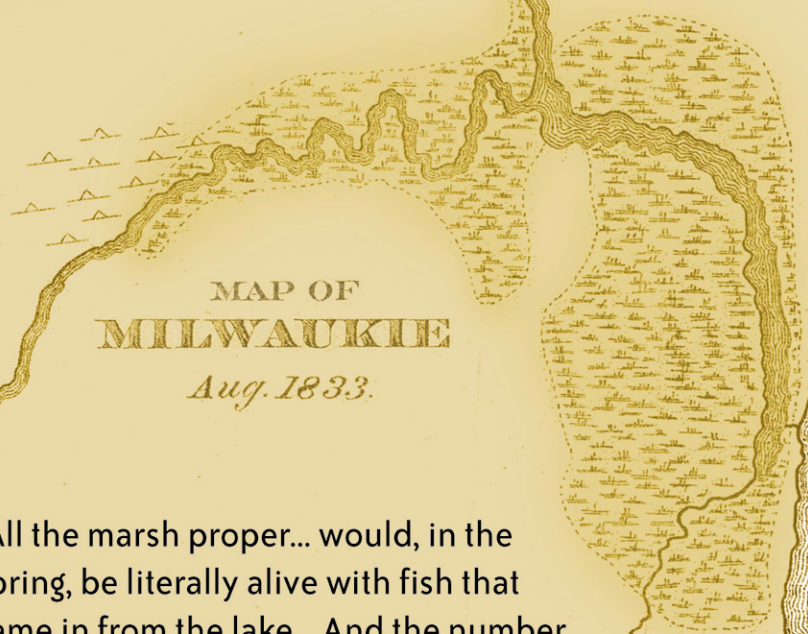


A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Four miles long and a half-mile wide, the Menomonee River Valley was formed by melting glaciers more than 10,000 years ago. A vast marsh extended from Lake Michigan to where you are now standing. Steep wooded bluffs rose 100 feet above both sides of the Valley.



"All the marsh proper... would, in the spring, be literally alive with fish that came in from the lake... And the number of ducks that covered the marsh was beyond all computation."

James Buck, 1830s

LEARN MORE, DO MORE...

Get involved with the Friends of the Hank Aaron State Trail.

HANK AARON STATE TRAIL

Hank Aaron State Trail sign panels supported by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Menomonee Valley Partners, Inc., the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act, Grant #NA03NOS4190106

L A K E M I C H I G A N

Milwaukee

Bailey, H. H., Milwaukee, Wis., Panoramic Maps 1847-1892. Online Available HTTP: <http://memorip.loc.gov/ammem/amhmm/parhome.html>. 1872. Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.



Background map: K. L. Martin, 1833, from Buck, James Smith, Pioneer History of Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wis., Swain, 1881. Ellen Pitzer Kupersmith

In its original state, the Valley provided habitat for plants and animals, supplying abundant food for generations. Surrounding wetlands collected rainwater and then slowly released it, providing clean water to springs and seeps along the bluff.

In the mid-1800s, Milwaukeeans filled the marsh with soil, gravel, and industrial and household waste to create dry land. They straightened the river and cut canals to provide shipping routes. Tanneries, lumberyards, stockyards, and other businesses moved into the Valley. These changes provided jobs for thousands of people, but damaged the Valley's natural resources.

In the late 1900s, industrial decline left the Valley an isolated and blighted area with contaminated land and abandoned industrial buildings.

Businesses, neighbors, and community groups are working to once again change the landscape of the Valley by balancing its economy and ecology. The Hank Aaron State Trail is part of this process to return green space to the Valley.