Sometimes, a word is worth a thousand pictures. Minnesota Reflections is well-known for its collections of historic images, but don’t overlook the database when searching for Minnesota-themed documents.

Documents from religious organizations highlight the important role that churches played in Minnesota’s cultural development. The Basilica of St. Mary (Minneapolis) contributed church announcement books dating from 1881 to 1928. View an 1881 – 1883 volume here: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/bsm,122.

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies (Presbyterian Church) contributed Dakota-language religious books dating from the 1870s through the 1920s. Follow this link to view a Dakota hymnal: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/p15160coll10,40.

Documents from county and local historical societies highlight their regions’ history and culture. The Morrison County Historical Society contributed several 19th and early 20th – century publications intended to promote the area for settlement and business. View an 1899 example here: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/mor,171.

Many county historical societies have contributed plat books to Minnesota Reflections. View a map from an 1896 plat book of Stearns County: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/stearns,295.

Several colleges and universities contributed college bulletins and other documents from the institutions’ early years. View a 1915 bulletin of the College of St. Scholastica: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/p15160coll8,0. Follow this link to see a 1925 bulletin of the Winona State Teachers College (now Winona State University): http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/winona,607.

St. Cloud State University Archives (St. Cloud) contributed issues of the “Normalia,” early student newspapers of the St. Cloud Normal School, which became St. Cloud State University. Browse the May, 1904 “Normalia” issue here: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u/?/stc,4058.

The Northeast Minnesota Historical Center contributed architectural drafts of
Duluth’s famous aerial lift bridge. View a 1901/02 document here: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u?/nemhc,4072.


Early publications of the Minnesota Department of Health, such as the State Board of Health’s 1878 annual report, provide glimpses into 19th-century medical theories and practices: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u?/mdh,921.


Some public libraries also have contributed to Minnesota Reflections. View a 1935 issue of “The Library Beacon,” a St. Paul Public Library publication, here: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u?/spp,776. The Hennepin County Library contributed playbills and programs from many early Minneapolis dramatic productions and musical performances, including this 1925 example: http://reflections.mndigital.org/u?/mpls,3797.

This is just a small sample of Minnesota Reflections’ documentary collections. Explore the database yourself to discover the database’s documentary sources related to Minnesota history and culture.

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