



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Court House Ramsey County, Minnesota. Erected 1850-51 Destroyed about 1884

Stock#: 85742
Map Maker: Upton / Bromley
Date: 1857 (but circa 1890)
Place: St. Paul
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 10 x 12 inches (including mount)
Price: \$ 1,600.00



Description:

The First Edifice of Local Government in Minnesota.

Important photograph of Ramsey County's first courthouse, taken a few years after its completion in 1851.

The construction of the courthouse lasted from 1850 to August 1851. It was built on the square bounded by Fourth and Fifth, and Wabasha and Cedar Streets.

A manuscript annotation below the printed caption reads "Torn down to give place to the new Court House".

Dane Smith's 1993 article "A Short and Happy History of Ramsey County and Its Two Earlier Courthouses" notes that the land for the courthouse was donated by Vetal Guerin, one of St. Paul's earliest settlers. At the time the courthouse was built it was perhaps the first permanent administrative structure in Minnesota. In its earliest configuration, Ramsey County covered a much larger portion of the state than it does today.



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The courthouse was designed by pioneer physician Dr. David Day.

According to a flyer distributed in 1932, the original courthouse "was the pride of the city, all important meetings and many theatrical performances being held there."

When the 1851 courthouse was razed, the *Saint Paul Pioneer Press* added up the legal activities that had taken place there over thirty-five years and found that they included 40,295 criminal cases, 475,000 records filed for real estate, and 35,000 marriage license applications.

Provenance

Deaccessioned from the James J. Hill Reference Library, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Such early Minnesota photographs are rare and almost unobtainable outside institutional deaccessions.

Detailed Condition:

Albumen photograph mounted on original card mount. The card is a bit wavy. Numbered "34" in ink along the upper right corner of the mount. Ink-stamped on the verso "Published by E. A. Bromley, Minneapolis, from the original Upton negatives." and "Hill Reference Library St. Paul" along with a library catalog number in pencil.