

# Beautiful Seymour Park to Be Transformed Into Busy Factory Town

## Soon Ralston Will Rise in Strenuous Activity Where Deer Once Roamed Through Beautiful Groves in Idyllic Security



MACADAMIZED ROAD RUNNING THROUGH RALSTON TOWNSITE PROPER, TO BE THE MAIN STREET OF RALSTON.

**I**NDUSTRY and commerce takes for its purposes, its smoking factories and tall warehouses, parks, cathedrals, whole suburbs and picturesque spots of earth almost by right of eminent domain.

This is shown in the plan of Shimer & Chase, Omaha real estate dealers, who have a score of engineers and surveyors at work laying out the new industrial suburb of "Ralston" in the 530-acre Seymour park, the former rural home of Dr. George L. Miller, two miles and a half west of South Omaha, where car shops employing 400 men and other industries are to be located, together with homes for almost 2,000 people; stores, a bank and newspaper, and all other things necessary for a complete manufacturing town.

### Passing of a Dream.

Pastoral scenes in natural and artificial woodlands will be converted into residence districts; paths where Dr. Miller's pet deer came trombling from underbrush to eat the corn he fed them, will be transformed into streets and the natural curves and graces of nature in forming the rolling surface of the earth will be cut to the straight lines of surveyors and engineers. Acres which seemed without limit and without bounds will be sold by the foot as city lots as the town of Ralston rises like magic. Instead of the noises of winds in the walnut groves will be the sounds of engine exhausts and the whizzing of the forced draughts of the forges and the streets of a busy town, will resound with the laughter of children on their way to school, instead of the calls of mother-birds in the catalpa trees.

But it is all to meet the necessity of the Greater Omaha and the demands for more work where there are more people.

While the scene is being transformed, Dr. Miller is witnessing the passing of the fondest dreams of his life. He made it his home many years ago, and besides the natural woods of oak which grew in the glens and valleys, the doctor planted 49,000 black walnut trees, 10,000 black cherry trees, 10,000 catalpa trees and more than 20,000 cottonwoods.

### Trees Outlive Fire.

After the prairie fire, which swept over the hills where the trees were planted, it was found that the seed of the walnuts had not been killed and many grew again and in the twenty-five years which have passed since the fire they have developed into one of the few black walnut groves of the country which were planted in the west, and their annual yield of fine walnuts has been a source of delight to Dr. Miller, who has watched his dream fade into one stern reality after another, but has gracefully yielded to the inevitable. The black walnut trees stand today. Through the forest the engineers and surveyors for the townsite company have cut their way, driving the white pine stakes and making the destruction of thousands of trees. Dr. Miller demonstrated that the walnut tree was well adapted to the climate of Nebraska, which in the days when the forest was planted was considered a blizzard-cursed waste by his friends in the east.

The great cottonwood grove of 20,000 trees has gone like the dreams of the doctor. They grew to maturity and thousands of them began to rot.

They had to be cut down and destroyed, and but a small number of them will meet the onslaught of the town builders. The catalpa trees still stand, their bloom in the spring and summer season still making the place beautiful. The great orchard of black cherry trees grew and prospered and surrounds the site of the old mansion of Dr. George L. Miller.

### Townsite Once a Deer Park.

Forty acres of the tract which is now to be a part of the townsite of Ralston was at one time a deer park and enclosed with a fence some ten feet high. In this preserve the deer prospered for a number of years and it was one of the pleasures of those who visited the home and park to watch the deer come out for their food. Dr. Miller had them trained to come up each evening for corn. Parties of friends enjoyed watching the fawns creep timidly out from the pathless woods, only after their mothers had led the way and with their animal language assured the young that Dr. Miller was their friend and

benefactor. On one occasion thirty-two deer with their fawns appeared to eat their corn while Dr. Miller was entertaining a large party, and the lover of trees and animals says it was one of the proudest moments of his life.

But the deer, like the cottonwood trees, began to die. Everything that veterinary surgeons and doctors could do was done to save the noble animals. The stomachs of those which died first were analyzed, but no traces of a poison could be found. Then Dr. Miller secured some cowboys to go to the park and catch the deer, that he might place them in the parks of Omaha, hoping that they would live if removed. Several were caught, but the doctor finally had the fence torn down and turned his pets free to wander over the country and outrun death if they could.

### Named for Horatio Seymour.

"Seymour park" was named after Horatio Seymour, former governor of New York and candidate for president of the United States, who was the intimate friend and associate of Dr. Mil-

ler. Many of the plans for making the place a beauty spot in the west were suggested by Mr. Seymour, including the planting of the great orchard of 10,000 black cherry trees.

When the great Miller residence was completed a bust of Horatio Seymour was placed in front of the home, the art work of which was approved and praised by Mrs. Roscoe Conkling, sister of Mr. Seymour. This bust was presented to the city of Utica, N. Y., after the Miller home burned, and Theodore Roosevelt, then governor of New York, went to Utica with Dr. Miller to assist in its dedication.

### Coming of Commerce.

Thus one thing after another passed from the picturesque spot. Great ice houses were built by a packing company on the shores of the Seymour park lake and the necessities of the growing commerce of the west crept in, a number buying acreage tracts and making their homes on the Miller park preserve. Dr. Miller had planned to make a beauty spot where the best people of Omaha and South Omaha

would live, and at one time it had promise of becoming the site of a great college, but transportation facilities could not be secured and the plan was given up with much regret by the owner.

### Ralston Succeeds Seymour.

Now it is to be called "Ralston." After C. A. Ralston of Chicago, who came to Omaha some two months ago after visiting many western cities in search for a suitable location for a big plant for the manufacture and repair of freight cars. He said at once: "I have looked at sites all over Omaha and in Kansas City, Des Moines and St. Joseph. I know of nothing which will meet the requirements as well as the Seymour park property."

Mr. Ralston then made the agreement with Shimer & Chase to begin work on the car shops within sixty days from March 15, and that his plant would employ 400 workmen. He required, in making the agreement, that the Omaha real estate dealers arrange to build enough houses to house his workmen, probably 300. The company at once made arrangements to meet the requirements and surveyors and engineers are laying out the new industrial suburb, which promises to spring into existence with the same suddenness as the town of Gary, Ind., which is now being built by the steel company, or one of the South Dakota reservation towns, which grew up in a single day when Uncle Sam held an Indian reservation land lottery.

### Dr. Miller on the Plan.

Speaking of the plan to convert the beautiful park into an industrial suburb, Dr. Miller said:

"God made Seymour park and I finished the work. It is, I am sure, one of the beauty spots in the west, and I want to see it always occupied by the best of people. I believe an industrial class to be among the best of people, but I had hoped to have it the scene of some of the most beautiful and elegant homes in the west instead of the site of hundreds of small cottages. I have become reconciled to the proposition which Shimer & Chase have put up to me. The name has already been changed. The place will be changed still more within a year.

"Personally, I have the greatest confidence in the plans to build the town of Ralston, and to locate the car shops and many other industries in the suburb. I have such absolute confidence in the plans and the location of the car shops and factories that I am going to make some other investments and depend on the Ralston Townsite company to develop the Seymour park proposition in such a way that I will be enabled to meet the things which I am now obligating myself to meet.

"Conditions change in a great and growing city like Omaha. For a time it seemed that Seymour park would be needed only for fine residences, but now it is needed for factories and workingmen's homes as well. The men who are fortunate enough to secure property in this suburb will have the most beautiful place in the west to live."

### What It Means to Omaha.

The plans of Shimer & Chase for a suburb with a definite purpose will mean more to Omaha than Pullman, Ill., and Gary, Ind., have to Chicago.

A townsite company has been organized and the opening sale of lots will be held in early May to give those who wish an opportunity to secure residence or trackage property in the suburb.

Scarcely had the announcement been made that the new town was to be built than 150 business men of Omaha got behind the movement and took shares in the townsite company. Shimer & Chase had worked hard for more than a year to locate some big industry in the suburb and at last suc-

ceeded. These 150 business men will become a "booster club" for Ralston, and thousands of circulars and descriptive pamphlets have already been sent to business houses in all parts of the United States. Wherever an industry is seeking a new home or a firm determines to organize a company for a new industry, the Ralston Boosters' club will get in with a bid for the location. Among the factories which have been told of for the new industrial suburb and which are considering the matter of locating in Omaha are a piano factory, automobile factory, foundry, stove foundry, starch works, canning factory and a large horse collar and saddlery factory.

### Platting of the Town.

The site of the car works is along the Burlington and Missouri Pacific main lines. Here for half a mile is room for a score of factories on either side of the tracks.

The town of Ralston is to be located back of the factory sites on the hills, which rise gently from the railroad tracks until they reach a height of fifty feet above the railroads.

When the trees are cleared away the cities of Omaha and South Omaha may be seen from the high points of ground, while stretching away to the west miles and miles of fields and many wooded spots may be seen, giving the residents a view of busy cities on one side and the country, almost as wild and free as when created, on the other.

The lake adjoins the townsite, and natural boulevards, developed by Dr. Miller, lead to it. It may be reached in several different directions, the boulevards always winding around the lake shores.

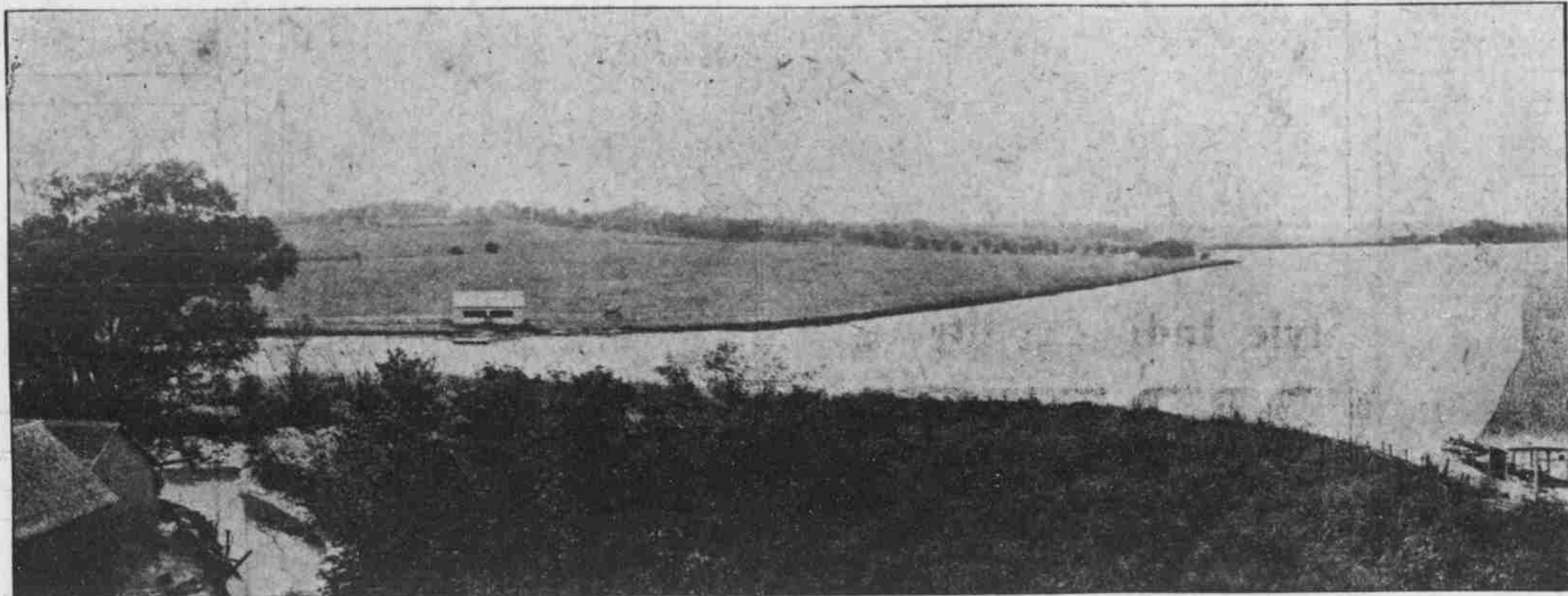
### Communication is Easy.

Just two miles and a half directly west of South Omaha the macadamized West Q street turns to the left and winds through the tract known as Seymour park. The road is one of the best kept in the county, the macadamizing being new and as hard and level as a brick-paved city street. Across the Pappio creek, which winds through the section, solid concrete bridges have been built. A great viaduct is now being constructed, which will take the last hard hill out of the West Q street road and make both driving for pleasure and hauling heavy loads as easy as in the city where hills have been eradicated. The street runs parallel with the wonderful "Lane cut-off" of the Union Pacific Railroad company, which is in sight of both the street and the townsite of Ralston.

Two street car lines are projected for Ralston, either of which would give first-class service to Omaha, and one to South Omaha. The line of the Omaha & Council Bluffs Street Railway company now runs to the city limits of South Omaha, almost within walking distance of Seymour park. This line runs straight through Omaha, clear to Ames avenue and Florence.

Another route which is proposed for Ralston is an extension of the west side Hamscom park line, which has just been built south on Thirty-second street. The promoters will favor either line and adjust the property at Ralston according to the wishes of the traction company.

As street cars always follow traffic, there is no doubt but what the line will be extended, as Ralston promises to be a town of 2,000 people within a year, if no other people go there except those who will be working at the car shops and running the stores, which will be necessary to supply them their needs.



SEYMOUR LAKE—SITUATED IN THE CENTER OF THE RALSTON TOWNSITE, THE FINEST BODY OF WATER IN DOUGLAS COUNTY, COVERING SOME FORTY-FIVE ACRES.

## Gossip and Stories About Noted People

### Traveling Inco.

**T**HE proprietor of a Chicago hotel tells in Harper's Weekly of an eccentric guest who registered with him about the time of the simplified spelling flurry and who undertook, in an ingenious way, to show his contempt for the opponents of the proposed reform.

When the newcomer spread his signature on the register it was at once observed that the name was a most unusual one—E. K. Pithologyrrh.

"Beg your pardon, sir," said the clerk, "but how do you pronounce it?" "Turner," was the reply, "and spelled in approved fashion, too."

"Will you kindly explain?" "Simplest thing in the world," said Turner. "First, we have 'pth', the sound of 't' in 'pithless'; then 'olo', the sound of 'ur' in 'colonel'; thirdly, 'gn', representing the sound of 'n' in 'gnat', and, finally, 'yrrh', the equivalent of 'er' in 'myrrh'. If the combination doesn't spell 'Turner', what does it spell?"

### About Vice President Fairbanks.

Vice President Fairbanks is said to rival Senator Allison in the skill of replying to a direct question by talking around it. A writer in the Sunday magazine relates that

at the Chicago in 1904 Fairbanks determined not to be placed in the attitude of seeking the nomination for vice president, or either accepting or declining a nomination before it was offered to him. Every effort was made to get some affirmative or negative expression from him without the least success.

Finally the Indiana delegates held a meeting, and as Fairbanks was the head of the delegation he was present and it was expected that he would declare himself. Different men spoke and pledged the delegates to obey the slightest wish of their senior senator, who was the central figure of the vice presidential situation. If he wished their support, he could have it; if he desired them to go out and deny that he was a candidate, they would do that and much more to the same effect. Then Fairbanks was called upon, and spoke at some length.

After the meeting was over a group of the most prominent delegates were found together, and they were asked what had been done.

"Nothing," was the reply. "Did Fairbanks speak?" "Yes, for a quarter of an hour." "What did he say?" "Well, I'll be hanged if I know," was the reply of one, and the others acquiesced.

A newspaper man once rushed to Fairbanks when he was senator with a sensational dispatch from Indiana, and wanted to know the facts.

"Come in, I will tell you the facts," said Fairbanks, and taking the correspondent into the back room he again carefully read the dispatch, and said:

"The facts are that I do not know a single thing about this."

"Won't you comment on it?" asked the correspondent.

"How can I comment when I don't know anything about it?" asked Fairbanks, showing his evasiveness.

And for fifteen minutes the debate went on, and the newspaper man didn't get a thing upon which he could hang a story.

### Kicked Either Way.

Admiral Evans was discussing the navy as it used to be before the advent of steam and armorclads.

"There was an altogether different atmosphere, a different feeling among the men in the old sailing days," the admiral said. "There was a greater feeling of affection between the men and their superiors, and whenever anything went wrong every sailor felt that it was his right to take it straight to 'the old man,' as the captain was called."

"And a job it was to suit those fellows, too. I remember that in the Spanish war I had two or three of these old salts on my ship, and as we lay down in that southern climate we couldn't keep our water in a decent condition for drinking. It's come Ben, one of my old sailors, to complain that the water wasn't fit to drink.

"Well, finally I thought out a brilliant scheme of passing pipes back and forth through one of the cool rooms, and soon we had water that was both fresh and

cold; only ship in the fleet that had it, too. "I had scarcely settled back to take it easy when word was brought to me that Ben insisted on seeing 'the old man.' "I knew there was no stopping him, so I asked him to come up. He marched into my quarters, pulled his forelock just as if he felt some respect for me, and muttered: "Complaint to make, sir." "Well, what is it?" I barked back at him. "About the water. It's too cold. Hurts my teeth." "Huh! Hurts your teeth, does it? Well, go and have your teeth pulled." "Ben grinned and marched out perfectly satisfied. He had had his say, and that was all he wanted."

### Tennyson's Tipple.

Tennyson loved to drink port. On one occasion when Sir Henry Irving paid him a visit the poet said: "Irving, you like a glass of port, don't you?" "Yes, I do," said the actor, whereupon Tennyson poured out a glass of port and finished the bottle himself. In later years the same little ceremony was gone through up to a certain point, but on this occasion the port was under the doctor's restrictions, and Irving, in relating the incident afterward, said: "Tennyson took the glass and I finished the bottle."

### Big Help to Growth.

With the Ralston Boosters' club and the committee of the Commercial club on the location of industries working together for the new town, it is one of the most promising prospects which Omaha has of attaining the coveted 200,000 population before January 1, 1910.

The Missouri Pacific and Burlington railroads already pass along the edge of the townsite. The Burlington will



A NATURAL BOULEVARD IN THE FUTURE RESIDENCE DISTRICT OF RALSTON.



ENGINEERS LAYING OUT THE TOWN OF RALSTON.