

*Exploring Historical Brickmaking in Minnesota*

# Minnesota Bricks

May 2018

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[www.mnbricks.com](http://www.mnbricks.com)

## Chaska Brick

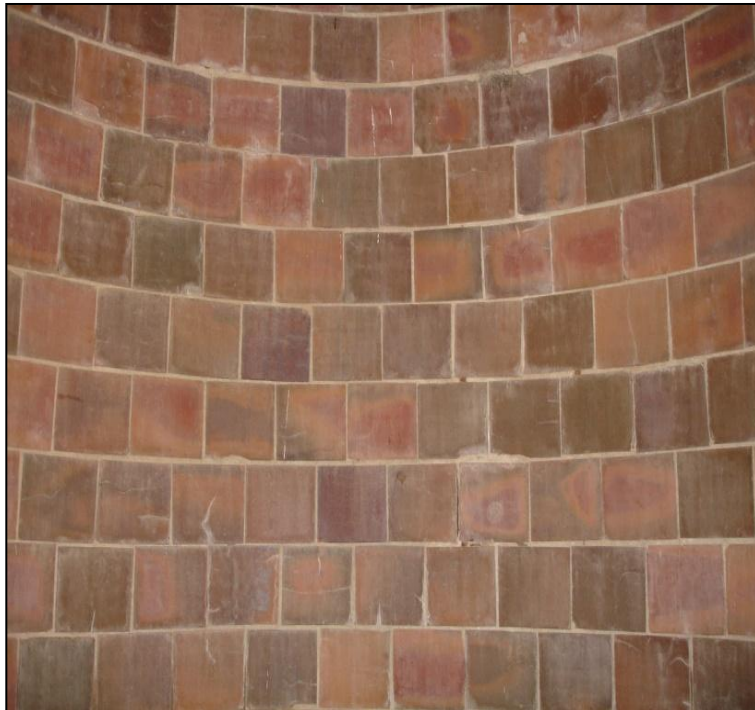
Brickmaking in Chaska Minnesota



[www.chaskabrick.com](http://www.chaskabrick.com)

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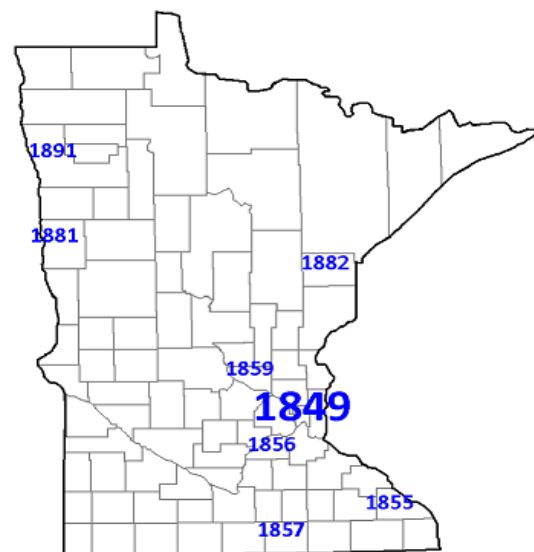
# 1. What's New?

- One of the primary reasons people come to my website is to find out how bricks were made. I freshened up the post I have about this topic, which is located at:

**[www.mnbricks.com/making-bricks-the-old-fashioned-way](http://www.mnbricks.com/making-bricks-the-old-fashioned-way)**

- I continue work on my book about the brickyards of Chaska, Minnesota
- If you want to sign up to automatically receive this newsletter, you can do so at [www.mnbricks.com](http://www.mnbricks.com)
- I added a new graphic which gives a rough timeline of brickmaking in various areas of Minnesota. This graphic can be found at:

**[www.mnbricks.com/timeline-of-minnesota-brickyards](http://www.mnbricks.com/timeline-of-minnesota-brickyards)**



## 2. Photo of the Month



### What stands out?

The first thing I notice is the fancy hat on the man to the right. He was clearly a man of importance.

Both men hold trowels and a single brick, so they are getting ready to lay more brick on the building.

On the zoomed in shot, you can see the “mud,” or mortar on one of the bricks.

*On the front of the card: “Papa and Will at Work. Summer 1906.”*

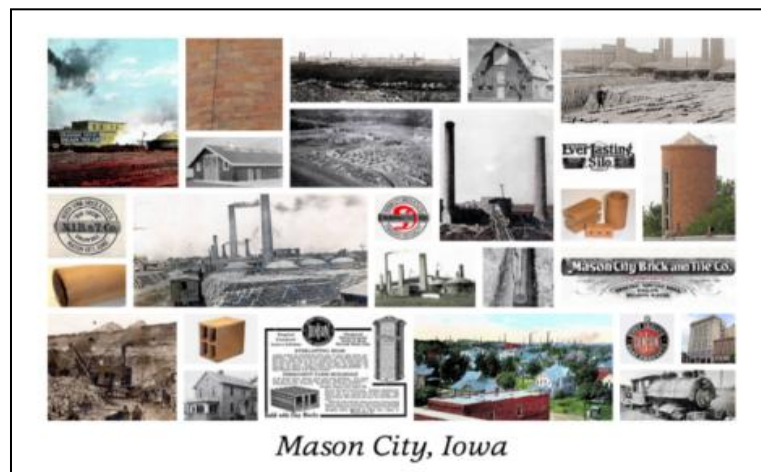


# 3. For Sale

There are still many brick-related remnants left from the old days.

Shown below is a 20 x 30 inch collage poster about the brick history of Mason City, Iowa. You can find it for purchase on the “shop” page of my website, [www.mnbricks.com](http://www.mnbricks.com).

On the same page mentioned above, there are other posters for sale on various brick towns, the historic Minnesota River Valley churches, and the Minnesota Winter of 1880-81.



# 4. Word Search

## Shakopee, Minnesota Brick

J I O Z C S M F L U T K P C R O N B F I X G Y I E X A Z T Q  
R J F D Q H C I H A Y O U Y V O M S O L W F T I N R X Z H T  
Z G L D O L M H E J Z K A A I O W O S K Z A N C A V Y J O H  
W E O I I E L S R J M L L T V D G H V H Q C U S V W U R M D  
P X Q S K Q Y E H O P L C Q S F A H C F D H O X S V B G A R  
N F E I E T G E L L E N B E C K B R I C K A C W W R Z J S B  
F E L H N N W N J Y U D Q S O R U A J N F S T P K N D I A X  
Y N K U G C R M R J W X E P E H K E Z H H T T X Y H W K H R  
L O O C B N Z A D Y H X E R C U Y E W E B I O F T V M C O Y  
T C Q Z E F I A B C N E Y S B U E T V H F N C K Z B W I L X  
D P J F Y L O S E T B T K W D R R H J G N G S L E M E R M Q  
I W P U R R F X T R R R Q R E V I R A T O S E N N I M B E F  
N G W O L T H M I E A O Y K X A L C X P R D R O J Y Q S S U  
Q K A I L Z L C A M A A F W K K X F K U E A M G R Y P S J H  
K D A N X W K I T D C M O M G S N S V Z D K Z U I M R E J V  
O R V U A U D S D Q A J B J O F E R R Y B O A T A K T L H H  
S T M A R Y S C H U R C H O Y C T U F X R T S J P W V E N T  
P A X W N U K M S J J L M K A M W F J L I A Q G S I S M H Z  
R G T H O N U B Z F Z X K D V T X A W F C Z G C E R V A Q V  
A X G V W H Y R T S U D N I E M I L J P K G I F L Z P N B G

ADAM FLECKEN  
COMFORT BARNES  
COUNTY SEAT  
FERRY BOAT  
GELLENBECK BRICK

HASTINGS DAKOTA  
LIME INDUSTRY  
LIME KILN  
MINNESOTA RIVER  
NAMELESS BRICK

RAILROAD JUNCTION  
RED BRICK  
SCHROEDER BRICK  
SCOTT COUNTY  
SHAKOPEE BRICK

STEAMBOAT  
ST MARKS CHURCH  
ST MARYS CHURCH  
THOMAS A HOLMES  
VALLEY RAILROAD

# 5. A Look Back

## Joseph Renville Minnesota history Segment

Joseph Renville was a pioneer in Minnesota, and his name can be found today in Renville County, Minnesota, Renville County, North Dakota, and the town of Renville, Minnesota. **Excerpt from: Dakota Tawaxitku Kin, The Dakota Friend, St. Paul, Minnesota, August 1852:**

Page 3. Joseph Renville was of mixed descent, and his history forms a link between the past and present history of Minnesota. His father was a French trader of much reputation. His mother was a Dakota, connected with some of the principal men of the Kaposia band. He was born just below the town of St. Paul, about the year 1779, during the war of the American Revolution. At that time, there were probably not more than six white families residing in the whole of that vast territory, that now comprises Northern Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota. Accustomed to see no European countenance, but that of his father, in sports, habits and feelings, he was a full Dakota youth. As often happens, his mother deserted her husband, and went to live with

Page 4. one of her own blood. The father noticing the activity of his son's mind, took him to Canada, before he was ten years of age and placed him under the tuition of a Priest of Rome. His instructor appears to have been both a kind and good man, and from him, he obtained a slight knowledge of the French language, and the elements of the Christian religion. Before he attained to manhood, he was brought back to the Dakota land, and was called to mourn the death of his father. ...In 1819 Col. Snelling, commenced the erection of the massive stone fort, at the junction of the Mississippi and Minnesota. From this time Renville (about 40 years old) became more acquainted with the people of the United States, and some of his (trading) posts being within the limits of the Republic, and there being great commotion in the Hudson's Bay Company, he with several other experienced trappers, established a new company in 1822, which they called the Columbia Fur Company. Of this new organization he was the presiding genius.



When Major Long arrived at Fort Saint Anthony, as Snelling was then called, in the year 1823, he became acquainted with Renville, and engaged him as the interpreter of the expedition to explore the Minnesota, and Red River of the North. The Historian of the expedition, Professor Keating gave to the world, one of the most interesting accounts of the Dakota nation, that has ever been published, and he states that for most of the information he is indebted to the subject of this sketch.

Shortly after the Columbia Fur Company commenced its operations, the American Fur Company of New York, of which John Jacob Astor, was one of the directors, not wishing any rivals in the trade, purchased their posts, and good will, and retained the "coureurs des bois." Under this new arrangement, Renville removed to Lac-qui-Parle, and erected a trading house, and here he resided until the end of his days (1846). ...Aware of the improvidence of his mother's race, he used his influence, towards the raising of grain. He was instrumental in having the first seed corn planted on the Upper Minnesota.



Fort Snelling Ferry Crossing



# 6. Brick Structure of the Month



## Winona State Normal School

**Excerpt from Winona Daily Republican, Saturday, October 20, 1866, Page 2:**

The ceremony of laying the corner stone of the new State Normal School building took place according to previous arrangement, on Friday afternoon, at three o'clock. The day was delightful. The rain of Thursday had settled the dust, which was becoming quite uncomfortable, and the sun in all his golden glory was shining his benedictions upon the glad earth in seeming approval of the festive occasion. The people were out in their strength, and the children in their innocence and beauty.

The number present on the grounds we have heard estimated by competent judges at from 2,500 to 3,000. The interest manifested in the proceedings was deep and abiding. We have never seen so large a number of persons, including so many children, at an open-air meeting where such excellent order was observed and such close attention was bestowed upon the exercises to the end, as on this occasion. The fact speaks volumes in behalf of the excellent discipline and the high moral tone which exist in the schools of this city, while it reflects the highest credit upon the capacity and fidelity of the teachers who have charge of them. (Continues on Page 10)



**FACT**

Normal schools were used to train high school graduates to become teachers

At half-past two o'clock the streets were made merry with the excellent music of Prof. Osten's Band, which had been engaged for the occasion, and which, in its own happy style, was thus uttering its notes of warning to our citizens of the near approach of the appointed hour for the proceedings. At a few minutes before three o'clock the procession was formed in front of the building at present occupied by the Normal School, on Fourth street, under the direction of C. H. Berry, Esq., as Marshal of the day, assisted by Mr. P. P. Hubbell. The line was formed promptly and without the slightest confusion, and was ready to commence its march at precisely three o'clock, the hour appointed.

The procession, which extended through the distance of about four squares, moved in the following order: 1. Osten's Band. 2. The pupils of the several departments of the State Normal School, preceded by their teachers. 3. The Superintendent and Teachers of the City Public Schools, followed by the pupils of the High and Grammar schools. 4. Officers and members of the St. Cecelia Society in full force. 5. Officers and Members of the Board of Education of the city of Winona. 6. His Honor the Mayor and the Common Council. 7. The Prudential Committee of the State Normal School. 8. His Excellency Governor Marshall and the President of the State Normal Board. 9. The Speakers for the occasion. 10. Citizens and strangers.

**Over 600,000 bricks  
were used in its  
construction**

The route of the procession was up Fourth street to Johnson, and down Johnson to Sanborn street. Arriving at the front line of the building site, the procession was halted and "opened to the right and left" through its entire extent. This movement was executed under the order of the marshal, with a promptness and precision that would have done credit to veteran soldiers.

Preceded by the Band, the procession reversed its order, Governor Marshall and the gentlemen composing the public bodies heretofore specified, moving with heads uncovered through the long files of happy children to the front, to the places assigned them, the boys raising their hats and the girls waving their handkerchiefs, along the entire line.

This portion of the ceremony was impressive and beautiful to look upon. After the public officers and speakers had reached the platform in the immediate proximity to the northwest corner of the main tower, at which point the stone was to be laid, the pupils and teachers of the respective schools, preceded by the Saint Cecilia Society, continuing the movement in reverse, passed in perfect order to their respective positions within the lines of the excavation made for the edifice, while the citizens in great numbers stood on the embankment surrounding the excavations, giving the appearance of a vast amphitheater filled with the interested spectators of a pleasant and happy scene. The assembled multitude was called to order at about twenty minutes past three o'clock by Dr. John D. Ford, President of the State Normal Board, who (gave a speech)...

These remarks were followed by the performance of a choral from Mendelssohn's celebrated Hymn of Praise, by the Saint Cecilia Society, in its best style. A most appropriate and impressive prayer was then offered by the Rev. D. C. Lyon, of the Presbyterian church, after which the band played one of its most effective pieces, and President Ford introduced his Honor Chief Justice Wilson, of the Supreme Court of the State (who also gave a speech). This address was heartily applauded at its close, and the band again struck up one of its liveliest airs, keeping the large concourse of people in the happiest mood and preparing them to receive with unabated attention the interesting offerings which follow. The Principal of the Normal School, Professor Phelps now stepped forward in response to the call of the president of the board, holding in his hand a tin box, ten inches long by seven in width and four and a half in depth.

(Professor Phelps gave a short speech). This box, which his Excellency the Governor will soon consign to its resting place in the firm foundations of this edifice, contains –

1. A copy of the Sacred Scriptures.
2. The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America.
3. The Constitution of the United States.
4. The Act organizing the Territory of Minnesota.
5. The Constitution of Minnesota.
6. The act of admission into the Union.
7. The act establishing the State Normal Schools.
8. The Common School Laws of the State as now in force.
9. A copy of The Daily Republican and of each of the weekly papers of this city.
10. Reports of the State Normal School since its re-organization in 1864.
11. Specimens of the Postage Stamps of all nations, kindly furnished by Maverick & Brother of this city.
12. Specimens of the Postal Currency and of the Coins of the United States.

13. The Constitution, By-Laws, and First Annual Statement of the Board of Trade of the City of Winona, together with the Card of the United National Bank, contributed by Thomas E. Bennett, Esq., President of the Board.
14. Manuscripts with the names of the Governor, State Officers, Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the State.
15. The Roll of Officers and Members of the Legislature of 1866 by which the first appropriation for this building was made.
16. The names of the State Normal Board, the Architect of this building (G. P. Randall, of Chicago), the Superintendent of construction (William S. Drew) and Master builder (C. Bohn, Winona; brick masons: Jones & Butler, Winona).
17. A catalogue of the Instructors and pupils in the several departments of the Normal School.
18. The names of the Mayor and the Members of the Common Council of the city of Winona.
19. The names of the Board of Education, the city Superintendent, and Teachers of the public schools of the city.
20. And last, but not least, the Constitution and roll of Members of the Saint Cecilia Society, who have honored us by their presence and favored us with their splendid musical performances, so grateful to our tastes, and sympathies on this memorable occasion.

...Governor Marshall, having been introduced by the President of the Board, received the box at the hands of the Principal and said: "I now proceed to the agreeable duty assigned me on this occasion, and consign these memorials to the receptacle prepared for them beneath the corner stone of this edifice." Descending from the platform the Governor then deposited the box in its resting place and resuming his position on the stage spoke in substance as follows: (his speech). ...At the conclusion of this address, which was heartily applauded, the Governor directed the workmen, who were standing in front of him, to place the corner stone in position.

The stone was standing on edge, in line with the position it was to occupy, and at the word it was turned over on its face and accurately adjusted on its natural bed over the cavity in the first course above the concrete foundation, which at this point is thirty-two inches thick. This concrete is composed of a mixture of coarse sand with gravel, lime, and cement, and is already very compact. It will soon be as hard and unyielding as the rocky layers above it. The corner stone, which was selected with excellent judgment by Wm. S. Drew, Esq., the Superintendent of the work, is three by five feet and seven inches thick, and a fine specimen of the cream colored magnesian limestone which forms the bulk of the "everlasting hills" that guard our city from the fierce winds of the prairie land beyond us.

The adjustment of the massive stone have been completed by Mr. Edwin Elkin, and his assistants, the Governor then said: "I now declare the Corner Stone of the Building for the First State Normal School of Minnesota to be securely laid." The Superintendent of the work then rose and propose(d) three cheers for his Excellency the Governor and the Normal School of the State. This call was heartily responded to by the immense crowd, and the Saint Cecilia Society at once executed that splendid choral from Mendelssohn, "Hail America!" At the conclusion of the performance President Ford introduced Hon. Mark H. Dunnell (who also gave a speech)... At the conclusion of this eloquent speech, to which very inadequate justice has been done in this report, the assembled multitude joined in the Doxology – "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." The benediction was pronounced by the Rev. A. Gale, of Minneapolis, Secretary of the Baptist State Convention. The band now struck up the patriotic air, "We'll Rally Round the Flag, Boys," in the midst of which the multitude dispersed, delighted with the ceremonies which we have described. The event is one long to be remembered, and we doubt not will often be reverted to by many of its participants as a sunny spot in the experiences of life, and as marking an important era in the history of popular education in our State.

**Excerpt from Winona Daily Republican, Friday, December 10, 1869, Page 2:** The general form of the building is that of a double cross, consisting of a main edifice rectangular in shape, 63 by 78 feet, and intersected by a wing at each extremity. The wings are each 50 by 85 feet. The main building and east wing are three stories above the basement, and the west wing is four stories high. The basement story is ten feet high. The first story is 13 feet, the second 16 feet, the third 19 feet, and the fourth story of the west wing is 23 feet to the crown of the ceiling, at the base of the sky lights. The southeast corner of the west wing terminates in a ventilating shaft, 8 by 8 feet, and 85 feet high; and the northwest corner of the east wing terminates in the main tower, 15 by 15 feet at the base, and 130 feet high. The front of the rear walls of the main building and the east wall of the east wing are supported by turrets, 4 by 5 feet, exterior dimensions, and projecting about 18 feet above the roof. The building is of red bricks, with facings and trimmings of a drab colored calciferous sandstone, making a very agreeable contrast of colors and shades. Its style is decidedly modern. It has a French or Mansard roof.



The building was destroyed by fire on  
Sunday, December 3, 1922