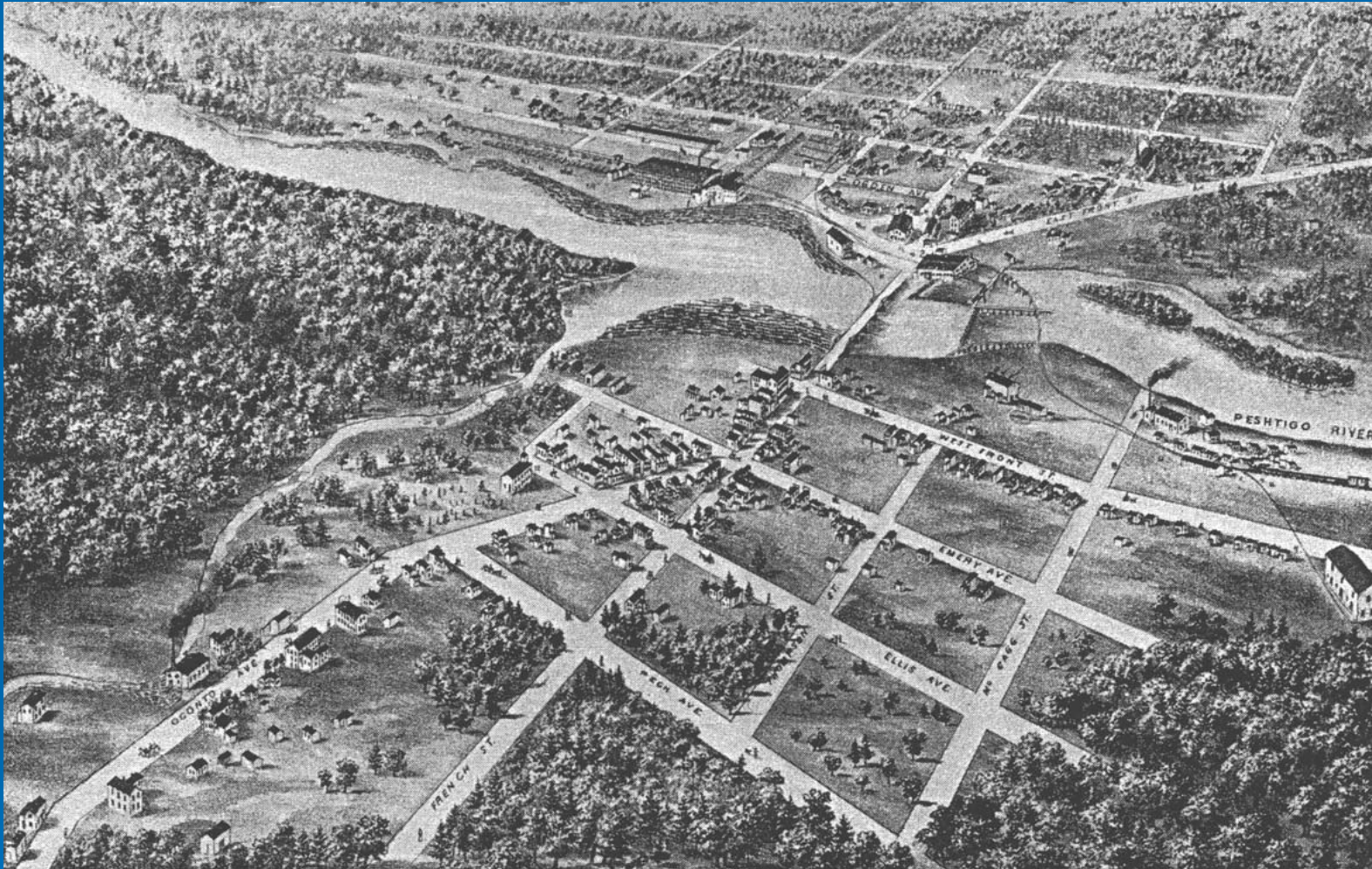


Peshtigo, Wisconsin, 1871

- 600 died in Peshtigo
- Including the outlying areas 1150 people died.





- In 1871 Peshtigo was a booming lumber town. It stood on both sides of the Peshtigo river which flowed southeast to enter Lake Michigan's Green Bay 6 miles away.
- The town had close to 2000 inhabitants working in sawmills and factories making timber buckets, broom handles, shingles and other wood based products.





- The fire occurred on 8 October after a period when the ground and vegetation was very dry. Survivors of the fire recall hearing a distant roar before the fire reached them. Very soon, under the action of the southwest wind, the timber sidewalks of Peshtigo started to blaze.
- Inhabitants sought refuge in the river - the safest place - as the forest flames leapt across the river, but some were swept away and drowned or were carried by the current onto the burning bridge.
- 40 people tried to get protection by entering the sawmill workers boarding house but they were burnt to a cinder.
- Between 9 and 10 o'clock the entire town of Peshtigo was burnt out.
- Some people outside the town committed suicide rather than face the fire. More than 600 died in Peshtigo, but including the outlying areas it is estimated that 1150 people died.
- The area swept by fire was estimated to be 1,280,000 acres.
- These figures suggest that this forest fire was the largest, in terms of life loss, in North America and possibly in the world.

