

RESTORATION OF THE BAY

Through the haze that time casts over
Memory's picture of the past,
I see the Trempealeau River,
Its course by Nature cast.
Through the lowlands, marsh and bottoms.
Winding on to Trempealeau Bay;
Forming many lakes and bayous,
As it flows its natural way.

And I see there in the picture
At the first grey light of dawn,
The sky alive with game birds
Ducks, wild geese, brant and swan,
Mallard, blue bill, teal and widgeon,
Wood duck, red head, many more—
In great flocks came wild pigeon,
Crossing there in days of yore.

At the foot of Trempealeau Mountain,
There I see old Trempealeau Bay,
Crystal clear its placid waters,
Mirror-like on quiet day.
People there to view its beauty—
'Twas a pleasure then to gaze
At the picture there before them,
Nature's setting of the ways.

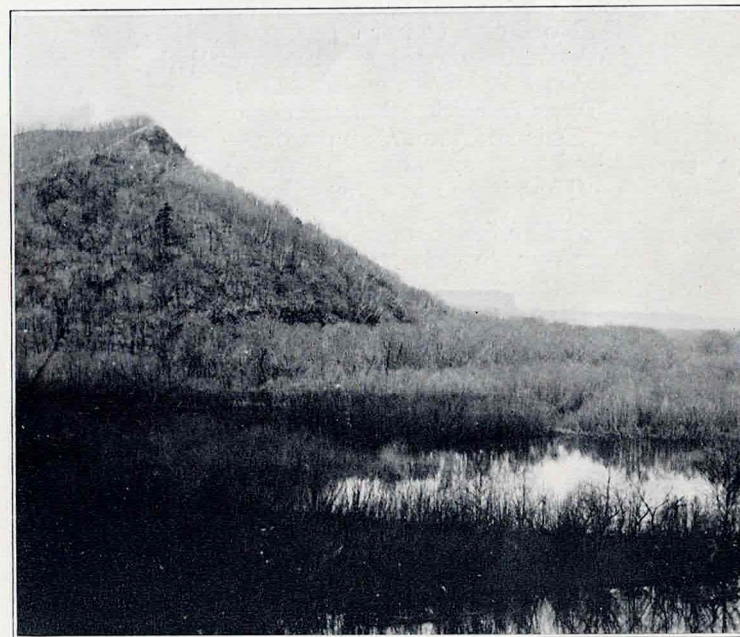
Now there comes into the picture,
In the year of Nineteen Ten,
The forming of a drainage district
Sponsored by well-meaning men;
And I see that iron monster,
Crane and dipper, gear and chain,
As they started on the project,
Waters from the marsh to drain.

But, alas, for all the effort,
Their plans all came to naught:
Ruined Nature's wild life setting,
To the bay destruction brought.
People now turn from the picture
That meets their gaze today—
Mire and mudflats, weeds and willows,
Where was once the Trempealeau Bay.

In the distance, now appearing,
Plainly through the haze I see,
A mammoth structure, steel and concrete,
The Nine-foot Channel dam to be.
There, across the Mississippi,
When complete, some future day,
Will submerge the weeds and mud flats,
And restore old Trempealeau Bay.



THE BAY BEFORE THE DREDGES CAME



"WHERE WAS ONCE THE TREMPÉALEAU BAY"