

Dr. Warren Upham, archeologist of the society and its secretary from 1895 to 1914, then read the following paper:

FORMER HOMES AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By an act of the first legislature of Minnesota Territory, this society was incorporated October 20, 1849. In the next month, on November 15, it was formally organized in the office of Charles K. Smith, the territorial secretary, to whose efforts, chiefly, the passage of the act and the earliest work of the society in promoting immigration and other interests of the new territory were due. In the first meeting, Governor Alexander Ramsey was elected president; David Olmsted and Martin McLeod, vice presidents; William H. Forbes, treasurer; and C. K. Smith, secretary. Governor Ramsey continued as president fourteen years, until in 1863 he went to Washington as senator, and he was again the president during the last twelve years of his life, from 1891 to 1903.

Meeting today for the dedication of this new building as the home of the Minnesota Historical Society, we may well look back to its first effort to provide such a permanent home. In the annual meeting of January 15, 1856, Colonel D. A. Robertson reported the sale of sixty-two life memberships at twenty-five dollars each, the proceeds of which were applied to payment on two lots at the northwest corner of Tenth and Wabasha streets in St. Paul, purchased from Vital Guerin for fifteen hundred dollars.

The corner stone of the projected building there for the use of this society was laid June 24, 1856, with a grand celebration and Masonic ceremonies. A procession was formed at the Winslow House, on the corner of Fort and Eagle streets, and marched to the grounds, preceded by a band and accompanied by Sherman's Battery from Fort Snelling, which had won distinction in the Mexican War under the name of the "Flying Artillery." An address was delivered by the mayor, the Honorable George L. Becker, followed by an address from Lieutenant M. F. Maury of the United States Coast Survey. The expense for excavation and a part of the foundation wall having absorbed the available

funds of the society, further prosecution of the work was shortly afterward abandoned.

The earliest occupancy of a room in the Capitol was on November 27, 1855, when the record states that the society "met for the first time in the hall set apart in the Capitol for their use, and properly furnished with shelves for the reception of books and other donations." In the summer of 1859 this room was required for use by the state auditor, and it became necessary to remove the society's property into a smaller room suitable only for storage.

Few meetings of this society were held during the troubled period of the Civil War. One is recorded as held on April 11, 1864, when it was voted to rent a small room adjoining the St. Paul Library room in Ingersoll's Block, and to move to the new quarters such portion of the collection as was thought desirable for exhibition. This was accordingly done, and the society continued to occupy this room for about four years.

More commodious rooms in the basement of the Capitol were the next home of this society, with space for the growth of the library and museum, and the first meeting there was held November 9, 1868.

When the Capitol was burned, March 1, 1881, the greater part of the museum was destroyed, but most of the library was saved. On March 3, in a special meeting at the office of the president, General Sibley, it was voted to remove the property saved to a room in the southeast corner of the Market House basement. The society occupied this room for the library and for meetings during two years.

With the completion of the second Capitol, rooms were provided for this society in the basement of its west wing, where the council first met on April 9, 1883. These rooms were the society's home through twenty-two years, until its removal in the summer of 1905 to larger rooms in the east half of the basement of the New Capitol. After more than twelve years there, the library and other collections were again removed, a few months ago, to this beautiful and spacious building.

On this great day of thankfulness and new hopes for the welfare of this historical society, and of renewed consecration for continuance and increase of its usefulness, we remember espe-

cially in love and gratitude its past workers who have received the fulfillment of the promise, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Following Governor Ramsey, who was the first president from 1849 to 1863, as before noted, the list of presidents, with their successive terms of service, comprises the Honorable Henry M. Rice, 1864 to 1866; General Henry H. Sibley, 1867; Governor William R. Marshall, 1868; George A. Hamilton, 1869; the Reverend John Mattocks, 1870; Captain Russell Blakeley, 1871; Charles E. Mayo, 1872; the Honorable Elias F. Drake, 1873; the Honorable George L. Becker, 1874; Dr. Robert O. Sweeny, 1875; General Sibley, 1876; Archbishop John Ireland, 1877 and 1878; General Sibley again for twelve years, from 1879 until his death in 1891; Governor Ramsey again, 1891 to 1903; General John B. Sanborn, from May, 1903, until his death on May 16, 1904; the Honorable Greenleaf Clark, in the latter part of 1904, until his death on December 7 of that year; Nathaniel P. Langford, from 1905 until his death on October 18, 1911; William H. Lightner, 1912 to 1915; Charles P. Noyes, 1915 to 1918; and the recently elected president, the Honorable Gideon S. Ives.

The first secretary, Charles K. Smith, removed in 1851 to his former home in Iowa; and on November 18, 1851, the Reverend Edward D. Neill was elected secretary. This position he held twelve years, meanwhile publishing in 1858 the first edition of his *History of Minnesota*. After Dr. Neill's long service, this office was held for a short time by William H. Kelley; during the next three years, 1864 to 1867, by Charles E. Mayo; during the following twenty-six years, to September, 1893, by John Fletcher Williams; from October, 1893, to March, 1895, by Governor Marshall; from November, 1895, through nineteen years by Warren Upham; and since November, 1914, by Solon J. Buck, the present secretary and superintendent.

During thirty-three years, from 1876 until his death, May 1, 1909, Henry P. Upham was the treasurer of this society.

James J. Hill gave the longest service as a member of the council, from December 14, 1868, until his death, on May 29, 1916; and in 1872 he held the office of vice president.

Many other names of generous donors and workers for the society deserve grateful remembrance in our dedication of this

building. From my association with five members of the council to whom the museum and library are much indebted for their gifts and service, this brief address may fittingly end with my personal tribute to the Reverend Edward C. Mitchell and the Honorable Jacob V. Brower, from whom the museum received donations of very extensive archeologic collections; Professor Newton H. Winchell, who during his last eight years served the society in its department of archeology, preparing large and valuable publications; Josiah B. Chaney, who for twenty-one years had charge of the newspaper department in the library, being succeeded by John Talman during the last ten years; and David L. Kingsbury who was the assistant librarian through eighteen years. Their hearty devotion to this society in its work for the state, and the similar fidelity and good service of others who preceded them, are an enduring inspiration for us, their successors, to "make our lives sublime," as Longfellow wrote, by being useful to our fellow citizens, to all the people of Minnesota.

The afternoon session was then concluded with the reading of the following paper by Dr. Solon J. Buck, superintendent of the society:

THE FUNCTIONS AND IDEALS OF THE MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In every one of the states of the American Union there is a society or similar institution devoted to the preservation of the record of the state's past; and the majority of these institutions are state supported, at least in part. Why is it that the American people have seen fit thus to put history on a different plane from other branches of human knowledge, to regard it as a matter of public interest and worthy of public support? The answer is simple. History is of community, rather than merely individual importance because history is to the community what memory is to the individual. It is the foundation upon which everything of the present rests and upon which everything of the future must be built. A nation, without knowledge of its history, like a man without memory, would be helpless.



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