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MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Nineteen Ninety-one Annual Report



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1991

Pursuant to M1977 Laws, Chapter 332
section 4



On the cover:

The Minnesota Historical Society's new identifying symbol is unveiled. The eternal flame in the "M" expresses our mission to illuminate and preserve the story of Minnesota. Our new symbol will represent us in many ways in the coming years. You'll see it on everything from brochures to signs to historic sites.

*The Minnesota Historical Society means different things to
different people. To some it is a place to search for one's roots.
To others, a place for scholarly research. But as the highlights
of our 1991 achievements and accomplishments show, the
Society is more things to more people than most ever imagined.*

This year's Annual Report to the friends of the Minnesota Historical Society focuses on the breadth of the Society's program and on some of the many ways it serves Minnesota's people. Few if any historical societies can match the Minnesota Historical Society in terms of the number of distinct services and programs it offers the public.

Last year, nearly 2 million people were directly involved in some aspect of the Society. As we often note, measured by the number of individuals served, the Society is Minnesota's largest educational institution. Yet even as a leader, we recognize a responsibility to extend our reach and to heighten our sensitivity to the diversity of our state's population.

There were signs throughout the year of this broader reach. Certainly the History Center stands as the most powerful symbol of our responsibility to all Minnesotans. Built with funds appropriated by the Minnesota Legislature and by the donations of corporations, individuals, and foundations, the History Center represents not only a conspicuous expression of the peoples' interest in our work, but also a challenge to the Society to meet their expectations.

In June we laid the cornerstone for the new building. During a moving ceremony, Governor Elmer Andersen reminded us eloquently that the fulfillment of our dreams for the future is tied inevitably to our knowledge of our heritage. Dakota Spiritual Leader Ed Godfrey moved our spirits with his traditional dedication ceremony. As the ceremonial pipe smoke drifted skyward, we imagined future generations of Minnesotans who will find their stories at the History Center. As each person present took a turn placing mortar around the newly placed cornerstone, we thought about the level of public participation that we all hope to achieve when the Center opens its doors next fall.

These are days of change for the Society. We have a proud history, but we know that the History Center will change our institution in ways we are only beginning to see. We have tried this year to understand and even anticipate these changes. Our effort involved us in significant introspection. We assembled focus groups and surveyed our staff and the public. The results revealed much about our own perceived strengths and areas for growth as well as the public's perceptions and needs. We learned how people see us and what they expect from us in the future. We learned that many people know and use our services but have only limited understanding of the Society as a whole.

The Society's new symbol, published for the first time on the cover of this report, is one way we hope to help people identify our many activities and services. The central flame relates strongly to our mission statement that calls on the Society to use its particular expertise in research, interpretation, and education to "illuminate" the human story. Certainly it is our intention to make that flame visible to a much larger audience.

One of the questions asked during focus group sessions was "What does the Minnesota Historical Society mean to you?" Most present mentioned one or two aspects. All were astounded when told of the true breadth of the organization. This experience suggested we should use our Annual Report to present a sampler of the organization's accomplishments during the year. We've chosen to build the sampler on the 26 letters of Minnesota Historical Society. This name has served us well over the last 142 years, nurturing the development of the extraordinary program we offer today.

In the pages that follow, you will find each of the 26 letters and discover their relationship to an area of accomplishment,

with each letter providing a small taste of the Society's collections and diversity of activities. For example, under the first letter "M," which was taken from an 1888 issue of the *Minneapolis Tribune*, you will read about the successful completion of the Minnesota Newspaper Project, while under the letter "Y," taken from a child's wooden block, you will learn how the Exhibits Department plans to use blocks in the History Center's inaugural exhibit, *Minnesota from A to Z*. And there are great stories in between.

In closing, our thoughts turn to people—to Alexander Ramsey and our founders whose ideas continue to compel our work today; to our staff members who both bring about and experience the change that is shaping our institution; to our volunteers with whom we work in full partnership to realize the Society's program; to our board members who lead our organization; to the Minnesota Legislature, which continues the vision seen by our territorial founders; to our donors who express their commitment to the Society's work through their gifts; to our colleagues in county and local historical organizations who bring history to the people throughout the state; and to our members who are our family.

As we anticipate coming together in the History Center in 1992, we are grateful to all who are with us in these exciting and challenging times.

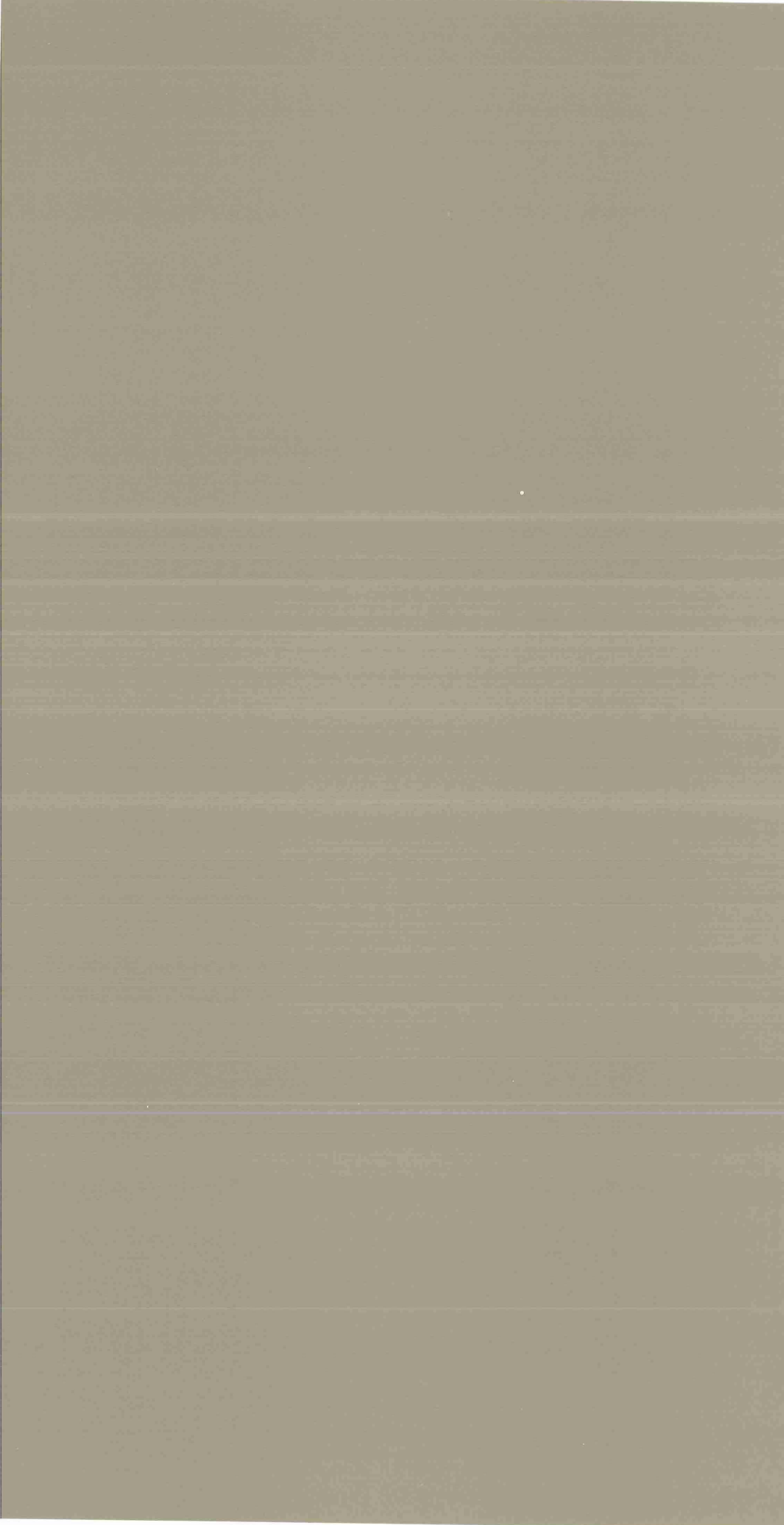


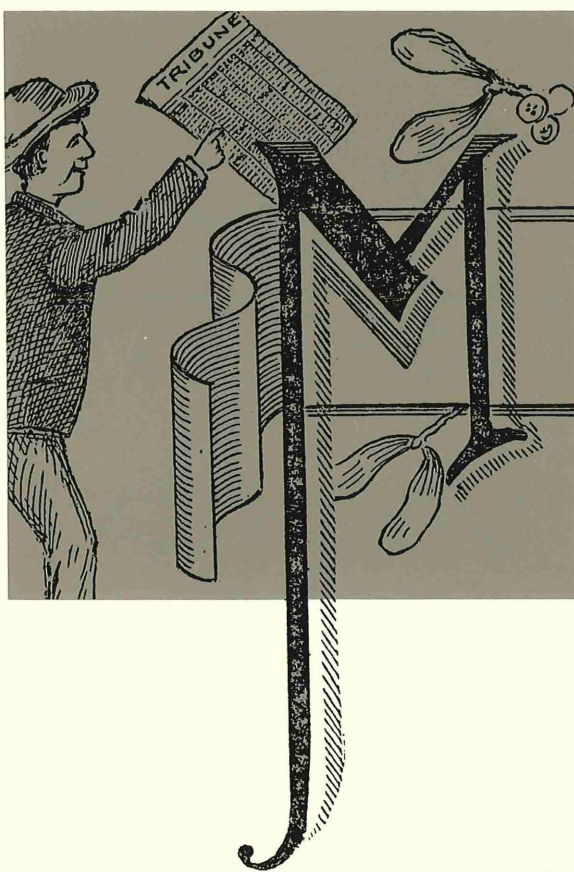
Kennon V. Rothchild
President



Nina M. Archabal
Director

Letters can speak volumes, often saying more than the words they spell. Opulent, scripted letters on a government official's 1880s stationery speak of the formality and stateliness of those bygone times. Bold, compact letters in an African American's 1980s mural speak of the hopes and struggles in these modern times. The letters featured on the following pages speak of the diversity of our 1991 highlights, spelling out the breadth and depth of the Minnesota Historical Society.





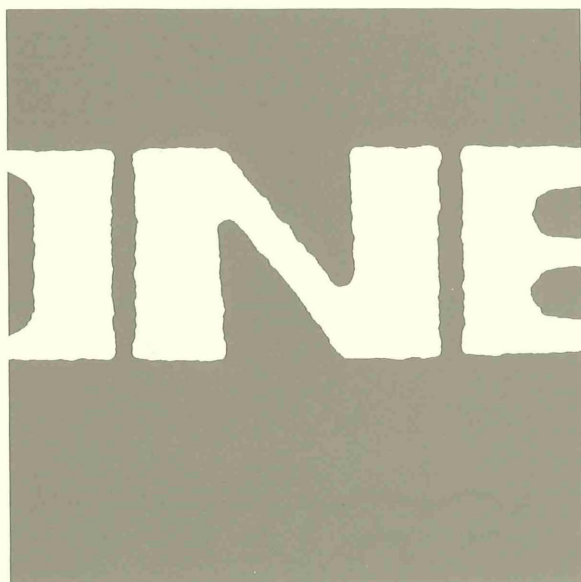
Decorative lettering adorns the cover of the Minneapolis Tribune's special 1888 Annual, part of the Society's 4,220-title Minnesota newspaper collection—the largest of its kind. This year the Conservation Department completed microfilming the collection—an effort begun more than 40 years ago—as part of the three-year, federally-funded Minnesota Newspaper Project. The Processing Department completed computer cataloging the collection.

ice-see

King

ma

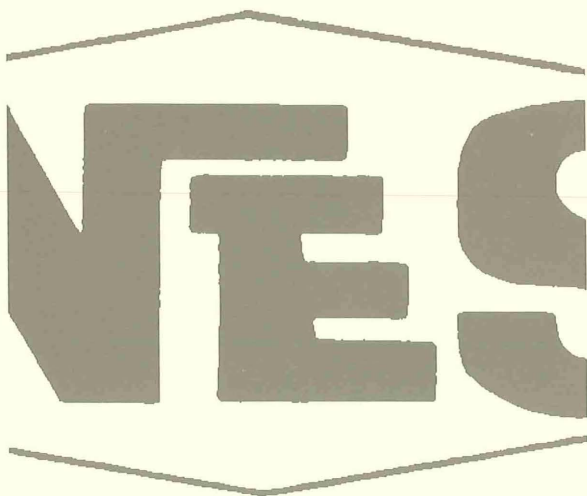
This “i” comes from the lively cover of a 1908 seed catalog for Northrup King, an agricultural company represented by many items in the Society’s collections. In 1991 the Society added the records and product samples of such agricultural companies as Rochester Silo Co., formerly one of the nation’s foremost silo manufacturers, and Gerber Industries, Inc., a grain milling company.



*"I Am Capable, I Am
Someone" reads the 1988
mural of St. Paul African-
American artist Alvin
Carter, whose public art
encourages young African
Americans to take pride in
themselves. In 1991 the
Society acquired this and 56
other art works, including
works by Dewey Albinson,
Clement Haupers, and Don
Koestner, and Arthur
Willard's early 1900s land-
scape of the Veterans Home
on the Mississippi River.*



The torn, wrinkled “N” from a 1910s Neolin shoe taps package shows some of the treatment challenges faced by the Conservation Department, which treated over 3,400 library items, documents, and objects this year. The department’s highlights included the hiring of the Society’s first-ever objects and textile conservators, and the completion of a two-year, state-funded Preservation Outreach Program to provide statewide conservation assistance.



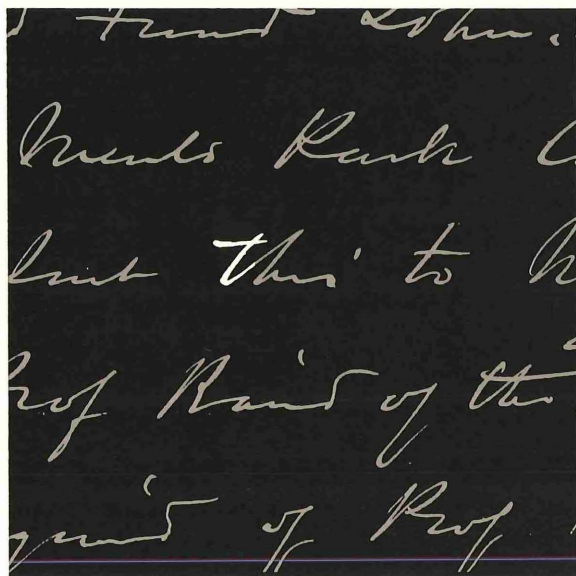
*Catalogs for the Stillwater
Prison's Minnesota Line farm
machinery have, since their
beginnings in 1911, featured
eye-catching designs and letter-
ing, including these elongated
letters from the 1970s. They
are among many new addi-
tions to the State Archives,
which this year also received its
oldest official records ever: pre-
territorial marriage records
and clergy ordination certifi-
cates from 1843.*



Elaborate lettering from the 1800s adorns many of the 87 atlases and 259 maps added to the Society's map collection this year, such as an 1898 Lincoln County plat book, a previously unknown 1896 plat book of Norman County, and the first separately published map of Hennepin County, from 1860.

ANGEL BOE LAN

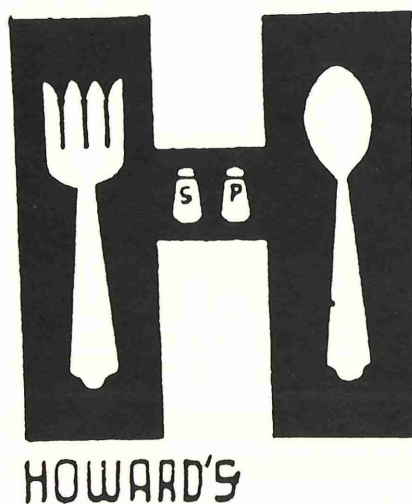
*Bob Dylan's 'The Times
They Are A-Changin''
was one of many 1991
acquisitions of recordings
and artifacts of the gifted
Minnesota son who turned
50 this year. The Processing
Department added new
issues of the Bob Dylan mag-
azine, Look Back—one of
over 3,000 Minnesota peri-
odicals currently received by
the Society.*



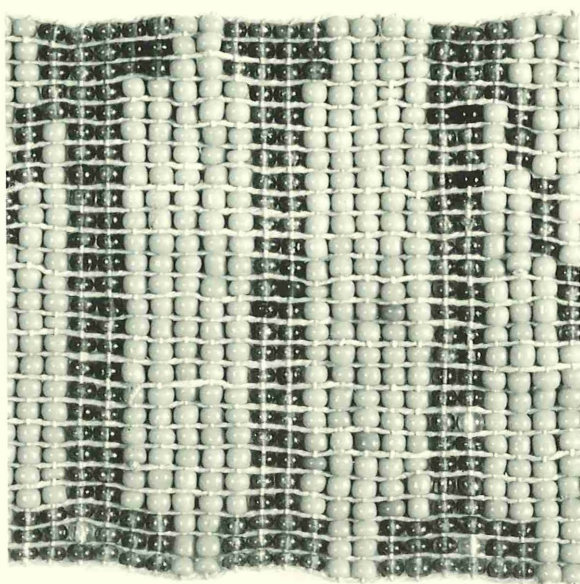
An 1881 letter written by General William T. Sherman was a notable addition to the Society's manuscripts collection. It is from the papers of William G. Le Duc, Commissioner of Agriculture during the Hayes administration. Also significant among the 900 cubic feet of manuscript acquisitions were the papers of the family of Charles W. Ames, a prominent St. Paul civic leader.



Minnesota women were represented in many Society highlights. The manuscripts collection added the papers of such prominent politicians as Marlene Johnson, Joan Growe, and Mary Forsythe, as well as those of the WARM Gallery, a women's art cooperative. The "A" from the gallery's logo appears above. The Research Department awarded \$45,000 in state-funded grants to support research on Minnesota women.



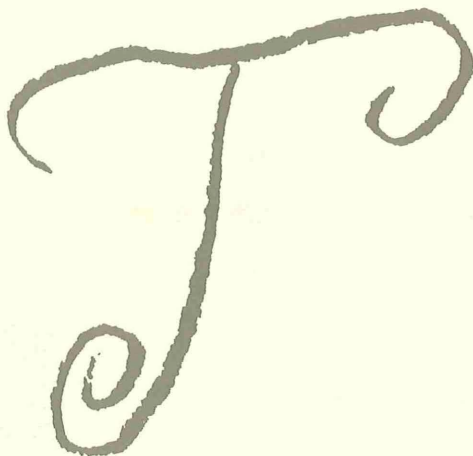
Many prominent African-American Minnesotans are represented in the Society's 1991 acquisitions of manuscripts, photographs, and artifacts. The list includes Dorwatha Woods Adderley, principal of Ascension School, James H. Rideaux, a St. Paul tailor and lay church leader, and Oscar Howard, the national founder of Meals on Wheels, whose distinctive letterhead from his Howard's Catering is featured above.



An "I" from an Ojibway dance outfit exemplifies the fine beadwork on several 1920s Ojibway artifacts added to the museum collections. American Indians were also represented by such acquisitions as Bishop Henry Whipple's personal copy of the 1863 Dakota Odowan. Hymns in the Dakota Language. And the Historic Sites Department constructed a wigwam at the North West Co. Fur Post to enhance interpretation of Ojibway culture.



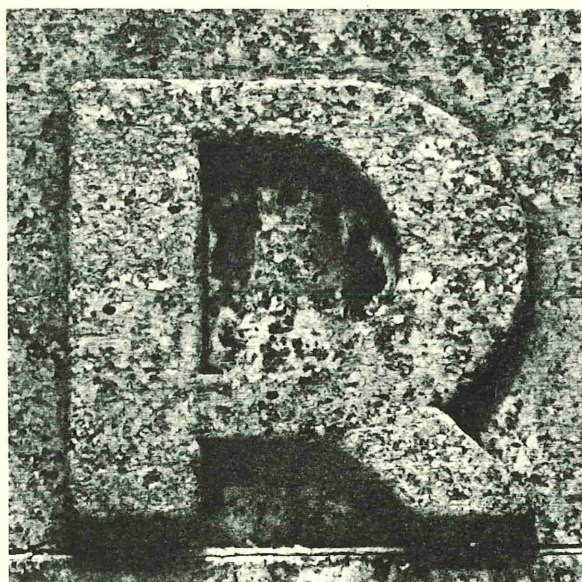
*This "S" is from a state fair
sideshow sign that is featured
in the new MHS Press
publication Blue Ribbon: A
Social and Pictorial History
of the Minnesota State Fair.
Other releases included
The Fires of Autumn:
The Cloquet-Moose Lake
Disaster of 1918, and The
Days of Rondo, a memoir
of growing up in the 1930s
and 1940s in St. Paul's
African-American Rondo
neighborhood.*



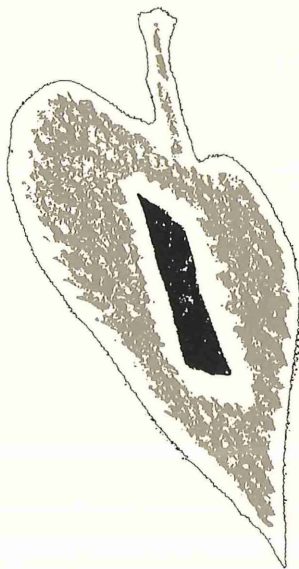
In 1991 the Education Department received many thank you notes from the over 6,800 students who attended its 250 museum lessons, including the popular "Blacks in Minnesota" lesson. Other highlights included participation by a record 4,000 secondary students in Minnesota History Day, creation of a Hispanic Steering Committee, and publication and distribution of "Minnesotans of African Descent" posters to schools statewide.



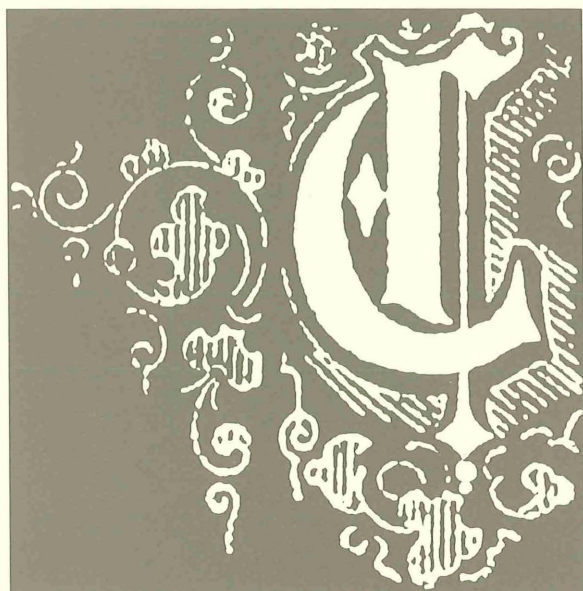
The owl inside the "O" on the cover of an album by The Nite Owls is familiar to fans of Minnesota polka music, and was part of a large addition of polka recordings to the Society's Minnesota music collection. The MHS Press made its own contribution to Minnesota polka recordings with its release of Minnesota Polka: Dance Music from Four Traditions.



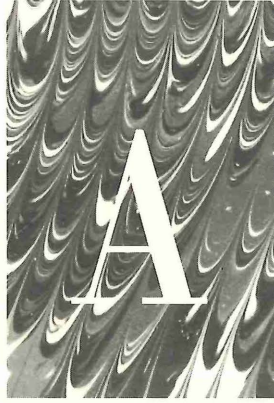
In 1991 the Historic Preservation Office worked to save several threatened National Register properties, including Hibbing's Androy Hotel, and the Minneapolis Armory, whose entrance features stone letters like this "R." The department also compiled a comprehensive inventory of Lake Superior's historic shipwrecks and prepared National Register nominations for 41 properties.



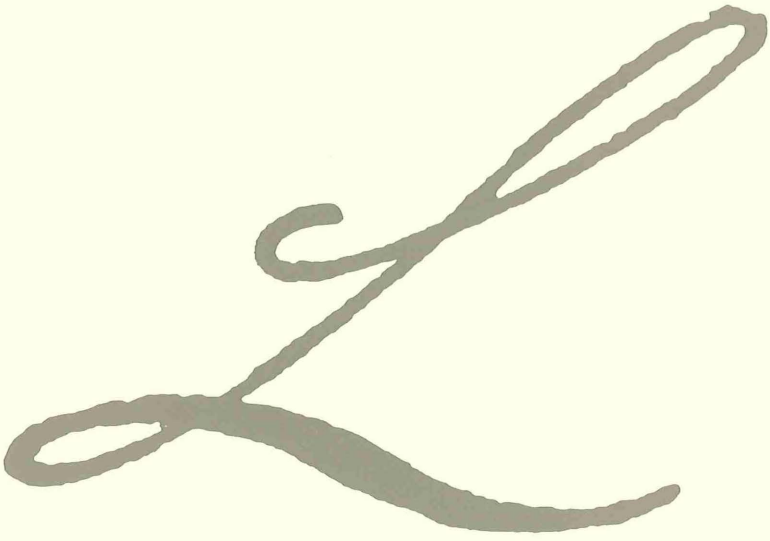
Lettered leaves dot the cover of Wanda Gág's 1933 book The ABC Bunny, one of several acquisitions of works by the famed children's author. The Society added drawings by Gág to its art collection, and facilitated a grant for the restoration of her childhood home in Brown County.



This stately "C" comes from 1870s St. Paul Chamber of Commerce stationery, included with the newly acquired LeDuc papers. It is one of many acquisitions representing politics and public affairs. Other additions included the papers of State Supreme Court Justice Douglas K. Amdahl in the manuscripts collection; interviews with the late Gov. Karl Rolvaag in the oral history collection; and the records of Gov. Rudy Perpich in the State Archives.



A large “A” amid a marble background was featured on the cover of a brochure produced by the Development Office as part of its History Center capital campaign. In 1991 the office secured over \$2 million in new gifts and pledges, passing the two-thirds point of its \$14 million goal, and recruited 835 new Society members, bringing membership to over 7,300.



The signature of the Lee Brothers Studio, with its distinctive "L," was once synonymous with the best in Twin Cities portrait photography. In 1991 the Society acquired over 30,000 negatives and photographs from the studio, founded in 1889. The Society's Visual Collection also received a large donation from Vincent Mart's aerial photography advertising business, and original stereographs of Taylors Falls photographer S.C. Sargent.



A large "S" is carved in one of Itasca State Park's first corner markers, which is in the Society's museum collections. The park celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1991. The MHS Press marked the centennial by publishing Everyone's Country Estate: A History of Minnesota's State Parks, and State Archives acquired guest registers from the park dating back to 1921.

IF FACE SCARES DOGGIE

Burma Shave signs—with those catchy jingles—that once lined Minnesota's highways are now in the Society's museum collections. They were added this year along with over 15,000 other archaeological items and objects, including a ca. 1910 Lake Superior resort cabin, an ERA computer memory drum prototype, and items from Will Steger's polar expedition.

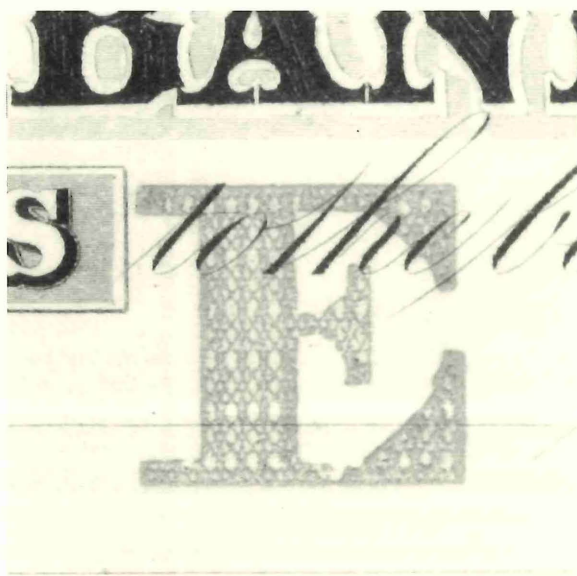


In 1991 the Field Services Department continued maintaining Minnesota's historic markers, with their raised lettering like the "c" above, and conducted 189 field consultations and 12 historic rehabilitation workshops throughout the state. The Grants Department also aided local preservation efforts this year by awarding \$259,342 in grants for projects in Red Wing, Faribault, Lamberton, and many other communities.

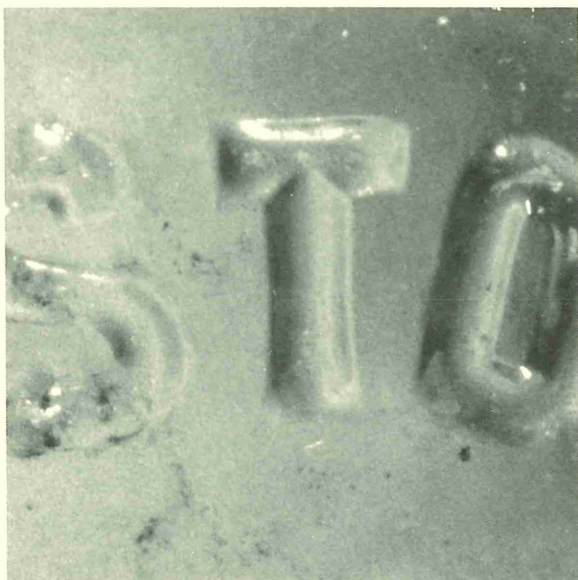
the many loves of dobie gillis



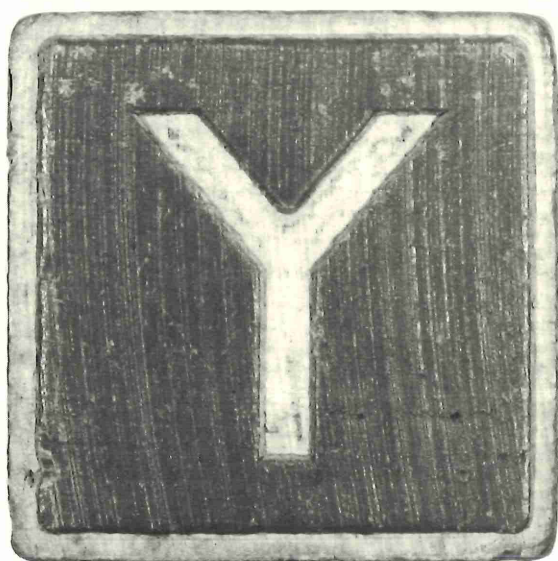
The Society added nearly 2,000 books to its library collection this year, including Max Shulman's The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis, an 1808 account of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and a signed and personally inscribed copy of F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Beautiful and the Damned. The Reference Department aided the public in finding these and numerous other holdings—50,000 requests in all.



While the museum collections acquired 1850s Minnesota bank notes, with their patterned letters, the Finance & Administration Division attended to currency still in use. The division evaluated and reclassified, as appropriate, all Society funds, including a first-ever separate reporting of endowment funds. The Institutional Services Department was established in the division to oversee such operations as food service and museum shops.



The Archaeology Department uncovered more than 125,000 artifacts at a 9,220-year-old stone tool manufacturing site—likely the earliest excavated site ever recorded in Minnesota. The department also acquired many artifacts from Historic Forestville, near Preston, such as medicine bottles with raised letters advertising “Dr. S. Pitcher’s Castoria.” In July 1992, Forestville joins the Society’s current list of 15 historic sites, which were visited by 680,000 people in 1991.



Children's letter blocks come into play in Minnesota from A to Z, an 11,000-square-foot exhibit showcasing the Society's collections that will open in the History Center in the fall of 1992. In 1991 the Exhibits Department began production of A to Z and other 1992 exhibits, began development and design of 1993 History Center exhibits, developed traveling exhibits, and completed various historic site projects.

*Financial Statements
for the fiscal year 1991*

*Governing board
and management staff*

Historical Society donors

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Minnesota Historical Society

Balance Sheet

June 30, 1991 (with comparative totals for 1990)

Assets

Cash

Cash on deposit with the State Treasurer for History Center

Total cash

Investments

Receivables

Interest and dividends

Federal and State grants and contracts

Publication sales

Travel advances

History Center pledges

Museum shop inventories

Collections, historic sites, and publications

Total assets

Liabilities and Fund Balances

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities

Note payable

Deferred amounts

Restricted funds

State and local advances

Federal grant advances

History Center contributions

History Center pledges

Total liabilities

Fund balances

Total liabilities and fund balances

These statements are excerpts from the Society's audited financial statements, which are available upon request.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds		Endowment funds	Totals	
	State appropriations	Other		1991	1990
\$ 2,034,413	\$ 500,079	\$ 1,036,007	\$ —	\$ 3,570,499	\$ 2,539,358
—	—	5,851,024	—	5,851,024	5,392,361
2,034,413	500,079	6,887,031	—	9,421,523	7,931,719
379,331	—	256,415	4,137,805	4,773,551	4,686,997
77,760	—	56,309	—	134,069	131,617
—	2,454,368	325,191	—	2,779,559	4,842,319
69,399	—	—	—	69,399	139,251
30,676	—	—	—	30,676	37,105
—	—	2,771,260	—	2,771,260	2,638,269
440,371	—	—	—	440,371	463,666
273	—	—	—	273	298
\$ 3,032,223	\$ 2,954,447	\$ 10,296,206	\$ 4,137,805	\$ 20,420,681	\$ 20,871,241
\$ 140,110	\$ 2,350,716	\$ 154,700	\$ —	\$ 2,645,526	\$ 5,379,258
—	—	—	—	—	246,000
—	—	622,006	—	622,006	629,117
—	603,731	152,754	—	756,485	494,013
—	—	2,415	—	2,415	54,311
—	—	6,593,071	—	6,593,071	4,415,323
—	—	2,771,260	—	2,771,260	2,638,269
140,110	2,954,447	10,296,206	—	13,390,763	13,856,291
2,892,113	—	—	4,137,805	7,029,918	7,014,950
\$ 3,032,223	\$ 2,954,447	\$ 10,296,206	\$ 4,137,805	\$ 20,420,681	\$ 20,871,241

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Minnesota Historical Society

Statement of Support and Revenue, Expenses, Capital Additions, and Changes in Fund Balances

Year Ended June 30, 1991 (with comparative totals for 1990)

Support and revenue

Support

Private gifts and grants

State History Center gifts and grants

Federal grants and contracts

State grants and contracts

County grants

State appropriations

State History Center

Other

Total support

Revenue

Membership

Admissions

Publication sales

Museum shop sales

Other sales and fees

Investment earnings

Total revenue

Total support and revenue

Expenses

Program services

Library collections and archival services

Publications and research

Museum operations, exhibits and education

Historic sites operations

Historic preservation grants

Special subsidies and grants

State History Center

Other

Total program services

Supporting services

Management and general

Fundraising

Total expenses

Excess (deficiency) of support and revenues over expenses before capital additions

Capital additions — contributions and bequests

Refund of unused foundation grant

Excess (deficiency) of support and revenues and capital additions over expenses

Fund balances (accumulated deficit) at beginning of year

Fund balances at end of year

* The refund of \$83,900 represented a grant from the Bush Foundation that could not be used for its original purpose.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds		Endowment funds	Totals	
	State appropriations	Other		1991	1990
\$ 107,472	\$ —	\$ 79,501	\$ —	\$ 186,973	\$ 418,173
—	—	255,946	—	255,946	91,719
—	—	1,072,543	—	1,072,543	875,690
—	—	839,333	—	839,333	778,732
—	—	76,220	—	76,220	62,000
—	28,083,095	—	—	28,083,095	20,396,524
—	12,107,104	—	—	12,107,104	12,247,394
107,472	40,190,199	2,323,543	—	42,621,214	34,870,232
90,199	—	—	—	90,199	96,902
143,856	145,662	—	—	289,518	248,597
611,865	—	—	—	611,865	626,444
597,235	—	—	—	597,235	591,695
416,104	—	11,600	71,956	499,660	436,628
439,320	—	82,136	24,512	545,968	555,657
2,298,579	145,662	93,736	96,468	2,634,445	2,555,923
2,406,051	40,335,861	2,417,279	96,468	45,255,659	37,426,155
\$ 251,403	\$ 3,199,947	\$ 382,171	\$ —	\$ 3,833,521	\$ 3,545,344
747,205	718,107	7,743	—	1,473,055	1,324,891
68,475	1,947,889	58,513	—	2,074,877	1,372,279
766,277	3,640,366	1,245,264	—	5,651,907	5,540,234
—	328,796	318,814	—	647,610	702,874
—	358,393	11,090	—	369,483	441,632
—	26,908,181	178,011	—	27,086,192	20,024,899
—	45,516	—	—	45,516	68,565
1,833,360	37,147,195	2,201,606	—	41,182,161	33,020,718
696,438	2,972,769	137,738	—	3,806,945	3,801,367
25,480	157,659	77,935	—	261,074	212,625
2,555,278	40,277,623	2,417,279	—	45,250,180	37,034,710
(149,227)	58,238	—	96,468	5,479	391,445
—	—	—	93,389	93,389	30,978
—	—	—	(83,900)*	(83,900)	—
(149,227)	58,238	—	105,957	14,968	422,423
3,041,340	(58,238)	—	4,031,848	7,014,950**	6,592,527
\$ 2,892,113	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 4,137,805	\$ 7,029,918	\$ 7,014,950

**Endowment funds are classified separately this year. As a result, the prior year fund balances were reduced by \$274,172 accounted for as deferred amounts in restricted funds.

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