

*Exploring Historical Brickmaking in Minnesota*

# Minnesota Bricks

April 2019

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## Chaska Brick

Brickmaking in Chaska Minnesota



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

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This is a train at the Minneapolis & St. Louis Depot at Jordan, Minnesota.

# 1. What's New?

- I added a couple new historical YouTube videos this past month. One is about the sulfur spring resorts at Jordan and Shakopee, Minnesota. I think this story is really fascinating if you have never heard it before. The second video is on the 1850 steamboat explorations of the Minnesota River. I encourage you to watch this one too, as there is a lot of information about the Minnesota River. You can find these videos at [www.mnbricks.com/mn-historical-videos](http://www.mnbricks.com/mn-historical-videos)
- I have been looking at old Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and finding a few brickyard locations that I had not found before. I will be adding these to the gallery sections for the appropriate brickyards as I have time.
- I am always looking for new topics or neat subjects. Feel free to contact me at [www.mnbricks.com](http://www.mnbricks.com)
- If you want to sign up to automatically receive this newsletter via email, you can do so at [www.mnbricks.com](http://www.mnbricks.com)



**SHARE INFORMATION  
& OLD  
PHOTOGRAPHS!**

## 2. Photo of the Month



### **The Mankato, Minnesota Brickyards**

On the back of this postcard, it says "Mankato Brickyard." This almost looks like workers in a farm field, but it is brickyard workers in a field of drying bricks.

# 3. For Sale

I have acquired quite a bit of brick silo related material over the years, which include pictures, plans, and various drawings that are quite fascinating.

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

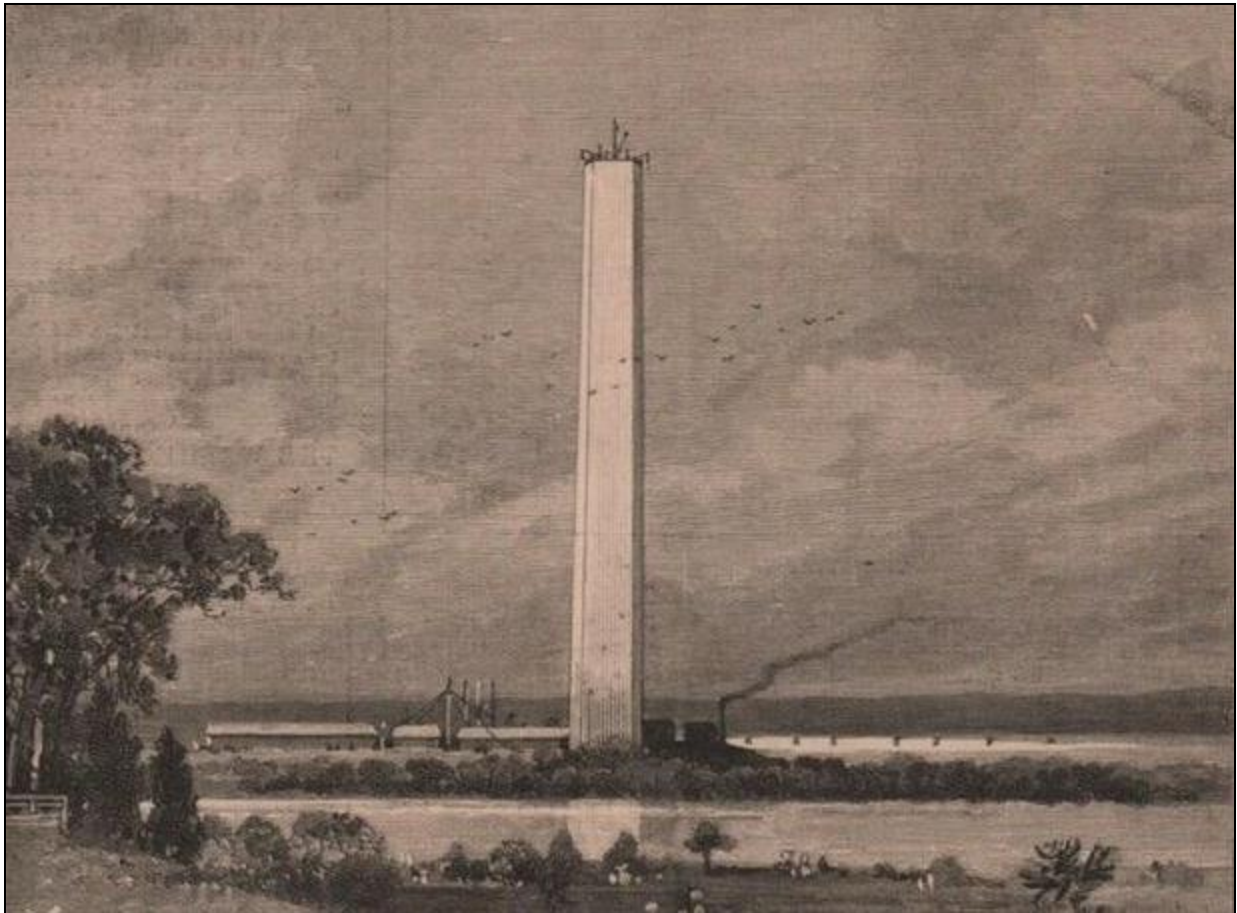
There are other posters for sale on various brick towns, historic Minnesota River Valley churches, and Minnesota brick silos on my shop page as well.



## 4. A Look Back

### MINNESOTA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT MINNESOTA HISTORY SEGMENT

Did you know that when they were building the Washington Monument in 1849, states could donate pieces of rock, mineral, etc., to be used in the monument? I visited the monument years ago, but I don't remember seeing any of these. However, the pieces of rock that were donated were used in the interior walls and landings. The picture below shows the Washington Monument during construction.



Excerpts about this donation process are shown on the next page...

The [Minnesota] Legislature intend to send a slab of the red stone such as Indian pipes are made from, and known as "Eyanshah," the Sioux name, or called by Mr. Catlin "Catlinite," to the building committee of the Washington Monument, as their tribute to that noble structure. (*The Miners' Express*, Dubuque, Iowa, Wednesday, September 26, 1849, Page 2)

The Washington Monument. What is Iowa doing towards furnishing a block of her beautiful Marble, to be incorporated into the magnificent and sacred structure, now being erected at the Capital of the nation, to the memory of the illustrious Washington? By our correspondence from Minnesota, it will be seen that the young Territory have offered their tribute, and more recently, we learn, that Michigan has done so likewise. Minnesota sends a block of "Catlinite;" Michigan contributes a solid block of copper - a specimen of its greatest and most valuable natural production, and one that, no doubt, will be highly acceptable to the Building Committee. Shall Iowa be represented in that noble structure? (*The Miners' Express*, Dubuque, Iowa, Wednesday, October 3, 1849, Page 2)

The Washington Monument. In a short article upon this subject, two weeks since, we took occasion to ask, what Iowa was doing towards furnishing a block of her beautiful marble, as a contribution to this noble structure. We are indebted to the Hon. Joseph T. Fales for the following information. Iowa City, Oct. 5, 1849. Dr. Holt - Sir: In reply to your article in the Express of the 3d inst., headed "The Washington Monument," I would say, that the Hon. J. H. Bonney and myself have lately been examining various specimens of rock from several various portions of the State, and particularly on the Des Moines River, for the purpose of procuring a block of marble for said Monument, but have not yet met with any that can be obtained of sufficient thickness and fineness of texture combined, that would be suitable for the purpose. (*The Miners' Express*, Dubuque, Iowa, Wednesday, October 17, 1849, Page 2)

**A Piece of Catlinite from the Pipestone, Minnesota quarries**



# 5. News Nuggets

One of our office boys started out early on the morning of the 10th inst., to create a "local" item. He took his skates with him, and buckling them on, struck out on the pond above the creek. He skated some, but got wet more. His purpose was to be able to say he skated on the 10th of April, and in this he succeeded. The like was never before known by the oldest inhabitant. (*The Mankato Union*, Friday, April 12, 1867, Page 3)

On last Friday morning, about six o'clock, the steamer Julia, commanded by Capt. Raney, struck a snag, two miles below this city, on the larboard side, causing her to sink immediately in twelve feet of water. (*The Mankato Union*, Friday, May 17, 1867, Page 3)

The steamer Hudson left this port on Saturday last for the purpose of raising the steamer Julia. She had her two large wheat barges, and a marine pump which will throw a hundred barrels of water per minute. A barge was placed on either side of the wreck, and filled with water to sink them to the water's edge. The wreck was then lashed firmly to them, by timbers placed through the Julia and across the barges. By pumping the water out of the barges they will rise to the surface and bring the wreck with it. Owing however to some derangement in the machinery of the Hudson they were obliged to send her below, and work is therefore suspended for the present, but will be resumed in a few days. (*The Mankato Union*, Friday, May 24, 1867, Page 3)

Three persons were attempting to cross the ferry on Saturday last when directly after starting from this side, the rope broke and the boat commenced going down stream. Two of them jumped off in shallow water and returned to this shore. The other man, Mr. Harts, went with the ferry into a swift current which caught the boat and drew it under. Mr. Harts caught a floating plank and cried for help. A skiff was sent to his relief, and by holding on to it he was brought to shore. The ferry railing when it sunk was barely in sight, but the river since has totally covered it. A skiff is running for public accommodation. The ferry will be raised as soon as the water recedes. (*The Mankato Union*, Friday, June 7, 1867, Page 3)

Mr. L. T. Kellogg shipped on the Mollie Mohler, yesterday, a large lot of furs consisting of 7,110 rat, 70 mink, 4 otter, 18 wolf, 40 badgers and a miscellaneous lot of coon, skunk, and wild cat skins. He also shipped at the same time about 7,000 pounds of cattle hides. He commenced to collect these skins on the 9th of May last, and in a month's time they were nearly all brought. They were taken in the counties of Faribault, Martin, and Jackson, and their value is about \$4,500. Quite a number of sheep pelts were also shipped at the same time. (*The Mankato Union*, Friday, June 21, 1867, Page 3)

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**News Nuggets  
from the late 1800s**



## News Nuggets from the late 1800s

The [steamboat] Chippewa Falls arrived at our levee on Saturday last with a heavy Government freight, and a small freight for our merchants. After laying about a half an hour a person on shore discovered that she was sinking, and strange as it may appear, neither officers or crew had discovered it, and the water was almost on deck. The boat was immediately run on to a shoal in the rear of the Union Office, but even there she could not touch bottom. Our citizens shoved out in great numbers in small boats with buckets in hand and through their efforts, the water was kept below the deck, until the leak could be discovered. The lead was found and repaired and the water pumped out, and in two hours she was all right. A few barrels of flour were pitched overboard and recovered, also two pieces of machinery. We understand, however, that 600 pounds of sugar belonging to J. J. Shaubut, and a barrel of apples belonging to Boyington & Cheney Garden City, were thrown over and lost. Under the exception of "perils of navigation;" the boat claimed that it was not liable to pay for them. There was no necessity for throwing off any goods, but the crew were excited and every thing went as if the boat had been "kicked an end." (*The Mankato Union*, Friday, July 5, 1867, Page 3)

Base Ball Match. The North Star Club of St. Paul, to the number of fourteen members arrived per Mollie, on Wednesday morning last, and were taken in charge by the Frontier club who assigned rooms for them at the Clifton and Mankato Hotels. The morning was spent in visiting the Minneopa falls, which our guests declare far surpass in beauty and romance any falls in the State. At two o'clock, a crowd in carriages and under awnings to the number of seven or eight hundred persons had gathered to witness the match game. The band under the direction of B. Sibley entertained the people with some excellent music, while Wallace had a large run on soda, lemonade, &c. Capt. Howe of Owatonna was chosen Umpire and Messrs. John Wilson, and Ira S. Smith were the scorers. ...It will be seen that the North Star Club made 57 rounds to 14 for the Frontier. It was expected that our Club would be severely beaten but it was hoped that our boys would at least play with their usual skill. The batting of our boys was unusually poor, so that but few rounds were made at each inning. The fielding was better but not in the aggregate as good as we have seen on other occasions. It was like raw recruits meeting war worn veterans. ...Among the Star Club were five brothers, one the scorer, and the other four in the game, named Wilson... The club are in splendid drill, and their experience has so far given them the position of the champions of the State. ...In the evening at Shoemaker's Hall a large party assembled in honor of our St. Paul friends, and with appropriate music the dance was extended far into the night. With the best of feeling the Clubs parted company yesterday morning and the North Star left on the Mollie for St. Paul. (*The Mankato Union*, Friday, July 12, 1867, Page 3)

While the North Star Ball Club was on its way from Mankato, on Thursday of last week, Harrison Wilson fell over a bank while running down to the Steamboat landing at Le Sueur, and broke his left shoulder blade. He came all the way home in this condition - some seven hours, and had the fracture dressed by Drs. Murphy & Wharton. *Pioneer*. (*The Mankato Union*, Friday, July 19, 1867, Page 3)

# 6. Brick Structure of the Month



## MINNEAPOLIS HIGH SCHOOL



If you look closely at this old photograph, this building does not have any brick on the outside, so you may wonder how I can pick it as the Brick Structure of the Month. The outside was made of local limestone from the Minneapolis area, but much of the inside was made with brick. Although I have no source to say where the brick was from, it was likely locally made Minneapolis brick.

Continued on the next page...

The plans of the new High School building in the office of Long & Haglin, architects, are nearly completed. As they now appear we see a school house that will not be discounted in Minnesota. That is not superlative praise as there are no overly expensive public school buildings in the state.

The location of the new house is on Fourth Avenue South between Eleventh and Twelfth streets. It is a fine site, high and well drained. The building, according to the plans, is not reared in the clouds, but reaches to a respectable height. There are only two school floors, the first and second; the third is divided up into halls for society and public exhibition purposes. The material is rock-faced limestone, with cut stone trimmings.

The style of architecture is modern gothic. The principal tower, corner of Fourth and Eleventh, is one hundred feet high. The extreme dimensions are 136 feet by 112 feet. There are a few gables to relieve and beautify the slate roof. On the Eleventh avenue front is the girls' entrance. Here there is a verandah 46x10, which will be decidedly pleasant for a promenade. It also affords the passage way from the superintendent's room to the main hall without going through the recitation rooms or out doors.

The girls pass in through a vestibule 8x10 to a large hall 19x22. From this hall is an easy flight of stairs to the second floor. The stairs are enclosed in brick walls; and in fact brick walls are found all over the building where they are needed as protection in case of fire. There are two school rooms 44x52 each on either side of this hall. Each school room has three recitation rooms 20x23. The boys' entrance is on Twelfth street and is similarly provided. There are plenty of closets for both girls and boys.

The superintendent's corner is in the corner on Eleventh street and Fourth avenue. He will have two rooms, 11x17 and 13x20. The second floor is the same as the first, with the exception that over the superintendent's rooms there are two rooms for the laboratory. The third floor is devoted to a hall 52x70 and a literary society room 40x54. There is also a room for drawing 22x54. In the basement there will be a room for a gymnasium. The heating apparatus, &c., will also be in this room. (*The Minneapolis Tribune*, Saturday, April 21, 1877, Page 4)