

LAKE Superior and Mississippi
Railroad station at
White Bear Lake, about 1870



RAILROAD ROUTE

From ST. PAUL to DULUTH in 1869

JOHN T. TROWBRIDGE

EDITED BY RHODA R. GILMAN

ONE OF the favorite promotional devices employed by early railroads was the excursion party. During the 1850s and 1860s, when lines were being extended into remote frontier areas, company-sponsored tours served an important function in acquainting Eastern investors and the newspaper-reading public with the potentialities of various Western regions.

An excursion might be conducted on a lavish scale, including up to a thousand people, or it might be limited to a party of twenty-five or thirty. Officers and directors of the sponsoring railroad usually formed the nucleus of the group, to which were

added a number of interested financiers and their friends: attorneys, publishers, a socially prominent physician or two, and perhaps a well-known clergyman. The presence of wives and daughters was an important feature of many parties. They helped to preserve the sight-seeing character of the journey and prevented ever-pressing business affairs along the route from absorbing the days completely. Another ingredient of any well-planned excursion was a journalist—preferably a prominent one—to sing the praises of the region served by the new line and to assure the public of the energy, initiative, and unlimited resources of its promoters.

Minnesota had its share of these events, beginning with the great Chicago and Rock

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Island excursion of 1854, which brought nearly a thousand visitors by rail and river boat to St. Paul, in celebration of the completion of the first railroad to reach the Mississippi.¹ During the late 1860s the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad, at that time backed and controlled by the Philadelphia banking house of Jay Cooke and Company, sponsored several tours to acquaint its investors with the line and especially with the potentialities of Duluth, the "new Chicago" at the head of Lake Superior.² The first of these parties went to St. Paul by rail in July, 1868, and proceeded from there to Duluth, conveyed by a cavalcade of spring wagons, since construction of the railroad had scarcely begun. From Duluth, lake steamers returned the visitors to the East.³

In the following year a second excursion left Philadelphia on August 2, and reached St. Paul on the evening of August 6. Among the thirty-five members of the party were S. M. Felton, vice-president of the Lake Superior and Mississippi and also president of the Delaware Railroad; Isaac Hinckley, president of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad; J. Hinckley Clark, a member of the Philadelphia banking firm of E. W. Clark and Company and a director of the Lake Superior and Mississippi; Pitt Cooke, a brother and partner of Jay Cooke; Robert H. Lamborn, secretary-treasurer of the Lake Superior and Mississippi; N. B. Brown, president of the Safety Deposit Company of Philadelphia; and John Townsend Trowbridge, a well-known editor and author.⁴

Trowbridge had made his start as a journalist, and during a previous Western journey in 1857 had written descriptive letters for the New York Tribune. Since that time he had become established as a writer of novels and juvenile books, and was in 1869 a contributing editor of *Our Young Folks*. He also wrote frequently for the *Youth's Companion* and the *Atlantic Monthly*. From notes on his impressions and experiences made while with the excursion party, he prepared for publication in the *Atlantic*

the following year a three-part narrative describing the trip.⁵ Excerpts from the second and third installments of his narrative are here reprinted.

As the St. Paul Press noted on August 7, "Most of the gentlemen have business interests connected with Minnesota Railroads, while the ladies come to enjoy the balmy air and far-famed scenery of our beautiful state." Thus the excursionists remained in St. Paul nearly a week, while the railroad men conferred with their Minnesota associates and inspected fifty miles of newly laid track on the Lake Superior and Mississippi line. The sight-seeing members of the party were entertained meanwhile by trips to Minneapolis, Fort Snelling, and — at the invitation of the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad — up the Minnesota Valley to Mankato.

After describing the latter jaunt, Trowbridge returned to St. Paul, where he heard discouraging tales of the "route through the woods to Lake Superior, the next thing in our programme." Travelers who had recently made the trip told of "coaches mired and upset, limbs dislocated, passengers forced to walk . . . with mud to their knees, belated in the forest, and devoured by mosquitoes." Upon learning that there were ladies in the party, the informants declared that the projected trip was "madness!" and predicted that "you will never get through!"

¹ For a full account of this affair, see William J. Petersen, "The Rock Island Railroad Excursion of 1854," in *Minnesota History*, 15:405-420 (December, 1934); a contemporary report, written by James F. Babcock for the *New Haven Palladium*, is reprinted in the Winter, 1954, issue of the same magazine (34:133-143).

² For a discussion of Jay Cooke's role in the building of the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad and the development of Duluth, see John L. Harnsberger, "Land, Lobbies, Railroads, and the Origins of Duluth," above, p. 89-100.

³ *St. Paul Press*, July 31, 1868.

⁴ *St. Paul Press*, August 7, 1869.

⁵ For a biographical sketch of Trowbridge, see the *Dictionary of American Biography*, 18:655 (1936). His articles, entitled "From Pennsylvania Hills to Minnesota Prairies," "Through the Woods to Lake Superior," and "A Week at Duluth," appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* for March, April, and May, 1870.

The railroad excursionists planned to use the "old Military Road, as it is called, cut through the wilderness for government purposes."⁶ After noting that recent rains had converted this, the only route, "into one interminable slough, or mud canal," Trowbridge expressed confidence in his hosts. "We rely, however," he wrote, "upon the experience and forethought of our friends of the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad, whose management of our excursion thus far inspires unbounded faith in their future plans for us." For the first fifty miles, the travelers would be journeying "on rails newly laid," and thereafter "in wagons, already provided and sent on ahead with our camp equipage." Extracts from the journalist's report of the trip follow.

THURSDAY morning, [August] 12th. [1869] — We are off. From the depot below the town our train speeds away, winding in among the broken bluffs, rising to higher and higher ground, — over bush prairies and oak barrens, — to White Bear Lake (St. Paul's favorite picnic spot), ten miles away.

There, on the shore of "one of those beautiful sheets of water which mottle Minnesota all over, and give it the appropriate name of the Lake State," the travelers stopped to witness the opening of an Indian mound — "a broad

conical heap of earth, itself overgrown by forest trees" — which unfortunately yielded nothing "but the black surface soil of the country, clear of even a pebble."

The next station is Forest Lake, where there is a still more extensive body of water and a beautiful town site on its banks. The railroad has been fortunate in its choice of sites for way-stations, as we observe all along the route. Few obstacles stood in the way of such a choice. Flanked, a greater part of the way, by its own magnificent land grant of more than a million and a half of acres, it had, moreover, from the first, the co-operation of a land company, securing in its interest such desirable tracts as lay beyond its domain.⁷ We pass through a rolling country of oak openings, and occasional native meadows, once the beds of lakes, converted by time and vegetable decay into grass-lands of exceeding fertility. A few scanty settlements lie scattered along or near this part of the route.

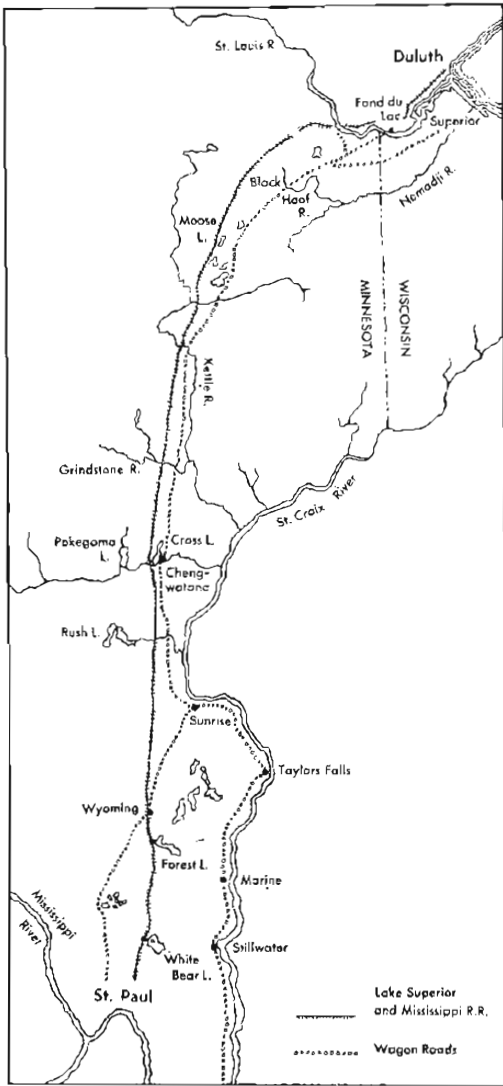
At Rushseba, fifty miles from St. Paul, we come to an end of the completed track, and, we might almost say, of civilization.⁸ Northward hence, the wilderness! Here we find an unfinished depot building, in a little clearing of the woods; Rush Creek, flowing eastward towards the St. Croix River, which divides, not far off, Minnesota from Wisconsin; a lounging Indian or two; a white woman with four children, one in arms, standing near a wood-pile; and, what is of most importance to us, our wagon-train in waiting.

While caterers are preparing dinner for our party, increased, by accessions from St. Paul, to more than fifty souls (or perhaps I should say stomachs), and while a photographer is getting his apparatus ready for a group, I make acquaintance with the woman at the wood-pile. She lives, she tells me, three miles hence, on Rush Lake, where she settled ten years ago with her husband, both young then, and made a homestead in the woods. When I ask if she is contented there, she praises the country, — thirty-five bushels of winter wheat to the acre! That speaks well

⁶ This road was first surveyed from Point Douglas to Fond du Lac in 1851, and later the northern terminal was changed to Superior. Not until 1858, however, was it made passable for wagons. See Arthur J. Larsen, "The Development of the Minnesota Road System," 60-109, an unpublished dissertation in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

⁷ Probably the Western Land Association, a subsidiary corporation of the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad, formed for the purpose of developing the lands acquired by the line through both federal and state grants. See Harnsberger, above, p. 92.

⁸ The spot Trowbridge describes is the site of Rush City. A nearby township still bears the name Rushseba, derived from a combination of the English word "rush" with the Ojibway "seba" or "sippi," meaning river. See Warren Upham, *Minnesota Geographic Names*, 109 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 17, 1920).



WAGON road and railway routes from the Mississippi to Lake Superior, 1869-70

for the soil, but does it keep her always from being lonesome? "Lonesome?" she replies with a luminous smile; "I have my husband and little ones and enough to do, and why should I be lonesome?" She rejoices greatly in the railroad, not because it will carry civilization to them, but because it will carry their grain to market. Is she now going on a journey? "O no! I am just waiting here. My children had never seen railroad cars, and so I took a little walk over here with them, for curiosity."

After dinner (served on rough board tables under the depot roof), we form a group, with the woods and the wagons in the background, and an Indian in the foreground, for the sake of the contrast, his hat on a stick, and the black icicles of his straight, lank hair dripping down his cheeks, and give the photographer a few shots at us. Then the start. It is like getting an army in motion. We climb to seats in the strong, canvas-covered Concord coaches, the tinkling of horse-bells resounds pleasantly in the woods, one after another the wagons take the road, and we go rolling and plunging into the forest.

A few farm-clearings and bark-roofed log-houses we pass, and now and then the poles of a dismantled wigwam; heavily timbered tracts of hard wood, shining growths of silver-limbed poplars and birches (many of the latter stripped of their bark, which has gone to kindle the red man's fires, or roof his huts, or build his canoes), high [bush] cranberries and raspberries, and swamps of rank wild grass. Here and there is a burnt district; and I notice a forest of tamaracks all upturned by the roots, and thrown into tangled heaps, by undermining fires in the peat.

Late in the afternoon we reach our first camping-ground, at Chengwatana, where there are a few wooden houses and huts of half-breeds, besides a sawmill, on the east shore of Cross Lake.⁹ While our tents are pitching on the stumpy shore, and our supper preparing at the stage-house, we embark on the lake in a barge manned by laborers from the railroad, and steer out into the fiery eye of the sunset burning in sky and wave.

The lake is four miles in length from north

⁹ Chengwatana was the name of an Indian village which for an unknown number of years had been located near the outlet of Cross Lake. A dam had been erected there as early as 1848 for the purpose of sluicing logs, and by 1852 the settlement had attracted a few half-breed and white families and had several log houses, a hotel, and a post office. See William H. C. Folsom, *Fifty Years in the Northwest*, 276 (St. Paul, 1888); August B. Easton, ed., *History of the Saint Croix Valley*, 2:1206 (Chicago, 1909).

to south. It is quite narrow, however, and Snake River, flowing through it from east to west, forms a watery *cross*, that gives the name. The Chengwatana dam has flooded thousands of acres above, and drowned the timber; and fires have destroyed much that the water spared. The western shores, peopled by melancholy hosts of dead trees, standing mournfully in the water, or charred and dark on the banks, lifting their blasted trunks and skeleton arms against the sky, give to the scene, by this light, a most unearthly aspect.

Rowing up the river we pass Indian burial-places on the north shore,—rude wooden crosses visible among the dead tree-trunks,—and a deserted village of skeleton wigwams, whose bare poles will be reclothed with skin of birch-bark, when the red nomads return to catch fish in these waters and hunt deer and bear in these woods.¹⁰ A week ago there were three hundred Ojibways on this camping-ground. Now we see but a few brown squaws on the bank, and half a dozen frightened Indian children paddling away from us in a canoe.

Chengwatana should have had the railroad depot, but it made the common mistake of setting too high a price on what it deemed indispensable to the company, which, accordingly, stuck to its own land, and put the track the other side of the lake. So grand an enterprise uniting our greatest river with our greatest lake, and forming one of the arteries of a new civilization, can well afford to be independent of a petty way-station. It is the railroad that makes towns, not towns that make the railroad.¹¹ We row over to the solid stone piers of the unfinished bridge, and the

high embankment, and the village of board-shanties about which ruddy Swiss laborers are washing their rough hands and bearded faces, their day's work done; then return in the twilight to Chengwatana and supper.

Our tents are pitched on the stumpy shore. A mist is rising from the lake. Camp-fires are early kindled, making ruddy halos in the foggy dark, and lighting us to bed. A bundle of straw and a blanket,—what more does man require? With the ground beneath, and the sloping canvas over us, we are well couched. There's no danger of robbers under one's bed. Mosquitoes swarm, covering the lake shore with their fine, formidable hum; but against their encroachments smudge-fires without the tents and cigar-smoke within are found effectual; then the increasing chill of the night protects us. There is much talk about the fires; and presently, in a neighboring tent, resounds a lusty snore, heard throughout the camp. Sweeter sounds rise on the foggy, firelit shore, when our colored attendants transform themselves into a band of musicians, and they who catered to the palate cater more delightfully to the ear, striking up pleasant tunes, to which the strangeness of the scene lends enchantment. . . .

FRIDAY, 13th. — A cold, wet morning. A little cow-hunting visits the camp, hopping about on the blankets, close to our feet, and even on our feet, in the friendliest manner, but coquettishly refusing to be caught.

The lake is both basin and mirror to us, making our toilets. Some, however, seek the little, dark washroom of the stage-house, and perform their ablutions there. Is not the tooth-brush a test of civilization? Mr. F[elton] lays his down on the sink, and afterwards, turning to look for it, finds a rough fellow endeavoring to disentangle his locks with it, having taken it for the public hair-brush.¹² He seems to think it ridiculously small for his purpose; "Confound the little fool of a thing!" and flinging it down in disgust, he makes a comb of his fingers.

The stage-house table has its limits, and

¹⁰ The presence of crosses in this Indian burial ground can no doubt be traced to the Christianizing influence of a mission maintained from 1836 to 1847 at Pokegama. See William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 1:174–181 (St. Paul, 1920).

¹¹ Pine City, platted in 1869, grew up where the railway established its depot. See Upham, *Minnesota Geographic Names*, 413.

¹² The reference may be either to S. M. Felton or to Edgar Felton of Philadelphia, both of whom were with the party. See *Duluth Minnesotan*, August 21, 1869.

we breakfast by relays. After which I take to the road, walking on alone in the cool of the morning, to enjoy the solitude of the woods and the sweetness of the air. Young aspens twinkle in the early sunshine. Upon a thicket of dead birches a crop of wild buckwheat hangs its festoons of blossoming vines. Here a grove of white poplars and birches gives to the woods the aspect of snow scenery. Waving brakes, raspberry-bushes, alders, wild honeysuckles, wild sunflowers, and wild cucumbers fringe the wayside. Not a bird, not a living creature, not even a tapping woodpecker or cawing crow, appears on this lonely road. I outwalk the wagons, for they must move cautiously through mud-holes which I avoid. After getting a mile or two the start of them, I sit down on a log to wait, and hark for the tinkling bells of the leading teams coming through the woods.

Dinner at Grindstone, — a log-house and stable in a burnt clearing on Grindstone River.¹³ One half our party more than fills the little table-room, and the rest of us receive our dinners on plates, passed over many heads and out at the windows; making the sky our dining-hall, and the first barrel-head or hen-coop, or the ground itself, a table. Then a dessert of berries in the burnt woods.

Supper at Kettle River, thirty miles from Chengwatana. A terrible day's work for the teams. Never were worse roads. We who walked on before, at any time in the afternoon, could hear the horses plashing through water far off behind us, and then see the high-covered wagons come rolling and pitching through the hub-deep holes, threatening at one moment to upset, and at another to keel over upon the horses. On one occasion a smoking driver, hurled from his seat by a sudden lurch, turned a somerset, and alighted on his back in the mud, without, however, losing the pipe from his mouth, — a feat to be proud of. Riding was neither so safe nor so agreeable as walking. Dripping wayside bushes pulled down by whiffletrees and wheels were constantly flying back, whipping and bespattering the wagons. Nei-

ther man nor beast did we meet in all this day's journey.

Kettle River comes sweeping down through the forest, between magnificent masses of foliage, combining the varied forms and tints of pine, balsam, maple, ironwood, and tamarack, and rushes whirling under beetling ledges at the road-crossing. Its glossy eddies shine with a strange wild lustre, in the evening light. The water is about the hue of maple sirup, being discolored, like all the streams in this part of the State, by the roots of trees.

On the banks of the river are some Ojibway wigwams, before one of which a squalid squaw, of great age and unspeakable hideousness is cutting up a hedgehog which an Indian lad has just killed, and throwing pieces of the meat into a pot hung from a pole over a smoky fire. The hut is of poles, covered by strips of birch-bark coarsely stitched together: a blanket in place of a door. Looking in, we perceive dirty mats spread about the household fire, kindled on the ground, its smoke — a part of it, at least — going out through a hole in the low bark roof. On the mats sit a very old Indian and a young squaw with her papoose, looking desolate and miserable enough. No romance of wild savage life discernible here! Near the wigwam are three graves. One is that of a child. It is marked by a wooden monument, — a sort of box, resembling a dog-kennel. Over the other two are built little narrow pens of rough poles, perhaps eight feet long and two feet high and broad.¹⁴ I have seen few more pitiful sights. Between these rude attempts of a wretched race to commemorate its dead and the poet's *In Memoriam* what infinite distance!

A dismal evening: with the darkness a drizzling rain begins to fall. Last night we

¹³ The road crossed the Grindstone River within two and a half miles of the present town of Hinckley. See Easton, *Saint Croix Valley*, 1245.

¹⁴ These miniature wooden houses are characteristic Chippewa grave markings. See Newton H. Winchell, *The Aborigines of Minnesota*, 402 (St. Paul, 1911).

had straw; but now the forest boughs must be our bed. We cut young pines in the woods, drag them to camp, and there by the light of the fires trim them, covering the ground beneath the tents with odorous wet twigs. Blankets and shawls are in demand; and many a desperate shift is made for pillows. Mrs. K[nox] has one of india-rubber, but there is a treacherous leak in it, and every ten minutes throughout the night she must awake and blow it up afresh.¹⁵ I resort to my valise. But it is too high when shut, so I open it, and lay my head on it. There is a storm in the night; a deluging rain falls, and many a trickling stream steals in through the tents upon the sleepers. To save my packed linen from a soaking, I am obliged to shut my pillow, — taking my head out, of course! In a neighboring tent a devoted husband sits up and holds a spread umbrella over his spouse, who sleeps in spite of thunder. The rain quenches the fires, the wind shakes the tents, the welkin cracks overhead. What a scene it is when, in the middle of the night, I look out from the door of our frail shelter, and see the camp, in the midst of roaring woods, instantaneously illumined by quick cross-lightnings playing in the forest-tops!

In the morning, he who is discovered with rueful countenance emptying water from his boots is accused of having set them out to be blacked.

AUGUST 14th. — Weather cold and drizzling. Roads this day worse than ever, though worse had seemed impossible. Every little while a wagon sticks in the mud. Now a whiffletree breaks, now a king-bolt; now a baggage-wagon upsets, or a horse is down;

¹⁵ This was probably Mrs. Henry M. Knox of St. Paul, who arrived in Duluth with the excursionists, according to the *Duluth Minnesotian* for August 21, 1869.

¹⁶ The present town of Moose Lake lies three and a half miles west of the route followed by the military road. Black Hoof station was said to be "noted for the abundance of black deer that ranged in that vicinity." A Superior pioneer recalled that the inn was kept by a Mr. Jackson. See *Carlton County Centennial, 1857-1957*, 21; *Superior Telegram*, December 9, 1908.

and now we must wait for a gulf of mud to be bridged with logs and brush. At every accident the whole train comes to a halt. We get through only by keeping together and helping each other. The shouts of the drivers, the calls for help, the running forwards, the hurrying back, the beckoning signals, the prying up of mired wheels, the replacing of broken bolts, make ever a picturesque and animated scene. Blueberries by the wayside are abundant, on which we regale ourselves while the wagons are halted.

Dinner at Moose Lake, eighteen miles from Kettle River. A little rest, a little drying of our soaked boots and wet clothes, and in the middle of the afternoon we set off again for Twin Lakes, still eighteen miles farther. It is dark when we reach Black Hoof, and only two thirds of the distance is made, and we are all weary enough.¹⁶ Two ladies quite unable to go on. But supper is ordered at Twin Lakes, and cannot be had here; and the Black Hoof landlord, perhaps offended because his house was overlooked in our programme, sternly declares, as he sits tipped back against the logs in his glowing room (how cheery it looks to us out in the rain!) that he has not a bed nor a floor for one of us. Fortunately we are the bearers of a message and a present to his wife. She last year anointed the swollen, inflamed hands and face of a mosquito-bitten banker of Philadelphia, who had been fishing in these woods, and cured his hurts; in acknowledgement of which motherly kindness he has sent her a new gown. It is delivered with a flattering speech from his partner; the good woman is delighted; even the husband's heart is softened; and our weary ones are taken in.

Then, six miles farther for the rest of us! We come to abrupt hills with terrible gullies in their sides. The night is dark, and it is perilous getting on by the light of lanterns. When we strike a piece of smooth road, we bowl briskly along the yielding sand; while the flashing gleams from the forward wagons, illuminating the boughs and open-



RAILROAD construction
between St. Paul
and Duluth, about 1869

ing vistas of the forest-sides, create for us behind a constant illusion of castles and villas, which vanish ever as we arrive at their gates. Are they prophetic glimpses of the time when these arched and pillared woods shall be transformed to abodes of cultivated man?

It is near midnight, and it is rainy and very cold, when we tumble from the coaches, weary and hungry and chilled, at Twin Lakes.¹⁷ Two log-cottages receive us, and furnish us most welcome excellent suppers; and we all sleep under roofs this night, some on floors, some on hay in the barns, and a few in beds. Next morning (Sunday, 15th) finds us rested and hilarious. I look about me, and am interested to observe with what cheerfulness men and women accustomed to the luxuries of life accept the discomforts and endure the hardships of days and nights like these. Even he whose shrunken boots, his only pair, resist all attempts at coaxing or coercion, and, at the end of an hour's straining and pushing, steadily refuse to go on the excruciated feet, yields with decency to fate, and appears happy as a king in a pair of stout brogans purchased of the hostler.

The lakes (as we see by daylight in the morning) are mere ponds, one of them full of leeches, which we dip up with the water in pail or basin, when we go to the shore to wash ourselves.

The cottages boast, and justly, of the butter and cream with which they treat their guests. The landlady of one of them tells me her two cows gave her one hundred and six pounds of butter in the month of June last, "and I kept a stopping-place besides, which takes milk and cream." We measure a spear of timothy pulled up by chance in the doorway, and find it five and a half feet in length; and clover is thick at its roots. Winter wheat, she avers, is a sure crop, yielding from twenty to twenty-five bushels to the acre. These are among the many evidences we have met with all along the route, showing that this vast forest-covered region is one of the richest of the State. Its mighty growths of timber possess an incalculable value for the fuel and lumber with which they will supply rising cities on rivers and lakes, and settlements on the great prairies; and the soil, shorn of its forests, will equal the best in Minnesota, for pasturage, root crops, and wheat.

Three miles beyond Twin Lakes we

¹⁷ Twin Lakes, some four miles south of the present town of Carlton, was the seat of Carlton County from 1857 to 1870. The settlement's main building was a tavern, trading post, and general store, which also housed the courthouse. With the opening of the railroad between St. Paul and Duluth in 1870, traffic on the military road nearly ceased, and within a short time the community of Twin Lakes had virtually disappeared. See *Carlton County Centennial*, 3, 8, 10; Upham, *Minnesota Geographic Names*, 76.

branch off from the old road leading to Superior, and take a new track cut through the woods to Fond du Lac.¹⁸ Our route on this, the fourth, morning lies through a region of pines, some of enormous size. The fragrance of their breath, the grandeur of the forest scenery, and even the terrible roots and hills and hollows over which we go rocking and tilting, all combine to fill old and young with childlike exhilaration. The country grows almost mountainous as we advance; we cross high ridges, and wind along the sides of deep gorges, and at noon come out upon heights that overlook the gleaming sinuosities and far-winding valley of the St. Louis.

Where the river rushes out from between wooded bluffs and the valley opens, there is Fond du Lac, a little cluster of old wooden houses, making the most westerly point of that immense system of lake and river and canal navigation whose seaward opening gate is the mouth of the St. Lawrence, — an interesting fact, viewed in the light of our fresh memories of St. Anthony, where a few days since we stood at the head of navigation on the Mississippi. One who has made this grand portage cannot help comparing the two places. From St. Anthony the river flows southward two thousand two hundred miles to the Gulf of Mexico, winding through fifteen degrees of latitude. A chip cast upon these more northern waters will float many more miles, through nearly thirty degrees of longitude, before it tosses on the waves of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Here, too, we are at the foot of extensive falls, creating a rival water-power, ordained to make lumber of these tremendous forests, and flour of the wheat from limitless grain-fields. Neither St. Anthony nor Fond du Lac is approachable, however, by any but small-sized

craft; and as the real head of navigation for Mississippi steamers is at St. Paul, so that of lake vessels is at Duluth, twenty miles hence, down the St. Louis.

We have made this grand portage laboriously in wagons (for the most part), and we have been three days and more about it. The railroad completed, it will be made comfortably in a few hours. This terrible mud-canal navigation through the wilderness will soon be obsolete, and a thing to be wondered at when the new avenue of trade and travel shall be established, with civilization brightly crystallizing in its course.

We have kept within two or three miles of the railroad grade ever since leaving Rushseba; and here once more it meets us, having crossed the river somewhere above, and throwing up now its fresh embankments on the opposite bank. There, too, moored by the marshy shore, lie two little steamers, which hospitable citizens, friends of the railroad and of its builders, have sent up for us from Duluth. We gleefully set out to cross to them, leaving our wagon-train on the south bank.

On the small steamers, the excursionists began the winding journey down the St. Louis River. Soon the two craft, "desperately puffing and panting, put their noses into the white teeth of an easterly gale on St. Louis Bay." Now the travelers beheld Duluth, "the Mecca of the pilgrimage" — "a bleak cluster of new-looking wooden houses, on a southward-fronting hillside."

In the final article of his series, published in the May Atlantic, Trowbridge reports his impressions of the new community:

THE FIRST SIGHT, to us shivering on deck, was not particularly cheering. But as we passed on into Superior Bay, and a stroke of light from a rift in the clouds fell like a prophetic finger on the little checkered spot brightening in the wilderness, the view became more interesting. The town lies on the lower terraces of wooded hills which rise from the water's edge, by easy grades, to the

¹⁸The village of Fond du Lac, platted in 1856, had a long history as the site of fur trading posts and an Indian mission. See Grace Lee Nute, "Posts in the Minnesota Fur-Trading Area, 1660-1855," in *Minnesota History*, 11:359 (December, 1930); Walter Van Brunt, ed., *Duluth and St. Louis County, Minnesota*, 1:49-56 (Chicago and New York, 1921).

distant background of a magnificent mountain range, — a truly imposing site, to one who can look beyond those cheap wooden frames, — the staging whereby the real city is built, — and see the civilization of the future clustering along the shore, and hanging upon the benches of that ample amphitheatre.

The two bays were evidently once an open basin of the lake, from which they have been cut off, one after the other, by points of land formed by the action of its waves meeting the current of the river. Between the lake and Superior Bay is Minnesota Point, — an enormous bar seven miles in length, covered by a long procession of trees and bushes, which appear to be marching in solid column, after their captain, the lighthouse, across the head of the lake, towards the land of Wisconsin.¹⁹ It is like a mighty arm thrust down from the north shore to take the fury of the lake storms on one side, and to protect the haven thus formed on the other. Seated on the rocky shoulder of this arm, with one foot on the lake, and the other on the bay, is the infant city of Duluth.

Approaching a wharf on the bay side of the narrow peninsula, we perceive a very large crowd for so small a town awaiting our arrival. On landing, we are made fully aware of the hospitable intent of the citizens. They not only sent the two steamers up the river to fetch us, but here they are crowding to welcome and carry us off to their homes. As there is no hotel in the place (though spacious ones are building), we are glad to fall into the hands of these new friends, some of whom have hastened the completion of their summer-built houses on our account. We are regarded as no ordinary guests, the real fathers of the city being of our party. A few papers signed in Philadelphia have made a great Northwestern port and market possible — nay, inevitable — at this point. The idea of such a city had long been in the air; but it was these men who caught the floating germ and planted it here. In other words, it is the Lake Superior and Mississippi Rail-

road that builds Duluth, and they are the builders of the railroad.

The "avenue" laid out on Minnesota Point is not yet the remarkably fine thing it looks on paper, and is no doubt destined to be in the future, — a grand thoroughfare extending some seven miles along this natural breakwater, betwixt lake and bay. At present one sees but a rough, pebbly road, which looks more like a line of very tremendous handwriting, italicized by a wooden sidewalk drawn under it. It is flanked by a few stores, dwellings, and Indian huts, and by a good many trees in the neighborhood of the wharf; and it leads up thence to the real city front, half or three quarters of a mile above. As we walk up thither (that is, such of us as are not lodged on the Point), under a strong escort of citizens on foot (carriages are still scarce in Duluth), we can hear the roar of the great lake on the other side of the bar, and catch glimpses of its white breakers and blue distance through openings among the trees.

Civilization is attracted to the line of a railroad like steel-filings to a magnet; and here appears to be the point of a magnet of more than ordinary power. "Four months ago," our guide tells us, as we mount the wooden steps which lead up to Superior Street, "there were only half a dozen houses in Duluth; now there are over a hundred." These are not mere shanties either, but substantial wooden buildings, for the most part. We look up and down Superior Street, and see stores, shops, dwellings, a church, a school-house, a post-office, a bank, a big hotel, and, strangest sight of all, a large jewelry store going up in the woods.²⁰ In the

¹⁹ The lighthouse at the southern end of Minnesota Point was erected in 1858 to mark the natural entry to Superior Bay. See Secretary of the Treasury, *Report*, June 30, 1858, p. 287 (35 Congress, 2 session, *Senate Executive Documents*, no. 2 — serial 979).

²⁰ The church was no doubt St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Lake Avenue; the bank was that operated by George B. Sargent; and the hotel must have been the Clark House, Duluth's main hostelry until 1881. See Van Brunt, *Duluth and St. Louis County*, 1:187, 190, 206.



THE lighthouse on Minnesota Point, built in 1858

midst of all which visible preparations for an early influx of trade an astonishing quiet reigns. There are unfinished roofs and open house-sides all round us, yet not a sound is heard.

Our first thought was that business had been suspended in honor of our arrival. Then we remembered that it was Sunday, — a fact which had been constantly jostled out of our consciousness by the secular circumstance of travel on that day. . . .

Two of us are taken into custody by a dealer in hardware; and it is like getting home, after our journey through the wilderness, to find ourselves in comfortable quarters, with the prospect of a real bed to sleep

in, dinner awaiting us, and the kind faces of Mr. [Edgar] N[ash] and his sister beaming upon us as if we were old friends, for whom enough cannot be done.²¹ We have front rooms, the windows of which command a view that can hardly be beaten by any windows in the world; on the left, the stormy lake tumbling shoreward its white surges; and in front, just across the dividing bar of Minnesota Point, the comparatively tranquil bay, studded with "floating islands," and stretching far off yonder, between forest-fringed shores, to Superior City, in Wisconsin, eight miles away.

THE NEXT MORNING (Monday, August 16th) shows a changed aspect of things. The wind has gone down, the weather is inviting, and we go out to view the town, which, so quiet the day before, is ringing now with the noise of axes and hammers and

²¹ Edgar Nash operated the first hardware store established in Duluth and served as a member of the town's first board of aldermen in 1870. His sister was a Mrs. Van Brunt. See Van Brunt, *Duluth and St. Louis County*, 1:180, 200.

saws, and clanking wheels, and flapping boards flung down, and scenes of busy life on every side. Wood-choppers are cutting trees, piling sticks and brush, and burning log-heaps,—clearing the land, not for wheat and potatoes, but for the planting of a city. The streets have not yet been graded, but the rude wagon-tracks go curving over hillocks and through hollows, amid rocks and stumps and stones, and the plank sidewalks span many a deep gully and trickling stream.

The plan of the town well befits its really superb situation. Superior Street occupies the front of the lower terrace of the hills. Behind this, and parallel with it, are the numbered streets,—First, Second, Third, and so on,—rising step by step on the gentle acclivity. Crossing the streets are the avenues, which go cutting their tremendous gaps through the dense forest growth up the wild mountain-side.

Going down to the lake shore, I am surprised to find under the cliff an old wharf and warehouse in the angle formed by Minnesota Point. I afterwards meet the owner and learn of him how they came here. Included in what is now Duluth is the old town of Portland, which had a name and a location at this point, but never any real existence. Here was an Indian agency, and that was about all.²² Good maps of the States show several such towns scattered along the north shore,—Clifton, Buchanan, Burlington,—like flies on the back of that monstrous forefinger of the lake, which is seen pointing in a southwesterly direction across the continent.²³ Of these paper towns Portland was always deemed the most important. Situated at the western extremity of the grandest lake and river chain in the world,—that vast freshwater Mediterranean which reaches from the Gulf of St. Lawrence almost to the centre of North America,—it required no great degree of sagacity to perceive that here was to be the key to the quarter of a hemisphere,—here or hereabouts. Wherever was established the practical head of navigation between the

northern range of States and the vastly more extensive undeveloped region beyond, there must be another and perhaps even a greater Chicago.

"This," said Mr. [Sidney] L[uce], "looked to me to be the spot."²⁴ There's no good natural harbor here; neither is there anywhere about the end of the lake. But here is the best chance to make a harbor. Superior Bay is deep enough for small vessels, and dredging will make it deep enough for large ones. On the lake side of the Point we have depth of water enough to float a navy; and it only needs a breakwater thrown out from the north shore, parallel with the Point, to make as much of a haven as is wanted. There are rocks on the hills that will dump themselves into the lake, only help 'em a little. I knew the expense of the thing wasn't going to stand in the way of a good harbor here many years. My mistake was in thinking the millennium was coming so soon. There began to be talk of a railroad here fifteen years ago, and I thought we were going to have it right away. So I went to work and built a wharf and warehouse. I expected great quantities of lumber would be shipped and supplies landed at once. But the railroad didn't come,

²² Portland was platted in 1856, as was the townsite of Duluth, adjacent to it, but farther out along Minnesota Point. The two communities, one in all but name, existed side by side until 1861, when the name of Portland was dropped. It was legally absorbed by Duluth in 1870. Trowbridge was mistaken in locating an Indian agency at Portland, though a United States land office was opened there in 1859. See Van Brunt, *Duluth and St. Louis County*, 1:113–117, 152–159.

²³ The three towns named were among more than a dozen platted in this area during the period of feverish land speculation which immediately preceded the panic of 1857. Clifton was laid out in 1855 on the north shore of the lake nine or ten miles from Duluth. Burlington Bay and Buchanan both appeared the following year, the former located near the present town of Two Harbors and the latter near the mouth of the Knife River. From 1857 to 1859, Buchanan had a United States land office. See Van Brunt, *Duluth and St. Louis County*, 1:121–124.

²⁴ Sidney Luce settled at Portland in 1857 and built the first dock and warehouse on the lake shore. See John R. Carey, "History of Duluth, and of St. Louis County, to the Year 1870," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 9:268 (1901).



SUPERIOR, Wisconsin, in 1857. From an original charcoal drawing by Eastman Johnson

and the lumber didn't go. It cost me two hundred dollars a year to keep my wharf in repair, exposed, as you see it, to the lake storms, and I never got a cent for it."

Then it appeared that the railroad was not coming to the north shore at all, but to the other end of Superior Bay, in the State of Wisconsin. This was the project of Breckenridge [John C. Breckinridge] and his Southern associates, who got a land-grant through Congress, and founded Superior City, and were going to have a stronghold of the slave power in the enemy's country, — a Northern metropolis to which they could bring their servants in summer, and enjoy the cool breezes of the great lake.²⁵ Superior grew up at once to be a town of considerable size and importance, and stupendous hopes. But

²⁵ Trowbridge here refers to the land speculation scheme which gave birth to the city of Superior in 1853. Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, one of the leaders in the enterprise, interested a number of prominent Southern politicians, including Breckenridge. The railroad land grant referred to is probably one made in 1856 for a line from Hudson, Wisconsin, to Superior and Bayfield. See Paul Wallace Gates, "Southern Investments in Northern Lands before the Civil War," in *Journal of Southern History*, 5:166 (May, 1939); Van Brunt, *Duluth and St. Louis County*, 1:67-72.

²⁶ Trowbridge's figures are exaggerated. The first sales of Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad bonds in the autumn of 1868 totaled \$2,598,000. A year later the market had slumped and sales were lagging. See Henrietta M. Larson, *Jay Cooke: Private Banker*, 252, 330 (Cambridge, 1936).

the war of the Rebellion came and put an end to schemes of that sort. The new city grew dejected, and fell into a rapid decline; if true, what its friends still loudly claimed for it, that it was "looking up," it must have been (like that other city a fellow-traveller tells of) because, lying flat on its back, it could not look any other way.

Portland, quite overshadowed for a while by the mushroom-umbrella of its rival, now peeped forth and took courage. Minnesota was determined, after all, to have the railroad which had so nearly fallen into the hands of her fair neighbor, Wisconsin. By running it from St. Paul to the north shore, crossing the St. Louis River at its falls, above Fond du Lac, she could keep it entirely within her own borders. But while the young State had abundant enterprise, she lacked the financial resources of her older sisters. Fortunately, when the project seemed on the point of failure, the attention of eminent capitalists of Pennsylvania was called to it, and its success insured. The bonds of the newly organized Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad Company — amounting to four and a half million dollars, secured by a lien upon its magnificent land-grant of over sixteen hundred thousand acres — were put upon the market by Jay Cooke, and sold within a week's time, so great was the confidence of financial men in the scheme and its supporters.²⁶ An immense

force of laborers was in the mean while thrown upon the line of the road, and the work was pushed forward rapidly towards completion.

Then the three or four faithful ones, who had held on so long here under all discouragements, began to see their reward. A new town had been laid out, including Portland and that part of the township of Duluth lying on Minnesota Point and the head of the bay, and called Duluth (pronounced *Doolooth*), after the adventurous Frenchman, Daniel Greysolon Du Luth (or De Luth, or De Lut, or even Delhut, for his name appears spelled in various ways), a native of Lyons,—soldier, Indian-trader, and explorer,—whose canoes scraped the gravel on these shores nearly two hundred years ago.²⁷ The land-owners made liberal grants to the railroad, and it has enriched them in return. One who came here fifteen years ago as an “Indian farmer” (sent out by the government to teach the Indians the culti-

vation of the soil) sells to-day, of land he “pre-empted” then, a single house-lot on Superior Street for forty-five hundred dollars.²⁸

The coast scenery is very fine. The waves break upon a beach of red shingle and sand, which stretches for miles along Minnesota Point (like an edge to that sickle), and crops out again in beautiful colored coves and basins under the jutting rocks and romantic wood-crowned cliffs of the north shore. The water is deep and transparent, and it is delightful in calm weather, afloat in a skiff, or

²⁷ For an account of Du Luth's exploring journey of 1679–80, see Folwell, *Minnesota*, 1:22–24.

²⁸ This is probably a reference to William Nettleton, who was an “Indian farmer” at the Crow Wing agency in 1852, and later, with his brother George, became one of the original proprietors of the townsite of Duluth. See Dwight E. Woodbridge and John S. Pardee, eds., *History of Duluth and St. Louis County*, 1:64, 205 (Chicago, 1910). The *Duluth Minnesotan* for August 28, 1869, records “the sale of Wm. Nettleton . . . of the two fine lots Nos. 29 and 31, East Superior Street, corner Second Avenue, for \$4,700 cash.”

THE Duluth post office was housed in a watchmaker's shop in 1869



lying on the shelf of a projecting ledge, to look down through the softly heaving, indolent, cool, crystal waves, and see the curiously tinted stones and pebbly mosaic at the bottom. The beaches abound in agates, which are constantly gathered, and which are as constantly washed up afresh by every storm. This shore is noted for them; and it is amusing to see newly arrived tourists run at once to the water, and, oblivious of all the grander attractions of the place, go peering and poking in the shingle for these not very precious stones.

Returning from a ramble on the rocks, I am attracted by a crowd on a street corner, discussing a murder committed on the spot a couple of days ago. Some Philadelphia roughs employed on the railroad got into a row at the door of a saloon from which they had been ejected, and made an attack upon a young man passing by, pursued him, crying, "Kill him! kill him!" and did kill [,] with a stab from a knife [,] his brother who came to his rescue. The victim was a brave young man, belonging to a highly respected family living here; his death created an intense excitement, and I hear stern-faced men talk with dangerous, settled calmness of tone of taking out the offenders and promptly hanging them, — justice being as yet scarcely organized in the place.²⁹

Nine of the rioters had been arrested and were having an examination in the office of a justice of the peace close by. I look in, and see a hard-visaged set of fellows with irons on their legs, listening with reckless apathy to the testimony of the murdered man's brother. . . .

With no grand jury, and no jail in the State nearer than St. Paul, but with a powerful gang of railroad laborers at hand threatening the rescue of their comrades, it was certainly a strong temptation to a hot-blooded young town to solve the difficulty

by the simple device of a vigilance committee and a rope. Better counsels prevail, however, and five of the nine, proved to have been concerned in the murder, are imprisoned in a lager-beer brewery back of the town, where they spend a thirsty night, — lager, lager everywhere, and not a drop to drink. To prevent a rescue, the streets are patrolled after dark by a strong guard of citizens, who can be heard walking up and down on the sidewalks all night long, and challenging each other under our windows.

"Who goes there?"

"Friend."

"Advance, friend, and give the countersign."

The countersign is whispered loud enough to let any one within easy earshot know that it is the popular name of the aforementioned innocent beverage; and once it is bawled out prematurely by an inexperienced sentinel.

"Who goes there?" is the challenge.

"Lager!" is the bold response; followed by the rather unmilitary rejoinder, "Advance, Lager, and give us a drink, will you?"

There is happily no rescue attempted; and the next day the five are sent off, under a sufficient escort, to be lodged in prison at St. Paul. I hope that when they come to be tried and sentenced, the jolt through the woods will be taken into merciful consideration, as something that should mitigate their final punishment.

WHILE our business-men are conferring with the citizens and discussing plans for dredging the inner harbor, building a breakwater for the outer harbor, and making one grand harbor of the two by cutting a canal across Minnesota Point, the rest of us have ample time to enjoy ourselves. One day we accompany them on a trip up the St. Louis River, to inspect the grade of the railroad at various points. Now it is a steamboat excursion down the bay to the end of Minnesota Point, where it tosses the seas upon the curved horn of a breakwater thrown out into the lake for the protection of Superior Har-

²⁹ The murdered man was George Northup, son of Anson Northup, a pioneer Minnesota lumberman and promoter of Red River transportation. The murder attracted state-wide attention. See *Duluth Minnesotian*, August 21, 1869.

bor; and a visit to Superior City itself, lying on a low plateau across the channel,—a desolate-looking town of deserted wharves, broken-windowed warehouses, dilapidated shops and dwellings, and one hopeful newspaper which keeps up a constant warfare with the rival sheet at Duluth. Then it is a fishing excursion up the trout streams of the north shore, a morning or moonlight row upon lake or bay, and a visit to the “floating-islands.”³⁰ . . .

Crossed by a forest road a little way northeast of the town are two mountain streams,—one of considerable size,—which fill the deep-wooded solitudes with their enticing music and pictures. They come down from the heights beyond, and fall into the lake through wild gorges, whose leaning rocks and trees overhang many a dark pool of fascinating depth and coolness, many a chasm of rushing rapids tumbling over ledges and stones, many a white cascade leaping clear from some high shelf, through an embroidered gateway of green boughs. A summer residence here, commanding a view of the lake on one side, and having a bit of nature’s own park with two or three of these delicious waterfalls in the rear, would not be very objectionable. Methinks one could hang up his hat here very contentedly during two or three months of the year.

Trowbridge found the hillside immediately behind the town “not quite so enchanting.” Attempting to climb the slope one morning, he became lost, and “after a terrible scramble over and about tangled treetops and trunks fallen and crossed, gullies and rocks and springs,” he reached a point “to the westward of the town, far above the reach of its avenues.” From this spot he gained a view which, from his description, must have repaid him for the difficult climb:

. . . I look out upon a wondrous picture of the world,—the windings of the St. Louis River, the sister bays, the great lake itself,

with floating islands, dividing points of land, and blue lines of forest sweeping round distant shores, all lying enchanted under a misty spell. A steamer coming up the bay, an idle schooner, and a canoe on the lake, appear suspended in the glassy stillness. With which exquisitely lovely scene before my eyes, I sit on a half-burnt log, and fight mosquitoes, and think what a fine place this would be to have a Rip Van Winkle nap, and wake up some years hence, when all this jungle shall have been displaced by the paved and spacious streets of a city overlooking a harbor thronged with shipping. . . .

I HAVE already intimated my belief that here is to be one of the foremost cities of the West. Not even the infancy of Chicago gave such promise of early greatness, for Chicago had no settled country behind it, whereas Duluth will enjoy at once, on the completion of its railroad, an immense traffic with the Upper Mississippi and the region beyond. All the railroads radiating from St. Paul, penetrating the State in every direction, will be tributary to this grand trunk, which is to unite, by a brief connecting link, the two great navigable fresh-water systems of North America. The head of Lake Superior lies four degrees of longitude farther west than the head of Michigan, yet it is practically no farther (by water communication) from New York and the ports of Europe. On the other hand, it is only one hundred and fifty miles distant, while the head of Michigan is near four hundred and fifty miles distant, by railroad from St. Paul. At least four fifths of the grain of Minnesota, which now seeks the markets of the East through other channels,—by railroad to

³⁰ These islands in Superior Bay—a curiosity to early travelers—were composed of matted tamarack roots, moss, and bushes, anchored lightly by roots clinging to the bottom of the bay. The canal opened through Minnesota Point in 1870 apparently created new and stronger currents, which dislodged the islands. One by one they floated out into the lake and disappeared. See Van Brunt, *Duluth and St. Louis County*, 1:121.

Milwaukee or Chicago, or by water to some point of transshipment down the river, or by the hot and tedious passage of the Gulf, — will naturally find this easier and cheaper outlet. The shortening of the route, especially at the railroad end of it, — for it is the railroad transportation that costs, — will tend to raise the price of wheat in Minnesota, and to lower the price of flour in Boston; while the great returning tide of Eastern merchandise flowing to the far Northwest will be sure to pass this way.

Duluth has not immediately surrounding it the fertile prairies which attracted emigration, and fed the infant Chicago; but back of it lies a magnificent forest belt, invaluable in the first place for its timber, and next for its soil, which appears peculiarly adapted to grazing and wool-growing, and the cultivation of winter wheat. In the midst of the lumber district, where the railroad crosses the river, some twenty miles from its mouth, are the falls of the St. Louis, — the

dalles of the French *voyageurs*, — which afford a water-power not inferior to that of St. Anthony. The *dalles* — flag-stones or steps over which the river falls — are the outcrop of one of the most extensive bodies of valuable slate in the world. It is available for all purposes to which slate is ordinarily applied; and experienced men, who have visited the quarries opened on the line of the road, declare that the whole surrounding country, and the entire valley of the Mississippi, may here be supplied with this useful material for centuries to come.³¹ Then there are the adjacent regions of copper and iron, whose importance in the future development of this now remote district cannot be calculated by any array of figures. With all which advantages of position, it is inevitable, as I see, that here must soon be built up a great commercial, agricultural, and manufacturing centre.

Yet here we are but just on the threshold of the great new empire of the Northwest. Here is the summit of the water-shed of near half a continent, the hills of Northeastern Minnesota pouring from their slope streams that flow to the lakes and the Atlantic on the east, to the Mississippi and the Gulf of

³¹ These slate outcroppings never proved commercially important. For a description of them, see George M. Schwartz, *The Geology of the Duluth Metropolitan Area*, 19–22 (Minnesota Geological Survey, *Bulletins* No. 33 — Minneapolis, 1949).

THE Clark House, center for Duluth social life in the 1870s



Mexico on the south, and to Hudson's Bay on the north. The head of Lake Superior is about equidistant from Boston, New Orleans, and the sources of the Saskatchewan, towards which the course of empire is fast taking its way. Not far from this geographical centre we may look with Mr. [William H.] Seward for the ultimate political centre of America; and it will not be many years before the frontier State of Minnesota will wake up and find herself in the heart of the Union.³²

A few landmarks show how powerfully the tide of human affairs is tending in this direction. In 1854 Minnesota had a population of twenty-four thousand. In 1864 she had sent more than that number of soldiers to the war. As late as 1858 she imported her breadstuffs. In 1868 she exported twelve million bushels of wheat, and was reckoned the fifth "wheat State" in the Union. This year (1869), with a population of near half a million, and more than a million acres of wheat under cultivation, — promising a crop of at least twenty million bushels, sixteen or seventeen millions of which will be for exportation, — she will take rank as the second or third wheat State; in a few years she will be the first, and that position she will retain until outstripped in her turn by some more youthful rival.³³

Rivals all about her she is destined soon to have. The North[ern] Pacific Railroad is now speedily to be built, running from the head of Lake Superior almost due westward to Puget Sound, through the most favored region of all the proposed transcontinental routes. It will sow cities on its borders, and link new States to the old. . . . Northward from the proposed line of the North Pacific Road one must travel some six hundred miles before he reaches the parallel of Edinburgh. What a region is here! rich in soils, rivers, forests, remote from the mother country, and adjoining our own, of which it must before many years form a part. Of the future of America, when all this old and new territory, stretching from Lake Superior to the Pacific coast, shall have become, with Minnesota, a

cluster of populous and powerful States, who shall venture to prophesy?

IT IS SUNDAY again (August 22d) just a week after our arrival, when the larger of the two little steamers that brought us to Duluth is once more thronged, together with the wharf at which she lies, with a crowd of people. There is much cordial hand-shaking, and hurrying ashore, and hurrying aboard; and the crowd separates, one half remaining on the wharf, the other moving slowly away from it on the steamer's deck. A mutual waving of hats and fluttering of handkerchiefs, and adieu to Duluth, and its week-old friendships, and its never-to-be-forgotten hospitalities!

Down the bay we go tipsily staggering; the crank little "side-wheeler" rolling over first on one paddle-box and then on the other, to the breakwater at the end of Minnesota Point, where is moored a long, black-hulled lake steamer, the *St. Paul*, awaiting us; we are soon transferred on board of her; before us lies a dim horizon of waters, and soon behind us is trailing an endless black flag of smoke, miles away, over the darkening waves; and we are homeward bound.³⁴

³² The reference is to the epoch-making speech delivered by Seward in St. Paul on September 18, 1860. See *Minnesota History*, 37:52 (June, 1960).

³³ In 1850 Minnesota had a population of 6,077, which in 1857 had increased to 150,037. No reliable figures exist for the intervening years, but Trowbridge's estimate for 1854 seems reasonable. In 1870 Minnesota's population was 439,706. The state exported 12,764,017 bushels of wheat in 1869, three-fourths of which was from the 1868 crop. Though 1,006,007 acres were sown to wheat in 1869, total production reached only 17,660,457 bushels. See *United States Census*, 1850, p. 998; 1870, *Population*, 3; *Statistics of Minnesota*, 1869, p. 64, 114; 1870, p. 19.

³⁴ The "St. Paul," a steam propeller built in 1868, was operated by Ward's Lake Superior Line on a regular schedule between Cleveland, Ohio, and Duluth. According to an advertisement in the *Duluth Minnesotian*, August 28, 1869, the round trip required fourteen days.

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