CHAPTER 5: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND GROWTH OF FORT SNELLING

The general historic overview presented below is taken largely from two documents, one entitled *All That Remains* (Clouse and Steiner 1998) and the other from a doctoral dissertation by the author (Clouse 1996). Both were written in part to provide an historic context in which to understand the significance of buildings, structures, features, sites, and archaeological deposits that are contributing elements of the Fort Snelling National Historic Landmark[1]. It is for that same reason that an overview is presented in this document.

Use of the region by American Indians has been documented through a series of archaeological investigations in the area that includes Fort Snelling, the American Fur Company in Mendota, and through a surface find in the Camp Coldwater Locality. None, however, has been documented within the BOM property. The only documented history of the fort, in general, and the Locality, specifically, comes from military records, maps, and photographs, censuses and reminiscences of early inhabitants of the region. Archaeological data is largely the source of information for any pre-Euroamerican use of the region. In fact, archaeological data has been recovered at historic Fort Snelling and in the Camp Coldwater Locality that substantiates a long period of aboriginal use of this general region (Clouse 1996, Clouse n.d.).

Fort Snelling, Minnesota, a frontier military post initially constructed between 1820-1825, was built at the junction of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers (Figure 3 - 5). Named Fort St. Anthony until 1826, Fort Snelling served initially as a military presence in curtailing British trading and securing the fur trade for American companies, preventing conflict between the Ojibwe and Dakota Indians, and keeping Euroamerican settlement out of Indian land in the recently acquired Louisiana Territory. Its location, more than 200 miles from the nearest Euroamerican community, prompted the commanding officer to exploit locally available building materials for construction, and to undertake extensive farming to supplement army subsistence supplies. Although Fort Snelling is a military site, its significance lies not only in military history. Important elements of American Indian history, Euroamerican commerce, and that of the American frontier are also components of the history of this place. During its 125 years as an active garrison, the fort underwent extensive physical alterations due to changing army needs and repair and replacement of facilities (Clouse 1996). The importance of what remains of that built environment and components of the archaeological record are recognized by inclusion within the variable boundaries of the Fort Snelling National Register Historic Site and District and the Fort Snelling National Historic Landmark.

One hundred and twenty-five years of occupation produced historic structures and archaeological deposits associated with a variety of functions at Fort Snelling. Historic maps, photographs, official records, and archaeological data document buildings that served defensive purposes, support facilities and as living quarters. These historical records and material remains offer an opportunity to examine the social and economic dimensions of life in this 19th- and 20th-century military post.

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[1] Some of the text and data presented in the historic overview is taken directly from a doctoral dissertation copyrighted by the author. That information is reproduced here for use in this report by permission of the author.

The military establishment is in many ways a highly structured and regimented microcosm of the larger society that created it, with well-defined social boundaries and strict divisions of labor. Historical and archaeological analyses conducted on the earliest manifestations of Fort Snelling reveal the expression of numerous activities and structures and reflect the differential use of material culture associated with social variables such as rank, status, and gender (Clouse 1996). The current research places an emphasis on observed patterns of structural development from the post's inception to the end of World War II, providing a context within which to interpret component significance as part of the analytical process. This period, 1819-1946, is also the period of significance for this National Historic Landmark/National Register site.

Like other communities, frontier military posts supplied basic human needs to its inhabitants with additional requirements supporting defensive and other military functions. Because of its initial remote setting, Fort Snelling also housed other facilities and functions that might normally be found in surrounding communities such as a school, chapel, library, and playhouse. More than a century later, as at other military posts, other facilities were added that included a gymnasium, movie theater, golf course, swimming pool, and sports fields for the convenience of the troops. The fort, since it inception, was considered one of the healthiest in the Army and had a major health-care component that continues to the present day. The evolution of the fort as an active garrison provides multiple contexts for evaluating and understanding that which remains today. But an understanding of what transpired at Fort Snelling is in large part dependent on an understanding of the larger military establishment of which it was a part.

Military history has often been focused on a history of wars and battles (e.g. Weigley 1973), however, the discussion here focuses on the setting, military culture and structure, changes in the military over time, and Fort Snelling's changing roles. The concerns in this overview are with broader patterns reflecting adaptations to changing military conditions, these patterns in turn reflect cultural and historical processes that shaped the conditions obtaining at this military post. These patterns, too, provide a context for the central focus of research at the BOM site that dominates the discussion later in this report.

A number of articles and booklets examine Fort Snelling in its early years (Callendar 1959; Fridley 1956; Hansen 1958; Holt 1938; Johnson 1970; Jones 1966; Ziebarth & Ominsky 1970). However, only limited research (e.g. Becker 1983; Prucha 1947) has been undertaken on developments in the Fort Snelling reservation that occurred after the Civil War and/or outside the bounds of the original walled fortification immediately at the juncture of the two rivers. Clouse and Steiner (1998), White and White (2000), and this document serve as the only comprehensive works that treat this larger context.

Today some 94 buildings, structures, and features survive from the period prior to Fort Snelling's closure as an active military post in 1946 (Clouse and Steiner 1998). By the end of 2002, actual and scheduled demolition will have permitted the reduction of the remaining structures to less than 90% of those standing at the beginning of 2001. The emphasis in this report is on a particular area within the former military reservation, and in particular, on two features remaining in the vicinity of the Coldwater spring. It is part of the purpose of this

document to provide a context for understanding the significance of the remaining structural elements of the site as well as the archaeological manifestations of occupations spanning at least 180 years.

The military as a whole can best be considered a tool of government. In that light, one major purpose of the army at this location was to exercise effective government over the Northwest frontier ensuring peace, security, and control of commerce. In the early-19th century, America's northwest frontier consisted of the present states of Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and the Dakotas. The Northwest was occupied by probably a quarter of a million American Indians who likely initially feared and then documentably resisted American expansion. The region also contained an untold wealth of natural resources in furs, mineral deposits, and timber. This is the setting in which Fort Snelling was to be built and which it was to protect. It is from this platform that we can proceed to discuss the need for fortifications such as Fort Snelling.

The military evolved along with the nation it served and Fort Snelling changed as part of that evolution. The history of the U.S. Army lies in the history of the growth and development of America which it served. And the growth and development of Fort Snelling cannot be understood outside the context of changes in the U.S. military of which it was an integral part. Because there have been numerous books published (e.g. Dupuy 1961; Ganoe 1943; Millis 1956; Weigley 1967, 1973) on what has been traditionally considered to be the subject of military history, a discussion of battles and campaigns will not be a part of the current study. Furthermore, during the majority of time that is the focus of this study, the U.S. was at peace, punctuated with three major and one minor period of conflict. Since the earlier period of the fort has been discussed at length in Clouse (1996) and in a number of other books and booklets (Callendar 1959; Fridley 1956; Hansen 1958; Holt 1938; Johnson 1970; Jones 1966; Ziebarth & Ominsky 1970), this summary will treat the early period more briefly with the major emphasis on the post-Civil War period.

It is realized that certain individuals such as Col. Josiah Snelling (initial commanding officer), Lt. R.A. McCabe (designer/engineer of original Fort Snelling) William Goddard (master builder), General Terry (late-19th-century Department of the Dakota commanding officer), and others played instrumental roles in the actual design and development of the physical structures known as Fort Snelling. The roles of specific individuals are part of the record, but a detailed account of their individual accomplishments is beyond the scope of this study. The primary emphasis here to provide a setting within which to better understand developments at the Camp Coldwater Locality. These changes reflect aspects of the military involvement on the frontier and in events of national and international importance as well as reorganization and redefinition of the military itself. It is the ongoing process of change, not just a chronicle of events (cf. Hansen 1958 [1918]), that portrays the military role at this one-time frontier garrison, while offering the most appropriate mechanism for understanding the past. Therefore, an historical perspective of the history of Fort Snelling must begin with some background showing the need for a military installation at this location and the role it layed in meeting those needs. While a history of standing armies and the need of a national defense are beyond the scope of this document, the rationale for a fortification at this site is not.

The beginnings of the history of Fort Snelling is found in the acquisition of the area that it was designed to protect, including the land upon which it sits. That is, it begins with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Through the Louisiana Purchase, the United States did not directly acquire the land, but rather the purchase gave the United States the *right of discovery*. This *right* gave the United States, whose perspective was that it was the paramount sovereign, the authority to negotiate treaties with sovereign nations of indigenous people who occupied the land (Clouse 1996).

In a directive from President Thomas Jefferson to explore the then virtually unknown Louisiana Territory, an expedition led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark was sent up the Missouri River in 1804. In the following year, Lt. Zebulon M. Pike was dispatched up the Mississippi River to explore that region and to secure for the United States suitable land upon which to build military installations. The early establishment of the military presence in a newly acquired territory is common as one of the first steps a government takes to demonstrate authority over that territory (Clouse 1996).

Lt. Zebulon Pike's initial survey resulted in the drafting of a treaty in which a $200 down payment was made to the Dakota (Sioux) Indians for a grant of tracts of land within their territory upon which the U.S. military might build a post. As part of that treaty it was promised that the United States would make further payments at such time the land was militarily occupied. Pike returned his survey data and the treaty document (see below) to the U.S. War Department, however the ultimate decision for the actual establishment of posts and approval of the treaty was of course left up to the Congress.

The treaty for acquisition of the land grant in which Fort Snelling was to be built reads as follows:

> Whereas, at a conference held between the United States of America and the Sioux [Dakota] nation of Indians, Lieut. Z. M. Pike, of the army of the United States, and the chiefs and warriors of the said tribe, having agreed to the following articles, which, when ratified and approved of by the proper authority, shall be binding on both parties:
>
> Article 1. That the Sioux nation grants unto the United States, for the purpose of the establishment of military posts, nine miles square at the mouth of the river St. Croix, also, from below the confluence of the Mississippi and St. Peter's [Minnesota], up the Mississippi, to include the falls of St. Anthony, extending nine miles on each side of the river. That the Sioux nation grants to the United States, the full sovereignty and power over said districts, forever, without any let or hindrance whatsoever.
>
> Art. 2. That, in consideration of the above grants, the United States [the following added by the Senate in 1808] shall prior to taking possession thereof, pay to the Sioux two thousand dollars, or deliver the value thereof in such goods and merchandise as they shall choose.
>
> Art. 3. The United States promises, on their part, to permit the Sioux to pass, repass, hunt, or make other uses of the said districts, as they have formerly done, without any other exception but those specified in article first.
>
> In testimony hereof, we, the undersigned, have hereunto set our hands and seals, at the mouth of the river St. Peter's, on the twenty third day of September, one thousand eight hundred and five.
>
> Z. M. PIKE, first Lieutenant, [seal]
> And Agent at the above conference.
> LE PETIT CORBEAU, his X mark. [seal]
> WAY AGA ENAGEE, his X mark. [seal]

Following congressional ratification of the treaty in 1808, John C. Calhoun, then Secretary of War, requested permission to establish military installations along the northern frontier of the recently purchased Louisiana tract. However, Congress, in its fear of too large a standing army in time of peace, did not see fit to appropriate funds for the construction of any forts at that time.

Zebulon Pike's documentation (Coues 1965 [1895]) of his travels to this area in 1805 clearly indicated that the region was economically dominated by the Montreal-based Northwest Fur Company and was for all practical purposes an extension of British territory (Canada). Later, having lost the whole of the northwest frontier to the British and their Indian allies during the War of 1812, the administration of President James Monroe proposed actions that would secure possession of that territory and assure the loyalty of the indigenous inhabitants. Additionally, because of the lucrative nature of the fur trade, American companies succeeded in gaining government support to eliminate the domination of British (Canadian) fur companies (Clouse 1996).

At the conclusion of the War of 1812, and with the movement of U.S. troops into forts Dearborn, Crawford, and Mackinac, it was deemed advisable to establish a *chain of forts* across the northern and western extremities of what was then the northwestern United States. This *chain*, it was hoped, would protect the new territory from British military incursion from Canada and block the established north-south fur trade routes from the Missouri and Mississippi River drainage basins (Prucha 1969). Four forts (Crawford, Edwards, Atkinson, and Snelling) were constructed as "links" in this proposed *chain* and with the removal of troops from the other three by 1827, Fort Snelling was for a time left as the sole link in the defense of the vast northern expanse of what later became Missouri territory.

In conjunction with the military at Fort Snelling, there was also the presence of an Indian agency. Indian agencies and the army were both a part of the War Department until late in the second quarter of the 19th century. The roles of each of these government bodies in seeking to assure American control over the area and its inhabitants were complementary and slightly overlapping in nature. The Indian agency role was to 1) encourage, protect, and regulate Indian trade, 2) exercise control over the Indians by encouraging a dependence on American companies, 3) impress upon the Indians the power of the United States, 4) gain the confidence of the Indians by protecting their rights, and 5) and introduce them to white civilization (Grossman 1977).

The clear initial military objectives of Fort Snelling were to 1) control the principal avenues of communication, 2) provide support for the Indian agency by sustaining a threat through armed force, 3) maintain peace among the inhabitants of the region, and 4) prevent settlement of whites in what was then Indian land. These combined objectives of the Indian agency and military were so commerce oriented they appear almost single-minded in nature: they were to control the avenues of the fur trade, keep out foreign fur traders, keep Indians from conflict with each other so that they would continue to provide the labor force for the fur trade, and keep whites from interfering with Indians so they could engage in the acquisition of furs (Clouse 1996).

Towards the establishment of the post at the junction of the St. Peters and Mississippi rivers, an expedition was sent into the upper Mississippi region in 1817 led by Maj. Stephen Long (Long 1860). Long's directive was to review those tracts purchased by Pike in 1805 for their suitability as locations of military garrisons. Long's review of the area at the mouth of the St. Peters (Minnesota) River resulted in a recommendation for the construction of a permanent garrison at the high point of land immediately fronting the Mississippi and above a slough separating the main land mass from Pike Island.

Utilizing the available cartographic resources of the Fort Snelling area, we can efficiently trace the 126 years of change that have occurred at Fort Snelling and visualize how actions far removed from this place had an effect on that change. The following historical discussion addresses structural changes in the context of the overall role of the military and Fort Snelling's changing role within that structure. Supplemented with other documents, the maps, photographs, drawings, and other images presented here are not a complete chronicle, but are representative documents tracing the physical and historical development of Fort Snelling.

1819 to 1858 – From Fort Snelling's founding to the sale of the fort

Following the 1817 report by Long (Long 1860), and congressional approval for construction, the Fifth Regiment of U.S. Infantry was ordered to the Upper Mississippi Valley in February of 1819. Under the command of Lt. Col. Henry Leavenworth, the regiment was dispatched to construct a fort at the mouth of the St. Peters (Minnesota) River and to occupy Forts Crawford and Armstrong. Leavenworth, arriving late in the year, opted to build a temporary cantonment on the flood plain on the east side of the Minnesota River. Thinking that the cantonment's location was partly responsible for the unhealthy conditions and the loss of more than 3 score of his men, Leavenworth, in the face of rising flood waters, moved this troops in May, 1820 to high ground near the head of a large spring about 1 mile up the Mississippi River. This location was, then and now, known as Camp Coldwater. This location is labeled on an 1823 map of the Fort St. Anthony (Fort Snelling) vicinity (Figure 4).

Col. Josiah Snelling replaced Leavenworth in 1820. It was Snelling who selected the site for the fort and decided on the design and materials. Originally built as a fortification to fit the ground upon which it was placed, Fort Snelling took on a configuration that was adapted to the landform at the point of the bluff overlooking the juncture of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. Its original design contained numerous angles and sharp jogs in the walls suggesting that considerable difficulty would have existed in providing adequate control of the defensive perimeter. This design, however, was modified during construction and with the final form having been established by 1823. Viewing this configuration in relation to the landform shown in the Heckle map (Figure 5), one sees the design as an attempt to adapt to the topography existing at the time of construction. Fortifications such as St. Anthony (Snelling) designed to adapt to the local topography are classified as *irregular* fortifications. However, within those irregular walls the fort buildings and interior plan form a symmetrical arrangement of buildings typical of regular fortifications that corresponds to the rigid structure of the military (Clouse 1996). Utilizing locally available building materials consisting of limestone quarried back from the bluff face adjacent to the fort, bricks made from clay in the

shale deposits, and timber cut locally and in the neighboring regions, the fort was completed in 1825. In honor of its commanding officer, the fort was renamed Fort Snelling in 1826.

A plan drawn by E.K. Smith in 1837 (Figure 6) documents developments around the fort in the Coldwater spring area. Of particular interest is the fact that this plan details and identifies structures such as private residences, blacksmith's shops, barns, and a hotel in the immediate vicinity of the spring. The structures near the spring are likely associated with Baker's trading post and accommodations for his employees and the Indian Agency blacksmith's shop operated by Antoine Peppin (also spelled Pepin and Pappin). Additional construction resulted from the settlement of refugees from the failed Selkirk colony in Manitoba. This area is discussed in greater detail later in this report. Upstream from the fort settlers built cabins on along the east bank of the Mississippi. The location and arrangement of buildings associated with the Indian Agency are also clearly depicted one-quarter mile southwest of the fort. The recent growth of the American Fur Company post in Mendota is also detailed at this time (Clouse 1996).

With the opening of territory east of the Mississippi River to settlement in 1838 and the growth of the settlement of St. Paul a few miles downstream, the fort was no longer the isolated community it had been just 20 years earlier. In 1849 Minnesota became a territory and, although there is not a sharp break in the activities of the army at this juncture, military action from Fort Snelling gradually began to decline. No longer isolated, it no longer had to rely only on what it could produce and what could be shipped up river. As the neighboring community grew so did the opportunities for the military to acquire goods and services that troop labor had provided before. With the growing civilian population and a civilian government the fort's role in frontier duties also declined.

At a post that had been largely dependent on self-sufficiency, it was now possible to contract for firewood, beef, horses, mules, cattle, forage for animals, etc. from local suppliers and farmers. The influx of government money to local entrepreneurs was a welcome addition to the local economy and troops were freed up from some of these duties to spend more time on military tasks and training. And although the army attempted to revitalize agricultural practices for gardening to supply the garrison with vegetables, it was not always successful at this northern latitude (Annual Report of the Secretary of War [ARSW], 1852, 32nd congress, 2nd Session, Senate Executive Documents, No. 1, p. 35).

Between the Mexican and Civil Wars, the army in this region was assigned the task of protecting arteries of transportation through Indian land and fought some battles with Indians along the frontier. Until the Civil War the United States government dealt with Indian nations in a conscious effort to move Indians into territory that was undesirable to whites or areas in which whites were not yet ready to settle, rather than eliminate or absorb them. This action created in their minds a more of less permanent Indian country. During the 1850s the idea of a permanent Indian Country began to breakdown as Oregon and California began to be settled. Indian Country was no longer the western boundary of the U.S.; instead it separated two parts of the country. A major economic factor responsible for change in the frontier setting was the demise of the fur trade. With depressed values for furs, increased pressure on land from

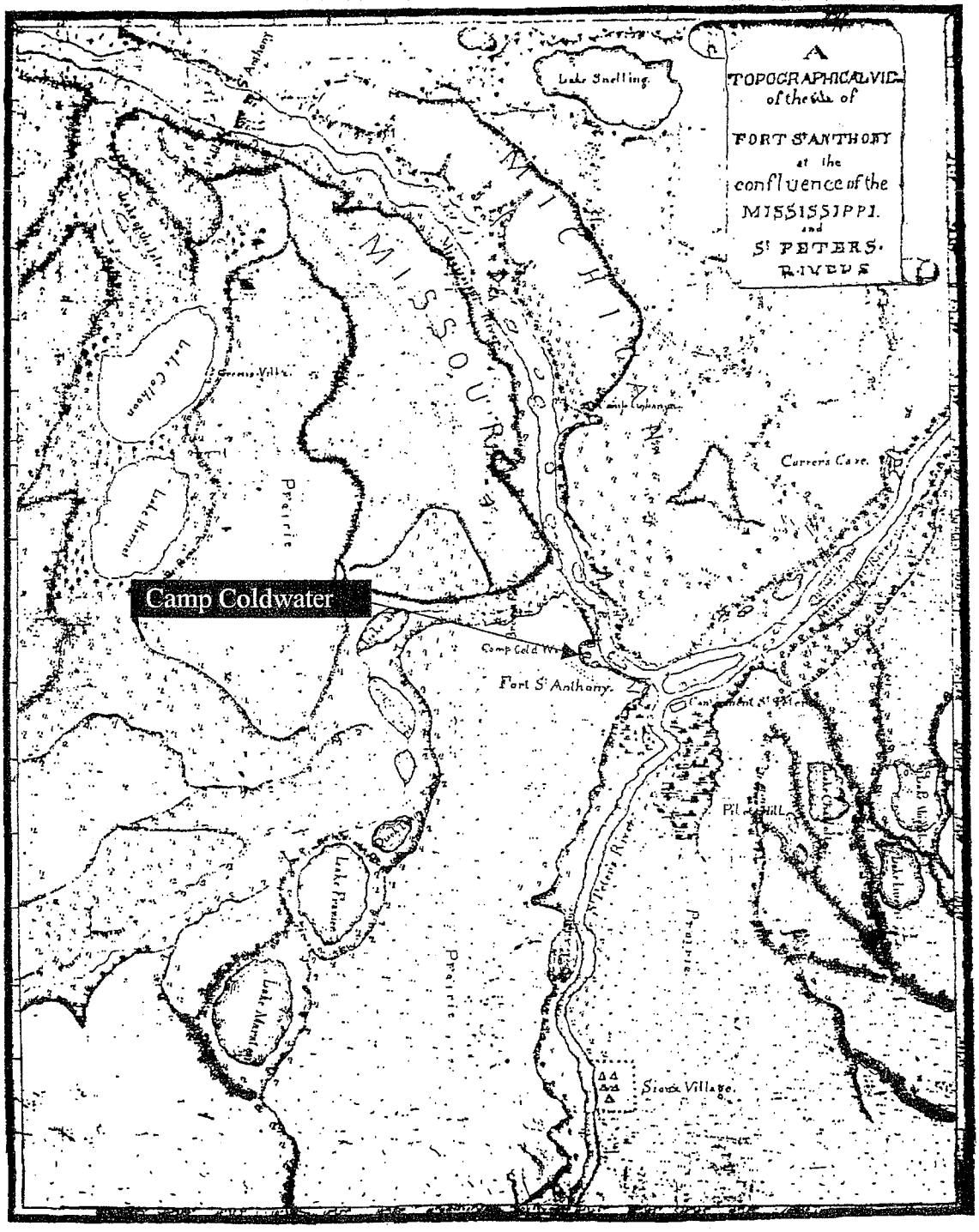

Figure 4 Ca. 1823 topographical map of Fort St. Anthony (Fort Snelling) vicinity. (cartographer thought to be Lt. Morrill Marsdon)

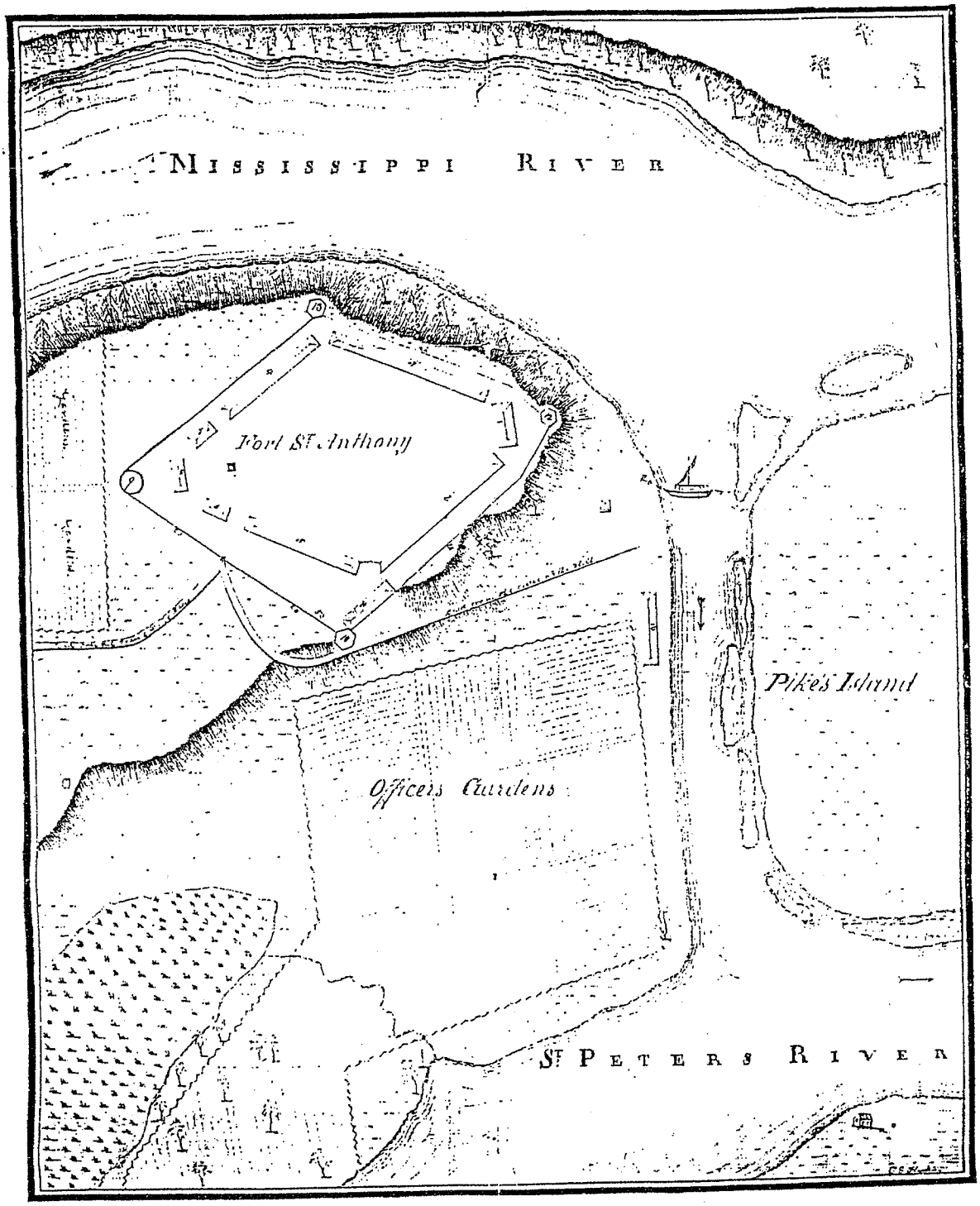

Figure 5 1823 plan of Fort St. Anthony (Fort Snelling) by Joseph Heckle.

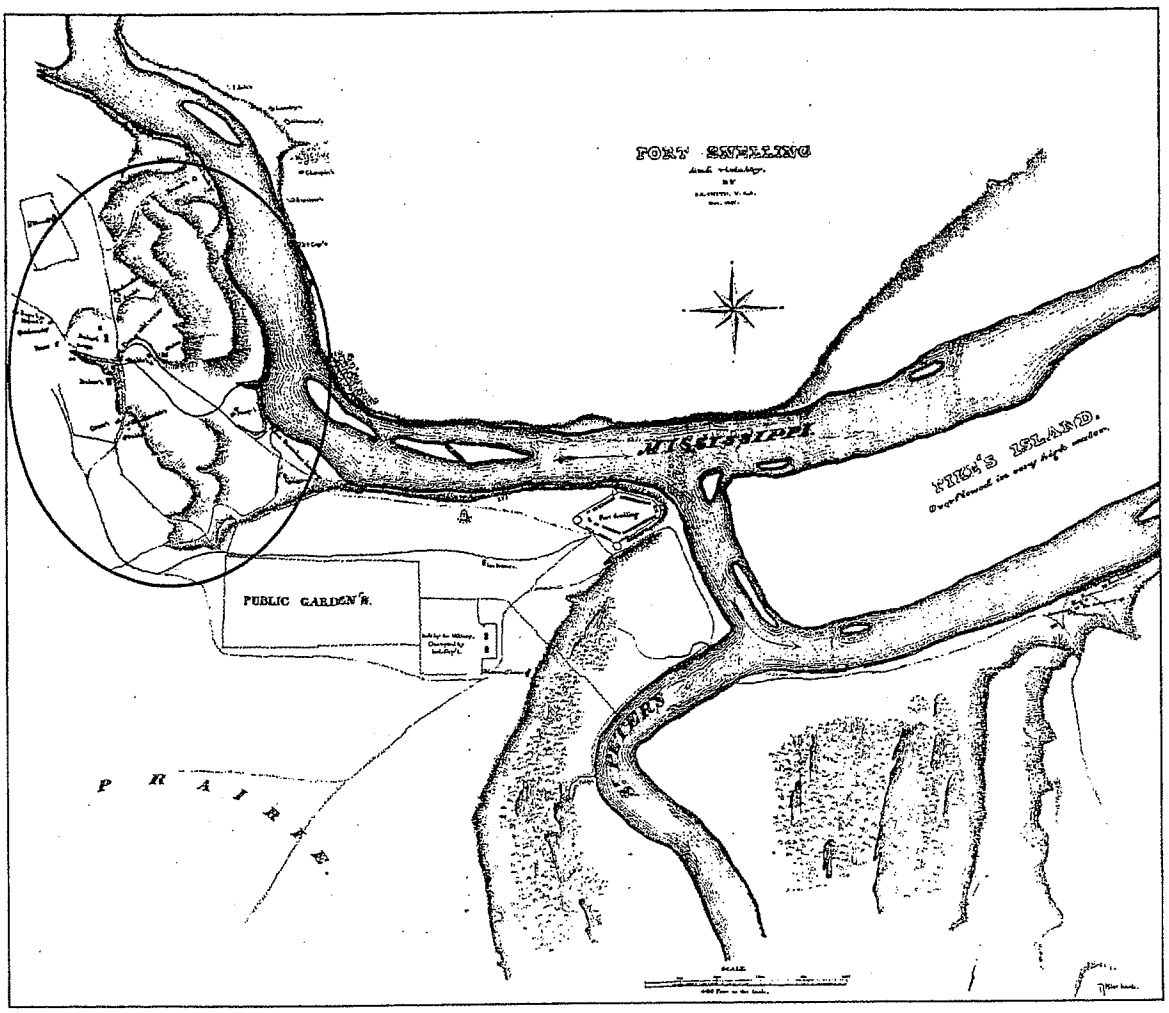

Figure 6 1837 E.K. Smith map of Fort Snelling and vicinity. Camp Coldwater community is within circled area.

anxious settlers, and treaties that opened up most of Minnesota to settlement, the fur trade as a major economic force was largely gone by 1851. In a very short period of time fur traders were replaced by farmers (Clouse 1996).

In 1849 Fort Ripley was constructed in Crow Wing County and four years later the army built Fort Ridgely along the Minnesota River valley in Nicollet County. The on-again, off-again Fort Abercrombie was finally founded in 1857 in the Red River Valley. With the construction of forts such as Ridgely and Ripley, at what was then the westward-moving frontier, and the removal of Dakota Indians to reservations as a result of the treaties of Mendota, and Traverse des Sioux in 1851, the military began to question the necessity of a fort well within settled territory. Finally, in 1856, a decision was made to sell the fort, and in 1857 Franklin Steele, a former sutler at Fort Snelling, purchased it. The appearance of irregularity in the transaction prompted the creation of a board of review to investigate the sale and to determine the advantage of maintaining the fort as a supply depot. The conclusions of this board of officers was that the frontier had moved to a line drawn from Fort Ripley to Fort Ridgely and that an

agency in St. Paul would be more satisfactory than a military station and depot at Fort Snelling (House Miscellaneous Document No. 133, 35th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 1-3). The sale of Fort Snelling follows a pattern of demise of frontier military posts that was to occur repeatedly as the need for earlier fortifications dwindled with the westward movement of that frontier (Clouse and Steiner 1998).

Franklin Steele took possession of the fort in 1858 and proposed the development of the City of Fort Snelling on the former military reservation. However the financial panic of 1857 cut short his plans and left him with little chance for profit from the sale of house lots. With no incoming cash, he defaulted on his second installment payment for the fort. Shortly thereafter the Civil War broke out and Fort Snelling was militarily reoccupied and declared the location for a training facility for volunteers, and in 1863 it became a draft rendezvous.

1861 to 1898 – Civil War to the Spanish American War

Fort Snelling returned as a part of the nation's military system in 1861 to meet the increased need for military training, housing, and supplies. During 1861 and 1862 a number of wooden structures were built to house functions necessary to meet its role as a rendezvous and training center for Civil War volunteer soldiers from Minnesota. Structures known to have been built during that time include enlisted barracks, kitchens and mess facilities, officers' quarters, a blacksmith's shop, a carpenter's shop, numerous stables, stock yards, teamsters quarters, and privies among other temporary facilities. None of these buildings remain standing today. The plan shown as Figure 7 is evidence of the fort's physical development outside the old walled complex of Fort Snelling as a response to the Civil War.

A few Indian campaigns continued in the northern plains during the Civil War and in Minnesota in 1862. These actions were waged by volunteer troops since the regular army had been removed to take part in Civil War action. In conjunction with the ending of hostilities in the U.S.-Dakota conflict in Minnesota in 1862, a temporary internment camp (stockade) for Dakota Indians was constructed on the Minnesota River floodplain below the old fort. The military solution to the friction between Whites and Indians in Minnesota was the removal of most Dakota Indians to reservations farther west. Continued conflicts and military directives by the commanding general of the army, W.T. Sherman, like the need to "act with vindictive earnestness against the Sioux even to their extermination, men, women, and children" (Athearn 1956), were tempered by congressional action that created a peace commission to restore order. The ultimate goal of this action was to attempt to eliminate their sovereign nation status and deal with Indians as individuals.

By the end of the Civil War and with the Homestead Act of 1862, the "Great American Desert," as Maj. Stephen Long had dubbed the Great Plains in the 1830s, was opened for settlement. This action brought about the obsolesce of the concept of an "Indian Country." There were no places left in which to remove them and the policy of reserving lands for Indians was promoted as a solution to Indian conflict with White settlers. With this solution the army would then be on the offensive to keep or return Indians to reservations. Following the Civil War, Fort Snelling was re-established as a permanent military post. Responding to

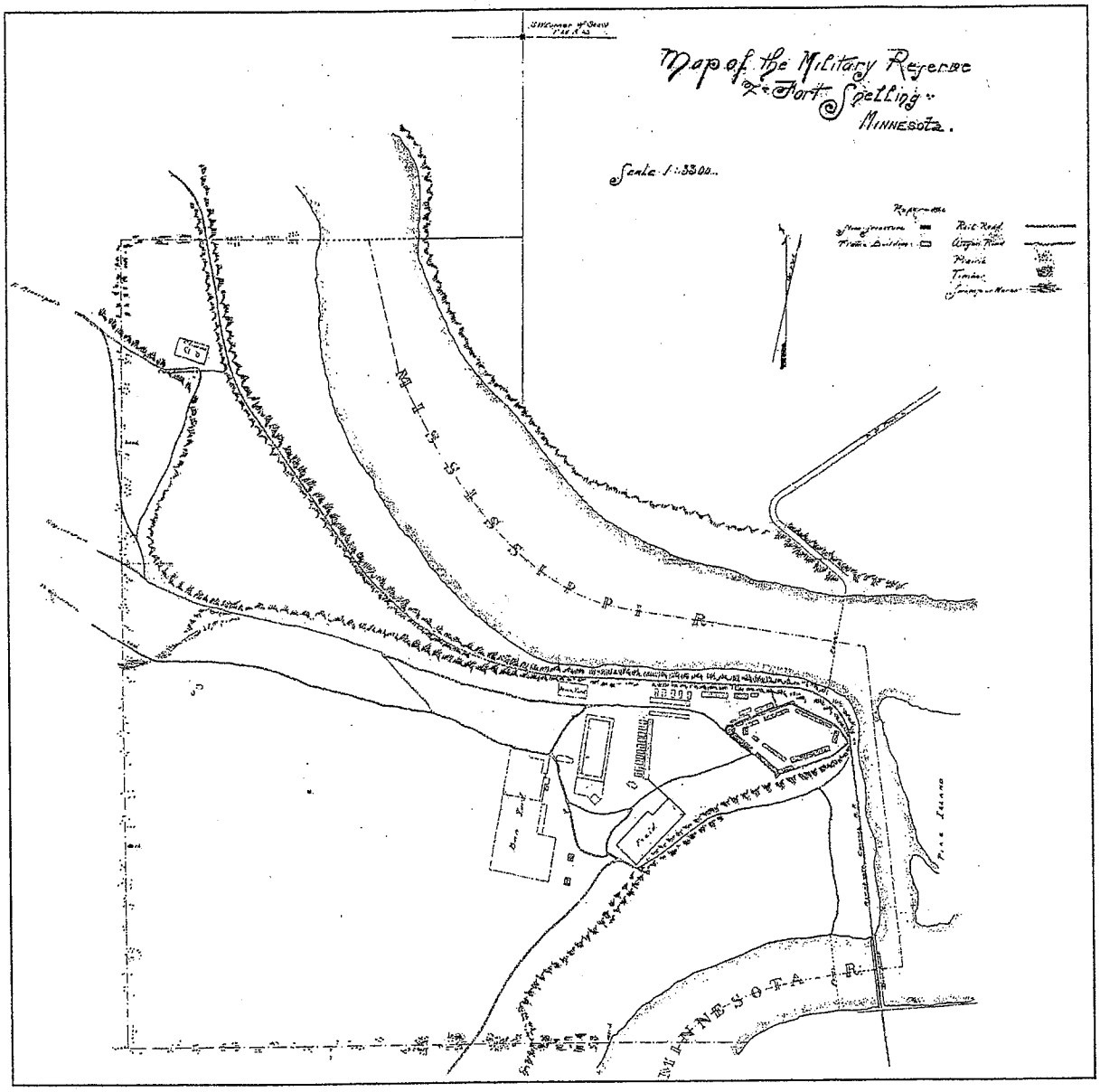

Figure 7 1870 plan of Fort Snelling.

pressure from neighboring communities for more land, the Fort Snelling military reservation was reduced to approximately one-tenth of the pre-war size.

Four years after the end of the Civil War the army still had over 250 military posts spread throughout the United States. A number of these and later posts were constructed on a temporary basis associated with westward trail development and with the extension of the railroads. Ulysses Grant, General in Chief of the Army until 1869, had asked for an 80,000 man force of regular army. Congress authorized however a force of 54,000 in 1866. Although it grew slightly larger than that which was authorized, Congress reduced the number to 45,000 in 1869. That number was reduced again in 1876 to a manpower total of about 27,500. The

reduction roughly corresponds to the official end of Reconstruction in the southern states in 1877 although a transition to civilian government had been occurring there since 1870. The size of the U.S. military force then remained nearly constant until the Spanish-American War in 1898 (Weigley 1967; Ganoe 1943).

The congressional reduction in force and reduction in funding in the decades that followed the Civil War was in part due to the role the army played in a number of controversial areas of American society. These included the Reconstruction period in the southern states, Indian campaigns in the west, a French threat in Mexico, and the putting down of domestic labor disturbances in 1877 and 1894. As a result of these actions and posturing within the structure of the military itself, military historian William Ganoe (1943) has referred to this period as "The Army's Dark Ages." During this period the Army looked inward with a resultant greater separation from the general society at large. It was, however, this period of comparative peace that helped develop the professionalism necessary to meet the needs of wars to come in the next century.

For administrative purposes the army was divided on a geographic basis. These divisions (Atlantic, Pacific, and Missouri) remained relatively constant over time, and Fort Snelling continued to be a part of the Division of the Missouri until nearly the end of the 19th century. During the latter part of the 19th century this division comprised a number of states and territories (Figure 8). The divisions were further subdivided into departments. Fort Snelling was in the Department of Dakota (a subunit of the Division of the Missouri) headquartered in St. Paul until 1878. The Department of Dakota encompassed Minnesota, and the future states of North and South Dakota and Montana. It initially included, in addition to Fort Snelling, Forts Wadsworth, Abercrombie, Ripley, Ridgely, Dakota, Rice, Sully, Randall, Berthold, Union (Buford), Thompson, and Camp Cook. By 1867 Forts Ransom, Totten, Shaw, and Stevenson were added along the westward trail from Fort Abercrombie. Other forts were added and/or removed as specific needs arose, usually in relation to the protection of transportation arteries.

In the Department of Dakota, military action against the Indians was often prompted by whites breaching treaty provisions thus provoking Indians into action to repel treaty violators. The military was then called in to protect the whites and punish the Indians. These violations were often fueled by greed and adventure frequently associated with the discovery of gold, such as that in Montana and in the Black Hills. Railroad construction through Indian land, slaughter of the Buffalo and development of western trails, such as the Bozeman Trail, also fueled tensions and violated treaty rights that resulted in armed conflict between Indians and the army. From the army's perspective, poor communication systems and officers who had received their experience on battlefields in the Civil War in part hampered military action against the Indians early in the period. The result was that they were not accustomed to dealing with an enemy that fought in an unorthodox manner. Some of the more memorable events in the history of the Department of Dakota Indian campaigns were the defeat of Col. George A. Custer at the battle of the Little Big Horn in Montana in 1876, the 1877 capture of Chief Joseph and removal of the Nez Percé to a reservation in Oklahoma, the army action

Figure 8 United States Western Military Departments in 1874 (Billings 1875)

against Indians at Wounded Knee in 1890, and the use of troops in the last U.S. Indian action at Leech Lake in 1898.

There is little evidence of growth in the garrison between the end of the Civil War and 1878. A primary reason for the lack of growth here, and at a number of other military installations was due to the nation's major focus on Reconstruction in the South. Reconstruction ended in 1877 and congressional appropriations were then directed to other needs. The construction of a new hospital in 1874 (Billings 1875), located where the north end of the Mendota Bridge now rests, is the only significant structural change during this period. Beginning in 1878, the fort gradually began to expand along the Minnesota River bluffs stretching towards the southwest.

The demise of the original fortification is witnessed in a number of historic plans from the late 1870s and early 1880s, as a "New Fort" was beginning a rapid spread to the south and west of the walls of the old garrison (Clouse 1996). The ground plan of the military reserve from 1878

shows evidence of the direction development will take in building the Department of Dakota Headquarters in 1879. In 1878, a general order was issued that required Department headquarters to be moved to the nearest military post. The rapid change that followed in the late-1870s and mid-1880s was largely due to increased demands on the fort as the Department of Dakota Headquarters moved from St. Paul to Fort Snelling. This growth follows a geographic pattern established during and after the Civil War spreading out in the contiguous areas available along the river bluffs. The development of Officers' Row on Taylor Avenue, the new headquarters building built in 1879, the 1880 ordnance depot, and new barracks completed by 1885 (Figure 9), all testify to the increasing importance of the post (Clouse and Steiner 1998). Also by 1885, the old fort is relegated to the status of "Ordnance Depot," with the "New Post" being the primary focus of late-19th century activity. During the early-1880s a pressurized water system was established with a water tower and other support buildings constructed at the Coldwater spring.

By 1881, the United States Army occupied 190 military posts 16 arsenals, 3 recruiting depots, and 1 engineering center, in addition to headquarters buildings and numerous other facilities managed for supply by various departments of the army (Clary 1983). Of the total, 84 posts were on the Great Lakes or Atlantic and Gulf Coasts; 11 on the Pacific Coast; and the remaining 115 were scattered inland (Annual Report of the Commanding General [ARCG] 1881, House Executive Documents 1, 47th Congress, 1st session, Part 2, Vol 1, p. 36). At that time military leaders objected to the expensive and inefficient maintenance of an excessive number of posts to house an army of only 25,000 enlisted men. They felt that the majority of posts had ceased to have any valid military purpose. Many coastal forts had been abandoned for years and many of the rest were "temporary" garrisons built to intimidate or control Indians that were no longer in a state of conflict (Clary 1983).

A prospective answer to many of these problems was in a military proposal for consolidation. Consolidation would abandon obsolete, temporary, and coastal forts and concentrate troops at strategic points where they could train in large formations. This would result in fewer posts to maintain while relying on the nation's relatively good railroad transportation system to rapidly deliver troops where they were needed. In 1880, Alexander Ramsey, then Secretary of War, and Commanding General William T. Sherman both made requests to reduce the number of forts to fewer strategic posts to effect greater economy and discipline (ARSW and ARCG 1880, House Executive Document 1, 46th Congress, 3rd session, part 2, vol. 1, pp. ix and 5).

Congressional opposition to consolidation included the lack of civilian population centers in some areas to provide adequate protection to local inhabitants, the commerce provided to local communities by military spending, and a reluctance to appropriate money to build new "strategic" posts as smaller forts were abandoned. Congress did however gradually increase funding for military consolidation.

By the early-1880s Fort Snelling was well supplied with the facilities necessary to carry out its role and achieve its military goals in the west. As the Indian campaigns nearly ceased to be a cause for extensive military activity, and as the Department of Dakota headquarters re-turned to St. Paul in 1886, growth at the fort slowed. With the onset of the Spanish American War in

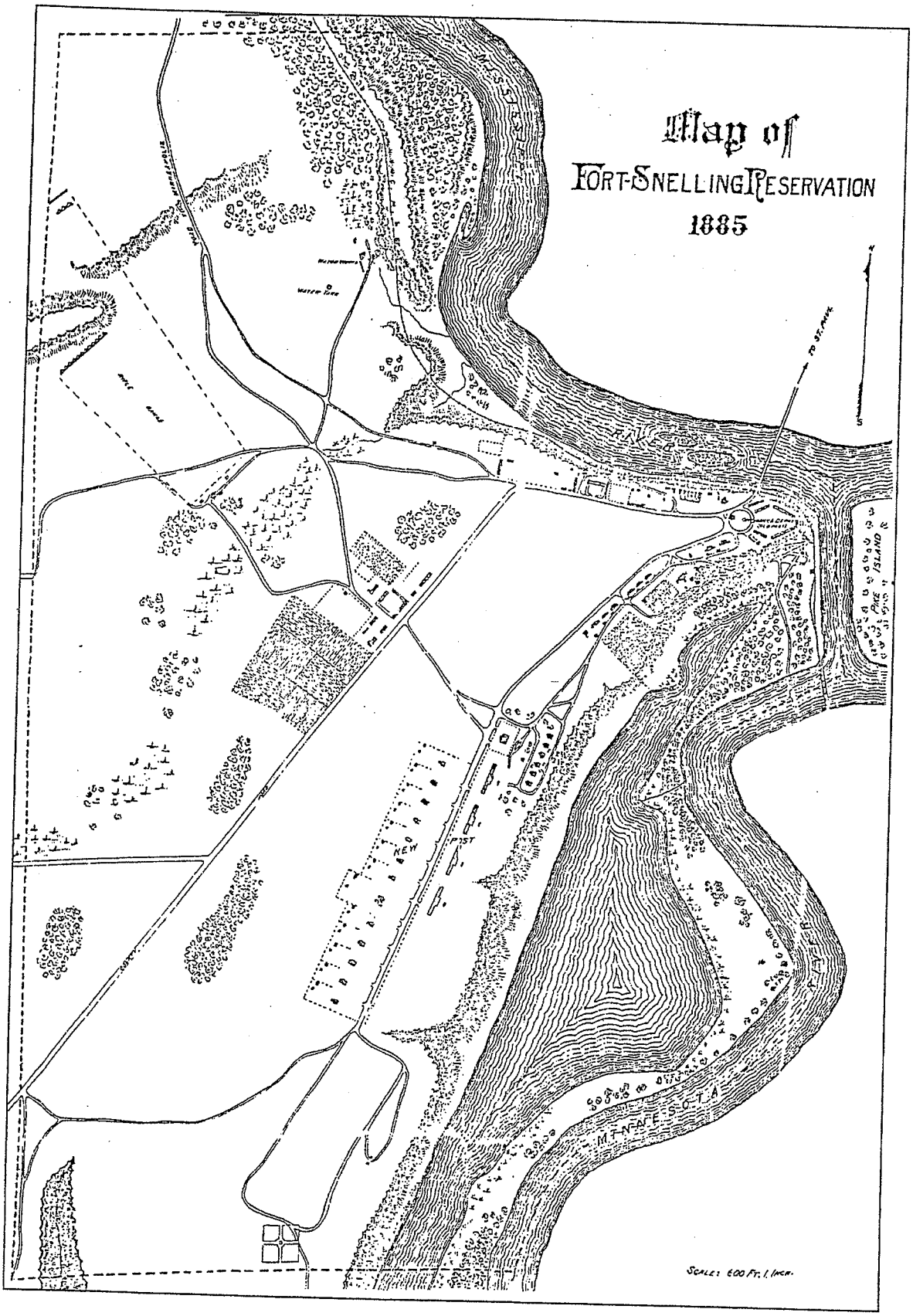

Figure 9 1885 plan of the Fort Snelling reservation.

1898, another rapid growth spurt occurred that was again to slow significantly after 1905. Prucha (1947) indicated that Fort Snelling, as regimental headquarters and head-quarters of the district of Minnesota, maintained a sizable garrison and kept troops on hand for dispatch to outlying posts as needed. Annual reports of the Department of Dakota show virtually no military action in Minnesota after the Civil War and that most of the garrison's activity was related to escort duty for supply and contractor's trains to other posts in the Department.

Between 1880 and 1895 army housing underwent a dramatic transformation. It came as part of a general overhaul of enlisted life with reduction of enlistment from 5 to 3 years, elimination of substandard living conditions, capricious discipline, and unbalanced rations (Foner 1970). Even post traders were removed and replaced with post exchanges operated for the benefit of the soldiers (Clary 1983). Changes in barracks were designed to remove soldiers from substandard housing while reducing the total number of posts and moving those that remained to locations in more settled regions. But an underlying military reason for this move was to assemble greater numbers of soldiers in one place so that they could train in larger formations.

During this same time period the Surgeon General of the United States condemned the conditions existing at the majority of military posts and supported moving towards more modern facilities. The use of latrine pits, frequently filled and covered, and moved a few feet away led to recommendations for disposal of human waste away from living areas and the elimination of cesspools, sinks, and privy vaults to rid the army of back yards "honey-combed with deposits of filth." (Billings 1870, 1875; Annual Report of the Surgeon General [ARSG] 1887, House Executive Documents No. 1, 50th Congress, 1st Session, Pt. 1, vol. 1, 657-671). By 1892 the Quartermaster General's office was spending over $250,000 a year on sewers, water supply systems and plumbing (ARSG 1892, House Executive Documents No. 1, 52nd Congress, 2nd Session, Pt. 1, vol. 1, 537). The adoption of modern sanitation and modern utilities was an enduring outcome of this period that also resulted in forcing the army to move from amateur (soldier) to professional construction methods. The result of this move forced a change from construction procedures and policies of a dispersed system to one run by centralized management (Clary 1983:22).

After receiving approval to abandon certain posts, a total of only 119 garrisoned posts remained by 1884. In an economic move, efforts had begun at the same time to create larger posts in the vicinity of larger cities. As consolidation was taking place, there were fears that this move would result in overcrowding in the remaining forts. In 1885 $229,556 was appropriated for nearly 100 new buildings nationwide and slightly more was appropriated for repair to existing structures. It is believed that funds to construct new barracks at the fort may have come from this appropriation. Additional funds were also authorized for water and sewer work and other items.

As consolidation began to take place there was also a change in the military supply system. In the past all supplies had gone through a chain of command: department to regiment to company. This system was logical based on the fact that most army units did not have a permanent home. With consolidation, came management of permanent posts with services and

supplies coming to posts for whatever troops occupied them at a given time (Clary 1983). By 1890 funding for the consolidation program had jumped from $150,000 to $400,000 with the general construction and repair budget also being increased. With the new construction money, complaints arose about the lack of an organized approach to construction (ARSW 1891, H. Ex. Doc 1, 52 Congress, 1st Session, Pt 2, vol. 1, p. 12-16). To cope with these problems, by 1895 the Office of the Quartermaster General consolidated numerous deparments into 4 major divisions, including one unit called "Constructing Quartermasters." By 1891 a pattern for new buildings was well established. Most barracks were 2 or three story brick buildings built to house 2 to 6 companies of men. They had steam heat, plumbing, separate mess halls, and quarters for non-commissioned officers (ARQMG 1891, H. Ex. Doc 1, 52 Congress, 1st Session, Pt 2, vol. 1, p. 509-517). Also in 1891 funding increased to over $1.25 million for barracks, quarters, and general construction at permanent posts (ARSW 1891, H. Ex. Doc 1, 52 Congress, 1st Session, Pt 2, vol. 1, p.16). It is believed that additional officers' quarters housing were built from this appropriation.

By 1892 the army had reduced the number of garrisoned posts to 96. Funding again rose the following year with a reduction in the number of posts by one. Construction funding for enlarging permanent posts fell off slightly in 1893 but was still in excess of 1.1 million dollars. By 1895 the number of garrisoned posts had been reduced to 80 while funding continued at a level of over one million dollars. Fort Snelling continued to grow as consolidation marched forward by witnessing the construction of new facilities in the Quartermasters Department. As the consolidation program was nearing completion, now with only 77 posts, the construction bubble began to burst. In 1896 consolidation money fell to nearly one-half the previous year's level and pork-barrel projects began to reduce still further these more limited resources. Continuation of congressional pork barrel projects and a reduction in funding in 1897 reduced to three-fourths the amount available nationally from the previous year (Clary 1983).

As noted above, a number of new buildings were constructed in the late 1880s and early 1890s including those for use of the quartermaster department and additional officers' housing along Taylor Avenue. Together with the construction of buildings from the late 1870s, more than 30 buildings had been added to the fort in less than 20 years. This includes the waterworks facilities at the Camp Coldwater Locality.

1898 to 1919 -- Spanish American War through World War I

During the Spanish American War, Congress temporarily permitted the creation of a three battalion infantry regiment allowing the total number of companies to rise from 65 to 146 men and cavalry from 100 to 164. Although this was only a temporary measure it was important from the standpoint that most military tactics were based on troop units of these numbers. The war also had its effects on army posts, with large interior posts essentially depopulated while soldiers temporarily moved to a number of temporary facilities, manifested as tent cities, that mushroomed near southern port cities. The effects and aftereffects of the Spanish-American War resulted in several construction projects nationally that built all brick double barracks that included plumbing, heating, and gas piping. Hospitals, often no more than tents and

temporary buildings were the rule at this time, but some barracks were converted to hospital use (ARQMG 1898, p.397). To improve this condition over $400,000 was earmarked for the construction of 8 hospitals during 1898 and 1899. Building 55 was one of those constructed with that first year's funding. During 1898 the extant wooden engineer's quarters (building H-3) at Camp Coldwater burned. It was replaced almost immediately (in 1899) with a brick house referenced with the same building number. When the fort building numbering system was changed in the 1930s, it was renumbered as Building 252.

Viewed from the perspective of the context of the comprehensive reform of army life and organization around the turn of the century, it is clear that a radically New Army assumed its character just after the war with Spain. Even WW I did not bring about a change in the army as it was at that time, and it was not until the interwar years that a radical change occurred again (Clary 1983).

Owing to the problems recognized as a result of the Spanish-American War and Philippine conflicts, in 1902 the authorized strength of the army was increased from 25,000 to 60,000 men. Secretary of War Elihu Root requested funds for an increase in barracks, quarters, hospitals, and other post facilities which he felt needed to be doubled. However, Congress, in a typical response to the high costs of the recent war, reduced spending instead of increasing it. The following year however, in 1903, over $ 5.5 million was authorized for barracks, quarters, and expansion of military posts. For the first time Congress also appropriated money for construction of post exchanges and gymnasiums while the QMD obtained another $3.5 million for sewers, plumbing, lighting, etc. (ARQMG 1903, House Document 2, 58th Congress, 2nd Session, vol. 2, pp. 26-7). Again Fort Snelling was to receive funds out of this first appropriation and a gymnasium was built. The following year construction increased again to over $10 million and in 1905 the largest peacetime budget in the army's history was appropriated at over $11 million. Fort Snelling shared in this growth with the biggest building boom in its history. These additions included barracks for cavalry and artillery and a number of support facilities for housing animals, and storage and repair of ordnance. Although many more were built at Fort Snelling between 1902 and 1905, with demolition of buildings in 2001, only 9 structures still survive from this context.

Significant problems with inflation in materials and labor costs slowed the increase in the construction program however. In order to reduce costs a revision of the late-19th-century standard building plans and specifications was undertaken by F.B. Wheaton, staff architect at the Treasury Department (Clary 1983:111). Wheaton's task was to make economizing changes by eliminating "unduly elaborate details of design and construction" (ARQMG 1905, House Document. 2, 59th Congress, 1st Session, Vol. 2, p.7). Revisions of standard plans improved economy, but in 1906 funding dropped to less than one-half that of the previous year.

The most rapid growth in Fort Snelling history came between 1898 and 1905. Initially as a part of the increased wartime spending, it was only after 1903, with vast increases in military budget appropriations, that a dramatic change it the form and structure of the fort was to take place (Figure 10). An extensive new cavalry stable complex (only one remains of a group of 4

stables) was built to accompany new barracks for cavalry. An artillery complex of barracks, artillery stables, artillery gun sheds and artillery workshops represented an intact functional unit until demolition in 2001.

Fort Snelling became an active component in training of National Guard and regular army soldiers as a result of the passage of the National Defense Act of 1916. In that act National Guard troops were required to have at least 48 days of drill and 15 days of field training a year. Although President Wilson had called over 150,000 National Guardsmen into federal service in 1916, it wasn't until the spring of 1917 that a formal process of preparedness for the European war was initiated. This National Guard program, however, had failed to recruit the number of soldiers necessary to reach war strength. In the spring of 1917, the United States entered the war against Germany and implemented conscription through the Selective Service Act passed that year. Fort Snelling responded to these new demands with the construction of the Cantonment at the south end of Taylor Avenue that consisted of over 150 structures dedicated to housing, mess, and training. Extensive trench warfare training grounds were also constructed to the west of the Cantonment. None of these facilities or structures are evident today.

1919 to 1946 -- World War I to World War II and base closure

As after every war, the present case being no exception, the War Department requested an increase in the Regular Army to meet the deficiencies recognized during the previous conflict. This time they requested a standing army of 600,000 men. Following what America thought was a total defeat of Germany, Congress estimated that there would not be a major land war for a long time. Therefore Congress perceived no need for such a large force, and in its typical response rejected the request. The U.S. did however recognize that there still was a potential conflict looming with Japan in the near future, but their assessment was that if that happened it would be a naval war. That prediction, and the country's isolation from any significant adversaries by two oceans, led to a military policy with a reliance on the U.S. Navy as the first line of defense. This policy lasted until almost the beginning of World War II.

During the demobilization of 3.25 million service personnel by the middle of 1919, a regular army strength was established at slightly over 200,000 men and 19,000 officers. Partly as an aftermath of the war, federal troops were again needed to deal with domestic problems associated with racial conflicts and labor disputes until the National Guard was reorganized in 1921. One of the most significant pieces of military legislation that was to pass in this period was an amendment to the National Defense Act in 1920. Unlike that enacted before WWI, this act created an Organized Reserve in addition to the National Guard and Regular Army. Each of the components was regulated to assure readiness for a national emergency. The training of these civilian components now became a major task of the peacetime regular army. As a result of this process it was necessary to have a much larger contingent of officers during peacetime than that which had previously existed--in fact three times as many officers. The War Department was also reorganized in to 5 divisions: G-1 for personnel, G-2 for intelligence, G-3 for training and operations, G-4 for supply, and a War Plans Division (Conn 1969). Another major organizational change that occurred during the interwar years was the

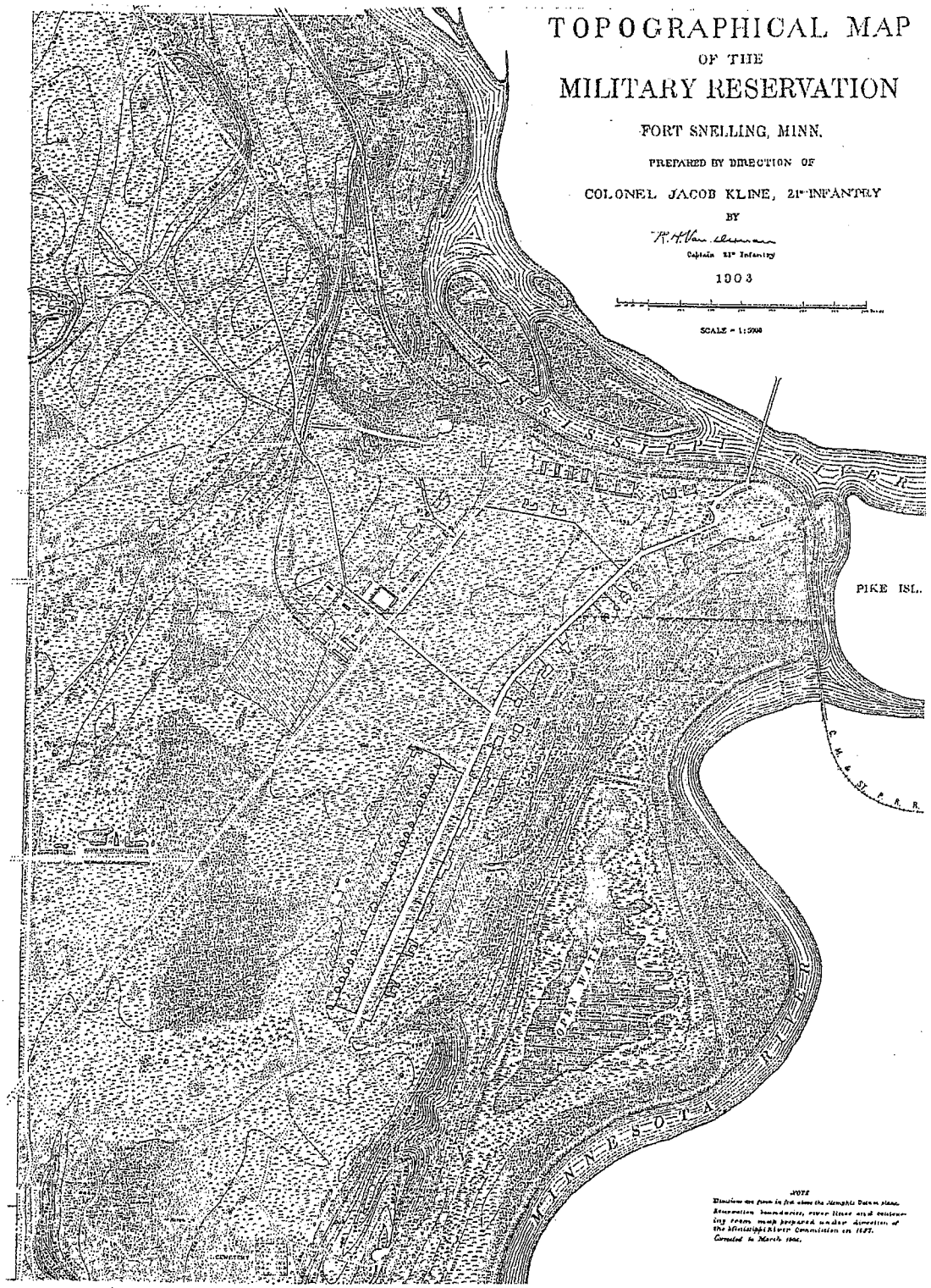

Figure 10 1903 (corrected to 1905) topographical map of the military reservation.

addition of the Army Air Corps as an equal partner with other combat units. A military airport, Wold-Chamberlain Airport, was constructed during the 1920s and used by the 109th Aero Squadron and the Security Aircraft Co. That area is today occupied by an airport service complex between the west ends of the parallel east-west runways.

In the late 1920s budget cuts nearly closed Fort Snelling for a second time. This time it was saved by its utility as a winter training site that taught winter survival skills and skiing and snowshoing. The emphasis on training and preparedness during peacetime resulted in the creation of special service schools. An outcome of this new training system was that the regular army had to come out of its military isolation and interact with the larger civilian population. This resulted in making a much larger component of the civilian community acquainted with issues surrounding the life of a professional soldier. Between the wars the Cantonment at the south end of Fort Snelling not only served National Guard troops but also served the Citizens Military Training Camp (CMTC) program.

In 1933, the Army was called upon to mobilize and operate over 1,300 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps throughout the country. According to Conn (1969:413) this duty was to be done without turning the CCC camps into a military project in disguise. During 1933 regular army officers were in charge of the units, but by 1935 reserve officers were directing operations. In the long run, the army's diversion to federal work programs helped to train officers and familiarized over 300,000 men with a more disciplined lifestyle that eventually assisted in military preparedness. Fort Snelling was the location of the Supply Company of the Minnesota District CCC. In early 1934 the company designation was changed to CCC Headquarters Company. The strength of the unit was increased to between 200 and 300 men and, along with WPA workers, they performed numerous duties at the fort. To assist with those operations Building 223 was built in 1935 as a commissary warehouse for the CCC unit at Fort Snelling. Through the construction of a number of buildings, stone-lined drainage ditches, and other features between 1934 and 1938, CCC participants made lasting modifications to the grounds throughout the fort. One of the most useful items from this era was the production of a 1 foot interval contour map of he military reservation. An example of that detailed work is shown in the next chapter as Figure 23.

After mechanization of the artillery following WWI, the areas set aside for artillery drill fields in the late 19th century were converted to other uses. By 1927 the area was used as a recreation field with a polo field, a polo practice field, a running track, and baseball diamonds. Polo matches and Sunday horse shows featuring military and civilian riders were conducted during the summer months. Although the precise date of construction is unknown, a 9-hole golf course was also built at the post. Fitting with the overall addition of the various recreational facilities, the area around the reservoir in the Camp Coldwater Locality, following the removal of the waterworks in 1920, was left as open space and is labeled as Coldwater Park on a 1927 (Figure 11) and 1935 maps. And, although Fort Snelling earned the nickname of the country club of the army, it was not alone in developing such recreational facilities. Other posts developed these facilities as part of a general military program to provide more recreational opportunities for staff and troops.

Throughout the interwar years the Third Infantry Regiment was a constant occupant of the fort. One of the oldest regiments in the army, the Third had been at the fort since the late 1880s. Throughout the period, until just before WWII, only a little over 2,000 military personnel were assigned to the post. However during the summer the numbers swelled to 7,000 with CMTC, Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), and the Organized Reserve Corps (ORC) (Becker 1983:7).

The hospital facilities at the fort continued to serve permanent fort personnel and summer trainees. At the post hospital a medical detachment was assigned to regimental headquarters. This occurred at other forts as well (Conn 1969) and Building 54 was constructed as a barracks for the medical detachment in 1939. Major changes in troop assignments occurred in 1940. The headquarters of the 6th Infantry Division was placed at the fort and the 6th Medical Battalion was also assigned there. This was but one of a number of large medical units trained at Fort Snelling. With the passage of the Selective Service Act in 1940 the fort had to reorganize its recruiting system and established the Recruiting and Induction Station and the Reception Center in the old Cantonment area. Initially the Reception Center could process about 35 men per day, but within a few months it more than doubled its daily output. With the construction of new facilities in late 1940 about 250 men were being handled in one day. By the end of 1942 the Center had dramatically increased in size to over 300 buildings and staffing was at 700 individuals. They could then process over 450 men a day. A total of 150,000 were examined in 1942 alone. Processing at Fort Snelling involved issuing clothing, giving a physical examination, an orientation lecture, distributing toilet articles, taking the army classification test, and viewing films on the army classification system, the articles of war, and sex hygiene. During the processing, men temporarily lived in the cantonment barracks while awaiting assignment to a unit.

Before and during WWII a number of military police battalions were trained at Fort Snelling and assigned to guard sensitive points in the United States such as war plants, harbors, storage depots, and bridges, and they also guarded prisoners of war. In 1942 the Military Railway Service was created at Fort Snelling and headquartered in St. Paul during the war. Their role was to maintain relations with commercial railroads to keep supplies and men moving; however, training also involved the ability to operate railroads in foreign countries should the need arise. One of the most important special units in the western theater was the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS). Initiated in California, the school was moved to Fort Snelling, then to Camp Savage a few miles away, only to return to the fort the last two years of the war (Becker1983:21-27).

By the end of WWII, Fort Snelling had processed hundreds of thousands of troops, trained thousands of personnel in a broad range of specialties that ranged from the Japanese language, to medical care, military police, engineering, and railroad specialties. Finally, in October 1946, the federal government closed Fort Snelling as an active military base. Yet, for next 40 years, in the same buildings that had housed their predecessors over 100 years before, the fort continued its service training reserve units of the army.

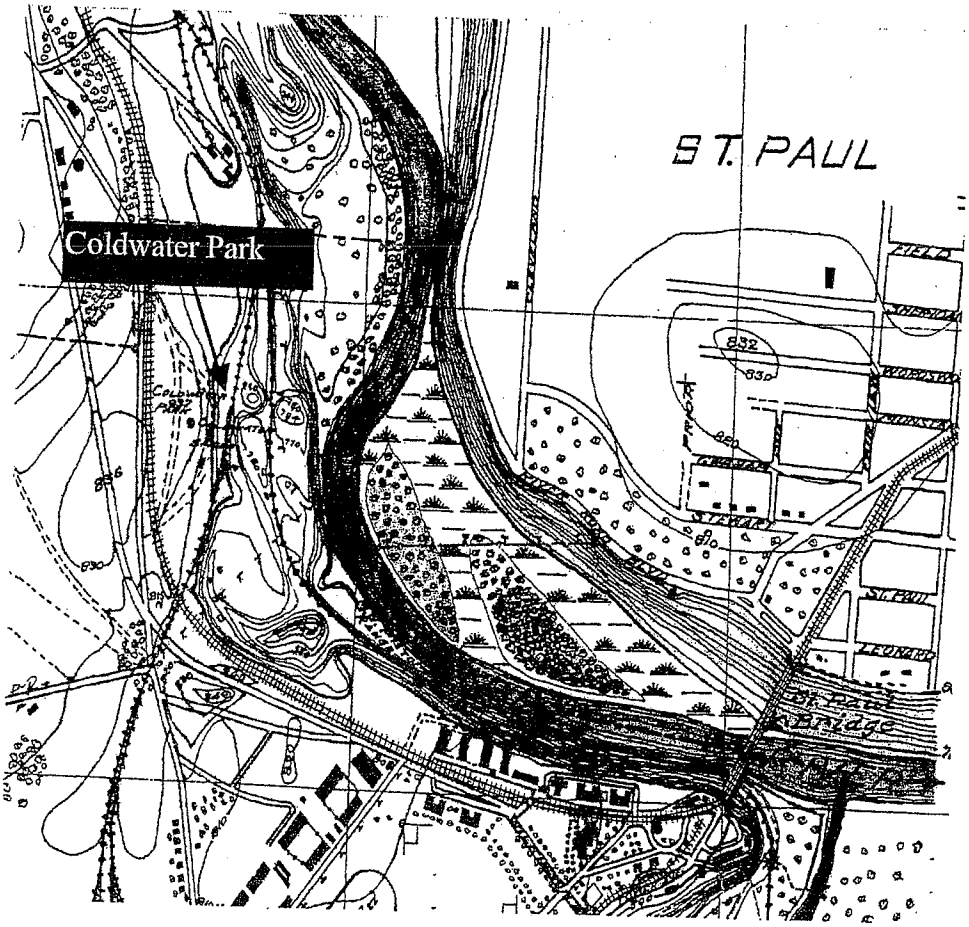

Figure 11 Detail of 1927 plan of Fort Snelling.