

*Exploring Historical Brickmaking in Minnesota*

# Minnesota Bricks

October 2018

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

## Chaska Brick

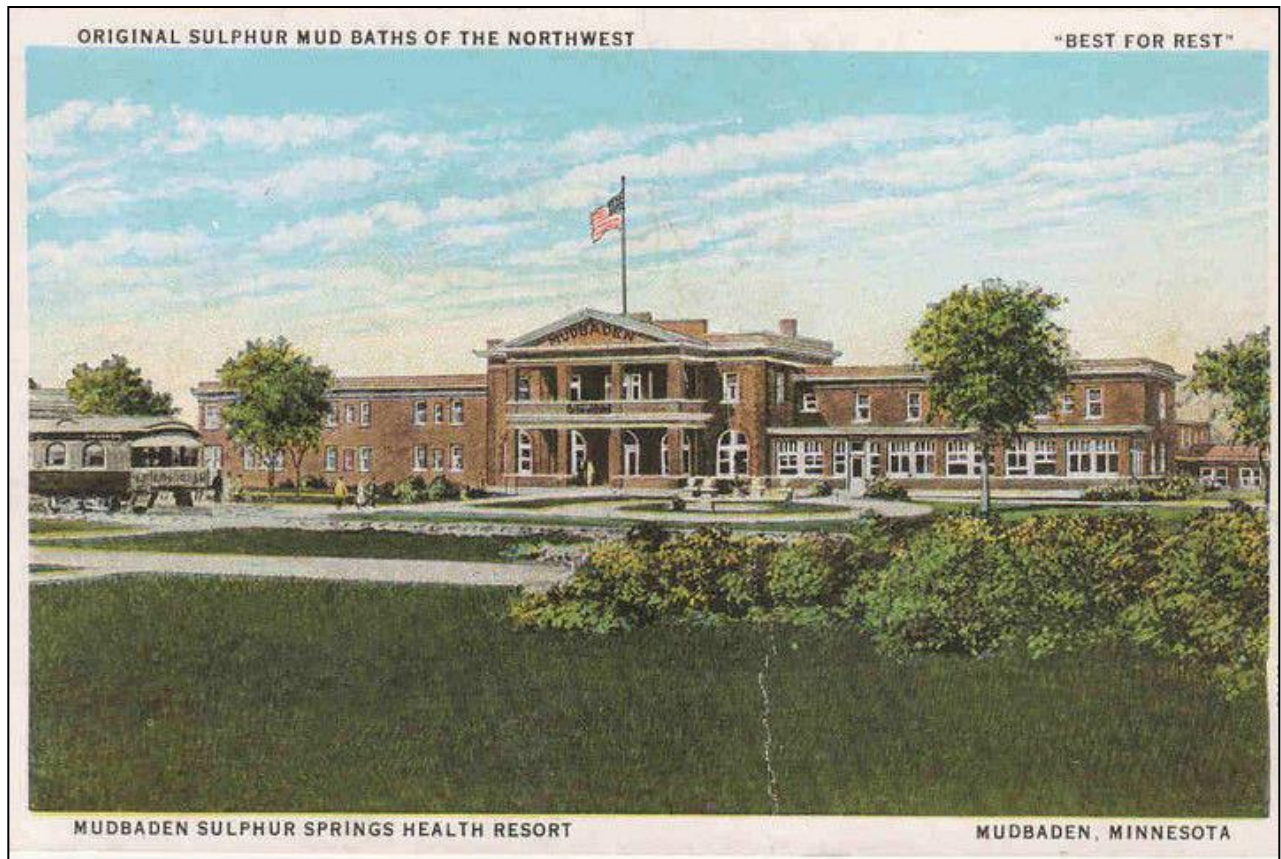
Brickmaking in Chaska Minnesota



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

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In the early 1900s, Sulphur springs were very popular, as the water and steam were thought to have medicinal powers. Resorts were built near these springs, where people came to bath in the curing waters (if you could stand the rotten egg smell). Near the Twin Cities in Minnesota, one was built near Chanhassen, and a second near Jordan. The Chanhassen location has been torn down, but the Jordan location (shown on the previous page) remains standing today. They had fine restaurants and orchestras (shown top and bottom), so they were quite elaborate.





# 1. What's New?

- I have put a lot of work into a new audio history section. When I research brick topics, I run across a wide variety of interesting information. Railroads were crucial to the success of brickyards. Check out my new railroad construction audio section at [www.mnbricks.com/brickipedia](http://www.mnbricks.com/brickipedia)
- If you want to sign up to automatically receive this newsletter, you can do so at [www.mnbricks.com](http://www.mnbricks.com)
- I continue to make my website more user friendly. Several maps and links on the home page have been updated.

**SHARE INFORMATION  
& OLD  
PHOTOGRAPHS!**



## 2. Photo of the Month



### 1881 River Flooding

I have a collage poster (shown on the next page) for sale on my website, with pictures from the winter of 1880-81. Laura Ingalls Wilder described this winter in her book, "The Long Winter."

This is a photograph of a steam locomotive in the Mississippi River flood waters at Rock Island, Illinois. After the "Long Winter," the spring flood of 1881 was also memorable all over the Midwest.

There is a neat brick building in the background on the left. It is probably a depot or some other railroad structure.

# 3. For Sale

The winter of 1880-81 was a brutal winter in Minnesota. I have seen many photographs of snow drifts and trains stuck in the snow from that winter.

Shown below is a 20 x 30 inch collage poster showing some of these photographs of that historic winter. You can purchase it on the “shop” page of my website, [www.mnbricks.com/shop](http://www.mnbricks.com/shop)

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



# 4. Word Search

## WARREN, MINNESOTA BRICK

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

BRICK SHIPPED BY TRAIN  
COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
CREAM BRICK  
GREAT NORTHERN RAILROAD  
JOHN LUND

LUNDGREN BROTHERS  
MARSHALL COUNTY  
MAYOR LUNDGREN  
NORTHWEST MINNESOTA  
RED RIVER VALLEY

RICH BLACK SOIL  
RIVER FLOODING  
SAINT VINCENT LINE  
SCARCE WOOD  
SNAKE RIVER

SOO LINE RAILROAD  
THE FLAT LANDS  
THE WIND BELT  
WHEAT COUNTRY  
WOOD WANTED

# 5. A Look Back

## THE MINNESOTA STATE FAIR IN 1867

### MINNESOTA HISTORY SEGMENT

Rochester, Oct. 5th, 1867. The State Fair commenced on Tuesday the 1st inst., and continued until Friday the 4th, with fine weather, except wind and dust, until the last day, when a rain set in at about 1 o'clock P. M.

Rochester is a place of some 6,000 or 8,000 inhabitants, located on the Zumbro river, in Olmsted county, surrounded by a rich agricultural country, and is one of the many beautiful and healthy cities of Minnesota. There are some very fine public and private buildings here among which we might mention the Court House, several brick blocks, &c. The Court House is built upon an elevated portion of the city, and can be seen for several miles. Some of the old settlers of Watertown are located here. Geo. Hand has just completed a brick block. John Head is also here. Eleven years ago where this city now stands, was a howling wilderness, and the county only contained 25 inhabitants.

We had the pleasure of shaking hands with our friend and a pioneer citizen of Watertown, Wm. Chappell. He is traveling for his health, and sight-seeing in our State. Jim. Tremain, of your city, is Assistant Superintendent and Conductor on the W. & St. P. R. R. We also met Harry Moak, Conductor on this road, running from Rochester to Owatonna, on an extra passenger train during the fair. At the fair we met Mr. R. B. Basford and his accomplished lady, Mrs. Tremain, Mrs. Beecher and daughter, and others from Watertown, in attendance at the fair. H. B. Gallup is here, and has on exhibition the self-acting iron hand-loom, from the manufactory of Wait, Gallup & Co., at Watertown. This loom is one of the main features of the fair, and aside from the races, seems to draw the largest crowd.

The fair grounds contain 80 acres, are enclosed with a high board fence, and well laid off with a Floral Hall 40 by 100 feet, a Mechanical Hall the same size, and a Vegetable Hall 40 by 100 feet, with only a roof. Between these different departments, agricultural implements and farm machinery are arranged in two rows. On the east side of the grounds, stalls, for the accommodation of stock, are built, to the number of 30 or 40, and in the centre is located a kind of amphitheatre, with seats to accommodate about 5,000 persons, and commanding a splendid view of the race track.

Continued on the next page...



## State Fair Advertisement

(*The Rochester Post*, Saturday,  
September 28, 1867, Page 3)

**GERMAN THEATRE!!**  
**STATE FAIR.**  
**TUESDAY, DES 1 OCTOBER, 1867.**  
**Lumpacius Vagabunds oder Das Leid-  
erliche Kleeblatt.**  
**With Song and Dance.**  
**PERFORMANCE COMMENCE at 8½**  
**TICKETS, - - 50 CENTS.**  
After the performance a  
**GRAND BALL.**

The Fair is said to be the best ever held in the State, and far more people are in attendance than on any similar occasion. Hotels are filled to the shingles, and last night a good many were obliged to sleep in out-houses, or stand around the bonfires that smouldered most of the night, after the public speaking by Gov. Marshall, Hon. M. S. Wilkinson, and other distinguished politicians and orators.

The State Fair Post, issued from the office of the Rochester Weekly Post, by Leonard & Booth, was printed daily and distributed gratuitously during the four days of the fair. It was a blessing to those in attendance, as it contained all the doings, with a daily programme of proceedings, &c.; a credit to its publishers and another proof of Rochester enterprise.

During the days of the Fair it was very windy and dusty, and from the city to the grounds there was a thick cloud of dust, flying high into the heavens, marking the track of the multitude of omnibuses, hacks, wagons, buggies, &c., that continually vibrated between the two points.

On the grounds were the usual amount of shows and contrivances to get your "bottom dollar." There were the omnipresent fat woman, living skeleton, bearded lady, wax-work of Lincoln's assassinator, specimens of living and inanimate beings, airguns, throwing of rings on nails, swings, and in fact all kinds of inducements for the unsophisticated to spend their money, in the way of shows, from the learned pig to the Fox Family. All seemed to be doing a "land office business." In the city Plunkett's Star Dramatic Troupe, and a German theatre, together with balls every night, formed the amusements.

The crowd is beginning to get somewhat thinner than yesterday. Every train that leaves here is crowded with people going home. As soon as a train arrives, the rush begins, and crinoline, water-falls, suspenders and private corns, are shown no mercy, and those so fortunate as to secure seats in the cars, only get them at the risk of limb and life. Moral suasion is nowhere, physical force is everywhere.

Taken together, the exhibition has been a very good one, but we will be glad to get through it, and once more breathe a long breath, and enjoy a little rest. (*Watertown Republican*, Watertown, Wisconsin, Wednesday, October 16, 1867, Page 1)

## News Nuggets from the late 1800s

We were last week presented by Mr. Geo. Huyler, of Cascade, with a carrot measuring two and a half feet in length, and with a parsnip measuring over four feet from the top of the bulb to the end of the root! (*The Rochester City Post*, Saturday, November 26, 1859, Page 3)

The stables, hay-stacks, some grain, harnesses, a buggy-wagon, &c., &c., belonging to Mr. C. H. Keeler, of Oronoco, were burned on Tuesday afternoon last, having caught fire by a spark flying from the house chimney. This is a serious misfortune to Mr. K., whose winter fodder is all thus suddenly consumed. (*The Rochester City Post*, Saturday, February 11, 1860, Page 3)

A yoke of valuable cattle belonging to Squire Hardin, of Kalmar, last week left the city very mysteriously, while the Squire was doing some trading, and although the country has been scoured in every direction, they have not yet been found. The cattle are large, of a red color, the nigh one lighter than the other, and the off ox having a white stripe in the forehead, as also a white-tipped tail, and a white strip along the rump. The wagon to which the cattle were attached contained a lot of Groceries, some grain bags, &c. Any information concerning the team, if left at this office or at Kalmar, will be suitably rewarded. (*The Rochester City Post*, Saturday, March 24, 1860, Page 3)

A den of rattle-snakes was discovered in the township of New Haven the other day - out of which 23 were killed - some of them measuring about 4 ½ feet in length. (*The Rochester City Post*, Saturday, May 5, 1860, Page 2)

The Rochester City Band give a ball at Morton Hall, on Wednesday evening next. Tickets \$1.00. refreshments served up in the Hall. We desire especially to commend this entertainment to the friends of the Band. They have for a long time been endeavoring to raise a sufficient sum to purchase an additional instrument, but with only partial success. They still lack about \$20, which certainly ought to be realized on Wednesday evening. The Band enterprise is worthy of encouragement - it is an institution creditable to our young city and every person who is able to do so, ought to either to attend the Concert and Ball of the Band, or to contribute something to the object sought to be attained thereby. (*The Rochester City Post*, Saturday, May 5, 1860, Page 2)

We often hear a bell spoken of, as among the foremost of our public wants. Shall we have one? If not, then we must lower our sails, and concede, however reluctantly in any respect, that several of our Minnesota Towns are our superiors in manifestations of public spirit, at least in this direction. The travelers landing at Winona, is greeted with the music of its bells, and making his way westward he is in like manner greeted at Faribault, and again at Mankato, and so on as he goes in other directions; but at the aspiring to be the queen inland City, Rochester, all is stillness in this respect, its citizens and visitors hearing no other for their bell music than that of the cow and dinner bell varieties. ...Can we not have a bell to be owned not by a society, and not by individuals, but by the City of Rochester, and such bell in a good degree supply the wants of all citizens? (*The Rochester City Post*, Saturday, May 12, 1860, Page 2)

## 6. Brick Structures of the Month



### **ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL, JORDAN & THE PILLSBURY MANSION, LAKE MINNETONKA**

I stopped to take the picture below, of the St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Jordan, Minnesota, in December 2017. To take the picture, I pulled into the parking lot of the old brick school, which was located across the street from this church. Little did I know, that the next time I would drive by (in August 2018), the brick school would be torn down. So this month, the brick structures of the month are two structures which are no longer standing.



I find most of my historical references online, and the Jordan newspaper is not one of them. Therefore, I have little to no information about the brick used in the Jordan Catholic school building. The only information I have, is that the cornerstone was laid on June 24, 1908, and the building was opened on November 26, 1908. So it lasted just over 100 years.



I had several people tell me about the destruction of the Pillsbury Mansion, which was located on Lake Minnetonka. This building was also torn down in August 2018. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Lake Minnetonka was a resort area for the residents of the Twin Cities. They could take the train directly to the lake.

I don't have any good references on the Pillsbury Mansion either. From reading local news stories, the brick mansion was built in 1918 by John and Eleanor Pillsbury. The Pillsbury family is well known in Minnesota. Who has never seen an advertisement by the Pillsbury dough boy?

Again, I apologize for having no pictures of either structure. Sometimes information takes a lot of digging.

**Lake Minnetonka is located  
about 15 miles west-southwest  
of Minneapolis**

