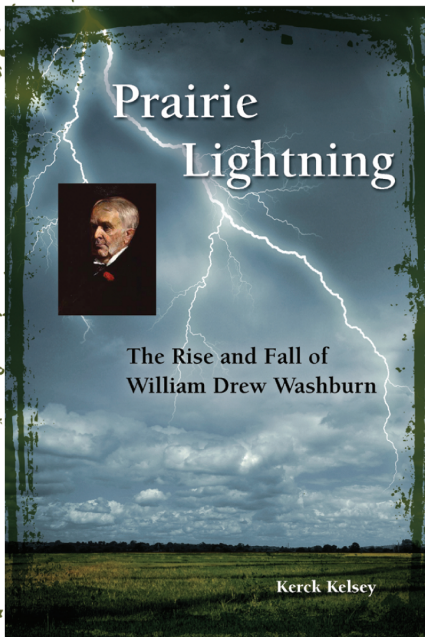


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Prairie Lightning

The Rise and Fall of William Drew Washburn



In every way, William Drew Washburn was larger than life. Born one of ten children on a remote, hardscrabble farm in western Maine, fifty years later he was entertaining Presidents in his eighty-room mansion in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Washburn was at the center of some of the largest enterprises in mid-western history, but he is little-known today. Perhaps this is because, although a loyal supporter of his church and family for more than sixty years, he was at the center of one of the biggest corporate shipwrecks in Minnesota's history.

A leading entrepreneur and politician of early Minneapolis, Washburn was deeply involved in most of the key developments of the early city. This included the development of the Minneapolis Mill Co., early lumber and flour milling at both Minneapolis and Anoka, trolley cars, newspapers, electricity, railroads, and coal mining, among other things.

Also covered are Washburn's life at home, his six successful children, many major civic projects he instigated, the births of the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad, the Soo Line Railroad, and the wreck of the Pillsbury-Washburn Flour Co. Ltd. Washburn's sometimes stormy relationships with his brother C.C. Washburn, James J. Hill, politicians Ignatius Donnelly and Knute Nelson, and with three generations of Pillsburys is also woven throughout his colorful history.

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and 7 maps, 6" x 9", paperback, © 2010
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About the Author: Kerck Kelsey, is a Washburn descendant and has chronicled the Washburn family for the past nineteen years. He is a historian and a story-teller delivering lectures on the Washburns across Maine and in Illinois, New York, Wisconsin, Minnesota; on the steamer Delta Queen; and the cruise ship Sea Lion. Kelsey's previous books include *Israel Washburn, Jr. Maine's Little Known Giant of the Civil War*, and *Remarkable Americans: The Washburn Family*.



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