

## **Reminiscences of William Epler who lived in Duluth from 1856 to 1860**

"I first arrived at Superior City August 5, 1856, afoot and footsore. I had come over the trail from St. Croix Falls...I can well remember my first view of Lake Superior. As we emerged from the old military road the sight presented was an impressive one.

"The military road had the appearance of a broad swath cut through the tall thick forest, as indeed it was. The road was about eighty feet wide, all cleaned up nicely.

"At the time of my arrival, Superior was enjoying a great prosperity, but a year later the great crisis of '57 came and paralyzed everything.

"At the date of my arrival, Duluth and Portland has a population of a dozen or so. Duluth was confined to Minnesota Point. Portland joined it on the mainland and extended back and up the hill.

"Duluth boasted of a sawmill and two houses that I distinctly remember, perhaps two or three more small houses. One of the two was afterwards known as the Culver House. It stood on the east side of Lake Avenue, close to the north side of the canal, or where the canal now is, and was still there in 1890.

"Colonel J. B. Culver occupied this house from the spring of '57, possibly from the fall of '56, until October, 1859, moving from there into a new residence, which he had had erected in Portland. This Duluth house which I am considering was the capital [sic] of St. Louis County. What little county business that needed attention was transacted in this house. Mr. Culver was Recorder of Deeds, and Samuel Badger, assistant. The county commissioners met in this structure...

"Later, probably in 1857, a warehouse was built on the lake shore. About at the intersection of Second Avenue with the Lake. This was a substantial, well-built frame house, supported by strong timbers, or a trestle, at least sixteen feet high. The entrance to the warehouse was thus brought up to a level with the bank, the house standing over the waters of the lake. A romantic picturesque place to live in, especially when storms lashed the lake in to fury. Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Luce had their residence in this building from the time it was built up to the time of our leaving.

"In 1858, a Mr. Ryder built a very genteel two-story house, not far from the crossing of First Street and Fourth Avenue East. I do not think Mr. Ryder ever occupied it. He sold it to E. C. Martin, a Deputy United States Surveyor, who resided there as long as I remained a citizen of Duluth.

"The house that Mr. Culver built and occupied in the fall of 1859 stood near the crossing of Second Avenue and East Second Street. It was a nice comfortable two-

story house, but must not be confused with one of a more pretentious character erected by Mr. Culver after the war, and which stood not far from the site of the first one.

"I think I am through with the houses of Portland, as they stood up to 1860...

"Rev. James Peet's diary describes one frame house in Duluth. The entry is for July 9, 1856; "The town contains one family, who are boarding the men that are putting up a steam sawmill." That house was occupied by the Fred Ryder family. Rev. Peet's diary for July 27: "Went with Br. Martin to Duluth and preached in the evening in Mr. Ryder's house...Duluth, on north shore of Lake Superior Bay, now contains three houses with families, two of which are grog shops, and a sawmill building."

"A fellow clergyman, Rev. John M. Barnett, confirmed Rev. Peet's recollection: "On the evening of July 20, in the summer of 1856, I preached my first sermon on the Point, in a house owned by a man named Ryder. The house was a little frame building, which had no siding, and was without doors."

"On December 21, 1856 Rev. James Peet entered in his diary: "I walked to Duluth, and in the evening preached in Mr. Culver's house to twelve persons...stayed over night at Mr. Culver's house."

An excerpt from a letter by William Epler to Dr. Coddington. William Epler lived here from 1856 to 1870. Copied from pages 129-130 of volume one of Duluth and St. Louis County, Minnesota: Their Story and People: An Authentic Narrative of the Past, with Particular Attention to the Modern Era in the Commercial, Industrial, Educational, Civic and Social Development, edited by Walter Van Brunt. American Historical Society, 1921, 3 volumes.

A second version can be found in pages 295-301 of volume one of History of Duluth and St. Louis County: Past and Present, edited by Dwight E. Woodbridge and John S. Pardee. C. F. Cooper & Company, 1910, 2 volumes.

## VOCABULARY

**afoot:** on foot, walking

**Br.:** brother, a male person who studies the same religion that you do  
**Colonel:** a title for a person in the military advanced or promoted up to this rank or level; above a lieutenant colonel and below a brigadier general  
**Culver House:** sometimes the word HOUSE is used instead of HOTEL but it means a hotel rather than a person's private home  
**distinctly:** clearly  
**erected:** built  
**'56 or '57:** short form of a year 1856, 1857  
**frame:** built with boards; a wooden building  
**genteel:** showing good taste, polite, stylish, refined, a little bit fancy rather than plain  
**grog:** an alcoholic liquor drink, usually rum with a little water in it, beer, whiskey  
**grog shop:** bar, tavern, saloon, place where liquor is bought and drunk  
**picturesque:** charming, pleasing, scenic, with a view  
**population:** all of the people  
**pretentious:** showy, conceited, exaggerated, pompous  
**prosperity:** wealth, richness, success, good fortune, having more than enough  
**recorder of deeds:** a job; work making a correct list of who owns what land or property; the list is a record; land buyer gets a paper deed as a receipt  
**reminiscence:** something remembered; memories; recollections  
**residence:** house, home, where you live  
**Rev.:** short for Reverend; clergy, pastor, a person in charge of a church  
**sawmill:** a factory or place where logs (cut up tree trunks) are sawed into boards; the sawing machine that cuts the logs into boards  
**sermon:** a talk or speech that teaches about behavior or encourages behavior  
**[sic]:** used to show that the word or statement just before [sic] is copied correctly even though it is an error --here, 'capital' should be 'capitol'  
**surveyor:** a job; in this case, a person who surveys, examines, areas of land and describes the land's features or characteristics  
**swath :** path, a long strip or a wide strip  
**the war:** the Civil War or the war between the states, 1861-1865  
**trestle:** a wooden support  
**warehouse:** building to store things, place for things before they go to a store or to a business and made available to buy

## Reminiscence of Sidney Luce

In this excerpt, Mr. Luce describes his and his wife Harriet's Minnesota Point house. This building was also described by William Epler.

"I went to Duluth in company with my brother Orlando, without any intention of remaining any length of time, to look after some investments we had previously made. We intended to return by way of St. Paul, calling upon relatives in Illinois, near Chicago. Finding the roads across the country to St. Paul impracticable, my brother returned by boat, as he came, and as I had an offer of \$3 a day to work on house building, I concluded to wait awhile and go to work...

"Not being well versed in western wild-cat ways, I was soon induced to build a warehouse, which I was assured would be needed the coming winter for the storage of supplies to be transported over a projected road to the St. Croix and Mississippi rivers. The house was in dimension thirty by forty feet, three stories high and garret above, the foundation was partly made by an excavation of rock on the bank of the lake, and partly by crib work in the lake, its foundation being about seven feet above water level. It stood in the neighborhood of three hundred feet west from the point rocks from which the old breakwater was projected. The third floor of the building was about on the level of the bank in its front. Coarse boards were used for a temporary third floor, packing boxes used in the shipment of household goods for partitions and cupboards, with stove pipe leading out of a window and without doors, constituted our apartments from first housekeeping activity in building above, beneath and around soon made us comfortable, and upon this floor we lived twelve years in peace and poverty finally ending in prosperity. On this floor there was as office in which were held the office of Register of Deeds, Auditor, Treasurer and Clerk of Court, and later the U. S. Land Office. Practically all of the public business of the county was transacted in that office until the commencement of the building of the railroad.

The commercial crisis of the season ('57) was a great set back to our calculations and prospects, and caused quite a stampede from the country. Men without families generally left. Those with families were generally compelled to stay. I had invested more than my all and consequently became a permanent fixture..."

This is an excerpt from a January 1, 1900, letter by Sidney Luce at Ohio, to his long-time friend Judge Josiah D. Ensign. It's heading is "Recollections from June 16, 1857 to March 1873" [The handwritten letter and a typescript copy: NEMHC SA File, Luce, Sidney.]

## VOCABULARY

**apartments:** rooms to live in (bedroom, kitchen - not the businesses rooms)  
**auditor:** a job; a person who looks carefully at money or finance records to see that they are both correct and legal  
**breakwater:** a wall that waves hit first to make waves smaller if they will eventually hit land or things, boats or buildings near the water  
**calculations:** careful planning, thinking something through before you do it  
**calling upon:** visiting, to go for a visit  
**clerk of court:** a job; a person in charge of keeping track of the city's or the county's courts' activity by keeping the papers or records in order  
**commencement:** start, to begin  
**concluded:** decided  
**crib work:** a box shape container filled with heavy rock to support or hold the building; many of these rock-filled containers next to each other  
**dimension:** size  
**excavation:** digging a hole or hollow  
**garret:** room under a sloping roof, an attic room, an upstairs room  
**impracticable:** impossible, impractical, not wise to do  
**induced:** persuaded, encouraged, required  
**more than my all:** besides all of my money all of my energy and my time and my future  
**peace and poverty:** content and happy but having very little money  
**projected:** planned or expected  
**prospects:** hopes, plans for future success, a measure of how able or capable you are  
**prosperity:** success, having enough money  
**register of deeds:** a job; work making a list of who owns what land or property and giving the land owner a paper, a deed, as proof of ownership  
**transacted:** done, conclude, taken care of, finished  
**treasurer:** a job; work that puts a person in charge of money, in charge of a city's or an organizations or a clubs money or funds  
**U. S. land office:** a job; the place that handles and records which public land is sold to people  
**warehouse:** building to store things, a place for things before they go to a store or a business to be sold  
**wild-cat:** risky business, doing something without permission or authority

## **Reminiscence of Rev. John M. Barnett, Pennsylvania**

"I was sent to the village from Weston, PA., as a home missionary and arrived in the harbor of Superior, which was then a village of considerable size, one rainy Saturday night in the early spring of 1856. It was the most wretched place that I had ever set eyes on and when I landed I sank into the clay above my shoe tops. It made me feel lonesome and I felt that I couldn't stay, so went back to the boat and climbed over its side, determined that I would not stay here.

"However, the captain told me that the boat would sail the following morning, which was Sunday, and as I do not believe in traveling on the Sabbath and did not then, I again landed and remained here six years, whereas if that boat had been sailing on any but Sunday I would have remained but a day or so at the utmost.

"I came over to the village on Minnesota point, which was all there was of Duluth, and made that my headquarters. At that time there was a population of about 100 persons, though I remember a young man who owned some lots on the point went down into the state of Kentucky with some hand bills advertising the place, and the population given on the bills was in the neighborhood of 5,000. However, it didn't do his much good, as there were only a few families that came up from Kentucky as a result of his trip to the 'Blue Grass state...'

"On the point there were two general stores, one kept by a Mr. Nettleton and one owned by Culver & Howard, where nearly everything was sold.

"The only means of crossing the bay to Superior was by using a row boat or a sail boat, and in the winter it was a case of walk across. I remember on one occasion we crossed the ice on a sleigh. We had a horse hitched to it and we sat with our feet hanging over the side so in case the ice cracked we could easily get away. Around the horse's neck we had a rope tied by which we intended pulling it out if the animal broke through.

"On the evening of July 20, in the summer of '56, I preached my first sermon on the point in a house owned by a man named Rider. The house was a little frame building which had no siding and was without doors. The attendance was not very large, there being only twelve adults and a few boys present...

"Where the city proper of Duluth now is the land was covered with timber, with the exception of about sixty acres, which was overgrown with raspberry bushes, where the settlers on the point used to come to pick them when in season. A few settlers had in the summer of 1856 built cabins on the mainland, as it was called, and it was then decided to give the place a name, as the settlement which was being then made on the mainland was called Portland, and after considerable discussion the

committee, which consisted of Mr. Nettleton and wife, a Mr. Culver and wife, and myself, finally decided upon the name of Duluth.

"There were no mills or industries of any kind at that time, and the only thing which people seemed to be engaged in was selling lots on the point, which usually brought about \$25...."

"In the winter of '55 and '56 the boat that was to have been the last of the season, and which was to bring in the winter's supplies, failed to make port, and as a result there was a scarcity of provisions all winter and many of the settlers were forced to subsist the entire winter on corn meal, and there wasn't a bit of butter in the settlement. There was some flour stored in the storehouse of Mr. Nettleton, and several times there was talk of taking it by force, but the treat was never carried out.

"Early in the spring a man came down from the north shore with a boat load of flour, there being forty barrels in the load. When the storekeepers asked him what he asked for it he stated that he wanted \$40 a barrel, but the storekeepers would give him no more than \$25, and he kept it. The next afternoon a steamboat hove in sight and that evening flour was selling at \$8 per barrel.

"I left in 1861 and at that time Duluth was quite a village... There were a number of gardens and the settlers were growing vegetables of nearly every kind.

"I have been back to the city several times since...one can hardly tell that it is the same town or city save for its location."

Copied from vol. 1, pages 291-293, History of Duluth and St. Louis County: Past and Present, edited by Dwight E. Woodbridge, John S. Pardee. C. F. Cooper & Company, 1910, 2 volumes.

## VOCABULARY

**frame:** built with boards; a wooden building

**general stores:** a building; a business that sells a variety of common things like food, cloth, plates and spoons, pots and pans, furniture; *not* a specialty store where only one kind of things is sold

**hand bills:** paper with information on it, a flyer, a handout, a brochure; it could be handed to you when you walk by or it could be posted on a door or pole like a sign

**harbor:** a sheltered place on a lake, a safe place for boats and docks

**missionary:** a person who offers aid or help and usually religion to people

**PA:** abbreviation for the state of Pennsylvania

**population:** all of the people

**provisions:** food, supplies

**reminiscence:** something remembered; memories; recollections

**Rev.:** Reverend, clergy, pastor, the person in charge of a church

**Sabbath:** a day for worship and a pause from work, chores, and play

**sermon:** a talk or speech that teaches about behavior or encourages behavior

**sixty acres:** land; 1 acre is 208 feet on each side, 4 acres about a square city block, 1 acre fits in a baseball diamond, a soccer field is smaller than 2 acres

**timber:** standing trees in a forest

**utmost:** most, greatest

**wretched:** awful, unhappy, miserable, unfortunate

## **Reminiscence of Etta Wheeler Merritt, Oneota 1929**

Read at an Old Settlers meeting Superior, Wisconsin. December 10, 1929.

"After the departure of Mr. Peet, a single man, Rev. Mr. Pugh was sent to Oneota. He was an Englishman of short stature, who charmed the children with his stories. From this time on, as far as I know, Oneota had no resident preacher and had to depend on the pastors of other churches for religious services except for Sunday School, until about 1870 when Rev. Henry Elliott lived there, and built the old church on the same site later occupied by Merritt Memorial church.

"A school was almost as necessary as a church, and in 1856 there were a number of children of school age. The first school was taught by Miss N. C. Barnett, a sister of Rev. Barnett. This school was in Mr. Ely's home. Undoubtedly it was a private one as no districts were formed in 1858. That year 6 districts were arranged for : No. 1, Fond du Lac; No. 2, New Duluth; (possibly that was called Milford), No. 3, Spirit Lake; No. 4, Oneota; No. 5, Portland; No. 6, Minnesota Point. I do not think the districts west of Oneota had much, or possibly no school, as some of the scholars from there used to come to Oneota. There was no school in Duluth until 1862.

"In September 1858, Miss Ely Walker, later Mrs. Jerome Merritt, was offered the Oneota school at \$20 per month and board. She did not accept. In December of the same year Mrs. Amelia Brown, at that time living in Oneota, was hired for five months at \$20 per month. Jerome Merritt taught the winter of 1859 and 60. At this time the district was financially embarrassed having to give the two teachers orders on the county treasurer, because they had no cash with which to pay for rent and fuel. In August 1862, the trustees paid Mr. Ely the rent for two years and made a contract with him for two more years. Later they put repairs on the building in lieu of rent.

"The total number of children between 4 and 21 years of age reported to the County Commissioners January 3, 1859 was 38. The following year there were 49. This seems a large number but from 1855 to 1869 Oneota was the largest settlement in Minnesota on the north shore.

"For the first few years from 3 to 5 months of school was all they had, since it was very difficult to raise sufficient funds to pay a teacher for even that length of time. The time was gradually increased to 7 or 8 months, but never more than 5 months in one term. The wages during this time ranged from \$16 to \$45 per month.

"Following is a list of teachers from 1859 to 1869 in the order in which they taught: Mr. Spellman, Miss Jennie Ayer, a sister of Mrs. Bradshaw, A. M. Weller, Miss Sallie Ayer who was Miss Bradshaw's mother, Jerome Merritt, 2nd term, A. M. Weller, 2nd term, Miss M. S. Ayers, Miss Fannie Meyer, Jerome Merritt, 3rd term, Miss Fannie Meyer, 2nd term..."

Etta Merritt was the daughter of Sarah and Henry Wheeler. She married John E. Merritt.  
[NEMHC, S3120 Merritt Family Papers, B4F23]

## **ETTTA'S FAMILY**

Etta had nine sisters and brothers.

Her brother Martyn married Mary C. Ely.

Her sister Elizabeth E. married Leonidas Merritt. She died at age 51.

Her sister Julia A. died in Duluth at age 70.

Her brother John James married Ellen Brown.

Her sister Susie May died at age 3.

Her brother Harry married Jennie Clinch.

Her brother Duane married Althea Richardson.

Her sister Carrie L. died at age 32.

Her brother Bert N. married Mae Whitmore.

Etta was the daughter of Sarah and Henry Wheeler. She married John E. Merritt and they had a family. They lived in Oneota, Duluth, and then moved to Aitkin, Minnesota.

## **VOCABULARY**

**county commissioners:** people elected to be in charge of the county

**district:** a part, a larger part divided into smaller parts

**in lieu of:** instead of, in place of, in exchange for

**Oneota:** a town; Oneota was added to Duluth and became a Duluth neighborhood

**per month:** each month

**reminiscence:** something remembered; memories; recollections

**resident:** living there all the time

**Rev.:** Reverend, clergy, pastor, person in charge of a church

**60:** the year 1860

**scholars:** students, pupils

**stature:** height, how tall someone is

**trustees:** people responsible or in charge, people in charge of a school district

## September 2, 1863, a letter by James Peet to the Merritt family

Farmington, Dakota Co. Minn. Sept. 2nd 1863

L. H. Merritt, Esq.

Oneota Min

Dear Bro.

Mrs. Peet is about writing to your family and I thought I would add a few words in regard to business matters.

Have you disposed of any of those things (House hold goods) I left in your care when we came away from Oneota? If so, and if there would be any thing due me after paying yourself for your trouble you can remit to me by mail. I am some in debt which is due this fall, and should be paid. If you have not disposed of them do the best you can in your own judgment and I will be content therewith. Take pay in any thing that can be turned (even at a discount) into a shape to remit to me. If you have anything in shape that you could remit to me now I would like it soon as convenient.

How are business matters prospering generally at Oneota and about the head of the Lake, and how are you getting along in particular. Financially and Religiously, your family also.

If you could make some turn with Bro. R. G. Coburn about my things, so as to have a barrel or half barrel of fish (mixed with different kinds) but principally Siskawit, set to me next winder to care of E. F. Ely, St. Paul, I would like that very well.

If you could send some money now and fish by & by I would like that but more after Conference in regard to particulars respecting sending fish. Conf. 1st week in Oct. Please write me immediately in regard to what shape matters are in and what you think you can do for me either in regard to money or fish or whether you have been able to dispose of any of our old things or not.

My circuit is large, too much work for one man. I am kept very busy. Had eight funerals during last month - mostly children. Have built a parsonage this year. Am living now living in it. Probably I shall get \$300.00 quarterage this year. Have about 100 members scattered over territory of 35 miles long, & 20 wide, with 8 preaching places. I might have more if I could attend to them. Love to all the boys,

Yours as ever

Jas. Peet

### VOCABULARY

**by & by:** not now, a future time, sometime soon

**circuit:** a regular route and places in a region; travel from one place to the next in a regular routine and going the same places again and again

**Co.:** abbreviation for the word county; short for the word county

**Bro.:** brother, a man who goes to the same church you do

**Esq.:** short for the word esquire; a title of courtesy, sir, Mr. , a man who owns land

**is about:** is doing (Mrs. Peet is writing a letter.)

**Jas.:** short for the name James

**Oneota:** a town; Oneota was added to Duluth and became a neighborhood

**parsonage:** building; a house provided by a church for use by the parson (clergy, reverend or pastor) employed by that church

**quarterage:** money, payment, allowance for living sent four times a year

**remit:** send

**siskawit:** a very fat whitefish of the salmon family

**therewith:** with what you have done, by that method or in that way

**turned into a shape:** exchanged for money, something of value

September 2, 1863, a letter by James Peet to the Merritt family  
Original James Peet Papers are at the Minnesota Historical Society.  
[NEMHC copies of originals, S3047 James Peet Papers B1F10]

## September 2, 1863, a letter by Harriet Peet to the Merritt Family

1863  
Farmington Sept. 2nd

Dear Br. And Sister Merritt and family.

As we have just returned from a trip to St. Paul I thought I would write you a little about it.

Mr. Peet went to attend out district association and I went along to trade some and visit some.

I went out to the cemetery and found Albert Ely digging a grave. A little farther on Mr. Ely was arranging the grounds for a new lot. So he invited us up to his house. We went and took diner with him. I was greatly surprised when they showed me their youngest daughter. She is very pretty but of quite dark complexion. They call her Sarah Elonor I think. I started to find Mr. Crasiere and Gianiwalds families but did not find them I was in a great hurry. I left our two boys at home and took Mary with me to get her picture.

We are quite well now except Mary who has a bad cold. We have had frosts here hard enough to kill all of our melon and other vines. Sister Merritt how I would like to see you Do you work as hard as ever I hear that Jerome is back there with his wife and baby. I do not suppose you can get time to write to me if I as you ever so many questions about things and especially about Jerome and his family. I will ask what do they call the baby? Betsy or John?. Tell Jerome to come out here and buy him a farm if he is going to be a farmer. Do you know anything about Mrs. Grinnebs?

Well Sister M trust in God and you will soon get home where "There is rest for the weary" and I hope to meet you and yours all there Give our love to Mrs. Cays family and any others

Yours H. E. Peet.

September 2, 1863, a letter by Harriet Peet to the Merritt Family.  
Original James Peet Papers are at the Minnesota Historical Society.  
[NEMHC S3047 James Peet Papers B1F10]

## VOCABULARY

**Betsy or John:** a way of asking if the baby is a girl or a boy

**Br.:** brother, a man who goes to the same church you do

**complexion:** color or appearance of skin especially skin of the face

**district association:** a meeting

**H. E.:** Harriet Evans (Her name before she married Rev. Peet and took his name.)

**Sister:** a woman who goes to the same church you do

**Sister M:** Mrs. Hepzibah Merritt who was a woman neighbor in Oneota

**trade:** shop, buy things

# DIARY

## James Peet Diary Excerpts 1856

The state historical society, Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul, holds photocopies of handwritten original Pocket Diaries and it produced a set of typed copies collated by MHS staff Houle and Nute in 1923. The NEMHC holds carbon copies of the MHS produced typed copies. NEMHC S3047 b1f3

NOTE: James Peet's diary includes information omitted in this hand-out including: the time he got up each morning and went to bed each night, the miles he traveled each day, the day's weather and the temperature outdoors. Reverend Peet himself omits punctuation, uses short forms for words, spaces in words, and he occasionally misspells words. In the last few entries given here, Rev. Peet is traveling to Beaver Bay. He says he is going 'down' the north shore of Lake Superior, but he is truly traveling northeast. The usual way we describe this kind of travel, and the direction, is the phrase "going *up* the North Shore."

## 1856

Monday, February 11, 1856

Today we loaded up to start for Superior - but had too much load & had to repack and leave many of our things - Sold some & gave away some. At 1 1/2 P.M. we left St. Paul and in a crowded sleigh we rode to Stillwater, and put up for the night with br. Fullerton A Mr. Wentworth is our teamster Mr. Ely our guide There are 4 of us professedly pious.

Saturday, February 16, 1856

Started from our camp about 3 A.M. Had our lunch on the banks of the Spruce river. 3 other teams stopped at the same place also -- At night we camped about 5 miles from the "half way" with a company from Superior to St. Paul -- Sent a letter back by them. About 4 P.M. we upset our lead & were detained 1/2 an hour -- Mrs. Peet got wedged in between the load and a tree so that we had to cut the tree to get her out. She would have been crushed to death had the sleigh & horses gone 6 inches farther, but she was extricated unhurt for which we were thankful.

Today we remain in our camp to keep the Sabbath in the woods over 30 miles from any house - The day has passed very pleasantly in our camp we have spent it by reading, prayer, singing - conversation & we have to melt snow to get water for our

horses &c. There is a cheerfulness about our camp fire - I like this camping out in the woods

Tuesday, February 19, 1856

Today we reached Superior found br. Felt and a house to go into &c. Eve Rev. Mr. Barnett (young man) Presbyterian called to see me. I wrote 2 letters to send back by br. Wentworth in the morning I lent br. W. \$10.00 to get home with Mr. Ely paid me \$20.00 for his ride with us. I think I shall like Superior very much

Wednesday, February 20, 1856

This A.M. I went to Wisconsin Point for some furniture of br. Felt Made several business calls in town also called on Mr. Barnet - I think I shall like him very much. H. wrote to her folks, also to my folks Took tea with Mr. Barnets family then went to br. Felts singing school. Bot 100 lbs. Flour. Paid \$12.00 for it.

Thursday, February 21, 1856

Having disposed of all our furniture at St. Paul, we have to get all things new again which is not an easy matter at this place which is at least 90 miles from any other settlement, and a scarcity of provisions and every thing else but wood. The town is not yet 2 years old. Our 1st meal was placed on 2 chairs for a table. Sister Felt furnished our supper for us.

Friday, February 22, 1856

Our house is made of hewn logs and will answer our purpose very well when we get it cleaned up & furnished. Today I find I have left after getting here, and paying for what few things I have purchased \$134.75 For our supper last Eve (our 1st meal) we had a fresh Herring fish from the Lake, Bread & butter, apple sauce & pie all of which we ate with our fingers from the dishes on two chairs as we have no table yet. Paid out \$14.50 for furniture &c.

Wednesday, March 5, 1856

To day I have got some more furniture to gether. Got some pine shavings to fill our bed with. Made 2 calls -- Eve. Mrs. Felt & Mrs. Stuntz called.

Spent the entire day fixing up about house, papering with News Papers, fixing shelves, cupboard &c. &c. Br. Felt gave us a bedstead - Paid others for furniture to day \$5.00

Saturday, March 29, 1856

This A.M. at 7 3/4 o'clock we were presented with a new responsibility - a Son - our first born - O Lord may it become an ornament to the world, or rather a good Christian Man, or else take it back again to thyself before it should grow up to Sin and wretchedness - The little fellow was at first, black but soon came to his color.

Sunday, March 30, , 1856

When dressed it weighed 9 3/4 lbs. No preaching in upper town today-- I was to have preached for br. Barnet at lowertown in P.M. But I got br. Wilson to preach for me. My child is the 1st born at the Head of the Lake in a Ministers family I believe. His length or height is about 15 inches arm and hand - 5 inches Its head when born was very much bruised & out of shape and I thought it must be an Idiot for its forehead looked so small & sloping

Monday, March 31, 1856

Went down Town in pursuit of a woman to work for us for a few days did not succeed very well. Mailed 6 papers. P. M. at home. Mrs. Peet has slept none for 2 nights and three days, nor I but little. Provisions are getting scarce here-- It is feared there are not now in the place enough to last till navigation opens-- I hear that some 20 to 40 men have left the place because of a Scarcity of Provisions, and more are going soon.

Friday, May 9, 1856

Today about 5 1/2 P.M. a Steamboat made its arrival and landed at Culvers & Nettletons pier (Quebeck pier) the 1st this season-- She was hailed with cheers & shouts of joy by the Citizens-- I hope she has a good cargo of provisions. It is the Propeller Manhattan from Cleveland-- Eggs have sold as high as \$1.00 per. doz. for cooking purposes so scarce have provisions been.

Saturday, May 10, 1856

The Steamboat, Superior, from Chicago, but few passengers came but, both boats brought lots of provisions-- I heard a Robin this morning. Flour has fallen from \$60.00 to \$9.50 per. b. within the last 24 hours...

Monday, May 19, 1856

Came home from Oneota in a Mackanaw boat with some Germans Made several calls -- went down town in P. M. Recd. 2 letters from br. Fullerton. Spent considerable time with br. Felt, on his dock. Dined with Mrs. Peet at Doctor Websters -- Made 7 or 8 calls. The town or city of Oneota contains about 20

inhabitants-- 3 dwellings 3 huts for work shops & a store, a Dock & a Steam Saw mill building

Thursday, May 22, 1856

Worked in garden most all day planting-- vines &c-- P. M. Mr. Mason called to ask me to come over to his house and see his sick & dying child, and to speak words of consolation to the Mother &c -- Although I had visited them two or three times, I felt a little condemned for not having visited them oftener. Mrs. P. & I both went to see & pray with them-- They are not professors of religion-- Eve at br. Felts to pr. Mt., 3 calls.

Friday, May 23, 1856

A Steamboat in this morning the Lady Elgin. Mr. Masons child died last night. Wrote letter to the N.-W-; C. Advocate. Went down town to see about the burial of Mr. Masons child-- Made 8 calls -- Saw Mr. M. Ohara, in town formerly a School Mate in Western N. Y. -- Just at Eve. We had a little thunder shower-- and strong east wind-- My lips are very sore from drinking the bay water I think

Saturday, May 24, 1856

10 1/2 A. M. attended Mr. Mason's child funeral then went in a boat to Wis. Point to bury it, quite windy N-East.-- P. M. ...

Wednesday, June 25, 1856

In morning borrowed a boat and went up along the North Shore of St. Louis Bay took dinner at Mr. Ellis'es Made several calls-- at Oneota I purchased some provisions of Mr. Ely on credit & borrowed \$5.00 of br. Merritt Got rather tired rowing boat all day-- Strawberries grow wild here & are beginning to ripen considerable

Thursday, June 26, 1856

Last evening Mr. Ely gave me the key to his house, and tells me to occupy it free of rent. A. M. I planted some potatoes P. M., removed some of our things to Mr. Ely's House. Eve. No pr. Mt., The wind has changed again this P. M. to the "N-East." Quite tired.

Wednesday, July 9, 1856

Spent A. M. fixing about the house-- P. M. went to Du Luth a new town at the head of the bay on Minnesota Point. The town contains one family who are boarding the men that are putting up a steam saw-mill I had heard that the family were Methodists but I find them to be Congregationalists. Paid a debt of \$1.48 -- Made 4 calls

Tuesday, August 5, 1856

Along the North Shore of the lake for 20 or 30 miles below Superior the land is nearly all claimed and a shanty built nearly every 1/2 mile some of the "town sites" have one or two families on them, others a few single men and others are not inhabited at all--

Wednesday, August, 6, 1856

I weigh 131 lbs to day with overcoat on The wind being unfavorable we did not start to day on our trip down the North Shore of the Lake Brs. Zanen & Moore left this A M on the Superior. I found another Methodist, a Mr. Robins from Pa. he is a Dentist, he filled a tooth for me I traded a little at store to day

Thursday, August 7, 1856

About 11 o'clock this A. M I started in a small open row boat in company with 4 men down the north Shore of Lake Superior . Made a portage across Minnesota Point at Du-Luth at 1.o'clock P. M. just called at Bro. Martins claim-- Mr. Talmage or Clifton town site-- got supper at Sucker River or the town site of Montesuma and at 9 o'clock Eve we camped on the Beach of the lake near Knife river 25 miles below Superior

Friday, August 8, 1856

Last night I had for my bed my Blanket spread on the gravelly beach of the lake and for my pillow I had a U. S. A. mail bag & my boots. We rowed 10 miles, and cooked our breakfast on the shore of agate bay Burlington Point This morning I saw the sun rise from the water for 1st time in my life-- Reached Beaver Bay about 4 o'clock P. M., we have come about 35 miles-- The shore has been very rocky-- only 1 or 2 men living between Knife river & Beaver Bay Beaver Bay has 3 cabins and two families The P. O. is here-- Camped on north shore of Beaver Bay near store

Monday, August 18, 1856

Slept in a regular Bed last night for the 1st time in 11 days-- My cold has settled on my lungs so bad that I can speak only in a whisper-- We reached home 10 1/2 this A. M. having been about 12 days-- I find my family gone from home-- Recd a letter from br. Fullerton-- Recd Several papers & Pamphlets also-- I fully undressed my self & changed my clothing to day for the first time in nearly two weeks.

Tuesday, October 28, 1856

P. M, "Manhattan" came in. I have a dull heavy head-ache today. Went down town -- made several business calls. Went to Minnesota Point. Br. Merritt's family came on the "Manhattan" & stay overnight at our house. Br. Clark gave me some paint to paint by boat with Our boy has got one more tooth (upper teeth) three in all

## VOCABULARY

**A. M.:** morning or daytime

**b.:** barrel

**bot:** bought, purchased

**Br.:** brother, a man who goes to the same church you do

**condemned:** strongly disapprove of; criticized forcefully

**consolation:** comfort

**cargo:** the load of things carried in the ship, the MANHATTAN held up to 3,000 barrels

**Cleveland:** a town in the state of Ohio

**Congregationalists:** people; members of the Congregational church

**&c:** etc., etcetera, and so forth

**excerpts:** parts; a short piece taken from something longer

**extricated:** set free, freed, released, taken out

**1st:** first

**H.:** Harriet Evans Peet, Reverend Peet's wife

**hewn:** cut

**inhabitants:** people living there

**Lady Elgin:** lake steamer, ship

**Mackinaw:** rowboat or sailboat with a flat bottom and a sharp bow (front) and a square or pointed stern (rear)

**Methodists:** members of a Methodist church, Reverend Peet was Methodist

**minister:** reverend, clergy, pastor, a person in charge of a church

**Minnesota Point:** landform, narrow strip of land, 4 mile sandbar that connects to Duluth

**N.-W; C. Advocate:** religion magazines

**Oneota:** a town, it was added to Duluth and became a neighborhood

**pier:** dock or platform built from the land into the water for boats to pull up to and load from

**pious:** religious devotion, honorable, righteous

**P. M.:** evening or night

**preached:** talk in front of a group of people about a religion subject

**propeller Manhattan:** a ship, a 330 ton steamer built in 1850

**provisions:** food, supplies

**reminiscence:** something remembered; memories; recollections

**recd:** received, got

**Rev.:** Reverend, clergy, pastor, person in charge of a church

**Sabbath:** a day for worship and a pause in work and play

**Sister:** a woman who goes to the same church you do

**some Germans:** people from the country of Germany

**Superior:** a town in Wisconsin across the water from Duluth

**SUPERIOR:** a ship, a lake steamer

**trade:** shop, buy things

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by Warren Upham, page 476

## **St. Louis County**

This county, established by legislative acts of March 3, 1855, and March 1, 1856, is named from the St. Louis River, the largest entering Lake Superior, which flows through this county. The river was probably so named by Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, sieur de la Vérendrye (1685-1749), who was a very active explorer, in the years 1731 and onward, of the vast country from Pigeon River and Rainy Lake to the Saskatchewan and Missouri Rivers, establishing trading posts and missions. The king of France in 1749, shortly before the death of La Vérendrye, conferred on him the cross of St. Louis as a recognition of the importance of his discoveries, and thence the name of the St. Louis River appears to have come. On Jean Baptiste Louis Franquelin's map (1688) and Philippe Buache's map (1754), it is called the Rivière du Fond du Lac, and the map by Gilles Robert de Vaugondy (1755) and Jonathan Carver's map (1778) are the earliest to give the present name. St. Louis County has the distinction of being the largest county in this state, having an area of 6,611.75 square miles.

Saint Louis was born at Poissy, France, near Paris, April 25, 1215, and died near Tunis, Africa, August 25, 1270. From 1226 he was King Louis IX of France, his mother Blanche being regent during his minority. He undertook a crusade to the Holy Land in 1248, from which, after a terrible war, he returned to France in 1254. His second crusade was undertaken in 1267, for which he finally sailed from France on July 1, 1270, but in this expedition he died by an illness less than two months later. He is commemorated by the name of the city of St. Louis, but Louisiana was named for Louis XIV, who was king of France from 1643 to 1715.

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