

Exploring Historical Brickmaking in Minnesota

Minnesota Bricks

January 2019

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www.mnbricks.com

Chaska Brick

Brickmaking in Chaska Minnesota



www.chaskabrick.com

Contents

1. What's New?	3
2. Photo of the Month	4
3. For Sale	5
4. A Look Back	6
5. Brick Structure of the Month	8
6. News Nuggets	9



Roundhouse Workers from 1930 (Milwaukee, Wisconsin)

1. What's New?

- I continue to add YouTube videos with historical information to my websites. I have two new videos this month: one on the Stone Arch Bridge of Minneapolis, and the second on Francis Xavier Hirscher, of Shakopee, Minnesota. Both fascinating looks at Minnesota history and can be found at <https://www.mnbricks.com/mn-historical-videos/>
- Feel free to bring me new information. History is something that can be a lot of work. I can't read every book or visit every historical society in Minnesota, so I appreciate when people send me tips or information.
- If you want to sign up to automatically receive this newsletter, you can do so at www.mnbricks.com
- If there is something you would like to see added, send me an email at mnbricks@gmail.com.



2. Photo of the Month



**STONE ARCH
BRIDGE AT
MINNEAPOLIS,
MN**

What is interesting?

I have a new You Tube video about this bridge. Check it out at <https://www.mnbricks.com/mn-historical-videos/>

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 with pictures of historic silo advertisements from Minnesota and Iowa. You can find it for purchase on the "shop" page of my website: www.mnbricks.com/shop

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. A Look Back

TOBOGGAN RUN AT BRAINERD, MN MINNESOTA HISTORY SEGMENT

The toboggan club of this city decided at a meeting at the Villard hotel Wednesday evening to build a grand slide on the railroad land in front of the Sleeper block. The slide will be 680 feet in length, extending from Sixth to Eighth streets, with two tracks, one running each way. The starting point at each slide is at an elevation of 32 feet running down an incline about 120 feet before it strikes the level surface, which will give velocity enough to the toboggans to send them the entire length of the slide at a speed that will suit the most fastidious of sliders. The tracks will be iced by water from the hydrants adjacent, and which Mr. Kindred kindly gives the club the use of free.

In the centre of the enclosure an ice rink will be constructed which will have a skating surface of 90x500 feet. The prominent location of these out door sports right in the centre of the city is a desirable feature and the success of the enterprise is apparent. The contract for putting up the slide was let to Ed. Mahan Wednesday evening for \$360 and he has already got the work well under way, he having agreed to have it completed in one week, so by the time the *Dispatch* reaches its many readers next week it will be in full operation. The use of the park is given by the railroad company free of cost. (*The Brainerd Dispatch*, Friday, December 17, 1886, Page 4)

**See Photograph on the Next Page
(although the photograph is not related to the Brainerd toboggan run, it shows a
ski jump at Fergus Falls, Minnesota)**



Ski Jump at Fergus Falls, Minnesota

5. Brick Structure of the Month



OCHS BRICK HOUSE SPRINGFIELD, MINNESOTA

Springfield, Minnesota, is what I imagine a typical Minnesota town used to look like. If you visit it today, it looks a lot like it did in the old days. There are brick churches, brick business blocks, brick schools, and a lot of brick homes. Why so much brick? Adolph C. Ochs had a prosperous brick business in Springfield. The Ochs brickyard produced bricks for many years, and its orange-red bricks are still in buildings all over town and in the surrounding country.



In Springfield, Adolph C. Ochs built a beautiful brick home for his family. It still stands to this day, as a testament to his work. The architecture of the home is remarkable, with fancy brickwork throughout. Adolph also left his initials in a fancy logo over his front door (not pictured here). If you like historical Minnesota towns and fancy brickwork, Springfield is worth a trip!

6. News Nuggets

News Nuggets

The Good Templars of St. Paul Lodge No. 38 and St. Anthony Lodge No. 35, had a delightful time at their picnic on Saturday at Lake Harriet, near Minneapolis. The Templars of this city left here at an early hour of the morning in carriages, and at St. Anthony were joined by their brethren and sisters, and the gay party proceeded together to the picnic grounds on the shore of Lake Harriet. The preparations made by the gentlemen who keeps the place were excellent. Tables and other conveniences were all ready. There were four fine sail boats on the lake and all of them were speedily filled by parties of ladies and gentlemen, who enjoyed it highly, as a good breeze blew all day. There is a fine bathing house for ladies, on the beach, with dresses and other conveniences. Several hundred fish were caught, and the utmost enjoyment and gay good humor prevailed. The dinner – which was served up by the ladies, was bountiful in the extreme – enough for thrice the number present. The party broke up at 6 o'clock, the St. Anthony folks retreating homeward, and the St. Paul members returning by Minnehaha Falls and Fort Snelling. The entire day was spent in the most pleasant manner, and was one long to be remembered by those fortunate enough to be present. They are loud in their praises of the beautiful scenery on and near Lake Harriet, and declare it a more delightful spot for a picnic than any other lake near St. Paul. The gentleman who keeps the place knows how to please the public. The charge for the four boats all day was only \$5. At some other lakes \$5 per day is charged for a single boat. There is a beautiful grove by the lake, and the best of bathing and fishing to be had. It is only twelve miles from this city. (*The Saint Paul Press*, Tuesday, July 28, 1863, Page 4)

Our Red River Trade. A large number of the merchants and traders from the Selkirk settlement are again in town, and the jobbing business of our city has in consequence received an unusual impetus for the season. Some two hundred and fifty carts are at St. Cloud, awaiting the arrival of the purchases and shipments made here to take back with them to the settlement. As they will each carry some 800 pounds, the number of tons of merchandise that will find its way to this distant settlement from our city this fall with amount to fully one hundred. This is the second trip these carts have made this season, most of them carrying a load each way, and as their cattle have to subsist on the grass which is to be found by the wayside, after the days journey is performed, their endurance may be considered remarkable. (*The Saint Paul Press*, Thursday, September 17, 1863, Page 4)

Continued on the Next Page

Everybody is engaged making a garden now, who has a garden spot to cultivate. Consequently the trade in garden tools is lively, and the demand brisk. The receipts are also large. The Key City (steamboat) yesterday brought up 242 bundles of garden tools, such as hoes, rakes, shovels, spades, scythes, &c. This is the largest lot ever received at one time. (*The Saint Paul Press*, Tuesday, May 5, 1863, Page 4)

A correspondent residing on Wabashaw street, sends us a strong complaint against the authorities, for permitting cows to run at large through the streets of the city; and alleging that much destruction of shade and ornamental trees, fences, &c., is of daily occurrence. (*The Saint Paul Press*, Wednesday, June 11, 1862, Page 4)

Our city sportsmen have been turning their attention of late mostly to duck-hunting. The numbers of these birds that can be killed by a good shot is surprising. Mr. A. F. Knight was out last week with some friends, and killed on an average two dozen per day. (*The Saint Paul Press*, Tuesday, October 27, 1863, Page 4)

Apples are coming in by the boat load. Fully one thousand barrels have arrived since Saturday. (*The Saint Paul Press*, Tuesday, October 27, 1863, Page 4)

Saint Paul is the headquarters of one of the largest Stage Companies in the Northwest, wielding more capital than any other in the Western States, and whose line altogether are more extensive than any other one company. We refer to the "Minnesota Stage Company," owned by J. C. Burbank, Russell Blakely and John L. Merriam. This company are now running over six hundred and fifty horses and one hundred coaches, and their lines are over twelve hundred miles in length altogether. On the La Crosse and Saint Paul route, which they run from November 15th to April 15th, annually, they have 300 horses and twenty coaches and sleighs, sufficient to run four times daily. So extensive is the business of this line that the movements of the stages are directed by telegraph. They also run during the winter season a daily route from La Crosse to Mankato. Also a daily line from Saint Paul to Mankato, running through all the Minnesota Valley towns; and from Saint Paul southward to Owatonna, via Faribault. Northward they run daily to St. Cloud and tri-weekly to Fort Ripley and Fort Abercrombie, the latter line being 400 miles in length. They also have a daily line to Stillwater, and a tri-weekly line to Sunrise and Superior. Little by little this Company has been extending its operations until its passenger and express business now embraces nearly all done in and through the State. As trade and travel springs up from point to point, its enterprising managers are on the alert to accommodate it by a line of stages. They have expended large amounts in repairing roads and bridge over their routes, and thus done a real service to the public, while more than one route (to Fort Abercrombie, for instance) has been an aid to the settlement of the country it traverses. Two or three of these lines will ere long be discontinued, and the Railroad take their place. The Stage Coach is a pioneer, which is pushed farther West each year, and by-and-by we will probably read of the "Pembina and Bannock City daily line," or some equally frontier route, while most of those now run by the Minnesota Stage Company will be traversed by the railroad car. (*The Saint Paul Press*, Friday, November 20, 1863, Page 4)