

CHAPTER III

CIVIL WAR, INDIANS AND IRON HORSES 1860-1872

The second era of development of the western end of Minneapolis Township found the settlers, or those who were left, confronting three new situations or problems, besides the one left over from the first five years. Two events disrupted the existence of the settlers, namely, the Civil War, and the Sioux Outbreak. The other event was the building of the railroads. The hold-over event was the depression of 1857 which continued on until the inflation of the Civil War returned economic conditions to normal.

The events which led to the Civil War were in the making before claimants appeared to take the land later known as St. Louis Park. The Compromise of 1850 was considered by political leaders as a great final work - a settlement which would endure for the life of the Republic. Within a couple of years Stephen Douglas had reopened the old struggle with his famous Kansas Nebraska Bill. On this issue the Lincoln-Douglas debates were argued and the struggle became more protracted as more people became interested. Buchanan was elected president in 1856,, the last Democrat to be chosen for the high office until Cleveland. His party was like a big tent containing all modes and shades of opinion on states rights, slavery, free soil and other issues directly related to the struggle which was to come. Coincidentally, the nucleation of the opinions led to the formation of the Republican Party which ran its first presidential candidate in 1856. Minnesota, it will be recalled, became a state in 1858 under a constitution which was drafted by two separate groups, Republican and Democrat. Essentially the Republican Party which was to win the election of 1860 stood for three principles; preservation of the Union, homestead law, and protective tariffs. On the first principle many thought that it meant an end to slavery - an institution which was morally evil as well as disruptive of public welfare. The Homestead Act was popular in the west and was inserted in the platform in order to cement the west to the party. The protective tariff was inserted to win the support of the industrial east.

Though it cannot be said with certainty, it seems logical that the people who settled in western Minneapolis Township would be supporters of the newly formed Republican Party. For one thing there were many New England people living there, and New England was abolitionist. Furthermore, if they came from an industrial part of New England they would support the protective tariff plank. And last, any group which had moved to the west and faced the problem of paying for land under the Preemption Act knew that the land was not worth \$1.25 per acre until it was improved. Thus they quite likely supported the Homestead proposal. It is also likely that the Democrats supported abolitionists because the free laborers were opposed to negro slave labor. It thus might be suspected that most of the people in this area would give moral, if not electoral, support to Republican principles.

In the summer of 1860 the political conventions produced four candidates; Lincoln, Republican; Douglas. Northern Democrat; Breckenridge, Southern Democrat,

and Bell, Unionist. The old tent of the Democrats, which sheltered all the shows of the various Democratic factions was now ripped. The Republicans with their new and specific principles seemed to have grown stronger since they were organized in 1856.

Those issues reflected back into the hinterland, of which Minnesota was on the very frontier edge. In Hennepin County there were committees organized in nearly every township to promote the candidacy of each of the four candidates.

What was said in the campaigns is unknown but it might be surmised that slavery made up the main issue. An incident which happened in this area was undoubtedly used as fuel for the political fires. A Colonel R. Christmas of Mississippi had visited in this area for some time usually bringing with him his negro servants. One year someone induced a court to enjoin Christmas to bring his slave Eliza O. Winston to court to determine her status. The woman was put in custody of the county sheriff. In jail she promised to return to her master after the court's decision but aided by a group was spirited out and escaped to Canada. As a result of this incident there was much excitement and it is conceivable that the terms "nigger lover" and "defiler of private property" were hurled at the various proponents. In another area, around St. Cloud, a vigorous newspaperwoman, Jane G. Swisshelm, was creating a stir because she opposed slavery and persisted in defying the local political bosses. Nevertheless, the issues of the campaign were subordinated to the desire of the Republicans to "get into office," according to Folwell, inasmuch as the party had hopes of capitalizing upon the disunion among Democrats, and was full of hope because of their strong showing in the last gubernatorial election.

When the November election was held it was found that Abraham Lincoln had carried the state 28,069 to 11,920 for Douglas, and the South was ready to pick up the gauntlet thrown down by the Republican Party. Beginning with South Carolina on December 20, 1860, eleven states repudiated their allegiance to the Union. The day after Christmas in 1860, Major Robert Anderson transferred his forces from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter in preparation for attack. On January 9, 1861 the first Confederate shot was fired on the Union forces. Less than a month later the Confederate government was organized and on March 4, 1861 Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President of the United States. When Confederate President Jefferson Davis called for 20,000 volunteers on April 18, Lincoln had to counter with a call for 75,000 volunteers to defend the Union. Two days before the Northern call for volunteers Governor Ramsey offered a thousand men from Minnesota to help defend the Union. Minnesota's quota was set at 780 men but by this time the First Regiment of Minnesota was being formed, being the first three year regiment to be formed. Ex-Governor Willis German was made Colonel of the Regiment and it was sent to Washington D. C. to guard the capitol where it arrived June 22, 1861. No more had the First Regiment left than the Second was in the process of formation and by October it was sent to join the Army of the Ohio. Within a month after the arrival of the First it fought the Battle of Bull Run, which might be called a defeat of the Northern arms. Though the First performed satisfactorily at Bull Run it went on to gain glory at Fair Oaks, Malvern Hill, Antietam, second Fredericksburg and finally at the critical battle of Gettysburg. After their three year term expired the regiment was discharged in

May of 1864 but many were anxious to continue and the First Battalion was formed out of the First Regiment veterans and went back to the front to fight at Petersburg and Appomattox. The Second Regiment fought at Corinth, Perrysville and Chickamauga, and went with Sherman on the "March to the Sea." The Third Regiment was formed about the time the Second left the state and was sent to Kentucky to guard railroads. When a sudden Confederate foray came near this regiment they surrendered at Murfreesboro, were captured, imprisoned, later paroled, and returned to Minnesota to fight the Sioux War. Later, parts were reorganized and returned to service to fight at Vicksburg the Fourth Regiment was organized and sent to northern Mississippi where they aided Halleck, and later accompanied Sherman on his devastating march. The Fifth was organized March 20., 1862 but only part was sent south, the rest remaining to fight Indians. The Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth were organized and were used to fight Indians but later saw service in helping clear the southwest of Confederates. The Eleventh was organized late in the war and was used primarily to guard railroads in Kentucky. All in all the Minnesota record, in the War of the Rebellion was creditable and she sent 21,982 men to the colors. This is remarkable, in that it comprised about 13% of the population.

The part that the St. Louis Park area played in the war is difficult to determine. Because of the different spelling of names and the indefinite location of places of residence it is difficult to determine exactly who enlisted. It is definitely known that Job Pratt enlisted as a private in Company D in the First Regiment and was one of the veterans who transferred to the First Battalion when the First was discharged. Another private in that company was M.G. Pratt which might have been Miles Pratt. In the Sixth Regiment one can find in Co. B a James Halloran, a private, who might have been from this area for it is known he was from Hennepin County. In the same regiment was James Pratt, who likewise could have been from western Hennepin County. Among an Irish group in the Ninth Regiment one can find Thomas Gaffney, who quite likely was the same man who had a claim in section 4. Gaffney enlisted as a private in August 1862, in Co. K. In the same company was Peter Hannan, a private, who was likely related to the Hannans in the St. Louis Park area. Better known perhaps was Martin Van Buren Pratt who later lived in section 6. He enlisted in Co. A Bracketts Battalion on September 25, 1861 and was discharged October 28, 1864. In the Independent Battalion (Cavalry) one finds Mark T. Berry, as First Lieutenant of 'Company E who enlisted August 31, 1864 and was discharged May 1, two years later. Joel Barber Clough, who owned land in section 17 and lived there when the business of construction of railroads was quiet, was an engineer in charge of building military roads for the Union armies. [Biographical sketches of him conflict about dates and places but it is certain that he was an engineer in charge of certain military roads.] Charles Rye, brother of Mrs. Laycock, enlisted at Fort Snelling, to which place his sister walked from the farm to bid him goodbye. William Calahan, Walt Rice and George Williams were among other groups which fought the bloody war to preserve the Union.

Of course there were many who owned land in the area later, who had enlisted and served in the armies of other states. Noteworthy is Walter Ainsworth who served with a New York Group. C.B. Heffelfinger owned land in St. Louis Park and was one of

the first to enlist, having joined a group called Lincoln's Guards. There are many whose names are not known or recorded who lived in the area and brief mention of a few will indicate that the area gave men to fight the war.

Besides the giving of men to the war the area also saw an economic revolution take place. Before the war a settler was content to make a living, try to pay his debts and build up a community with all the institutions and conveniences of the more settled areas. During the war, without any fanfare, more machinery was introduced to make raising of grain a cash producing crop. Many abandoned the old cradle as a device to harvest grain and began to buy reapers. Especially was the area interested in raising wheat, and it was in 1858 that the first shipments of flour were made from Minneapolis. Wheat rose in price from around sixty cents a bushel to about \$1.50 at the end of the war. With ten acres of wheat, a few of corn and potatoes, a wheat farmer could expect ten to twenty bushels of wheat raised per acre. With one or two hundred bushels of wheat to sell at \$1.50 per bushel a settler could look forward to selling enough to pay his debts to land loan agents to whom his land was often mortgaged in order to pay the government for the Preemption. Thus the Civil War brought prosperity and the claimants now owned their lands without encumbrance. Hereafter the settlement pattern was to be relatively stable and there would be less emigration.

While the Civil War was in progress, Minnesota was faced with another problem which was somewhat unexpected, an Indian uprising. This event though terrifying and murderous for people farther west on the frontier, did not touch St. Louis Park area with the devastation of other places, although it sent a wave of fear through the area which caused many residents to flee to the haven of Fort Snelling and Minneapolis.

The general causes of the Sioux Outbreak can be found in effects of white man's penetration of the Indian country. The Sioux sensed that the extinction of the game animals meant the end of their livelihood. Furthermore they knew white intrusion was inevitable and in selling the Minnesota lands in 1851 made the best deal they could - retaining a shoestring reservation along the Minnesota River. But the frontier moved westward, and the alluvial river lands being excellent agricultural land, soon attracted the attention and increased the avarice of the whites for more land. Joseph R. Brown had induced the Sioux to cede the reservation north of the river in 1858. Even then the Indian considered it his right to hunt outside his reserve, and the whites became accustomed to see Indians wandering across their lands. Added to this was the attitude of the government and its agents. The notorious and murderous Chief Inkpaduta had few years earlier committed crimes and had gone unpunished for them. Furthermore he demanded and got a share of annuities which really and rightfully belonged to those who had signed the treaty. White prestige was declining when the undiplomatic actions of agent Thomas J. Galbrath tried to force the Indians to cut their hair, adopt sedentary living habits and become farmers on eighty acre plots. In addition, traders on the reservation were allowed to give credit to the Indians, payment for which would be deducted from annuities. The Sioux, with a semblance of justice, pointed out that it was their prerogative how their annuities should be distributed. They strongly felt that the federal government was not living up to its part of the treaty and agreement.

Thus tension was growing at the Upper Agency where about four thousand Indians of the Wahpeton and Sisseton tribes lived and at the Lower or Redwood Agency where tribes under the leadership of Little Crow, Shakopee, Big Eagle and Wabasha lived.

The whites, on the other hand, were apathetic toward the troubles of the Indian, thought that they were becoming civilized and became used to seeing them wander across their lands. Furthermore, the whites were now engaged in a "great Civil War" and regular troops were withdrawn from Fort Ridgely. The time was auspicious for an uprising.

The immediate cause of the outbreak seems to have been the failure of the corn crop in 1861 which caused many of them to hunger. Some emergency rations were issued by the government but were rapidly used up by Indians and their relatives who customarily eat with the families who have most to eat. Traders, on the other hand, refused to give credit, and one who instructed the suppliants to "eat grass" was later found dead with grass in his mouth.

The opening shot of the Outbreak was fired at Acton, a small settlement in Meeker County where four Indians murdered, apparently without approval of the chiefs, five whites. On August 19, 1862, two days after the murders, the word reached Minneapolis and this city and St. Anthony were filled with refugees by August 20.

In the St. Louis Park area many people fled, but the Laycocks resisted the panic. Mrs. Laycock had become used to having Indians around, had seen them take various articles for their own use, and was not afraid. Once an Indian watched her bathe the baby in a tin wash dish, took a fancy to it and walked off with it after she had hung the dish up to dry. Another time a brave watched her comb her hair which was long, and when he stepped over and picked up a strand saying, "Show how scalp." a visiting neighborwoman screamed but the Indian scowled and muttered, "Not Afraid" and pointed to Mrs. Laycock.

While the settlers were traveling to a safe place the Acton murderers headed for Shakopee's village where a war council assembled. After some hesitation Little Crow decided on war which would oust the whites from the Minnesota River Valley. Thus on the 18th of August a war party descended upon New Ulm and settlers, were killed, houses were pillaged, while wagons, goods, cattle and horses were driven off. Three days later the Shetek settlement was attacked and the following day Springfield felt the first wrath of the Sioux. Settlers fled in terror and night to try to reach the sheltering walls of Fort Ridgely and the settlements at the mouth of the Minnesota River. The frontier line receded to a line connecting Sauk Center, Paynesville, Forest City, Hutchinson, New Ulm and Blue Earth. The Sioux attack on Fort Ridgely and New Ulm failed.

Meanwhile the whites were preparing to take the offensive. Regiments Six to Ten were being recruited at Fort Snelling and were pressed into service. Colonel Sibley with four companies of the Sixth Regiment were sent up the Minnesota River. In the early part

of September two battles were fought, one at Birch Coulee and another at Forest City. Two days later on September 4 another battle was fought at Hutchinson and on the 22nd the battle of Wood Lake took place. It still did not seem to many that the whites could defeat the Indians.

In St. Louis Park area the Laycocks never left their farm. One night there came a loud' knock on the door. Mrs. Laycock whispered:

"Will, do you think that's an Indian?"

"No," he answered but cried out, "Who's there?"

"It's Jerry Falvey squire, ye better come with me I'm taking the wife and children to Fort Snelling."

"No thank you Jerry. I'm not going. I am not afraid of Indians, Mary Anne can go."

"No", said Mrs. Laycock, "I'll not go if Will won't."

"Well, ye better come with the child", said Falvey.

"No," said Mrs. Laycock, "I am not afraid to stay, thank you."

But she confessed later of thinking that she saw something that looked like an Indian dodging from corn shock to another in the field most of the night. She would often remark:

"Will, I'm sure I see something." And he would remark

"No, thee doesn't."

But the campaign was going to the whites during this time and the Indians were becoming demoralized. Camp Release was reached about September 25 and 107 whites and 162 half-breeds were released from captivity. Soon some of the hostiles were sneaking back into the camps of the friendlies. The military captured some 425 prisoners of whom the court martialled 321 and condemned 305 to death. The commanders referred the case to President Lincoln who reprieved all but 58 who were hanged at Mankato on December 26, 1862.

In the following year all the treaties of 1851 were revoked and in May 1863 boats took 1,510 Sioux to Crow Creek in Dakota. Little Crow, the leader of the hostiles, escaped to Dakota but returned in 1863 and was shot while picking berries with his son in a thicket north of Hutchinson on July 5, 1863. The Sioux Outbreak was the last of the Indian scares in this part of the country and provided much subject material for stories to youngsters who gathered to hear the patriarchs amuse their progeny.

The third great event of this period which affected the St. Louis Park area was the building of the railroads. Though it provided no transportation for the nearby farmers, it did give them a chance to earn some extra dollars by using their teams to help with the grading, and a favored few sold small parcels of land to the railroads for right-of-way. The two roads that built through in the period 1860 to 1872 were the St. Paul and Pacific, which later became part of the Great Northern line, and the Minneapolis and St. Louis.

The St. Paul and Pacific was originally the Minnesota and Pacific road which was one of the many roads projected during the years of railroad building mania in the 1850's. Organized in 1857, it secured a charter from the state legislature on May 22, 1857 and capitalized itself at five million dollars. It proposed to build a line from Stillwater, through St. Paul, St. Anthony, Minneapolis and on to Breckenridge, plus another line from St. Anthony to St. Cloud. Securing part of the notorious Five Million Loan, it graded sixty-two miles when the depression of 1857 caused it to halt. In 1860 the legislature asked for lien on the uncompleted roads and the electorate voted to take the land grants of the defunct company. After two years of dormancy, the St. Paul and Pacific was organized to take over the properties of 'the defunct Minnesota line. This group was headed by Edmund Rice and had in addition. R.R. Nelson, E A.C. Hatch, J. E. Thompson, and William Lee as officers. It completed the line from St. Paul to St. Anthony in 1862 and ran the first locomotive. The William Crooks between the two cities on June 22, 1862. Capital being difficult to secure, the president, Edmund Rice, made a trip to England where he induced investors to lend the money and bought three thousand tons of rails. Two divisions were organized in 1864 to build the line. The First Division or main line under the presidency of George L. Becker was to complete the line from St. Paul to Breckenridge, and the second division was to finish the St. Cloud branch and others. Elk River, on the St. Cloud branch, was reached in 1864 and by 1866 it had reached St. Cloud, seventy-four miles distant.

In 1866 the officers of the railroad were busy buying right-of-way to construct the line westward. Jeremiah Falvey sold a right-of-way strip to the First Division on March 24, 1866, and E.A. Veazie, George Bums, Mark T. Berry and W. Pearce sold similar strips of land the same year. During the next year other persons who sold property in the St. Louis Park area to the First Division were J. Larkin, C. B. Heffelfinger, and C. W. Houston. Other strips needed for right-of-way were ceded by warranty deed before 1880 though one party refused to sell and the property had to be taken by condemnation proceedings which gave the railroad title in 1883. In 1867 the graders were busy constructing the substructure of the line which ran a rather curved route around the south side of Cedar lake across sections 30, 31, 9, 8, and 7 where it turned south into section 18 and thence westward. That year the line was completed to Wayzata, twenty-five miles distant, and two years later it had reached Willmar, 104 miles from St. Paul. By 1871 the St. Paul and Pacific was running trains to Breckenridge before the panic of 1873 cut short operations and placed the road in the hands of the receiver from which James Hill and his company secured it.

The Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad was built for two reasons; to connect Minneapolis with Duluth, and to tap the great wheat fields of the west in order to keep the flour mills in full operation in Minneapolis. Organized in May 27, 1870, the railroad had for its officers Henry Titus Welles, R. J. Baldwin, W. D. Washburn, Isaac Atwater, while Joel Barber Clough of the St. Louis Park area was chief engineer. On the board of directors were two men who owned land in the area, R. J. Mendenhall and W. W. McNair. This group which was financed by Philadelphians and Jay Cooke began by constructing a line which was to connect Minneapolis and White Bear where a railroad which connected St. Paul and Duluth was met. With this line finished they turned their attention to building the line south and west to reach the wheat raising area.

In 1870 the land division of the railroad was busy purchasing right-of-way westward out of Minneapolis. The first section was to pass through Hopkins (West Minneapolis), Chaska, Eden Prairie and Carver, where there was a bridge over the Minnesota. At Chaska there was a high hill over which the rails had to be laid and at Eden Prairie a high trestle had to be constructed.

Engineer Joel B. Clough supervised the grading and laying of rails of the Minneapolis and St. Louis on this western extension. Clough is an interesting character in his own right. He had been born on October 30, 1823 in Palmer, Massachusetts. Graduating from Wesleyan University in 1848, he began a long career as an engineer for various railroads. Between that date and 1862 he was engineer in the construction departments of at least six different railroads, mostly in Kentucky, Ohio and Vermont. In that year his health failed somewhat and he moved to Minneapolis and bought a farm in section 17 what was to become St. Louis Park. During the latter part of the Civil War he was Engineer of Construction of U.S. Military Roads in Pennsylvania and Virginia. Returning home to regain his lost health, he lived two years on his farm before becoming engineer on the Hastings and Dakota line. Finishing that job in tow years, he became city engineer and street commissioner for Minneapolis after which he became chief engineer of the Minneapolis and St. Louis line. After 1872 he was a construction engineer for the Northern Pacific with the exception of the two intervals when he farmed or was city engineer of Minneapolis. Besides railroad construction he is credited with the development of the Minneapolis boulevard system and house numbering. He died on August 23, 1887.

The grading on the Minneapolis and St. Louis line was finished in mid-August, 1871 and on the 29th Clough began to lay rails westward. By November 14 the last spike was driven and the railway officials made an informal inspection tour in preparation for the grand opening. Behind a locomotive, which was in regular use on the White Bear line, the first train passed over the line, stopping at various points where General Washburn spoke, bands played, and banquets and toasts were given. Twelve days later passenger service was to begin. Hardly had the line been built and was operating when Jay Cooke absorbed it as a branch of his Northern Pacific system. But the depression of 1875 caused the Northern Pacific to go bankrupt and the M & St. L. passed through various vicissitudes of fortune within the next score of years.

By 1872 the St. Louis Park area had two railroads traversing it but there was no depot for either passengers or freight. No longer would the rural stillness listen only to itself but the nights would be filled with the whistle of the steam locomotive and the rumble of wheat trains pulling for Minneapolis. The immediate consequences of the building of the roads was not great but the roads were to play a more important role in later years when the village was established and became an industrial center.

Other changes which took place in the area were of relatively small import during this period. Farmers cut more and more of the oak trees which covered the land, burning the wood in stoves and turning the land into grain and corn production. More cattle were raised and the surplus was marketable and meat found its way to the tables of the settlers. Wheat was raised in greater amounts and was sold to the Minneapolis mills. Prosperity had returned, most farms were owned without mortgages, and the residents felt a sense of stability which the first frontier could not support. Schools, churches, government and other institutions became more firmly fixed. Minneapolis, which had abandoned her town form of government in 1862 for economy reasons, asked the legislature for a charter in 1867 and received it, thus becoming incorporated, and in 1872 Minneapolis and St. Anthony were merged into one city. Prices of land rose somewhat under the aegis of prosperity. The Civil War was over, the Sioux had been subdued and shipped away, and the veterans returned. Minneapolis was a growing city, the frontier was farther west, and basic patterns of development laid. The next decade would see a further growth of the seed which was planted in the decades from 1855 to 1872.