
THE EDITOR'S PAGE

IN RECENT conversations the editor of this magazine was mildly surprised to learn that some would-be authors did not know the procedures for offering articles for publication. Moreover, in at least two instances writers seemed unaware that the quarterly's pages are open to anyone who can produce publishable material.

Lest there be any doubts, we decided to reiterate in this space that *Minnesota History* is interested in articles and documents dealing with almost any aspect of the state's past or, more broadly, with the Upper Midwest if Minnesota connections are included. Scholarly (but not pedantic) articles of state-wide interest and based largely on primary sources are preferred. Also acceptable are articles bringing together known materials in an original way and documentary pieces and translations with suitable editing and annotation.

Because we prefer to present a variety of subjects in each issue, we like to receive manuscripts on a wide range of topics — exploration, Indians, fur trade, folklore, biographies, archaeology, cultural themes, and economic and social history, among others. There are many, many subjects that have not been treated in depth — or at all — in the magazine. If there is an overabundance of any one topic, accepted manuscripts in that field probably will take longer to see print than one that will offer the desired variety.

One criterion for acceptance is originality of an article's theme. Before tackling a subject, first check to see whether it has been treated in *Minnesota History* or in some other publication and then determine whether you have something new to say. Files of the magazine are available in numerous libraries, and scholars can refer to the quarterly's master index at the society. It helps if a subject is of general interest. Local topics are acceptable only if they have some state-wide application.

The sources on which an article is based are an-

other criterion for acceptance. The more extensive the primary sources consulted the better. Fresh conclusions based on sound scholarship are highly desirable, but mere "sounding off" without "homework" in primary sources is less acceptable.

A third criterion is the author's style. We prefer a straightforward, well organized way of expression in which the author communicates clearly what he is trying to say. Forego long sentences and hazy references, if possible.

Minnesota History does not pay for material it uses, but each year the Minnesota Historical Society makes \$250 available to the winner of the Solon J. Buck Award for what a panel of judges chooses as the best article published in the quarterly during the previous year.

Manuscripts should be typed double-spaced. Send the editor the original or an easy-to-read copy, not one in which words trail off into nothing on the margins. An author should keep a copy for himself. All manuscripts need to be footnoted, and preferably the footnotes should be typed consecutively at the end of the article. For footnoting style, consult past issues of the magazine. Send pictures with the article if you have some appropriate ones.

Articles of from 5,000 to 6,000 words are best suited for *Minnesota History*. The maximum is about 8,000 words. Authors "mining" dissertations should especially keep length in mind.

Minnesota History has always been a magazine of high standards, and we intend to keep it that way. This should not discourage authors. Rather, it may help them discover that, in the words of J. H. Plumb, "local history contains, as few other subjects do, an intellectual delight of the most varied kind for the amateur as well as the professional."

KENNETH CARLEY, *Editor*



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