

history.

The Lowry building's namesake, Thomas Lowry, came to Minnesota in 1876 as part of the post Civil War Westward migration. As a Twin Cities business pioneer he founded a successful law practice. His interest in law soon combined with an enthusiastic interest in real estate and urban development.

Lowry recognized the potential of a Street Car system to increase the value of outlying real estate. In July of 1875, the Minneapolis City Council approved the first street car lines. These lines were managed by the Minneapolis Street Railway Company which Lowry was a stockholder and vice president. Until his death in 1909, Lowry oversaw the development of the Minneapolis and St. Paul street car system. He guided the enterprise through financial hardship, labor problems and the conversion from horse, to cable to electric power. At the time of his death, The Twin City Rapid Transit Company, with its 368 miles of track, was a model of mass urban transportation.

Although completed in 1911, after his death, The Lowry Medical Arts Building has its foundations in Thomas Lowry's era. The original car barn and office of the St. Paul City Railway Company was located on the east side of Saint Peter Street between 4th and 5th. After a fire destroyed it, Thomas Lowry began purchasing the surrounding property. In 1890, he bought two additional lots from the streetcar company. The site was modestly improved during Thomas Lowry's lifetime. His son Horance, developed the block into the successful Lowry Medical Arts Buildings.

Constructed for \$400,000 between 1893 and 1911, the Lowry Medical Arts building, originally known as the Lowry Arcade Building, is a large 12 story, commercial style office building. The Minneapolis architectural firm of Keess and Colburn was responsible for the design of this St. Paul landmark. As Minneapolis Architects, the commission to build the Lowry fueled an already intense rivalry between the two emerging cities.

The Lowry's construction materials of light brick and white terra cotta provide the foundation for the many cornices and dentils. The second floor windows feature robust terra cotta surrounds and swags. The building scale and materials are very complimentary to its immediate neighbor The Saint Paul Hotel, which was constructed in 1878.

