

HISTORY OF  
Goodhue County  
MINNESOTA

ILLUSTRATED

EDITOR IN CHIEF

FRANKLYN CURTISS-WEDGE

ASSISTED BY

W. M. Sweney, M. D.; Jens K. Grondahl; C. A. Rasmussen; Julius  
Boraas, M. L.; F. W. Kalfahs; Edward W. Schmidt, M. A.;  
Mrs. Julia B. Nelson; E. Norelius, D. D.; George C.  
Wellner, M. D.; John C. Applegate; Ralph W.  
Holmes; Dwight C. Pierce; Henry Hal-  
vorson; Rev. James H. Gaughan;  
Henry R. Cobb; Edgar F.  
Davis and many others

---

CHICAGO  
H. C. COOPER, JR., & CO.

1909

battle of Cold Harbor, June 1, 1864, when the New England regiments were being mowed down like grass, he gave up his life in defense of his country and the principles in which he so thoroughly believed. To Mr. and Mrs. Hancock were born four children. Eugene A. is the capable manager of the family estate at Featherstone, having taken charge of the home farm in 1899. He lives at 1208 Twelfth street, in Red Wing, with his mother, driving to and fro to attend to his duties on the farm. Fred L., the second son, died in infancy at Worcester, Vt. Arabella R. married Hiram Watson, of Red Wing. The youngest child, N. Maude, married Gustave Kunze, an insurance agent, of St. Paul.

**William W. Sweney, M. D.**, was the second physician who settled in Minnesota for the purpose of practicing his profession. He located in St. Paul in April, 1850. Dr. Murphy had settled there the year before. Dr. Sweney was the son of Alexander M. and Mary M. Kehr Sweney, and was born in Northumberland county, Pennsylvania, in the year 1818. His father was of Scotch-Irish, and his mother of Piedmontese-Huguenot descent. When William was eighteen years old he moved to Fulton county, Illinois, having previously obtained an academic education in his native town. He read medicine with Dr. Abram Hull, of Marietta, Ill., practiced in connection with him in 1848-9, and graduated at Rush Medical College, Chicago, after settling in Minnesota. In May, 1852, he came to Red Wing, which was at that time an Indian town, on the Mississippi, having an Indian farmer, John Bush, and an Indian missionary, Rev. Joseph W. Hancock. The doctor gave his services to the Indians, whenever called upon, freely, and was highly esteemed by them. After the Indians were removed, as settlers multiplied, Dr. Sweney's professional business increased, and for a quarter of a century he had as many and as long rides as any one man could reasonably desire. He always had the confidence of the people up to the time he was unable to practice longer. He was a member of the Goodhue County and of the State Medical Society; was president of the former in 1872, and of the latter in 1873. He wrote several essays on the "Climatology and Diseases of Minnesota," a prize essay on the "Epidemics and Endemics of Minnesota," a prize essay on "Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis"; also on a few other subjects. He was elected to the territorial legislature in 1857, serving in the last session before Minnesota became a state. He also held office several terms in the municipality of Red Wing. In politics he was a state's rights Democrat, but no disunionist; not an active politician in his latter years. Dr. Sweney was married in Fulton county, Illinois, in 1841, to Maria Freeborn, daughter of Richard Freeborn, of that place, who emigrated to Minnesota early in the fifties and died in Red Wing

about 1870, in a good old age. Dr. Sweney's favorite pastime was trout fishing, though he often indulged in the pursuit of other game in the early days. He was a good physician, cautious of giving medicine when he was convinced that none was needed, ever ready to attend the calls of the suffering, whether poor or rich. He was a quiet and unassuming man, yet always considered a prominent citizen in Red Wing. His death occurred in August, 1882. His funeral was attended, at the Episcopal church, by the largest number of all classes of citizens ever assembled on a like occasion in the previous history of the place. The church was crowded and its entrances thronged. The procession which followed his remains to their final rest in Oakwood consisted of the various orders of secret societies, the firemen and all the various benevolent associations of the city.