



# 2011 VICTORIA PARK

design advisory committee

december 4, 2012- MEETING #3

City of St. Paul Parks and Recreation

Project Manager: Don Ganje / Alice Messer  
Contact: 651-266-6425 / 651-266-6412  
Email: Don.Ganje@ci.stpaul.mn.us / Alice.Messer@ci.stpaul.mn.us





FOR MAP OF  
**SAINT PAUL,**  
 SEND FOR  
 RICE'S MAP OF THE  
**CITY**

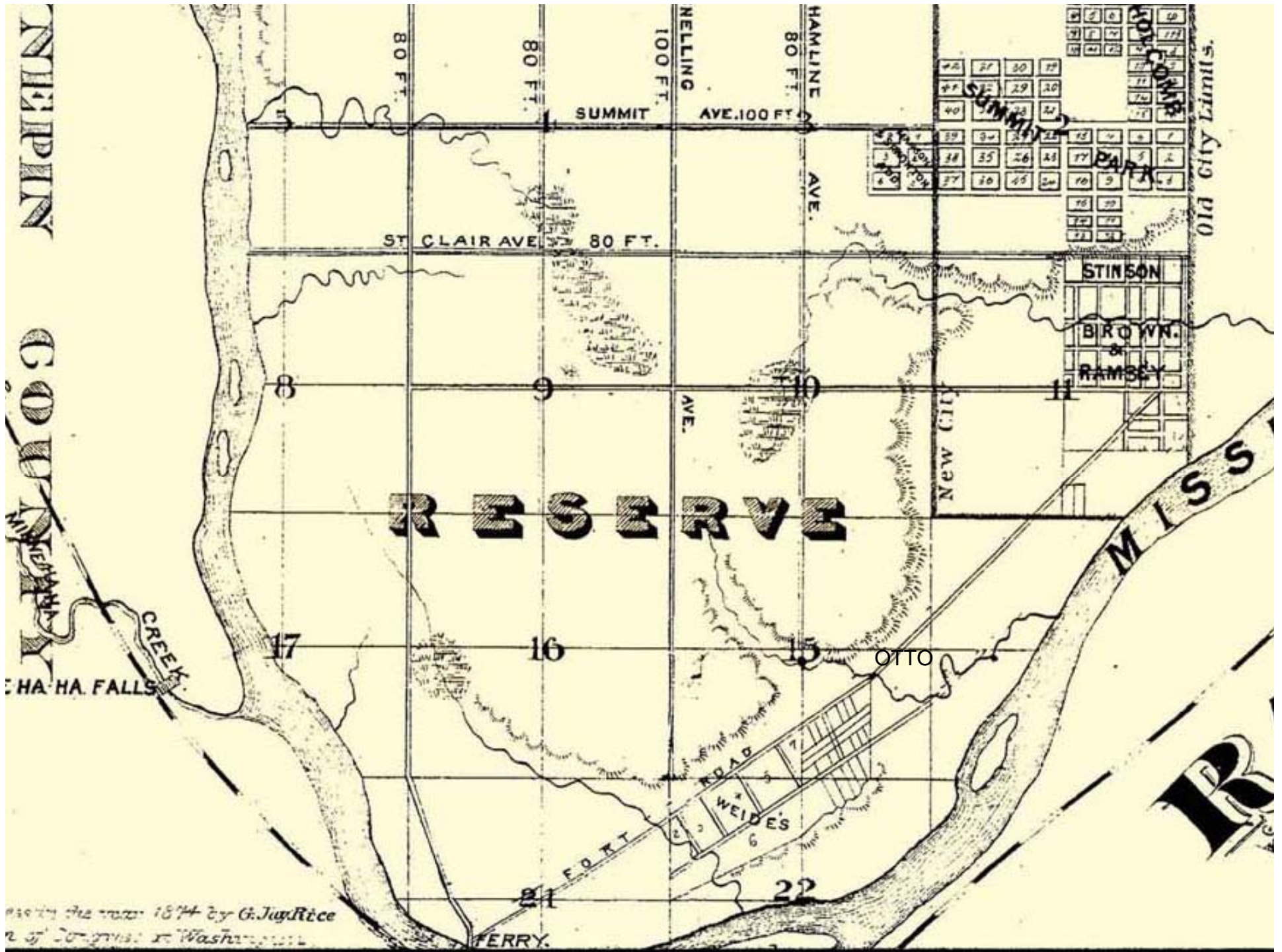
WEST ST PAUL

- REFERENCE:**
- COUNTY BOUNDARY.....
  - CITY.....
  - ROADS.....
  - FINISHED RAIL ROADS.....
  - UN-FINISHED.....

**RICE'S**  
 MAP OF  
**RAMSEY COUNTY**  
**MINNESOTA.**

Withing to act of Congress by the year 1874 by G. J. Rice  
 Vice of the Librarian of Congress in Washington



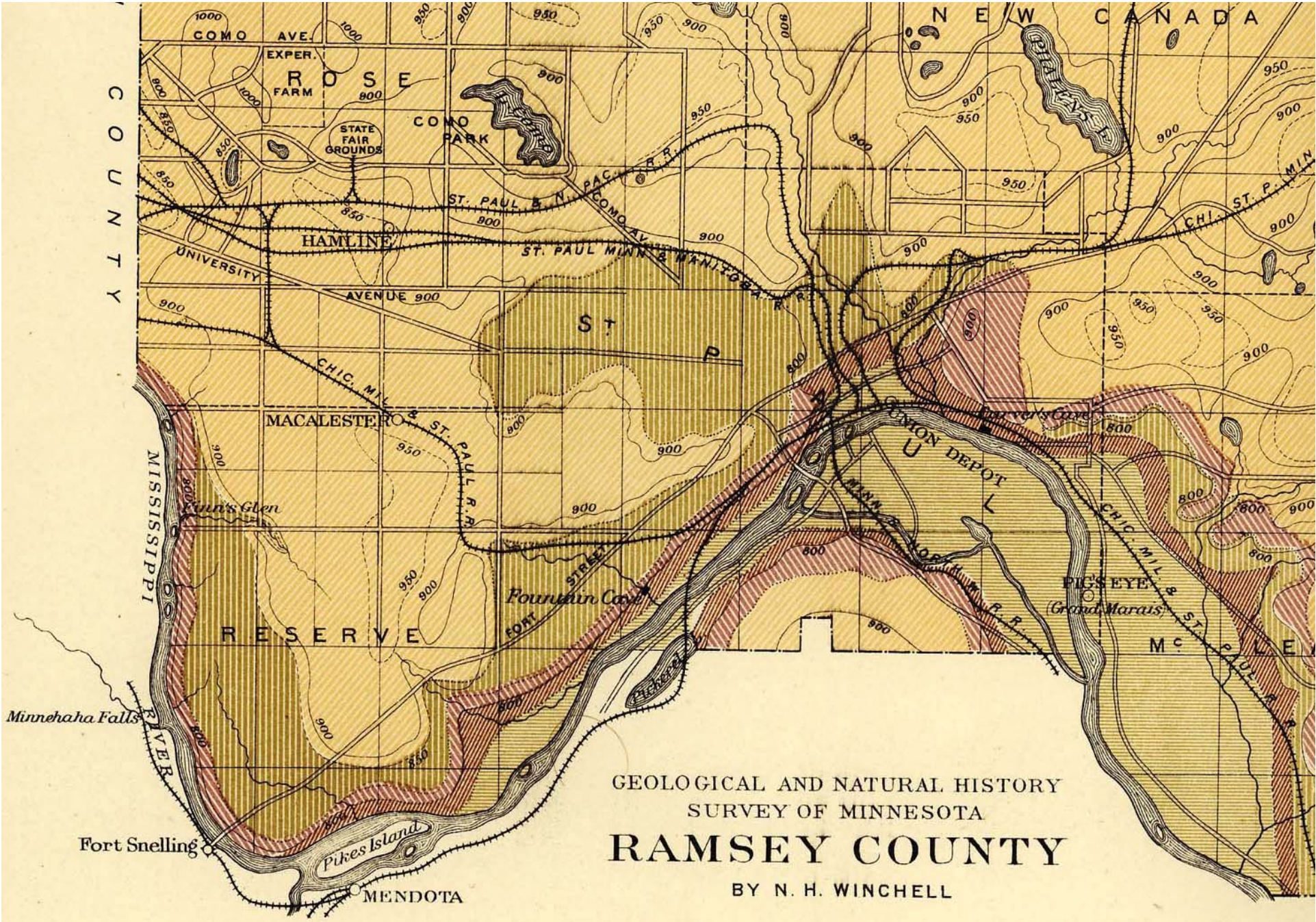


Map of the tract 1874 by G. Jay Rice  
 of Congress at Washington







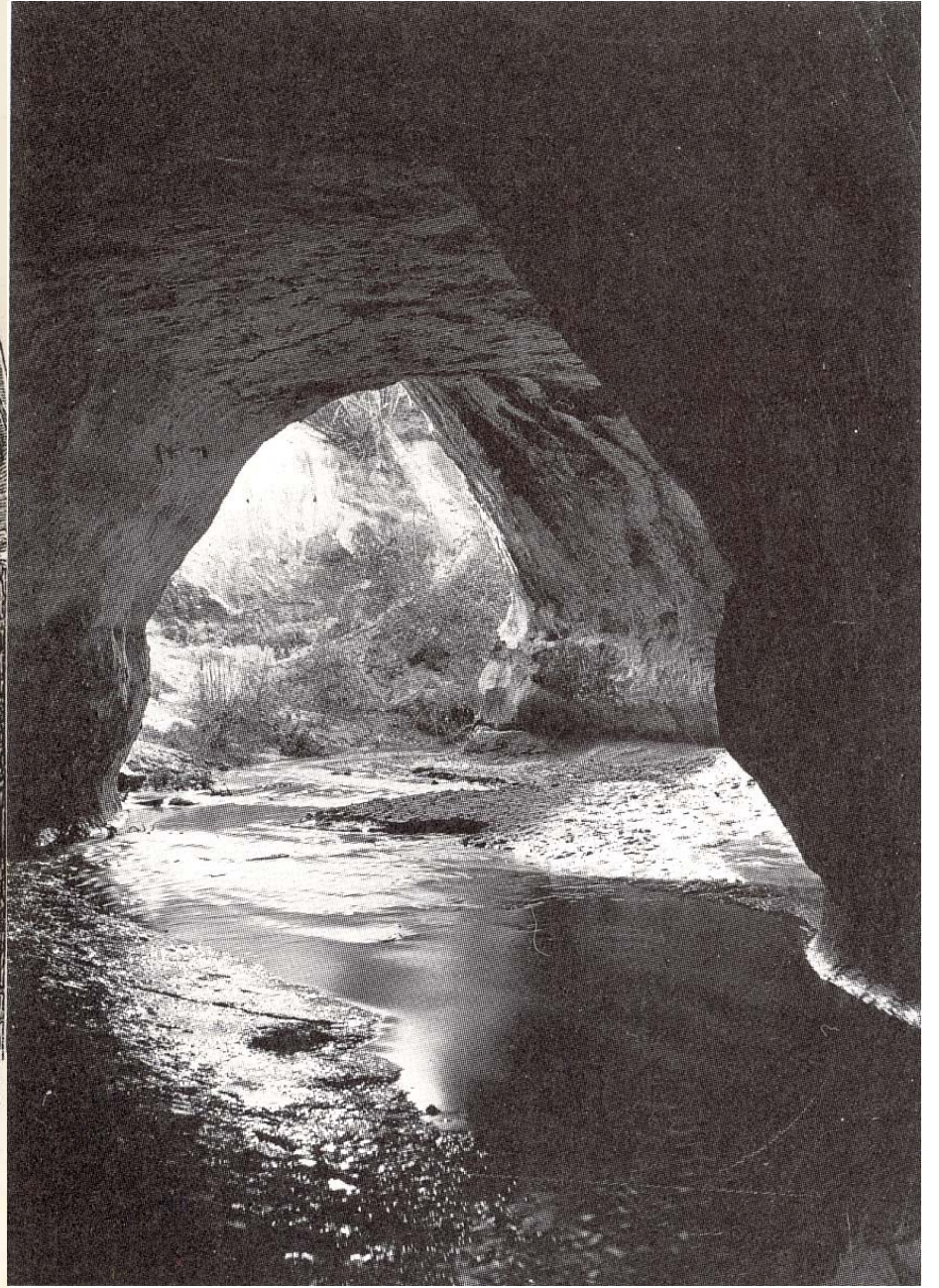


GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY  
SURVEY OF MINNESOTA

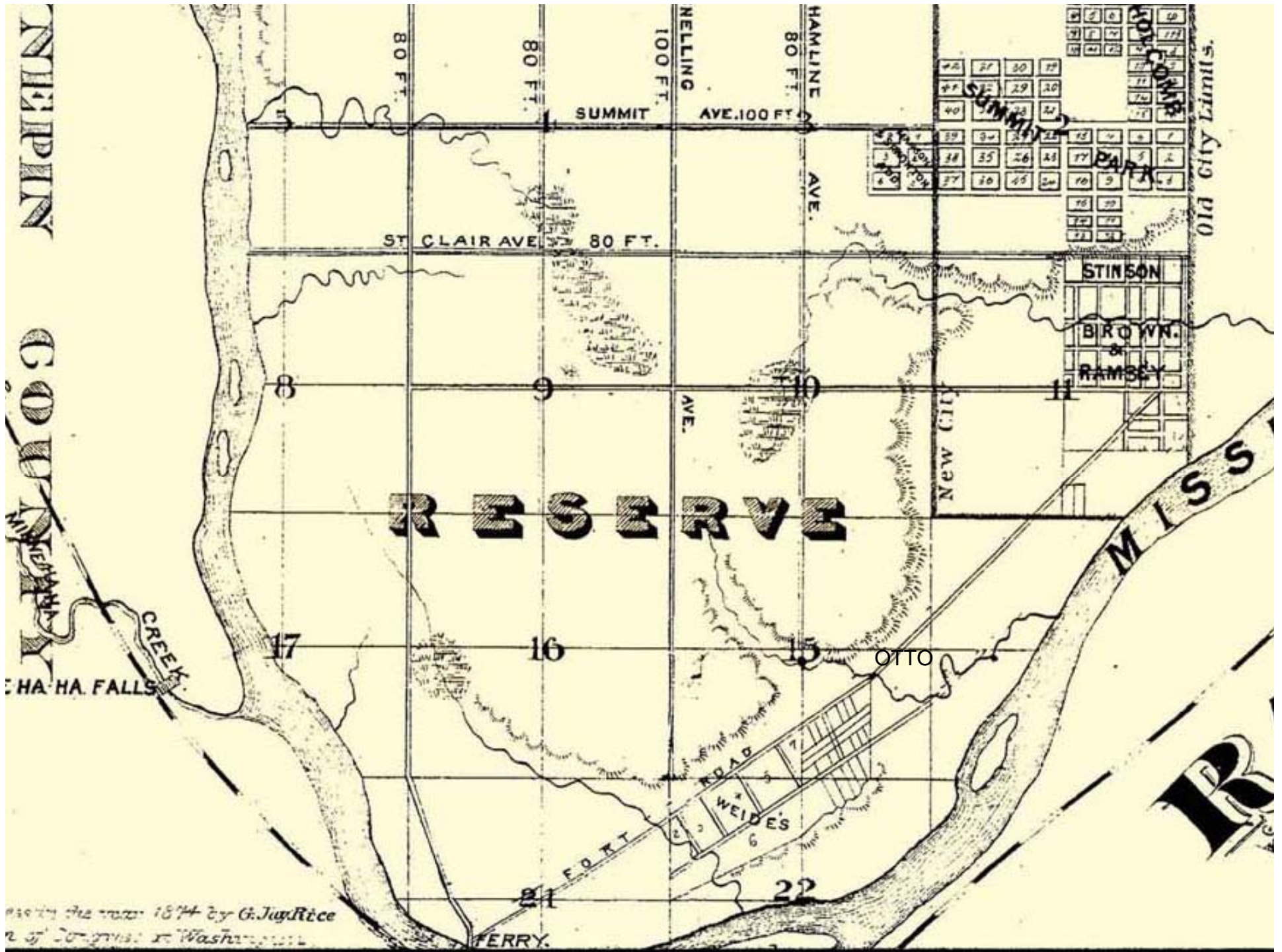
# RAMSEY COUNTY

BY N. H. WINCHELL









Map of the tract 1874 by G. Jay Rice  
 of Congress at Washington







# Farming Along Old Fort Road

Perhaps one of the more forgotten chapters in the history of an urban area like Fort Road is the story of its rural heritage, the lost epic of the long vanished family farmers, who for more than 70 years made the once secluded countryside of the far West End their home. Indeed, from 1850 to around World War I, the area west of Otto Avenue was predominantly the domain of farmers. The agrarians came in a variety of forms (large farmers, small farmers, dairymen, cattlemen, hog raisers, sheep raisers, horse breeders, poultry producers, grain growers, vegetable growers and even fruit growers) and from a variety of backgrounds (Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, England, Canada, as well as different parts of the United States). Yet in spite of such variances they all shared two things in common: 1) all of their farms were built from nothing but the sweat of human and animal power, 2) all of their farms, no matter how much toil was put into them, were destined for extinction. Today their grain fields, pasture lands and vegetable gardens have given way to the march of the city and the products of machine power: apartment houses, gas stations, a shopping center, commercial stores, factories, oil tanks and neat rows of 20th century housing. Clearly the neighborhood gained much with such development. Yet at the same time, it lost something special that will never be replaced: the world of the local family farmer. The following sketches are an attempt to recreate a bit of that lost world; the farms discussed are but a sampling of those west of Otto Avenue. Most of this information was pieced together from a myriad of primary sources, including agricultural census records, probate court records, old newspapers, accounts, platt maps and land records, and interviews with descendants of the pioneer Davern family.

On the southwest corner of West 7th and Otto, on the grounds now covered by the Mobil Oil tanks, once stood the frontier farm of James and Mary Williams. James or "J.D.," born in Missouri in 1822, probably started the farm around 1850, about the time that he and Mary, who was born in Illinois in 1833, were married. From 1851 to 1864 James and Mary had five children: Stephen (born in 1851), Anna (1853), John (1856), Mary Ellen (1860), and Florilla (1864). Together, the steadily growing family was able to create an impressive 60-acre farm that ultimately included 4 horses, 2 cows, 2 calves, 11 sheep, 2 pigs, an 180-bushel potato garden, a hayfield which yielded 6 tons of hay a year and a good producing wheat field. In addition, the Williams owned a \$300 threshing machine, 2-\$10 cultivators, a \$125 mower, a \$35 raker, 2 \$100 farm wagons, one \$25 cutter and an "old" \$10 buggy. Beginning in 1857 their pioneer farm was partly supplemented by income derived from Williams' river ferrying service. "J.D.'s" ferry ran from what is now lower Lilydale to the river bottoms near Shepard Road and Otto. How much business it took in is not known, but the rates Williams charged for the service were fixed by the Min-

nesota legislature at 10 cents for each foot passenger, 15 cents for each mule or horse, 25 cents for a horse or ox team, 25 cents for a single horse carriage, 2 cents for each pig or sheep, 10 cents per barrel, 50 cents per 1,000 feet of lumber, and 3 cents per 100 pounds of articles.

The story of the Williams' farm and ferry end in tragedy. On November 7, 1866, "J.D." routinely loaded his wagon with his annual wheat harvest and rode over to Minneapolis, where he sold it for cash. On his return home, somewhere "on the prairie between Minneapolis and Bloomington," Williams was accosted by unidentified highway bandits who, by use of an ax, robbed him not only of his money, but also of his life. Williams' battered body, which the highwaymen dumped into his wagon, was soon discovered when his team of horses walked toward home on their own. The murderers were never caught and their identities, as well as more specific details about the case, to this day remain a mystery.

A little west of the Williams' home, lying between the west side of Fort Road and Montreal and the east side of a woodland stream that flowed southward through a rocky ravine, was another pioneer farm — the 40-acre homestead of John and Elizabeth Smith. The Smiths first settled the land in the late summer of 1850, after emigrating from Birmingham, Canada, following their marriage on June 27. John, born in New Brunswick, Canada in 1829, was the son of Irish immigrants and Elizabeth was an Irish immigrant. Born Elizabeth Ryan on February 2, 1830 in Kilkenny, Ireland, she had moved with her family to Canada in 1840.

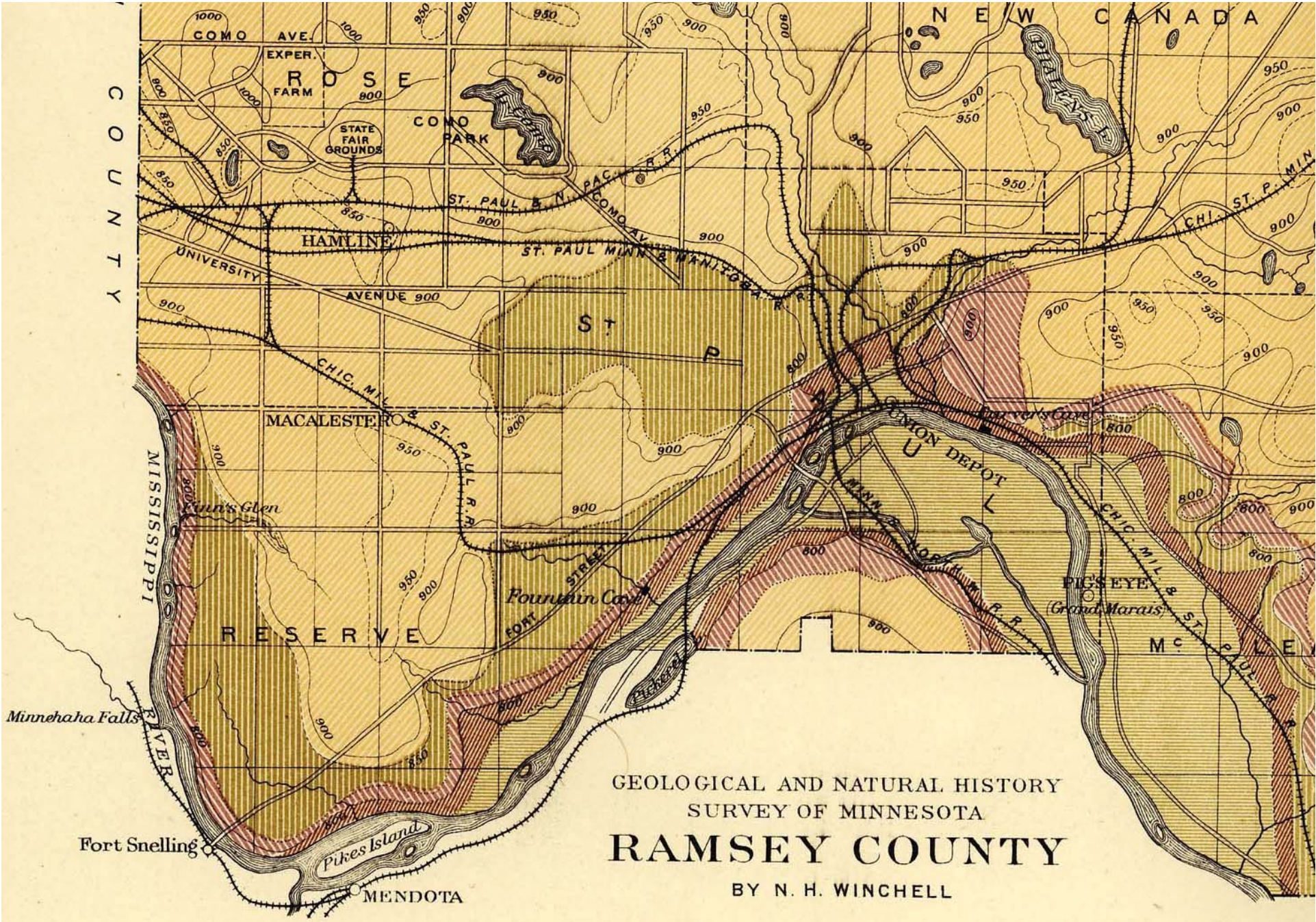


Elizabeth Ryan Smith (1830-1911), sister of Catherine Ryan Davern, wife of John Smith and mother of nine children. (Photograph courtesy of John Sattler).









GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY  
SURVEY OF MINNESOTA

# RAMSEY COUNTY

BY N. H. WINCHELL



nesota legislature at 10 cents for each foot passenger, 15 cents for each mule or horse, 25 cents for a horse or ox team, 25 cents for a single horse carriage, 2 cents for each pig or sheep, 10 cents per barrel, 50 cents per 1,000 feet of lumber, and 3 cents per 100 pounds of articles.

The story of the Williams' farm and ferry end in tragedy. On November 7, 1866, "J.D." routinely loaded his wagon with his annual wheat harvest and rode over to Minneapolis, where he sold it for cash. On his return home; somewhere "on the prairie between Minneapolis and Bloomington," Williams was accosted by unidentified highway bandits who, by use of an ax, robbed him not only of his money, but also of his life. Williams' battered body, which the highwaymen dumped into his wagon, was soon discovered when his team of horses walked toward home on their own. The murderers were never caught and their identities, as well as more specific details about the case, to this day remain a mystery.





FOR MAP OF  
**SAINTPAUL,**  
 SEND FOR  
 RICE'S MAP OF THE  
**CITY**

WEST ST PAUL

- REFERENCE:**
- COUNTY BOUNDARY.....
  - CITY.....
  - ROADS.....
  - FINISHED RAIL ROADS.....
  - UN-FINISHED.....

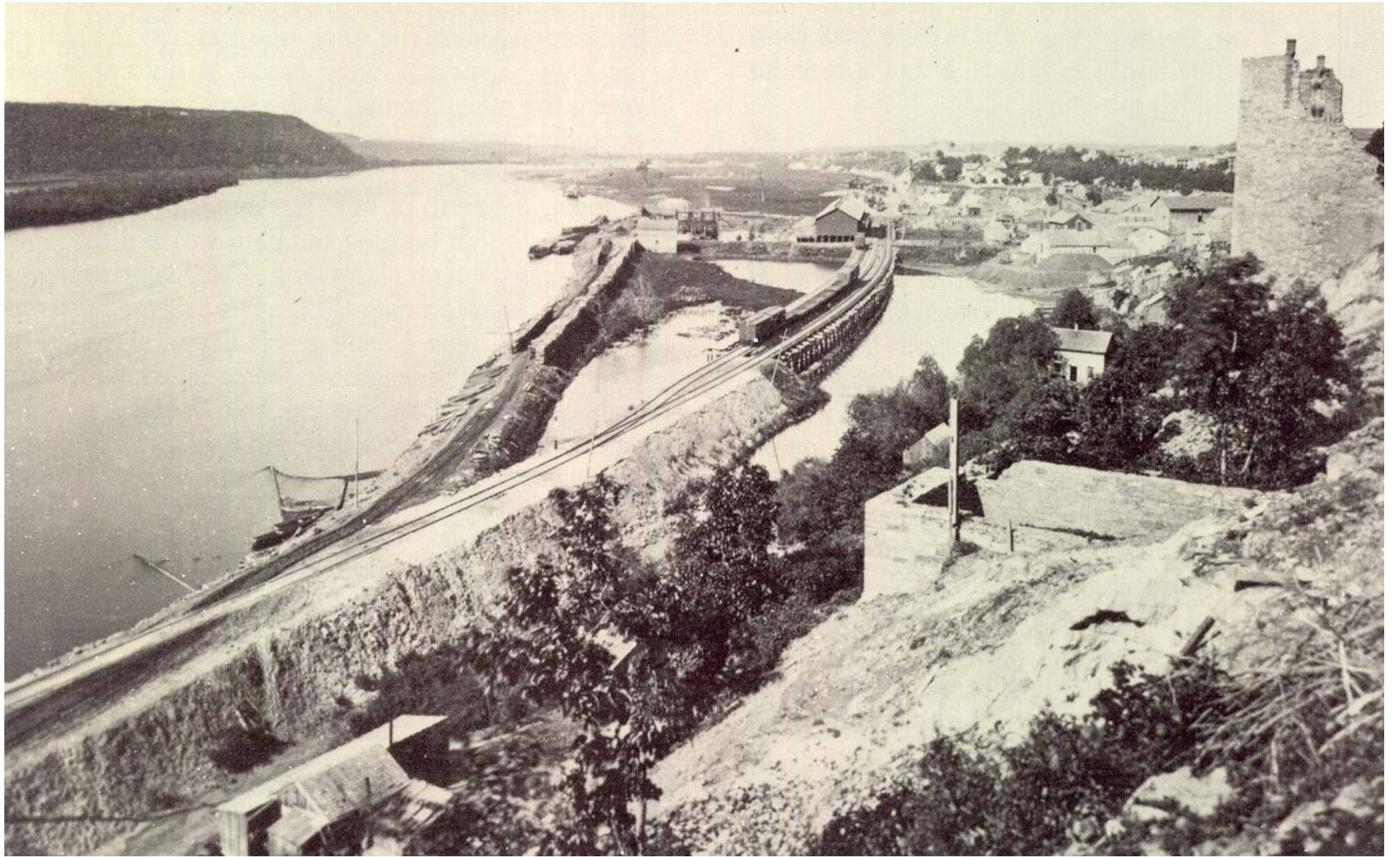
**RICE'S**  
 MAP OF  
**RAMSEY COUNTY**  
**MINNESOTA.**

Withing to act of Congress by the year 1874 by G. J. Rice  
 Vice of the Librarian of Congress in Washington

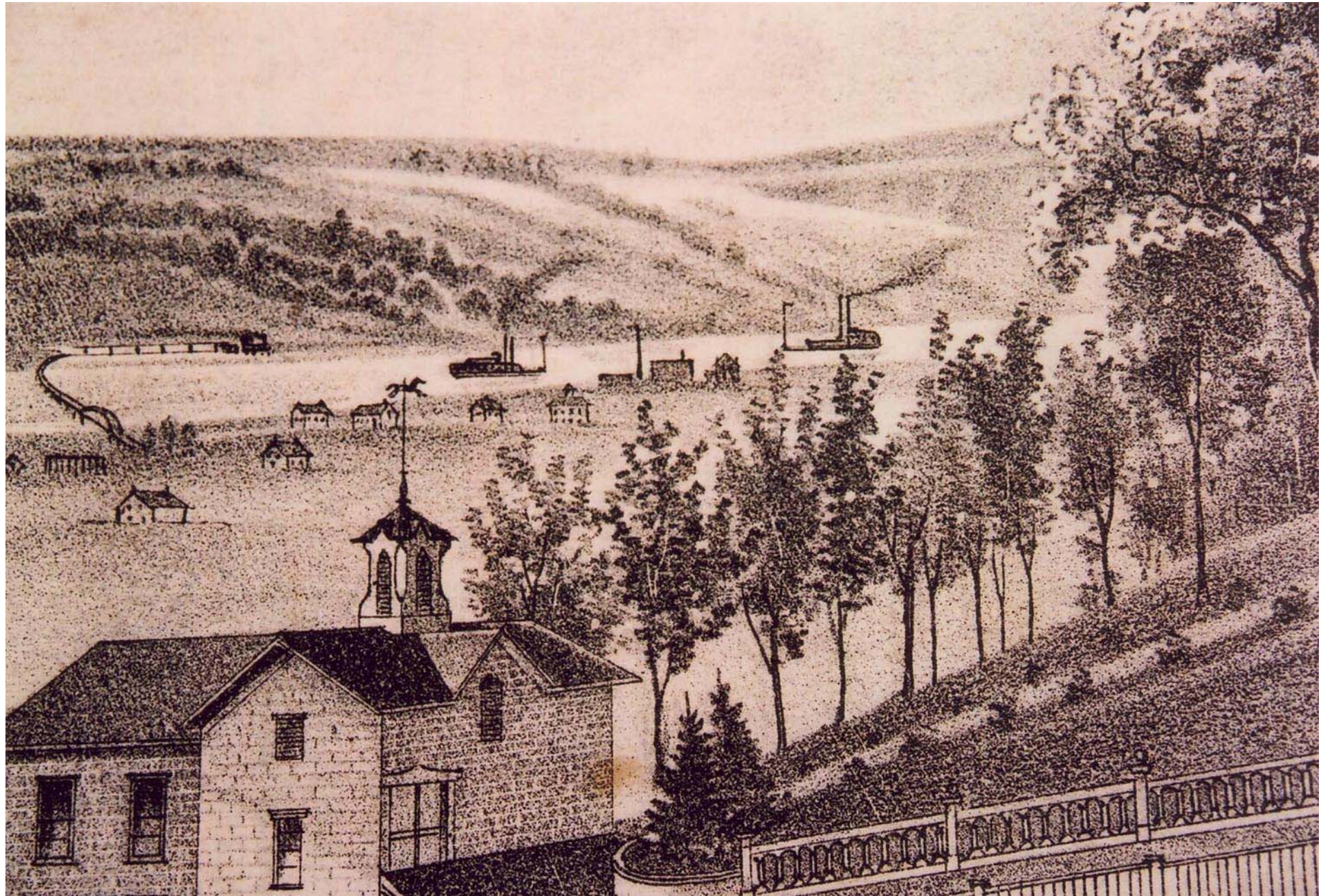




















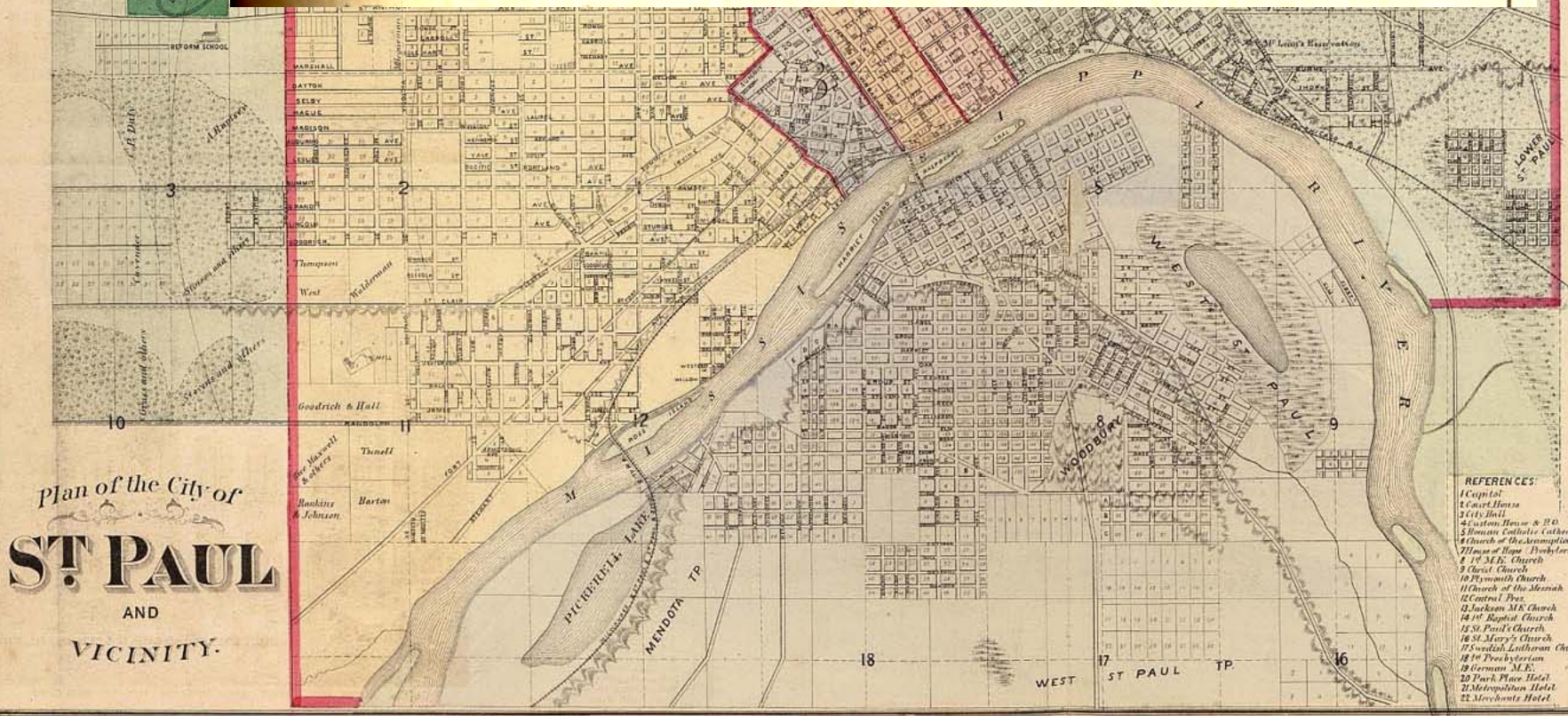


Henry A., SRPT LAUER BROS, D 212 COL-  
borne.

**LAUER JACOB, Stone and Crushed  
Rock, Quarries Stewart av s w cor  
Victoria; Office and r 252 Erie.**

“Joseph, painter, r 956 Goff av, W  
St P.

“Louis A, foreman Jacob Lauer, b 252  
Erie.







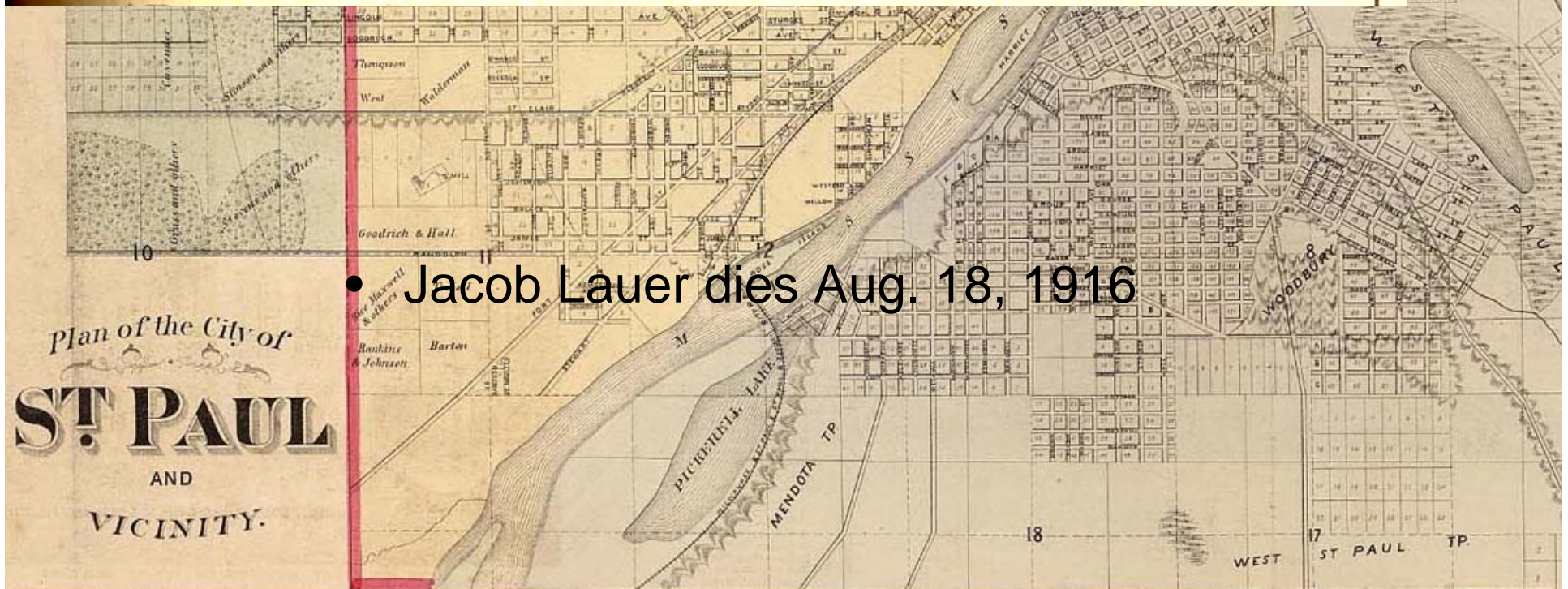


Henry A., Capt Lauer Bros, b 212 Col-  
borne.

**LAUER JACOB, Stone and Crushed  
Rock, Quarries Stewart av s w cor  
Victoria; Office and r 252 Erie.**

“Joseph, painter, r 956 Goff av, W  
St P.

“Louis A, foreman Jacob Lauer, b 252  
Erie.











# 1949 VICTORIA PARK

design advisory committee

december 4, 2012- MEETING #3





# 2011 VICTORIA PARK

design advisory committee

december 4, 2012- MEETING #3