is not known. Some historians think that they left for the north and became the Eskimos, others are of the opinion that these quartz workers migrated to the south. As Little Falls is so close to Benton county it is possible that they also visited in the locality.

It is thought that the first people who actually lived in the county were the mound builders. but it is not definitely known who they were or where they came from. Some historians insist that the mound builders were the tribes who migrated through Alaska and still others believe that they were the Sioux, who first lived in Minnesota.. Catlin describes a Sioux chief who built a mound ten feet high over the body of his son. Catlin says also the Sioux carried the bones of their dead and buried them in what is now Mounds Park, St Paul.

The mounds in Benton are found along the Mississippi River. It is not known whether these people built the mounds because they lived there or for the reason that they loved the water so intensely that they wanted their loved ones to rest there.

The excavation of these mounds have disclosed bundles of bones with one or several skulls on top. The fact that the bones were tied in this fashion would indicate that they had been moved after one burial. The skulls however seemed to point to the fact that they were another tribes for they were very low browed and had protruding chins. This did not compare with the Indians of that time. Along with the bones were found their weapons, such as stone, flint, and copper heads. Some cooking utensils had also been left in the mound. This pointed to a very peculiar belief in a future state.



The people that we have learned a great deal about are the Chippewa and the Sioux Indians. The Chippewa tribes had been living near the Great Lakes. They were driven out by the Hurons who wanted that territory. The Chippewa Indians had to look for another home so turned their eyes westward to the land occupied by the Sioux. The Chippewa had been in contact with the whites for some time so had the white man's while gun and ammunition. The Sioux still used the bow and arrow. For over fifty years there was warfare among these two tribes. The Sioux steadily lost ground and kept retreating toward the setting sun land east of the Miss

Toward the middle of the 17th century, explorers began to push westward from the French settlement. Of these Grosseliers and Radisson penetrated the Lake Superior region and some think they reached what is now Minnesota. The recorded history of the area which includes begins with du Luth, a young French explorer.

In 1679 this intrepid young man forced his way through the wilderness from ~~the wilds~~ <sup>of swamp</sup> of the Lake Superior down through the maze to the Indian village at Mille Lacs Lake. At this time there no sign of a road, nothing to tell him that he was going in the right direction. After months of hardship he reached the Indian village. There he placed the flag of France in the ground, raised his right hand and said " I



4

proclaim this land to be French territory." But this country had further interesting story. The land was now known as the Louisiana territory. In 1762, France put this land in trust with Spain. Spain governed that part of Minnesota until by another treaty in 1800 when it came under France again. Then in 1803, the United States bought this territory for 15 million dollars. But because of the slowness of communication and other plans of Napoleon, this northern part of Louisiana territory was still governed by foreign powers when taken over by the U S in 1804. It is interesting to note that Napoleon planned to land troops in this area with the intention of controlling the United States.

This country continued to interest men from other lands. About 1680, Father Hennepin, then a captive of the Sioux, was compelled to walk from St Anthony to the Sioux village at Mille Lacs. They made the trip in the early spring before the ice was out of the river. As there were no bridges, the party was forced to ford the streams. This hardship was too much for the priest and he became ill with rheumatism. Then the Indians showed him the greatest kindness, giving him the steam baths, (boiling water poured on stones that had been heated.) After this the Indian women massaged him with hot skunk oil.

This treatment seems to have cured his ailment for he was soon able to walk again. During the stay with the Sioux, the Father studied the Indian language, getting valuable assistance from the young Indian braves.

It is quite possible that the party crossed the northeast corner of the county.

About the first of July, the Sioux Indians went to hunt buffalo on the prairie of southwestern Minnesota. The Indians had a meeting place on the Rum River near Anoka. At this time Father Hennepin received permission to find out if the supplies promised by La Salle had reached the mouth of the Wiaconsin river. He came down with the Sioux as far as Anoka, then went on. It was on this trip that he discovered and named St Anthony Falls.

In 1766, just ten years before the Declaration of Independence was signed, Johnathan Carver, an English explorer went up the Mississippi as far as the junction with Elk River.

The river was again visited, this time, in 1805 by an expedition sent out by the United States government under the leadership of Lieutenant Zebulon Pike. The object of the exploration was: to find the source of the Mississippi; to note the population and residence of the Indians;

*20 copies with  
U.S. history*



to make peace with the tribes if possible; to pick out sites for trading posts; to explore the branches of the great river.

Interest in the Mississippi even extended to Italy, for Count Beltrami, lawyer and scientist from a small town in that country, came to the United States to hunt for the source of the river. The Count went up the Minnesota with Major Longs expedition but for some reason left them and started out with only three Indians. These Indians deserted him and he was entirely stranded. However he was able to hire three more and at last managed to reach a lake that he called Lake Julia. This he thought was the source of both the Mississippi and the Red River. Some historians say that he came down the Father of Waters.

Some years later, Henry R Schoolcraft, a geologist and mineralogist was sent by the government to the Mississippi country. He was accompanied by an surgeon and several missionaries. The object of this trip was to conciliate Indians so that trading relations could be established and to vaccinate the natives against small pox. But the actual object was the discovery of the source of the river. After a long hard trip, he saw a "transparent body of water" and declared that lake to be the source. He named this lake Itasca.



These early explorers were responsible for the fur trade that developed, for they sent such glowing reports back to the mother countries. These foreign business men knew that the gold of this new country also lay in the immense fur market.

As a result, the Hudson Bay, the American and the Northwestern Companies were established. Trading posts were built all over the state.

The big problem was transportation. There were no railroads, no steamboats. The furs had to be shipped to the ocean ports, so they could be sent to Europe. The Red River cart was the result.

The Red River carts, as these clumsy vehicles were called were made entirely of wood. The wheels were large so that they would not sink so deep into the ruts. The rims were made of oak or iron wood that had been soaked and bent. In other instances it had been cut to assume that shape. The spokes of the wheels were made of a lighter wood. No axle grease was used so the rubbing of the wood produced a squeak that could be heard for miles. There ~~was~~ <sup>two</sup> shafts that were fastened to the ox with straps made of buffalo hide. On top of the shaft rested a box wherein the furs were packed.

The drivers of the Red River carts were an interesting and picturesque group, with their red, green plaid shirts, low crowned ~~brimmed~~ <sup>brimmed</sup> hats and gayly colored ~~sash~~ sashes

low crowned, broad brimmed hats and gayly colored sashes tied around their waists. Even as the drivers strudged behind the carts, their voices broke out in weird songs. They traveled in groups of 80 to 100. The drivers selected a leader for the trip. This man was the absolute boss. If the rest of the drivers disobeyed him, they were punished. When he was ready he raised a white flag. The same signal was given when he thought a good stopping place had been found. At night the wagons were arranged in a circle.

This was for pt

The oxen were placed inside the row of wagons. This arrangement was considered the safest. The drivers took turns guarding the caravan. When all was settled for the night, the drivers ate their meal of pemican. After that they built bonfires and talked.

These very interesting people came through the county because it happened to be along the trail.

tied around the waist.



*Amos*  
With the fur traders came the parasites who ruined the Indians instead of bettering their condition. ~~These were~~ the traders who were downright crooks. It is true that the red men learned many things from the white race such as the use of clothes, the art of using the sewing needle, but the damage they did overbalanced the good. Through the white men such diseases as smallpox, tuberculosis, measles scarlet fever and the social diseases, were spread.

With the trader came the half breed, who, except in a few cases had all the vices but none of the virtues of either people. But worst of all was the introduction of whiskey which transformed the Indian from friend to foe, from a man to a snarling beast.

The Indians were in this state of mind when the settlers came in. The next step then to incur the Red man's hatred was the seizing of his land.

## Benton County

### Settlement.

The United States government, anxious to have the states settled, advertised the land at home and in foreign countries. Of the Minnesota land, the advertisement read " Good land, 160 acres for \$1.25 an acre. Timber and prairie land. Men, work in the pineries in the winter while proving up the land."

In Europe conditions were far from ideal. Men with little or no money could not buy land, others who had some funds but who wanted large farms were in the same position for land was too high priced. Then there were some people who were dissatisfied for social reasons, others because of religious.

This state of affairs was excellent for both parties. The United States wanted immigrants, these people from Europe were anxious to acquire land and build homes.

In order to speed up immigration, agents were sent to the foreign countries. They worked around in settlements to get a small colony of people who spoke the same dialect and had the ideas. They felt that these people would be more content in the new home if such conditions existed.

Many of these people did not have the money for passage so they had to borrow it from friends or relatives.

These people dared to start this new venture with " two empty hands and debt besides."

When a sufficient number had signed up for the trip, the list was given to the captain of the sailing vessel. These immigrants were also required to give a financial statement. The captain made out a list of provisions and bedding they would need for the voyage. Those who had some means were compelled to bring twice the necessary amount because there were always a number who could not buy enough.

The day of the departure arrived. The immigrants dressed in their native attire came, loaded down with baskets and chests. <sup>came.</sup> Some were hilarious, others hung to their loved ones and wept. The whistle sounded and families were parted, many never to meet again. The boat pulled out very slowly while handkerchief and hats waved. Then they had time to think things over. They were going to America and there was no turning back.

Under ordinary circumstances, this would have been great vacation for most of them. The immigrants were not used to ease and this meant 7 to 13 weeks of leisure. They could visit to their hearts contents. But it wasn't so simple. After about two days practically all became seasick. The continuous rolling of the vessel made them so dizzy and nauseated that they could not stand up, much less walk.



For these orfortunates there was no bracing salt sea breeze, they had to stay below the deck where the air was foul from lack of ventilation.

The captain of the vessel was the absolute boss. He looked very stately in his dark blue uniform trimmed with gold braid and buttons. He, and the first mate, who if anything should happen to the captain, would take charge of the ship had their own quarters they ate and slept. The other employees mixed with the passengers.

The immigrants furnished their own food and cooked their meals <sup>on stove</sup> provided for their used. Their dining table was the top of a trunk or chest in the bunk room.

The men and women had separate bunk rooms. The bunks were placed head to head. Between them was a narrow space that constituted the immigrants sitting room.

A storm at sea was not rare. If the sea was very rough the immigrants were all forced below the deck. Some prayed, some sang hymns while others played checkers as if nothing had happened.

It quite often happened that there was a burial at sea. During illnaess the captain served as a physician, givning first aid. If the passenger died, he took full charge. Some sailing vessels carried lumber so that aacoffin could be built, others used only a coffin made of stout canvas. The captain officiated at the funeral. Then the body, suspended by ropes, was held over the sea. At the words

"dust to dust," the ropes were dropped and the bodies sank into the water. The first evening after a funeral the first mate did his best to comfort the saddened family.

The mates were great story tellers, so much so that the immigrants were very much frightened. The stock of stories was the usual ghost story.

It sometimes happened that a ship was caught in a local "region of calms." Then the captain was helpless until a wind came up and helped them out of their predicament.

At last the ocean experience ended and a pilot came out to take charge of the boat. When the harbor was reached, physicians came aboard to check up the passengers. If they were ill and the recovery was doubtful, the unlucky or may <sup>be</sup> fortunate passenger was sent back to the locality he came from.

As soon as the immigrants landed, they were put in charge of interpreters who saw ~~saw~~ that they had all the baggage and that they took the right train or boat to their destinations.

There was a few more days of companionship and then the wilderness and hardship.



The people who had chosen Benton county for their home found not only a beautiful country but one that would prove profitable as well.

When these sturdy folks arrived, tall grass, as high as the oxen greeted them. There was an abundance of wild game such as geese, ducks, deer, and the Mississippi as well as the lakes were well stocked.

But it was lonely for there was no railroad, no method of communication. Maybe the family would have to live there a whole year without any neighbors. They might have to fight illness and even death alone. But these folks squared their shoulders and met the tasks as they came.

All their worldly belongings were in the wagon box. All they ever hoped to possess would have to come by the toil of their hands. But the immigrants saw 160 acres of land. It was what they had come for and they determined to own it.

The first move to get legal right to the land was a trip to the land office. This was at Sauk Rapids. The land office was a long, low log building with benches around the walls and long table at one end of the room. On the wall was a large map of Minnesota.

Here men from the different countries met. They pointed to the land they wanted for they could not speak the language. Then men stood around, exchanging comments by signs. Then with the description of his chosen land



in his pocket, the future settler went home.

Having been assigned a piece of ground, the next important step was to dig a well. The men at that time hunted water by the "Water witch method." A straight willow about six feet was cut. This was carried over the ground by two people. If the willow quivered, there was water underneath. In a very short time the well was dug for the settlers usually chose a low place where water would be easy to get. A box was put over the well to keep out small animals and dirt. The water was raised by fastening the pail to a pole and lifting it out. The well also served as an icebox for butter and milk.

Now the next step was the planting a small garden. The plow was then unknown so the ground had to be spaded. The first vegetables were: corn, potatoes wabbage.

When the garden was in, trees were felled for a home. Most of the settlers barked the trees so that the logs were smooth. The building of a log house was a very laborious process. There were no derricks and the man had to raise the logs with a rope. Bruised hands and sometimes crushed feet were the result.

At first only sod roof was used while the single window was a piece of oiled paper or deer skin.

The light inside the home was very dim and work had to be done with the aid of candles.

The settlers made the candles themselves. They had two dishes, one with the hot melted grease and the other filled with cold water. Then they dipped a rag or a piece of string into the grease, then into the water, and repeated this process until the candle was the required size.

Furniture was home make. If the settler was a good carpenter he could build some fairly presentable pieces but otherwise it was very crude. There were no springs those days so slats or rope took the place. Pallets of straw or corn husks served as mattresses. Usually a buffalo skin was thrown over the bed. For the children was a smaller bed called the "trundle bed" that slipped under the other one during the day time.

The settlers had no stoves so the fireplace was used. Kettles were hung on chains and bread was baked by means of "reflectors". These were iron plates put in such a position that they threw the heat on the pans of bread. The frequent turning was necessary so that the bread would not burn on one side.



Benton  
County

Alga Jones

as told to writer by  
William Everest

In 1845, Phillip Bupree with a train of 80 ox carts  
came down from Pembina to Mendota. The trip was made on the  
east side of the Red River, then across the country to the  
north side of Gull Lake, down the east side of the Mississippi  
to the destination.

The carts were heavily loaded and the oxen slow so  
that only about 10 miles could be made in a day.

The Indians came down the rivers in canoes and sold  
the furs.

In 1849, the government road was build up to Fort  
Gaines, later called Fort Ripley.

//  
Jeremiah Russell first was active in Wisconsin. He had a town  
site in the St Croix but later decided to come to Sauk Rapids. He  
took a town site claim here but later, a Mr Potter took a homestead  
claim on his claim. This complicated things. They decided to  
divide spoils. Mr Russell had put up a monuments ( what they called  
the stakes those days) and for some reason claimed a triangle on the  
side of the river in what is known Stearns. Hence that piece of  
land still belong to the town of Sauk Rapids. The old brewery is  
located there.

The Hyperborean Hotel was built by Day. It was 2 stories and  
a half and the top story was used for a ball room. It was a fine  
building, none better at either St Paul or At Anthony.

I have more land than I can use  
I have more of corn and wheat  
I have more of corn and wheat  
I have more of corn and wheat



As the roads were good and as Jerimiah Russell was so well known, the people who came to St Paul did not feel that they had a complete trip until they had seen Sauk Rapids. Consequently there were many people coming up and staying at the Hyperborean.

When this hotel was sold to Dr Chase, he turned it into a "Consumptive rest home. Whole families who had a sick loved one came up that the wonderful bracing air of Minnesota might cure them. Many of these were from the south and they brought their slaves with them. //

The Winslow House in St Paul did a lot to advertise the town. They advertised in the papers in the south and offered wonderful inducements/ Part of this was a pleasure trip to the great falls of Sauk Rapids.

Col Hayes.  
by  
Mrs Fletcher. // Col Hayes came from Virginia. He had a slave attendant, his wife had a slave maid. But they were very kind to them and the colored folks could not have been induced to leave the. When the Civil War was over they were offered their freedom and refused so Col Hayes took the servants back to Virginia. So Benton county, in spite of its strong anti slavery attitude had slaves after all. //

( This Col Hayes, was a father in law to the present Mrs William Fletcher.)

// Jerimiah - - - - - was a live wire. It was in everything. He couldn't help himself Russell. they simply would not let him alone. He was tall, handsome, with the bearing of a general. He was not even with anyone. He People were either above him or below. He would bow to some one that he considered his superior but other wide others were distinctly below him.

His manner, speech and sttitude was perfect. He had a marvelous  
persomalality that drew or repulsed. He was not afraid to face  
any man.

He did all in his power to advertise Sauk Rapids and make it  
a city. "

---

William  
Everest.

If it hadn't been for the railroad branching off at it did to the  
west, Sauk Rapids would have been a great city. It had the falls  
all right, that could have been turned into water power.

Sioux outbreak.

At that time William Everest and two others stood guard at the  
Fletcher Hill. They had guards posted all over both in Sauk  
Rapids and in St Cloud to warn the people if the Sioux should  
come. They(the Sioux) were just across the river.

Mrs Fletcher. I was a school teacher when I was 14. I had a chance to go to  
Cass Lake and teach and so I went. I liked the Indians, thought  
they were as smart as the whites. But you never knew where they  
were. If Eddie or some other boy were gone, some other little  
Indians would say- " He march away or he go away.

The coaches were not so comfortable becasue the roads were so  
rough. We sat and faced each other. Sometimes I would be  
thrown into their lap and they into mine. Some times the  
wheels would go down many feet into a rut and then again one  
side would run ober a rock or a stump. It was hard-on the back.  
The mosquiteos didn't come singly, they came in droves. Sometime  
if we were out playing croquinole we had to run for shelter.

73-4-5-6-7

Sauk Rapids  
Sentinel

Events which concern Sauk Rapids.

Jan 24, '73.

Sauk Rapids ferry will run again this summer under the able hand of Mr Arnold. There will be a charge of 10cents for hourses, single or do ble team.

There was occasion for amusement and wonderment in our village yesterday. A colt ran in front of the train on the railroad bridge, then when the train had passed, ran back again.

A steamer is to be run between Itasca and our village next summer. We hope it will cut the freight prices.

July 1, 73.

There is some ch nce that granite from our quarry will be used in the state capital.

July 22. -73

Atbrass band has been organized.

Rattle snakes are coming into town. Children with low shoes should be careful when they step in the tall grass.

The Mississippi river has a drop of 9-14 feet. Through there 6,000,000 ft of water pass. This is an excellent location for a millsite.

Minn is an extra country for the cure of comsumption.

~~Singingschuelzhaszgzlnzheanzatzadz~~

Sept 30

The growth of Sauk Rapids is now fully established. The buildings in St Cloud are veing moved over here. Last Sunday a building was moved with 12 pair of oxen. We do not like to see this done on Sunday.

The long evenings are now coming. Nothing to do but to wait for bed.

Can't we get up some kind of entertainment?

Nov 18.

Guard against purchasing half breed script as it is worthless.

Dec 9

Chas M Wood that the liquor store is entirly separated from the groceries and dry goods so that the ladies do not need to feel delicate about calling.



Dec 28-73. T C Hobert will run a small steamer from St Anthony to Sauk Rapids this summer.

Spicer and Carlson will a steam furniture factory.

Nov 3, '74. One of our would be offici ls lectured from the steps of the Sentinel office yesterday.

Nov 24. There is too much trouble with the mail. One day the train did not get through but the other day it had been left in St Cloud. " hat do these contractors mean?

A dog here was bit by a rattle snake. The animals was given whiskey and the woundhwas bound up with earth. It recovered.

Feb 3. Mrs Coburn has started z millinery store.

W H Fletcher has opened a wagon and sleigh estab lishment.

March 31 The platform thresher came out.

A very drive of logs went through. The character of the drivers has changed. They are no longer a class of men to be dreaded.

April 4-76 J W "atson closed out his store.

A group of men watched a wangan go over the falls.

May 23-76. A cheese factory is being built. The basement will be used as a mfg room. There will be 2 vats, holding 600 gal of milk, 1 large cheese press, with a capacity for pressing 10 cheeses, 1 curd sink with a capacity of 2000 lbs dally, steam engine and boiler, well and force pump to carry water over the building. Floors will have an incline so that the water can be drained into spouts and carried off. On the second floor will be a curing room with shelvessto hold the cheeses.

Feb 2, 75.

A company had been formed to promote a railroad from here to Taylor Falls. The building for the office will be in Sauk Rapids. The run will cover a period of 50 years. The capital invested will be \$ 2,000,000 and the amount of indebtedness at no time shall exceed this. The originators are: Geo Sweet, G W Benedict and S Carpenter.

Feb 9

"Lo," the Indian and his party, passed through here yesterday. As usual he had imbibed too heavily.

The town has a tinner, harness maker, boot and shoe maker.

Oct 19

Our citizens were pleased to see the Hon Alex Ramsey walk the streets yesterday. He was well pleased with the improvements here.

There is a lot of men passing through here to go to the pineries.

Dr Mac Mahon is back in Sauk Rapids. There are no funds to pay him in Cass Lake.

Light spring wagons and buggies are coming to town.

June 6,

The fast horses are coming in. Dr MacMahon has a black beauty.

Wilson Bros are closing out.

Arnolds mill is now enclosed. It makes a fine appearance.

Nov 20, '77.

The Steamer Pokema was destroyed by fire. It was valued at \$ 12000 and was not insured.

The captured Nez Perce Indians passed through here yesterday on their way to Fort Leavenworth. There was 12 coaches and several box freight cars. There was quite a crowd to see Chief Joseph and his people. The chief shook hands with several in the crowd. He is a handsome man, absolutely with display.

Dec 25-76      There is a large colony of 130 Polish families coming. A Mr  
Rudnski is at the head of it.

July 7, 77.      Dr MacMahon dies.

17      C C Wood has contracted for 5000 lbs of cheese.

J R Russell advertises 180 lots of sale. This includes 8-10 mill  
sites.

The Sauk Rapids won a silver medal for cheese. This was the highest  
award that could be given.

We have a new lawyer, Atty John Sims.



Editorial opinions -expressed about diseases and cures.  
comments.  
interesting advertisements.

Dec 30- 73

Quick consumption kills in 10 days.

Carbolated Cod Liver oil is a cure. The carbolic acid  
disinfects prevents further decay and the oil builds.

One has " Rodent ulcer of the face. "

Sept 5, 76.

At 60 years, if the pulse exceeds 70, there is a fever or ing  
inflammation and body is feeding on itself. as in consumption.

In such an instance the pulse is rapids.

*Pennis was spelled - Pro Me.*

April 20 76

Bite from a mad dog can be cured by a bath " Ala Russian.

A rattle snake bite can also be cured by "sweating "

*most kids have a good  
course in "Kerlit" by the  
line & know full  
treatments - saunter for 283.  
serum for robit.*

3-30-76

Diphtheria can be cured by a warm bath.

Markets

Sept 5-76.

Venison sells for 6 cents a lb

Style.

women

Sept 5, -76. Patterns with the following notations were printed in the paper.

Waist samll and neat but not too small. The waist is plain with plating in front. The best style is the polonaise with loops and bows. Buttons are covered with silk and embroidered with a star.\* Neck is high as possible, there are long slender bustles. There is very little bulkiness at the sides, The fullness is given by slender ruffles.

men.

Bosom shirts are going to be worn. ( They have been since 1855)

March 10-74

Waist patterns. material required.	3	yrds	of	54	inch	material.
skirts	4	"	"	"	"	"

Nonsense.

Oct 20, ' 74.

A new way to hunt. to hunt wild geese is to soak the grain in whiskey. The geese get sleepy and are easy to bag.

# School

Aug 18, 74. The Union school opened with J A Barum principal and Miss Donovan teacher.

Sept 11 Report of school.

Name absent department scholarship, tardy,

-----	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	8	8	1
-----	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	9	9	3
-----	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	8	9	1

There were 42 in the school.

More males wanted.

March 16.

A strike in school. Strike is the order of the day. The children will not obey the teachers. They want to run the teachers and the school.

But it is not so easy to disobey such a powerful man as Mr Barnes.

*different in places*

2-16-75. The school houses opens at 8:30. Fires are made immediately after.

There is no use in standing outside.

" A boy goes to school, follows one branch of fundamentals after another.

Then he reaches 16 or 18, when he is too old to go to school.

School devided becuae of spelling.

11-16- 75. There is no school because court is held.in the school house.

There is an amendment that free schools are to be established.

Sept 7, 75. School has started for another year. We hope the teachers will be encouraged by parents to enforce rules laid down.

May 11. School has closed. There is no money this year for summer school.

We hope the pupils will not forget what they have learned.

The school reports were rinted monthly. After every one there was a long discourse on the importance of punctuality. Sometimes this coveres as much as  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a column in the local paper.

Aug 29. Pupils will meet at school on Sat afternoon to get assignments.

*2021-76 Court in school house*



May 30

Hunour.

Milking.

The best time is at 5:30 in the morning and 6 at night. Be tender with the cow at milking time. Never talk or think of anything else while milking. Offer some caress, some soothing word when you leave. The cow gives more milk when she loves you. ( So touching.)

Printing.

Nov 24.

The editors attitude to each other. Sentinel calls editor of Princeton, " Poor little wasp.

Nov 5. 74.

Victorious candiate.

The editors choice.

1. The eagle in her victorious pose.

( cut.)

2. Other party. Picture of a lamb.

Mary had a little lamb but it can't follow him to the legislature.

- 3 Other party. CCock, dejected, feathers disarranged, in this position.



- 4 Victorious party. Cocky cock.strutting.

Oct 5, 75.  
Job printing.

Cupids setting type.

Temperance. Behavior.

Aug 18-74

Ladies Temperance League to petition enforcement of the Sunday  
law.

Sept 20-74. Temperance songs.

|| Throw your whiskey out.  
Papa stay home.  
Will be home tonight.  
Poor little Tim.  
Dont sell my Father Run.  
Drinking Gin.  
We won't leave the farm. ||

Feb 2, 75.

*(same as black jack)*  
Boys play Pedro and Penuckle, and then stay late and wind  
up with an oyster stew.

Amusement.

Sept 29-74 Singing school is opened at Sauk Rapids under S H Rhys.  
Dec 7, 1875.

Library and dramatic club have been organized.

June 17

There will be a circus in St Cloud. It will have the rare and unusual animals. there will be a gallery of wax figures, a steam man who walks and runs.

Church party. Singing and the reading of an Essay on "Why women don't read." A grand concert will be given by the Sauk Rapids Vocalists.

Dec 20-74  
Dec 7

Library and dramatic club has been organized. They will put on a play soon.

Dec 30.

This year we had no trees, (2) But the weather was so warm that people enjoyed driving instead.

May 10

The young ladies in the town gave a necktie party. The hall was decorated with festoons of green leaves. A very fine time was had by all.

Dance was held. Ice cream and cake was served and they danced until the wee sma hours of the morning.

First court.

First held at the home of Jeremiah Russell, then at Hyperborean hotel, next at the school house and then hall of the good Templars.

Nov 21- 76

Court was held, J W Mc Kelvey presiding. The cases were assault and stealing. Two men from St George were accused of stealing and of disposing of the loot. They were convicted and given a sentence of 3 years for each count.



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SAUK RAPIDS AND BENTON COUNTY

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## TOPIC: SAUK RAPIDS AND BENTON COUNTY

Sauk Rapids gets its name from the rapids in Sauk River. Because of the force of the rapids early explorers called this the Grand Sauk Rapids.

In the early days Sauk Rapids was a trading post and shipping center. Its early boundries included East St. Cloud. In 1889 the present boundries were formed. Jeremiah Russel, called the "Father of Sauk Rapids" managed the trading post and devoted himself to selling Sauk Rapids.

Sauk Rapids developed very rapidly and gave promise of becoming a large city until the cyclone in 1886, struck the entire city and destroyed practically everything.

There are some interesting landmarks and remains of the early history of Sauk Rapids. One of the landmarks is the marker on the Herman Fischer farm, this marks the farm Mr. Russel built in the fur trading post days. The foundation of the old saw mill along the river bank gives evidence of the boom days in Sauk Rapids as well as the destructive power of the cyclone. Even today memories to the old timers that are left. In former days the court house was located in Sauk Rapids and a step of the old building can be found in the park.

Today Sauk Rapids has a population of 2600 people. It is located in the sections 23-26 in Benton County.

The business district of Sauk Rapids consists of four groceries, three meat markets, three garages, two hardwares, three shoe shops, a theater, grain elevator, bakery, dimestore, drugstore, a hotel, post office, and several restaurants, gas stations and saloons and beer parlors.

Sauk Rapids has a public library. It started a few years ago by the Lions Club. The Lions Club still is the backbone of the library. Sauk Rapids has a very fine school system. It has three grade schools, a Jr. and senior high school. Two of the grade schools are parochial schools, one is the Sacred Heart Catholic School and the other the Trinity Lutheran. The other schools are all public schools. The Jr. high school is in the same building as the high school.

The high school in Sauk Rapids is one of the most modern in the Northwest, as well as the most beautiful building in town. It is built on a high green terraced hill, in about the center of town. It teaches a general school course, including a commercial and science course. Sauk Rapids has no schools of higher learning.

There are four different churches in Sauk Rapids. A Catholic, a Lutheran, a Congregational, and a Methodist church. The Catholic Church is the largest. It is called the Sacred Heart Church, the Poor Clare Convent is connected with this church. The Poor Clare Convent was built in 1923. The Nuns are cloistered sisters and are entirely secluded from the rest of the world with the exception of one sister, who contacts the outer world. The building is very beautiful both inside and out. It is built on a high green, terraced hill, with beautiful shrubbery surrounding the walls of the convent. The Chapel is one of the loveliest of its kind in this territory. The Lutheran Church is the next largest. The other two churches are about the same size.

There are very few clubs and societies in Sauk Rapids, the existing ones



are the Lions Club, American Legion, Ladies Auxilliary, the Eastern Star, and the Masonic Lodge.

Sauk Rapids has one hotel, the Hohn Hotel, famed for its home cooked meals.

The residential district is scattered and varied. There are some very old homes and some very modern homes. There is one park. It has a bandstand and Tennis court in it; the park was a tourist park near the city limits, but the city council voted to discontinue caring for it.

The manufacturing in Sauk Rapids is carried on by the Sauk Rapids Flour and Feed Mill, operated by Adolph Drieg.

One of the best granite quarries in Minnesota is located in Sauk Rapids, and is the only natural resource.

Highway No. 10 goes through Sauk Rapids; there are many gravel roads going to the country and other small vilages. The Northern Pacific is the only Railroad in Sauk Rapds. The Greyhound bus line has a stopping place at the Drugstore. Just recently Raymond Brothers have started a bus line between Sauk Rapids and St. Cloud, Waite Park, and the Reformatory, with cheap fares.

Information from:

Mr. J. Senn  
Mr. A. Lose  
Miss Irene Freeberg  
Sister Gonnida.



Revised Copy  
E.03-

### BENTON COUNTY

Benton County, in central Minnesota, some 65 miles up the Mississippi River from the Twin Cities, is on the southern edge of the state's potato belt. While the potato is the principal cash crop, the farmers of Benton County get most of their money from the sale of livestock and dairy products.

The county was originally covered with forest, mostly hardwood, but the invasion of the territory by the tillers of the soil has been so complete that today more than 94 percent of the land is in farms. The soil proved favorable to the growth of small grains, root crops and grasses for pasture and hay. In recent ~~recent~~ years, a number of fruits, acclimated to Minnesota, have been introduced. Chief of these are apples, grapes, and plums. The climate and soil<sup>e</sup> of the county, plus its proximity to the Twin Cities marketing center, have combined to make it one of the important agricultural counties of the state.

While small grains of all sorts are grown, the chief small grain crop is oats, to which 25,000 acres were devoted in 1935. The oat crop is, in the main, fed on the farm. Livestock consumes the produce of 60,000 acres devoted to forage crops such as hay, legumes, and corn fodder. Further indicating the importance of livestock, is the fact that as a rule the farmer's herds graze over an amount of land almost as great as his combined cultivated area.

The dairy cow occupies the center of the scene in the livestock industry. Although milk production fell from 7,631,248 gallons in 1929 to 5,299,311 gallons in 1934, still the farmers of the county sold 2,366,288 pounds of butterfat in 1935, at an average price of 30.06 cents per pound. This butterfat was turned into 2,914,613 pounds of butter by the 10 creameries which the farmers of the county support.

In its infancy is the poultry industry of the county. In 1934 approximately 150,000 chickens and 2,500 turkeys were raised. The production of eggs for that year was 588,901 dozens.

#### OPPORTUNITIES

For the farmer experienced in the care and feeding of livestock, in dairying, or poultry raising, the county offers opportunities equal to or perhaps greater than most counties of the state. While it is true that the land is not as natively fertile as that in most of the counties in the southern part of the state or in the Red River Valley, neither are the land values as high as in many sections. The average value per acre in Benton county is \$35.69 and for the state as a whole is \$42.14. Then, too, as livestock raising has always been extensively followed, the soil has not been robbed of its original fertility as have those sections where one-crop grain farming has been followed over a long period of time. Then, of course, the proximity to the Twin City market center is a factor not to be forgotten by the prospective purchaser of farmland in Benton county.

PHYSICAL  
SETTING

Benton is not a large county, having an area of 405 square miles or 259,200 acres. To the west winds the Mississippi River and across the river, lies Stearns county. To the north is Morrison County; to the east, Mille Lacs, and to the south, Sherburne.

Topography

The surface of the land is in the main a gently rolling terrain. This is marred only by the granite outcroppings in the western part near the river. Between the villages of Sauk Rapids and Watab there is an outcropping two or three miles long. These granite bluffs do not rise higher than 1500 feet above sea level, while the elevation of the county ranges from 1000 feet to 1500. There are also a few small outcroppings of this granite in the northeastern part of the county.

Unlike much of Minnesota, Benton county has very little water surface, about 3.7 percent of the total area. This area includes the larger lakes: Mayhew, Briggs, and Little Rock, and numerous smaller ones, swamps and hay marshes. A number of streams are also included in this area.

Drainage

The surface of the land is sufficiently rolling to assure good natural drainage which flows into a number of small creeks and streams. About one third of the drainage is taken care of directly by the Mississippi and the remainder by the Elk and St. Francis Rivers which eventually empty into the Mississippi.



Soil

A little more than 71 percent of the soil is red, pebbly, clay loam; somewhat more than 8 percent pebbly sandy loam and the remainder or about 20 percent is taken up by granite outcroppings, gravel knolls, and wet land. The red loam soil has a clay subsoil.

Climate and Rainfall

Benton county has a moderate climate with a mean annual temperature of 42.6 degrees and an average precipitation of 26.41 inches. The latter includes 46 inches of snow which reduces to 4.6 inches of <sup>precipitation</sup> ~~rain~~. The last killing frost in the spring usually occurs about May 15 and the first killing frost in the fall about September <sup>20</sup> ~~15~~, thus making a growing season of about <sup>132</sup> ~~130~~ days.

The following are temperature and precipitation norms taken at St. Cloud over a period of <sup>60</sup> ~~58~~ years.

CLIMATIC RECORD

MONTHS:	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
TOWN:												
St. Cloud (alt. 1,020)												
Precipitation in inches	.72	.66	1.09	1.88	3.39	4.38	3.56	3.36	3.42	2.20	1.21	.54
Temperature (Fahrenheit)	9.8°	13.4°	27.4°	44.3°	56.3°	65.7°	71.2°	68.2°	59.4°	48.7°	30.2°	16.8°

Average Annual Precipitation - 26.41 inches  
 " " Temperature - 42.6 degrees

SETTLEMENT AND  
RACIAL ORIGIN

Benton was among the first counties of the state to be settled. <sup>and it</sup> ~~This indicated by the fact that it~~ was one of three counties to be established at the time of the organization of <sup>MINNESOTA</sup> ~~the state as a~~ Territory. The first settlers were fur traders and trappers who came up the Mississippi and settled where now stand the villages of Sauk Rapids, Watab and East St. Cloud. At present the native born population of the county constitutes a little over 88 percent. However, about 47 percent of the present population are descendants of German, Slavic, Swedish, Norwegian and scattered groups from a few other nationalities.

COUNTY ORGANIZA-  
TIONS AND SUB-  
DIVISIONS

Benton county was formally organized on January 7, 1850. It was named for Thomas Hart Benton, who had been United States Senator from Missouri for 30 years and as such had worked for the passage of the original Homestead Laws, thus endearing himself to pioneer American farmers.

The original Benton county was much larger than the Benton county of today, several other counties having been cut from its original domain. In fact it is now one of the smaller counties of the state. The townships ~~and incorporated villages~~ are as follows:

Alberta	7,842	Mayhew Lake	826
Gilmanston	1,065	Maywood	1,044
Glendora	844	Minden	560
Graham	648	St. George	866
Granite Ledge	640	Sauk Rapids	491
Langola	430	Watab	

Incorporated Villages:

Foley	798	
Rice	314	
East St. Cloud	2,300	
Sauk Rapids	2,656	
Ronneby	75	
Sartell (partly in Stearns)	521	

TAXES

Tax rates in Benton county increased from 52.22 mills in 1931 to 72.44 mills in 1935. However, the total assessment for 1935 was less than the 1931 figure as the drop in valuations more than offset the increase in the tax rate. The decrease in total taxes levied amounted to 17 percent. In 1931 all taxable property was valued at \$7,326,911. The levy that year was designed to yield \$387,259. In 1935, on the other hand, the total taxable valuation had fallen to \$4,381,840. So that even with the increased rate, the levy amounted to but \$321,451.

Indebtedness

On January 1, 1936, total indebtedness of the county and subdivisions was \$237,554.39 or 5.42 percent of the taxable valuation. The per capita debt on that date was \$15.78. Only ~~three~~ <sup>four</sup> other counties in the ~~state~~ <sup>state</sup> had a per capita debt below \$20.00.

Delinquency

Tax delinquency in Benton county is slightly above the average for the state. Of the total tax levy of \$333,113 in 1934, \$68,182, or 20.47 percent was unpaid January 1, 1936. The state average for the same year was 18.83 percent. Cumulative delinquency for Benton on the same date was \$204,388, or 61



percent of a year's tax, using the 1934 levy as a base of comparison.

MARKETS AND  
TRADE CENTERS

This entire county is within the retail trading area of <sup>the</sup> Twin Cities. The city of St. Cloud, however, is fast becoming a major wholesale distribution point from which distribution is made to retailers in the surrounding counties. The chief merchandising market is St. Cloud. South St. Paul is the primary livestock market.

The village of Foley has been the county seat since 1902. It was named for John Foley, its founder, who came to Minnesota from Lanark County, Ontario, Canada. Flour milling is one of the leading industries in addition to dairy processing.

The small railroad village of Rice, 18 miles north of St. Cloud on the Northern Pacific Railway and US 10, was named in honor of George T. Rice, an early innkeeper. This little village is <sup>well</sup> known statewide for its outstanding tourist camp at the north end of the highway.

East St. Cloud is made up of wards 5, 6, and 7 of the city of St. Cloud in Stearns county. This region is famous for its granite quarries and rock outcroppings. Granite cutting, polishing plants, and quarries are found here. There is a hydro-electric plant on the river which is partly in Benton County and partly in Stearns.

One of the largest paper mills in the world is located at the village of Sartell. ~~Large quantities of newsprint paper and other papers are manufactured here.~~

Sauk Rapids, the largest village in the county, gets its name from the Sauk River. The cyclone of 1886 leveled the entire village. Shortly after that disaster, the work of rebuilding began, and <sup>it</sup> is now a thriving little community. There is a flour and feed mill and a granite quarry at Sauk Rapids.

## COOPERATIVES

Foley, Rice, and Sauk Rapids have livestock-shipping associations; while Foley and Oak Park have cooperative associations for the marketing of potatoes and produce.

There is a cooperative fire insurance company with offices at Rice, and a cooperative oil company with offices at Sauk Rapids.

The cooperative creameries and their location are:

(single space)	Farmers Cooperative Creamery Co.	Sauk Rapids
Foley	" " Assn.	Foley
Fruthville	" "	Sauk Rapids
Gilman Cooperative Creamery		Gilman
Glendora	" "	Princeton
Oak Park	" " Assn.	Oak Park

Rice Farmers Cooperative Creamery Co.

Rice

*Three independent creameries are located at Foley and H. Cloud.*

TRANSPORTATION Main lines of the Great Northern and Northern Pacific

Railroad pass through the county. Bus service is furnished

by the Northern Greyhound lines on the route running from the Twin Cities <sup>to</sup> St. Cloud and Brainerd. There are truck lines operating over the same route. In addition to the county roads, three state highways, 23, 95, and 218, and US 10 traverse the county. Roads are kept passable by means of snow plows during the winter months.



The present county program for road building includes 75 miles of new <sup>ly</sup> surfaced roads, including 20 miles of township roads.

#### SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES

##### Churches

There are 25 churches in the county with ~~the~~ Catholic, Lutheran, and Methodist ~~denominations~~ predominating. Sauk Rapids, the largest village, has 4 churches; Catholic, Lutheran, Congregational, and Methodist. The largest of these, the Sacred Heart, is Catholic. In connection with this church is the Poor Clare Convent, only one of whose cloistered sisters ever sees the outside world.

##### Schools

The majority of school children of Benton county attend ungraded elementary schools. In 1936, the pupils in the ungraded elementary schools numbered 1,823, <sup>under 66 teachers</sup> while those in graded elementary and secondary schools combined totaled 978, <sup>with 36 teachers.</sup> There are 64 school districts and 68 school buildings in the county. The grade schools are in Foley and Sauk Rapids. The Sauk Rapids system also includes a junior and senior high school. Foley has 141 elementary pupils with 4 teachers and 276 secondary pupils with 12 teachers. Sauk Rapids had 213 elementary pupils with 6 teachers and 348 secondary pupils with 14 teachers. Two of the three elementary schools of Sauk Rapids are parochial. One is Catholic and the other Lutheran.

Among the educational opportunities offered to residents of Benton <sup>2</sup> county may be listed the leading educational institutions



of neighboring Stearns county. First of these, is the State Teachers' College of St. Cloud, founded in 1869 and the largest in the state. At St. Joseph there is the St. Benedict College and Academy and St. Joseph's Girls School operated by the Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict. At Collegeville are St. John's University and St. John's Abbey, <sup>and</sup> a preparatory school for men, all maintained by the Order of St. Benedict.

### Clubs and Organizations

Farmers and their wives maintained 8 social clubs in January 1937 <sup>there were</sup> and thirteen 4-H clubs for boys and girls.

#### FAIR

An annual county Fair is held at East St. Cloud under the sponsorship of the Benton County Agricultural Society.

#### FARM INCOME

The latest available figures covering farm income are from the 1930 census based upon the income for 1929.

According to these figures, the total farm income for 1929, including farm products consumed on the farm was \$2,853,361. The following table indicates the sources and their relative importance:

Livestock . . . . .	21.6	percent
Field Crops . . . . .	17.9	
Dairying and . . . . .	41.8	
Livestock Products		
Forest Products . . . . .	.7	
Products consumed on farm . . . . .	18.0	

~~Total 100.0~~ <sup>145.1</sup>

#### CENSUS REPORTS

While more than 55 percent of the farms of Benton county contain less than 140 acres, a statistically average farm in Benton county would contain <sup>145.1</sup> ~~141.5~~ acres. Its

Benton County

value would be \$5,180. This represents a decrease of ~~21.5~~ from the 1930 figure. Such a farm would have three or four horses and on every tenth farm would be a colt under working age. There would be about 16 head of cattle and of these about ten would be cows and heifers above two years of age. On every seventh farm there would be a flock of about 17 sheep. Each such farm would raise annually about 90 chickens. The cultivated area of such a farm would be devoted to the following crops: Oats, 51 percent; rye, 16 percent; barley, 13 percent; potatoes, 10 percent; wheat, 6 percent; other grains, 4 percent. An occasional such farm would have a field of flax. The amount devoted to pasture would be almost as large as the total cultivated area. About 35 acres would be devoted to forage crops such as grasses for hay, corn for silage, sorghums, etc. The farm buildings, feeding lots etc., would occupy 3 or 4 acres and a small plot would be used for vegetables and fruits.

34.17 percent<sup>11.</sup>

percent



BENTON COUNTY  
AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS \*

Population.....(1930 census).....15,056  
Area.....405 square miles or.....259,200 acres  
~~Water Area.....~~

County Seat - Foley

Farm Development

Number of farms, 1935.....1,680  
Land in farms, 1935.....243,819 acres  
Average size of farms.....145.1 acres

Farm Values

Average value per acre, 1935.....\$35.69  
" " " " , 1930.....\$54.05  
Average value per farm, 1935.....\$5,180.00  
" " " " , 1930.....\$7,869.00

The Tax Picture

Total Taxable Value, 1935.....\$4,381,840.00  
Total General Tax Levy, 1935.....\$ 321,451.00  
Average Tax Rate, 1935.....72.44 mills

Total Debt of County and Subdivisions, 1935\$237,554.39  
Per Capita Debt, 1935.....\$15.78  
County Bonds, 1935.....\$ 33,187.51  
Total Debt of County and Subdivisions was ~~5.47~~ <sup>5.42</sup> percent of the tax value.

Tenancy and Mortgage Debt

Farm Mortgage Debt, 1930 (farms operated by owners) \$1,908,264.00  
Of farms occupied by owners 53.4 percent were mortgaged in 1930.  
Tenants occupied ~~45.7~~ <sup>25.5</sup> percent of the farms in ~~1937~~ <sup>1935</sup>.

Farm Income

Total Farm Income.....~~2,853,361.00~~ <sup>2,853,361.00</sup>  
*Average Farm Income*.....~~2,853,361.00~~ <sup>2,853,361.00</sup>  
Livestock Products.....\$1,193,309 or 41.8 percent  
" sold or traded \$ 617,696 or 21.6 "  
Crops.....\$ 511,827 or 17.9 "  
Farm Products Used \$ 514,599 or 18.0 "  
Forest Products \$ 15,930 or .7 "



# BENTON COUNTY - AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

## Livestock Holdings - U. S. Census, 1935

Horses..1,485	farms reported.....	5,594	animals all ages
Mules.....18	" " .....	34	" " "
Cattle..1,575	" " .....	25,501	" " "
Sheep.....236	" " .....	4,081	" " "
Swine...1,351	" " .....	7,585	" " "

(Approx. 5,000 decrease in swine since 1930)

## The 1935 United States Crop Census - 1934 Crop Year

Oats.....	<sup>1,209</sup> <del>1,410</del>	farms reported .....	<sup>23,911</sup> <del>25,984</del>	acres -	371,802	bu.
Wheat.....	476	" " .....	3,079	" -	24,458	"
Barley.....	748	" " .....	6,336	" -	83,907	"
Rye .....	296	" " .....	8,274	" -	33,849	"
Mixed Grains...	108	" " .....	1,831	" -	26,267	"
Flax.....	53	" " .....	353	" -	1,995	"
Corn (all purposes)	1,528	farms reported.....	35,685	acres -		
Irish Potatoes .....	1,476	" " .....	5,041	"	228,472	"
All Hay and <del>Sorghum</del> for Forage .....			24,428	"	14,656	tons.

*3-9-38*  
Benton County.

Settlement.

Conditions ideal in the  
U S for pushing settle-  
ment.

At this time the United States was not satisfied with the settlement in the midwest. It was too slow. In Europe conditions were such that the people were becoming dissatisfied. The countries were becoming over populated, consequently the land could no longer be purchased in large tracts for the price was too high. These people had visions of big farms, attractive homes and they would not settle down in contentment with an acre or two. Besides this, there were some who were unhappy for social reasons and still others wanted to leave because of religious freedom. Hence the United States was in a position to offer these Europeans just exactly what they wanted.

Advertising  
the land.

With this knowledge, the government was ready to act. It sent out men to <sup>work</sup> act as agents. They lectured, in halls, ~~in~~ gave talks to small groups and even canvassed the ~~in~~ the communities. These men were very anxious to interest groups in the same locality. for they felt that a settlement who <sup>shared</sup> talk the same dialect and had the same customs would be happier together. A great deal depended on the reports sent back by the first settlers. When the American fever had taken hold of a community, nothing would stop them.

Many of these immigrants did not have money and had to borrow enough for the passage. Others again sold their property to try their luck in the new country.

How they made the trip.

The first settlers came to America in sailboats. At that time there were no steamers. The transportation company and the agents worked together. When a sufficient number of people had signed up for the trip, the list, with the financial standing was taken taken to the captain of the vessel. He then made out a list of supplies and bedding that the immigrants would need for the ~~trip~~<sup>voyage</sup>. Those who had means were obliged to bring twice the amount they need for their own use because there were always so many who did not have enough. Once out on the ocean there was no opportunity to obtain anything.

The captain of the boat was the absolute "boss". His word was law. With him were the first and second mates. If anything happened to the captain, the first mate took charge.

The captain wore a neat uniform of dark blue, trimmed with gilt braid and buttons. The mates were dressed in white.

The captain was really a modern "Jack of all trades." He was the ship's physician, and also the minister. He held services on Sunday, also some time during the week, and officiated at funerals.

Life on the sailboats was not the most pleasant. On stormy days, the passengers were not allowed on the deck but ~~sit~~ below in the rooms that were so poorly ventilated.

This was especially difficult when the immigrants came down with the "sea sickness. At this time the people suffered



How they made the  
trip.

The first settlers came over in sailoba

with severe headaches, dizziness and vomiting. Some of them were ill the entire trip.

These unfortunate folk were much worse during a storm. Sometimes the billows were so high that they covered the vessel. On such occasions, the passengers who were afraid, sang hymns, prayed or sobbed. Others walked the floor and wrung their hands in despair.

On almost every trip one or more of the older folks died. Then there was the dreaded funeral at sea. The captain in his black garb, read the funeral service. At the words, "Dust to dust" the body, in a coffin which was weighted at the foot was gently lowered, the ropes drawn back.

People at that time were very superstitious. They thought that school of sharks knew just exactly when a death had taken place and for that reason followed the boat.

If there was no serious illness, the immigrants enjoyed the trip over. It gave most of them a respite from hard work and also a chance to visit to their heart's contents.

After many weeks, the ship came in sight of the shore. Then a pilot came out and took full charge. When the landing had been made, physicians came aboard and examined the immigrants. If they were given a clean bill of health, they were ready to continue the trip but those who were refused admission were sent back to the country that they came from.

Now these tired foreigners were put in the hands of interpreters. These men saw to it that they had the right baggage and took the proper train.

In Benton county, there was a grove and prairie land with meadows. In the open spaces, the grass was the height of the oxen. Small animals that ~~ran~~ could not be seen and only the movement of the grass indicated that they were in that vicinity. —

The flowers peculiar to that region were hidden in the grass. *a government road that led*  
 Along the river was a fair road. That was because of the Fort Ripley that this road had been designated as a government road.

The first method of transportation along this road was the oxcart and the covered wagon, also called the prairie schooner. These covered wagons were well built, rather high wheel and wide boxes that extended over the wheel. The cover was made of stout canvas, well oiled. This was fastened to a frame that designed to stand storms. When the cover was closed at the ends, it provided a water proof covering for the family.

In the year '48 and '49, the settlers began coming. Most of Benton's first settlers came from the New England states. They had the choice of two routes. One was by way of the Great Lakes, down to Milwaukee, thence overland to St Paul. Some of them bought their equipment there and drove to Benton. The other route was the railroad to Pittsburgh from there down the Ohio to St Louis and then up the Mississippi to St Paul. At this time there was no transportation service above St Anthony because the boats could not get over the falls and the stage coach had not yet started. Many of the settlers came this way, buying the wagons, oxen and a cow at St Anthony of St Paul.



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Benton County  
Just as a few settlers started to come in

The Act of Congress establishing the territory of Minnesota was approved by the president on March 3, 1849. A governor was appointed vested with executive power in and over the territory. A secretary and judge were also appointed. The first legislative assembly met in 1849 and one of the first acts was to divide the territory into 9 counties. Benton was one of the nine and was invested with such powers.

"  
The county originally contained all the land bounded by: Beginning at the mouth of the Rum river, thence up said river, and the west branch thereof to its source, thence due north to intersection with Mississippi river, thence down said river to place of beginning, the distance being not far from 100 miles in length and 30-40 miles in width at the broadest part."

The act declaring Benton to be an organized county provided that the seat of justice " shall be within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of a point on the east side of the Mississippi river, directly opposite to mouth of Sauk River.

The first board of County Commissioners were: William A Aitkin, Joseph Brown, Jeremiah Russell, James Hitchens. They met at the home of Mr Russell with Mr Atkins as chairman, Mr Kitchens as clerk. He also became the Register of Deeds.

At this meeting the county was divided into election precincts.

1. The Sauk Rapids precinct, from Ransey county to the Platt river.
- 2 Swan River precinct, from the Platt river north to Cold Springs.
- 3 Crow Wing precinct - Cold Springs to the end of county.

These precincts continued until divided into townships when the territory was made into a state.

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At this time the settlers lived a very peaceful life. They worked hard, grubbing and clearing the land, putting up buildings, but it was a very peculiar situation. They were almost self sufficient. Very little was bought. The Indians had not yet become unfriendly for there was not enough settlers to bother them. The people in Benton had very close Indians neighbors. (Many of the Winnebagoes, who refused to live near the agency at Long Prairie had moved to the bank of the Mississippi, another part of the reservation.)

The Indians often came to Sauk Rapids and Watab to trade but aside from the fact that they called at the homes, begged for food and stole some things, they did not bother the whites seriously.

But as the settlers that the land was being cleared and knew there would be crops, they began to worry about the way they were going to transport them.

The men carried a sack on his back and traded for groceries but this was not what he had come to Benton for. So some of the settlers went to St Anthony to see about getting the steamer service up to their county.

from  
Anson

as told to  
Mrs C J Chubb  
by her  
mother

When the settlers had his wagon, and other needed supplies, he struck out for Benton. The family usually spent the night where they found water. Here the frugal meal of salt pork, potatoes, bread, syrup and coarse bread was prepared. While the mother was busy with this, the father saw that the oxen had water and feed. This usually meant that they were staked quite near the wagon so that they would not wander.

The family were all very tired at the end of the day. The father walked ahead of the oxen for it was a well known fact that better time could be made that way. Sometimes he had to clear a road before they could get through. The wife rode and knitted.

It was a very slow and tedious trip. The oxen were forced to carry the heavy yokes and this sometimes retarded their speed. But they were cheaper than the horses, could pull more and got through the deep mud better.

The oxen were never bridled, but were directed by the "Gee, Haa" which meant right and left. They were also very stubborn. When an oxen figured that he had gone far enough, he simply laid down and no amount of prodding could get him up.

There was very little real rest on that trip. While the mother and the children slept in the wagon, the father took a blanket and slept outside, his hand on his gun. Then at daybreak, after a breakfast of mush and milk, if they happened to have a cow, they started on the trek.

It took about 4 days to get to Benton. Now they had reached the coveted county. They they debated whether they should squat or preempt. By preempting they could get a legal right to the land by paying \$ 1.25 and making the improvements which meant a log house, the clearing of  $\frac{1}{2}$  na acre and the digging of a well.



Schoolcraft.

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112-113-114  
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Some years later, Henry R Schoolcraft, a scholar, interested in both minerology and ethnology ( study of the races) was sent by the goverment to study the Mississippi and the adjacent country. He was accompanied by a surgeon and a missionary. The object of the trip was to make friends with the Indians , to vacinate them against small pox , and to establish trading relations with them. At first he found some of them to be hostile but after giving them a few present and winning their confidence they were not only friendly but helpful. However, the actual purpose of the expedition was the discovery of the source of the Mississippi. After a long, hard struggle, he saw " A transparent body of water " and declared that lake to be the source. After some debate, the lake was named Itasco.

112-113-114  
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The next explorer was Nicollet, a scientist who came from Savoy, France. He made a trip from Fort Snelling up the Mississippi and then portaged to Leech Lake. He went to Lake Itasca, reported it as the source of the Mississippi. Nicollet gave Schoolcraft all credit for having discovered <sup>the source</sup>. His name is commemorated by Nicollet county, by Nicollete Ave and by Nicollet Island.

Some years later, Henry R Schoolcraft, a scholar, and minerologist, also

The settlers could not pre-empt because Minnesota was not surveyed.

So they squatted but nevertheless visited the land office.

*located at Stillwater*

This land office was a very interesting place. It was a long, low log buildings, with only a few windows. Split logs were placed around the walls, there were several large split log tables, stumps to sit on and maps on the walls. Here men, many of whom wore the garb of their native country, met. They could not speak the language, so had to point to the locations they wanted. But for those who could talk it was a great day. They visited and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Encouraged after his talk with other men, the settler hurried home. Next they went over the land and set out stakes. Some of the burned the description in the stakes, others again put their name on.

In the selecting the site for the house and barn the water, a lake or stream was taken into consideration. The next step was the breaking of a small patch for potatoes and a garden. When this had been planted, a well was the next problem. They hunted water by the "Willow witch" method. Two people carried a long, straight willow between them and <sup>when</sup> the willow quivered, it was a sign of water. After the well had been dug, and a box built to put in the top to serve as an ice box, the settler turned his attention to the log house.

The trees had to be felled and barked, and notched at the ends. Then logs were raised, the end resting in the notch. There were no nails used at all. The crevices were chinked with moss or mud. When the highest logs were raised, a neighbor, if there was one, helped.

Most of the log house had a loft with a floor. This gave additional sleeping and storage space. Cele was thrown together, stumps carried into the log house



After this the fireplace, was built, ~~a table~~ and chairs made, <sup>and</sup> the meals could be cooked inside. Then bunks were put up, the fresh cut hay put in the mattresses, and the family had a home for the winter. A little later a barn was built.

How the  
homesteader  
lived.

At this time, a family was dependant upon themselves. They had no money so had to get along on what they raised. Coffee was made from roasted grain, wild tea ~~and fruit~~ was picked ~~and dried~~. Mocassins were made to take the place of shoes, stockings and mittens had to be knitted. Butter was churned by hand. The churn was a crock, though sometimes made of wood, about 3-4 ft in height. A dasher lifted the cream up and down, the process taking about 2 hours. Then the butter had to be washed and all the butter milk worked out. Another piece of work was the making of candles. The wick was made of cloth, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide and rolled. This was dipped into warm fat, then into cold water, and the process repeated until the candle was the required size. After some practice, several candles could be made at the same time.

These candles gave a yellow, hazy light, that was not easy to work by.

As the autumn came on, most of the settlers dig small cellars where they could store potatoes and vegetables.

By this time, the settlers had seen enough Indians to become somewhat acquainted with their habits. They learned that the Sioux and Chippewa stole and that it did not hurt their conscience. ~~They~~ <sup>They</sup> had found that the Chippewas were friendly. Those who lived near the river learned the ferocity of the tribes, for scalping parties were continually going back and forth.

Lumber  
camps or  
" pineries.

or  
what the  
men did.

In the late fall, the house and barn were ready for the winter. Potatoes and garden had been placed in the cellar but the pocket book was empty. Something had to be done. If the timber was cut and sold they would be without it later on. The settlers saw only one way out of the difficulty and that was the " pineries." The brave pioneer woman was willing to try the winter alone, so the next months saw the settler in a logging camp.

The logging camps in the earliest days were very crude. The walls were only 4 feet high, the roofs high and steep. They had only one room, which served as kitchen, ~~also as~~ the dining room as well as sleeping quarters.

The cooking was done in the fireplace, the biscuits baked by means of reflectors placed before the fire. Beans were baked in a bean hole over night and were ready for the next days breakfast. The bull cook, with his five foot tin horn called the men at five in the morning. Teamsters had to get up at four to feed the oxen. At six the men were in the forest.

The noon meal ~~taken to the men~~. This consisted of fried potatoes, beans, corn bread, sometimes meat and coffee. They quite frequently had venison and wild fowl, as the woods were full of them. Food was hard to get and was very expensive. Flour was \$ 15 a barrel and pork \$ 23 to <sup>27</sup> a barrel.

The men were not very comfortable. They slept on pine boughs on the floor. The blankets were so large that two or three slept under it. On Saturdays they either carried water from a stream or lake or melted snow so they could wash their clothes.

That was a period of hand tools, brute strenght and slow motion. When the men from Maine came to the pineries, they brought such tools as the "go devil," drive peavy. "The "chopper," who felled the trees was an important man. The "swamper" came after him and trimmed the branches.

It wasn't very long before the camp was enlarged. They built the cook shack, the bunk house, where the men slept and spent evenings and Sundays. In this room, double decked bunks lined the walls, there was a large table. On weekdays the lights were turned out at nine, but on Saturday they could sit up as long as they wanted to. Sunday was their wash and mending day. Besides this was the blacksmith shop and stable, and usually a root house.

The choppers received received from \$ 19 to \$ 22 a month with "keep. The season was only about five months so the settler did n't make very much.

At that time money was so scarce that they couldn't borrow it. Interest was 5 % per month and sometimes even higher.

*I have written that the men from Maine brought such tools as the "go devil," drive peavy. "The "chopper," who felled the trees was an important man. The "swamper" came after him and trimmed the branches.*



What the women  
did. and  
children did.

While the men were working in the timber country, the women did not have a very easy time of it. They had to take care of the cattle. Sometimes storms were so fierce at times that one could not see a rod ahead of them. The women, fearing that they might lose their way between the house and barn or the woodshed, tied ropes to be used as guides. Sometimes they carried water to the cattle when it was too stormy to take them out. Often the water supply gave out so they had to melt snow.

The women churned the butter. The churn was made of wood, in the shape of a cylinder, about three feet high and about 18 inches in diameter. The cream was churned by means of a dasher which lifted up and down. Then the butter was washed and worked by hand.

In addition to this, they spun yarn and knitted hose, mittens, and kept the house in order.

The boys spent all the time hunting and trapping for these pelts meant a little cash.

During the cold months, the girls knitted, mended, helped with the house work and sometimes made the rounds to see if they had made a catch in the traps.

The days passed into weeks, the weeks into months and the long, dreary winter was over. The husband came back and there was happiness in the little home.

The first spring meant a great deal to these people. The bright sun drove dreary shadows from the log house. The door could be left open. The hillsides once more were green and the lowlands, now small lakes reflected the clear blue spring sky. In the hot bed, the tomatoes and cabbage were almost ready for planting.

~~A little later the small steam thresher was brought into the county.~~

Fall.

~~Fall was a very busy time of the year. Garden stuff had to be taken care of, more shelter had to be built for the new stock, hay had to be disposed of. In short they had to get ready for another winter.~~

School

~~Another very difficult problem was the school situation. The settlers felt that they couldn't take a lot of time off for school. Winter was the time to catch the valuable fur bearing animals, such as beaver, mink, otter, raccoon, wolf, bear. These pelts would help to buy horses and new machinery. But nevertheless they started schools and until school houses could be built, many of the settlers offered their homes for that purpose.~~

Only " Readin, ritin and rithmetië were taught at first.

Books were rare. The method was entirely different from what it is now. The pupils memorized the alphabet and then learned to spell words. Some of the children of Benton learned to read from the county paper. All the books they had were those brought by the families from the east. They did not have paper and later on used slates. These could be washed and used over again.

~~The~~ After a year or so, they built log houses, made homemade furniture.

The teachers " boarded around." This meant th t each family had to take turns and keep the teacher. This was a part of the salary.

School days in the 50s as told by an old settler.

" We went to a log building that was built on posts. Imagine the icy wind sweeping in under it. In the middle of the room was a long drum stove. We burned our faces, froze our backs and feet. We hung our clothes in an ice-cold room and took our lunches; apple and bread and dripping or bread and butter inside and left the pails on the floor. Just before noon we put them on the stove to thaw.

There was, of course the water pail and the dipper. We all drank more than we wanted because they we had to go and get more water and the trip took half an hour, that much time from school.

I walked to school a distance of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Mother used to stand on the hill and watch me and make motions for me to walk faster so that I would not freeze my feet.

At noon we used to rush out lunches so that we could go out and play " Pump, pump, pull away" and "Last couple out."

We used the National Primer. We made spelling blanks from the light brown wrapping paper that we ironed out. We tied them with bits of bright yarn.

For gum we used "slippery elm bark and the sap that came out of tamarack poles. If we were caught chewing in school we were paddled good and our gum taken away.

We had a Literary Society. Those meetings were the pride of the school. After the regular program of recitations and dialogues, we had the spelling match. The girls always had new dress for the last day in school.

One of the school board always gave a speech and told us how thankful we should be for the chance to go to school.



# Churches.

Although they were very busy with land clearing and building they had not forgotten their religion. In the villages it was easy to find room for religious services but in the country it was different for they had to consider the distance. Sometimes they could take turns and then again one's home was used. On Saturday the house was scrubbed and more baking done than other days. Stumps and board was brought in to be used as chairs, a lace tidy was placed on a table and this served as a pulpit. Rev Sherman Hall served the Protestants and Father Pierz the Catholics, though either one went to any family regardless of creed if asked.

After the service in either denomination, the hostess served coffee and a lunch. In the summer the house was decorated with flowers, branches and there was always a carpet of green leaves on the floor. This get-to-gether meant a great deal to the settlers.

# The farmers pride and worries.

So the settlers cleared more land, planted wheat and it grew abundantly on that new soil. The acres of waving grain became the pride of the land owners. The settlers saw wheat talked wheat and dreamed it. His greatest pleasure was to walk through his fields, take the kernels in his hand and examine them. But there was worry too. If there was no rain, he feared the drought was coming. A very black cloud might mean hail while too much rain and heat would cause rust. There was always the fear of grasshoppers. So he worried along but nevertheless was happy.

One of the big problems was that of transportation.

Benton  
3-17-38  
Algothum

Benton County, as early as 1851, had mail and stage coach service because mail was brought to Fort Ripley and Crow Wing. While this was a distinct advantage, it also had the other side, for the stage-coach brought in many undesirable characters, such as the speculators and gamblers.

The stage coach was a glittering, glamorous affair. In construction great care was taken. The body was hung on heavy leather tongs to eliminate the bumps in the rough road. The exterior of the body was painted black or gray, the interior was upholstered in a real light gray. The upper part had windows, so that the passengers could view the country without being exposed to wind and rain.

The driver wore a uniform of grey, or blue, trimmed with heavy gold braid and with either a high cap or hat. He had a cowhide whip, so treated that it would give a loud noise when cracked. Some drivers used a trumpet to signal the stopping place.

The stage coach owners maintained stations where horses were kept so that the teams were changed at regular intervals.

As mail carrier, a stage coach driver was not always reliable. They left the mail sacks to take on another passenger.

However the people in the hamlets thoroughly enjoyed them for it meant a little break in the monotony and they always brought news.

The steamboat.

Several of St Sauk Rapids people were in St Paul at the time of the excitement and brought back the news that there would be a steamboat.

The first steamboat to ply between St Anthony and Sauk Rapids was the Ramsey. The woodwork for this steamer was taken from St Anthony while the machinery was shipped from Bangor, Maine.

The boat was 168 feet long, 25 ft wide, and had a capacity of 125 lbs of steam. It drew 11 inches of water and could stem the strong current of the Mississippi at 65 lbs. It was propelled by a stern wheel.

All the boats were painted white or light grey and presented a fine appearance. The difference was in the interior, was dirty. The lower deck was used for freight, also for carrying cattle and oxen to be taken to the woods. On the second decks were cabins " which slept twelve men or more, space for officers quarters, a dining room and a small room for women, and a lounge. The floors, covered with carpets were anything but clean and sanitary. The men sat around, chewed tobacco and were not careful about using the spittoon.

The bunks were dirty and full of vermin. They used roller towels, and these were not changed very often. Meals were poorly cooked and served carelessly. When the bell rang, there was a mad stampede for the dining room and a fight for the best pieces of meat.

For the most part the captains were poor managers. Sometimes they ran out of wood, and then the passengers would have to go out and cut some before they could get started.



2 116

Then again the boat would pull up and force the passengers off because the captain was afraid of an explosion. When the weather was nice, the passengers didn't mind but in inclement weather there was a great deal of grumbling.

The second year this boat was renovated. It was a replica of the larger boat<sup>s</sup> that steamed majestically into port. It was green and white and a touch of red here and there. Between the two funnels ( chimneys) suspended on a wire was a gilded ball. Paintings of some figures in mythology or an Indians scene were hung everywhere. The second decks had railings. Meals were good. Bunks had been cleaned and were claimed to be vermin proof. The meals had become gala occasions, with white table cloths, and even music, for the freight rustlers sat near the dining room and played on their string instruments.

Crowds came to the landings. The stops were: Anoka, Urono, Davis Landing, Beford, Union, Bag Bend, East St Cloud. and Sauk Raids.

In 1854 another boat was added, the H M Rice. It was light, 140 ft long, 26 ft wide, stern wheel and cost \$ 15.

Many remedies were offered for sickness on the trip. Some of the Scandinavians used black pepper in milk, others peppermint, and others whiskey. However most of the passengers did not feel any ill effects and enjoyed the short trip. Often fifty or more people made the trip.

19

One of the settlers told this story." I would rather be a settler, fight the Indians and the drought than be a river pilot, even if there good money in it. In the first place, the pilot must go as a passenger if he has not made the trip for a week because the river changes so much. Sometimes it cuts through the banks and makes an entire new course. In cutting through, it often dislodges huge trees so that a strong wind bring them right into the river. Then the steamer or rather the pilot has to stop and get that out. Again it seemed that sand bars could form over night. In that case they had to get to work and push the boat off the bar and get it back into water again. But before they started up stream they would sound the river. This was done with a "sounding board" if the boat had one, otherwise they had to make it. This looked like a church pew with just the seat and one end on. This was taken thru the water and the depth measured.

The pilot would run it something like this. He knew every foot of the ground. At such and such a place he would steer stright for a pine, at another place he would steer straight for the moon if it shone between two pines.

If the captain thought they were late, he would go up to the pilot house and resort to abuse. On the boat that I came on, the pilot threatened to leave and only the passengers could talk him into staying.

*See Wabigo*

During these first years, the settlers heard many stories about losing the claims. In 1854, a law was passed giving the squatter the same rights as the legal claimants, that is, they could get clear title to the claims by proving that they had been actual residents, had made certain improvements and paying \$ 1.25 an acre.

The county began to show prosperity. Judge Hamlin had opened a bank and Dr Mayo was now operating a drug store. The presence of a doctor in the community was a source was gratification to the settlers.

In the meantime there were lots of visitors in town. Many came out of curiosity for they had heard of the paper called the Watab Reveille.



The Frontiersman carried on a battle against the speculators and land grabbers. There was a fight to get the best land and the water power. Town sites, with wide streets, parks, lakes were laid out. People who had not seen the property bought it, came and were disappointed. This was the day of paper towns and general swindling. Then came the strife to cut the land into small counties and rush to get the county seat so as to bring up the price of land.

The speculators had much to do with the division of Benton. In 1856, the measure passed the Legislature for the division. Many people did not know of it and there was general dissatisfaction. What had been Benton county was cut up into Sherburne, Benton and Mille Lacs counties.

The county seat was moved to Watab. The men who engineered this were considered very selfish and underhanded. A Board of County Commissioners proceeded to provide buildings for the new county seat. They started to build a court house, jail, buildings for other county offices. Bonds were issued to the contractors for the buildings. These bonds were sold to others. There was no money in the county to pay either the principle or the interest. There was not enough settlers to raise the taxes. Through mismanagement the county was nearly bankrupt. When there was no money to pay the contractors

A pleasant surprise was in store for the county.

Volume 1 of the Sauk Rapids Frontier came out on Thursday, April 26, 1855. This was owned by Jeremiah Russel. This was a four page paper, a snappy little sheet. The printing was very clear and the paper was full of breezy articles. But the style was somewhat different. In the left hand corner was a six stanza poem. Then three whole columns devoted to the Red River country, told in a story form. Finishing the third column was a combat between a horse and a lion. The rest of the page consisted of an anecdote of a giraffe, other jokes and a land office announcement.

The second page of world news, about the uprising in China, how Queen Victoria felt about Napoleon, an article on money and exchange and an article on farming.

The first agricultural society in Minnesota was organized in this county and three columns were devoted to this. Although the ideas at that time were far different from what they are now, they were interesting. There was an article on Money and Exchange.

The third page was devoted to advertisement. The New York store had one whole column, the Variety a little over half while the rest of Sauk Rapids business concerns had about one sixth. In the right hand corner was a Prospectus of the paper in which he explained what the space in the paper would be devoted to. In the issue of August Mr Russell announced that a whole page would be given over to the reports from the Agricultural Society so that the county might benefit.

The following is of interest. "Destroy the barberry bush. Its roots sneak through the ground and destroy other trees. There is a dust carried from the flowers that blasts wheat and rye. It is believed to be caustic to grains.

they did not finish the buildings. Holders of the bonds sued for pay and won the case. The county had to pay and the settlers were under a heavy load for a long time.

Many came to <sup>Watab</sup> Watab thinking it would be the county seat. It was with a view to exploiting that the <sup>Watab</sup> paper was started.

At this same time there was a serious Indian scare. A warring band of Sioux invaded the Chippewa country. When either band got drunk they threatened the whites. The settlers who heard of it came to Sauk Rapids where the large jail had been converted into a stockade. The outbreak and maybe serious results were prevented by the Fort Ripley soldiers.

While the county offices were in Sauk Rapids the court was held at the home of Jeremiah Russel with Aron Goodrich presiding as judge.

*pleasant*  
It was not exactly the most thing to be a settlers. Hunters were careless, often bullets whizzed past the men as they were working. When the mother was alone at home she did not know what kind of a visitor she would have. Through all this, the pioneer developed a spirit that could not easily be broken. These dangers became daily occurrences that they expected. It was probably this training that made the Minnesota men so outstanding in the Civil War/



2  
the white people. The jail was turned into a stockade and the population stayed for safety. The trouble was quieted down by the Fort Mifflin soldiers.

Conner  
The years 55-56-57 were the years of greatest immigration. But it was also the period of speculation. Every claim in the county was for sale. The town sites were dotted with little real estate offices. Some men didn't even take the trouble to build an office but depended on a scrap of paper and a silver tongue to do the business. Proposed townsites were only a few blocks apart. The county was overrun with "Wild cat money." This was paper money that was not back by gold or silver.

Life Insurance  
The people were awakened from this wonderful dream of riches by the panic of 1857. On August 24, the Ohio Life and Trust Company, of a corporation of Ohio with offices at New York and Cincinnati failed. There had been crooked work. \$2,000,000 had been borrowed. New York banks called in all loan. The banks in the territory that had been doing a good business closed. Money could be borrowed at an interest of 5% per month.

The store keepers suffered because all credit was cut off. They could not buy merchandise without cash and they sold their wares bare and then closed the stores.

Farmers could not buy what they needed. All transaction was done by barter. Money was so scarce that the bank closed.

Relief Laws  
Because of the panic of '57, "Relief Laws" were passed. "Our people see no way of extricating themselves from debt, there is no way out. Many have borrowed money to come here, they have started

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with two empty hands and now destitute. Both the senate and the house have passed the measure. The settlers will be given ample time to raise products with which to meet the debt."

At this time the following notice appeared in the paper.

" The United States will require payment for logs cut. The U S Deputy Marshal will collect payment of \$1.50 per 1000 logs. They will demand bonds of \$ 1000 that will not cut timber anymore. "

In the same issue was this. " Thensettlers can no longer use school lands for pasture. A weathly lumber man of St Paul, cCaleb D Doree has been appointed the agent. He will prosecute the tresspassers."

This was quite a blow to those who lived near these school lands. But nothing was said until it was found that St Paul people came up and cut the hay. There was still more indigation when they could not find any records that payment had ever been paid.

In the midst of this came the rather unusual proclamation of Govenor Gorman for Thanksgiving. " Be glad that you are free from the diseases of the lower latitude. Hope has come after the terrible panic and hard times of 1857. We should be thankful that we feed on the finest wheat in the world and that peace prevails. even in the excitement of presidential election. Let each one celebrate in his own way.

HP

The scare of '56 had left its mark on the settlers. The men began to carry guns wherever they went, the women learned to shoot. Some of them had cellars dug, with trap doors that hooked securely so that they could hide in there with their children. Most of them began keeping food in the safety dugouts. If the family left the home, they would come home and find the house stripped of all food. An ax could never be left outside for it would be stolen. It ~~The dugouts were a safety source only in the case of one or two~~ Indians. When they Indians traveled in bands and were drunk besides they did not hesitate to burn the houses.

However nothing like that happened in Benton. The Sioux killed horses and carried off hogs but nowhouses were destroyed. ~

From '56 to '59 nothing very exciting happened. In that year, county seat was moved back to Sauk Rapids. This left the property holders in Watab flat. The ~~hamlet~~ had no water power and the people realized that the village would never be a city as they had planned for. Property went down and the lots that had been worth money were of no value.

County  
seat  
removed,

At this time the timber industry was beginning to boom although as early as 1848 logs had been floated down the Mississippi to St Anthony. This had to be done in the spring or early summer when the water was high.

The men or guided the logs down the river were called "drivers" or "cordeliers." They wore high boots, heavily "hob nailed"



so they would not slip off the logs when they were standing on them, bright red, blue or green hose rolled over the tops of the boots, stag shirts of the same color and large hats. They Rarely shaved and were a grizzly, grimy looking class of men. they worked hard and played hard. But nevertheless were welcome in a village for they were good spenders. The liquor dealers had to close their places of business for the driver usually amused themselves by smashing up one of the places.

The logs were "snaked" to the bank of the river during the winter and placed in piles. Then in the spring when the river was high, they "sprung" in the water. Sometimes they floated down and there was no trouble. Then at a moments notice, one log became entangled in some way. Then another could not pass because of the first one. Before they knew it, there was a jam.

It was the drivers business to keep the logs moving or if a small jam started to extricate the log that caused the trouble. But sometimes the stream was too swift or there was some other impediment and they were not able to do anything. Sometimes the logs piled up until they were over the banks. Then dynamite had to be used. When the logs broke loose there was a terrific noise that could be heard for miles.

The "wangs" or the living quarters of the drivers were built on logs, and floated

Songs of the Lumberjacks.

The song of the alphabet.

A is for axes, for all we know  
B is for boys, that we can use them also  
C is for chopping, we now do being  
D is for danger, we oftentimes stand in.  
  
So it's merry, oh merry are we  
No mortal on earth is as happy as we  
Hi derry, don derry, hi derry dong  
Give a riverman grog and there's nothing gone wrong.  
  
There are lots more letters, I can't put in rhyme  
And if it don't suit you, please tell me in time  
For the trains they are moving, their whistles do blow  
So farewell my Darling, to the woods I must go.

---

A Driver's Song.

Come all you river drivers,  
Whereever you may be  
I pray you pay attention now  
And listen unto me.  
  
It's of a jolly barber,  
Which I am going to tell  
It on Penobscot where where  
This man is known right well.  
  
He shaved three years for Hunter,  
A year for slippery Sam

He shaved a crew or Ross one year  
Down on Chesuncobck cree,  
  
He shaved six years for Loveland  
For Sam with a year or two  
And now he's back to Lobster  
To shave John Rollins crew.  
  
If he begins a shaving there  
The crew will let him know  
That they will surely kill him  
Or down river he must go.

2

In 1858, the country was over run with "wild cat" money. It had no value outside of the state and was not a sure thing in it. " You took money at night, not knowing if it would be worth a cent in the morning. However it looked well and we all took chances. Any county would issue by giving some sort of a bond. There was Fillmore money, Chisago and Freeborn money. Daily bulletins were issued telling what money was good. "

Another event that interested the county was the announcement that Col S LeHayes had put up a grist mill and saw mill at the mouth of of the Sauk River, that his prices would be very reasonable and the work first class. This meant a great deal to the settlers who had lived near there, all their grain

When it finally had been settled that Sauk Rapids would be the county seat, Dr Mc Mahon would remain <sup>in the</sup> village. The doctor ~~was~~ served, as a sheriff. " He was a great man. He shot a man if he felt it was his duty, then turned around and did his utmost to save him. He could be seen at any time, day or night, riding his black horse at top speed, either to reach a sick bed or to arrest a crook. "

At this time the settlers were very much discouraged. Taxes were high and there seemed to no reduction in sight. There appeared a plea for lower taxes in the county paper. "The editor wrote" We have neither court house, jail or buildings of any kind. Court is held at the Day hotel while the rest of the county offices have their rooms in the New Era building. The taxes will beggar any



4  
know that surface waters carried contamination.

The disease was very severe, ~~and many died.~~ to find whole families down at once time. Many died.

In addition to this there were so many things that affected the crop. One menace was the gopher. The little animal seemed to understand that by following the straight line, he could <sup>all</sup> the rows of corn that had been planted. Hunting parties were organized to exterminate the pest. However it happened that the gopher proved to be of some value. The women made mocassins of the pelts. They were also used for mittens, caps, muffs and even for coat linings.

Cut worms were hard on the garden. When the farmer thought that his garden was well on the way he would come out some morning and find the tomatoes and cabbage destroyed. Potato bugs ruined the vines of the tubers. Lack of rain ruined the pastures and the supply of milk went down. The grain crop was poor.

The settlers could not raise the money to pay for the claims. For the purpose of helping these hard working people, the Homestead Bill had been introduced. The bill would, if passed, enable the homesteaders to buy the land for 25 cents an acre. But they ~~also~~ required to make certain improvements. They were, the construction of a log or frame house, the sinking of a well, the clearing of one bearing acre of land. When this had been done, two witnesses accompanied the settler to the United States land office and made an affidavit to the effect that all improvements had been made.

3

If a settler had just squatted and he had made the improvements, he *according to the law of '54* he could, by ~~paying~~ 25 cents an acre, get the title to his land. But it wasn't always as easy as that. Maybe there was a neighbor who had his eye on that particular piece of land. He could swear that the settler had not spent the required time of five years on his property, or that he had not made the improvements. Then the case was settled in court and the man with the best witnesses would win.

This Homestead Bill was fought and side tracked at every turn. It was generally known that President Buchanan was opposed to it.

On September 29, there was a long article on the bill in the St Cloud Democrat. ~~The editor~~ They wanted the bill amended and sent the following petition to the Senate and the House. Part of the petition is the following!

" This petition prays your honorable bodies of the House and the Senate to amend the Homestead Bill so that a wife, with or without the consent of her husband, be competent to pretest delayed proceedings and to keep the homestead for herself and the children."

While the farmers worried over this, the business men of Sauk Rapids and Watab were anxiously awaiting the building of a bridge across the Mississippi. At this time, the logs in the river made it dangerous for the ferry to operate. The settlers who lived on the other side wanted to cross the river and trade but could not except in the winter. A company known as the Sauk Rapids Company tried to raise the funds by selling stock.

While Sauk Rapids was planning on the trade of the settlers, the Sioux Indians were trying to get the land back. They sent the following petition to Washington. " The Sioux Indians have petitioned the Great White Father to remove the white people from the west side of the Mississippi and give the land back to the Sioux Indians to whom it belongs



7

Articles about the Homestead Bill and opinions of statesmen concerning the same appeared in every issue of the paper. Of the president, <sup>the editor</sup> he printed this " President Buchanan, when he vetoed the bill said, it is an act of charity, something to make the people soft.

It seemed that slavery, Homestead Bill and Indians kept the people busy. at least the editor, for the pages were full of it.

" Senator Wigfield of Texas said " These northern people are a mean, despicable set of starlings unable to see beyond the dollar. Just swear that you will dissolve the Union and the timid creatures will get down on all fours and bite the dust, yes, kiss the rod raised to chastise them."

" Col Hayes, of lower town , will lecture on the slavery question. He will show that it is in accordance with the Bible."

" Victor Hugo wrote: " There are slaves in the land of Washington. A white man will be hung because he fights slavery in Virginia. Inspired by the Gospel, he sounded to these oppressed men and women the cry of Freedom. Slavery has paralyzed their hearts and ears. They no longer hear. And this takes place, not in Turkey but in the United States of America. The executioner is the American people."

" The Minnesota House of Representatives passed a resolution condemning President Buchanan for condoning slavery. "

" St Paul will have a separate school for negro children.



In the middle fifties, the Winslow House was built in St Paul. It was well furnished, had a large ball room and was very well equiped for the times to give visitors every comfort. St Paul generally catered to trade from the South. The sentiment of hospital ty was so strong that on March 15, ' 60, there was a resolution passed in the house and a bill introduced in the Senate to permit slave owners to bring negro slaves and to hold them for a period of five months.

Hordes of wealthy people came from the south bringing with them their slave retinue. The proprietor of the Winslow had provided slave quarters. The coaches were in clover for these people were not contented with seeing St Anthony's and St Paul, they wanted to see the surrounding country. When they heard that the roads north to Fort Ripley were good, they took slaves and went in big companies.

9

This display of wealth and arrogance seemed to antagonize the hard working citizens of Benton, especially the farmers when they came in and saw them. A few made statements to the effect that the country should "get rid of both the slaves and the "rats" who owned them."

Then this paragraph appeared in the paper. Democrat Rice says "I hope the people of Minnesota will keep out of the fanaticism of the day. If trouble comes to the nation, why should 1000 or more men who have never drawn the sword be forced into it."

At the same time the editor emphasized this." Senator William Minden wrote to Governor Ramsay that they had a traitor in the president's chair."

Then when it was quite apparent that there would be war between the north and the south, there was in Benton and Stearns counties, a general reaction against enlisting. The St Cloud paper said "It is just as patriotic and more for our men to stay at home and farm. The needs food in the shape of wheat and meat. What is more, our men are needed in case of Indian trouble."

Next week this statement was made.

"Men, you are needed at home. Two people have been killed by the Indians at Paynesville."

The week following this was noted. "One man is killed by the Indians at Norway Lake. There is trouble with the Indians at Abercrombie."

"This proves that the men are needed at home. We shall let the administration know that the MEN ARE NEEDED AT HOME."

19

Some of the settlers were ready to leave the county. The women were afraid to stay at home if the men left the house. A scouting party of Sioux had shot a man's oxen.

A few days later one of the settlers had this article in the paper. " The United States should pay a bounty <sup>on</sup> the Sioux scalps. Then and only then will the country get rid of the pest. "

From time to time there had been discussions in the Frontiersman as to the rights of the Indians. Mr Russell wrote an article on "Why the Indians hate us." He said " The Traders, as long as they remained only traders were always welcome. When they turned to trapping the Indians realized that that they were losing their furs. They looked up this as stealing from them. When the settlers came, they took the land and everything on it."

Then there came the rumour that the Sioux were coming. Families came to town and stayed in the jail and in other places in town. Some of the young folks came to the hotel and danced. The week after this comment was in the paper. ~~Some~~ said " The people are so thoughtless. Don't they know that dances are sinful? Thou shalt not kill yet when you take the night time or rest away from people you kill them gradually. How many haven't wilted and died from dancing.

But it wasn't amusement or lack of it that the farmers just now grieved over. It was the price of grain that had gone to rock bottom prices. <sup>"</sup> Whatever hope they had had were dashed away now. Wheat



was 40 cents a bushel. It took  $4\frac{1}{2}$  bushels to make a barrel of flour. or \$ 1.80 worth of grain. The settler had to pay \$ 18 for a barrel. There was \$ 15 between the selling price of wheat and the buying price of flour. Unless the prices were adjusted there was no use in farming. They had hoped that the unstable conditions in the south would alter and improve their condition but up to that time they had not seen any change.

Then this appeared in the paper.

" Benton county should be supplying the forts with grain. Contractors received 18 cents a bushel for handling the shipments of oats for Fort Ripley. Not one bushel was bought in this county. "

" Then the county was in despair over the report that the Sioux were coming. But it proved to be a false alarm. The Mille Lacs Indians came in great number carrying rifles. War whoops were given. But the Chippewas had neglected to send a messenger to explain that they had come to protect them from the Sioux. They remained several days and when the Sioux did not show up, went back after assuring the settlers of Benton that would come to their aid if they needed it.

A society wrote to the governor and he answered that there citizens of Benton county had nothing to worry about as the Chippewas were friendly and the Sioux Indians were too far off.

but news got around in a few days. Men got together and talked war. At last they heard that Fort Ripley had been fired on.

In 1860 occurred a massacre of the 10 Sioux Indians in the vicinity of Sauk Rapids that threw some light on the character of Hole-in-the-Day, the Chippewa chief. He lived in a government house in Crow Wing, apparently a fairly civilized man. His white wife occupied the house while his Indian wives lived in tents. He made several trips to Washington and each time returned with presents. The last time he was presented with a repeater rifle.

A band of 10 Sioux who had been living on the other side of the river came to Sauk Rapids to lay in wait for the Chippewas, who were coming from the west. The Sioux band behaved very well while in the village although they did go to the homes and beg for food. It appeared that each brave had selected a house and then went there every day.

As the Chippewas did not come quickly enough to suit the Sioux, they went in search of the enemy. The two bands met and fought near Sauk Rapids. Hole-in-the-Day mowed the Sioux down with his repeater rifle. Then he scalped them. He cut the head off one of the Indians and brought it to Sauk Rapids in a sack. As he came to the Sweet store he emptied the sack and the head of one, who was known in Sauk Rapids rolled out. This Indian was a Winnebago.

It seems that Hole-in-the-Day was very fond of coming to Sauk Rapids and visiting in the Day hotel. On such visits he was dressed in the black frock coat, stove pipe hat and shoes. After this last trip he did not return for a long time.

The day after the massacre, a band of Indian women came after the bodies of the Sioux braves.

13

In the year 1860, Benton county had a population of 627 people. On the 53 farms the following products were raised. Wheat, 2592 bushels; oats, 5700 bushels; corn, 6005 bushels; and potatoes, 6835 bushels. There were 155 dairy cows, 232 other cattle and 42 horses.

At this time there was among most of the settlers in the county a general dissatisfaction with President Buchanan. They eagerly awaited the next election. Then the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency of the United States precipitated the revolution. On April 4 1861, Fort Sumpter was fired upon by the revolutionists and war started.

All of a sudden the attitude in the county changed. The Union had to be defended. Then one day this sign was placed in the post office.

Men.

American Citizens.

The President calls for men.

Finish up the war in 9 months

A bounty of \$ 50 given to soldiers.

Be proud of your country.

All day the men and the women gathered in small groups. Some talked and others were silent. They knew that if the call for men failed, they would be drafted.

Then it became known that Governor Ramsay who happened to be in Washington, had called on President Lincoln and had offered him the services of the people of Minnesota. It was the first state to come to the front.

Rallies were held in the towns of East St Cloud, Sauk Rapids and Watab.



14

At a rally held in Sauk Rapids, the speaker said " A citizen is a member of a community, protected by the state government in civil rights. The state is a part of the nation. It is then the citizens duty to protect that nation by force of arms, if necessary."

Up to this time, the settlers had felt isolated. The war brought them closer together.

~~At the call for men, Ramsey, who happened to be in Washington at the time offered the secretary of war 1000 men.~~

These men, many of whom were farmers, left the claims in the hope that their wives would be able to hold them until they returned. As the day came that they would leave for Fort Snelling, the women brought the men in, to save them the long walk and to have the opportunity of spending those last hours with them. Both realized that there might be no triumphant homecoming but a funeral instead.

On that day Sauk Rapids was crowded. People shook hands as at a funeral. Then the men piled into the transport wagon, hats were waved and the women went back to begin the lonely and terrible struggle.

When the recruits reached Fort Snelling, they heard that they would be placed at Fort Ripley, Ridgely and Abercrombie. This angered them, they had left home to fight for the Union and not the Indians. At last they were sent into actual service.

*The main purpose of this pamphlet is to show the logical  
reasoning in your method. It is one of your copy  
now, and it is very important to you. It is without  
anybody making it - and that is why it is so good.*

P.D.

15  
Most of the men all over the nation signed up for 9 months. Then the magnitude of the struggle became evident, the secretary of war, Mr Cameron, sent this message to Governor Ramsey. "

"It is decidedly preferable that all the regiments from your state not already sent forward should be mustered into service for three years. If any persons belonging to the regiments already mustered for three months but not actually sent forward should be willing to serve for three years, or during the war, could not their place be filled by others willing to serve? "

This put a different color on the war for the settlers who had claims. To them it was a choice of the land they had taken or the nation. Still these hardy settlers were just the type of men so necessary to the nation. Most of them had worked as lumberman, accustomed to camp life and hardships; they were expert with the saw and the ax and could do almost anything. These men could cut through a forest, build roads, bridges and railroad. Besides through the hunting they had learned how to use firearms. In short, ~~he~~ <sup>was</sup> the ideal soldier.

So the men of Benton answered the call of the nation. But the letters that came from the south did not <sup>paint</sup> print such lurid pictures. The men wrote " We, who are used to the cold and can stand it, are sent to bake or rot in the swamps. The malaria is eating at our vitals. We shake until our eyes drop out. "

In addition to the worry and grief caused by these letters came the excitement caused by Indians massacres in the state.



Most of the men from the county had signed up for 9 months. Then  
when the magnitude of the rebellion



After days of agony, Hole-in-the-day sent word that he would take the part of the whites and protect them against the Sioux.

One man who had been in Sauk Rapids frequently went down in defense of the settlers. He was Newell Houghton. <sup>of Sherburne</sup> He was mourned not only as a fine, outstanding man but as an excellent shot.

While there was no immediate danger for Benton county, there was was trouble at Abercrombie. Some of the men from Sauk Rapids joined Captain Freeman on a march to Abercrombie. When they reached Sauk Centre they found that such a small company could not assume the risk and the trip was abandoned.

Most of the settlers felt quite secure although there were some who talked of giving up the claims and going back east. Then after the hanging of 31 Indians at Mankato, the settlers ceased to worry and thought of the claims.

On the farms where the men had gone to war, land clearing had been suspended. The women could not get the crops in. They heard such terrible reports from the war. "The men of the northern states had all been sent to the malaria infested district. True, they might come alive but only as invalids for they always be racked by the intermittent fever and chill of the malaria. "

The freight rates on the steamers were so high that it was useless to plant anything to sell. Meetings were held to try and figure a way out of the difficulties. Prices had gone up until they were absolutely prohibitive. Matches had come into the county but they were still too expensive to buy, so the housewives kept live coals on the hearth from which she could light a stick of wood.

14

Likewise Kerosene could be bought but the price was prohibitive. One The St Cloud paper printed this notice. " Use the this high grade illuminating oil sparingly. We do not know how long the supply will last. Nature's supply is not endless."

The homesteaders at this time could have lived well and enjoyed many comforts but he was too short of money. Cotton good had doubled in price, likewise groceries. and hardware.

There appeared at this time a new sugar evaporator. It was a huge round pan, about three feet in diameter, with a small spout on the side. It was fastened to a tripod, so constructed that a fire could be built under. The homesteaders made syrup of the green sugar cane. However few could buy this new devise although it would have saved the housewives a lot of useless labor.

No one bought machinery or any implements except for cash. A breaking plow cost \$ 20 in gold. When it came to paying the debt , the settlers paid \$ 50 to \$ 70 in paper money. Sometimee only gold would be accepted.

Machinery at that time was very primitive. The first reaper that appeared in the county was very small. It had a sort of weighted reel that pushed off the untied bundles of grain.

The next reaper had a small platform for two men to stand on. The men took the grain, tied the bundles and pushed them off. The third harvester had a round platform that revolved. Three men could stand on this. The machine cut a wider swathe and more work could be done.

Harvesting methods were so slow that the men were forced to work at night.

19

At ~~At this busy time~~ when the draft of October 20, was announced in the paper, the editor came out with a scathing article " Slave ship is landed at Corpus Christi, Texas, " The negros were nearly dying of thirst. Their tongues were hanging out of their mouths. //

// This is a disgrace to our country.----- Men, men, enlist, stamp out this evil. ----- Let us again look the world in the eye."

This draft worried the settlers. For one thing the war was dragging longer than it should, for another ~~too many men~~ were being ~~men~~ were being sacrificed. But they also felt that in order to win and bring stability, the men must go. <sup>Here</sup> This notice appeared in the postoffice.

" How can any man wear a beard and neglect privilege it carries to fight for land that gave him birth.

Lawyers, put down your law books,

Theologians, drop your ferule,

Farmers, leave the plow and reaper

and

Fight for your country.

Obey the law. The goverment will provide forces to fight the Indians."

With this was a notice that the hospital stores were low. Again the units that previously had organized began working. The groups in Sauk Rapids worked at the Hyperborean hotel. When the stagecoach came, the women <sup>would</sup> rush out, <sup>at</sup> and get the news from St. Anthony from the driver.



170

While Benton county discussed ways and means to improve conditions, news came that General Lee had surrendered. A celebration was staged in Sauk Rapids. Messengers were dispatched to bring the good news to the families who had men in the army. The men were hardly through discussing this event when the stage coach driver told Mr Russell that President Lincoln had been shot. Memorial services were held for him in the churches. The usual hilarity in the Russel House was suspended. A heavy sorrow hung on the hearts of the settlers. again.

Now that the war was over, land clearing started again in earnest. There had been plenty of rain in the spring so the soil was in excellent condition. The Mississippi river was three feet higher. the boats could get through without any trouble except when the river was filled with logs.

One day the ~~Ramsay~~ <sup>steamboat</sup> was pushed to one side and could not move because of the log jam. The captain sent the men out to try and get it and loose. They worked for several hours and then gave up. There was a fair crowd on the boat who had come up for the trip. The captain didn't want to disappoint his passengers so he obtained the services of several players and put on a dance. Mr Russell invited the guests to come to his hotel for the night. He served them breakfast and then had rigs take them through the country. The visitors had an enjoyable trip, and made plans to come again.

It happened that several men who had political power in the state were among the guests. This gave the Benton an opportunity to impress them with the fact that that this was the logical place for a railroad and that the benefits would be mutual.

While Benton county discussed ways and means to improve the county,

The

W/

Some years previous this report of Isaac I Stevens had appeared in the paper, " After surveying the district between St Anthony and Sauk Rapids, I am convinced that the latter place has unbounded opportunities. St Anthony has water power capable of driving 120 thousand horse power and Sauk Rapids is second to St Anthony. This territory can have mills second only to the New England states.

If Sauk Rapids were to assume such an important place, the next logical move would be to run a branch line to connect Lake Superior. But there was one thing that seemed to dampen there ardor. The county was not settling as fast as it should. The land grant to the railroad was blamed for this. The most attractive land in Benton at that time was the strip along the river. This was the location of the trail. The settlers could not have this land because the speculators had bought it from the railroads and were holding it for high prices. The slow settlement retarded the villages.

At this time the rumour reached the county that the railroad would cross the river below East St Cloud, that the first plan had been changed. This worried the settlers for Sauk Rapids would not be the terminal for this line. Some felt that the river Benton would be ruined, for immigration would naturally follow the railroad. The county would not be settled as it should.

Then came the news that that the original plans would go through. Plans were made to give the first train into the village a rousing welcome. The crew and officials were to be feted at the hotel.



22  
That year, 1866 was a memorable one, for in September, the William Crooks reached East ST Cloud, the extremed part of the county. Sauk Rapids was very much disappointed for they had looked forward to the time when the mainline would run through that territory.

A great caravan of citizens were to be on hand. But a change in the time had been made and by the time Benton county settlers reached St Cloud, the train had come and gone.

The following year, a spur was built to Sauk Rapids.

In '68, Benton county had a newspaper again. The Editor was was Geo Benedict. Judging from the large advertisements, the reader would think that Sauk Rapids was a little city. The Mayo Drug store advertised the following. Drugs, paints, oils, varnish, brushes glass, dyes. Physicians prescriptions carefully compounded.

During this year, Dr H Mahon and a Mr Spencer built the Sauk Rapids Tannery. " On visiting the tannery, we were met by a very offensive odor, but we managed to get through by holding our noses. This is a fine structure, one that the county can be proud of. The " Beam"room has two large vats, of lime, " 2 soaks" and " 2 bates." This was where the hair was taken off the hide. After this the hides were put in the " yards " to dry. Next it went through the " leeches." Here the vats was filled with ground bark. Then they were scraped and everything taken off. Next the hides went to the " curriers" who put on the back dye or lacquer. One would hardly realize that the ill smelling, half rotting hides could be changed into the attractive piles of leather. "

22  
That year, 1866 was a memorable one. for in September of that  
year, the William Crooks reached East St Cloud, in the southwest<sup>e</sup>

23  
This could lead to other enterprises here. We could have shoe factory, a linen factory and why not make the woolen goods."

At this time they were starting the much talked of dam across the Mississippi. "The men were excavating when they found the remains of a man imbedded in the sand, <sup>the</sup> who had been placed in a quadrangular grave, cut out of solid rock, 12 feet long, 4 ft wide, and 4 ft deep. The body was petrified, and must have weighed around 900 lbs. His head measure  $30\frac{1}{2}$  inches, it was low in "os frontis" and very flat on top. The femur measured  $26\frac{1}{2}$  inches, the fibula  $25\frac{1}{2}$  inches, from crown of head to sole of feet was  $109\frac{1}{2}$  inches, the chest 59 inches. The skeleton weighed  $304\frac{1}{4}$  pounds. The thumb and fingers of left hand and left foot from ankle to toes were gone, all else perfect. Over the sepulchre was a slab of limestone. (Sauk Rapids Sentinel.)  
Dec 18, '68.  
The body was sent to Boston.

At this time there was some talk of moving the capitol to Kandihohi. Hole in the Day, the Chippewa chief, said this "Sauk Rapids is the place for the capitol. It possesses so many more advantages and near the center of the state. I am sure, if the people of this county get busy with the bill, the governor will sign it.

The bachelor farmers were beginning to realize that wives were an asset. One man wanted a help mate so wrote this poem and had it inserted in the Sentinel.

I want a wife, I want a wife,

A mate to comfort me through life

One with a true and loving heart

That would me wed and do her part.



24  
I am six feet high, if measured right,  
My age was 36 last knight  
My hair is light, my whiskers red  
A girl with red cheeks I would like to wed.

Oh do, for heavens sake, I pray  
Step forward some young lady gay  
And take the chance that is in view  
Perhaps some other day won't do. "

He signed his name.

In the next issue were answers from two young women.

" To that air farmer who wants a wife."

" Dear sir: Your poem I chanced to see  
In the last weeks paper.  
And in haste I will reply  
To the man who wants a helper.

I'm rosy cheeked and just 19  
My hair is auburn tinted  
And my eyes are sorter hazel tinted  
And I always am contented.  
I 'm sure I'm just the one you want  
To comfort and console you  
Through all the trials you may meet  
I'll always try to help you.

March 18, ' Lucinda.

The editor devoted a great deal of space to the dam. " This is very important to Sauk Rapids. The water power will be great for the water falls over a natural granite ledge. The dam will have mill sites on both side. All the logs in the river will be passing through here. All should be converted to lumber at this point and then taken by boat or railroad to St Anthony. We will have the first free bridge in the state. Our crops will be able to keep several flourmills busy.

The Sentinel at this time had the following notices,

" Mrs Foster has opened a millinery store. "he sells " bonnets, hats, flats, sundowns and flowers.

A meatshshopohasbeen opened by Mr E Cross. His shop is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. On other days, he is out looking for good meat.

A beautiful rose window has been put in the Episcopal church. It was made in Chicago.

Excellent flbur is made by Frank Arnold. He has an uptodate mill, second to none in the northwest.

Women! The latesttiinfashion is the " Patent eyelash."

The lightning from Heaven kills hundred each year buttthe lightning from the stills kills thousands every week.

Why didn't we give free lots to the members of the legislature and we could have had the capitol/."