

NORTH SHORE ORGANIZES TO FIGHT FOR SKOKIE PRESERVE

(Continued from Page one)

the land can be had at comparatively small expense." The Forest Preserve commission is the only public body with power to acquire these preserves. It has already acquired large tracts on all sides of the city in general conformity with the recommendations of the Chicago Plan. These substantial and wisely located purchases indicate that the Commission is fully alive to the situation and determined to bring back the departed glory of 1869 when Chicago was foremost in park areas.

Over 2,500 acres have already been acquired for the north preserve. This includes the river valley from Rogers Park north to Wilmette and 140 acres known as Turnbull Woods west of Glencoe. The Skokie valley is the connecting link and even when this is purchased only about 2,000 acres will be added and the north preserve will still be several thousand acres short of the 8,000 recommended by the Chicago Plan. Greater Chicago of 1950 is not yet provided for.

FIVE REASONS WHY THE SKOKIE VALLEY SHOULD BE PRESERVED.

The many reasons for preserving the Skokie Valley may be grouped under five general heads:

1. Desirable Location with Reference to Present and Future Population.

When Chicago is a city of six or seven million, the limits of the city in fact if not in law, will extend far beyond its present boundaries. The greater part of the county, including the northern section both to the east and west of the Skokie valley, will be built up in city fashion. Obviously, the preserves, to serve their most useful purpose, must be distributed on all sides of the city and there must be one for the north side. If this is not to be in and include the Skokie valley, where else is it to be? Another preserve in the northwest or southwest part of the county may be all right, but it is not an alternative for the Skokie valley preserve

as it will not serve the same population.

2. Accessibility.

The five outlying preserves recommended by the Chicago Plan will not only serve the adjoining populations which spread around them, but also—and perhaps more so—the great central mass of population within the present city. For this purpose the north preserve and particularly the Skokie valley will be one of the most accessible and the most used because of its easy access. You will note on the map that the north portion of the Chicago river valley known as the Skokie, curves in to the east and for several miles closely parallels the lake shore and the Northwestern railroad and the North Shore Electric railway. The city worker starting from the loop may get off at any one of twenty or more stations of the railroad or trolley and within a few minutes' walk reach the Skokie valley.

Not only this, but the whole proposed north preserve over twelve miles long, from Lawrence avenue to the county line, radiates from the center of Chicago and along its edge will be the natural route for an automobile road giving access to the preserve and leading to the North Shore suburbs, Waukegan and Milwaukee. The other preserves are merely crossed or tapped by transportation lines, not paralleled.

3. Natural Beauty.

To the uninformed the Skokie is only a dismal swamp. Even so, a

large part of Chicago, including some of its parks, was once a similar marsh. In the second place, only a portion of it is now marshy, due to the ditching and drainage of the last twelve years. The Winnetka public golf course is on the bottom level of the Skokie. It is not marshy, nor is it injured by occasional overflows. In the third place, insofar as the original marshes remain, they are treasure spots to be preserved. This

may be done even if the Skokie is drained, by means of lagoons enhancing its beauty.

The Chicago Tribune said editorially April 17, 1919, "Preserve the

Skokie! Its passage will mean the destruction of one of the natural beauty spots of Illinois and the defeat of the plan to add it to the Forest Preserve system of this region—

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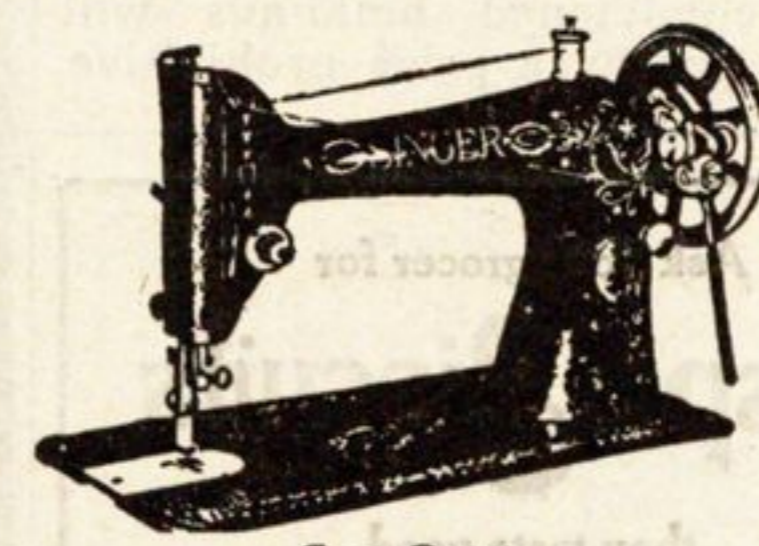
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