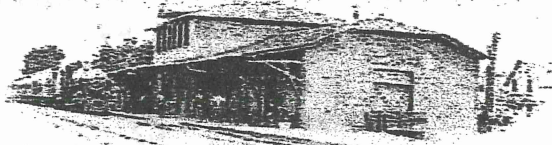


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OPEN MAY-OCTOBER  
PRESERVING  
THE HISTORY OF THE  
GREAT HINCKLEY FIRE  
OF 1894



# Hinckley Fire Museum

Placed on the National Register of Historic Places  
by the United States Department of Interior

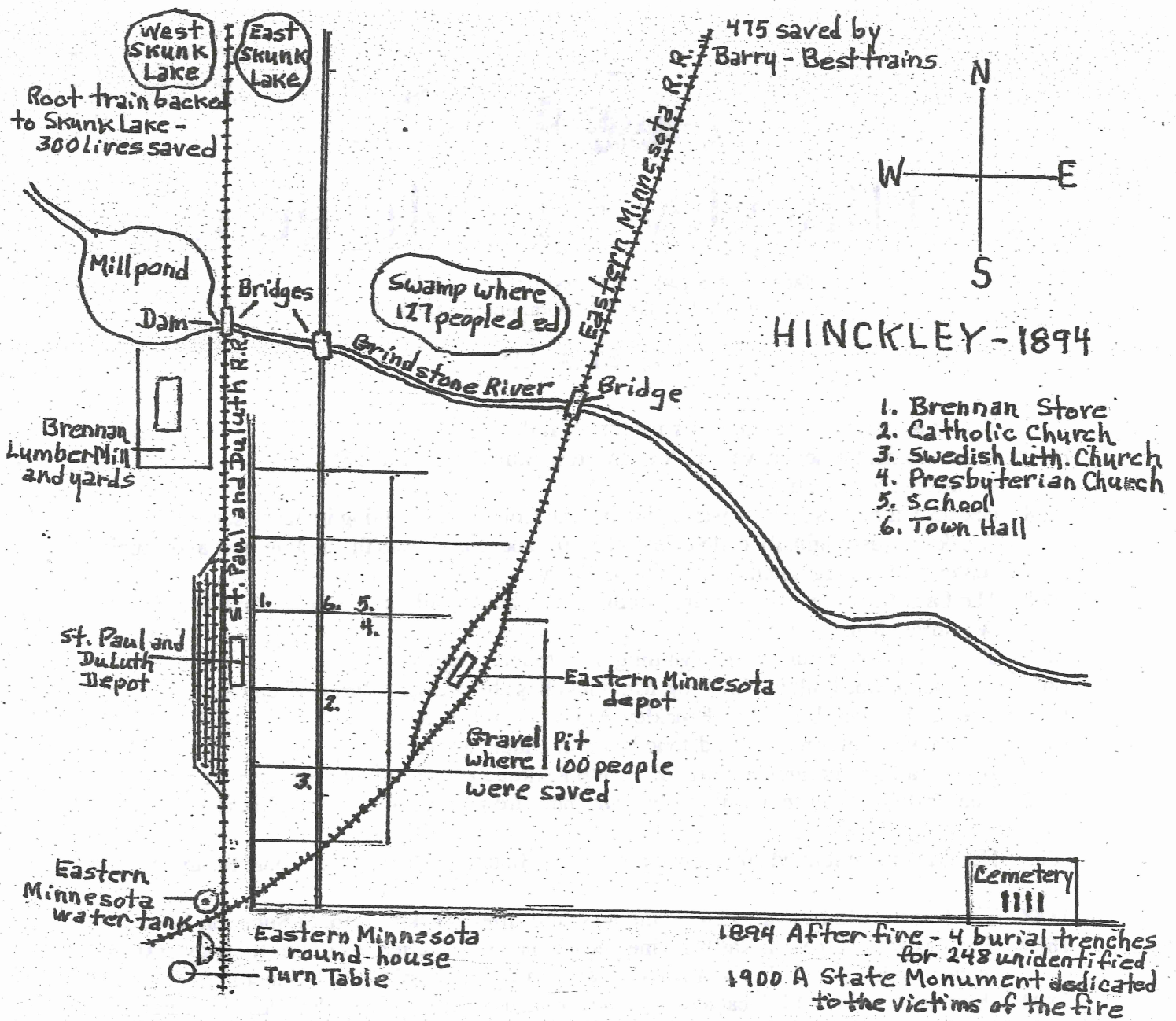
## FACTS & TIME LINE

- 1837 Treaty was signed with Ojibway for timber rights
- 1850's A government roadway was built connecting Stillwater to Lake Superior
- 1858 Minnesota became a state
- 1868 Because of huge stands of white pine in Pine County, the logging industry surged. Hinckley was originally called Central Station because it was the trading post and supply center for the logging and lumbering industry.
- 1868 The Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad Co. built a rail line from St. Paul, Mn. to Wyoming, Mn.
- 1869 The rail line was built from Wyoming, Mn. to Hinckley, Mn.
- 1869 The Depot was built in Hinckley, Mn. including the famous "Beanery" eating place.
- 1870 The rail line was built from Hinckley, Mn. to Duluth, Mn.
- 1870 A dam was built on the Grindstone River in Hinckley, Mn.
- 1877 A new rail line became St. Paul & Duluth Railroad and eventually Northern Pacific.
- 1882 The Eastern Minnesota Railway line was built from St. Cloud, Mn. to Hinckley, Mn.
  
- 1885 Hinckley incorporated and named after Isaac Hinckley who laid out a plan for the village.
  
- 1888 The Eastern Minnesota Railway line was built from Hinckley, Mn. to Superior, Wisc.
- 1889 The Eastern Minnesota Railway line became part of the Great Northern Railway system owned by James J. Hill. Eventually became part of the Burlington Northern system.
- 1894 Brennan Lumber Mill located above the Grindstone Dam at Hinckley was the center of lumbering operations in the area and a prime employer of up to 300 men.
- 1894 September 1<sup>st</sup> the City of Hinckley and its depot were completely destroyed by the Great Hinckley Fire with 418 deaths (248 unidentified) as well as the villages of Sandstone with 80 deaths, Pokegama (Brook Park) with 23 deaths, Partridge (Askov) 1 death, Miller (Groningen) 0 deaths, Mission Creek with 0 deaths. Many loggers and woods dwellers had no family or were never found. It is believed an unknown number of people died in the weeks and months after the fire because of burn infections and lung damage and were no longer living here. None of these were included in the coroners death toll.

127 people died in the "death swamp" on north side of Grindstone River thinking it held water, but it was dry. Many folks perished at their homesteads when they went to their cellars and wells to escape the fire, others attempted to outrun the fire but sadly perished.

Around 300 people were saved at Skunk Lake north of Hinckley where Root's train brought them. Over 100 were saved in the gravel pit in Hinckley and around 475 were saved escaping the fire on the Barry-Best trains. There are several stories where groups of people were saved in potato patches by covering themselves with wet blankets or found safety in the Grindstone and Kettle Rivers. There are many miraculous stories too numerous to mention here of how people survived the terrible fire of 1894.





#### AFTER THE FIRE

- 1894 Out of the ashes and with a lot of determination, Hinckley town folks rebuilt Hinckley.
- 1894 The depot was rebuilt according to the identical plan of the original depot
- 1900 Became Northern Pacific Railway & Depot
- 1900 On Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> a 51 ft. granite monument was dedicated to the victims of the Hinckley Fire.
- 1962 The famous depot eatery "The Beanery" closed
- 1968 Passenger and freight service ended at the Northern Pacific Depot, Hinckley, Mn.
- 1970 Several railroad lines merged in to the Burlington Northern system, only one rail track remained through Hinckley.

#### OLD DEPOT TURNED IN TO A MUSEUM

- 1970 A group of Hinckley citizens met and decided to save the old depot. Purchased it for a \$1.
- 1971-76 Restoration of the old depot began with aid from the State Legislature, the Minnesota Bicentennial Commission, the Minnesota Historical Society along with funds raised locally through memberships, fundraisers, and donations. Much of the work done by volunteers.
- 1973 Museum placed on National Register of Historic Places by U.S. Department of Interior.
- 1976 The Hinckley Fire Museum officially opened as a Bicentennial project.
- 1986 A replica of a fire relief house was built and a train caboose added to the Museum site.