



# Lambert Landing: Early Immigrant Arrival Place

Known as the Lower Landing by early immigrants, Lambert Landing was once one of the busiest steamboat landings in the country. The landing served as the arrival point for vast numbers of immigrants entering Minnesota and as the principal source of supply for the new community of St. Paul until the beginning of the railroad era in the 1880s.

## A Natural Stopping Place

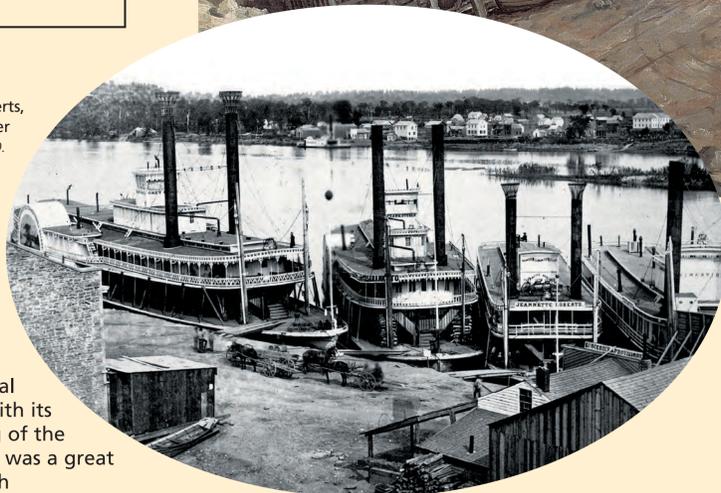
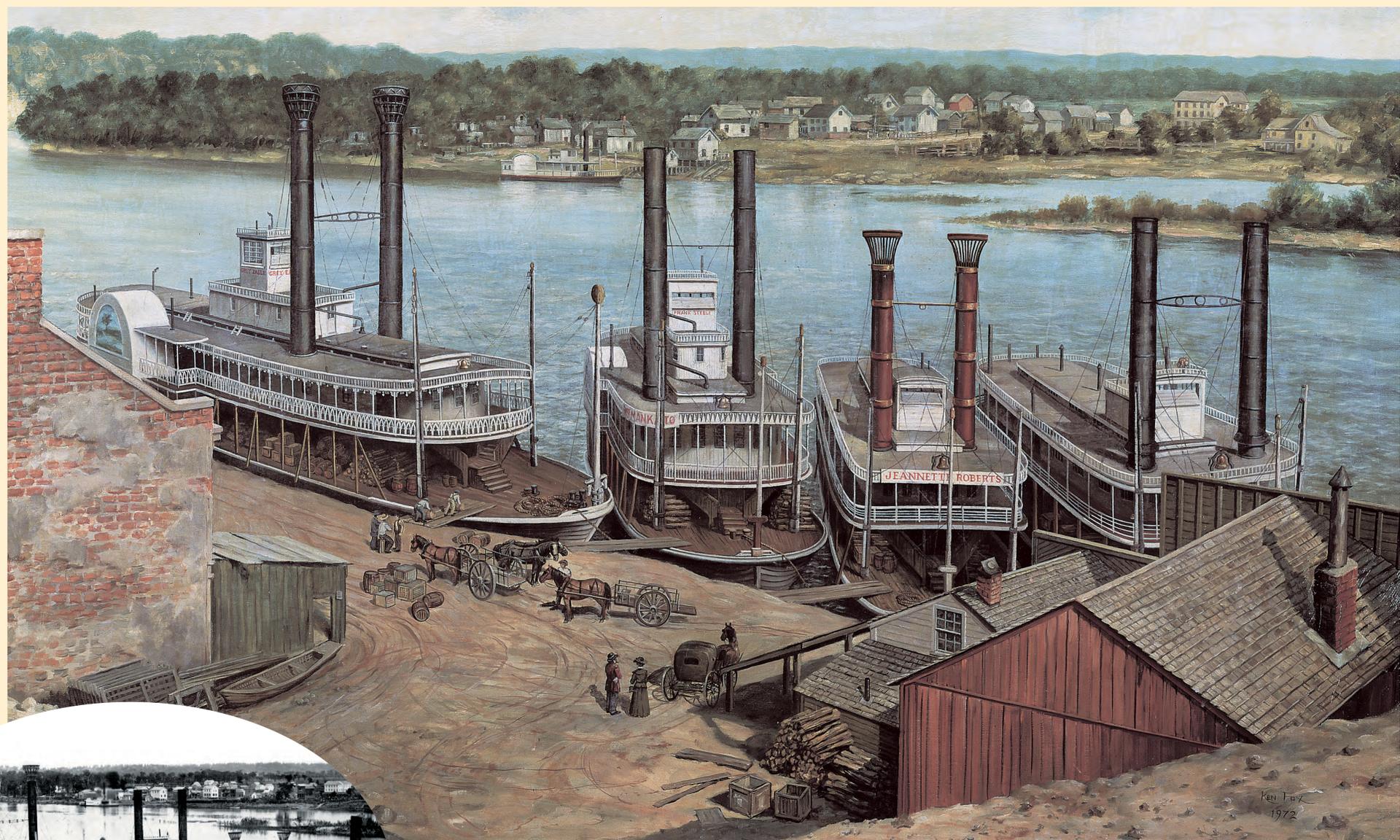
Geography made St. Paul a natural destination, and caused a city to be born. It was here that steamboats reached the upper limit of practical navigability due to rocks, shallow water and the Falls of St. Anthony further upstream. Situated at a break in the Mississippi River's 80-foot high bluffs at the foot of present-day Jackson Street, Lambert Landing was the first and busiest St. Paul landing site encountered by steamboats traveling up the Mississippi River.



Map above: Location of Lambert Landing on Mississippi River

Illustration above right: "Jackson Street Landing 1858." This 1972 painting of the steamers Grey Eagle, Frank Steele, Jeannette Roberts, and Time and Tide, closely detailed a photograph from the earlier time. Painting by Ken Fox; from the private collection of Capt. William D. Bowell, Sr., owner of the Padelford Packet Boat Co., Inc.

Photo at right: Four steamers at Lower Levee, St. Paul, c. late 1850's. This photograph served as the original source from which the Ken Fox painting was created. Photo courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.



## Steamboats

For many years the Mississippi River was the principal channel of communication for the city of St. Paul with its neighbors to the east and south. Before the coming of the railroads, the first arrival of steamboats each spring was a great event for St. Paul citizens who often responded with standing ovations.

By the mid 1850s tens of thousands of immigrants, attracted by the promise of new and prosperous lives in Minnesota, were traveling the Mississippi River on steamboats to Lambert Landing. The number of steamboat arrivals grew from 256 in 1854, to 1068 in 1858, the year St. Paul became the capitol of the new state of Minnesota. Each steamboat carried on average several hundred passengers. By the 1870s, however, the steamboat heyday was past and immigrant travel to Minnesota shifted to overland transport, generally the railroad.

## Modernization

The landing officially became known as "Lambert Landing" in 1937, upon its reconstruction by the Works Progress Administration as a revival of St. Paul's riverfront. It was named after Colonel George Lambert, a prominent figure in the crusade to modernize navigation on the Upper Mississippi River. In the 1950s most of the landing was removed for the construction of Warner Road.

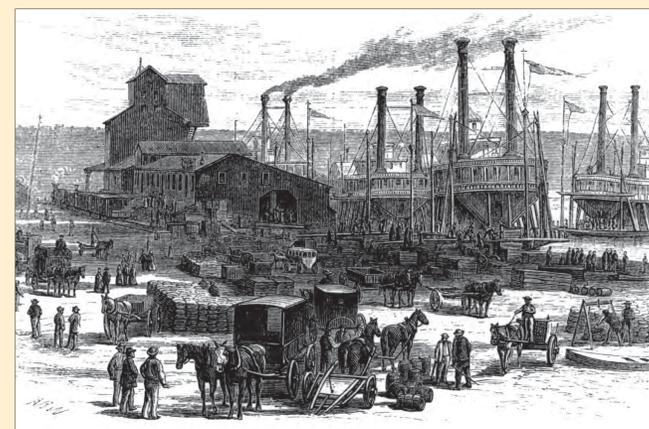


Illustration above: "View at the Levee," St. Paul, c. 1864. Artist unidentified. Railroad builder James J. Hill's first enterprise, the Transfer Warehouse, appears in background at left. Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society.

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