

Portage Creek

6. Streambed of Portage Creek, looking south from the 2200-2300 block of Lakeisle Avenue



Early View of
Outlet Avenue
at Portage Lake



Streambed of Portage Creek

All of the water that came into Portage Lake through springs ran out through Portage Creek before the digging in 1871 of what became the Channel. This swiftly running stream curved from a point opposite of

what is now Outlet Avenue, running northward across the present Lakeisle Avenue, and curving once more to empty into Lake Michigan at a point now near the cottage at 9034 Lakeside Avenue. The field notes of the original surveyors had identified the inland Lake as “O-nek-a-ma-engk” or “Portage.” The early settlers were told by the Indians still remaining in the area that “O-nek-a-ma-engk” meant to portage or carry across, which is exactly what the Indians had to do when traversing the land between these lakes. The first certificate for land purchased in what is now Onekama Township was issued to James Stronach in 1845 by the United States Government. His land included the original outlet from Portage Lake.