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THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Report

of

Committee on Examination

This is to certify that we the undersigned, as a committee of the Graduate School, have given Warren Leslie Wallace final oral examination for the degree of Master of Arts . We recommend that the degree of Master of Arts be conferred upon the candidate.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

June 1 1918

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Report  
of  
Committee on Thesis

The undersigned, acting as a Committee of the Graduate School, have read the accompanying thesis submitted by Warren Leslie Wallace for the degree of Master of Arts.

They approve it as a thesis meeting the requirements of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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May 27 1918

**Political History of Minnesota Territory, 1849-1853.**



**A Thesis Submitted to the**

**Faculty of the Graduate School of the**

**University of Minnesota**

**by**

**Warren L. Wallace**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement**

**for the Degree of**

**Master of Arts.**

**June**

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## Bibliography

### Manuscripts

**Owen's Manuscript.** J. P. Owens planned a work which was to be called "Owen's Political History of Minnesota, 1847-1862." The book was to be divided into two parts: Part 1, Political History Proper; Part 2, Railroad History. A prospectus was issued under the date, 1875 but the work was never completed remaining in manuscript form. The first two hundred pages give every valuable account of the political development up to 1850. This manuscript is in the Manuscript Room of the Minnesota Historical Society Building, St. Paul.

**Ramsey Papers.** This collection consists of letters written to Governor Ramsey and also a few written by him. These with the Sibley Papers form the most valuable material available on the subject. The collection is in the Manuscript Room of the Minnesota Historical Society Building, St. Paul.

**Sibley Papers.** This collection is much more complete than that of the Ramsey Papers. Sibley received letters from a great number of people and carefully preserved them. Some of the letters give accounts which cover weeks and even months of partisan growth and tendencies. There are among the letters many that were written by Sibley. The collection is the most valuable collection extant. Also in the Manuscript Room of the Minnesota Historical Society Building, St. Paul.

### Newspapers

**The Minnesota Chronicle.** James Hughes was its editor and proprietor. This Whig paper was first issued May 31, 1849. Hughes sold his plant to McLean and J. P. Owens of the Register and the first number of the Chronicle and Register appeared August 25th, 1849.

**The Minnesota Chronicle and Register.** This was the title given to the Register after McLean and Owens, the editors of the latter, purchased the Chronicle. The ownership of the paper changed several times during the time it was published. On February 10th, 1851, it was sold to the Democrat. The Chronicle and Register was a Whig paper and it advocated party organization. Because of the dissatisfaction of the Whigs the editor, Henniss, sold it.

**The Minnesota Democrat.** The Democrat first appeared on December 10, 1850. It was owned, throughout the period covered by this study, by D. A. Robertson and was operated from the beginning as a democratic paper, subject to the interests of Rice and his friends. It was a strong advocate of the establishment of parties. It opposed the Pioneer and the Ramsey administration.

The Minnesotian. J. P. Owens became the editor of this paper which was first issued September 17th, 1851. It was Whig and supported the Ramsey administration.

The Minnesota Pioneer. The Pioneer was the first paper published in the territory. J. M. Goodhue, the editor, arrived in St. Paul April 18th 1849 and commenced the issuance of the paper April 28, 1849. He published the paper until his death in August, 1852 after which it soon passed into the hands of J. R. Brown. Goodhue was a man of intense passion and his columns recorded his feelings. He was intense in his approval of men and measures and was extremely violent in his attacks. Throughout his three years in Minnesota he supported Sibley and Ramsey and urged the policy of no parties during the territorial period. His paper always did part or all of the public printing and it was considered the "Organ" of the Territorial Party.

The Minnesota Register. The Register was a "Whig paper, established July 14, 1849. An early issue came from Ohio, dated April 27, 1849. After August 25, 1849, it continued with the name, Chronicle and Register.

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Contains a few pages which deal with the early period.

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Moss, H. L., Last Days of Wisconsin Territory and Early Days of Minnesota Territory, in Minnesota Historical Society Collections, 8: 67-88. (1898) Very inaccurate.

Murray, W. P., Recollections of Early Territorial Days and Legislation, in Minnesota Historical Society Collections, 12: 103-130. (1908)

Stevens, J. H., Personal Recollections of Minnesota and Its People, Minneapolis, 1890. Valuable work.

Sibley, H. H., Reminiscences, Historical and Personal, in Minnesota Historical Society Collections, 1: 374-396. (1902 Ed)

Stevens, J. H., Recollections of James M. Goodhue, in Minnesota Historical Society Collections, 492-502. (1894)

Sibley, H. H., Reminiscences of the Early Days of Minnesota, in Minnesota Historical Society Collections, 3: 242-277. (1880)

(The articles referred to in this group are generally correct but many inaccuracies of detail appear)

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Obituary notes are to be found in many of the volumes of the Minnesota Historical Society Collections.

Histories, Biographies, Biographical Notes and Miscellany

Baker, J. H., Lives of the Governors of Minnesota, in Minnesota Historical Society Collections, 13: 1-47; 75-109. (1908) The lives of Ramsey and Sibley are sketched.

Castle, H. A., Minnesota, Its Story and Biography. 5 vols, New York, 1915. Volume one gives a short account of educational institutions and public corporations, It is of very little value for a study of political development.

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### Preface.

The purpose of this study is to give an account of the political development in Minnesota Territory from the years immediately preceding territorial organization to the close of the administration of Governor Ramsey in 1853. The study is divided into four main parts: Organization and party interests; party organization and the election of 1850; party and personal interests in elections and in the Legislature, 1851-1853; and Indian relations and politics. Through these general divisions, it has been the plan to trace the growth and purpose of the territorial parties and to develop and emphasize the idea of personal politics. Personal politics was dominated by a few men and it has been the plan to include in the discussion as few as possible of all those identified with the various groups. It will be noted that economic interest rather than political theory played a significant part in the early development of Minnesota.

Organization and Party Interests.

The land which was to be organized in 1849 into the territory of Minnesota had been included within the limits of various territories. Immediately preceding 1846, Iowa had exercised a nominal authority over that part west of the Mississippi; while that east of the river remained a part of Wisconsin until 1848. During these early years many settlers had come into the section. The earliest one of prominence was Joseph R. Brown who had come as a fifer to Fort Snelling in 1819. After his discharge from the army, he made his home in the St. Croix valley. In this valley lived many lumbermen who had, by the close of the forties, established their mills at St. Croix Falls, Marine Mills, Stillwater, and other camps. Here a thriving business was done—the annual cut being estimated at twelve million feet. This industry had attracted many settlers from the northern states and particularly from New England. On the south bank of the Minnesota, Mendota had been founded. It became the principal depot of the trade of the American Fur Company in Minnesota and was, after 1834, the home of H. H. Sibley. Stephen A. Douglas, chairman of the Senate committee on Territories, considered it very favorably for the capital of the new territory. Other

1. J. E. M<sup>c</sup>Kusick, the owner of the mills at Stillwater, gave the following figures:
- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| St. Croix Falls, Wis. | 4,000,000 feet. |
| Osceola, Wis.         | 1,800,000 feet. |
| Marine Mills, Minn.   | 15,00,000 feet. |
| Arcola, Minn.         | 700,000 feet.   |
| Stillwater Minn.      | 1,800,000 feet. |
- Other estimates put the total as high as twelve million feet.

trading stations were located toward the west and northwest of Mendota but by far the greater portion of the inhabitants was in the St. Croix valley.

The first political issue which tended to draw these settlers into a unit centered about the locating of the western boundary of Wisconsin. The intention of the second Wisconsin constitutional convention was to extend that state to the Rum river or to the St. Croix. That of the inhabitants of what was to be Minnesota, including those of the entire St. Croix valley, was to restrict the new state to a line east of the St. Croix. This desire, on the part of the latter group, was prompted mainly by its economic interests and partly by certain ideas regarding the proper size of a state. The settlers felt that they were so far removed from the seat of the new government that their part would be to pay taxes to aid in maintaining an administrative system of no use to themselves.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, they objected both to the Rum river line and to the St. Croix but met with no success in the Second Constitutional Convention or before Congress. Resolutions, which were to be printed in the Wisconsin papers, were also drawn protesting against the boundary fixed by Congress.<sup>3</sup> This struggle made them realize the need of some territorial organization of their own.

There were certain personal elements in this early contest. Sibley did not favor the western boundary proposed by Wisconsin. This may have been due to his interest in an early organization

Seymour, Sketches of Minnesota, 200

2. Senate Miscellaneous Documents, 30 Cong. 1st Session, No. 98.

3. Dousman to Sibley, January 28, 1848, in Sibley Papers. (All manuscript material, unless otherwise indicated, is in the

of Minnesota Territory in which he hoped to play a prominent part. It may, on the other hand, have been that his objection to the Wisconsin line was based on the belief that the acceptance of it would indefinitely postpone the creation of a new territory and would open no way for political advancement. Dousman, who was located at Prairie du Chien and who had been a member of the constitutional convention of 1847, was disgusted with Sibley because of his dissatisfaction and assured him that, with the Rum line, there could be no doubt about the placing of the capital of Minnesota on the west side of the Mississippi and further assured him that this would be for "our interest,"<sup>4</sup> Although there were indications of personal differences, the creation of the new state had developed a sense of common purpose among the settlers and had opened the way for new leaders in a new territory.

Wisconsin was admitted into the Union as a state in May, 1848 with the St. Croix as the boundary on the Northwest. This left a great area of the old territory without any organized government. The settlers felt that need and, in the summer of the same year, took up the question of forming a territory. In the preceding year Sibley had in mind such an organization. In March H. M. Rice expressed the belief that, after Wisconsin was admitted,<sup>5</sup> nothing more could be done in the immediate future. So

Sibley Papers.] Fenton to Sibley, February 14, 1848: Tweedy to Sibley, March 3, 1848: Brownell to Sibley, January 28, 1849: Minnesota Register, April 27, 1849.

4. Fenton to Sibley, February 14, 1848: McKusick to Sibley, April 22, 1847: Dousman to Sibley, January 28, 1848, H. L. Dousman was a member of the trading company to which Sibley belonged. This company was known as the American Fur Company until the summer of 1848 when it was sold to P. Chouteau Jr. & Co. P. Chouteau Jr. & Co. to Sibley, July 14, 1848.
5. Rice to Sibley, March 25, 1848.

matters stood in the spring but in the summer, sentiment became stronger for some active work in Congress which would give the Minnesotans recognized political protection. The result of this was a meeting at Stillwater during the first week in August. It was the first general meeting convened and its principal work was to issue a call for another convention to be held at the same place on the 26th of the month. More than sixty delegates attended the latter convention. It was decided to draft a memorial to be submitted to Congress and the convention proceeded to select one of their number to represent their interests at Washington. For this purpose Sibley received the unanimous vote of the convention.

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Soon after the Convention the idea of the authority of the delegate changed. Up to that time it had been the belief that that portion of Wisconsin Territory lying between the St. Croix and the Mississippi had been left without any government to protect the settlers and to guarantee their rights. Under these conditions Sibley would have gone to Washington without legal right to claim recognition. The claim was soon made, however, by Mr. Catlin, that a territorial delegate might be sent to Washington. Mr. Dodge, formerly governor of Wisconsin Territory, had been elected United States Senator from the new state and Mr. Catlin, territorial secretary, now considered himself acting governor of the part of the old territory which had not been included in the state. In a letter to Mr. Holcombe dated August 22 he stated his claim and at the same time he transmitted a copy of

6. Minn. Hist. Soc. Col. I, 35-37

The notice sent to Sibley announcing his election is in the Sibley Papers.

an opinion of Mr. Buchanan who held that the territory of Wisconsin still existed and that the laws of that territory were still in force. Mr. Catlin further advised Holcombe that the territorial offices must have been continued and that the only necessary step was to hold an election to fill those offices, including that of delegate. The latter office was still held by John H. Tweedy who was then residing in the State of Wisconsin. Mr. Doty, second territorial governor of Wisconsin, heard the same idea advanced, regarding the continuance of the offices, while he was at Madison during the early days of September.<sup>7</sup> At this time the resignation of Mr. Tweedy was expected. It was soon tendered, leaving the office of delegate from Wisconsin Territory vacant. Mr. Catlin, as acting governor then established his residence in the "residue" of Wisconsin Territory and issued a call for an election to fill the vacancy. This election was to be held on the 30th of October and was to clothe some man with authority to represent the territory in Congress.

This election was the first political affair of importance for the Minnesotans and in it was found the first expression of personal politics. In this contest Sibley and Rice were prominent candidates for the position of delegate. Each was re-<sup>8</sup>presented as having no interest in his ~~own~~ personal success.

7. Catlin to Holcombe, August 22, 1848, quoted in Neill, History of Minnesota, 491; Doty to Sibley, September 4, 1848.
8. Williams, The History of St. Paul, 183; Flaudrau, History of Minnesota and Tales of the Frontier, 48.  
Both of these accounts were written years after 1848. The events already referred to disprove the claim that Sibley had no interest in his own success. The work of Rice shows that he also was anxious to be elected.

Sibley had come to Mendota in 1834, as a co-partner in the Fur Company and had retained his headquarters there ever since. He had a wide acquaintance, was a man of classical training, had for some time served as justice of peace while Iowa exercised jurisdiction over the land west of the Mississippi, and was interested in the organization of Minnesota Territory. He had the confidence of the Fur Company and of the settlers. He attended both of the Stillwater conventions and was the choice of the delegates of the second convention to go to Washington to advocate the interests of all. Rice came to Fort Snelling in 1839. In the following May he went into what is now northern Iowa and lived there until 1847 when he moved to Mendota. In that year he joined with P. Chouteau Jr. and Company of St. Louis and remained a co-partner until the 12th of October, 1849. These two men, members of the same company, entered the contest and commenced their political antagonism which was to last through the first five years of territorial existence.

The months of September and October were months of keen political interest centered about Sibley and Rice. As early as April, 1847, Sibley had corresponded with John M<sup>c</sup>Kusick of Stillwater on the matter of the delegacy and had asked his support at that time. It is likely that much work had been done between that date and August, 1848. As the election campaign progressed, Sibley felt disturbed because of his residence which was outside the limits of the old territory of Wisconsin. He was in doubt as to whether he was qualified to serve as a terri-

9. Pioneer, October 11, 1849. Sibley and S. B. Lowry were also members of the partnership.



torial delegate and wrote to Doty, former governor for advice on the subject. Doty expressed the opinion that the act establishing Wisconsin Territory made no residence requirement and that he was eligible for the office. Though he was qualified there were some who used the fact of his non-residence as an argument against him. Sibley impressed the people with his fairness but was not an active campaigner. By the close of the first week in October he had not been at Stillwater. Through the two months he assumed a dignified attitude and endeavored to enforce a strict observance of the election laws because he considered such a course would serve him well in the election. 10

Rice was also interested and busy. By the middle of September he was represented as "acting in a low and underhand manner." In a letter to Sibley, Dr. Potts writing from Galena said: "I have made up my mind that he is unscrupulous and would make use of every means honorable or otherwise to advance his views and interests. You must watch him, and if he mines, do you counter-mine." In the following week similar estimates of Rice were made. The proposed removal of the land office, which had been

10. McKusick to Sibley, April 22, 1847; Doty to Sibley, October 15, 1848; Fisher to Sibley, September 22; Covey to Sibley, October 5; Lambert to Sibley, October 11; Sibley to Lambert, October 12.

Catlin, desirous of having as large a vote as possible, suggested the expediency of "relaxing the challenges". This Sibley objected to because he believed Congress would scrutinize more strictly than usual the claim of the delegate to a seat. He also believed that, if Rice should be defeated, he would contest the election on the ground of illegal procedure. Further objection was made because so many Rice votes would be added by this plan.

opened at the falls of St. Croix in August, 1847, either to Stillwater or to St. Paul gave Rice an opportunity to gain votes at Stillwater. Rice was represented as having been there early in October and was said to have pledged himself to assist in locating the land office at that place. Whether or not it was due to this promise he was considered to be gaining in strength through the St. Croix valley and the friends of Sibley were forced to keep a close watch over everything that was done. Rice endorsed the opening of new voting precincts at Sauk Rapids and at Crow Wing thereby admitting to the ballot many unnaturalized residents the majority of whom would vote for him. His friends were even charged with using liquor and money to get votes and it is claimed that some were secured in that manner.

October 30th passed. Sibley was elected and received his certificate of election under date of November 4. He soon left

11. Potts to Sibley, September 14; October 3: Fenton to Sibley, October 4; Covey to Sibley, October 5; Moss to Sibley, October 20. In his letter to Sibley, Fenton wrote in part: "--- Doushman says you are entitled to the Delegacy above all others, but thinks Rice could or would do more for their (his) interest, than you or in so many words, he says R. would use ways and means to effect his ends, that neither you nor him (D) would condescend to use. You know I never had confidence in R. and I certainly have none now."
12. Jackson to Sibley, October 14, Jugar wrote: "Our election went off yesterday considerably briefly. We should have done better but they commenced buying votes quite early in the morning." Of one voter he related: "He says now that before he voted he got very drunk and they some of them changed his vote." Jugar to Forbes, October, 31.
13. The correspondence indicates that the vote was divided. No territorial papers had been established to record the vote. The Sibley papers give no statement of the vote. "As is well known Mr. Sibley was elected by a respectable majority." Moss, in Minn. Hist. Soc. Col. 8, 800

for Washington and presented himself as an accredited delegate at the opening of Congress. But he had difficulty in gaining a seat and was not admitted as a delegate from Wisconsin Territory until the 15th of January.<sup>14</sup> He directed his efforts toward securing the enactment of a law providing for the organization of Minnesota and succeeded in having a bill pass Congress in the 3rd of March for this purpose. He was aided by letters from men of Wisconsin, by the cooperation of citizens of St. Paul, and by Steele.<sup>15</sup> Rice was in Washington during the last weeks preceding organization and is represented by J. H. Stevens and Neill as having aided Sibley in his work.<sup>16</sup> The organization bill, early passed by the Senate, was held up by the Whig House. The latter body attempted to amend the bill so that it would not go into effect until March 10th thereby preventing the appointment of Democratic officers to the new territory. This amendment was not acceptable to the Senate and it was only by means of an exchange of votes that it became possible to secure the enactment of the desired measure on March 3, 1849.

Mean while the bonds of personal groupings in Minnesota were

14. Catlin to Sibley, Nov. 4: Congressional Globe, 2nd Sess. 30th Cong. 260
15. Meeting under date of January 25, 1849: Franklin Steele lived at St. Anthony. He was present at each of the Stillwater meetings of August. He was a friend of Sibley and co-operated with him at Washington.
16. Stevens, Personal Recollections, 5; Neill, History of Minnesota, 492; Chronicle and Register. May 11, 1850. Much doubt must be thrown on the statements made in this reference "Mr. Phillips also said that Mr. Rice did not wish the Territory organized during the present session of Congress and would oppose it-and that he would push his way through to Washington now as fast as possible since he had heard that the bill for the organization of Minnesota Territory had passed the Senate." Fisher to Sibley, February 12, 1849. "We have no news. Mr. R. is evidently paving the way for the

being strengthened. The friends of Sibley were alert. Rice and his associates were busy. Scarcely had the election passed before it was reported that the contest, just closed, had been only a special election to fill a vacancy but that, when the regular election came, it would be a "different story". During the three months before Rice's departure for Washington, plans were made for a great deal of building in St. Paul. Rice gave lots to all of his "satellites" to aid the growth of this place and to gain political converts. It was thought that consideration of a future election strongly influenced his actions and his trip to Washington was believed to have been prompted by motives unfriendly to Sibley. His influence was also felt on the upper Mississippi. J. R. Brown, writing to Sibley on December 1, said: "Your success in the canvass for delegate has made great havoc among the good people of Crow Wing and the Winnebago Mission. The influence Rice has over General Fletcher determined him to keep me out of the country if possible. In fact, report says they are all perfectly rabid and war to the knife declared against all who assisted in any way in defeating the universal favorite.----Your friends at Crow Wing were as much elated at the success of your election as your opponents were chagrined. Clement and Russell were in ecstasies."<sup>17</sup>

The news of the passage of the bill providing for territorial

coming election.---Keep on the lookout. He will be in Washington about the 1st of February. "Walke" to Sibley, January 2, 1849.

17. Lambert to Sibley, November 18, 1848; January 13, 1849; Buss to Sibley, January 28, 1849; Brown to Sibley, December 1, 1848.

organization reached Minnesota in April and an enthusiastic demonstration followed. Aside from this, political life was not active. Sibley and Rice returned from Washington and toward the last of May the governor of the territory arrived. Mr. Ramsey, who was to be the first chief executive was a Whig from Pennsylvania. There he had performed efficient services for the party acting as chairman of the Whig Central Committee and was considered to have done much to secure the election of Taylor. The Pioneer of May 31, described him as a "plain, frank man whom the people will like." On the first of June, Ramsey went to St. Paul and formally announced the organization of the Territory. With him were associated Chas. K. Smith, as Secretary and, as Marshall, A. M. Mitchell of Ohio. The estimates of these men at the time were varied; their political careers were checkered; and their retirement early. Three eastern men were selected for territorial judges. Meeker and Cooper were related by blood to United States senators and Goodrich was a protege of Wm. H. Seward.

Two months after the proclamation declaring the territory established, the first election was held. At this, a delegate to Congress was selected, as well as members of the territorial legislature. The choice of a delegate was less interesting than that in the fall of 1848. It is to be recalled that Rice or his friends had, in November and December, expressed their strong disapproval of the election of Sibley at that time and that they had given warning that, at the regular election,

18. -- to Ramsey, October 20, 1849, in Ramsey Papers.

19. Wm. P. Murray in Minn. Hist. Soc. Col. 12, 103, 107, 108.

the matter would be a "different story". Yet, when the time came there was no contest like the one predicted. In fact, Rice is not mentioned in the accounts and the choice of Sibley is described as "the unanimous voice of the citizens of the Territory". Early in May the public did not know whether Sibley would run nor was the method of enlisting support for any candidate decided on.<sup>20</sup> Conventions were held in different precincts in July and in those mentioned Sibley was named as the candidate for territorial delegate. On the 9th of August Sibley, writing to P. Chouteau Jr. and Company of St. Louis, said: "The election has been held, and I have been unanimously chosen Delegate to Congress in all the Districts in the Territory."<sup>21</sup> On the 4th of the same month the Minnesota Register spoke of the outcome as a "meritorious complement to that gentleman highly creditable to our people."

The election for members of the Legislature was also held on the first of August. For this purpose the territory had been divided into seven districts from which nine councillors and eighteen representatives were to be sent. No uniform method of nomination was followed but the precinct convention is mentioned more than any other and was probably the prevalent plan.<sup>22</sup> Party lines were not drawn and very little influence of personal politics was felt. No one is mentioned as a Sibley man. Men were not considered as Whigs or Democrats.<sup>23</sup> Rice attended the

20. Furber to Sibley, May 8: Minnesota Register, August 4, The refusal of Rice to become a candidate was probably accounted for by the success of Sibley in getting the territory organized and by a realization that it would be futile to run against Sibley at such an early date.

21. Sibley Papers.

22. Individuals and groups of individuals submitted names,

meeting of the citizens of St. Paul precinct at the American House made a motion that B. W. Lot~~t~~ be chosen secretary of the meeting, and acted as one of the two tellers. But he intended to exercise a great influence on the choice at Crow Wing. As early as March 15, he had written from New York regarding a certain man at that place: "Give him my regards and say that he shall be sent to the Legislature." In July Rice's methods and purpose are well shown. He wrote: "H. H. Beaulin goes up with the mail. I wish you would run him and Morrison for the Legislature. Also Mr. Babcock at Sank Rapids.---Make Beaulin work if you can find something for him to do - until the election.---A deed for your lot will be made out in a few days. I have just selected it-it is a very fine one. I will also (if I don't fail) give you one at the Falls of St. Anthony where I have 200.---Please get Mr. Beaulin boarded until after the election, he will tell you the amount - we want a charter for a plank road from the falls to this point and must have the votes. Morrison will be dignified - Beaulin silent. How would Olmstead do? I hope you and Lowry and Olmstead will agree upon your men and send them.---The lines are not drawn yet. I hope you will send a majority of <sup>24</sup> Democrats."

The legislature was convened at St. Paul on September 3, 1849. The members were not listed as Whigs or as Democrats. The houses organized and continued their work of a varied nature for nearly two months. Two of the important questions before them were the location of the capital and the disposal of the printing

Minnesota Chronicle, July 12. Precinct meetings were common, Minnesota Register, July 21; Norris to Sibley, July 22; Howe to Sibley, July 25.

23. Pioneer, July 19.

24. Minnesota Register, July 21: Rice to M<sup>c</sup>Kenny, March 15; July

15.

Local jealousy enlivened the debate on the location of the capital and it was decided to maintain it temporarily at St. Paul. The public printing concerned the owners of the local presses. Though the election had not been carried on under party organization and though the members who were successful were not classed as belonging to one party or another, the idea of allegiance was considered to have prevailed. The Pioneer of November 1st wrote: "Let our Democratic friends remember that without an intelligent, fearless independent democratic representation in the assembly, Whig minorities, however small, with Whig cunning, will hoodwink, and mislead the legislature. It is Whig tactics to do things by thimble-rigging and circumlocution. Two-thirds of the motions and resolutions offered by the Whigs at the late session were traps laid in the sand to ensnare unwary Democrats." The Democrats claimed that this Whig tendency in the legislature was, in part, responsible for the organization of their party on October 20th. During this session there were no outspoken Sibley and Rice factions.

While the legislature was in session, Rice withdrew from the Fur Company. He had opposed Sibley in the election of October 1848; his friends had been bitterly incensed because of his defeat at that time; warnings had been given that later Rice would win: he had been in Washington while the organization bill was being pushed through: but had during that time remained a member of the trading company with interest at Crow Wing and at St. Paul. He maintained his residence at Mendota until June, 1849 when he moved to St. Paul. In February of that year he had written from St. Louis, complaining of Sibley's ill-will towards



him.<sup>25</sup> In October his business at St. Paul and at the Winnebago Agency was considered in poor condition. It was believed that he had been unfortunate in Indian trade and had sustained losses. His store in St. Paul was closed. Bailey and others were summoned to investigate.<sup>26</sup> The outcome was the dissolution of the partnership on October 12, 1849.

25. "I find that Mr. Sibley has been disposed to do me no good here (St. Louis). He is to return this way and we are to test the matter. He cannot floor me." Rice to McKenny, February, 13
26. Fletcher to Sibley, October 12; Sire to Sibley, October 9.

Party Organization and the Election of 1850.

It has been stated that there was no division among the voters of Minnesota into Whigs or Democrats at the time of <sup>the</sup> election of August 1, 1849. The general sentiment was in favor of a territorial or neutral party. This was prompted by the feeling that much more could be accomplished for the territory by this means both in the legislature and in Congress than through manipulation by the regular national parties. The newspapers, three of which had been established by the time of the election, were strongly opposed to party lines and expressed the intention of working against any candidate who attempted to gain votes by advancing the claim that he was either a Whig or a Democrat. The Minnesota Register of July 28, 1849 expressed itself as follows: "We stated, in substance, we would oppose any candidate for the Legislature at this time, who presented his claims to the people, or any portion of them, in the shape of a partizan. We did this in accordance with our best judgment for the present and prospective welfare of Minnesota, as well as in deference to the opinion of Mr. Sibley and other prominent men at home and abroad who took a leading part in planning and carrying through the incipient measures of our organization as a territory." The Minnesota Chronicle of August 2, speaking of the election, wrote: "Some tried to draw the lines but they have been severely rebuked in the result." 1

1. The Minnesota Pioneer was edited and published by J. M. Goodhue who came to Minnesota in April. He was very outspoken against drawing party lines in the territory.

The outcome of the election was thought of in terms of men selected and not of parties and it was the desire that the men chosen to take care of the legislative work should take up their task in the same spirit as that which had controlled the election<sup>2</sup>. The legislature met September 3, but it was not long before there were reports that the idea of neutrality was being abandoned. By the close of that month, the Minnesota Chronicle and Register observed a disposition to give up the territorial group and to draw party lines. The manner of conducting the business of the Houses caused Goodhue to warn the people of Minnesota against the trickery of the Whigs. The local elections were not held until November and, at that time, some, if not all of the candidates for county offices ran on party tickets. In Washington county most of the Whig ticket was elected. The Whigs were divided. Some still kept the idea of neutrality while a large number, though probably a minority of them, felt that an organization should be openly avowed and supported.<sup>3</sup>

During the contest for delegate in 1848, an effort had been made to force the recognition of Whigs and Democrats. Sibley, who ran at that time as a neutral, was considered a Whig. Many of his friends and supporters belonged to that party and it was believed that, if he were to express himself, he would probably declare himself a Whig. Such a declaration was not made. He

2. Minnesota Register, August 18, 1849.

3. Minnesota Chronicle and Register, September 29, 1849; Moss to Sibley, November 11, December 4.

4. The following is a portion of a letter written at St. Paul, November 25, 1848 and addressed to the Editor of the Union:  
 "Mr. Henry H. Sibley, a Whig in principle, but who came before the people as a neutral, was elected. Every effort was made during the canvass to induce Mr. Sibley to declare

remained a neutral, and defeated Rice, styled at that time an out-and-out-democrat, who was in favor of the recognition of parties.<sup>4</sup> Immediately after the election of October 30, 1848, Orange Walker, writing from the St. Croix, informed Sibley that there would be a strong effort to organize a Democratic party in the territory to promote Rice's interests.<sup>5</sup> The efforts of the latter, during the following winter, to place men at St. Paul and elsewhere in the territory under obligation to him, were probably directed toward the same end. In the election of August 1, parties were not recognized. Those who tried to recognize them were considered rebuked but Rice hoped that there would be a majority of Democrats sent to the Legislature.

Before the first month of the legislative session had passed, the Democrats had decided to act. A Democratic caucus was held at the house of H.M. Rice on the 24th of September. A committee was appointed and instructed to call a Mass Meeting of all Democrats of the territory for the 20th of October "to secure a permanent and thorough organization." On the evening of that day the meeting was held. The Democrats defended their action by claiming that the Whigs had violated neutrality. The appeal

openly and candidly his political opinions; but this he positively refused to do. A letter of the following purport was written in order to be sent to him, but not one of his friends would sign it:

Sir: Your prominent position before the people as a candidate for Congress has caused many inquiries to be made in regard to your political opinions, and we think it due to you and to your fellow-citizens that all doubt in relation thereto should cease; we therefore respectfully request you to state unequivocally whether you are a Whig or Democrat-----" quoted in the Union, Washington, D. C. January 9, 1849.

5. Walker to Sibley, November 7, 1848.

had been made to the Minnesotans to be members of but one 80.  
party for the general good of Minnesota. It had been asserted  
that partisanship could bring no good to the Territory, but it  
was claimed that a series of events had occurred showing that  
there had been disregard for this wish. In the first place, it  
was asserted that the appointments made at Washington for the  
territory had for their purpose the planting of "Whig fortifica-  
tions and Whig batteries" in Minnesota. Next, it was held that  
there was a Whig party "already armed and in the field" and had  
been since the opening of the session of the legislature. More-  
over, in that body itself, it was claimed that a dozen votes  
were "under the strictest kind of party discipline;" and finally,  
"letters written by Whigs," had been sent out of the territory  
"announcing that Minnesota must be inevitably a Whig Territory." <sup>6</sup>

The local elections of November were the first in which the  
recently organized Democratic party could participate. The party  
had been organized at St. Paul and, at that place, great interest  
was shown in the conduct and outcome of the election. A Mass  
Meeting was called to name a ticket but it conducted its business  
in such a way as to antagonize those whose support it needed.  
The meeting had been called for a definite hour. At that hour,  
however, many had not arrived. Regardless of this fact, the  
small number present proceeded to organize, chose Edmund Rice,  
brother of H. M. Rice, chairman, and instructed him to appoint a  
nominating committee. This was done and the committee quickly  
reported the names of the candidates desired by it for the vari-  
ous offices. The report was adopted and when the "strength of the  
party" arrived "from the Falls and elsewhere", there was nothing

for it to do but accept the work of the meeting. The members who arrived late became indignant, looked upon the whole affair as a "smart attempt at a gag under the name of party organization," and refused to support the nominees as nominees of a party. Men who were of the Democratic party would gladly have supported the ticket had it been a real party ticket.<sup>7</sup>

The controlling factor at St. Paul was H.M. Rice and the party organization was to be made to serve him, his opponents alleged. Lambert writing to Sibley said; "It (the nomination) was a concerted thing by the Prime mover at the upper town or his agents and was no more purely democratic than the most rabid Loco foco gag Caucus that ever disgraced the 4th ward of New York City." W. H. Forbes also wrote to Sibley in December and mentioned several of the nominees whom he characterized as "creatures of H.M. Rice Esq."<sup>8</sup> Consequently the election became a personal rather than a party contest and the outcome was considered by the Democrats a direct blow at Rice and the Rice influence. Forbes expressed the belief that "that beautiful faction is crushed". Brown said of the defeat: "It has done much good, however. If Rice himself is not satisfied that he 'can't shine', his friends are — they give it up, I think, as a bad job. It is now as clear as day that Rice has received more votes than he can ever get at any election hereafter let the population be as dense as it may."<sup>9</sup>

6. Pioneer, October 4; October 18; Brown to Sibley, December 21, 1849:— to Ramsey, October 20, 1849.

7. Lambert to Sibley, November 27, 1849.

8. Lambert to Sibley, November 27, 1849; Forbes to Sibley, December 21, 1849. Forbes was in charge of the American Fur Company at St. Paul until 1853.

9. Brown to Sibley, December 21, 1849.

On the whole the elections were a contest between parties; either between the Democrats and the Whigs, or between the Democrats and the Territorial party, at places known as the People's Party. In Washington county where the Whigs were well organized each party - Whig and Democrat - placed a ticket in the field and the result was favorable to the Whigs. Even in that county there were personal influences which entered and determined the outcome to some extent. At St. Paul, the contending interests were variously spoken of. Those who had been opposed to organization considered the outcome as a triumph for the Territorial ticket. Others who believed in adhering to the regular national parties thought of it as a victory for the Whigs. Those Democrats who had supported the movement for organization but who refused to become tools of the Rice interests held that the St. Paul election had resulted in the defeat of Rice and had no bearing on the comparative strength of Democrats and Whigs. J. P. Owens even went so far as to say that the election in St. Paul had been resolved into a "regular Sibley and Rice affair".<sup>10</sup> Clearly there could not be at this time any certainty as to the course which organization in the territory would take.

Reference has previously been made to the prominence of Sibley in territorial affairs and also to the strength and influence of

10. Potts to Sibley, December 20, 1849; Brown to Sibley, January 30, 1850; - to Sibley, March 12, 1850; Owens to Ramsey, December 20, 1849, in Ramsey papers. No party lines could not have been drawn with great certainty. In Washington County the Whigs were said to have elected every one of their candidates, another wrote that the outcome was nearly an equal division, while another said they had every office but one.

Rice. The former had been accepted as a fitting representative of territorial interests in 1848 and again in 1849. The latter, to become a leader, was forced to displace Sibley or build up an organization subject to his will. The part which he took in the election of 1848, his visit to Washington in the following winter, his methods of enlisting supporters in St. Paul, and his general policy and purpose in the election of August have been discussed. Again his influence was shown in November to such a degree that it caused many Democrats to refuse their support to Democratic nominees and it was hoped that the outcome would have crushed him and his friends. His popularity was due, it was claimed, to money of the American Fur Company which he had spent with "reckless extravagance" and "foolhardiness" so extensively that he had been called a "grand business man" and "a man of extensive views". But the defeat of November did not crush him. During the winter he visited Washington again and it was rumored that he was causing Lowry to take three Winnebago Indians to Washington to aid in showing how great his influence among them was.

The territorial legislature had been convened in its first session in September, 1849, and had closed in October. The second session was not to be called until January 1851. Under these conditions there was no legislation or legislative program in the territory to absorb the political interest and the tendency was for the political leaders to look forward to the election of delegate in the fall of 1850. The Democratic party which was the only one which had been regularly organized was

11. to P. Chouteau Jr. & Co., December 21, 1849



considered by many to be only a tool of Rice and those closely associated with him. Many Democrats refused to join. The Territorial, or Neutral party, had been successful in the preceding election and Sibley, though a Democrat in principle, was serving for the Neutral party in the interest of the Territory. The Whigs who had been accused by the Democrats of fostering a secret party organization and of having used the legislature for their gain, had elected many of their nominees in the county and precinct election of November. These elections had hardly closed before plans were being made for the next election, candidates were early discussed, and efforts were made to determine the best course to pursue.

It was expected that Sibley would be a candidate at the succeeding election. But during the winter months there were various opinions expressed as to the party he should represent. Goodhue had cast his lot with the Democrats. His paper had become the Democratic organ; he had gained much financially from the public printing, and was anxious to see the party successful. He knew that Sibley was Democratic in principle and urged him to become the candidate of that party. He even talked the plan

12. "Having been elected to Congress by an undivided vote of the people, without the distinctions of Whig or Democrat, my actions as Delegate will be governed by that fact, and you will not of course expect me to depart from my neutrality in that particular."
- "But I may be allowed the privilege accorded to every private citizen of stating my individual sentiments. I am a Democrat of the Jeffersonian School and as such I stand ready at all proper times and places to take my place under the banner of the party. It is especially proper that I should define my position now, as a false statement has been circulated about that I am a Whig and elected as such." This is the greater part of the letter written by Sibley and read, in his absence, before the mass meeting of the Democrats, held in St. Paul, October 20, 1849. The letter is

over with the friends of Rice and assured Sibley that they would give him their unanimous support.<sup>13</sup> Brown was of the opinion that Sibley should run as a Democrat. To him Sibley was the man who could be elected most easily. In fact, he believed that there could be no doubt about the outcome. He was a Democrat and believed that the continued success of the Neutral party would make people feel that the Democratic party was weak in the territory and the ultimate outcome would be the dominance of the Whigs in Minnesota. Although he disliked neutrality, he was not ready to insist that Sibley should run on the Democratic ticket in the fall of 1850.<sup>14</sup>

Others believed that it was wise to continue neutrality and maintain a ticket which would draw the votes of the Democrats who were dissatisfied with Rice and also those of the Whigs who were not given over to the idea of organization at such an early date. Sibley's expression to the Democratic caucus of October 20th and his conduct in the preceding elections indicated his firm attachment to neutrality. He was warmly commended for

quoted in the Minnesota Chronicle and Register, November 3, 1849.

13. Goodhue to Sibley, November 26, 1849; December 11, 1849. It is difficult to believe that Rice's friends could have given the assurance which Goodhue believed they did. It may have been that this was an early move to draw Sibley away from his position as a Neutral.

14. Brown to Sibley, January 30, 1850.

his stand and it was claimed that many votes which he had re-<sup>26.</sup>  
ceived had been given by Whigs some of whom were his "warm and  
most zealous supporters." He was assured in December, 1849, that  
those who had voted for him would continue to support him unless  
he ran as a Democratic candidate.<sup>15</sup> By the close of February,  
Sibley was advised that his friends had secretly organized a  
Sibley party and were confident of success against the Rice and<sup>the</sup>  
Whig candidates. These supporters urged him to come out on the  
People's Ticket which was to include Sibley men and a few Whigs.  
But it was not known at that time on what ticket Sibley would  
run nor was there any assurance that he would become a candidate.<sup>16</sup>

Sentiment against Sibley developed. During April and May,  
his correspondents kept him informed regarding politics. His  
statement of principles to the Democratic caucus was looked upon  
more and more as a very unfortunate statement, and one hard to  
explain satisfactorily. James Morris, writing to him in April,  
said: "They (the Whigs) are exasperated at what they call a  
breach of faith on your part in declaring your political opinions  
although it was in accordance with your determination to do so  
when the people should decide to draw party lines as expressed  
in your address to the people and although that declaration was  
coupled with one that your political opinions should not inter-  
fere with the discharge of your official duties which they will  
not deny has been thus far faithfully adhered to. The whole  
secret of the matter is that you are, contrary to their hopes, a  
Democrat and those men who at your first election were your  
staunchest advocates as they professed upon grounds entirely

15. Walker to Sibley, December 10, 1849.

16. Friedley to Sibley, February 24, 1850:

aside from politics are now your bitterest opponents." A few days later Dr. Potts wrote: "I tell you candidly that your letter to the "Democratic Convention" has made a good many of your Whig friends feel hard towards you.---Furber is very bitter about it and a good many more on the Prairie as well as in other parts of the Territory."<sup>17</sup>

It was not until the last of July that the candidacy of Sibley as a Neutral was announced. Brown who had been anxious to have him run as a Democrat again late in May, pointed out the danger of appearing once more on the Territorial or People's Ticket. He claimed that that party was only the Whig party under another name and that Governor Ramsey wished to continue it through another election. If it should be successful again, Brown feared that the territory would become permanently Whig, exactly as Ramsey desired.<sup>18</sup> The day following the announcement of Sibley's candidacy in the Pioneer, he wrote to Ramsey expressing his confidence of re-election and his desire to return to Minnesota before the election which was to be held the first week of September. The reasons for his consenting to run again he gave at that time: "I conscientiously believe that certain parties wish to gain the control in the Territory to effect their own selfish ends. To defeat the united cliques of Rice, Mitchell, the Ewings, and others of a like stamp, I will<sup>19</sup> make any personal sacrifice of my own comfort and inclinations."

Meanwhile, the Rice faction had been deciding on what it considered the proper course to follow. The opponents of Rice

17. Norris to Sibley, April 14, 1850: Potts to Sibley, April 17, 1850. "It is necessary to get over that Democratic letter." May 8, 1850. Brown to Sibley.
18. Stevens to Sibley, July 24, 1850: Brown to Sibley, May 31, 1850.
19. Sibley to Ramsey, July 26, 1850, in Ramsey Papers.

had hoped he would be crushed in the fall election of 1849 but,<sup>28.</sup> in this, they were disappointed. Early in the winter he and Mitchell, the marshal of the territory, set out for Washington and other eastern cities. They did not return until spring. While away they made plans for the September contest and, by the close of January, Mitchell wrote to Governor Ramsey announcing his intention to run for delegate to Congress. He expected to receive the votes of Rice and Rice's friends and hoped to gain the support of Ramsey and believed that Ramsey's influence would cause many Whigs to cast their ballots for him.<sup>20</sup> At the same time Rice and Mitchell were endeavoring to weaken Sibley in the territory. One of the questions for Sibley to handle at Washington was that of a treaty with the Sioux. This had been discussed previously and it was hoped that something could be done so that a treaty could be made in the summer or fall of 1850. It was the expectation that Congress would authorize negotiations and Rice and Mitchell seized upon this as an opportunity which could be used to the disadvantage of Sibley. Ramsey, who was in Washington, was to be given full credit for the favorable actions of Congress and it was to made to appear to the Minnesotans that Sibley had been entirely<sup>21</sup> ignored at Washington.

20. Mitchell to Ramsey, January 28, 1850, in Ramsey Papers. "I have retired from the political field, and believing as I do that Col. Mitchell can do more for our territory than any other man that will run, I have determined to give him my support. I left him in Washington". Rice to Ramsey, February 25, 1850, in Ramsey Papers.

21. "The Governor wrote to his brother among other things, that he had learned that this country (Minnesota) was to be flooded with letters from Washington stating that you had no influence at Washington and if a treaty was made that he (the Governor) would be the main instrument in bringing it about --- " Potts to Sibley, January 15, 1850.

Rice returned to St. Paul about the first of May, announced his intention to aid Mitchell, and called upon the Whigs to rally and do the same. The Whigs looked with disapproval on such dictating by Rice and expressed their determination not to recognize his summons. As yet it was not clear on which ticket Mitchell would run. By the last of May, Brown wrote from St. Paul: "What probably will surprise you, however, is that he (Rice) now repudiates the Democratic organization in Minnesota.---When last up here I understand he said he was aware that Mitchell was unpopular and he (Rice) did not believe his (Mitchell's) election at all probable. - he (R) was satisfied that the people were not prepared to go into a thorough party organization at this early day - he had given his reluctant consent to participate somewhat in an attempt to organize last fall to please a few friends, but was at the same time satisfied the procedure was impolitic." <sup>22</sup> These statements Brown explained were made to a Whig. The purpose was obviously to make an effort to draw whatever Whigs he could to his side and aid in the election of Mitchell.

The nomination of Mitchell was made by a convention which met at St. Paul, July 31. The call had been issued for a Whig convention. The Whigs of the St. Croix valley chose delegates with the apparent understanding that it was to be a Whig Territorial Convention but when the delegates arrived, they found that the

During the winter the Winnebago Contract, to be discussed later, was made. The awarding of the contract was bitterly opposed by Sibley but he failed to have the contract withdrawn.

22. Brown to Sibley, May 31, 1850.

Ramsey and Benton county men refused to act as such. The latter, joining with the delegation from St. Anthony, organized a Territorial Convention and nominated Mitchell. The Whigs were disconcerted by the move and the majority of the St. Croix delegation refused to act with the other delegates. The convention expressed its condemnation of party lines; passed a resolution condemning the American Fur Company which it considered was exercising a powerful influence destructive to the interests of the community at large; and nominated Mitchell as the man deserving their confidence, and as one well fitted to resist the monopoly and promote measures conducive to the public good.<sup>23</sup>

While the Sibley and the Rice interests were busy enlisting support wherever they could find it, the Whigs were playing a losing game. The proceeding of the Territorial Convention, which had been convened July 31st, shocked them. They refused to accept Mitchell as a nominee, stating that he had been chosen contrary to the wishes of the majority of the people and for personal and selfish reasons. Consequently another meeting of Whigs was held in St. Paul, on August 10, and it proceeded to select David Olmsted as nominee for delegate. This nomination would have divided the Whigs, it was believed, and would weaken Mitchell's chances to win because it was thought that many of the Whigs would otherwise have given him their support. Fearing that this division would draw enough votes from Mitchell to cause his defeat, agitation was commenced immediately to cause Olmsted to withdraw. Brown, interested in Sibley's election, advised Olmsted to remain in the race if he could do so without sac-

23. Potts to Sibley, August 1, 1850: Holcombe to Sibley, August 5, 1850.

erificing his future prospects. But before the month had passed, Olmsted had been brought under the influence of the Mitchell supporters and was induced to withdraw, leaving the contest between Sibley and Mitchell.

These two men ran as territorial candidates. The method of nominating Mitchell seemed to indicate that Rice had become convinced that party organization would not give him success at the time and, if he were to gain the leadership in the territory it was not to be achieved as head of the Democratic party. Nor could Rice well hope to become the candidate of the Whig Party. Consequently he had been forced to resort to the idea of a Territorial party hoping that it would bring success to him as it had twice brought success to Sibley. Throughout the campaign, Sibley was attacked as a representative of the American Fur Company and as a promoter of its interests. Mitchell was considered the nominee of Rice and he posed as an enemy of the Monopoly. When the votes were canvassed, it was found that Sibley led Mitchell and carried every precinct except St. Paul, and St. Anthony and one on the upper Mississippi which gave Mitchell majorities of two, forty-six, and one hundred thirteen votes respectively.

24. F. B. Sibley to Chouteau Jr. & Co. August 13, 1850; Brown to Sibley, August 28, 1850; Pioneer, August 29, 1850.

25. The following report was given:

| "Precinct       | Sibley | Mitchell |
|-----------------|--------|----------|
| St. Paul        | 151    | 153      |
| St. Anthony     | 64     | 110      |
| Little Canada   | 44     | 8        |
| Stillwater      | 117    | 59       |
| Marine Mill     | 17     | 4        |
| Falls ST. Croix | 17     | --       |
| Snake River     | 10     | --       |
| Lake St. Croix  | 54     | 24       |



Sibley had not returned from Washington at the time of the election and the campaign had been left in the care of his friends. They had located workers wherever it was felt there was a need—particularly along the Mississippi toward the north which was considered to be the stronghold of the Mitchell supporters. Men were stationed at Elk River, Sauk Rapids, Swan River, and at Ft. Gaines. F. B. Sibley, brother of H. H. Sibley, responded to his brother's request and used money of the Fur Company to defray part of the election expenses. He wrote to the company telling them that he had drawn on them at one time for eight hundred dollars, part of which was money spent for election, and stated that he would have to draw from time to time for the same purpose. He believed that the company had a real interest in the outcome and after the election of Sibley was assured, he wrote to them that "we have been successful" The choice gave rise to talk of contesting the election but at Washington it was reported that there did not seem to be a man, "Whig or Democrat, in office or out of office, who is not heartily glad of it also and they take the pains to say so."

|                              |    |     |
|------------------------------|----|-----|
| Mendota                      | 78 | 3   |
| Lac-qui-parle                | 15 | --  |
| Elk River                    | 16 | 8   |
| Sauk Rapids, Crow Wing, etc. |    | 115 |
| est. maj.                    |    | 10  |
| Wauashaw                     | 40 |     |

"Holcombe to Sibley, September 6, 1850.

26. Lambert to Sibley, September 5, 1850; F. B. Sibley to Chouteau Jr. and Company, September 9, 1850; Foster to Ramsey, September 14, 1850, in Ramsey Papers.

The votes for Mitchell were gained in various ways. Many, who were former supporters of Rice continued to give their votes for his candidate. Many of the Whigs who had not bolted at the time of the July Territorial Convention and others who would have supported Olmsted gave their votes to Mitchell. Incentives of different kinds were resorted to in order to gain the sympathy of men who were not willing to vote without a bribe. Writing to Sibley on the 4th of September, Brown told him that it had been rumored that Rice had loaned Cooper four hundred dollars. He stated, as a fact, that McKusick had the promise of a one thousand dollar loan and that others had the promise of sums to suit the occasion. He further said that all the offices in the Territory and some out of it had been promised many times. He said, in addition, that it had been reported that the election judges at Wabashaw had been caught exchanging Mitchell and Sibley ballots.

The motives for voting against Sibley were varied. Many of his former friends had been disappointed because he had declared that he was a believer in the Jeffersonian principles and would join the Democratic party when the time should come making parties necessary. With these men the vote against Sibley may have been considered a matter of party discipline. His association with the Fur Company was made the chief issue when the Territorial Convention was held on July 31. Several men who were in the pay of this company worked and voted against Sibley. Wilkinson who was performing legal service for the company opposed Sibley but believed that his own service with the company would not be dispensed with because of his opposition. Dr. Borup was said to

have openly worked for Sibley's defeat with the idea that this would discredit Sibley with the company and open the way for his own advancement. <sup>27</sup> Rice had greater reason than formerly to desire the defeat of Sibley in that the latter had made a desperate effort to break the Winnebago contract which meant much for Rice in a financial and political way.

Viewed as a whole the organization of the Democratic party had intensified the demand for the organization of the Whigs but, in the election of delegate in 1850, it failed to adhere to its own partisan policy, forced the continuance of territorial parties and resolved the contest into one dominated by personal politics and controlled by the thought of economic and political gain.

27. Lambert to Sibley, September 5, 1850.

Party and Personal Interests in Election and in  
the Legislature 1851-1853.

The second session of the territorial legislature was to open January 1, 1851. A new group of Representatives, chosen in the September preceding, was sent to this legislature. These men had been chosen as representatives of a Territorial party and, though all were either Whigs or Democrats, it was impossible to tell how they would divide on the question of the organization of the legislature and in the conduct of the legislative work. The attitude of the newspapers was better known. Mr. Henniss, who came to Minnesota in October, 1850, became the editor of the Chronicle and Register, the Whig Paper, but the ownership remained with Mr. Olmsted who had withdrawn his candidacy for delegate in the last week of August. Inasmuch as his withdrawal at that time had been in favor of Mitchell, his paper was classed as a Rice paper. A new sheet, devoted to Democratic principles, was started before the close of the year. This was directly under Rice's influence. By controlling these two papers, Rice hoped to win the support of the Whigs and the Democrats for whatever organization and measures he desired. The Minnesota Pioneer had supported Sibley as a neutral. It continued its opposition to party alignment and to the "Rice Clique" and was the only paper of the territory to which the opponents of organization could turn.

The first business before the Legislature was the organization of the houses and to secure control of them the efforts of the

1. Brown to Sibley, December 2, 1850.

members were directed. Edmund Rice became one of the candidates for the speakership of the House of Representatives and M. E. Ames of Stillwater, a member of the Sibley group, opposed him. In their support of Rice, the Mitchell party, a Rice Clique, resorted to the methods of campaigning which it had used in the fall of the preceding year. The territorial papers under its control were active in its support. H. M. Rice appealed to the members to vote for his brother who would resist the Fur Company and aim to conduct the business of the legislature in such a manner as to defeat the plans of the monopoly. Minor offices in the House were promised to various men if the Rice organization won and it was thought that these would use their influence to induce some of the members to support the candidacy of Ed. Rice.<sup>2</sup> The division of the groups in the House was so nearly equal that there was great uncertainty as to the outcome and the Sibley men believed that every precaution should be taken to prevent antagonising any of their supporters. They believed that they could be successful only by adopting a policy broad enough to give some recognition to the Whigs, who had voted for Sibley, as well as to the Sibley Democrats but they felt that defeat would be certain if they made an effort to control all the offices and the public printing. The force of circumstances made the territorial men conciliatory and gave them the speakership. Seven ballots were taken, however, and three days passed before Ames was selected. A week of the session elapsed before organization was completed.<sup>3</sup>

2. Ames to Sibley, November 25, 1850; Stevens to Sibley, November 29, 1850.  
 3. The votes in the House do not indicate that the parties were

In the Council there was a similar struggle. Norris, although a friend of Sibley was believed to be coming under the influence of Rice and therefore the Rice men planned to support him for the presidency. But before the Council met it was decided it would be better to name Olmsted. The territorial men named Loomis and succeeded in making him president. The choice of these presiding officers still left some men in doubt regarding the policy and influence which would prevail. Commenting on the election, Dr. Potts wrote: "Ned Rice has had 'his comb out' as he was very sanguine that he would be elected speaker. Olmsted was the opposing candidate to Loomis and he has also had 'his comb out' and I am glad of it!"<sup>4</sup> Stevens, however, considered Ames a tool of Rice. Ames had voted for Sibley but, in the struggle for the speakership, he was believed to have made an agreement with Rice whereby, if he secured the speakership, the minor offices would be given to the friends of the latter. Stevens found further evidence of an arrangement between Ames and Rice in the dismissal of Philips, clerk during the first session and temporary clerk in that of 1851. Wait, another Sibley man, was under consideration and was favorably thought of for enrolling clerk. Both of these men were dropped as

almost balanced. Rice received two votes on the first ballot and only <sup>one</sup> on the third, fourth, fifth and sixth. He received none on the second and the seventh ballot. Council and House Journal, 1851.3 - 6 (House); Foster to Sibley.

The vote for Tilden was much greater than the correspondence of the ~~the~~ indicated it would be. The Territorial men had planned to run either Ames or Tilden for speaker, but decided on the former and voted for him. Tilden was a Whig who was closely associated with Whigs who had supported Sibley which Tilden had not done in the fall election. Two or three Democrats voted for Tilden, apparently believing that they could not elect Ed. Rice but that they might control the House by supporting Tilden. Owen's Manuscript, 112.

soon as Ames was chosen and Rice men took their places. The whole affair had a distressing effect on Stevens. "I get so excited," he wrote, "that when I hear of the dishonest cowardly conduct of those base men that I do not know when to stop." Bass commented on the organization of the houses in a similar manner. He said, "There has been more a chull-dugery and log-rolling carried on in this Legislature to get friends appointed to office than was ever known before."<sup>5</sup>

After the organization of the houses was completed the contract for the public printing was awarded. In the first session the incidental printing had been divided among the printers who were in the territory. Goodhue did more than half the business and presented a bill of about two thousand five hundred dollars. In addition to the incidental work some provision had to be made for the publication of the laws and journals the cost of which, it was estimated, would amount to four thousand dollars more. The total expenditure of that session amounted to approximately nine thousand dollars.<sup>6</sup> This sum indicates why there was so much concern among the printers regarding the awarding of the contract. From their point of view, there was in this public work, a source of profit sufficient to make the continuance of their business possible and it is not surprising to find a keen interest shown. A

4. Forbes to Sibley, December 17, 1850: Potts to Sibley, January 7, 1851.
5. Stevens to Sibley, January 6, 1851: Bass to Sibley, January 7, 1851.  
Reference is made to Wait in the Council and House Journal, 1851. 38 (House)
6. Statement made by Secretary C. K. Smith in the Chronicle and Register, December 22, 1849.

39.  
political consideration, of no small moment, was also involved. For Goodhue and the territorial advocates, this was particularly true. In the fall of 1850, the Chronicle and Register was the Whig newspaper of the territory. The new paper, the Minnesota Democrat, brought in by Rice, was immediately subject to the interests of the latter. Thus the Whig and the Democratic advocates were appealed to by newspapers of their own principles. Each paper urged party organization. If the Whigs and the Democrats responded favorably to this appeal, there would be no group that could be classed as territorial and Goodhue, as a representative of neutrality, would be without support. If he were to lose the contract for the public printing, his income would be materially reduced, his paper might be discontinued, and those who might desire the continuance of a neutral party would have no paper as their organ.

Fearing that all of the work might be given to others, Goodhue wrote to Henniss in December and told him of a proposal which he had made to the preceding proprietor of the Chronicle and Register whereby the printing business should be divided between them. - This was done before the Democrat began to operate. - To this plan of Goodhue, Henniss replied that he was willing to abide by the decision of the Legislature, whatever that might be. It is probable that he felt confident of securing part of the printing because of the relation that existed between Rice and himself and he may

7. The letter of Goodhue was written December 15, that of Henniss the 18th. Published in the Chronicle and Register, December, 30, 1850.



have believed that he would gain more from the support of Rice than by a division with Goodhue. In fact, it was claimed that a contract existed between the Chronicle and Register and the Democrat, providing for a sharing of the work in case either one were successful in carrying the vote in the Legislature. An effort was made to show the Whigs of the Legislature that any vote for the Chronicle and Register was nothing but a vote for the Rice - Mitchell Clique because of Rice's indirect control over that paper. It was said that the Whigs were disposed to believe that their party could be best cared for by supporting Goodhue, and this may have accounted for the selection of him to do all the printing. It was understood, however, that he should make some arrangement to give part of the work to a Whig and it was believed that Stevens would be selected. H. M. Rice fought to the very last in an endeavor to direct the choice. He was on the floor of the hall while the balloting was under way but left as soon as the vote was announced. Immediately Ed. Rice offered a resolution which was looked upon as a small piece of pettifoggery. He pretended to believe that everyone who had received a vote should be recognized as a public printer for a certain part of the work but the Legislature did not yield to his claim.<sup>8</sup> The outcome was very unsatisfactory to the Rice faction and both the papers under its influence attacked Goodhue with considerable bitterness.

8. Potts to Sibley, January 7, 1851; Potts to Sibley, January 14; Brown to Sibley, January 14: Chronicle and Register, January 6; Democrat, January 14.

On January 13, Ed. Rice offered a motion in the House having as its purpose an investigation by a committee of three, of charges of efforts to corrupt members of the House. It was claimed that newspaper publishers or others had attempted to use unlawful means to secure all or part of the public print-

The vote just mentioned occurred on January 14th. On that very day the Pioneer came out with a stinging attack on Judge Cooper who was then in Washington with Mitchell. Cooper, who had been appointed in 1849 for judicial work in Minnesota had made common cause with Rice and Mitchell. There can be no doubt regarding Goodhue's extreme dislike for the man. His scathing criticism and condemnation of Cooper in issue of the Pioneer, of January 16, delivered on the 14th, led to an immediate clash. Just after the adjournment of the House of Representatives on the day following, James Cooper, brother of the judge, met Goodhue on the street and a fight ensued. Pistols and knives were used. The affair gave rise to great excitement and resulted in a very general condemnation of Goodhue because of his extreme language. Forbes wrote to Sibley on the day of the attack and told him that it was believed that the pistol used by Cooper belonged to H. M. Rice. The later accounts did not further develop this claim. When Goodhue was sufficiently recovered to return to his work he gave his version of the affair. He interpreted the attack as an attempt "to murder the Editor of the Pioneer and thus prepare for electing another territorial printer." He charged Rice with responsibility for the

ing. The motion passed, a committee was appointed and an investigation conducted. The proceeding was directed against Goodhue. It was shown that Goodhue had talked with the members but no consideration had passed or was promised. The committee reported January 15, the report was accepted and the committee discharged. Council and House Journal, 1851.35-(House)

9. Goodhue's statement is in the Pioneer, February 6, Every paper in the territory gave an account of the fight. The Democratic gave one version. The Pioneer another.

attempt.<sup>9</sup> At best, the affair must have intensified the feeling already existing and may have been a factor in causing the removal of Cooper before the close of 1851.

This session selected the location for the public buildings - the capital, the prison, and the university. Ever since the Stillwater convention in 1848, the question of their disposal had been agitated. It was claimed that some understanding had been reached at that meeting.<sup>10</sup> The first legislature discussed the matter but failed to arrive at a conclusion. Again in the session of 1851, discussion developed and, by the close of February, a bill was passed, providing that the capital should remain at St. Paul, that the prison should be built at Stillwater, and that the university should be founded at St. Anthony. The groups in this debate were formed on the basis of residence and the vote which closed the controversy was the result of a compromise among them. The personal elements, already noted, played no part in the decision. Provision was also made for the election of four Commissioners of Public Buildings who were to have general supervision of the construction work. This election was to be held the second Monday in April. The Pioneer alleged after the election that the choice of commissioners was controlled by personal politics. Goodhue maintained that, in an unguarded moment, the Democrat, which he claimed had stood for the election on party lines, threw

10. "Some old settlers have asserted that the compact was made as early as 1848 at Stillwater, before the organization of the Territory.---Now there is not a word of truth in the statement." Wm. P. Murray in the Minn. Hist. Soc. Col. 12, p. 116.  
Williams, History of St. Paul, 182, - claims an agreement was made.

off the mask and announced that the contest was not one between<sup>13.</sup> Whigs and Democrats but one against "that awful monopoly." He wrote of Ramsey and Dakota counties only which were to elect two of the four commissioners. In these counties the Rice candidates received 697 votes out of a total of 1557 votes.<sup>11</sup>

Of all the legislative enactments of the session, the measure known as the Apportionment Bill, created the keenest partisan feeling. A territorial census had been taken during 1850 and it became a part of the legislature's work to district the territory. Having in mind certain questions which might be raised in connection with this apportionment, Sibley wrote, on February 27, to James Thompson, Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for an opinion on various points. On the following day, Thompson advised him that the organic act provided that all of the inhabitants of the Territory, excepting Indians, should be counted in dividing the Territory and determining representation. He also stated that the territorial legislature had authority over all parts of the Territory, subject only to the restrictions implied in the exclusive right of Congress to regulate the intercourse between the Indian tribes. A bill, in keeping with the spirit of the organic act, was introduced into the legislature. The general effect of the act would be to give representation to traders and others who were west of the Mississippi and who were associated with the fur company, of which Sibley was a member.<sup>12</sup>

11. Brown to Sibley, January 24, Minnesota Pioneer, May 8: Democrat, April 22.
12. The letters of Thompson and Sibley are in the Pioneer, September 11, 1851. Owen's Manuscript, 132.

Naturally the Rice faction objected to the bill and the feud broke out, Owens wrote, "more intensely, if possible, than on any other measure." The bill first passed the Council. It was then sent to the House where a struggle opened at once. The Rice men found themselves in a minority and decided to try to block proceedings in the hope that, with the close of the session as set by Congress only three days away, they could force the advocates of the measure to yield. On the 28th, when the House convened, it was found that seven members of the opposition were absent on a "fishing trip" and would not be in the House that day. At the same time it was discovered that the engrossed bill from the Council had been taken from the Clerk's desk during the night. The bill could not be found and it became necessary to transmit a communication to the Council informing it of the misfortune. The theft was charged to the Rice Clique which naturally replied that it knew nothing about the disappearance of the bill. In spite of the obstruction by the Rice men, the measure was forced to a vote and passed, Saturday the 29th. Immediately, seven of the minority handed in their resignations which were accepted. The session closed on the next legislative day, Monday the 31st. Violence was threatened if Ramsey signed the bill. His house was guarded but  
 13  
 no disturbance followed.

The matter was not settled, however. The Minnesotian claimed that the bill became the issue in the fall election. Seven of the nine members who supported the measure were returned to the House,

13. Owens' Manuscript, 120-133; Neill, History of Minnesota, 548. House Journal. The newspapers of the first week of April discuss the measure in the House.

it claimed. Only one of the seven "fishermen" was re-elected. The St. Anthony Express, on the other hand, maintained that this was not an issue at the time.<sup>14</sup> Regardless of any vindication of the measure that there may have been in the fall elections, its opponents presented the situation to Congress, asking for an investigation and an annulment of the law. The argument was advanced that the apportionment was unequal; that the legislature had no authority west of the Mississippi and, consequently, no representation should be allowed that part; and that Congress had power to withdraw the law. It was contended that, in Benton County, one representative had been assigned for each one hundred and seventy one inhabitants and, in Pembina, there was one for less than seventeen. It was claimed that, on the unceded lands, the average population for a representative was less than thirty six, while on the ceded lands, it was over one hundred and five. A petition, signed by one hundred and seventy four citizens was sent to Congress, and citizens went to lobby in Washington but the House Territorial Committee, to which the measure was referred, refused to modify the law.<sup>15</sup>

Partisan and personal antagonism had been aroused to a high pitch while the legislature was in session; and some of the feeling which had developed because of the measures adopted, was continued throughout the year and well in 1852. Meanwhile, the opposition to several of the office holders of the territory was continued and resulted in the removal of several of them. Secretary Smith had aroused the enmity of Goodhue in the fall of 1849. It is pro-

14. Minnesotian, October 22, St. Anthony Express, September 27.

15. Sibley to Ramsey, May 11, 1852, in Ramsey Papers: M. Democrat February 18: Owens Manuscript, 130.

bable that the editor was not kindly disposed to the secretary at any time following his tardy arrival in the territory. He said nothing, however, until Smith refused to pay the printing bill which was presented to him, but from that time Goodhue had no sympathy for him. His removal did not take place until the fall of 1851 and, though gratifying to Goodhue, was not considered a part-<sup>16</sup>isan triumph. At the same time a new marshal<sup>16</sup> was appointed. Mitchell, the first marshal, co-operated with Ramsey during 1849 and hoped to gain the governor's support in the contest for delegate in the fall of 1850. When he learned that the governor was disposed to consider Sibley with favor, he withdrew and openly opposed the administration. He continued in office until 1851 when he was replaced by H. L. Tilden. The latter official was, however, succeeded in the fall by Gen. J. W. Furber of Cottage Grove.<sup>17</sup>

Two of the territorial judges were also removed in 1851. Judge Cooper, one of the original appointees, had not been in the territory long before he began to criticize chief-justice Goodrich. He took occasion to write to Ramsey as early as October 30, 1849, calling to the governor's attention the fact that Goodrich had become the "talk of everybody" and deserved more contempt than pity. A

16. Pioneer, November 8, 1849.

The following communication was sent to the President. "-- The good of the community, the safety of the Public moneys, the integrity of the office, and the credit of the Whig party require his removal. He is entirely unfit for the office, is altogether unacceptable to the people here, by whom he is known and his removal is desired. I feel safe in saying by the whole population of the Territory excepting perhaps a few, a very few who have hopes founded upon his control of the Public moneys." J. W. Bass, April 23, 1851, in Ramsey Papers. It is interesting that he speaks of the "credit of the Whig party Also Babcock to Ramsey, July 11, 1851, in Ramsey Papers.

year later, while in Washington, he received a petition signed by fourteen members of the Minnesota Bar, asking the president to remove the chief justice. The Minnesota Democrat of September 16, 1851, claimed that Cooper had been in Washington to receive and present this petition to the president asking for the removal. Early in December, 1850, he sought to enlist the support of the governor, assuring him that with his aid, Goodrich could be removed. Mitchell was in Washington at the time. It appeared to Sibley that the two were working for Cooper's promotion in the territory. Less than three weeks after Cooper's appeal to Ramsey the territorial delegate found it necessary to warn the governor that the two Minnesota officials in Washington were then, he believed, to do all the harm they could to Goodrich, Steele, and others, as well as to Sibley himself. So prominent had their efforts made them that their presence became known to the Whig Secretary of State who took steps to have them return to the territory or resign. Cooper was still there, however, at the middle of January when Goodhue made his editorial attack. The Democrat claimed that the attitude of the Editor was due to the effort which the judge was making at Washington to dislodge one of the "leading members of Governor Ramsey's coalition with Sibley and Borup." It is not stated what effect the incidents of December and January had on the tenure of Cooper.

The fortune of Goodrich was no better than that of Cooper. Even his friends recognized that he was not fit to act as a judge but

17. Pioneer, October 30.

18. Cooper to Ramsey, October 30, 1849; December 3; Sibley to Ramsey, December 28, 1850 in Ramsey Papers, Democrat, September 16, 1851.



they were unwilling to see him removed by any influence which came from "Cooper, Hollingshead, Rice and Co." In December, 1850, the petition, signed by the members of the Minnesota bar, had been sent to the President asking for the judge's removal. He was much disturbed by this move against him but his friends came to his support. Sibley wrote letters from Washington reassuring him. Brown, probably aided by Potts, took up the matter at St. Paul and secured as many names as possible endorsing Goodrich. Members of the legislature were asked to sign in their official capacity in order to add weight with the government. In defense of the judge, it was urged that the organic act had made provision for a four year term and that, as a result, the incumbent of the office could not be removed until the close of the term. The Democrat could not reconcile the conduct of the defenders of Goodrich with the attitude which they adopted toward Cooper, whose removal they were at the same time working for. The only explanation which this paper could offer was that Goodrich was a "member of the Company" while Cooper was not. The first petition for the removal of Goodrich failed, but as the year passed greater dissatisfaction was felt and another petition was sent to the President. The reasons given in the later petition ~~against~~ the retention of the justice convinced the chief-executive that it was time to act and the re-  
19  
moval was made in November.

19. Potts to Sibley, January 14, 1851: Democrat, September 16, November 18.

The petition submitted to the President represented the judge as being wholly incompetent to perform judicial duties, ignorant of the law, wanting in good sense and judgement, destitute of character, and one without the confidence of the bar or the people. Democrat, September 16, 1851. Owens says that the removal was due to the jealousy which had

The year which witnessed the removal of Mitchell, Cooper, and Smith, all of the Rice faction, had some rebuffs for the friends of Sibley. Goodrich, who was defended by Goodhue and Sibley, lost his position during the period and Ramsey was himself subject to a partisan attack. As late as December, 1850, Cooper had sought the support of Ramsey in an effort to gain the position held by Goodrich, but he failed. By the close of the succeeding month, the Rice party had made "several severe thrusts" at the governor. In March, Mitchell transmitted to the President a communication, charging Ramsey with supporting a non-Whig paper and speculating on the Indians. This letter was forwarded to Ramsey by the Secretary of State and he was called upon to answer the charges made against him. Early in May he denied the allegations, asked for specific charges, and explained that the Indian bureau knew of the Indian affairs and that the legislature had awarded all the territorial printing to a non-Whig paper. Newspaper attacks were continued in the Democrat which claimed that he had sold himself early to Borup and Sibley. A printed circular was issued against him in October. <sup>20</sup> By the close of that month he had the treaty negotiations with the Sioux and the Chippewa Indians completed and his friends planned a housewarming as a mark of their regard and appreciation for his services to them and to the people of Minnesota.

developed years before in Buffalo where the President and Goodrich became violent antagonists. Manuscript, 156.

20. Brown to Sibley, January 24, 1851; Communication to the President, dated March 31; Secretary of State to Ramsey, April 26; Ramsey to Secretary Mayl, in Ramsey Papers: Democrat, May 27; September 16; Printed circular in Ramsey papers.

22. The new secretary was also to be welcomed officially at the same time. The promoters of the plan felt that this would serve as an offset against the "mercenary enemies" who had openly re-  
 21  
 viled the governor. In the meantime, partisan agitation was continued. The newspapers were active in the discussion of organization. The Democrat naturally defended it and was more active than any other paper. It denounced the principles of the Whig party, claimed that a "swindling banking system" would be established early if the Whigs were to become triumphant in the territory, and urged that the time had come to yield to the demands of Democrats who wanted organization. It was confident of success and pre-  
 22  
 dicted that the next legislature would pass under their control. It claimed that Sibley opposed organization for business reasons and in the issue of June 3, 1851, made a direct attack on him. "Every well informed man in this territory knows," ran the editorial "that all the members of the Fur Company unite their powerful influence in opposing the organization of a Democratic Party, because like yourself (Sibley), they suppose that such organization will in some way prove detrimental to the pecuniary interests of the Company. You and they have an alliance with the Whig leaders of the Territory, which you imagine promises to your company more profitable results --" Ames, speaker of the House, was tired of the Whig clamor of no partyism in the Territory and advised Sibley  
 23  
 that the time had come to act. The Pioneer and the St. Anthony

21. Committee to Ramsey, October 25, in Ramsey Papers.  
 22. Democrat, December 10, 1850; February 25, 1851.  
 23. Ames to Sibley, January 10, 1851.

Express remained constant in their advocacy of a territorial party

In the fall, elections were held to select members of both houses of the legislature. The Democratic party made its nominations in September, mainly, and placed tickets in the field throughout the territory. The People's Party, or the Territorial Party appeared again and drew its candidates from the Whigs and from the Democrats who objected to organization. Sibley feared that the methods which the Rice faction had used in the preceding elections would be adopted again.<sup>24</sup> The contest lacked the unity of those in the fall of 1849 and 1850 in that no delegate to Congress was to be chosen. The outcome was, however, a marked victory for the People's ticket. The St. Anthony Express and the Pioneer, in giving the results of the election, represented one group of candidates as the Rice group and the other as the People's candidates. The former paper considered the result "most gratifying to the people of Minnesota." The latter spoke in the following characteristic manner: "The yeomanry, the people themselves, have thrashed, fanned out, and cleaned out the Rice party, most beautifully." And the Minnesotian added: "We are happy to state that the people have made a clean sweep of it almost, throughout the Territory."<sup>25</sup>

The legislature which convened in January 1852, was so completely dominated by the People's candidates that there was no problem connected with its organization. In fact, the entire session was very uneventful. The public printing was divided between the Pioneer and the Minnesotian. Goodhue characterized the work and

24. Sibley to Wells, October 1, 1851.

25. St. Anthony Express, October 18; Minnesotian, October 15; Pioneer, October 16.

the spirit of the session in the following manner: "No party, factional, or political questions have been involved. Important amendments have been made to our statutes and there has been an unusual amount of legislation upon private bills, Divorces and the Maine law are the chief work." <sup>26</sup> The Maine law was enacted by the legislature in response to a demand by the people for some measure, prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquor. A territorial Temperance Society, with member societies, was busy advocating the adoption of the law. Accordingly the legislature responded but provided that the measure should be voted on favorably by the people before it could go into effect. On April 5th, the electors, by a majority of 191, adopted the measure which became effective the first Monday in May. <sup>27</sup> This law yielded itself very conveniently to the parties in the fall elections. Each made an effort to appeal to the advocates of prohibition. The People's party continued its policy of choosing candidates from the Whigs and the Democrats, while the organization Democrats made it appear that their candidates were friends of Temperance. <sup>28</sup>

The election was very quiet. The national Whig party had made too many concessions to slavery, it is asserted, to satisfy the northern people and, as a result, there was a decided sentiment in favor of the Democratic party. Though the men of the Territory had no right to participate in the election, they were, nevertheless, influenced and their vote was directed to some extent by the

26. Pioneer, March 11, 1852.  
 27. St. Anthony Express, April 30, Late in the year the Supreme Court of the Territory declared the law unconstitutional on the ground that the legislature, not the people, was the law making body.

national antipathy to the Whig party. Sibley returned from Wash-  
 ington in September confident that Pierce would be elected. While  
 the national state of mind was permeating the Minnesotans, they  
 were drawn away from politics by conditions at home. During a  
 great part of the year uncertainty prevailed as to the outcome of  
 the treaties with the Sioux. At the time when these treaties were  
 pending, settlers were going into the Sioux country and the result  
 was that a great number were interested in establishing claims  
 rather than in politics. The St. Anthony Express, in the issue of  
 September 24, 1852, reported that the subject of election had hard-  
 ly been mentioned. In view of the disrepute of the Whig party in  
 the national contest and the claim that the territorial Democratic  
 party was a temperance party, it is not surprising that the Dem-  
 ocrats carried the day and believed that they had a majority in the  
 House.

When the Legislature met and the House undertook to organize, it  
 was found that the Democrats were not in control. There were  
 seven of the eighteen who were Democrats. One other member joined  
 with the seven but three of the People's candidates voted with the  
 Whigs. The other member voted with the eight and the outcome was  
 a tie. As a result the House was unable to choose a speaker or  
 other officers. Three weeks passed with no action and at the

28. St. Anthony Express, October 15; Pioneer, March 3, 1853.  
 29. Democrat, September 22; Owen's Manuscript, 186. During the  
 summer Goodhue met with an accident and after a long illness  
 died in August. His sickness and death removed a constant  
 agitator and this may have had a bearing on the changed  
 aspect of the election of 1852.

close of that time a caucus was held at Steven's home. Here the Whigs came to an agreement and on the following day the dead-lock was broken and a Whig Speaker was selected. <sup>30</sup> The legislative program of the session did not develop partisan strife. Already it was known that the national election had resulted in the elevation of Pierce to the Presidency and the territorial interest centered in the choice of Democrats to succeed the Whig administration inaugurated by Ramsey.

To several of the Minnesotans it appeared that the appointment of Sibley to the governorship would be a proper promotion for him. After his return from Washington in September, 1852, he had recognized there was to be a change of officers and neither he nor the papers which had formerly supported him so strongly participated to any extent in the election. Only a few of his closest friends refused to join with the organization men. Support for Sibley was sought among the Congressmen and other men of prominence throughout the country. On March 16, Dodge of Wisconsin wrote to Pierce asking for the appointment of Sibley. He presented the names of fifty-eight Congressmen of twenty different states, who recommended Sibley for the governorship. Personally Dodge defended the candidate, expressing his belief that Sibley was a Democrat <sup>31</sup> who commanded the esteem and confidence of the people of Minnesota.

Meanwhile some of his Minnesota enemies were opposing him. The alleged irregularities and fraud in the payment of the Sioux, to be discussed later, were made late in 1852 by Sweetzer, a trader, and Robertson, editor of the Democrat. Ramsey, Sibley, and others were charged with having perpetrated a fraud for their own financial advantage. There could have been, it would seem, no better

time to expose such a scheme, than at the moment when a new administration was about to take charge of the national government and make new appointments for Minnesota. Not satisfied with this attack, Robertson went to Washington arriving March 2nd. At that time, he claimed, the prospects of Sibley were bright and his appointment seemed certain. But within a month's time conditions were reversed. Robertson, aided by Senators, Democratic friends from Ohio and from Minnesota, believed he had effected the defeat of Sibley.<sup>32</sup> At any rate, the President selected W.A. Gorman of Indiana. Dodge, of Iowa, had been interested in Sibley's success and, upon learning of the President's nomination, went to Pierce to learn, if possible, what effect the charges, made against Sibley in connection with the Sioux payment, had had in determining the choice of governor. From Dodge's letter it is impossible to learn what had caused Pierce to reject the candidacy of Sibley. He did say, however, that, as Governor, Sibley would be empowered to grant and revoke licenses to Indian traders and to care for other matters of Indian policy. Inasmuch as Sibley was a trader himself,<sup>33</sup> Pierce did not think it best to select him.

During the closing months of Ramsey's term a party realignment was in progress. Sibley had returned from Washington fully convinced that the Democrats would carry the national election. That fall he gave his support to the Democratic candidates. The success of the latter was attributed by Rice to the influence of Sibley.

30. Stevens, Personal Recollections. 30. Democrat, January 26, 1853.

31. Dodge to Pierce, March 16, 1853.

32. Democrat, April 20, Pierce did not, however, appoint the men desired by Robertson.

33. Dodge to Sibley, April 1.



As the winter advanced, the friends of Sibley and of Rice discussed the feasibility of establishing party solidarity and presented their views to Sibley and to Rice. In response to their efforts, Rice wrote to Sibley, February 3, 1853, urging that the time had come for an understanding and for the discontinuance of factional strife. The idea appealed to Sibley and by June he was even willing to endorse Rice as candidate for delegate in the fall contest. This endorsement of Rice as a Democrat became known to A. C. Dodge who heartily commended the action. Dodge believed that such a course would silence all clamor against Sibley and would open the way for his success in the senatorial contest when Minnesota should become a state. In the late summer nominees of two parties Whigs and Democrats, were named, for the first time in the career of the territory. Rice became the candidate for the Democratic party. With the support of the Democrat and the Pioneer, now published by Brown, he easily defeated Wilkin, the Whig nominee whose cause was upheld by the St. Anthony Express and the Minnesotian.

34. Rice to Sibley, February 3; Dodge to Sibley, June 25. Minnesota Newspapers of September and October. The action of Sibley was doubtless a forced one. There was no chance of maintaining any position of prominence under a Democratic Administration especially when he had been so closely associated with Ramsey. He had, however, kept the way open to get into the Democratic party ever since his statement made to the caucus of October 20, 1849.

### Indian Problems and Politics.

When Minnesota was organized as a territory, most of the land embraced within its limits belonged to the Indians. Aside from a small tract, south-west of Lake Pepin, all the land west of the Mississippi and south of an irregular line extending from Sauk Rapids to the Buffalo River belonged to the Sioux. The Chippewa claimed the land to the north of that line and also all north of a line which extended from the mouth of the Crow Wing River east to the Wisconsin boundary. In 1847 they ceded a small portion of their land, south of the Crow Wing River and west of the Mississippi to the United States government which established there a reservation for the Winnebago Indians.

During Ramsey's administration, these Indians were a source of considerable interest and anxiety to the settlers; and the governor, as superintendent of Indian affairs, had dealings with them. Inasmuch as this study has as its purpose the tracing of the partisan development in the territory, reference will be made only to those Indian relations which the source material indicates had a bearing on party growth or personal politics. The disposal of the Indian questions gave rise to opportunities to test the strength and the influence of men who desired to establish their prestige both at Washington and in the territory. Most conspicuous among the men who dealt with the Indians were Rice, Mitchell, Sibley, and Ramsey. Their struggles centered about the Winnebago Contract and the Sioux treaties made in the summer of 1851.

The Winnebago Contract was a contract entered into by Rice and Orlando Brown, the commissioner of Indian Affairs at Washington.

It had as its purpose the removal to Minnesota of Winnebagoes who had either never been taken to their reservation on the upper Mississippi or having gone up, had wandered back down the river. These Indians came originally from Wisconsin. The government had transferred them from their Wisconsin lands to a tract in Northern Iowa but when Iowa was organized as a state it was felt best to remove them. Accordingly a treaty was made with them providing for the cession of their land with the understanding that another reservation was to be secured. Rice, who had lived among them and traded with them since 1840, was chosen to select their new lands. Acting for the Indians he negotiated a treaty in 1847 with the Chippewa providing for the cession of the tract south of the Crow Wing River. This became known as the Winnebago Reserve. In the following year Rice made an effort to conclude a contract by which he would be empowered to remove the Winnebagoes to the north but the government refused to act. In the absence of an agreement Rice proceeded to remove the Indians and was only partially successful. Some refused to leave Iowa, others dropped out on the road, and many who reached the reservation soon returned either to Iowa or to Wisconsin. Again in 1849 he made an effort to<sup>1</sup> gather the Indians and remove them but he was unsuccessful.

1. Polwell "Minnesota", 103, 105.

The evidence on this point is somewhat vague. In his answer to Sibley's protest against the contract, Brown stated that the Winnebago removal was in 1848. He said that Rice offered to make a contract but his offer was declined. Regarding the work of 1849, Sibley said the work was done in a "slovenly" way. Brown did not say that any Indians were moved that year but he did say that Rice had no contract in 1849. It hardly seems possible that Sibley could have made a mistake of an entire year specially when the protest was made in April, 1850. The contract, protest, and Brown's answer to Sibley's protest

The influence of Rice among the Winnebagoes was greater than that of Sibley. He had traded with them for several years. They trusted him and had sufficient confidence in him to believe that he would protect their interests in the selection of their new home. He spent much time in his efforts to remove them in 1848 and 1849. It is to be noted, however, that his solicitude for the Indians was prompted by financial considerations, for during the period of his association with them, he had established claims against them to the amount of forty thousand dollars. Before Mitchell left the Territory for Washington in the winter of 1849-50, he had said that Rice had put these claims into his hands for prosecution at Washington.<sup>2</sup> It is not indicated whether this alleged indebtedness of the Winnebagoes to Rice had any bearing on the awarding of the contract or on his desire to secure one. But it is evident that his financial interest and his acquaintance with the Indians were such that he might easily believe that, if any one was to profit by this transfer to the new reservation, he might rightly be considered the one entitled to such an advantage.

About the middle of March, 1850, Rice made a definite offer to the government for this work. He also wrote to Governor Ramsey making known his desire and asking for the Governor's support. He frankly admitted that he had enemies on the Mississippi and in Wisconsin who would resort to various means to prevent the performance of the contract if he should be successful in having it

are given in The Minnesota Chronicle and Register, July 8, 1850.

2. Potts to Sibley, January 15, 1850.

3. Rice to Ramsey, March 19, in Ramsey Papers.

awarded to him. He did not intimate whether the enemies were political opponents or rivals in business but asked the Governor to treat the correspondence as confidential.<sup>3</sup> A few days after Rice had written to Ramsey, informing him of his offer to the government, Sibley wrote and spoke of the "gross impudence manifested in the proposition." Though Rice had asked Ramsey to maintain secrecy in the matter if he could do so, in less than three weeks Ramsey had written to Sibley, telling him of the hopes of Rice. His own opinion of the plan is given in the following statement: "It would have been a pretty speculation at \$75 per head as the contractor could easily have cleared \$50 per head."<sup>4</sup>

At the time when Rice and Mitchell, who had gone to Washington with Rice in the early winter, were negotiating the agreement, Sibley was ill, being confined to his room "for some twenty days." During this time the matter had remained under discussion at Washington. On the 13th of April, however, the day when the contract was finally made, Sibley had visited the Commissioner of Indian affairs. With Rice and Mitchell present he had discussed the steps to be taken for the removal of the Winnebagoes. After a two hour interview, he left and, on the very day, though no intimation had been made to him of the intention, the contract was signed. The contract met with the disapproval of Ramsey and Sibley. Five days later Sibley filed with Brown, the Commissioner, an official protest against the contract, asserting that the statements, made by Rice relative to the number of Indians and the cost of removing them, were false; and he told Brown that he would have undertaken the work himself for \$20 per head. Mitchell

4. Sibley to Ramsey, March 22, in Ramsey Papers; Ramsey to Sibley, April 10.

wrote to Ramsey ten days later, telling him that the senators of Iowa had been consulted about the propriety of such an action on the part of the government. On their endorsement and that of others who were acquainted with Rice's relations with the Winnebagoes, the agreement had been made. Sibley was not consulted, it was explained, because it was felt that the others were more intimately acquainted with the question of the Indian removal.<sup>5</sup>

The "official protest" was answered by Brown. He had felt that there was no necessity for consulting with Sibley and had found Rice highly spoken of. Consequently he found no reason to consider an alteration of the contract. Having failed with Brown, Sibley took the matter up in Congress and had a resolution, calling for an investigation, introduced and referred to the Committee of Indian Affairs. The investigation by the committee continued through the last half of May and the month of June. During that time it collected all the evidence obtainable dealing with the need of removing the Indians, with Rice's influence among them, and the estimate of Rice's ability and integrity. Rice and Lowry were also called before the committee. At the same time the question of annulling the contract was submitted to the cabinet and to President Taylor. The President found no evidence of fraud in the contract and the Committee in its final report to the House of Representatives, sustained the agreement with Rice.<sup>6</sup>

5. Mitchell to Ramsey, April 23; Sibley to Ramsey April 20, in Ramsey Papers: Minnesota Chronicle and Register; July 8.
6. Brown's answer in the Minnesota Chronicle and Register, July 8; Sibley to Ramsey June 20, June 1, June 26, in Ramsey Papers. The report of the House Committee is given in the Reports of Committees, 1st session, 31st Cong, Vol 3, No. 501.

62.

This investigation, pressed as it was by Sibley, involved considerations of a political nature. It has been stated in connection with the discussion of the alignment of parties, preparatory to the election of delegate to Congress in September 1850, that Rice and Mitchell were planning to spread reports throughout the territory that the influence of Sibley at Washington was slight.

The investigation of the contract resolved itself into a test of strength between Sibley and what he called the Rice clique. He was interested in the Indian question and desired to take some part in the moving of the Winnebagoes but the contract had been made while he was unaware of it. His official protest had been looked upon, Mitchell said, "as consummate presumption" and the government "had paid no attention to it."<sup>7</sup> The outcome of this contest over the awarding of the contract involved momentous consequences for Sibley. If he were beaten in this struggle, it would be made to appear that Mitchell and Rice had more influence at Washington than he had. Writing to Ramsey May 18th he said: "I want to show my friend Mitchell that I have some little influence here." He believed that there had been some understanding between Mitchell and Rice in regard to the delegacy and he felt certain that Rice had promised to support Mitchell for that place but he continued: "I will do anything to prevent having any one of that Rice-clique foisted upon the territory as its Representative."<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, the excitement about the contract had spread. According to the Chronicle and Register of June 10, the St. Louis

7. Mitchell to Ramsey, April 23, 1850, in Ramsey Papers.

8. Sibley to Ramsey, May 15, 1850, in Ramsey Papers.

Union of May 25th had contained a long article about it and other papers of the same city had devoted space to the question. The Minnesota papers looked upon the whole affair as a personal quarrel between two rival parties of Indian traders each one of which had hoped to get the contract. It was asserted that liquor had been sent down the Mississippi by Dr. Borup a bitter enemy of Rice to the place where the Indians were being assembled and that this had been used with other inducements to make the Indians dissatisfied with any attempt to remove them. The obstructions put in Rice's way were of such a nature that Sibley felt it necessary to write to the editors of the Minnesota papers to whom he voiced his disapproval of any means used to obstruct the work of any authorized officer of the government. He had feared, he said, that some unwise and rash steps would be taken and had admonished some of his friends and had urged them not to throw any obstacle in the way of the removal of the Winnebagoes. That this had any political bearing is not clear but, in view of Sibley's expressed determination "to prevent any one of the Rice-clique being foisted upon the territory as its Representative" it may be easily construed that his action was intended to safeguard his interests at the coming election.

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The other question of Indian policy which entered to a great extent into the political life of the territory was that which had to do with the terminating of the Sioux title to the lands west of the Mississippi river. The disposal of these Indians

9. Potts to Sibley, May 29, 1850; Sibley to Editors, July 19, 1850, in Ramsey Papers.



had been agitated before the territory was organized and the settlement of the treaty difficulties was not completed when Ramsey left the governorship in 1853. The Indian issue played a part in the first election in the fall of 1848. At that time opposition in the St. Croix valley was voiced against Sibley because he was known to be in favor of a treaty with the Sioux and it was claimed that the opening of the land west of the Mississippi would work a hardship on the inhabitants of that valley. This claim, it was held, was not recognized by <sup>the</sup> inhabitants who, in certain parts, voted for Sibley to a man, believing that with the coming of immigrants the St. Croix would profit. Yet it is worthy of note that the question of the removal of the Sioux became involved early in the political life of Minnesota.<sup>10</sup>

The year 1849 brought out some interesting facts on the Indian situation. Ramsey and Sibley had reviewed the prospects in September and had decided that nothing could be done toward completing a treaty during the year. Sibley believed that any attempt that might be made would end in a failure, and from the "wonder" of the failure he wished to spare Governor Ramsey. Before the month had passed, however, Ramsey had received information from the Secretary of the Interior, stating that he and Governor Chambers of Iowa had been appointed to negotiate with the Indians during the fall. Upon the receipt of the departmental instruction to issue a call for an assembly of the Indians, Ramsey turned to Sibley for advice in selecting the proper men to carry the summons to the Indians. Ramsey's recognition of Sibley's "intimate acquaintance with all this country and known influence over the

10. Robertson to Sibley, November 26, 1848.

Indians" caused him to assume an attitude of dependence upon Sibley which may have had a great deal to do with their firm friendship during Ramsey's governorship. Ramsey Crooks, president of the American Fur Company, also had great confidence in the ability of Sibley and felt that the interests of the company would be as fully cared for as though he were himself in Minnesota. Crooks desired to see all equitable claims recognized in any treaty that should be made. In this manner Ramsey, the members of the former trading company, and Sibley of the P. Chouteau Jr. & Co. to which the rights of the American Fur Co., had been transferred became unitedly interested in the success of the negotiations.

The plans to negotiate was not acceptable to Rice who voiced his opposition in December. Writing from Virginia, he said: "Unreservedly I wish to give you my opinion in regard to a treaty with the Sioux Indians. Great efforts will be made during the coming winter to obtain an appropriation to defray the expenses of commissioners to attempt a treaty next summer. Should a treaty be made next summer with that people, the west side of the river will receive nearly all the emigrants to Minnesota and the infant settlements on the east side must for a time stand still-lands now in market will remain unoccupied for years - farmers will find a poor market for their produce. There is a plan on foot to make St. Peters a great town. As soon as the Sioux title is extinguished a road will be opened from St. Peters to the Long

11. Sibley to Ramsey, September 15, 1849, in Ramsey Papers; Ramsey to Sibley, September 21, 1849; Crooks to Sibley, October 12, 1849.

Prairie Agency. Fort Gaines, and Sauk Rapids - the Red River trade will be diverted from St. Paul to St. Peters. The road will strike the St. Peters at Little Rapids - this will make the land carriage much shorter than from St. Paul. Farmers will settle along the line of this road as far north as the Winnebago country and they will be enabled to supply the Forts and Agencies at a much less price than those on the East Side of the River. If the treaty can be put off two years longer, the east side of the river will be well settled and the inhabitants able to maintain themselves - now they must depend almost entirely upon the Forts and Agencies for a sale of their products ---- Mr. Sibley and the Company will urge it - first because they are expecting to make money out of it and second because Mr. Sibley wishes to be the man among the new settlers on the west. Mr. Sibley has no influence in Washington, and if an appropriation is made all will know that it was not done through his influence. Two years hence, make a treaty and the present settlers of Minnesota will be benefitted by it, make one next summer and they will be materially injured." <sup>18</sup>

Due to the lateness of the season when the runners were sent out it was impossible to get a sufficient number of the Sioux together to make an agreement in the fall of 1849. A treaty with

18. Rice to Ramsey, December 1, 1849, in Ramsey Papers.

The influence of Rice and the danger to the Company are suggested in the following letter: "It may be better for all parties to continue in good harmony for some time yet so that your projects or treaty with the Sioux may not find too many opponents which it is sure to have in any event." P. Chouteau Fur Tr. Co. to Sibley, September 3, 1849.

It is difficult to understand how a twelve month's postponement of a treaty could so materially benefit the East Side. Does this mean that Rice hoped to gain the delegacy in September, 1850 and thought that he would be in a position at that time to gain influence and financial profit by partici-

the Half Breeds was made but it was not ratified by the Senate.<sup>67.</sup>

The making of a treaty was taken up again in Congress in the spring of 1850 at the time when the Winnebago contract was under discussion. In Sibley's "protest" against the awarding of that contract contrary to his wish, he had insisted that this was taking the whole of the Indian business out of the hands of the local superintendent. So when the time came to designate commissioners to make the Sioux treaty, the conduct of it was left very much to Ramsey. Sibley wrote to him that Brown realized the unfavorable impression produced on Ramsey by the contract and told him that Brown had decided to let him do pretty much as he pleased. At that time Sibley believed that the treaties could be made about the middle of September. But the necessary appropriations and other arrangements were again postponed to such a late date that 1850 passed without a treaty.<sup>13</sup> The delay was caused at Washington and was not claimed to have been effected by any intrigue of Rice or Mitchell, both of whom were in Minnesota pushing their interests in the election of delegate.<sup>14</sup>

pating in any Indian negotiations?

13. Sibley to Ramsey, June 1, 1850, in Ramsey Papers: Sibley to Lafremboise, October 25, 1850.

14. Whatever credit Rice and Mitchell had hoped to give to Ramsey because of the plans for the treaty must have been entirely or, at least partly discounted by the late action by Congress. The appropriations were made after Ramsey had left for Minnesota and the success would be attributed to Sibley and may have aided his election somewhat.

The opponents of Sibley worked against him in the September election 1850, because he was the representative of the Monopoly. Borup, although a member of the Fur Company, was charged with working against Sibley to secure his defeat. Mitchell, the leader of the Anti-Monopoly forces failed to defeat Sibley and Borup was unable to show to the Company that Sibley's influence in the territory was small and that he, instead of Sibley, should be made the chief representative of the Fur company in Minnesota. Thus Sibley appeared to enjoy the continued confidence of the inhabitants of the territory and of the governor and merited the trust of the trading company. His position and prominence made him a conspicuous figure in the negotiations which were to be carried on in 1851. In the treaty which was to be made, the people had a great interest because the lands west of the Mississippi were very attractive and it was the opinion that the settlers could not be kept much longer from crossing and taking possession.<sup>15</sup> His relation to Ramsey invited the continued confidence of that official and no condition had arisen to decrease the faith of the Fur Company in his ability to protect its interests.

The fur business was on the decrease and it was but natural that the Indians would soon be forced to abandon the land or sell their title to the government. The financial profit for the fur traders rested now in the collection of the deferred payments rather than in the prospect of future trade. Writing to Ramsey in March, 1851, Sibley said: "The Indians have always said to their traders ' we know we cannot pay you now, but we must have

15. Brown to Sibley, November 29, 1850.

supplies of ammunition and clothing, and we will pay you when we our lands,' and the traders have gone on with this assurance for years, until they have without a single exception ( I speak of those now in the country ) become utterly impoverished and involved in debt. Under these circumstances, they only ask that the government do not interpose its authority to prevent the Indians from liquidating these debts from their own money. Not that I suppose that any of these men expect to be paid the full amount of these just claims but they do expect to receive a sum sufficient to enable them to pay their own debts contracted for the benefit of the Indians and a little more."<sup>16</sup>

When the treaty of Traverse Des Sioux was made in July between the Indians and the United States, represented by Governor Ramsey and Luke Lea, the Indian Commissioner, it made a provision for the claims of the traders. Goodhue and Sibley, as well as many others attended the negotiations. The whole affair was looked upon by the Democrat, the organ of the Rice faction, as a farce. This paper was bitter in its criticism. It pronounced the treaty as one made between Sibley and Company and the United States and not between the Sioux and the United States. It maintained that the traders of the company would get whatever money they wanted and would see to it that such should be the case or no treaty would be made.<sup>17</sup> The first treaty with the upper Sioux was made in July and the treaty with the lower Sioux was completed at Mendota

16. Sibley to Ramsey, March 21, in Ramsey Papers.

17. The Democrat, July 1, July 22, 1851.

on the 5th of August. The general substance of the treaties was the same. They opened all of the land, except a comparatively small reserve on the upper Minnesota, guaranteed the Indians a cash payment and annuities and provided for the claims of the licensed traders.<sup>18</sup>

The fate of the treaties was not decided for almost a year, ratification not taking place until June, 1852. The treaties were very popular with the people of the territory and no one dared to object to them openly. There were, however, men in the territory who opposed the makers of the treaties and these were willing to rouse opposition in the Senate in order to thwart Sibley, Ramsey,

18. Later in the season a treaty was made with the Chippewas at Pembina. Of this treaty the Democrat wrote: "A large number of Half-breeds from the British side of the line have crossed over to the American side, for the purpose of being ready to treat with Governor Ramsey for the sale of the Pembina lands! Thus Uncle Sam will have a chance to buy American Lands of British half-breeds - men straw enticed there by the American Fur Company as a ruse to get money out of the public treasure. H. H. Sibley and company have great sympathy for these imported Pembinese and Governor Ramsey, so far as the Fur Company is interested, is just the man to make a treaty with them." July 15, 1851.

St. Anthony Express. December 5, 1851; Sibley to  
Husman, October 15, 1851.

and the Pioneer. The St. Anthony Express believed that the greatest danger to the acceptance of the treaties was to be found in the unfriendly spirit of some of the people of Minnesota. While this paper made direct reference to no particular person, Sibley, in a letter to Dousman said that the report was out that Rice would go on to Washington to do all in his power to defeat the ratification. Sibley deplored any appearance of opposition because he knew that many Senators voted against Indian treaties if there was a plausible pretext. Any influence that there may have been against the treaties increased the difficulty of the work of the delegate. The opening of the Indian lands increased the possibility of another state at an early date and Sibley feared Southern votes against the treaties. Yet with some modification of an unimportant character, the treaties with the Sioux were accepted but the Pembina treaty was rejected. The latter because it provided for the cession of land not needed for settlement until a later date.

The treaties as amended, had to be approved by the Indians before the government would make any payments to them. Ramsey was selected as disbursing agent and he proceeded in November to make settlements in accordance with the provisions of the treaty. A "Traders Paper" embodying the claims of several licensed Indian traders had been drawn up while the treaty negotiations were pending in the summer of 1851 and it had been signed by the Indians when they signed the treaties. This Paper authorized the government to pay large sums of money to the traders to satisfy their claims against the Indians. Accordingly when the time came at the close of 1852 to adjust the claims and make the pay-

19. St. Anthony Express, December 6, 1851; Sibley to Dousman, October



ments, the matter was cared for according to the signed papers. The Lower Sioux were to receive \$90,000. Of this amount \$70,000 was paid to the traders and the half-breeds "in full acquittance of their (the Indians) just debt." \$275,000 had been set aside for a settlement with the upper Sioux and of this amount \$250,000 was paid to the traders and half breeds in accordance with the specifications of the Traders' Paper. The claims presented by the traders amounted to much more than was paid to their representative, Hugh Tyler. The amount of the indebtedness against the Lower Indians was claimed to be \$129,885.15, that against the upper Sioux was \$431,735.78. These were settled by the payment of \$320,000 which was then distributed among several of the licensed traders. 20

The retention of this money by the traders and the half breeds was objected to by the Indians who claimed that they had been misled into signing the papers, making provision for this disposal of the funds. Ramsey insisted, however, that the traders should be paid according to the agreement. The outcome of this non-payment to the Indians was a charge that they had been defrauded, by Ramsey who was represented as working <sup>in</sup> the interest of the traders. Other charges were involved. All were made by Sweetzer, a trader who had lately established himself at Traverse des Sioux and was not associated with the company of P. Chouteau Jr., and by Robertson, editor of the Minnesota Democrat the organ of the Rice faction. The accusers sent some statements to Washington trying to establish

16, 1851.

20. The full report of the investigation ordered by the Senate is in Senate Documents, 1st Session, 33rd Congress, vol.9, Senate, No. 61.

their claims. Sibley, then at Washington, visited the President in an effort to shield Ramsey from the charges of fraud. Ramsey believed that he was acting under government instructions in making the distribution of the funds that he did. S. B. Lowry, who had earlier been associated with Rice and opposed to Sibley wrote to Sibley explaining the situation as he saw it. He said: " -- It is the opinion of a large majority of your political friends as well as enemies in our territory, that there is no ground for attacking any blame whatever to you for anything connected with those Sioux payments and it is my belief that as far as you are concerned the reports and charges which have been so industriously circulated have been gotten up mainly by men who were foiled in their designs upon the funds and in their efforts to establish fictitious and unjust claims upon the Tribe for a large portion of the Sioux money.<sup>21</sup>

At the time when these charges were being made and while the investigation was being commenced, the appointment of a territorial governor was pending, Sibley was a candidate for the place. In view of all the attempts which had been made earlier to defeat him, it is not impossible that this was part of the purpose at this time. Sibley failed to secure the appointment but in an interview with Dodge of Iowa the president explained that the charges brought against Sibley and Ramsey had not influenced him in his selection of Governor.<sup>22</sup>

21. Minnesota in Three Centuries, Vol 3, pp. 330-331: Sibley to Ramsey, January 14, 1853, in Ramsey Papers: Ramsey to Sibley, March 8, 1853: Lowry to Sibley, February 24, 1853.
22. A.C. Dodge to Sibley, April 1, 1853.

### Conclusion.

74.

Throughout the four years of Ramsey's administration the organization of the regular national parties was unsuccessfully attempted. The Democrats favored organization even before the Territory was established but no definite step was taken until the meeting of October 20, 1849. Rice was very prominent in this early movement and, though he claimed later that he had given a reluctant consent to the action of that meeting, he was a conspicuous figure among the Democrats and hoped for a Democratic majority in the first legislature. During the year, 1849, Rice was compelled to leave the firm of P. Chouteau Jr. and Company because of the condition of the business in the branch under his control. It is alleged that this friction in business became the cause of his enmity toward Sibley. There is much evidence obtainable to support this view. Sibley with others appealed to the people of the Territory, urging them to act as non-partisans, and was successful in gaining their support.

In 1850 the friends of Sibley maintained their position as neutrals but both the Democrats and the Whig leaders made efforts to advance their party interest. The Democrats, acting under the name of a territorial party, accepted Mitchell, a friend of Rice, as their candidate. The extreme Whigs, anxious for a thorough organization, named David Olmsted as their candidate; but he failed them at the last hour by withdrawing his candidacy, thus leaving Mitchell and Sibley before the territorial electors. The Mitchell supporters appealed to the voters to cast their ballots against the monopoly and consequently against Sibley. The election was more exciting than any other election during Ramsey's administration. The struggle resulted in the entire abandonment of

party affiliation and became one of bitter personal antagonism. Sibley was absent at the time but his campaign was successfully managed by his friends and he was gratified in being able to keep any of the Rice Clique from gaining the delegacy. While the campaign was being planned during the winter, Rice won a victory over Sibley at Washington by having the contract to remove the Winnebagoes awarded to him. Sibley chose to challenge the award with the avowed purpose of showing that he did have some influence at Washington. The investigation of the award did not result in an annulment of the contract and Rice was in a position to use the committee finding to his advantage in the election.

The legislative session of 1851 was given over to a series of struggles mainly between the personal factions. The speakership of the House, the presidency of the Council, and the public printing all went to friends of Sibley and Ramsey. The apportionment bill was fought because of the increased representation which it would give to the Sibley men but the latter won in the legislature and had their action sustained by a congressional committee. Though the vote on the location of the public buildings resulted in a compromise between the St. Anthony, the St. Paul, and the St. Croix delegations, the selection of the Building Commissioners became a factional contest. The summer of this year witnessed the making of the Sioux treaties which the Democratic papers denounced as Ramsey-Sibley-Borup affairs and insisted that the terms agreed upon were only such as were acceptable to the traders associated with Sibley. The later investigation, caused by the action of the opposing newspapers, established the fact that the financial in-

terests of the Fur Company were partially covered.

The legislative sessions of the two succeeding years and the election of the fall of 1852 were generally uneventful. The Territorial party, known as the People's party reappeared in the legislature and in the election. Opposed to it was the Democratic party which was unable to control the legislature in either of the sessions, although it gained greatly in the fall election. As the administration closed preparatory to the advent of the Democratic territorial officials there was a marked tendency toward a re-alignment of parties which resulted in the first year of Gorman's term in the definite appearance of Whigs and Democrats and in the discontinuance of the People's party. Very noticeable is the re-establishment of an understanding between Rice and Sibley carrying with it the prospect of future Democratic success.