

Pierre “Pig’s Eye” Parent. (c. 1777-1844)

This Half-Breed whiskey trader is credited with founding St. Paul, Minnesota when he located his trading establishment there in June of 1838. The village was originally called Pigs-Eye but was officially renamed in 1841. The *Minnesota Pioneer*, reported that the Priest’s invocation was:

Pigs Eye, converted thou shalt be, like St. Paul;
Arise and be henceforth, St. Paul.

Parent was born at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, his father and three uncles were fur-traders. He apparently worked for the Choteau/McKenzie interests and was stationed at Prairie du Chien, Green Bay and St. Louis. From 1832 on he operated a number of whiskey shops in Iowa and on the banks of the Mississippi River at Mendota and the village near Fort Snelling in the St. Paul area. In 1838, when the squatters were forced off the land surrounding the fort due to their strain on surrounding resources the sixty-some year old Parant made a claim on a tract of land at the entrance of what was known as Fountain Cave. This cave was situated on the north bank of the Mississippi River just south of what is now downtown St. Paul. Parant’s bar, known as “Pig’s Eye” or “Pig’s Eye Pandemonium” was easily accessible to local residents, riverboat crews working on the river, and to the soldiers from nearby Fort Snelling as well. Later in life he settled near Winnipeg and was living there when he died.



Drawn from remembrance of a physiognomist.

PIERRE PARRANT, OR "OLD PIG'S EYE."
First settler in St. Paul, in 1838.



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