

MINNESOTA

HISTORY

Dakota and Ojibwe people, French fur traders and settlers from many lands each helped build Minnesota.

The First Peoples

People have lived in Minnesota for more than 10,000 years. The Dakota hunted bison and deer, fished and gathered wild rice. In the 1600s and 1700s, the Ojibwe moved in from the east along Lake Superior. The two nations traded at times and fought at other times. By about 1800, the Ojibwe held the northern forests, and the Dakota lived in the south and west.

French Traders and Canoes

French explorers reached Minnesota in the 1600s. They came for beaver fur. In 1679, a trader called Sieur du Lhut met with the Dakota near Mille Lacs Lake. The city of Duluth is named for him. In 1680, Father Louis Hennepin saw a waterfall on the Mississippi and named it the Falls of St. Anthony. Later, British traders kept a large post at Grand Portage. A **portage** is a trail for carrying canoes between lakes or around rapids.

A Fort and Two Treaties

In 1819, American soldiers came to build Fort Snelling where the Minnesota River joins the Mississippi. In **treaties** signed in 1837 and 1851, the Dakota sold nearly all of their Minnesota land to the United States for payments and goods. They kept a strip along the Minnesota River. The Ojibwe sold much of the north in other treaties and kept reservations there.

Territory and State

Congress made Minnesota a **territory** in 1849. Settlers poured in for farmland and for work in sawmills. The number of people grew from about 6,000 in 1850 to more than 170,000 in 1860. Minnesota became the 32nd state on May 11, 1858. St. Paul was the capital.

The War of 1862

In the summer of 1862, the Dakota were hungry and their treaty payments were late. In August, Dakota warriors led by Little Crow attacked a government agency, farms and the town of New Ulm. Hundreds of settlers were killed. Soldiers and townspeople fought back. The army defeated the Dakota at Wood Lake in September. Most Dakota were then moved out of the state, and some later returned. Eleven tribes have their governments in Minnesota today.



Building Minnesota

Immigrants from Germany, Norway, Sweden and other lands plowed the prairie and planted wheat. Railroads carried the wheat to the flour mills of Minneapolis. Loggers cut the northern pines, and miners dug iron ore. In 1889, Dr. William Mayo and his two sons became the doctors at a new hospital in Rochester. It grew into the Mayo Clinic. In 1959, the St. Lawrence Seaway opened, and ocean ships could reach Duluth.

MINNESOTA THROUGH TIME

1680	1819	1849	1851	1858	1862	1889	1959	1992
Hennepin names St. Anthony Falls	Soldiers start Fort Snelling	Minnesota Territory is created	The Dakota sell southern Minnesota	Minnesota becomes the 32nd state	The U.S.-Dakota War	A hospital opens in Rochester	Ocean ships can reach Duluth	The Mall of America opens

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Little Crow	Dakota leader in the war of 1862.
Will and Charlie Mayo	Brothers and doctors who built the Mayo Clinic.
Laura Ingalls Wilder	Author. Lived near Walnut Grove as a girl.
Charles Schulz	Born in Minneapolis. Drew the Peanuts comic strip.
Prince	Singer and songwriter born in Minneapolis.

WORDS TO KNOW

portage	a trail for carrying canoes between waters
treaty	a written agreement between nations
territory	land run by the United States that is not yet a state
immigrant	a person who moves to a new country to live