

*Exploring Historical Brickmaking in Minnesota*

# Minnesota Bricks

August 2018

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## Chaska Brick

Brickmaking in Chaska Minnesota



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

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# 1. What's New?

- I attended the Polk County Fair in Fertile, Minnesota, in early July. While there, I drove by the brickyard ruins, which were featured in an old edition of "Brick Structure of the Month." Sad to say, but they were recently bulldozed and there is nearly nothing left of the site now. Guess that is what is called progress.
- If you want to sign up to automatically receive this newsletter, you can do so at [www.mnbricks.com](http://www.mnbricks.com)
- I know there are a lot of history buffs out there. If you have information on bricks or brickyards, I would love to hear about it. If you have old historical photographs you would like to share, those are also great conversation pieces.

**SHARE INFORMATION  
& OLD  
PHOTOGRAPHS!**



## 2. Photo of the Month



### **N. P. Washout, Fertile, Minn. postcard**

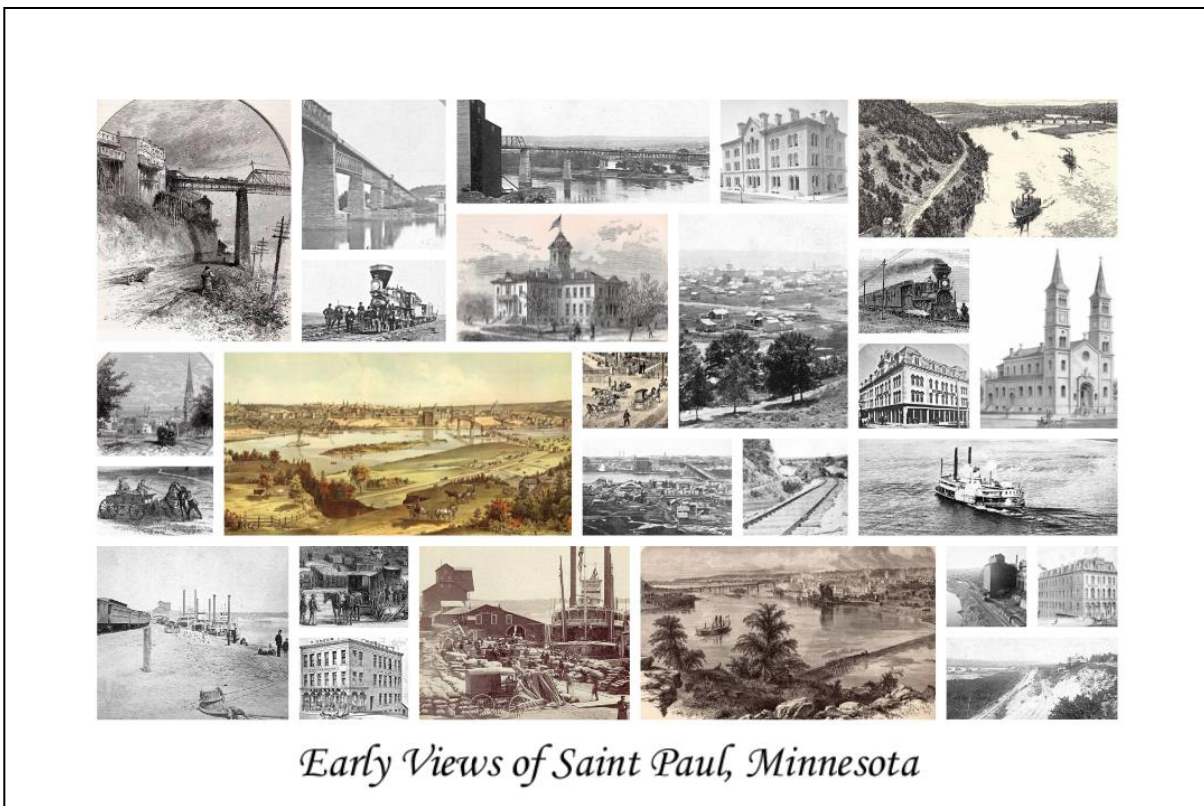
This is a postcard showing a Northern Pacific Railroad bridge washed out near Fertile, Minnesota, from an unknown date. Although not specified, it is likely the bridge over the Sand Hill River just south of Fertile. This was actually not too far away from the Fertile brickyard. If you drive by the Sand Hill River, it is barely a small stream. This postcard shows a raging river, so a lot of rain must have fallen for this to occur. Sadly, just about all traces of the Fertile branch of the Northern Pacific Railroad are gone today. However, if you drive along highway 102 from near Crookston to Fertile, you can still see traces of where this line once ran.

# 3. For Sale

Do you ever wonder what some of the early cities in Minnesota looked like over a hundred years ago?

Shown below is a 20 x 30 inch collage poster showing some of the early views of St. Paul, Minnesota. You can purchase it 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

## FERTILE, MINNESOTA BRICK

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

ABUNDANT SAND  
AGASSIZ DUNES  
ANDREW OPHEIM  
BRICK HIGH SCHOOL  
BRICKYARD RUINS

CREAM BRICK  
EDGE OF THE VALLEY  
FERTILE BRICK AND TILE  
GARFIELD AVENUE  
HISTORIC WATER TOWER

KRONSCHNABEL  
NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD  
OTTO KANKEL  
POLK COUNTY  
RED RIVER BRICK CORP

SANDHILL RIVER  
SIDE TRACK  
SIMS BRICK  
STEAM SHOVEL  
WASHINGTON AVENUE

# 5. A Look Back

## THE BUTTER INDUSTRY

### MINNESOTA HISTORY SEGMENT

Last week we alluded to the fact that Andrew Palmer, Jr., was largely engaged in shipping butter to New York. We now learn that he has associated with him in the trade Mr. Alfred Folsom, of the latter place, and old and experienced butter-maker and packer, and that they are receiving, daily, the entire collection of nearly every merchant along the line of the Southern Minnesota Railroad, west to its terminus, thereby enabling them to select and grade by itself, and by the aid of the most improved machinery to carefully handle, each lot so separated, as its condition and character requires, some of it being entirely separated washed, re-worked, and re-salted, whereas other lots are simply cooled and re-worked, or it may be, salted and worked less than other lots. Each firkin being finally filled with a uniform and improved grade that will keep in any climate, and shipped by them to New York, receiving a fresh supply of ice three times in its transit and insuring its speedy arrival in as good condition as when it leaves their cellars, without change of cars the entire distance. This enterprise is likely to prove of immense benefit to our agricultural friends, as it enables the merchants to pay higher prices than they would be justified in doing, did they rely on the usual mode of packing and shipping individual collections. We are informed that during the hot weather last summer, on a better eastern market than now prevails, they lost money by paying 10 cents per pound, by packing and shipping their own purchases, after the usual manner of handling it, whereas by this arrangement they are now able to pay much better prices and materially improve the standard of Minnesota butter, thereby enhancing its value to the purchaser and diminishing the commission and charges of middlemen. (Freeborn County Standard, Albert Lea, Minnesota, Thursday, June 25, 1874, Page 3)

Mr. Andrew Palmer, Jr., of this place, is engaged heavily in the butter trade. He has a contract to fill with parties in New York, and has about 11,000 pounds ready for shipment. (Freeborn County Standard, Albert Lea, Minnesota, Thursday, June 18, 1874, Page 3)

**Andrew Palmer Advertisement**  
(Freeborn County Standard, Albert Lea,  
Minnesota, Thursday, September 3, 1874, Page 3)

**CASH PAID**  
FOR  
**Butter & Wool**  
AT  
**PALMER'S HEADQUARTERS**

## News Nuggets from the late 1800s

Among the many enterprises in Winona, the ice business ranks not the least. Thousands of tons are being put up here for the New Orleans market. This ice business gives winter employment to many men and teams, and transportation for the boats and barges during the summer. I am informed that Upper Mississippi ice is considered superior to Boston ice, from whence New Orleans and other southern cities have largely imported from. It being exceedingly hard and clear, and free from a peculiar, unpleasant taste the eastern ice seems to be impregnated with. (*Mower County Register*, Austin, Minnesota, Thursday, March 10, 1870, Page 2)

Mr. John Robeson, of Winona, has stored 5,000 tons of ice for the Southern market. (*Mower County Register*, Austin, Minnesota, Thursday, March 10, 1870, Page 2)

We have many times spoken of the matter of setting out shade trees. Every individual in Austin who owns a house and piece of ground should not fail to set out shade trees the very first work that he does. Farmers also, in this prairie country, who set out trees now, in twenty years, will see the superior wisdom of cultivating trees for ornamentation and usefulness in front of their farms. (*Mower County Register*, Austin, Minnesota, Thursday, April 22, 1869, Page 1)

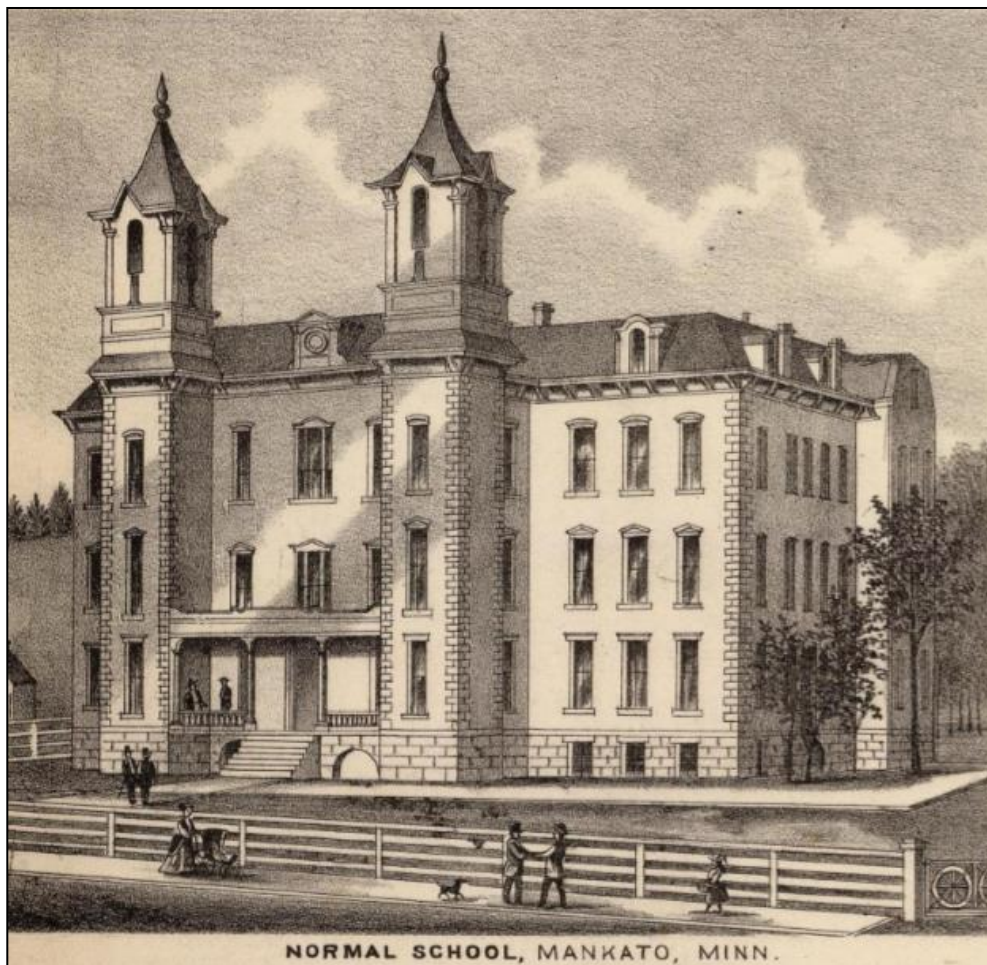


# 6. Brick Structure of the Month



## MANKATO NORMAL SCHOOL

There has been no measure before the Legislature this past winter in which our people have felt so deep and lively an interest as that making provision for the erection of a State Normal School building at this place. (*The Mankato Union*, Friday, March 15, 1867, Page 2)



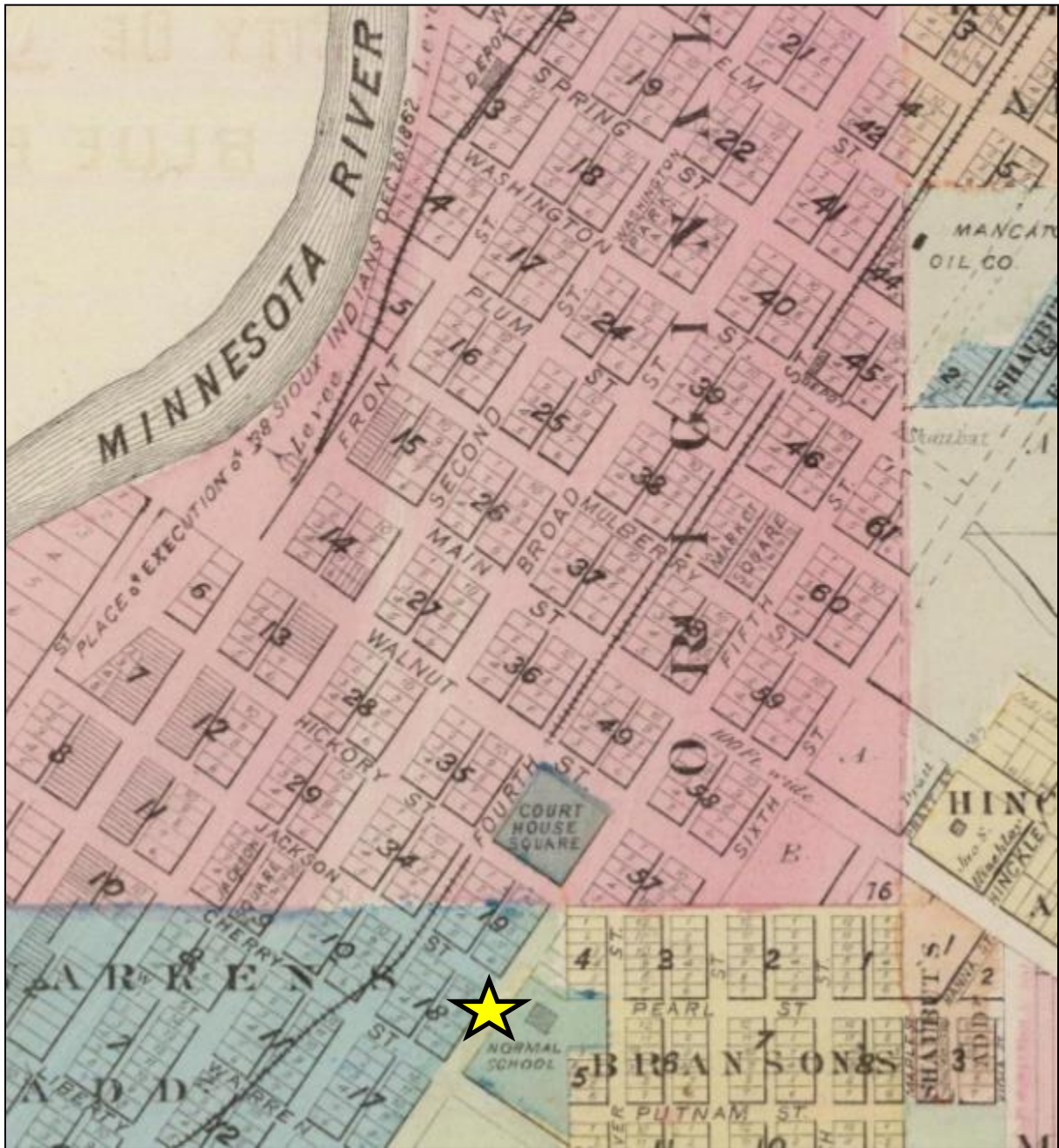
We learn from the *Mankato Record* that the State Normal School Board, consisting of Rev. Mr. Parker, Dr. McMasters, Gen. Andrews, Mr. Blodgett, Daniel Buck, Esq., and Phelps, Principal of the Winona Normal School, met at Mankato of Thursday last, to select a site for the Second State Normal School, which is located at that place. A fractional block fronting on Fifth street and extending from Hickory to Cherry, containing nearly three acres, and owned by Mr. David Lines, suited the Board in everything except its triangular shape... (*Winona Daily Republican*, Tuesday, July 21, 1868, Page 3)

Work has commenced on the Second State Normal School at Mankato. (*Winona Daily Republican*, Tuesday, May 18, 1869, Page 1)

The laying of the corner stone of the second State Normal School at Mankato took place last week, accompanied with music, speeches and marches. (*Shakopee Weekly Argus*, Thursday, July 1, 1869, Page 1)

At the head of Jackson street, on Fifth, stands the new normal school building, not yet complete inside. It stands on the first bench of the grand old bluff that walls in the city from the land side, overlooking pleasantly the residences and business bustle beneath. The building is 126x116 feet, three stories, besides basement, and embellished with two towers 120 feet high, with cupolas; the building is furnished with a Mansard roof, and is an ornament to the city and State. The entire number of rooms is 46, and is intended to accommodate 600 pupils. The basement story is of stone, and the superstructure of native brick, with cut stone corners, window-dressings, and outside steps. The building was commenced in June, 1869, is now enclosed, floors laid, partitions now being set. The appropriations contemplate furnishing grading and fencing of grounds, &c., and is estimated, when all complete, to cost \$75,000. Too much praise cannot be bestowed upon the architect and contractor of this building for the tasty manner in which it was designed, and substantial manner of its construction. W. P. Boardman was the architect, and he has lately received orders for a draught of the Third Normal School building, to be erected at St. Cloud. Lewis J. Lewis is the contractor; Hon. Daniel Buck, member of the State Normal Board, James Brown, Esq., and L. C. Harrington, all of Mankato, were the building committee. The building here will be completed ready for occupancy by September, 1870, and is generally conceded to be economically built. (*Minneapolis Daily Tribune*, Tuesday, January 18, 1870, Page 3)

**A Normal School  
was a College for  
Training Teachers**



Location of the Mankato Normal School from the 1874 Andreas Atlas of Minnesota