Digital Delights
By Alex Ames
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The following is the first installment of a new Minnesota Digital Library Listserv feature, titled Digital Delights from Minnesota Reflections. You will receive a Digital Delights email at least once a month. Each email message will highlight specific items and/or collections held by Minnesota Reflections. This month’s focus is Thanksgivings of Minnesota’s past.

“Warehouses are crowded and steamers groan with the varied products of the harvest,” wrote Governor Alexander Ramsey in his November, 1860 Thanksgiving Day proclamation. “In accordance with a custom now prevalent in the States of the Union, I respectfully recommend to the people of Minnesota to observe in their own way, the last Thursday, the 29th of November next as a day of praise and thanksgiving.” (Read Governor Ramsey’s entire proclamation at http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/mhs,505.)

Minnesota Reflections is filled with a variety of photographs, illustrations and written documents that depict Minnesota Thanksgivings of every vintage. In 1894, some young students at Carleton College in Northfield marked the Thanksgiving season with a hot cup of tea— followed by a séance around the Ouija board! Compare dormitory life past to dormitory life present at http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/ccn,156 and http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/ccn,157.

If you fancy the dramatic arts, why not stop by the Shubert Theatre for a matinee performance of “Baby Mine” on Thanksgiving Day? Many did— in 1910. Leaf through the play bill here: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/mpls,2381

Despite the bleakness of the Great Depression, the members of the Civilian Conservation Corps stationed in Cook County still took time to gather and celebrate the holiday: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/p15160coll14,80

Of course, we should all have some pity in our hearts on Thanksgiving... for the turkey! http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/gust,538.

Visit Minnesota Reflections to see these and many more historic images and documents relating to this most American holiday. And have a Happy Thanksgiving!
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