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Aspects of the Dynamic Geography of St. Cloud, Minnesota

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Aspects of the Dynamic Geography of St. Cloud, Minnesota

A study of economic, political, and social establishments and institutions in St. Cloud, Minnesota, provides a solid foundation upon which the urban-rural patterns of human use of area and land in St. Cloud and its hinterland may be viewed. Activities of these organizations in the area are a true reflection of the culture in which they are operated and of the nature of the men who control them. Since organizations are eventually subject to change, their study in terms of areal organization, physical setting, and cultural origin and spread produces a dynamic geography both in the evolutionary sense and from the standpoint of natural and cultural forces.

In St. Cloud, there are in excess of 950 economic establishments, nearly 75 political institutions, and more than 100 social organizations. The activities of these establishments and institutions produces a four order, or level, areal-functional hierarchy in each of the three categories. In the economic 'nested' areal-functional hierarchy, for example, retailers perform their obvious function for establishments of all types, wholesalers supply retailers, while transshippers at the fourth-order level carry on most of their functions for wholesalers. As the hierarchical scale is ascended there are fewer and fewer establishments engaged in the higher-ordered functions and the service or nodal area becomes larger at each higher level. St. Cloud's 75 percent retail service area contains about 2400 square miles, its 75 percent wholesale area approximately 4500 square miles, and its 75 percent transshipment region, which stretches in a band about 70 miles wide to Fargo, North Dakota, toward the northwest and beyond Minneapolis-St. Paul toward the southeast, contains more than 9,000 square miles. Similar nodal regions for municipality, county, and state dis-

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strict political institutions, and for recreation, education, and religious social organizations, focus upon St. Cloud in a hierarchical manner. While the activities of St. Cloud's establishments and institutions have changed in innumerable ways since the first permanent settlement was made in 1853 (Fig. 1), they still interconnect as in the beginning to Minneapolis-St. Paul for hierarchical functions beyond the fourth-order of organizational land use.

SEQUENTIAL OCCUPANCE OF ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA

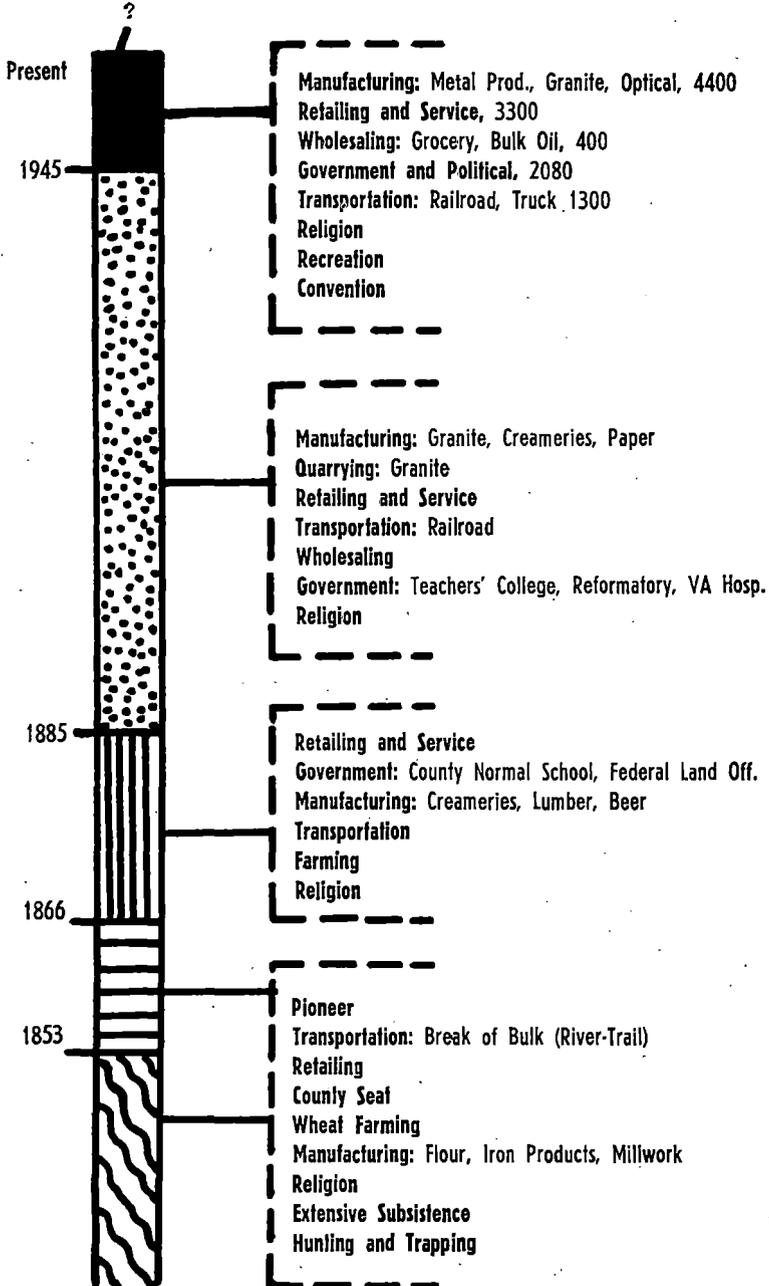


Fig. 1.