

**“HISTORY OF THE DAKOTA COUNTY
COURTHOUSE” ***

Excerpts From

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Goodhue Counties
MINNESOTA**

Illustrated

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THE HISTORY OF THE DAKOTA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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County Court House The county offices were held in rented buildings for some years. **June 3, 1857**, the county offices occupied a stone building on the levee, at Hastings, known as Marsh 's block. Here they remained until **1858**, when they were removed to a wooden building, between Ramsey and Vermilion streets. In **1859**, they again removed to a building between Ramsey and Sibley streets, remaining there until **1862**, when they were located in the second story of Gardiner & Meloy 's warehouse, which had been fitted up for that purpose.

At a meeting of the Hastings city council, **October 12, 1868**, it was resolved that whenever the county of Dakota would erect a county building the city would cede to the county for such building purposes all its right and title to the public square, and **\$15,000** of its bonds. Hastings having been decided upon as the proper place for the county seat, the proposition of the city was accepted, and the county commissioners instructed to proceed at once to erect suitable buildings. A committee of three, consisting of **R. T. Marvin, George Boher and Ditus Day**, was appointed to procure plans, specifications, and estimates of cost.

The public square donated, comprised about one and a half acres in block **20**, and work was begun there as soon as practicable. On **June 14, 1869**, the ground was broken for the erection of a jail and residence for the sheriff. These were built by contract, **Mr. Radcliff** being the architect, and **R. J. Marvin**, superintendent. The jail was thirty-six feet square, one story high, and strongly built of stone and brick. It had separate departments for male and female prisoners. The quarters of the former were situated on the west side of the building, and contained ten cells, **5 by 7**, feet in size, locked with a patent brake, and accommodating two prisoners each. The cells on the east side, of the same description, were used as a "city lock-up." These cells were entirely of iron, and the jail was paved throughout with flag-stone. The sheriff's house was built of brick, **30 by 40** feet in its dimensions, contained nine rooms and was two stories high. Both jail and house were completed in **1870**. The jail was later torn down

and a new, modern one erected in its place.

The court house, communicating directly with the jail, was commenced immediately on the completion of the latter, Mr. Marvin being again superintendent of the building. The structure is an imposing ones and the pride alike of Hastings and the county. It is mainly of brick, but heavy, gray stone trimmings are conspicuous in its architecture. Its dimensions are 60x100 feet, while its two stories, surmounted with a cupola, and its four tall towers, rise above the surrounding buildings with becoming stateliness. There are two main entrances, one from Third and the other from Vermillion street. Below, there are eight rooms, besides the basement, for the use of the auditor, register of deeds, commissioners, and other officers of the county. The court room is adorned, through the liberality and good taste of various citizens, with fine portraits of the judges of the district courts.

It is worthy of remark, and greatly to the credit of the managers in the work of the building, that \$5,000 of the money originally appropriated was unexpended and returned. The new courthouse and offices were ready for occupancy in November, 1873. Although nearly forty years old, the building is still substantial, and its lines being mellowed by time, it is one of the beloved landmarks of the county. ■

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