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THE NATIVE AMERICANS LEFT THEIR MARK--MOUNDS

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

After our record snow melts (and we hope and trust it will), look closely around your yard. Are there any unusual humps or rises? If so, you may be sharing your lot with a thousand-year old Indian Mound! Check today's map and descriptions for the locations.

The 1872 Map

Last week's article on bypass highways featured an 1872 map of the village of Baraboo, drawn originally by historian Canfield. Actually, it was only a portion of a larger map, and today's map is a continuation of the map shown last week.

The left hand edge of today's map is the same as the right edge of last week's map. Therefore this map represents that part of Baraboo east of Elizabeth street, between Water Street and Eighth Street. It was virtually uninhabited countryside in 1872, but the area now contains hundreds of homes and a thousand or so citizens.

The reason that this is of interest is that the 1872 map shows a large number of Indian Mounds, carefully drawn in by Canfield. The mounds occupy the area North of the Circus World Museum (CWM) grounds and parking lot on Water Street, and extend as far north as Sixth Street. Eighth Street is shown as a country road, while Water Street and the Baraboo River are at the bottom edge of the map. In the upper right corner, well out of town in 1872, is the Sauk County Fairgrounds.

Canfield

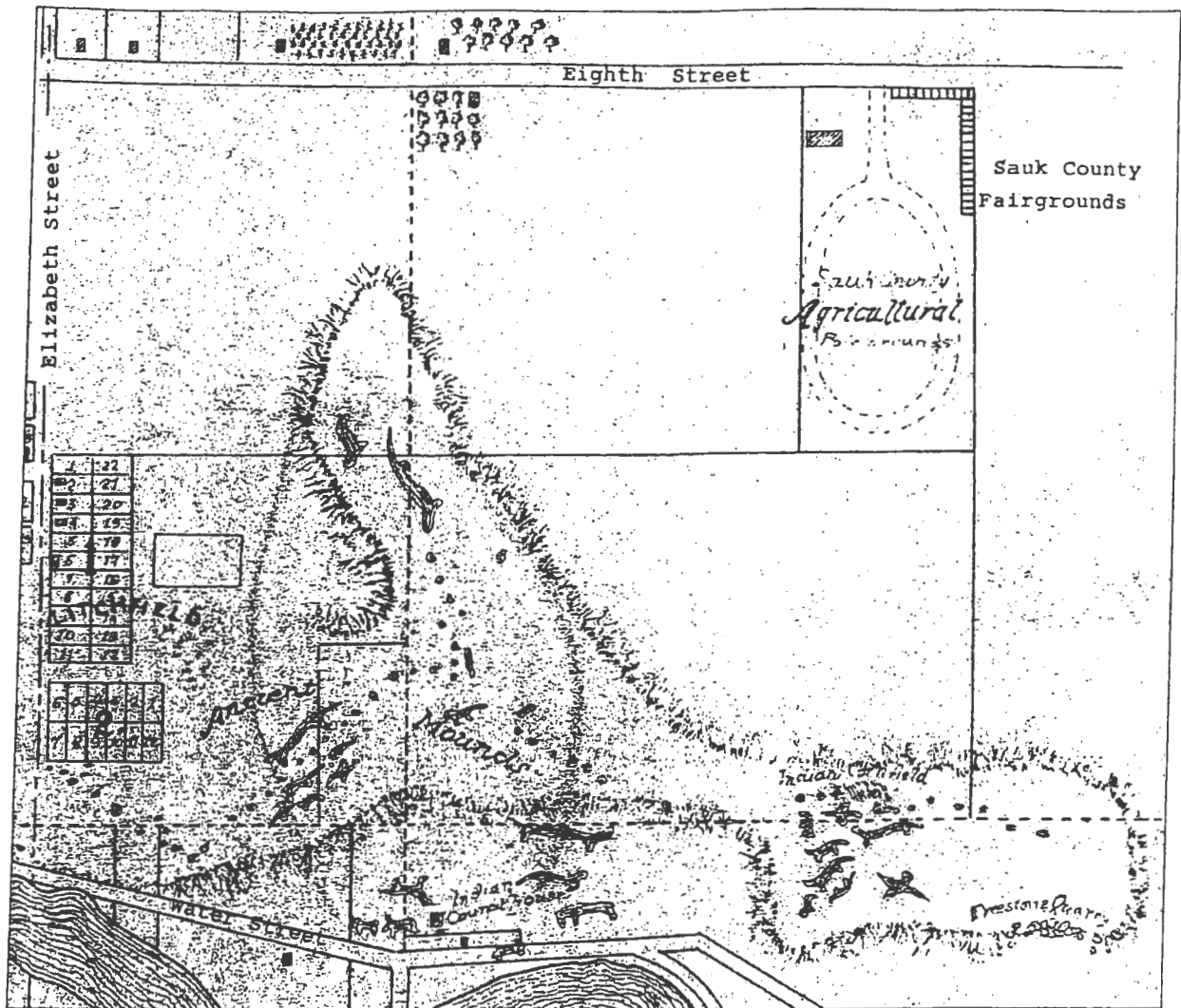
Canfield was the local surveyor as well as historian, and was pictured in a previous article. He lived in Baraboo and Sauk County during most of its first 50 years, and carefully recorded his observations of the growing colony along the banks of the Baraboo River. His histories are a treasure for those who followed him--Butterfield, Cole, Derleth, Goc, Lange, etc. Not all counties have had such diligent and prolific recorders of man and his work on earth.

Canfield was a close and accurate observer of his surroundings, including an intense interest in the Native Americans who came before us. Part of the result is what you see on the map--his drawings of Indian Mounds.

Mounds

Mounds come in an endless variety of sizes and shapes, it seems, and appear to reflect the ancient Native American's close association with birds and animals, actual or imagined. Some mounds represent serpents, bear, deer, and sometimes totally unidentifiable shapes.

Note that the map shows an Indian Council House directly across Water Street from the present CWM parking lot. It was in this very area that Eben and Roseline Peck crossed the Baraboo river on horseback and tried to establish a claim in 1838. They were driven back across the river by the Indians, but returned the following year to establish a claim



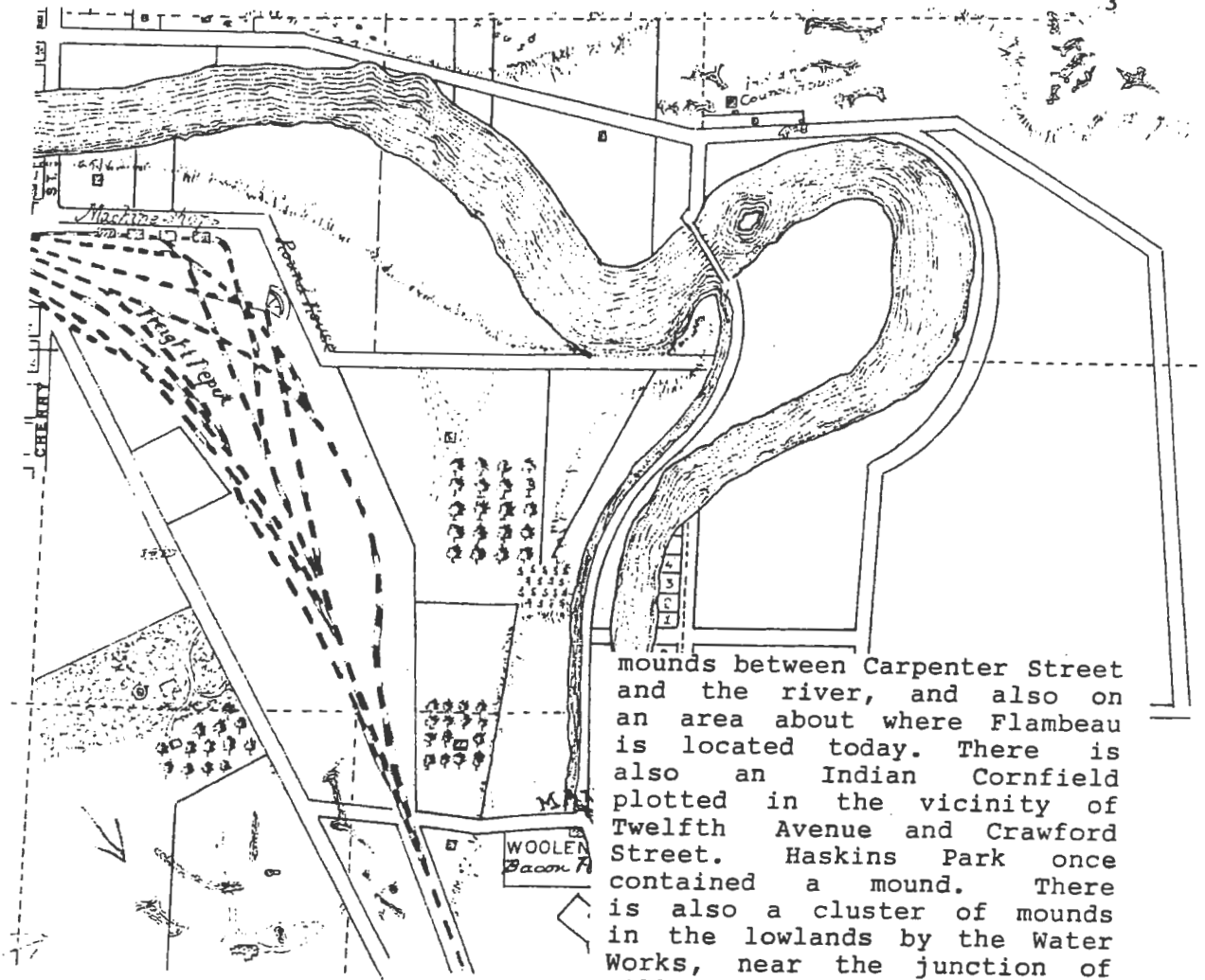
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A large number of Indian Mounds were carefully drawn on an 1872 map by a historian named Canfield. They occupy an

area north of Water Street near the Circus World Museum and extend as far north as Sixth Street.

without incident. Abe Wood and Wallace Rowan built their dam about a mile upstream in the Ochsner Park area that year also. Thus the Pecks, Woods, and Rowans were the first settlers in the area known as Baraboo Rapids.

An area north of the Council Grounds is marked "Indian cornfield", apparently at the junction of Second Street and Washington. A Freestone Quarry is shown near the crest of College Avenue.



Also on the map is a plotted area called Litchfield, this being a developer's effort to either add to or rival the growing village. His plot effectively blocked eastern extension of Third and Fourth Streets, a problem that exists all over Baraboo. The only real through street is Eighth Street, though Second Street has the potential to be a East-west artery. Too many developers have been allowed to have streets vacated, blocking efficient movement throughout the city.

Not on the map
Shown on other parts
of the original map, but not
included here, are Indian

mounds between Carpenter Street and the river, and also on an area about where Flambeau is located today. There is also an Indian Cornfield plotted in the vicinity of Twelfth Avenue and Crawford Street. Haskins Park once contained a mound. There is also a cluster of mounds in the lowlands by the Water Works, near the junction of Hill Street and Lake Street

Well preserved and readily visible are Indian mounds at Devil's Lake State Park, though one of the hotels once occupied the end of one mound. Mounds once existed between Baraboo and Devils Lake, indeed all over the county. But the most famous Indian Mound is yet to be discussed in the next article, and it lies near to Baraboo.

Meantime, next time you mow your yard (surely the snow will melt someday), that slight rise in the terrain might represent the toil of a Native American as long as a thousand years ago. This was his way to try and understand his world. We build churches and mosques and synagogues, still seeking enlightenment.

A SURPRISE DISCOVERY AT MAN MOUND

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

In a recent item in the Wisconsin State Journal, we learned that a planned road construction in Ozaukee County has been halted. The reason: it is believed that a rare dragon fly has breeding grounds in the area about to be graded, so work has been halted, at least temporarily.

How times have changed! Sometime in the Nineteenth Century, Sauk County road crews thought nothing of grading away the lower legs of Sauk County's most famous Indian mound of all, the Man Mound of Greenfield township, some three miles east of Baraboo. This Naderizing (to use a very modern term) cut the effigy off at the knees, the straight highway grid being deemed more important in those horse and buggy days.

Their amputation was not quite complete, however! More on that later.

Wm. H. Canfield

It was Baraboo's indefatigable historian, surveyor, and antiquarian, Wm. H. Canfield, who first drew attention to Sauk County's bountiful supply of Indian mounds. Those in Baraboo were illustrated recently in an article published on January 8. Most of the mounds are shaped like fanciful birds or animals, and are believed to have been constructed 800 to 1000 years ago by unknown effigy mound builders, probably for religious purposes.

Historian Lange says there were well over 1000 mounds in Sauk County, though

only about 100 survive. It is said that buckets made of skins were filled by hand, scraping up the soil with clam shells or sticks or antlers and carrying it to the site.

As early as July, 1859 Canfield surveyed Man Mound and a similar mound at LaValle, (NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of NW $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 36, T 13N), the only ones known to be in Wisconsin. There the arms are outstretched, and the horns more vertical. The arms and legs seem unusually full also.

Canfield's investigation included accurate measurements of the Baraboo area effigy, which still had its legs and feet at the time. It was discovered to be 214 feet long, the head 80 feet long, and the legs only slightly longer. The figure is apparently depicted as walking westward. Projecting from the head are two hornlike appendages.

The body itself is greatly elongated, the arms and legs being short in proportion to the torso. Canfield's drawings and measurements are prized possessions of the Sauk County Historical Society, and were donated by Canfield himself.

In a July 30, 1976 article in the News Republic, Ruth Burmeister stated that Canfield traveled "in a cart pulled by his faithful horse, Pedro." He made over 4000 farm and land surveys, traveling over 20,000 miles.

Canfield's method of surveying of the man mound was to run a straight line

over the middle of the figure lengthwise. At intervals of ten feet measurements were made to the sides of the body at right angles to its length. As can thus be seen in the drawing, at the end of the right arm it is ten feet to the edge of the body, and the arm at that point has six feet of width.

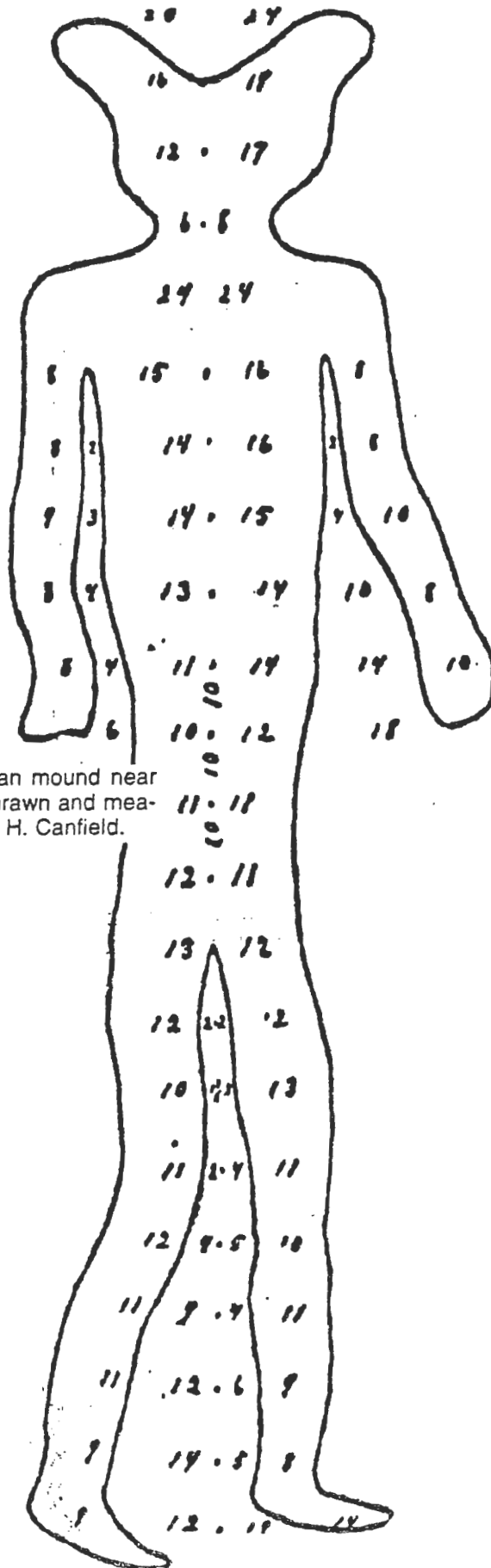
The Purchase

It would be 48 years before Man Mound would be set aside as a small park, now minus the lower legs. By 1905 the area was overgrown with vines, brush, and small trees. Three Baraboo men, News editor H.E. Cole, banker Jacob VanOrden, and A.B. Stout determined that the effigy should not be lost, as had the similar mound in LaValle, long since plowed over.

Baraboo farmer Abram Hoege was indeed planning to cultivate the land, but a fund was raised jointly by the Archeological Society and the Sauk County Historical Society to purchase the plot on October 12 1907, for \$225.

In those days contributors were listed by name and amount, even for church contributions. In the case of the little park. some 60 persons, mostly from the Milwaukee Archeological Society, had contributed a dollar each.

Of the 20 persons who contributed five dollars each, nine were from Baraboo, only two from the rest of the county. Among those nine were Luise Gattiker, who within eight years would contribute the courthouse clock memorial mentioned in another article. Banker Jacob VanOrden also contributed a bronze plaque, still in good condition today, and it credits Canfield for



This is the man mound near Baraboo, as drawn and measured by Wm. H. Canfield.

his efforts. The News published a letter from Canfield, now age 88, elderly and retired, thanking VanOrden for including his name. Canfield died in 1913 at age 94.

The Dedication

Of interest is that the Wisconsin Legislature apparently took a field trip to Baraboo for the dedication of the park, which several hundred persons attended. Some speeches were given in the then new red brick schoolhouse on the southeast corner of Second and Oak, now gone. Others were in the then new courthouse, still extant, which housed the historical museum at that time.

Across the road was the Weirich farm, where in well over a decade later Daunene Weirich, now Jelinik, would be born. She now lives in the greatly remodeled and enhanced Man Mound Schoolhouse, adjacent to Man Mound Park, over which she keeps a watchful eye. Gone is the viewing platform and some of the playground equipment, but the form of the body can still be made out.

The Feet are There?

The surprise is that the road graders failed to destroy the feet of the effigy, and she knows where they are! As may be surmised, they are directly across the fence to the north. Though the outline of the feet is gone, researchers from the university concluded their location some years ago, in 1989, by testing the different soil found in the effigy. For many years the adjacent land was an orchard.

Daunene says a small round mound has been found

to the south of the head, and that there are other mounds in the neighborhood. Also of interest are certain branches of two trees, where limbs were bent down grossly out of shape to mark Indian trails of the early 1800's. Some rock formations suggest a ceremonial place in the woods nearby, she adds. A modern religious group, the Baha'i faith, held a ceremony at Man Mound in December, 1971, citing a legend that the mound represents a holy man coming. In 1912 a Persian Divine did pass through on a train, but did not visit the mound. He died in an Israeli prison in 1931.



DR. INCREASE A. LAPHAM—Wisconsin's Pioneer Archeologist.



Perhaps we shouldn't be too surprised when considering the effort which drove these ancient aborigines to build mounds. As one wag commented after reading the article on mounds in Baraboo, "Look around you--we build mounds too, mounds of snow in every parking lot". Hopefully our mounds won't last a thousand years. As we ponder the mystery of the mounds, we can consider the poem by Arlene Hoege, which reads as follows:

Man of Earth, what secrets
do you hold?

What were they like,
those builders of old?

Did you share their
dreams, or were you part
of a Fear that clutched
at every heart?

Were you a kind God,
did you love
your children, looking
down from above?

Or are you seen in
striding pose,

As you struck terror
with your blows?

Man of earth, what secrets
do you hold?

What were they like,
those builders of old?

Ben Franklin, Baraboo,
and PBS
Yesteryear Revisited
By Bob Dewel

Friends know that this writer is an unabashed admirer and promoter of Benjamin Franklin, whom we regard as the real father of our country. We will spare you the overwhelming evidence for our claim in that respect, but do want to call the reader's attention to the special TV series on Franklin to be presented on PBS on Tuesday November 19 and Wednesday Nov. 20, at 9 P.M. each night.

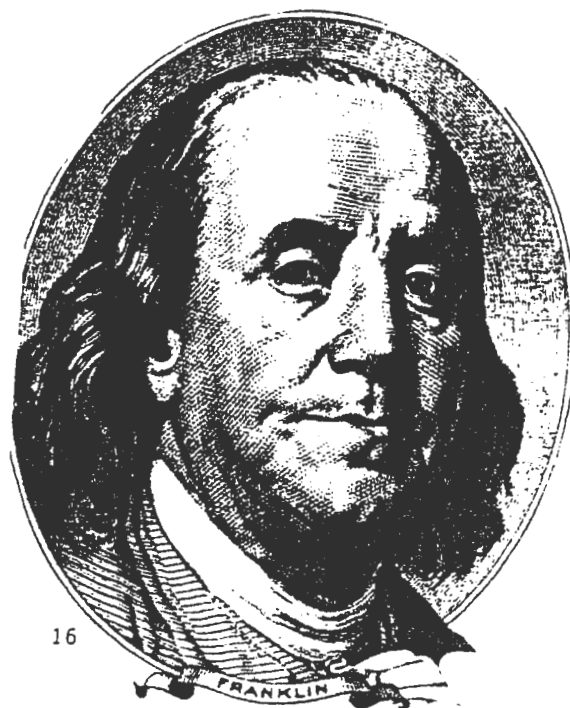
It is true that these Yesteryear Revisited articles deal mainly with the history of Sauk County and Baraboo, and you may think that we are challenged in presenting Ben Franklin as part of local history. Giving it a try, lets concentrate on his activities beginning with the French and Indian War, and leading up to the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

A Territory of France

A little history lesson is needed here. Wisconsin, and indeed all of what we call the upper Midwest, (or at least that part east of the Mississippi River), was from the early exploration days until 1755 the possession of France. French traders and explorers passed from the Fox River to the Wisconsin River at Portage, and no doubt camped overnight on the Sauk Prairie or elsewhere in the county.

Later two French brothers appear to have established a trading post at near the mouth of the Baraboo River where it joins the Wisconsin River near Portage. After a bitter fraternal fight, one of the men changed the spelling of the name from Barbeau to Baraboo, and that name was subsequently applied to the river, and to the rapids in what we now call the City of Baraboo.

French and Indian War



16

Had the French settlements and claims prevailed in the mid-west, we would be comparable to Quebec today, militantly pro-French and speaking that language on the streets of our city. The French and Indian Wars changed all that, for the British and their American colonist allies won, and the territory became nominally British, including Canada as well as the upper mid-west.

Although already a man 50 years of age, Franklin obtained from local farmers, with his own signature, the 150 wagons and 259 horses used by Braddock in his and Washington's ill fated march into the wilderness. It was with the greatest of difficulty that Ben got the British to compensate him for the destroyed wagons.

His other activity during the French and Indian Wars included raising and leading a militia, and building a fort and stockades. The war dragged on into 1763, when the Treaty of Paris granted Canada and everything east of the Mississippi, including Wisconsin, to the British.



Part of the British Empire

Though the colonies had strongly supported their British rulers in this war, hardly a decade would pass before the colonies were in revolt. The rebellious Continental Congress chose Ben Franklin as its ambassador to France in hopes of gaining French aid to defeat the British and gain independence. Franklin's success in this matter is legendary, obtaining not only massive loans of money to finance the Revolution, but eventually involving significant French land and sea forces.

It is said that, thanks to Franklin's success, there were more Frenchmen at the final and decisive Battle of Yorktown than there were American revolutionary soldiers. In the peace negotiations with the British, the shrewd Franklin tried to get Canada ceded to us. This was a ploy to make sure we got all of the South and upper mid-west, including what is now Wisconsin, and Baraboo.



AT THE CIRCUS WORLD MUSEUM



AT THE AL RINGLING THEATRE



VISITING WITH THIS WRITER

Benjamin Franklin in Baraboo, 1991



This marble statue is inside a domed building in Philadelphia. It is the same size as the Lincoln Statue in the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C.

The Northwest Ordinance

On his return after the Revolution, Franklin, now a man of nearly 80, was elected President of Pennsylvania. There was no United States as we know it for seven years after we gained our independence, only a loose and weak association of the colonies under an agreement known as the Articles of Confederation. Its major accomplishment was the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which called for not less than three or more than five states to be carved out of the upper mid-west territory.

One of those states, of course, was Wisconsin, some 60 years later. As President of Pennsylvania, Franklin must have been instrumental in that Colony's approval of the Northwest Ordinance. Meantime, the French had had the annoying habit of sticking around in the wilderness, with their trading posts, and one was the Barbeau brothers mentioned above, from which we got the name of the river and of the city.



This writer welcomes Ben to Baraboo

Admittedly, Franklin's connection to Sauk County and Baraboo is indirect, but his work in the French and Indian War helped to eliminate the French from the upper mid-west. Without his skillful enlistment of the French on our side, the Revolution might well have failed, and the British would not have been eliminated. We might be singing "God Save the Queen."

Had the French and Indian War effort failed, we might well be greeting people on the streets of Barbeau with "Bonjour, Monsieur/Madame, bienvenue au Barbeau"! We don't even have a street named after Benjamin Franklin, though W. Howard Taft got one!

Meantime, don't forget the PBS special on Tuesday November 19 and Wednesday Nov. 20, both at 9 P.M.

“One more day and we eat the dog”

by Bob Dewel

What was the burning question of the day in the 1840s in the little outpost of civilization which now constitutes Sauk County?

No, it was not the rights or wrongs of commercial development — all commercial development, what there was of it, was welcomed with open arms!

No, it wasn't dams. Anyone knew that if a river had sufficient rapids, you built a dam or two and harvested nature's abundant supply of free and non-polluting energy. Besides, the mill pond was a source of ice, to be stored in straw for use well into the summer.

And no, it wasn't building highways. You just cut a path through the forest — and who would want to bypass a village or settlement anyway? It wouldn't be neighborly.

(Little did they dream of interstate highways, and the 1960 argument over whether Baraboo would get an interchange on County A. A neighboring city was rumored to want all traffic routed to them via Highway 12, but Lt. Gov. Olson denied this at a Kiwanis meeting. He was from Wisconsin Dells.)

No, the burning question was not one of the above. It was, simply, where would the county seat be located?

On the surface, the question seemed moot. A commission appointed by the legislature of the territory that would later become Wisconsin had pretty well decided the issue. They recommended that either the Upper Town (Prairie du Sac) or the Lower Town (Sauk City), “whichever would make the largest donation” be given the honor.

Lower Town offered the Count Haraszthy house, said to be worth the fortune of \$3,000. Upper Town countered with a number of lots considered to be worth more than that, and became the county seat in 1844. However, when the deeds of the latter were examined, their terms were not acceptable, especially to the rival Lower Town.

“Shall we shoot the dog?”

While the rivalry between the two towns escalated, a committee of five was appointed to “make an exploration of the interior (largely unknown) of the county and ascertain whether the land was fit for settlement.” Of the six members, four were from Baraboo, including Wm. Canfield the historian, and the irascible Abe Wood.

“The committee started on this exploration on the 10th of November 1845. Count Haraszthy's mare and a week's provisions, a shotgun, two rifles and a bird-dog constituted the outfit . . . [later] the Count took the halter off the mare and told her to go home to her colt . . . later, with one day's provisions the explorers started for the primeval forests.”

“The next day Wood shot (at) a deer but did not get it, and a partridge, which the Count bagged, had to suffice for dinner, supper, and breakfast for six stalwart men. Another day passed with nothing but water to drink, and the next breakfast and dinner also were a blank. It was proposed to shoot the dog that night for dinner, but Capt. Moore's trusty rifle brought down a fine yearling buck, and the fast was soon terminated.”

*Preston Brigham

“As is reported in an article in the booklet, “The Benefactors of Baraboo,” the Baraboo Mills settlement appeared to offer a compromise, with its beautiful location and burgeoning saw mills. The clincher was when tavern operator and stagecoach driver Preston Brigham purchased the land now known as downtown Baraboo “with his own money” and donated it to the county, an entity which existed largely on paper at that point. It is to be noted that Brigham did not reside in the Baraboo area, but in Sumpter township. Baraboo became the county seat in 1846.

Because of his donation, Brigham was allowed to name the new village, and he chose Adams, due to his admiration of John Quincy Adams, sixth President of

*Prescott

the United States, then only a nation for 59 years. The name was later changed to Baraboo because there was already a settlement by the name of Adams.

A two-story log courthouse and jail was built, about where the Al Ringling Theatre is today, and village founder Abe Wood became one of the early inhabitants of the jail — at least until nightfall, when he dug his way out via the dirt floor.

Thus the rivalry of the Sauk villages became a boon for the Baraboo river settlement. Being a county seat was considered a big boost for a village, bringing hotels, harness shops and livery stables, and eventually county offices and employees.

Sauk County grew from a population of 102 in 1840 to 4,372 in 1850, with Wisconsin not becoming a state until 1848. Soon stage lines opened as well as ferries across the Wisconsin River. Railroads would soon appear in the southern border and the Northeastern border of the new county — but not in Baraboo until 1870.

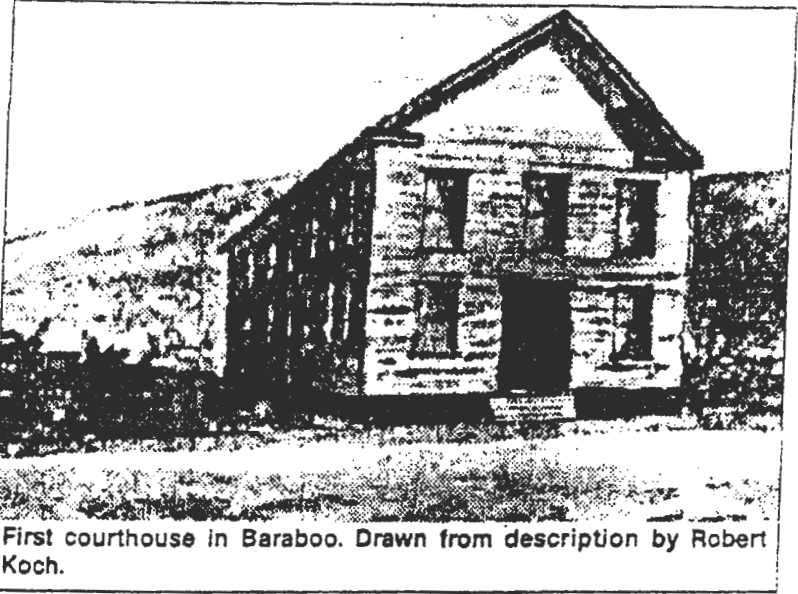
The Reedsburg War

Baraboo's future as the county seat seemed assured, but not to the folks in newly platted Reedsburg, founded in 1848. Those folks looked with envy at the modest increase in commerce and prosperity in Baraboo which followed its selection as county seat. They reasoned that Reedsburg was nearer the center of the county, and coveted the honor and advantage.

Tempers ran hot, and in 1851 Reedsburg "took the position that no rafts or logs would pass over their dam en route to Baraboo." A mounted and armed delegation from Baraboo, supported by a United States Deputy Marshall, made their way to Reedsburg and the Reedsburg dam was cut away. This has also been called the sawmill war.

Relocate the County Seat?

Taking another tack, Reedsburg convinced the State Legislature in 1852 to attach a strip of the lower



First courthouse in Baraboo. Drawn from description by Robert Koch.

border of Juneau County nine miles deep to Sauk County, thus making Reedsburg even more central to Sauk County and perhaps adding a few voters to their cause. This political move was reversed in 1853. In 1855 the Legislature was persuaded to hold a referendum in the spring, but Baraboo came off victorious in that election.

Early Courthouses

The first courthouse was said to resemble a huge dry goods box, but was erected hastily to help secure Baraboo's claim as the county seat. It soon was replaced by a slightly more elegant structure costing \$5,000, which, it was predicted, would bankrupt the county. This brick building was only 40 by 20 feet, and was soon enlarged by an addition. It replaced the temporary building on the north side of the square, which burned on the night of July 4, 1857. That structure had been used for school, church, funerals and dances. Once there was a conflict in reservations, with both church folks and dancers, the latter prevailing thanks to the fiddler drowning out all opposition.

After the new brick structure was built on the square, the old building became a printing office, and then a saloon before fire and smoke "cleaned it of all impuri-

ties."

The newer brick structure, with additions, served until December 27, 1904, when it too succumbed to fire. This brick building had been enlarged with what was called the West Addition.

By coincidence the county board had, a month previously, voted to expend \$100,000 on a new and more suitable edifice. This building was completed in 1906, and is the stately neoclassic structure which graced the square alone until 1962, when the west addition was added. Somewhere along the line the present clock belfry was added, a gift according to old timers, who remember it as having a gold roof.

The 1980s and 1990s saw controversy as to the erection of what is now the new West Square Building, a re-run in some respects of the controversy of 150 years ago. It stands on ground once donated to the county by Preston Brigham. Later he re-purchased some of the land across from the square for a commercial enterprise.

Brigham would be surprised at the structures on the public square, and also on the land he once owned on the West side of Broadway. He would also be proud, though there is no plaque acknowledging his generosity and trust.

The first Christian service in the valley

"A little over 66 years ago as a group of men were working on a dam across the Baraboo river, a young man appeared on the scene of activity. When it became known that he was a minister, he was not very cordially received, but as he talked with the men and helped them the best he could, they looked on him with more favor, and soon one of the men took care of his horse, and he was received with good frontier hospitality."

So wrote William Little in about 1906. Though it is not an eyewitness account, Little's story could be valid, for he could have known some of the original workers as elderly men. Also, Roseline Peck, an original settler, had only been dead six years when this was written.

He also may have known some of the workers' descendants, who told the story. In any event, we know who the young man was who came upon the 2-year-old settlement in 1841. His name was the Rev. Thomas M. Fullerton, a Methodist circuit rider, and to him goes the honor of preaching the first Christian service in the Baraboo Valley, on Oct. 16, 1841. More on that later.

The circuit rider

The World Book describes circuit riders thus: "The circuit rider, or traveling preacher, was often selected because of his ability to 'exhort.' Rather than for his religious training. But some-

times he did noble work. His presence in a settlement meant great activity. He performed marriages, baptized infants, preached sermons, served at funerals, and caught up with all he had missed since his last visit. Usually his only salary was his food and perhaps a little produce or clothing."

Fullerton was a circuit rider of the Methodist faith. The first to preach in Sauk County was the Rev. John Crummer, who appeared in the Sauk City or Prairie du Sac areas in 1840. Some claim that the Rev. James G. Whitford was the first. Like Fullerton, all three men were Methodist circuit riders, a characteristic of that church in the 19th century.

Whitford was not only present at the first wedding, he was the groom, marrying the widow Sarah Sayles at the Teel home on the prairie below the bluffs.

Being a circuit rider was not an easy vocation. Despite our mythical view of American religion in that century, most people were not affiliated with any denomination, and religious membership was almost the exception.

Crummer, an immigrant from Ireland, upon arriving at Mineral Point for the conversion ceremony of Thomas Fullerton, was greeted with the outcry of "Here comes the Methodist minister." At once there appeared on the scene a drunken, howling mob. Soon they threw stones and rolled empty whiskey barrels into the street ... the

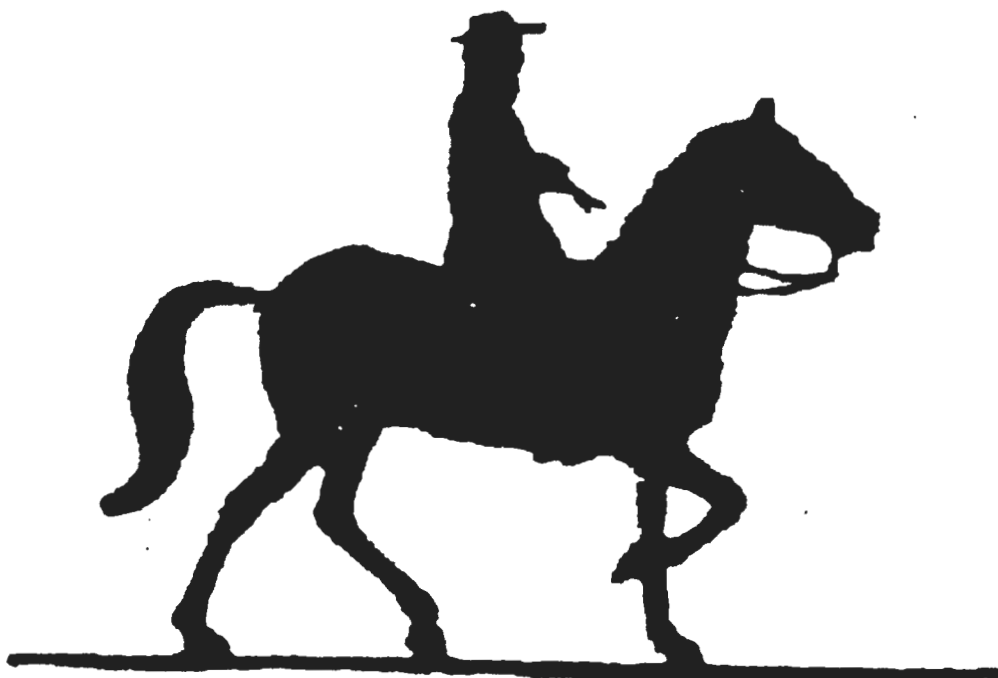
preacher's horse, named Judge, showed more opposition to the whiskey barrels than some modern judges do to those well filled ... The Lord attended the Word, and from that young Fullerton commenced to seek the Savior."

The circuit rider often had a territory involving 200 miles of travel, on trails hardly marked through the forest and wetlands, sometimes having to lead his horse. Sleep might come in a makeshift lean-to with snow covering the sleeper's blanket.

During one of Crummer's sermons in a log cabin, a rattlesnake crawled between one of the logs. Also, in an exaggerated report, he stated that the mosquitoes were huge, "a great many of which weighed a pound."

First service in Baraboo

As was indicated in the first paragraph of the article, the first Christian service in the Baraboo Valley did not occur until two years after the first settlers arrived in the area. Butterfield relates that "the Service was in the log cabin of William Hill, which stood ten or fifteen rods east of what was then known as Draper's Mill, both a half a mile above the ford on the Baraboo River.



Circuit riders were traveling preachers who performed many religious rites.

"The sermon was from 2 Corinthians 5:20, and there were 11 persons present none of whom confessed Christianity except Mr. Draper, who was a Baptist." Mrs. Valentin B. Hill confirmed that the first sermon was in her home by Thomas Fullerton, in the winter of 1841-42. Incidentally, her son Ichabod B. Hill was the first white child born in the valley on Jan. 9, 1842.

Fullerton himself kept a copious diary, and confirmed many years later, in an address to the Old Settler's Association, that "My first visit to Baraboo Mills was October 5, 1841. Notice of my coming had not been given, and we therefore had no meeting. An old man, Dr. Draper, was some way interested in the mill, and it was called Draper's Mill. He invited me to come and establish meetings there."

Fullerton then relates the service mentioned above, saying it "was certainly the opening of the Gospel for the first time in the Baraboo val-

ley. None of them professed to be Christian except Draper. After that my appointments were regularly filled except once, when the roads were impassable."

It is from this humble beginning that the First United Methodist Church of Baraboo traces its origin and its claim to be the first Christian church in Baraboo. A brass plaque on a stone on the southeast corner of Broadway and Fifth Avenue commemorates the location of its first rough log building.

It seems likely that 24-year-old Thomas Fullerton, like young men in so many generations in history, sought to endow his exhortations and scripture quotations from his sermons with a patina of age and maturity and wisdom by growing a full beard on his youthful face. We do know, from a photo which will appear in the next article, that he still had the beard in the 1860s or 70s when the picture was taken.

Young Fullerton apparently passed muster, according to the account which begins this article, for he not only helped with the work on the dam, but one of the men took care of his horse, a significant gesture of acceptance.

Fullerton was the first of many circuit riders of many denominations to visit the villages of Sauk County. Their lot was hard, but one they bore cheerfully. Now, there are still areas where one minister or priest serves several congregations as of old, with one big difference. They travel surfaced highways instead of Indian trails. Fullerton would be envious of the easier lot of the traveling pastor of today. So would his pony.

Circuit riders once brought Christianity to the frontier

The preceding article told of the first Christian service in the Baraboo Valley, by the Rev. Thomas Fullerton. His efforts resulted in a small Methodist Association, to which the First United Methodist Church in Baraboo traces its beginning.

The rapid growth of the settlement into a village and the subsequent development of a county government in 1842 and statehood in 1848, brought adherents of other denominations to the culturally and philosophically starved residents. The Baptist and Congregational groups were established in 1847, followed in 1851 by the Presbyterians.

The Episcopalians were close behind, arriving in 1853, with the Wesleyan and Evangelical United Brethren folks in the 1870s. The first Catholic Mass was held once a month in a hotel beginning in 1850, and in 1860 they bought the original Congregational church, a small red brick structure on the southwest corner of Oak and Second Streets.

Many local churches were not established until the middle of the 20th century, and Baraboo now numbers at least 24 congregations. This wide range of devotion was typical of the rest of the U.S., where religion has flourished thanks to the neutrality of the government and the Constitution. In contrast, most European governments support one church



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with taxes and preferential treatment. Their churches are empty, compared to the vitality of worship in our country.

Fullerton's challenge

Establishing a church on the rough frontier was not an easy task, as young Thomas Fullerton learned when only 11 people showed up for his first service. Somehow the group survived, though his ministries only occurred about every six weeks.

In later years Fullerton was invited to return and speak at the Old Settlers' annual meeting, where his remarks were preserved in print by historian Canfield. Much of the rest of this article will describe Fullerton and his experiences, as typical of the circuit riders of many of the denominations.

Fullerton was a native of Christian County, Ky., and was born in 1817. Shortly after his birth his mother became insane, and at age 17 his father was thrown from a horse and killed. A kind Presbyterian family provided sustenance and religious inspiration, but at 19 he

moved to Snake Hollow, Wis., now called Potosi, being occupied as a salesman.

He was licensed to "exhort," or speak, and his employer, one George Madiera, gave him a pony and saddle and bridle "and all you need besides, and go in the name of the Lord." In July 1841, he was licensed to preach, after five months of exhorting.

Life was not easy for a circuit rider, whose charge usually covered some 200 miles. In his first visit to the Sauk Prairie he found but one habitation on the trail between Mineral Point and the prairie. There the home and tavern of "Father Teel" was the focal point for all activity, and the entire area south of the bluffs had but 270 inhabitants in 1841, including the colorful Count Haraszthy.

Fullerton's territory included Muscoda, Blue Mounds, Honey Creek Mills, Sauk Village and others, a 200-mile loop with virtually no roads and few Indian trails. A temporary bridge built across Honey Creek in 1841 was welcome, since before that his pony had to swim the creek while Fullerton took his baggage across on a log. With regard to the pony, Fullerton states that "sometimes my pony concluded that it was as easy for me to walk and carry my luggage as it was for him to carry that and me too."

Fullerton found he was not

welcome in Lower Town, soon to be renamed Haraszthy after the count, and eventually named Sauk City. The Germans there "had little sympathy for our forms of religion." In 1842, a Congregational minister came to Upper Town, now Prairie du Sac, to serve a Presbyterian church there, the ministries of those churches being interchangeable. He was the first permanent pastor of the village, and was supported by the Presbyterian Home Missionary Society to the tune of \$700 a year. Fullerton was only paid \$100 a year, and the Presbyterian man allowed as how Fullerton had room for improvement.

Fullerton writes at length about the Teel home on the prairie, where Badger Army Ammunition Plant is now located. He considered Mother Teel as more than a mother to him, saying "No poor itinerant minister ever met with more generous hospitality than I did at the 'Methodist Tavern,' and my time there is among the most cherished memories of my life."

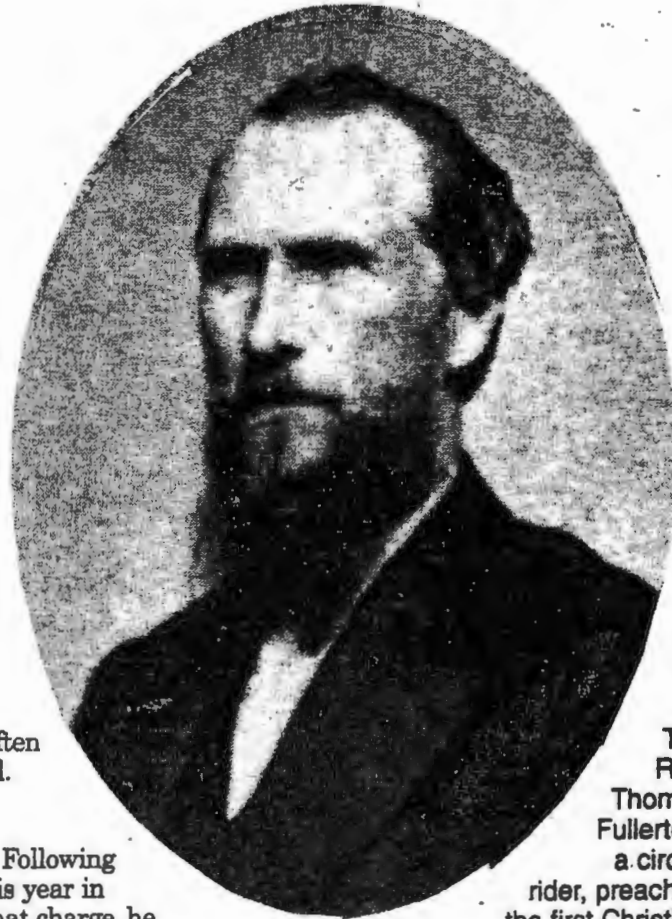
In his year in our area Fullerton traveled some 3,500 miles with his pony, often on foot, and preached nearly 299 times to congregations ranging from two people to 30. He said the people were generally very poor, and newly married, but exceedingly kind, for he was

often ill.

Following his year in that charge, he was assigned, "far hence to the gentiles, that is among the Chippewa Indians at the head of Lake Superior." His career, mostly in Wisconsin, spanned 40 years. The year he departed this area he married a girl from Fayette and fathered six children. Over the years, he served congregations in Fond du Lac, Mineral Point, Hudson, New Richmond, Mazomanie, Brodhead, Prairie du Chien and Shullsburg. While in the Minneapolis area he also served as register of the United States Land Office.

Reverend moves on

By 1882, however, he was destitute, the fate of far too many men of God in his time, and went to live with a son in Iowa. He wrote to a



The Rev. Thomas Fullerton, a circuit rider, preached the first Christian sermon in the Baraboo Valley as a young man. This picture shows him 30 years later.

friend, "I am at peace with God and His Church. I am only waiting till my charge. All is well."

And so it was that Christianity came to the rough and rugged settlements of the Wisconsin frontier, not with a flourish of heavenly trumpets and gold and jeweled robes, but in the way of its master riding into Jerusalem — a plain man of God on a pony.

Bob Dewel's column is a weekly feature of the News Republic.

They don't make men like this anymore

by Bob Dewel

"A terror he was, with a character as rude and as varied as the roughly rising talused hills and deep rock-lined ravines of the region of his adoption . . . while they lasted, his tantrums struck fear to the timid members of the little colony . . . Abe possessed an open-hearted generosity and a certain rude sense of justice — (yet) his wild outbursts of temper shocked the community."

Cole in his "Standard History of Sauk County" has several pages devoted to Abe Wood, including the above quotations. Cole astutely observed that "men sometimes seem to reflect in a remarkable degree the attributes of their surroundings," listing the steely quartzite bluffs as a corollary as well as the wild nature of the largely unexplored area of Sauk County in the 1840s. Abe Wood was on the committee that explored the rough countryside of Sauk County and selected the Baraboo River rapids area as the location of the new county seat.

Wood is reported to have been blue-eyed and red haired, six feet tall, with an unusually large head and six toes on one foot. He wore pantaloons patched so often that the pant legs had been "amputated above the patch and sewed in place again," with the patch on the back of the knee. Some questioned whether he was coming or going, but not to his face!

Early in life this Kentucky-born woodsman came to Wisconsin, locating at the Portage Fort area, where he kept a grog shop. When he killed a Pawnee Indian due to some dispute, the uproar that followed was silenced by his marriage, later solemnized by Eben Peck, to a Native American woman from the Madison settlement. She already had a half-grown daughter, and in 1837 they produced a girl. In 1839 they



Abe Wood

From "Abe Wood" by Cole

They were trying to leave the stricken man with a very reluctant landlord when they saw that the steamboat was pulling away without sounding the bell. Dumping the poor sick man on the landlord's doorstep, the Baraboo Rushers swam to the boat and commandeered it.

With a flourish of his tomahawk, Abe assumed control of the steamboat, crying, "The Baraboo Rushers are not to be trifled with," and relinquishing control only when the boat neared St. Louis.

attests to his presence in the settlement that became Baraboo.

The Prairie Aristocrat

The story of Count Haraszthy is really a story of Sauk Prairie rather than of Baraboo. However, the Count did play a major role in the selection of Baraboo as the County Seat, and he even opened a store here in the new capital of the county in the 1840s.

A previous article told of the committee of six men who considered shooting the dog for food while exploring the unknown wilds of the county. The Count was a member of that party, along with Abe

Wood and historian Canfield. Because of the importance of his presence, we include the Count as one of the true frontier characters of the Baraboo area.

A refugee from Hungary following the failure of the democratic revolution led by Louis Kossuth, the Count swept into the Sauk Prairie in July, 1840, and quickly became a respected civic leader and promoter. He was known to Rev. Thomas Fullerton, however, as rather pretentious and erratic, but popular.

he had given his name and abruptly departed for California. In his 20 years in that state, Count Haraszthy attained considerable prominence in the General Assembly and as assayer of the United States Mint in San Francisco. He also had agricultural pursuits, particularly in the growth of grapes using Chinese laborers. One wonders if he was the father of the California wine industry.

In 1848, Haraszthy left for Nicaragua, where his promotional talents surfaced. However in 1849, he disappeared forever, perhaps drowning while exploring the unknown areas of that country.

His village of Haraszthy later became known as Westfield, and finally as Sauk City.

Observations

It is hard to picture the courtly and refined Count exploring the unknown areas of Sauk County in the company of the impulsive and barely civilized Abe Wood, when they selected Baraboo as the site for the county seat in 1844. The Count was driven by his resentment of rival Prairie du Sac, chosen as the first county seat over the village named after himself. It is hard to think of the untutored Abe Wood as a land speculator for the Baraboo Rapids area, but he, too, helped in making the choice.

Yet these two men, accompanied by surveyor-historian Canfield and three other men (and a nervous dog) made the selection, perhaps because of the beautiful setting in the Baraboo River valley. The deal was cemented when Preston Brigham, a resident of Sumpter township rather than of Baraboo, provided "with his own money" the cash to purchase the land now known as downtown Baraboo. It was he who gave the area its first name, Adams.



drifted into the Baraboo Rapids area as its first settler, though Wallace Rowan and Eben and Roscline Peck should perhaps share that distinction.

Abe Wood's stormy personality and great physical strength dominated the more timid members of the growing settlement. Historian Canfield felt Abe's wrath after a perceived slight at a community picnic at Skillet Creek. Canfield eluded Wood at the Eben Peck cabin, so Abe in his anger leaped upon the Peck dining table and "kicked the cups and plates right and left to destruction." Apparently the Pecks did not challenge him.

At another time, Wood and three companions took passage on a Mississippi steamboat, and a crewman came down with the dreaded cholera. When no one else on the boat would assist in putting the unfortunate man ashore, Abe thundered, "Where is a blanket, the Baraboo Rushers will take him ashore. We're not afraid of man or the devil, much less a gripe in the stomach."

Eventually Wood's Indian wife and her first child departed, leaving Wood's child Margaret with him. Because of his violent reputation, Margaret was given special consideration by the other settlers.

Later, in Abe's absence and while still a teenager, Margaret was married to Charles W. Perry of Milton. Abe was so incensed that he shut his son-in-law up for a period of time, but eventually relented and the trembling groom was freed.

Shortly after this, Abe fell from a horse-drawn wagon and after five weeks of agony died from a head injury. His burial place in Albion did not receive a marker, and its location is now unknown. Wood, however, left a lasting impression on the settlement he founded, and it was not all bad. He loved children, and also on occasion dispensed rough but fair justice on his fellow settlers. His strong physical attributes and overpowering personality dominated the settlement, but to this day only a plaque in Ochsner Park

At various times Haraszthy operated a ferry, a steamboat, dairy, pig and sheep farms, as well as stores in Baraboo and the Sauk Prairie area. Actually, his settlement was modestly named Haraszthy after himself in what is now Sauk City, and was surveyed at the time by Canfield.

In 1844 he promoted his village of Haraszthy to be the county seat, but Prairie du Sac won the election. Its honor was short-lived, for the Count, defeated in promoting his village, joined and perhaps even formed the committee which selected the Baraboo Rapids as the county seat, as reported in a previous article.

Despite his frontier surroundings, the flamboyant aristocrat wore a stovepipe hat and prowled the forest wearing "a green silk hunting shirt with a wide silken sash of flaming red!"

Unaccountably, on Christmas Day of 1848, the Count and his wife and six children pulled up stakes in the village to which

Both Wood and Haraszthy were gone in a decade, one to his final resting place in an unmarked grave, and the other to greater glory in California, followed by disappearance in a foreign county. Only Brigham, featured in an earlier article in "The Benefactors of Baraboo," lived out his years in our area, serving in numerous county offices.

Unmentioned so far are the other members of the selection committee which selected the new county seat. Canfield's "Sketches of Sauk County" affords him some recognition. Other less colorful members of the group of six were Edmund Rendtorff of Sauk City, and Thomas Remington and Levi Moore. You will find the latter two names on streets in Baraboo.

However, nowhere in Baraboo will you find an Abe Wood street, a Haraszthy Park or a Brigham building. Are we failing to honor our founders in the coming sesquicentennial-plus-10-year anniversary?

Frontier justice among

Too often we have have a glorified view of the early settlers on the American frontier, and forget that Baraboo too was once an outpost on the frontier in the 1840s and early 1850s.

The territory north and west of the Wisconsin River had only recently been opened up to settlers from the young United States, then only 50 tumultuous years old. This followed the unfortunate Black Hawk War, of which Sauk County had a part.

Life on the frontier called for hard work and self-reliance, and also common sense. It also attracted the boisterous and untamed element who had failed to fit into the more decorous Eastern coast society.

Baraboo had its share of these characters, already discussed in our recent "Highlights of Baraboo History" booklet, untamed men like Abe Wood and adventurers like Count Haraszthy. It also had its upright citizens like Preston Brigham and Albert Ochsner, as discussed in "The Benefactors of Baraboo" booklet in 1987.

Unfortunately it is often the boisterous and untamed who make the history books. Witness Abe Wood's notoriety compared to that of his partner and co-founder of Baraboo, Wallace Rowan. Rowan probably provided stability to the wild Abe Wood, but Rowan was buried unceremoniously somewhere in the present residential area of West Baraboo in an unmarked grave, "forty rods northwest of the dam" in 1846. Unlike Wood, we know little of Rowan's life in Baraboo.



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men and boys

The duel

As in all cultures, disputes often arose in the frontier days, and a court system of sorts was organized locally. Sometimes, though, the judges abandoned legal protocol and applied a dose of common sense as they saw it, rightly or wrongly.

Such was the case when a dispute arose between Archibald Barker and Captain Finley. This was the first law suit in Sauk County, and the Justice of the Peace was D.C. Barry. Continuing disputes between the two men had culminated in the lawsuit, as related by Harry Ellsworth Cole in his "History of Sauk County." Cole writes:

"After hearing their jangling until he got tired of it, (Barry) proposed ... that Finley and Barker fight it out and not bother him; that he had a couple of pistols made out of a gun barrel by Hosey King that would make good dueling pistols."

Apparently there was favoritism on the part of Judge Barry, for "he gave Barker a knowing wink." Barker insisted on his old shot gun. Barry and Levi Moore, a prominent citizen, were to be the seconds, but they loaded the guns with powder only, no balls!

Cole continues: "At the word 'whell and fire' Barker quickly wheeled and hallood out 'you are

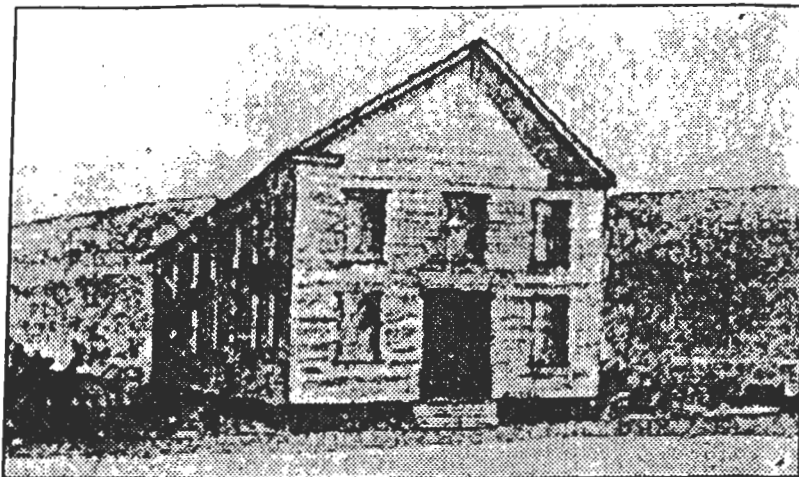
a dead man' and blazed away with both barrels of his old shot gun." Captain Finley, thinking he had been shot, cried out "oh" but in a little while "saw the joke, and the matter was settled over a bottle of whiskey."

It might be noted that there seem to have been no lawyers present at this rendering of frontier law! Barker Street in Baraboo may be named after Archibald Barker, or perhaps after an attorney, John Barker.

Another famous duel

We may be surprised that there was a duel in the Baraboo area at this time, but the local duel occurred only 40 years after the most famous duel in American history, that between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr in 1804.

Imagine this scenario if you can: It is 1993, and immediate past Vice President Dan Quayle has challenged Secretary of the



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The first courthouse in Baraboo, located about where the Al. Ringling Theatre is today.

Treasury Lloyd Bentsen to a duel, the result of years of political differences. Secretary Bentsen, his honor not to be tarnished, accepts the challenge. It is understood that a manly appearance at the duel is the real requirement, and that the opponents may suddenly become bad marksmen that day. Their honor assuaged, the duel is over and they return to public life.

Such was not the case in 1804 as far as Burr was concerned. Like Quayle, he too was a former vice president. He, instead of Jefferson, could well have been our third president after a series of tie votes in Congress but Hamilton, a former secretary of the treasury, had reluctantly thrown his support to Jefferson, despite their political differences!

Note the similarities in the offices Quayle and Burr had held, on the one hand, and the offices that Bentsen and Hamilton held.

At any rate, Burr was smarting from derogatory remarks by Hamilton, and aimed to kill. Hamilton died in a few days. He might well have been president instead of Madison, following Jefferson's two terms. This would have changed the course of American history, for unlike Jefferson, a man of the people, Hamilton espoused the aristocracy and his governing style would have favored the rich and powerful. This is a continuing struggle in America!

At any rate, we are thankful that Quayle and Bentsen did not engage in a duel, unacceptable today but still acceptable at the time of the Baraboo duel!

Rowan and the kiss

We mentioned above the relative anonymity of Wallace Rowan, but there is one story about him that is of interest. It seems that he had two sons who, in brotherly fashion, had engaged in a dispute with each other which had led to blows.

Rowan "happened to witness the altercation. He stepped in between them, took each by the collar, and mildly walked them into the house," relates Cole.

Quelling their protestations of innocence and righteousness, he put one on each side of the room and assembled his rather large family. He then "told the boys to meet halfway and kiss, with their heads up and pleasant."

Rowan, unsatisfied with a surly performance, had the osculatory encounter repeated, and the greater compliance by the boys settled the matter.

Such was frontier justice among men and boys.

How settlers invoked frontier justice

"The enraged settlers followed him finally to Sauk, where he had taken refuge, taking him from his bed one stormy night and forcing him to begin with them, on foot, a return journey to Baraboo. On the way, after repeated threats of hanging, they rolled him in a mud puddle, and that brought him to terms."

The circumstances leading to the above action are not all that different from the scams which are attempted on all of us today. The difference is that while we have access to an array of governmental agencies to protect us or go to bat for us, the settlers had no ready access to the law, and the resulting compromise was called frontier justice. Even when the law was present, the settlers had a way of deciding things, as a U.S. marshal learned during the sawlog war in Reedsburg.

Here then is a story of how that justice was meted out in early Baraboo in 1847—but the bad guy eventually won!

Land claims

All of the western lands in those days were originally owned by the U.S. government, which in turn allowed its citizens to explore and mark out claims on parcels of land under most circumstances.

Baraboo's early settlers had made their claims under what they thought were those rules. They were angered to learn that the government had now proclaimed those lands as for sale "on the 20th of November next, without giving the usual notice of six months, as has always been done, thereby denying the settlers of timely notice."

Claimant's Association

Thus read the proclamation of the Baraboo Claimants Association, organized on Sept. 7, 1846, and chaired by Alexander Crawford. The matter was serious, for it appeared that lands occupied for years by early settlers such as Roseline and Eben Peck, and cleared and improved over those years, could be taken from them by a stranger, or even a friend.

The proclamation continued, "it is unanimously resolved that we will be in readiness to protect each other in our respective claims to the utmost of our power." Nearly all local settlers signed, including the irascible Abe Wood, historian Harvey Canfield, and some 56 other men. All signatures are male. Missing is the name of Eben Peck, Roseline's husband, who may have already left for California and possible death.



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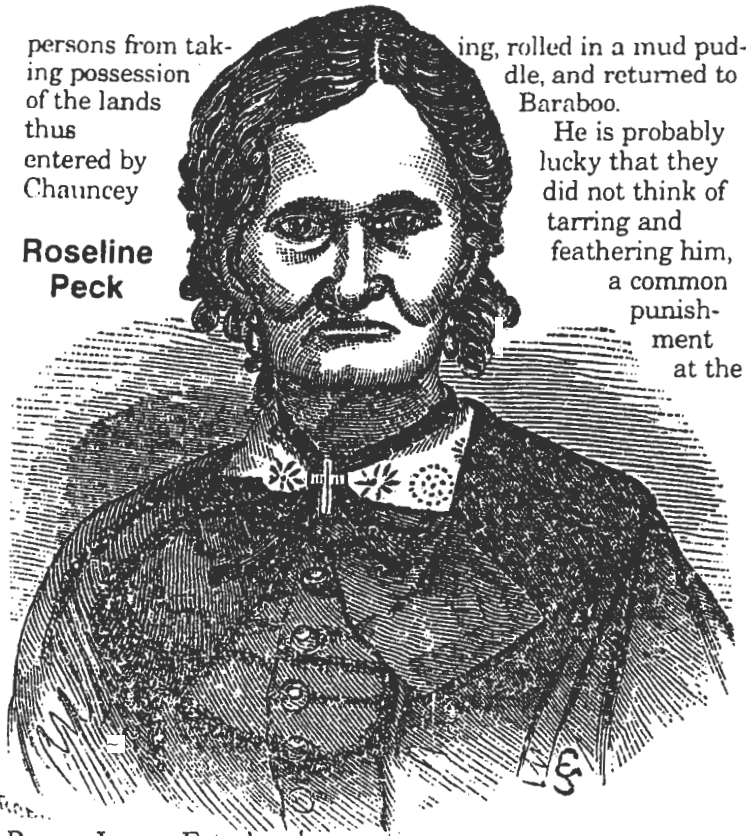
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Despite the bravado, by late summer 1847 some of the settlers' lands had been claimed by and assigned by the government to others, notably the lands of Roseline Peck. On Aug. 10 the Claimants Society met at a picnic table in a grove, and was addressed by the ever-present Count Haraszthy. The resolutions which were drafted specifically named local residents Chauncey Brown, a man named Esterbrook, and Simeon Crandall.

It stated that "as Chauncey Brown has chosen to seize upon and enter lands embracing all the improvements of widow Peck, it is resolved that we will defend and protect each other; that we will prevent any and all

persons from taking possession of the lands thus entered by Chauncey

Roseline Peck



Brown Jr., one Esterbrook, and Simeon Crandall."

The resolution concluded ominously that the Claimants Society would "use our best endeavors to punish any person or agent of such person who shall attempt to take possession of or improve such claims." Strong talk indeed!

Taking action

Bella French Swisher, in "American Sketch Book", reports that at that point it was decided to force Simeon Crandall to listen to the resolution, and he was carried to the spot and lain on the picnic table. He attempted to escape, "and would have done so had not an enthusiastic dog who had the thoughts of the settlers at heart, seized and detained him." Crandall then relented and made a satisfactory settlement with the original landowners.

Chauncey Brown had fled to Sauk Prairie, and it was he that was taken from his bed, as told in paragraph one, threatened with hang-

ing, rolled in a mud puddle, and returned to Baraboo.

He is probably lucky that they did not think of tarring and feathering him, a common punishment at the

in entering lands (claiming them) as the others had. In order to secure herself a home, she borrowed money at fifty percent interest and purchased an eighty acre piece."

The Browns

Chauncey Brown seems to have remained in the area despite the indignity he had suffered at the hands of the irate Claimants. He had two sons, William and George, and they appear to have claimed the water power in the area of what is now the Baraboo business district south of the river. Indeed, this must have been the Brown family who founded the village there, which took the name of Baraboo. There were a few lots on the north side of the river also.

In improving the grist mill, George was killed when a timber fell on him, and his estate was administered by his father, Chauncey. There seems to have been lingering animosity toward the Browns, for Swisher, in speaking of a fire that destroyed the grist mill, says, "myself and a few others were fully satisfied in our own minds that it was the work of an incendiary, and who he was." An enemy of Brown? Her secret is not revealed.

Even the venerable Harvey Canfield was subjected to an attempted claim jump. Someone erected a building on his claim, but the Claimants Society is said to have quickly torn it down and burned it. Swisher says that with a few exceptions, the Society was generally victorious, even "though the law was not on their side."

Other villages

Canfield established the village of Lyons, now known as West Baraboo, in 1846. At that time the village of Adams (now Baraboo), could

time.

It was Brown who had claimed Roseline Peck's land, and at this point he deemed it wise to deed the land back to her. This was done by the entire party returning to the Sauk villages, where the deed back to here was completed. Somehow she had to pay some money in the bargain.

Does it sound like frontier justice triumphed here? Read on: "The matter did not end here. The deed, having been obtained by force, would not stand in law, and by taking the matter into the courts, Brown won the case.

"Nor was this all. The money which was paid (Brown) for the land was never returned (to Roseline), that the official (who held it for safekeeping) kept it. The law suit was in court five years, and cost Mrs. Peck several hundreds of dollars.

"Besides all this, not being able to prove her husband's death, (Eben was at the time reported massacred on the way to California), she did not have the same advantage

hardly be called a village, even though it had a somewhat precarious hold on the county seat and a minimal frame building for the purpose. Canfield, a surveyor, felt that the site to the west was a more likely spot for a village to arise, and laid out Lyons with great hopes.

The central square was named after DeWitt Clinton, with whom he had worked on the Erie Canal. Lyons fared better than did Manchester, a proposed village in the area near the present sewage disposal plant. Another part of present Baraboo seems to have been laid out as Litchfield.

Money could be made in those days by land speculators, who platted out a mythical village and publicized it, sometimes deceptively, to prospective settlers from the east.

The widow Peck

It seems that the one person who suffered the most from claim jumping was Roseline Peck. She was the first woman to enter the Baraboo River valley, arriving with her husband about the same time that Abe Wood and Wallace Rowan came upon the scene. Wood is generally regarded as the founder of Baraboo, or at least the first resident.

Within 10 years or so after their arrival, Roseline had outlasted Rowan and Wood and her husband, and is regarded by some as the real founder of Baraboo. Indeed she lived in the area for some 60 years, until her death in 1899. Roseline Street is named after her.

She was a plucky woman to have outlasted so many assaults on her squatter's claim, and became highly regarded in the community for compassionate care of sick individuals.

PRESCOTT
 The ~~Preston~~ Brigham County Building?

By Dr. Bob Dewel

A recent article in the Sun about the Warner Memorial Road briefly mentioned a Preston Brigham as a prominent Baraboo benefactor, without explanation. No one has asked, so we decided it was time to write of him.

*The Preston Brigham County Building."

That is what this author suggested they should name the new county building on the square in Baraboo. I even sent a neatly composed proposal to the County Board.

Their lack of response was deafening; only one member even commented on the idea. I have to admit that deep in my heart I knew the proposal wouldn't be accepted. After all, the name Preston Brigham does not often fall from the lips of Sauk County residents these days. But there were reasons for my suggestion.

That lack of name recognition was not always the case. Time was when everyone in the young county knew him personally. They knew him as the stagecoach jehu. They knew him as the proprietor of an inn in the town of Sumpter and as the mail carrier. They also knew



said quartersection (now the courthouse square in downtown Baraboo) in his name with his own money, there being no funds in the treasury, and subsequently deeded it to the county."

The quotation is from Canfield, "Outline Sketches of Sauk County," 1861, page 18. Historian Canfield was a contemporary of Preston Brigham, which gives the story added veracity. The statement is repeated by later historians Butterfield, Cole and the late Erhart Mueller.

that Brigham was an early and enthusiastic citizen of Baraboo, but the fact is that he didn't even live in Baraboo, but in the Town of Sumpter south of the bluffs!

Actually, the first name of the village surrounding the new courthouse square was not Baraboo. Butterfield reports: "The County Commissioners platted it into a village and called it Adams, in consideration of Mr. Brigham's high regard for the renowned Massachusetts family of that name." This refers to our second and sixth Presidents.

These were heady times in the little settlements on the prairie. Wisconsin was not yet a state. The question of where to locate the county seat of the fledgling county had preoccupied the early settlers. Disputes in the Sauk-Prairie communities led to appointment of a commission to scout out the unoccupied northern part of the area. Their experiences, and subsequent battles over the location, are a story in themselves, not to be told in this account for lack of space.

Suffice to say that Baraboo's first resident, Abe Wood, was soon incarcerated for attempting to shoot the land agent. That night Abe simply removed a floor board and dug his way under the walls of

devotes several pages to Brigham in "Only in Sumpter." Brigham left no will, but a modest estate went to his son and daughter. The records are preserved in the Sauk County Historical Society.

"All these years until his death, Preston Brigham remained a loyal booster of Baraboo and Sauk County."

Unfortunately there is one little hitch in Canfield's story! A study of official records shows an indenture to Brigham on 12-31-46 for \$200 with interest at 12 percent for 18 months. But it also shows, on 11-23-46, a mortgage already for \$400. The latter sum was a huge amount of money on the frontier. In those days customers at Brigham's Inn paid 25 cents for a full dinner, so \$400 represented a fortune.

Also, the Deed is from the United States to Sauk County, not to Brigham, but the plat of the area is filed under Brigham's name, not the county's. In

as "with his own money, and deeded it to the County." Later, Butterfield corroborates the story. It seems likely that Brigham wrote off the debt, for the time is too short for the County to organize and raise taxes, nor would Canfield, publishing at the time, dare to misrepresent the facts. Besides, they even let Preston Brigham name the town!

But there is another interesting turn to this story, and this fact is certain. On 11-16-47, Sauk County sold lots 1, 2, 11, and 12 to Preston Brigham. These are the very lots now occupied by the new county building! If there are ghosts in the new building, we'll know who it is, won't we?

No, the county building will never be known as the Preston Brigham courthouse annex. The courthouse square will never be known as Brigham square. But a plaque somewhere would be nice.

Sources of information:

- Historians Canfield, Butterfield, Cole, and Erhart Mueller.
- The Sauk County Historical Society Museum

*Prescott

him as a musician who sang in the Presbyterian choir in his native Massachusetts before he moved here.

Sauk County also knew Preston Brigham as the first Register of Deeds, and as Judge of Probate. Indeed, he was a Commissioner on the first county board, the board which 150 years later declined to recognize him!

Perhaps the board cannot be blamed. The once familiar name in Sauk County would be awkward as the name of a building, and his time of recognition had long since passed.

But there is still another reason to recognize Brigham, for he made a significant beneficial contribution to our county. In April 1846, Preston Brigham "purchased the

"Actually, the first name of the village surrounding the new courthouse square was not Baraboo"

Canfield continues: "The County Commissioners plotted the quarter section into a village plot. There were realized from the sale of lots \$4000. A fair sized courthouse of wood, two stories high, and a sham wooden jail (were built) in April 1848. The courthouse was built on the north side of Fourth street," apparently where the Al. Ringling Theatre is now.

One might infer from the above

the ramshackle jail.

Reedsburg challenged the location of the county seat in 1852, with some help from the state legislature, but the effort failed. Soon the wooden courthouse burned, to be replaced by a somewhat more elegant brick structure in 1856. It too burned at the turn of the century, and was replaced by the handsome classical courthouse which still serves.

During all these years until his death in 1862 at the age of 82, Preston Brigham remained a loyal booster of Baraboo and Sauk County, serving in many capacities. He died in his daughter's home in the Town of Sumpter, respected for his years of service to the area. The late Erhart Mueller

the summer of 1848, there is indeed a satisfaction of the mortgage, but for \$200, not \$400, to Brigham by the Commissioners.

What does this mean? Was Brigham actually paid for a loan to the emerging county? Or, did he "satisfy" the mortgage by writing it off?

The records are incomplete, not unusual in those days when a man's handshake was his word.

Canfield, who surely knew Brigham, speaks of the purchase

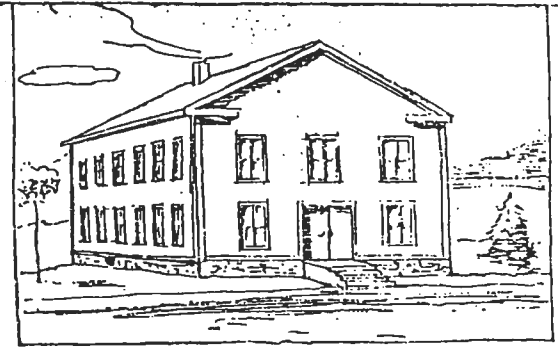


Illustration courtesy of
Sauk County Historical Society

The old court house

- The Baraboo Carnegie Public Library
- Judge James Karch
- Sharon Dithmar, Sauk County Abstract and Title

*Prescott

Prescott Brigham

See page. . . . 12



Augostin Haraszthy, the
 Ubiquitous Count
 Yesteryear Revisited
 By Bob Dewel

Although we have mentioned Count Haraszthy frequently in other articles, a packet of material submitted by Fred Galley of Galley Studios, Portage, calls for a more complete examination of the life of this pioneer Sauk City promoter.

Actually the Count's career is so varied that some obituaries do not even mention his years in Sauk City. From his early career in Hungary to his eventual prominence in California, followed by his activity in Nicaragua, his life presents a fascinating story of which his time in Sauk County, though significant, is only a small part of the narrative.

Hungary

We start at the beginning, about 1000 A.D., when according to one account, the Haraszthy forebearers were Huns, uncivilized hordes from the steppes of Russia who overran much of Europe. Actually, the first Huns came 500 years before that, and by 1848 the descendants were civilized and often cultured individuals, as was the Count.

As a young man he was important in Hungarian government, first as one of the bodyguards of Emperor Ferdinand, and eventually as private secretary to the Viceroy of Hungary. However, he fell in with the Hungarian Freedom Fighter Louis Kossuth, and when the rebellion failed in 1839, both were forced to flee.

Then, as now, the United States was the refuge for the disenchanting and discontented, and the Count brought a number of settlers with him, settling first near Koshkonong, and then, in 1841, in what is now the Sauk City area.

In 1842 he obtained permission to return to Hungary to bring his wife and family to the area, but had to abandon

his estate there. He remained in the village named Haraszthy (now Sauk City) until Christmas Day, 1848. At this time he abruptly left for California.

Wisconsin

The Count apparently had a personality described in more than one article as restless and erratic. This proud Hungarian nobleman was recalled in 1925 by the Sauk City Journal as restless, energetic, and self-contained, but with a romantic disposition. He "flitted from one undertaking to another with an erratic abruptness that was really heroic. His courtly, dignified manner, aristocratic manner, and lofty mien (mien) was familiar to the older residents of the locality."

These qualities account perhaps for his remarkable accomplishments in Sauk County. He had a village platted, and modestly called it Haraszthy. He was the first to plant hops in the county. For a time he had control of the operation of a steamboat on the Wisconsin River, as well as a ferry boat. An expert horseman, he adapted well to frontier Wisconsin, becoming a trader and a hunter. Sauk City was not the only village he founded, for Roxbury, in Dane County, can make the same claim.

Though there is little reference to Columbia County in the papers we have, the Historical Society there recognizes him as an important area personality. Baraboo, however, has significant ties to the Count, who seemed at times to be everywhere. He established a store in the river settlement called Baraboo Rapids, perhaps the first store there, with Baraboo's first absentee ownership.

Perhaps his most significant contribution to Sauk County was the location of the county seat in Baraboo. Due to rivalries and obfuscation between the villages of Haraszthy and Prairie du Sac, described in an earlier article, an ad hoc committee headed by the Count explored the largely unsettled lands north and west of the

Sauk area, and designated Baraboo as the preferred location for the new county seat. Among those also serving on the committee were historian Canfield and Baraboo's erratic founder, Abe Wood.

California and Nicaragua

Count Haraszthy's importance is illustrated by several references to him on the Web (Google-Haraszthy). In California he was quickly elected Sheriff of San Diego, but it was his work with viticulture that distinguished his career there as founder of the California wine industry. He served in several capacities as a public official, including Superintendent of the San Francisco mint, and as a state Assemblyman. He also was a founder of the San Diego Masonic Lodge.

In the 1860's he became interested in the Central American nation of Nicaragua, spending considerable time there engaged in a sugar plantation. According to several reports, he met his death in 1869 by falling into a stream and being devoured by an alligator. It was a violent end to the restless but productive life of an erratic but inspired man.



PORTAGE Historical Society

Claim Jumper Cheats Widow Peck

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

Here's the scenario for this story: It is 1847, and women not only cannot vote, they have no property rights. The husband of a pioneer Baraboo lady has disappeared, leaving her status as a married woman in question.

Although she and her husband had previously staked claims to property on the grounds above the Baraboo Rapids, the claim is being "jumped" by an unscrupulous claim jumper. What's more, the primitive state legal system is supporting the claim jumper, to the distress of the abandoned if not widowed lady. What is she to do?

Well. It is all true, and it happened in the frontier settlement called Baraboo Rapids then. We've touched on this story before, but recently it was carefully researched and chronologically explained by none other than our newly reelected State Assembly person, Cheryl Albers, as part of a law school graduation requirement. The 50 page essay is highly documented, including a few minor references to the articles by this writer, for which we thank her.



Rosaline Peck

There is a lot to this story, and we may not get it all in one article but let's begin with Eben and Rosaline Peck, the first married couple to settle in Baraboo Rapids. They had a son, Victor, and a baby daughter, Victoria, and like all early arrivals in America's western expansion, they "staked a claim" to some land.

This seemed to be in accordance with the laws and customs of the times. They developed the property, clearing their 80 acres of land for a cabin and adjacent gardens, and lived there for seven years. Rosaline did, anyway, but Eben, in 1845, left for California and the gold rush, never to be heard from again.

Albers explains it best as follows: "Rosaline Peck lacked 'personhood' status. At the age of 39 Rosaline was husbandless but not exactly widowed; she had one young daughter to care for, though her son was almost an adult when her husband, Eben, left in 1845. Although she had been 'in-charge' of their public house operation for decades, Rosaline could not own real estate, nor could she make a will or transfer real estate to her heirs. When the government put her property on the market, she was unable to buy it. Her legal existence was merged with that of her husband, and she could not represent her own interests in court, and her husband was nowhere to be found."

Chauncey Brown Jr.

Enter the villain! Chauncey Brown Jr. was the son of an apparently respected local promoter. His father, Chauncey Sr., developed much of what is now Baraboo's south side, even including property near the corner of Ash and Water streets on the north side of the river. Young Brown realized that Rosaline's staking a claim was not legally sufficient for ownership of a piece of land. Though it was rare, filing a legal claim to an early pioneer's staked property did happen, and the Widow (?) Peck seemed a likely target.

The year was 1847, and others in the community who had staked claims became nervous, partly because of their precarious legal status with regard to their land, but also because of the high regard in which Rosaline Peck was held. She was for many years the "welcome Wagon" of those days to strangers and newcomers, sheltering them in her own home for a time. She also was the local medical authority, with various salves and ointments and lotions and other remedies.

Partly out of that regard, but perhaps more for their own protection, a Claimants Association was formed. How the association took the law into its own hands, to no avail. Is described in the next article, which will follow in a future issue.

Claimants Association Fights Injustice in 1847

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

As related in the previous article about Baraboo in 1847, Rosaline Peck was husband-less and had no property rights, even to the land they had staked out seven years previously. They had built a cabin and developed their 80 acres of land, but now their claim was being "jumped" by Chauncey Brown, Jr.

Other early residents in the settlement were alarmed, not only because of the injustice to the Widow Peck, but because some of them also had no real claim to their property other than that they had "staked a claim" a few years before.

As a result, a Claimants Association was formed with some 56 - signatures, even including that of Chauncey Brown Jr's father, also a resident. Another leader was the irrepressible Count Haraszthy of the village of Haraszthy, now Sauk City.

As was explained in the first article, Assembly person Cheryl Albers recently researched the matter deeply, and presented a discussion of it amounting to some fifty pages. We thank her for approving our plan to review this interesting part of our early history. The document is too long to reprint, but in surprisingly correct legalese of the day, and after several "Whereas", the document stated the case for the settlers. They claimed that "for the purpose of securing to ourselves our just rights, and to protect our improvements, it is unanimously resolved that we will be in readiness to protect each other in our respective claims to the utmost of our power."

They stated that a claim should consist of "not more than 320 acres, in two legal subdivisions, for the purpose of farms or settlement only, and not for speculations." In addition to the Count,

the local signers included such early pioneer names as Levi Moore, and Canfield and Luther Peck—apparently no relation to Rosaline.

The Vice-President was the irrepressible Abe Wood, generally recognized as the founder of what became Baraboo. This is somewhat in dispute, since the first settlement to bear that name was that of Chauncey Brown Sr., mostly on the south side of the river, whereas Abe was in the western part of what is now Baraboo, unincorporated then.

The stage for further confrontation was set in May, 1847. Albers reports that Chauncey Brown Jr. "purchased from the United States the Sauk County property which Rosaline (and her missing husband Eben) had made improvement on valued at \$300 to \$500", a large sum in those days. Brown Jr. "received a copy of the deed from the register of land office in Mineral Point,"

This called for another declaration from the local citizens, again with several "whereas'." They stated that "it is resolved that we will defend and protect each other, that we will prevent any and all persons from taking possession of the lands thus entered by Chauncey Brown Jr., and punish any person or agent of such persons who shall attempt to take possession of or improve such claims."

Rosaline's land was apparently located in the general neighborhood of the present pumping station and Manchester Road, on the south side of the river, lands later occupied by the Manchester Mill. This is known as the lower oxbow area, referring to the loop or bend in the river at that point.

At about this same time, Chauncey Jr.'s brother, George, hired a surveyor to plat some thirty lots adjacent to and west and north of the Peck claim. This was a legitimate claim apparently, and he named the area "Baraboo". It included a few lots on the north side of



Abe Wood, The First Settler

the river, at the present junction of Ash and Water streets.

There is no proof that Gorge Brown was in a conspiracy with Chauncey Jr., though the proximity of their claims makes one wonder. The remaining citizens did more than wonder, taking their ire out on Chauncey Jr. in the manner of men in a frontier settlement. Their rather violent methods will be reported in the final installment of this review.

Claimants Strike, Supreme Court Strikes Back

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

In this the third and final (finally!) episode of early Baraboo and its claim stake residents, we write of the rough nature of frontier justice, and its fate in the Supreme Court of Wisconsin.

Readers will recall the two previous articles in which the Widow Peck, in an age when women had no property rights, had her 7 year old cabin and 80 developed acres "jumped" or legally claimed, by Chauncey Brown Jr., the villain in our story.

State Representative Cheryl Albers has researched the matter in depth, and a copy of her research is available at the Sauk County Historical Society for those who want more details. As she reported, a Claimants Association had been formed by the leading local citizenry, and they were incensed at Brown's efforts to claim by legalistic means the widows property as his own.

The Claimants Act

As reported in Cole's Standard History of Sauk County, and condensed by Albers, November 23, 1847 was not one of Chauncey Brown Jr's better nights. Cole says that on that night Rosaline's brother-in-law Luther Peck, BCA President John Crawford, and others "illegally and with force...dragged" Chauncey Brown Jr. from the Prairie Du Sac house/hotel of Marcus Warren "with nothing on but his shirt." He was "urged to make a deed to the widow Peck" of the land, although Brown Jr. "kept refusing."

Subsequently 15/20 men took him "up the street", a threat was made to throw him in the river, but instead Brown Jr. "was rolled in the mud and snow up to three times." The thoroughly chilled Brown was then taken to Fife's Tavern where notary public Cyrus Leland awaited, "with deed ready—prepared to be executed."

Luther Peck offered \$100, and Brown stood mute but apparently in acceptance of the deed. Brown was now allowed to leave the tavern, and apparently never returned to claim the \$100. It now being midnight, the group left and the tavern closed for the night, after one of its more unusual activities.

In an earlier article (Vol. I, page 21), we report a similar application of frontier justice to one Simeon Crandall, as reported by Belle Swisher in an early account. It involves a picnic table and a dog. Albers research apparently found little of note on this or other matters in the ensuing three years, a notable exception being the accidental death of Chauncey Jr's brother George while putting up an addition to the mill.

The Legislature acts

There were, however, two important events in 1859. The first was the action of the state legislature granting women sole ownership rights in real estate, rent issues, and profits.

This was of little consolation to Rosaline Peck, for that same year Chauncey Brown Jr. filed suit against her and Abraham (Abe) Wood seeking to void the 1847 deed, due to Brown's allegation of "duress, force, and fraud" and other allegations. The matter dragged on until 1853, when the Circuit Court ordered the deed null and void. Albers reports that Rosaline was ordered to "quiet title and deliver up the property to Brown Jr."

To make matters worse, the State Supreme Court upheld in the ruling in December, 1853. The action of the Claimants Association was declared to be "a case of the most lawless violence and mistreatment." Brown was lightly reprimanded for claim jumping when other land was available.

Brown takes possession

By 1855 Rosaline had sold her cows, and borrowed money at 50% interest (!) to purchase other property. Rosaline had not suffered the last of her troubles even yet, for

following a break in the Bassett and Pratt dam, William Brown took charge and pulled together 500 men to save the dam. They cut down timber to save what was left of the dam. Rosaline later stated that the stand of timber was hers, and that the timber cutting was done by "rich capitalists" who never even thanked her.

Chauncey Brown Jr. died Dec 6, 1865 but Rosaline, having achieved the love and respect of the community, lived until 1899, passing away at the age of 91, "a woman of some wealth".

In her essay, Albers poses the question—who walked the high ground in this matter? Rosaline achieved respect and prominence in the village, "loved by all and hated by none...willing to extend the hand of friendship, hospitality, and financial assistance to others." Albers says Brown is not afforded further mention by any of the early historians.

This is the last of three articles which admittedly only skim the surface of Albers' research. The Sauk County Historical Society has a copy of her 53 page research article for those who hunger for additional information. We again thank Representative Albers for making the material available for review.



Tarring and Feathering

**Roseline Peck's
Descendants are
Numerous
Yesteryear Revisited
By Bob Dewel**

Regular readers of Yesteryear Revisited will remember frequent references to the troubled life of pioneer Baraboo woman Roseline Peck. We also know how her Baraboo land claim was jumped by Chauncey Brown. Now we can report that she was the subject of similar misdoings previously in the then very little village of Madison. Roseline has been pictured several times in previous articles

There is also much more to be learned from recent articles by Ross Curry of Wisconsin Dells, which appeared previously in the Dells Events newspaper. Curry was a long time staff member there, and now writes well documented historical items. He has generously allowed us to add to our knowledge of Roseline and her sometimes tragic life. Actually, as we shall see, Curry is related by marriage to the Peck descendants, and is on occasion in touch with them.

Roseline in Madison

It all began in Wisconsin's pioneer days, when Roseline (Willard) Peck, wife of Eben Peck, both of Vermont, arrived in Wisconsin in 1836. While running a boarding house in Belmont in 1837 they were approached by the Territorial Governor, Judge Doty. He convinced them to move to what was to become Madison and provide similar services for the surveyors and others who were building a capitol building there.

Though expecting her second child, Roseline traveled there from Belmont, riding all day the second day on an Indian pony, and camping in wagons in a snow storm along the way. Accompanying the Pecks was their 3

year old son, Victor, who later grew up in Baraboo, Victor's son was Curry's father's first cousin, hence the family connection. More on the Peck descendants in a moment.

Here we learn for the first time about Abe Wood, later Baraboo's erratic settler and claimant as its first founder, Abe was in charge of building a cabin for the Pecks in Madison, which was unfinished when they arrived but became sort of a boarding house and probably tavern for the workmen.

It was here that Roseline Peck gave birth to a girl on Sept. 14, 1837, the first white child to be born in Madison. The child was named Wisconsin Victoria Peck, and we have written about her and her first husband, Attorney N.W. Wheeler. She did not have children, but her brother Victor did, and that is how the Peck line was continued to this day.

Roseline's husband Eben served as justice of the peace in the little village of Madison, and we learn from Curry that Peck performed the marriage of Abe Wood and an Indian maid, the daughter of Chief DeKaury (Decorah). The wedding date was April 3, 1838.

Eviction twice

Frontier life seems fraught with misdeeds, and Curry reports that, while in Madison, "After clearing 80 acres, breaking sod, putting in fences, buildings, and other improvements, Judge Doty showed up and said he had sold them the wrong piece of land and they would have to move off."

Regular readers will recall that a few years later, with Eben gone, Roseline was also evicted from land in Baraboo which she had developed similarly, and again had to start over, this time without a husband. Eben had left for Oregon and was never heard from again—though some claim he was later located and found to be remarried and with a new family.

The Descendants

We have chronicled Roseline's story in previous article, but now have information on her descendants. It was

Roseline Peck's monument was cleaned and reset a couple of years ago by the folks at Walnut Hill Cemetery. Her daughter Victoria is buried beside her, as is her first husband N.W. Wheeler, whose monument is nearby.



her son Victor who married Elizabeth Curry. Victor was for a time the owner of the Sauk County Democrat newspaper. They had a daughter Anna who later lived in Rock Springs, and a son, William Ross Peck. Curry says that there were many descendants of William, and the descendants "are scattered across Wisconsin and some out of state."

Ross Curry has had several contacts over the years with one of the descendants, Phillip Peck, his second cousin once removed (Curry's grandfather's sister married Victor Peck). Phillip is a UW graduate and engineer who was employed for 30 years by General Electric, and he has researched

the Pecks as far back as Vermont, from which Eben and Roseline emigrated. Phillip is the great great grandson of Roseline Peck.

Roseline would be proud to know of her extended family of descendants, and we are appreciative that Curry has shared the information with us. Curry writes that he is a seventh generation Sauk County resident, the first Curry's arriving in 1845. Curry has produced several local area history books, available from him or on sale at Book World. His books apparently sell better than mine, which are for sale at Corner on Wisconsin and the Village Booksmith!

Old pictures show early Merrimac Ferries

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

The on-again, off-again saga of the Merrimac Ferry has occupied the local news for several weeks now. As of this writing, the ferry is not operating, but hopefully will be by the time this article is published.

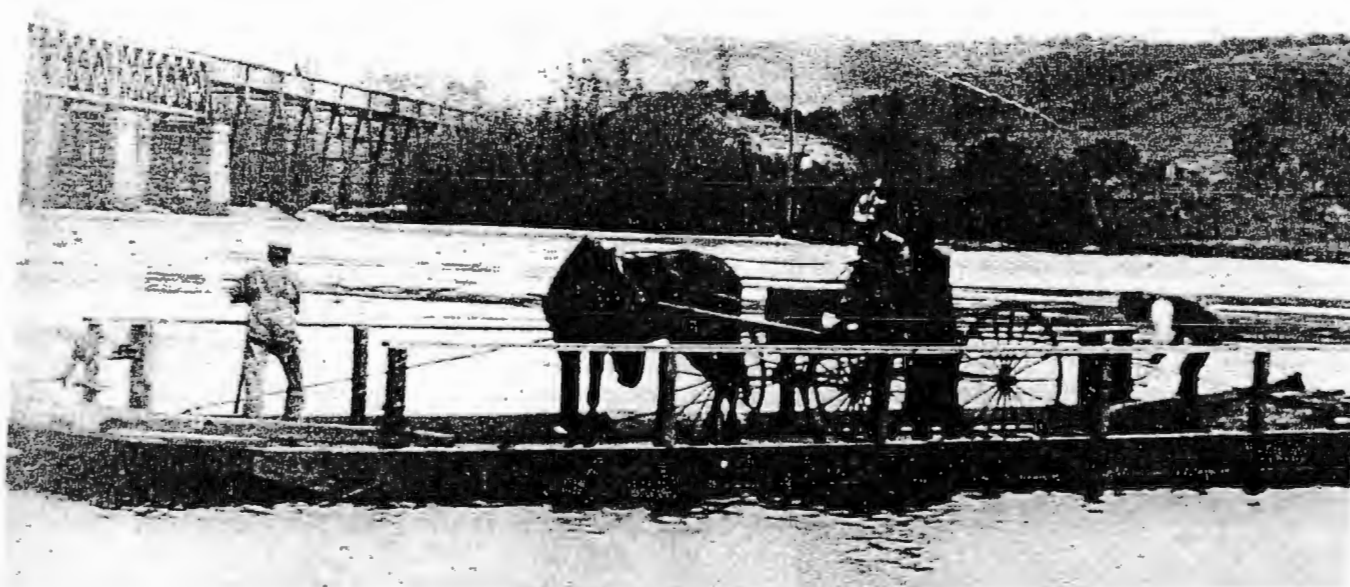
To be helpful to the ferry powers that be, we offer a short history of the ferry service, which has operated in Merrimac since 1847, some 156 years ago. Perhaps today it will be necessary to resort to the original manner of operation, without gasoline or diesel motors, and using the power of the river as described below.

Chester Mattson was the first ferry operator, having been commissioned to establish both a ferry and a road. His name was honored in Baraboo recently when a new and very short spur road was constructed connecting Lake Street and Old Lake Road. It was named the Matt's Ferry Road.

As was reported in more detail in an earlier Yesteryear Revisited article in 1999, no dam formed Lake Wisconsin in those days, but even so the Wisconsin River was a formidable obstacle to travel, and the ferry was very welcome. It was operated, somewhat as it is today, by connection to a cable. The cable was 1200 feet long even then, and was composed of three inch Manilla rope.

Pollution free power was supplied by the rapidly flowing water pushing against the small ferry boat, which was held at nearly right angles to the current. The latter provided enough of a push to propel the boat forward, guided by the rope cable. The crossing is said to have required 20 minutes.

According to Goc in "Many a Fine Harvest", the ferry was motorized in 1900 using kerosene for power. In 1924, Sauk and Columbia Counties took over joint operation, hence the name Colsac for the vessel. The Prairie do Sac dam was constructed in 1914, but the railroad bridge has been there since 1870. The ferry service outdates them both.



Goc, Many a Fine Harvest



Credit: Carolyn Siberz

The Ferry in about 1915



A different day

The great Indian scare

of 1844

"Baraboo is in flames, and the Indians are massacring all the people."

Such was the cry of a panic-stricken settler, Mrs. Shew, as she fled in her nightclothes to the Brewster home north of the bluffs.

The cry was taken up by her sister-in-law, Mrs. Brewster, who then came over the bluffs bare-footed and out of breath to spread the alarm. Thus began the great Indian scare of 1844, a perfect example of how a harmless encounter can be amplified into a crisis.

The treaty

Despite the somewhat infamous 1837 treaty relegating all Native Americans to territories west of the Mississippi, many of them had returned to their homeland in Sauk and other counties. Like all returns home after an absence, things are not the same, and the sparsely settled territory formerly theirs now seemed, in their eyes, to teem with white settlers from the East.

In truth, things really had changed, for the county which had no white residents in 1837 had some 13,614 souls by 1855. Baraboo's population is not known, but it was large enough to have several saloons, since it was this same year, 1854, that the women of the town initiated their whiskey war — mentioned in another article.

At any rate, it was an uneasy meld of cultures, with the settlers wary of the Indians and their return, and the Indians curious about the settlers and anxious for samples of new foods and material goods, so unfamiliar to their former way of life.

The incongruity of the cultures led to much fear among the settlers, especially. It was a situation ripe for serious misunderstandings, and that happened in 1844.

Both Butterfield in his "History of Sauk County" and Bella French Swisher in "The American Sketch Book" relate the story, as told by James Taylor, later of Spring Green.

Swisher's account was published about 1875, and Butterfield's shortly afterward, and the accounts are identical, with direct quotes from Taylor, who was present when Mrs. Brewster arrived. Butterfield probably copied Swisher's account, but in 1875 the story was already 30 years old, and perhaps embellished by time and retelling.

The scare

At any rate, as related in the opening paragraph, the panic-stricken Mrs. Brewster arrived, "having come over the bluffs barefooted, bringing the news that old Richard Clark had been killed by the Indians, and the 'savages' were coming this way," Taylor said.

Like Paul Revere only 79 years before, alarmed men mounted steeds and rode through the countryside of the fertile prairie below the bluffs, the prairie itself named Sauk after an Indian tribe, to warn the populace. The advice given was to "take care of yourself ... wagons could be heard going every direction."

Taylor himself then went to a neighboring farm, procured a pony, and made the rounds of the neighborhood. When he told Philo Barber's brother the news, "The strong man trembled like an

aspen, and faltered. What should I do?" Again I gave the advice "Take care of yourself," he said.

By this time Taylor had reached to lower part of the prairie settlement, and he and some other men then returned to the bluffs, where "There was terrible confusion by this time ... Thomas Tabor made provisions for his wife to make her escape — in some wagon, I think, to where they were thinking of making a place of defense."

The fort

It developed that people were collecting at Uncle Bill Johnson's for self-protection, bringing old guns and pitchforks and "such treasures as they possessed." In all there were about 150 people, with "the women and children into the cellar and the men to stand battle."

By early morning, with no sign of the Indians, "we held a council of war, and concluded to send a scout to reconnoiter the grounds in the neighborhood of (supposedly deceased) Uncle Clark's house ... but not a soul dared to act as a scout except John Grey," who started out alone. After an hour and a half passed, a company of men headed by David Baxter formed a scouting party to look for him. In a mile they found him and heard his story, after which a remarkable thing happened.

The scouting party put spurs to their horses and rushed back, crying: "The Indians are upon us!" The women and children fled to the cellar, and "stout hearts stood in anticipation."

"But from John Grey we learned the true story," Taylor reported. "He had been to Uncle Clark's house. It was not burned and Uncle Clark had no remembrance of being massacred. In fact, he had seen no Indians. Baraboo slept peacefully, undisturbed." The people dispersed, and by daylight the fort was empty!

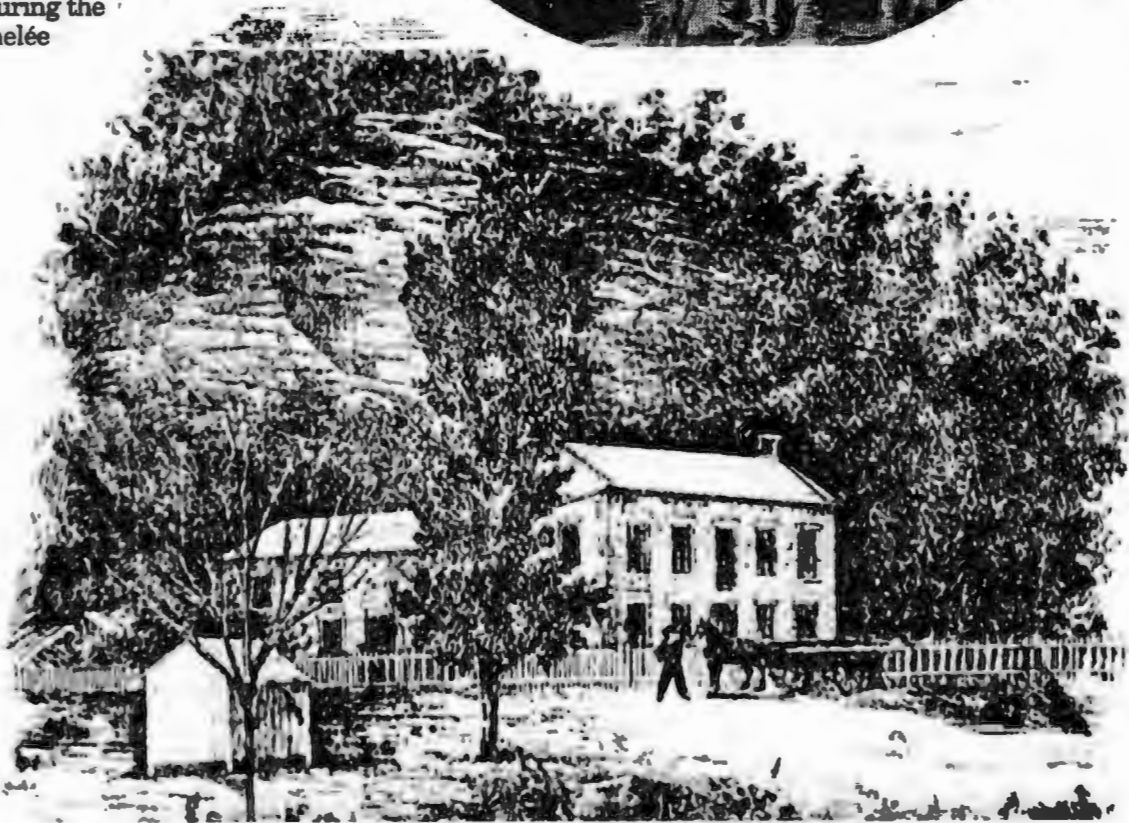
The explanation

Taylor ends his story with this explanation: "It seems from what I can learn that Mrs. Brewster had started, barefoot, over the bluffs to Sauk Prairie on business, and had met an Indian who had frightened her. Uncle Clark that day had been burning some brush-heaps, and the great smoke led Mrs. Brewster to believe that the house was burning. Her imagination did the rest."

Swisher, in her "American Sketch Book," adds that someone during the *melee*

stopped at the home of a Mrs. Harrington, warning her of the impending massacre in Baraboo. "But she concluded that if such was the case, they would have work enough for one night; and she went to sleep again regardless of the warnings."

Curiously, on another page Butterfield tells a slightly altered story. He quotes Taylor as going to a Ben Johnson farm, not Williams. Also, on the morning after the scare, the assembled men, "determined to have a smell of gunpowder if they could not win any glory



Pictured at top is a Native American delegation that petitioned the governor. Yellow Thunder appears in the lower right. Shown

above in later years is "the fort" where frightened settlers gathered during the great Indian scare of 1844.

(and commanded by Taylor, who said) ... 'Make ready, aim, fire' ... and an old musket was fired. Since then Mr. Taylor has been known as the General."

And the Indians?

It can be assumed that the alarms, midnight riders and rushing wagons did not escape the attention of the Native Americans in the area, for ever among the strange invaders from the East, such goings-on in the night were not their normal manner of operation.

One can imagine, then, the

amazement and consternation which the Indians must have felt. One can imagine two or three of their number gathered in the shadows as the "fort" was developed at the Bill Johnson homestead, marveling at the confusion.

Perhaps they wondered if they should rouse their Native American families, since the white man seemed to be acting as if the world was coming to an end. If they did so, a wise chief must have waved it off as another crazy action of the unpredictable white man.



UNCLE BILLY JOHNSON'S . . . INDIAN SCARE OF 1844

A copycat and a farce in Sauk Prairie



BOB
DEWEL

YESTERYEAR
REVISITED

You'd think that the Indian scare of 1844, described in the previous article, would have taught the settlers a lesson, but on Aug. 13, 1845 a very similar incident took place in the Sauk Prairie area, promoted by a Baraboo monomaniac.

A monomaniac is a person obsessed or pre-occupied with one subject, to the point of irrational behavior. We see it today in women's clinic bombings and in the current postal worker and school shootings. We also see copycat actions when a bomber or a shooter is "successful" in his action, such as bomb threats by those who want to get into the act.

This was the case with a Baraboo man, unnamed by Canfield in his "History of Sauk County," who created havoc in Sauk Prairie with an Indian scare like that of the previous year, which had involved Mrs. Shew and Mrs. Brewster and the people in the bluffs. It is reported in detail in Belle French Swisher's "American Sketch Book."

The alarm

This person alerted his sister, who lived six miles north of the Sauk Prairie area, with a claim that "the Indians were burning the houses and murdering the people at Baraboo Valley — that he saw the flames and heard shrieks from the people."

Quickly dressing the children, she and her brother and a roomer set out for the Sauk settlements in the dead of night. They reached A. Jameson's and urged him "to alarm the neighbors, for the people were all massacred at Baraboo."

Canfield says that the people involved were considered to be truthful, so "from house to house (Jameson) went, and others went, and in a short time the whole settlement was in a boil of excitement."

The scene seems almost identical, except for location, to the scene the previous year in the bluffs area. Here people headed for the Sauk villages, alarming others along the way, and even the area below Lower Town, now called Sauk City, was routed out.

Eventually "before daylight all Sauk was rendezvoused (sic) at Upper Town (Prairie du Sac)." Count Haraszthy was chosen captain, and scouts were sent out, feeling their way to Baraboo. Meantime one person was wounded when the blacksmith's gun went off by mistake.

The scouts, of course, found Baraboo inhabitants "at their usual employment, and entirely ignorant of the intense excitement" that had been created.

Curiously, it was not considered to be a practical joke, for "it was evident that the intention was good and came from a monomaniac."

As in the previous incident the year before, the Winnebagos, as they were called then, had unknowingly gone about their business. The problem of differing cultures remained, but the lessons learned perhaps made slow progress possible.

The settlers' fears were not entirely groundless. Only 13 years had elapsed since the so-called Black Hawk War. Originally defiant early in 1832, the Indians were soon in flight across Wisconsin and Sauk County, pursued by U. S. government troops. Now, 13 years later, many had infiltrated back into the territory despite a rather controversial treaty, raising concerns among the settlers.

The real altercations

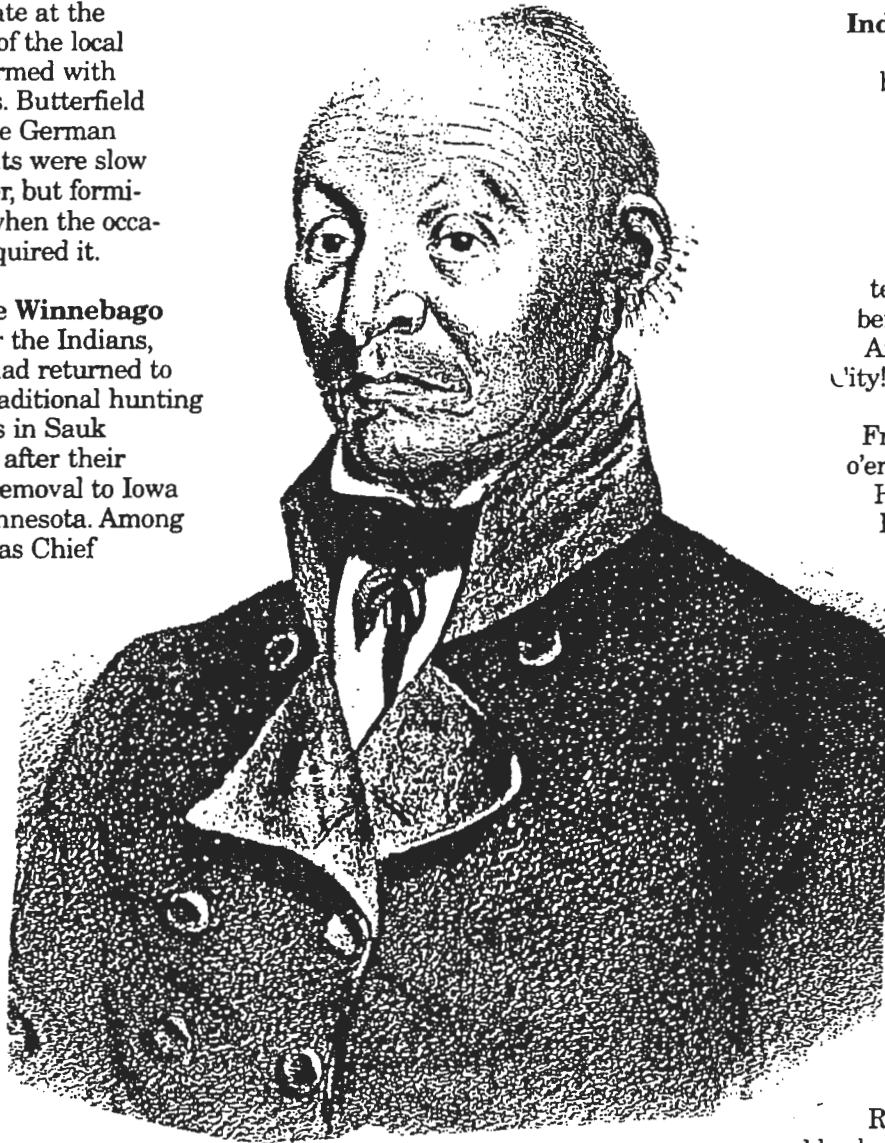
Curiously, the real altercations during these early times were not between Native Americans and white settlers, but disagreements among the settlers themselves. Mentioned in previous articles was the saw-log war in 1851 or 1852 between Baraboo and Reedsburg, with the U.S. marshal detained in jail for a time. Also mentioned previously was the whiskey war of 1854, in which Baraboo ladies were fined for invading local saloons and destroying all alcoholic beverages.

The Sauk Prairie area itself, in its early days, had

an extended battle between residents and river raftsmen, in which the lawyer for the latter had to flee to Prairie du Sac to avoid an unknown and certainly undesired fate at the hands of the local mob, armed with cudgels. Butterfield says the German residents were slow to anger, but formidable when the occasion required it.

The Winnebago

As for the Indians, many had returned to their traditional hunting grounds in Sauk County after their forced removal to Iowa and Minnesota. Among them was Chief Yellow



Thunder, who had to return twice but eventually owned a considerable acreage on County A just south of the interstate highway. Like the whites, he and others paid taxes.

The Winnebago, now called Ho-Chunk, are now large landowners, and employ more people in the casino than any other industry in the county. This writer is not qualified to address the cur-

rent question of taxation or other compensation for the growing land ownership of tribal lands — future historians can deal with this matter!

It appears, though, that the only Indian “uprisings” in

express their thoughts and experiences.

Hence this poem by one Samuel Shaw, whose 17 verses have been reduced to the more essential ones for this story:

Indian War on Sauk Prairie

by Samuel Shaw

Good sir, attend
and hear a friend,
chant forth a
measured ditty.
Droll things I'll
tell which once
befell
Around Sauk Prairie
City!

From Baraboo hills,
o'er rocks and rills,
Hard by the Devils
Lake, sir,

Black Hawk

At
dead of
night, in sore
affright,
Ran men o'er bog
and brake, sir.

Without a gun, to Sauk
they run
and tell a fearful story;
The scalping knife was taking
life,
around lay corpses gory.

The news did spread, and
roused from bed
A score of sturdy yoemen;
Upon their feet and in the
street,
To fight the Indian foeman.

Sauk County were in the imagination of one woman and in the troubled mind of a man.

Poem

Settlers in those days had among them several people of high educational backgrounds. Since the frontier was almost completely lacking in cultural opportunities, say nothing of our modern TV and its endless commercials, or of radio, or of motion pictures, those persons of educational quality often resorted to prose or poetry to

From friends to friends the
news extends,
And Parson raised a
broomstick;
E'en aged dames caught
war-like flames,
While Satan twirled the
drumstick.

On moonlight green, there
soon was seen
A band of valiant freemen;
Armed for the field with
sword and shield,
And guns in moonlight
gleaming.

In martial ire, with eyes of
fire,
All ready at command, sir,
'Tis right at first to know
the worst,
Are Indians out in band,
sir,

Then they propose where
sun arose
To send and watch their
motion;
The matter sift, ask Red
Men if
For fight they have a
notion?

Through woods and rills,
o'er rocks and hills
O'er prairie dell and fern,
sir,
To Baraboo where owls
hoo, hoo,
Did go Sauk Prairie men,
sir.

To seat of war they now
repair,
No Indians there were
prowling;
One Peter Funk, that night
lay drunk,
and raised a hideous howl-
ing.

The which was heard by
talking bird,
Who for his life did scab-
ble;
On that dread night, in
horrid fright,
Did scare us with his gab-
ble.

The public mind rejoiced to
find
No danger thence was
pending,
The fright was bad, no
fight they had,
The dread of carnage end-
ing.

The clash of arms no more
alarms,
Blind peace smiles on our
prairie;
Far, far from strife, runs
every life,
Altho' our fortune vary.

Steamboats and a Murder in Sauk City Tales From Earlier Days

By Bob Dewel

In many previous articles we have written of murders and lynchings involving Sauk County people in earlier days. Now, in a clipping in the Southard scrapbooks at the Sauk County Historical Society, we find another murder which many found justified, and for which the admitted murderer served only two years before being pardoned!

The story, by Robert Richards, was published on August 2, 1924, but concerned his memory of events in 1847, when Richards was apparently in his teens. It seems that among the county residents was the "Hunter Davis" family, Davis being a hard drinking man from the general area of Honey Creek. He also was a good hunter with a reputation as a dead shot.

Living in Sauk City was another large and powerful man and operator of the livery stable, named Bill Millard. Richards says of him "I doubt very much if he ever fired a gun before the shooting" though this is hard to believe about a man in those frontier days. The Davis and Millard families were apparently on familiar terms, as Mrs. Davis came to the Millards one day, saying that Davis had been abusing her in his drunken state, and had threatened to kill her. She wanted them to come home and stay with her that night, to which they agreed, Davis being in town and drunk.

What happened at the home is not stated, but the next day Davis appeared in town with a rifle, threatening to shoot Millard on sight. Millard disappeared for several days, but Davis would not relent in his threats, and the local officials did nothing to deter him in his proclaimed quest for murder. Richards says Millard hid in the Gilmore

warehouse for several days, hoping for Davis to cool down.

The Murder

When Davis appeared in town a few days later with a double barreled shotgun, Millard obtained an old musket loaded with buck shot, but remained hidden in the warehouse, taking up a position in a window. When Davis approached the warehouse, Millard took aim and shot him with six volleys, five of which struck Davis in the breast, producing instant death.

Millard then went outside and gave himself up to the law, now belatedly ready to participate in the feud. He was put under guard in a small hotel between the street and the river. Soon it was necessary to transfer him to Baraboo, the procession including three militia men whom Richards says were armed, oddly, with swords! At the foot of the bluffs the militia men stopped at the Pabst tavern for beer. The sheriff and Millard proceeded up the bluff road, the latter being in handcuffs.

On the way up, the wagon or buggy broke down, and the sheriff could not fix it without help. No sword-bearing militia being in sight, the sheriff asked Millard "if he would promise not to attempt to escape if he took off the handcuffs so he could help him." Millard agreed, and soon they were back on the way to Baraboo. The guards apparently never appeared after their stop at the Pabst tavern.

Millard's sentence was for five years at Waupun, but in two years he was pardoned. Richards says Millard learned to read and write in prison. Upon his return to Sauk City, he "sold everything he owned, his son-in-law did the same, also his brothers, and they left Sauk and have never been heard from since." The fate of Mrs. Davis was not given.

Steamboats and fistfights

Sauk City was a river town and a frequent stopover for loggers and riverboat men. Richards recalls steamboats making regular runs to as far



Shipping on the Wisconsin River

Sauk County Historical Society



It is hard to believe that a boat this size could go all the way to Portage

*Sauk County
Historical society*

up the river as Portage, there being no dam at Prairie du Sac at that time. The ubiquitous Count Haraszthy was owner of one of the boats. Richards recalls rafts full of lumber and logs, and Sauk City was a convenient place to stop for provisions. He says that when they tied up for the night the saloons did a big business.

Fights were inevitable among the rough and tough raftsmen, often with the locals of Sauk City. Richards says the locals once retreated to an enclosed area, and when the raftsmen tried to climb over the fence, the local men smashed their fingers with clubs.

There were similar groups of men who floated logs down the Baraboo River. Only recently, within the last year, an old house on Lynn St. in Baraboo was torn down. I am told it once was a frequent overnight stop for the hard working and hard drinking Baraboo River men. It was probably not in good enough condition to be saved as an historical site, but if only the walls could talk, I would have enough material for a year of columns, though perhaps somewhat censored.



Ferries and Toll Bridges in Pioneer Times

Tales of Earlier Days

By Bob Dewel

Suppose it is 1840. You are moving your family from Ohio to the newly opened land called Wisconsin. Friends or family who went ahead have written of the glories of the new area, with lakes and forests and virgin prairies not found in abundance in Ohio. Like most Americans of the time, you are seeking a better life for your growing brood.

All of the family has been packed, along with your meager worldly goods, into a covered wagon, pulled by two ornery oxen and perhaps with a mule tethered in the rear. There are no roads to follow, only the wagon trails of those who preceded you, and only a rare cabin to relieve the wild horizon. Haphazard settlements are often more than a day's travel apart.

What is perhaps your greatest obstacle in this lonely trek? Not mountains, for the land is basically flat or slightly rolling. Wild animals are startled by the racket produced by your wagon as it lumbers along in the rutted trail you are following, and do not prey upon you. But the rivers are erratically either at flood stage or, hopefully, placid. Even when placid, rocks under the water and swirling eddies threaten to break a wheel on the wagon or wash away the contents if it tips. The greatest challenge of all, in this hypothetical trip, is the Wisconsin River.

The Flatboats

Fortunately your fellow Americans are skilled workmen and canny entrepreneurs, and in some areas one can find a ferry, or even a bridge. Such was the case in Prairie du Sac and Sauk City, both of which developed river crossings soon after the land west and north of the river was opened for settlement.

We have already written about later ferry crossings at Merrimac, spelled Merrimack then, including pictures (my Section I-68), and will confine this discussion to the Sauk-Prairie crossings. A newspaper article from Oct 25, 1923 quotes a pioneer Sauk City settler, P.J.R. Post, as saying that the first flatboat was built in 1839 by Berry Haney, and was poled across the river.

Count Haraszthy, of whom we have frequently written, purchased the rights on October 14, 1844. Foot passengers were carried across the river in a skiff, the lease holder now being Robert Richards, with John Hawley steering the flatboat. By 1844 Prairie du Sac already had a bridge of sorts, and the competitive Saukites persuaded the legislature to grant them the necessary rights to build a bridge despite opposition from Prairie du Sac (were they called Sacites?).

First Bridge

The village committed \$2500 to the project, which included a causeway, but early attempts failed and Post says that it was 1860 before Marcus Warren completed the work, now in association with H. Miller and others. There were a couple exchanges of ownership, and then a freshet washed away the two spans. The date of this loss is not given, but they were replaced and apparently served until 1866, when Miller sold the enterprise to Mr. Stengelhammer. A heavy storm washed out the span and causeway in 1878, and this time the bridge was rebuilt with steel girders. The village stood for \$5000 of the \$9000 cost. It was a progressive city council

Steel bridge

Finally, in 1888, a sturdy steel bridge spanned the river, with a new feature, tolls with a toll gatherer. This bridge served until 1922. Records show that The tolls for the first year came to \$1,848.35 and on the first day it was used by 16 teams, two single teams, one rider, one foot passenger (?) and five cattle, that day's take being \$5.02



The Baraboo River was always heavily used

In contrast, on the last day in 1922, look at the change: 276 of the new automobiles, four motorcycles, only one horse, and five foot passengers, the take for that day being \$196.78. The die was cast for America's love affair with the gasoline motor in those 34 years, little knowing the problems big oil and foreign oil would present to our generation 80 years later. But imagine it in the eyes of our Ohio immigrant if he was still alive in 1922—change unimaginable to him in those early days.

Recent bridges

The 1923 newspaper account speaks of the new 1922 bridge as the "present one" which indeed it was for over 40 years. It is remembered as having sides so high you could not see the river, and a dangerously narrow passage for the automobiles which crowded its lanes. It was replaced sometime in the 1960's, but that bridge was in turn replaced during the last decade or so with a wider and safer structure. The demands of traffic made it necessary to widen it to four lanes two or three years ago.

One wonders, with its history of five crossings, if there will ever be a permanent structure. This writer once crossed a bridge in Spain in a tour bus. It was built of stone by the Romans nearly 2000 years ago. They don't build them like that anymore!



In 1920 the bridge on the right was new. It was replaced in the 1960s, and that replacement bridge was widened to four lanes in 2007

Baraboo's First School was Pretty Drafty

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

Suppose your child returned from their first day of school and said that the cracks in the walls were so wide "you could throw a cat through the cracks and not touch a hair."

This conversation could have happened with regard to Baraboo's first schoolhouse. The story about the wide cracks is perhaps exaggerated with time, but it was also said that the doorway was so small you had to stoop to enter, so the building must have been very crude.

The First Public School

On June 22, 1844 Wallace Rowan, Lewis Bronson, and historian-to-be William H. Canfield had selected a site at the suggestion of Eben Peck. It was located, after some discussion, on "Seventh Avenue slightly east of the corner of Birch, on the south side of the street, facing north." One account locates it at 327 Seventh Avenue. It was later used as a dwelling, though during its time as a schoolhouse it was also used on occasion as a courtroom, town hall, and general meeting place.

This article was inspired by someone who brought a description to the office of Dr. Matt Colby, but it develops that it was a typewritten copy of the account by Cole in his "History of Sauk County." At the outset, Cole says the cracks in the logs were filled with batten. The blackboard was all of 2 ½ by 5 feet in size, with no desk for the teacher, and the students sitting on backless benches.

The first teacher was E.M. Hart, an acquaintance of Eben Peck, residing recently in the Prairie du Sac area. It is said that Hart had the previous year

conducted a school privately on the south side of Baraboo, in an old log building. His curriculum consisted of reading, writing, spelling, and elocution the first year, with grammar and arithmetic added the second year. His salary was in the form of gifts, perhaps \$25 per month, and he was said to have "fine manners, but not extra smart."

A bachelor, Hart became enamored of one of his pupils, Eveline Gilson, age 14, and they were married. It was the first white man's marriage in the Baraboo valley, according to Canfield. They lived in a lean-to attached to the school. Among the pupils were Eben and Roseline Pecks children, Victor and Victoria. Victoria Street in Baraboo is named after Victoria Peck, about whom we have written in the past..

It is believed Hart taught for only one year in Baraboo, then at Sauk City, and then back to the south side of the village with about 30 pupils. Other early teachers included D.K. Noyes, R.P. Clement, and Wm. H. Joy. After it was abandoned as a school, the building was sided with boards and became a dwelling, on Seventh Avenue.

Union Village School

The rapidly growing village soon required more commodious quarters for a school, and in 1850 a two-story frame building thirty five feet square was erected in Block 38, on the north side. This is the present location of the Veterans Memorial area on Third Street.

By 1869 the 1850 building had long been inadequate, and a three story brick school with cupola was completed in 1871 (Butterfield says 1870), at a cost of \$33,000. It was said to have a capacity of 870 students, though not by modern standards. This apparently was mostly a grade school until 1877, when high school curricula were added, thanks to a grant from the State Commission of School and University Lands. It is this building which burned in February, 1906, and was replaced by a red brick school in the

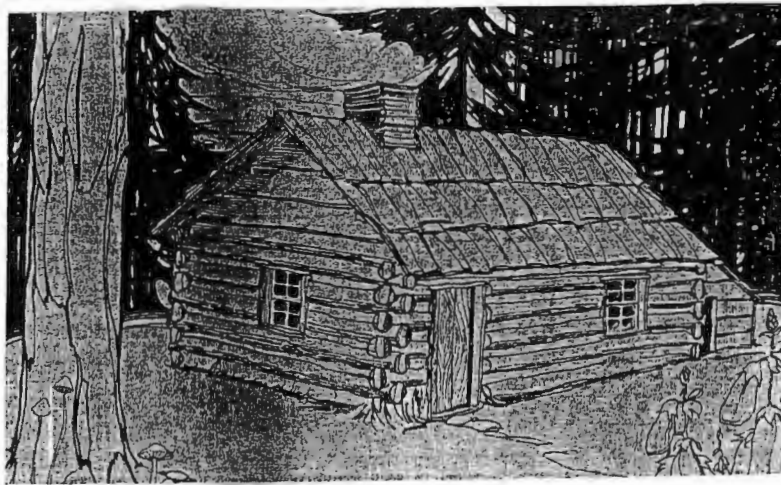
same block but facing Oak Street, now gone also.

One of the teachers at this time was the many-talented William Canfield. Records at the Sauk County Historical Society show that he kept meticulous records, with expenditures of as little as 3 cents for pencils listed. An inventory included 100 pens, valued at a total of \$1.00

Cole lists all of the Superintendents, up to and including the legendary Kingsford. Both Cole and Butterfield have detailed accounts of the early schools. In 1882 the village, newly incorporated, set plans for three grade schools, one in each of the three wards.

Meanwhile the 1850 schoolhouse seems to have been moved to the NW corner of Ash and Fourth Streets. Early pictures of that street show a small building in the distance, with a cupola. It is said to have been used by the city for the primitive fire fighting equipment of those days. Butterfield lists the total school taxes, beginning with \$138 in 1859 to \$5,069 in 1879. Of the latter, \$4020 was the total outlay for teacher salaries.

A follow-up article will discuss city and county attempts at higher education, from the 1850's to 1967.



FIRST SCHOOLHOUSE IN BARABOO

The first schoolhouse in Baraboo was of logs and built in 1843. It stood on Seventh Avenue between Birch and West streets. Drawing by Ronald Hargrave

Baraboo's first school, and a teacher in love



BOB
DEWEL

YESTERYEAR
REVISITED

The recent article about the Baraboo Collegiate Institute raises a sufficient number of questions that a review of early schooling in Baraboo seems appropriate. A pleasant surprise was the discovery that the 1997 high school annual staff did a remarkable job, under the guidance of Mrs. Chickering, in chronicling the first graduating class in 1872. More on that later.

Early private schools

By 1844 it was evident in the little village of Adams that education of the community's youth must be addressed. Historians Canfield and Butterfield say the first school was a private enterprise of one E.M. Hart. A building was planned in the present Ochsner Park area, with Canfield, Rowan, and Bronson as sponsors. However, building had hardly begun when the site was moved, at the suggestion of Eben Peck, to the approximate present neighborhood of West Elementary School, which was then virtually outside the city limits.

This first building was mentioned in a previous article as being so crude that "you could throw a cat through the cracks without touching a hair." By 1850 a newer building corrected some of these defects, and was two stories, but it was later moved to the northeast corner of Ash and Fourth, as it was replaced in 1870 by an even better building.

The tenure of the first teacher, E.M. Hart, created a great deal of interest. Canfield reports that "Mr. Hart came to Baraboo a bachelor of about forty years of age; but a lass of fourteen years, a pupil in his first school at the 'Boo' — Miss Eveline Gibson — softened and warmed up his stoic heart, and the Chief Justice of Baraboo — Don C. Barry — tied fast the hymeneal knot. This was the first white man's wedding in the Baraboo Valley."

By 1870 the growing village found it necessary to build a new schoolhouse at a cost of \$33,000. Located on block 38, which later would be the present Civic Center location, it had three large rooms, serving as a high school. By this time, according to school records, some 736 children were eligible to attend Baraboo schools, of which 534 did. There was also a school building on the south side of the river for elementary students, replacing an earlier board shanty building there.

According to Canfield, the Baraboo schools were among the best in the state, but the school system "must grow better and stronger, or it will deteriorate, for there is no stand-still point in this fast age." Apparently every generation thinks that its age is one of rapid change!

The female seminary

Contemporary to the Collegiate Institute was the Baraboo Female Seminary, organized in 1856 and chartered by the Legislature. A denominational school sponsored by the Presbyterians, the seminary had "fine build-

ings," which later were sold to the Episcopalians, and were located at the present corner of the Episcopal Church location. Butterfield says, "As the public schools grew into favor and became more popular ... the state of private schools began to wane and the doors of the Female Seminary were finally closed."

There were a few other short-lived operations. Maria Train's school in 1854, and Miss Hathaway and her school for Masters and Misses in 1864 are examples. Canfield concludes, "School advantages have always been ample at Baraboo."

The class of 1997

It is not every year that a high school annual rises above the usual, but to a lover of history, the 1997 Baraboo High School annual, the Minnewaukan, achieves that stature. It took a chance perusal in a barber shop, while waiting for the tonsorial skills of John McNabb, to introduce this writer to this publication, which celebrates 125 years of high school in Baraboo.

The first page, for example, features the class photo montage of the class of 1872, Baraboo High's first graduation class. There were all of 10 graduates, and the news report from the Baraboo Republic read as follows: "The exercises consisted of the reading of essays, declamations, &c., by the graduating class ... (they) were well received and delivered, with only a few failures in memorizing."



SAUK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Above is a bird's-eye view of northwest Baraboo circa 1890. Note the schoolhouse near the center of the drawing. Pictured at right is the class of 1872, the first high school class to graduate in Baraboo, as it appeared in the 1997 Baraboo High School Minnewaukan yearbook.

The wreck of Baraboo

There are perhaps 100 quotes from the 1872 Republic and other papers, to give a flavor of the old times to the present class. All were a result of diligent searches of old newspaper files in the Sauk County Historical Society and the Baraboo Carnegie Library. For example, on Jan. 22, 1873, the Republic reported the "Wreck of the Baraboo," as follows:

"We regret to announce that the Pullman Palace car which was named in honor of our village was wrecked ... it was thrown from the track and dragged a few feet on a rail fence, the spokes of which penetrated the side of the coach and pushed through the roof. It is now in Chicago undergoing repairs."



1997 BARABOO HIGH SCHOOL MINNEWAUKAN

Events year-by-year

There is also a chronology of events, a selection of which follows:

- 1858 — Corner Drug Store established
- 1865 — National introduction of the potato chip
- 1866 — Baraboo Baseball Club formed, patriotic uniforms
- 1866 — Minnewaukan House opens at Devils Lake
- 1867 — Fire wipes out entire city block
- 1871 — Fire on Dec. 3 destroys six stores
- 1872 — Fire in meat market at Fourth and Oak levels seven stores
- 1874 — Devils Lake steamer now carries 150 passengers
- 1876 — August Ringling establishes harness shop on Oak Street
- 1878 — Fire on Oak Street destroys more businesses

Not all the stories were from the Baraboo Republic, but many are pertinent to the times they were depicting. In 1877 the *Omaha Herald* published "Tips for Stage Coach Drivers," as follows:

"The best seat in a stage is the seat next to the driver. If the team runs away, sit still and take your chances. If you jump, nine times out of ten you will get hurt. Don't smoke a strong pipe inside the coach. Spit on the leeward side. Never shoot on the road as the noise might frighten the horses. Don't grease your hair, because travel is dusty."

Usually it is the Baraboo Republic which is quoted, often about a local happening. On Oct. 30, 1872, it printed the following report: "Some scalawag without the fear of the law, last Sunday night cast a stone through the handsome transparency of Michelstetter and Son, sim-



Bell Case taught at Baraboo High School, pictured here before it burned down in 1905, during the 1880-1881 school year.

ply because the latter would not get out of bed at such a late hour on Sunday night and retail oysters. For such an offense, the perpetrator ought to have a whole basket of these quinces M & S are selling at one dollar per basket crammed down his throat!" The editors of the day expressed opinion at will throughout the paper then!

Home remedies were common sources of information in those days. Bear fat was used to massage sore muscles and callouses. Squash and pumpkin seeds could be dried and ground to cure stomach worms, butter and sugar and ginger together eased children's coughs, and skunk oil could be used to make hair grow on a bald head!

Conclusion

There is a relationship between the two somewhat unrelated themes of this article. The first theme was the determination by the early settlers, hard as life on the frontier was, to establish as best they could suitable educational facilities. The early attempts at primary educa-

tion were followed by establishment of high school curricula.

There were also valiant efforts made to establish even higher education with the Baraboo Collegiate Institute and the Female Seminary. Though the latter two attempts failed for lack of benefactors, the hunger for local higher education survived, and was fulfilled nearly a century later with the establishment of "Boo U" by joint action of Baraboo and Sauk County.

The class of 1997, taking note that they were the 125th class to graduate from the local high school, saw fit to pay tribute to the early educators and students of the middle of the 19th century in a respectful and significant manner. Their efforts produced a book which belongs in the history section of a library as well as in the school annuals section.

It would appear that the Baraboo public school system continues to fulfill the hopes of its founders of long ago.

Baraboo gets a Schoolteacher in 1850

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

It is the impossible dream of every historian to be transported back to an earlier era, and to interview people on their home turf, in their own time period.

Such is the case in regard to the early history of Sauk County and Baraboo, for too often our knowledge of the past is confined to second hand information. We are lucky to have the copious writings of Wm Canfield, including his rather complete reports of the Old Settlers Society meetings. But oh how we would like to personally interview Abe Wood or Eben Peck, for example!

Well, we have the next best thing, memoirs of an early schoolteacher, in her own words. This is contained in a long personal letter from Mrs. C. C. Remington to the newly formed Sauk County Historical Society. It was read to the group on Feb. 6, 1907 by Emma Gatticker.

Four Day Buggy Ride

In the entire very long letter, the schoolteacher's maiden name is not given, but a search of Historical Society records reveals it to be Maria Train. At the invitation of a Baraboo Methodist minister, James Flanders, the 18 year old girl arrived in Baraboo after a four day open buggy ride from Milwaukee over unmarked trails and bogs.

As was the custom in those days, before taverns and roadhouses, the travelers sought shelter by "arriving at a small village (Aztalan) at dusk. We drove up to the most hospitable looking house and requested a nights lodging." They were generally well received, except at one small cabin where she remained awake all night in fear of the owners, but without incident. Taking the ferry at Dekorrah, they arrived in Baraboo on the evening of the fourth night, entering the village at its eastern boundary at the time, this being the intersection of Fourth Street and East Street.

Their destination, however, was a low story and a half house on the corner of Sixth and Birch, the home of the Rev. Flanders who had invited her to come and start a school. Maria describes the location of several pioneer homes in 1850, such as Dr. Cowles, Asa Wood, and Ed Hart. It was not long before the Flanders home was purchased by a Mr. Taylor, well known to historians as the builder of Taylor' Hall and other business buildings.

Her First School

Maria Train opened her first school in the log and slab Methodist Church, the only church building in the village, on the SE corner of Fifth Avenue and Broadway. Despite its rough construction, she considered it well ventilated and spacious, with open space outside for a playground. In winter she was not so pleased, with the fire requiring attention constantly. Often the wood was too green to burn properly. The student fire boy, George Perkins, later became a Congressman from Iowa. Maria is able, 57 years later, to name all of her first pupils, with some of their subsequent life history, though she lives, 57 years later in her old age, in Olympia, Washington.

Maria must have been a person of some means, even at 18, to hire a driver and buggy for the four day journey. In addition, after her first year in the settlement she purchased a house on Sixth Street near Oak for her school. It later became a part of the Female Seminary, of which we have written previously. Again she is able to name all her pupils, including a boy from "Under the Hill (the Walnut and Water Street area) which was then and for many years afterwards regarded as a locality of ill repute."

Despite her advanced age at the time of her reminiscent letter, she tells of several real estate transactions in the city, of interest to local historians. We also learn of

*Maria
probably
arrived
in a
buggy
like
this*



the marriage of General Harszthy, father of the Count. He departed for California with the Count, leaving his wife behind, a seemingly common practice in those days.

It is curious that Maria makes no mention of the pioneers who founded what became Baraboo. Eben Peck and Abe Wood were gone, but Roseline Peck was still present and would live another 45 years or so. Yet to come were the Reedsburg or Sawlog War and the Baraboo Whiskey Ladies who raided the local saloons. The population of the entire county was only some 4372 in 1950, with the heaviest population living south of the bluffs. Reedsburg was just getting organized.

Baraboo could boast of its first newspaper, the Sauk County Standard, which would soon fail. It would be five years before the Baraboo Republic would produce its first issue in 1855. There is more to Maria Train's story, including her advantageous courtship and marriage, the pioneer social life, and the 1001 Club. Stay tuned!

The New Schoolteacher Dances, Gets Married Yesteryear Revisited By Bob Dewel

As related in the previous article, Maria Train arrived in Baraboo in 1850 as the new schoolteacher, and in 1907 wrote a long descriptive letter of life in the little settlement. It appears that the 18 or 19 year old quickly became a part of the fabric of life in the area, not only as a teacher but as an acute observer, with an excellent memory even 57 years later.

Inventing their own amusements

It is hard today to imagine the Baraboo world of 1850, a world without radio, television, CD, or DVD, a world in which individual and group initiative provided the entertainment. There were no city ball parks, river walks, soccer fields, or playgrounds, nor did the inhabitants even expect such extravagant services. There was no theatre, and hardly any meeting places except the Methodist Church, and later the Taylor Hall.

This did not stop the young people from inventing their fun. Maria speaks with some embarrassment about a game of blind man's bluff, played in the dining room of a small hotel. She remembers that "some of the young men who would not stay caught took their coats to the tailors the next day", presumably torn in their attempt to get away.

There were outdoor concerts on the square, and dances, both played by the Parrish band, sometimes with Jim Badger fiddling. The dances were old fashioned quadrilles and country dancing. Maria says they "utilized even the dullest of amusements...and there was a spirit of good comradeship which ensured harmony and made light of all obstacles." In the winter there were sleigh rides.

The local Scene

The only practicing physician at the time was Dr. Cowles "noted for his skill in diagnosis and his prompt and energetic measures in an emergency. He was kind and charitable, and a great friend of the Indians, whom he never turned away, sometimes keeping several for the night on his kitchen floor."

By now the Methodists had been joined in their endeavor by the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, who worshiped together "in the old Court House, on Fourth Street, north of the square. That building was later used as a saloon, and finally burned." Perhaps it is one of the saloons which the whiskey ladies assaulted in 1855!

Early Baraboo actually had a photographer, using the daguerreotype method, and he kept a gallery of his work. Maria, writing in 1907, says she still has some of the pictures, and historians wish they had been preserved and donated to the Historical Society. There was also a Miss Jackson, later Mrs. Harrison, who was a milliner, though Maria indicates she had little imagination in the design of hats.

Maria also writes about Lum Parish' livery stable, located within plain sight of her school. She says that "often times, as the time drew near for school closing, the knowing glances and smiles of certain pupils, who from the windows had seen a young lawyer come for horse and buggy, warned me to prepare for a ride." He was C.C. Remington, who on August 12, 1852 would become her husband. He died in 1878, but Maria lived to the age of 83, dying in 1916. One of their children married Mr. Olin of Madison, after whom Olin Park is named.

Clubs and Women's Rights

We've written before of clubs and organizations in the early days, such as the Skillet Creek Bachelors Club, the Arachne Club, and Koshawaga. Maria writes with regard to another earlier organization, called the 1001 Club. The reason for the name remained a mystery to her, though some wags called it the "1000 rascals and one honest

man club." She speaks of irregularly timed meetings, no women's auxiliary and mystic rites, and "woe to the helpless stranger who was lured into its doors for initiation." Passersby spoke of "sepulchral groans, long drawn out and terrible," issuing from the meetings, and indeed some clubs were reported to have grotesque initiations in those days.

Even in those early days there was a modest women's rights movement, and Maria tells how a group of ladies improvised a wagon or hay rack with seats along the sides, and hired Lum Parish as their driver for a trip to Delton. What distinguished it was a flag with "Women's Rights" printed on it in large letters. This is said to have "excited considerable comment and criticism on the part of some of the men." Seventy five years would pass until a new generation of women succeeded in gaining the right to vote.

This completes our "interview" with Maria Train Remington. Her long and informative letter in 1907 shows her to have been a charming and delightful lady. C.C. Remington, later a judge, and with a Baraboo street named after him (or them!), was a lucky man indeed. We too are lucky to have her memoirs of those early days.



This photo, taken in 1911, is probably typical of the school in which Maria taught. It was the Lower Wilson Creek School in Troy Twp., Sauk County

What's in a name in Sauk County? Quite a bit

Let's suppose that some parts of Sauk County history were just a little bit different — that certain name changes had not taken place. In that case, the courthouse would stand not where it is today, but in a county seat city named Adams.

Directly to the west of Adams would be the village of Lyons, and to the east the village of Manchester. Five miles further east, near the unsightly quarry on Highway 33, would be the village of Garrisonville.

North of Adams, on County A, would be the thriving tourist mecca and railroad center called Newport, where the Hiawatha stopped regularly — a larger city than Adams. Nearby is the Sauk County portion of the village of Kilbourn.

Off to the west on Highway 33 would be the rival town of Babb's Prairie, known for its Butterfest celebration each summer. Coming back to Adams on Highway 136, one would pass through Ableman and pass near Bessemer at Shales' Corners. On the other hand, if one went south from Babb's Prairie on Highway 23, you would come to Logtown.

On the river on Highway 12 on the way to Madison, one would cross the river bridge as you left the village of Haraszthy, noted for the area cow pie throwing contests ever year. Following north on the river on Highway 78, one would come to Mattson's ferry in the village of Merrimack, spelled with a "k."

If the names sound unfamiliar, they once were the common names of these towns and villages in the early history of the county. For various reasons, the changing sands of the political history of the county have changed the names to those we know today. In the memory of many is the relatively recent time when Kilbourn changed its name to Wisconsin Dells, part of which is now in Sauk County.

Early Baraboo

So what happened? Why were the names changed? There is a story for each of the changes. Let's start with the county seat, once named Adams, then Brooklyn, now Baraboo.

Located on the rapids of the Baraboo River, this area once supported four or five dams providing pollution-free power for the lumber and flour mills. It was known in the early days as Baraboo Mills, more of a description of what was here on the river than as the name of a village. Eventually a speculator named George Brown platted a village, with lots mostly on the south bank of the river, which he named Baraboo after the river. So, where does the name Adams come in?

The first county seat

The earliest settlers, Eben and Roseline Peck and Abe Wood and Wallace Rowan, had arrived in 1839, with their operations on the north side of the river. By 1844 the county had enough residents that the Territorial Legislature was petitioned to organize a county by residents of Prairie du Sac.

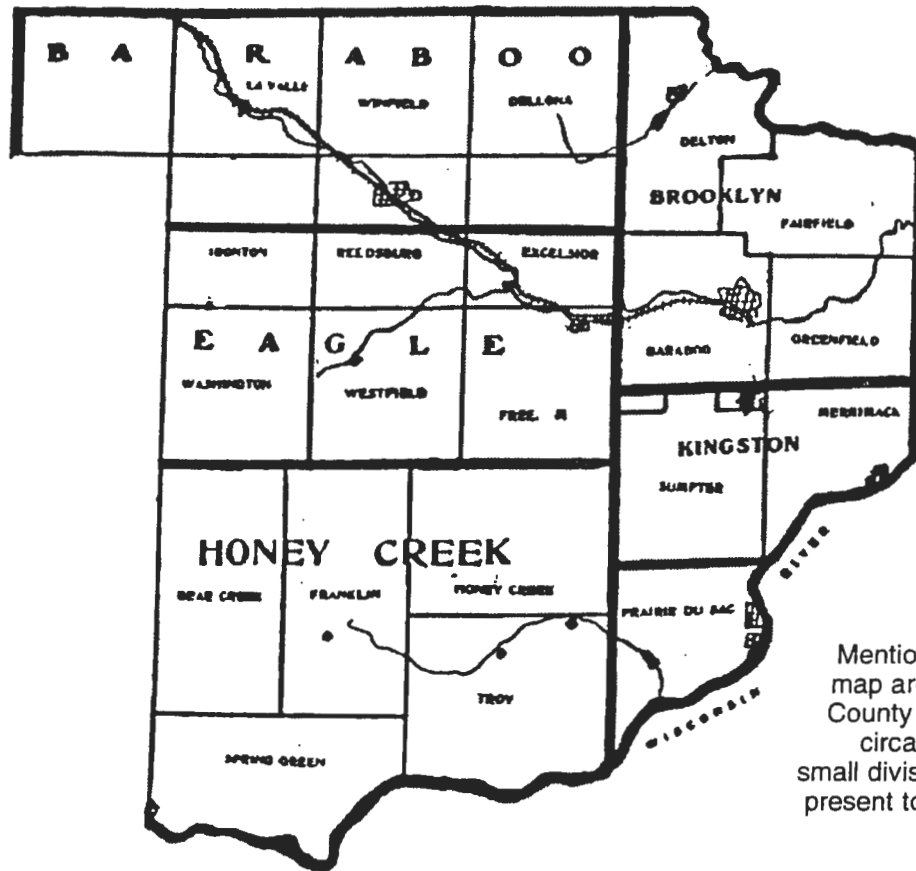
Because of their relative size and location, Prairie du Sac and Haraszthy (now Sauk City) seemed logical contenders, and each promptly offered a proposal, a promotional package not totally unlike the modern day TIF districts used to adjust the city to the arrival of new industries or facilities. The town offering the best incentives in this case was to win the county seat.

Prairie du Sac offered several choice lots as their inducements for locating the courthouse, while Haraszthy offered the relatively elegant home of Count Haraszthy, founder of the village. Prairie du Sac was chosen in 1844 by the legislative committee appointed to make the decision.

However, a close examination of the deeds to the lots revealed what August Derleth, in his county history, calls a "thrifty joker." The lots were to revert to their original owners if the county seat were later moved. The provision was "ingeniously worded so that it was difficult to discover the deception."

Outraged by this subterfuge, citizens of Haraszthy and the Baraboo River valley organized a search party to select a new site and have a referendum.

Their efforts attracted the attention of Preston Brigham, a prominent Sumpter tavern keeper and stage driver who "purchased the said quarter section (now much of downtown Baraboo) in his name with his money, there being no funds in the treasury, and subsequently deeded it to the county."



Mentioned in this map are six Sauk County townships circa 1849 (the small divisions mark present townships).

Adams and Brooklyn

According to historian Canfield, who was on the scene, Brigham, because he gave the money, was allowed to select the name of the county seat. He chose Adams because of his admiration for the Massachusetts family of that name which produced two of our presidents.

Soon this created a problem for the post office, for there was another Adams in Wisconsin, in what later became Adams County to our north. For a period of time the local Adams settlement was called Brooklyn. In fact, though, there was a township named Baraboo then which included the Reedsburg area, but not Baraboo! Both names were eventually changed, with Baraboo Township now in and around the area of the city of the same name.

Baraboo ^{Never}

The name Brooklyn really caught on, and finally Adams-Brooklyn was consolidated by the post office with Brown's Baraboo on the south side of the river, to become Baraboo.

Two business districts developed, and some old-timers are adamant that the area on Walnut Street across the river is properly and historically named downtown Baraboo, and the business district around the courthouse, being higher, is properly called uptown Baraboo. If so, the present "Downtown Baraboo" would properly change its name to "Uptown Baraboo!"

County seat controversy

Selection of a county seat was an important matter then, and the new county seat, Adams-Brooklyn-

Baraboo, could not long rest on its laurels. Newly developing Reedsburg to the west coveted the amenities, prestige and business advantages of the seat of government, arguing that it was more near the geographical (but not population) center of the county. Thus arose a rivalry comparable to that between Prairie du Sac and Haraszthy.

Reedsburg takes its present name from David C. Reed, who was attracted there in 1847, when he learned of the discovery of iron. Copper in small amounts had already been found in 1845, but gave out after two tons were extracted.

Reedsburg seems to have first been settled in 1844 in the area formerly known as Babb's Prairie, named for James Babb, who built there in 1845 as the first settler to till the sod in the area. An Indian ford of the river led to the construction of a dam and mill, and at this time the township of Reedsburg was carved out of what was then the township of Baraboo, with the voting precinct named Baraboo!

A change is explained in "Reedsburg Remembers" as follows: "The name Baraboo, for the township, became objectionable as there was a

village by that name on the rapids of the river ... the post office was called Reedsburg (in 1849) ... therefore the township of Reedsburg was organized." A stage arrived three times a week from Baraboo.

Those residents, believing that Reedsburg could wrest the county seat from Baraboo, persuaded the Legislature in 1852 to add an extra row of townships onto the northern border of the county, thus obtaining more votes. This was reversed in 1853. In 1855 a referendum failed and Baraboo retained the county seat.

The sawlog war

Tempers flared in 1852
("Reedsburg Remembers")

says 1851) when, according to Derleth, "some of the settlers postulated that logs destined for Baraboo could not pass over the Reedsburg dam ... logs belonging to George and Edward Willard of Baraboo were gleefully confiscated by Reedsburgers."

The result was a determined and some say armed delegation from Baraboo which arrived in Reedsburg with a U. S. marshal. The marshal cut away part of the dam, allowing passage of the logs. Interestingly, the marshal had been summoned by Reedsburg people! In their anger they arrested him, but cooler heads prevailed. Incidentally, Reed left in 1849 for Pike's Peak and was not heard from again, as did Baraboo's Eben Peck!

This was the last major confrontation between the two cities, and since then both have prospered along with the county. Baraboo undoubtedly benefits some from the county seat locations and the university center, and has emerged as a regional shopping center.

Reedsburg has done very well with its MATC branch, the county hospital, and other amenities, and enjoys new industry and prosperity. Both cities are a credit to the county.

In the meantime, Prairie du Sac and Sauk City continue to flirt with the proposition of merging, as do Baraboo and West Baraboo. At least we do not have to refer to Haraszthy, Lyons, Brooklyn, and Babb's Prairie.

Other names of towns in the county will be considered in a subsequent article.

Reedsburg's Unusual Baby Contest

Tales of Earlier Days

By Bob Dewel

Let's admit from the start that we have only a newspaper clipping to support this story. Moreover, it is reminiscence, published on 2-28-1929, some 80 years after the event in question. There is some authenticity, however, for the story appears in "A History of Reedsburg and the Upper Baraboo River Valley" published by Merton E. Krug. In any event, the story is too good to pass up.

Reedsburg's Problem

It seems that the very early settlers of Reedsburg had a problem. This was perhaps in 1849, for David Reed had settled there in 1848. The problem was that for two years after the initial settlement of the proposed village, only two babies had been born. This meant that the prospects for growth and expansion, and presumably David Reed's sale of lots, were bleak indeed.

The article continues: "It was the villagers' sentiment that the Barabooites stopped all travelers and offered them inducements to settle there...which was very commendable to the enterprise of Baraboo, though adverse to the growth of Reedsburg. Founder David C. Reed, who was always ready for emergencies, hit upon a plan to increase the population by home culture, and accordingly offered a choice of any unused village lot to the woman who presented the town with the first baby."

Contest Rules

The rules of the contest are not spelled out, but a number of questions arise. Was there a starting date? What was to prevent a couple from jump-starting the contest, so to speak? Would a premature birth count? It seems probable that time was factored in, and we suppose there was a rule that only a baby born at least nine months after the beginning of the contest would qualify, giving every one a fair and even start.

This would rule out any pregnancies already on the way, as having an unfair advantage, thus defeating the purpose of the contest and its real estate prize. It appears, though, that there were no such events anticipated anyway, hence the need for the scheme to increase the population.

The Winner

The article continues: "There were some 18 married women in the village who could enlist in the enterprise, and the sequel shows that nearly all made up their mind to go into the real estate business, since 15 babies were born during the succeeding year." The article does not so indicate, but it is presumed that the 18 husbands of the ladies were enlisted in the endeavor. The winner, the Mother of the first baby, was Ms. Jacob Mowers, who gave her son the interesting name, Rowdy. J. Rowdy to be exact.

Unfortunately, there is a problem with our story, for it seems that the stork was occasionally visiting the Reedsburg settlement during the contest reported upon above. We have a clipping written by O.D. Brandenburg, a Baraboo youth who had become editor of the Wisconsin State Journal in the early 1900's. His undated article asserts that Reedsburg's first child, born in 1848, was named Josephine Shepard, and that a baby boy, Thomas Babb, was born in 1848. These children probably arrived before the target date of the contest. It is possible that David Reed felt that this was not the rate of population



These are two of seven Log cabins featured in the Pioneer Log Cabin and Museum located two miles East of Reedsburg on Highway 33. They Would have been considered elegant accommodations in the newly Platted village of Reedsburg in 1849

growth to which his little village aspired, thus the baby contest.

Reedsburg and Baraboo

Perhaps this story illustrates, in an early way, the competitive nature of Reedsburg. It was in this period of years that Reedsburg tried to wrest the County Seat away from Baraboo, even persuading the legislature to temporarily attach several towns of Juneau County to Sauk County to obtain votes. Another notable event then was the Reedsburg (or Sawlog) war, in which logs floating down the river and destined for Baraboo were temporarily impounded at the Reedsburg dam by local hotheads.

I wrote extensively about both of these events in earlier stories, and mention them here only to remark on the early competitive nature of Reedsburg. As late as the mid-1990's, hardly a decade ago, Reedsburg was unsuccessful in attempting to move significant parts of the County Offices to Reedsburg. In recent years they have shown a competitive nature in bringing industry to their city, comparable to the successful efforts made by Baraboo in the years following WWII.

A population discrepancy remains, however, with Baraboo alone having about 3000 more citizens, plus its closely attached neighbor, West Baraboo, with well over 1500 more citizens. An unusual number of Baraboo-related persons reside outside the city limits also. Baraboo, in the opinion and observations of this writer, currently remains complacent and only moderately interested in being competitive for industry and growth,

Baraboo, the Gem City, is so-named by some because of its jewel-like setting amid the Baraboo Bluffs and on the Baraboo River. It boasts the very remarkable Devils Lake near the city limits, and a surfaced scenic Riverwalk in the city. The city is fortunate to host the Circus World Museum, Al. Ringling

Theatre, Boo U, and the nearby Intl Crane Foundation, as well as the nearby Mid-Continent Railway Museum. Reedsburg has a Pioneer log village, a Rockwell exhibit, MATC, and the 400 bicycle trail. Both cities are a credit to Sauk County and Wisconsin. But only Reedsburg had a baby contest, with real estate as the prize!

No Dogs or Booze Allowed at This Parade!

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

What is your nomination for the oldest continuous event in Sauk County, not counting government or churches? What event has apparently had regular observance since 1839? And, what event in Sauk County had not just a mention but an entire segment devoted to it on a national television network?

Our nomination is the annual Fourth of July celebration now held in tiny Witwen. Historian Erhart Mueller lists this event in detail as beginning in 1839 and running to the time of publication of his book in 1986. The event is known to have continued since then to the present time, and this year will be no exception. It gained fame in 1980 when Charles Kuralt of CBS featured it in a segment of his Sunday Morning program.

Actually, in the early days it was an area cooperative event, being held first in 1839 "with the entire population of the hamlet (Prairie du Sac) of 25 persons in attendance," reports Mueller. Other early records are missing, but by 1879 the observance was held at the Evangelical Church Camp Grounds, with the churches in Black, Hawk, Honey Creek, and Denzer in charge.

Activities

A 1882 entry in John Darms' diary notes that "in the morning we fired guns and then the boys came together and fired things up for the day. We put a flag on the bluff, made a nice stand and seats and a jing swing. In the evening there were fireworks."

By 1885, Mueller reports, "there followed a series of yearly picnics alternating mostly between Black Hawk and Witwen." Sometimes the festivities were held at someone's farm, with ball games, fishing, speeches, oratorical contests in German and English, and music by the Black Hawk Band. Later there were car races.

By 1915 Witwen had a band stand, complete with electricity from the dynamo at the Witwen Roller Mill. Here a tug of war over the mill race assured that half of the men spent the rest of the afternoon in damp clothing. In 1916 there was a balloon ascension, plus trapeze artists on exhibition.

In 1918 Witwen built a tabernacle, and future observances have generally been held in or near Witwen. Black Hawk's final turn at holding the celebration appears to have been in 1920. Always the event was a joint effort of the three Evangelical Churches in the area.

Witwen

So, what and where is Witwen? It is located on County E between County PF and O, some ten miles west of U.S. 12. There appears to be a grand total of 18 to 20 houses in this settlement. No business place was discernible, not even a tavern, but Bill Schuette, in a recent report in the Historical Society bulletin, reports there once was a store, a creamery, a school, a garage, and a blacksmith shop. There even was a telephone office, and a mill. Witwen was first settled by Gaudenz Witwen in 1856, and after development over the years it even had a post office for a time, starting in 1892.

And what about the national television coverage? Charles Kuralt of the CBS Sunday Morning program visited the hamlet in 1980, giving national coverage to the Parade and its American flag "made of red white and blue satin dresses worn by eight members of the Sauk County Extension Homemakers." It is not every day that national TV takes note of events in our county. Mueller notes that August Derleth of the Sauk Prairie area also immortalized the event with accounts of his visits in 1939 and 1942.

This Year's Parade

The parade is on the Fourth of July, at 10:30 A.M. This is not your ordinary regimented parade. however. There is no pre-registration, and if you have a vintage

car, or some sort of float, just show up with it, we were told. Do not, however, bring your dog to Witwen, and do not bring alcohol in any form. Do bring a lawn chair, and an empty stomach, for the Black Hawk and Denzer United Methodist Churches will be doing a chicken Bar-b-q with all the fixings. Go early, as you may have to park a mile or so away from Witwen, and take a shuttle bus if one comes along.

It is a century and a half of tradition in Sauk, our remarkable county.



Witwen in earlier days



It is a half mile to the first house. Are there hopes for industrial expansion?

So when is/was Baraboo's Sesquicentennial?

by Bob Dewel

Some cities know exactly when and by whom they were founded, even to the day. It usually occurred when a developer arrived on the scene, staked out his claim and mapped out his dream city with a grid of streets laid out according to the compass.

Those developer were really land speculators, and they produced glowing pamphlets replete with imaginary buildings and navigable streams. None of these were evident when the sight-unseen buyer arrived on the scene with his wagon load of family and provisions, and a horse or oxen.

Such was not the case with Baraboo, whose first white settlers (the Native Americans were already here!) had only one interest — harnessing the abundant water supply offered by the falls in the Baraboo river. It was only after the dams were built and sawmills became active that developers appear to have recognized the possibility of developing a community.

We in Baraboo do have, however, rather complete accounts of the first settlers, written by historians who were contemporary to the time. Historian Canfield soon arrived on the scene and knew the pioneer settlers. He wrote his "Sketches of Sauk County" only 22 years after Baraboo was founded. Butterfield published his volumes in 1875. Both writers provide extensive information about the early settlers, and also about the village developers.

ery of Devils Lake, and of seeing the Baraboo valley through a clearing at the lake, Peck was intrigued. Peck knew that this was what he had been looking for, and with Alban as his guide, they proceeded to the area. Peck staked out a plot on the north side of the river, near the lower rapids, in what is now the land north of the Circus World Museum.

There was a problem, though, for the Native American village of Winnebago Chief Caliminee was directly adjacent, and the area was filled with dozens of Indian mounds. Butterfield, in "History of Sauk County," says the Indians "manifested a strong displeasure, and obliged the intruders to recross the river."

Undaunted, Peck returned in the fall of 1839, accompanied by his wife, Roseline, and while here met Abraham Wood and Wallace Rowan. Those men immediately started building a dam to the upper rapids, which now divide Baraboo and West Baraboo. There was an Indian village in the West Baraboo area, but as Wood was living with "a Winnebago woman, said to be a daughter of the Chief, DeKaury," he was not driven away. Wood remained during the winter of 1839-40, the first resident, along with the Pecks, of what is now Baraboo. A small marker in Ochsner Park denotes the location of Wood's cabin, and

CWM pond have been decimated with the destruction of the concrete dam. Thirty years ago another modern dam, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, was destroyed with great difficulty in the general area of where Wood and Rowan had their dam and sawmill.

Van Slyke's work came to naught, for high water in June 1840 destroyed part of his flimsy effort. Eben Peck obtained a court order validating his claim, and Van Slyke apparently slunk out of town. Peck and his wife Roseline and family moved to the area, apparently the first white family to do so.

Justice of the Peace, Judge of Probate, County Commissioner and Register of Deeds. The Commissioners were paid seventy-five cents a day when meeting. It was Brigham who would supply his own money to purchase what is now downtown Baraboo and the Courthouse Square, and deed it to the fledgling county. Wisconsin was not yet a state.

Meantime Rev. Thomas Fullerton, a Methodist circuit rider, had arrived and preached the first sermon in the Baraboo valley. Fullerton soon organized the first church in the valley also, in 1842. It is now the First United Methodist Church in Baraboo.

Platting two villages

The little settlement was known then as Baraboo Mills or Baraboo Rapids, with two sawmills, Rowan and Wood's, and Pecks. Rowan died in 1846 and was buried "40 rods Northwest of the dam" in an unmarked grave, somewhere in what is now West Baraboo. Wood died in 1855 near Milton after falling out of a wagon and striking his head. His wife had already returned, in 1850, with one of their daughters to her Native American tribe. Like Rowan, Wood's grave is unmarked.

the name Adams because of his admiration for President John Quincy Adams. However, in 1852 the post office dropped the name because of a conflict with the village of Adams in the county of that name.

Also, in the mid-1840s a land speculator named George Brown platted a village on the south side of the river, but including 34 lots on the north side near the present Ash-Walnut street and the river.

However Cole, in "History of Sauk County," states: "on the 14th of January, 1849, the board of county commissioners ordered that the village plats of Adams and Baraboo be consolidated under the name of Brooklyn"! The real unification came in 1866, when they were united under the village charter name of Baraboo.

So when was Baraboo Founded?

As Carol Sorg pointed out in a recent letter to the editor, there are many dates which could be considered as the founding of Baraboo. Here are a few:

1. 1839 — the first permanent settlers arrive.
2. 1842 — 14 families and the first church.
3. 1844 or 1846 — George Brown plats his village.
4. 1846 — Preston Brigham donates land for Adams.
5. 1849 — County consolidates two villages as Booklyn.
6. 1852 — Post office changes



Mrs. Roseline Peck

The Dambuilders

In 1839 Eben Peck was a resident of the little Madison settlement. Nine years would pass before Madison would be designated as the location for the state capitol, but at that time there was no settlement to the Northwest of Madison. An exception was one James Alban who, with his family, occupied a small cabin near the south end of the present prairie south of the Baraboo Bluffs. They were the first permanent residents of Sauk County.

When Alban appeared in Madison with tales of the discov-

the dug-out area was still visible in recent years. The Wood and Rowan dam and saw-mill were completed in the winter of 1841-42. Rowan's cabin is believed to have been in the present Attridge Park area.

Peck, meantime, had his troubles. A James Van Slyke appeared on the scene and proceeded to "jump" Peck's claim to the lower rapids area. Enlisting the skill of James Maxwell of Walworth County, Van Slyke began building his dam in 1840. One wonders if remnants of that dam can be seen now that the placid waters of the

Growth

By 1842, according to Canfield in his "Sketches of Baraboo and Greenfield," there were 14 families living in the little settlement, including Canfield himself and his family. There were also a contingent of bachelors and widowers, all presumably working at the sawmill.

Canfield became County Surveyor in 1844, and also school commissioner along with Preston Brigham of Sumpter township. Brigham subsequently became

Roseline Peck does not give the date, but sometime after they settled here and fenced in their land, "my husband left on the pretense of going to Oregon and claiming the offers they held forth to settlers. From that time I have struggled alone to raise" his family." Roseline Peck stuck it out, saw the railroad come in 1870, and lived until 1899. To Roseline, therefore, goes the honor of being the survivor of the original settlers of the region.

Preston Brigham's donation of land for a county courthouse in 1846 gave him the honor of naming the platted area, and he chose

name of Adams to Baraboo.

7. 1866 — Villages officially chartered as Baraboo.

8. 1882 — City of Baraboo is incorporated.

In all but the latter three instances, our sesquicentennial time has already passed. It would seem, however, that the greatest claim to the origin of Baraboo goes to the first permanent settlement in 1839, with Roseline Peck, the most permanent settler.

If that is the case, should not next year, 1999, be observed as our Sesqui-plus-ten anniversary in some manner?

Any volunteers????

Sesquicentennial Notes — How Sauk County came to be

by Harold Willis
Baraboo Sun

It so happens that Sauk County is slightly older than the state of Wisconsin. It was formed in early 1848, but before that, what was it called?

The land that we now inhabit was originally claimed by native Americans, and when Europeans settlers arrived, the Ho-Chunk (recently called the Winnebago) lived and hunted here. Before they came, the Sac (Sauk) and Fox tribes lived here for a time. Native American peoples often did claim regional territories, but they had no conception of someone owning the land.

The French first claimed Wisconsin as part of the Northwest Territory (northwest of the Ohio River) in 1796, and all of Wisconsin was within Wayne County. On July 4, 1800, Wisconsin became part of Indiana Territory, and on March 2, 1809, we became

part of Illinois Territory.

In 1818, Wisconsin became part of Michigan Territory and was divided up as part of three counties — Michilimackinac, Brown and Crawford. Present-day Sauk County was part of Crawford County.

On April 20, 1836, Wisconsin Territory was formed, but it included more land than present-day Wisconsin. It was divided into eight counties, but only four of them were in the present state — Milwaukee, Brown, Iowa and Crawford. Sauk County was then still in Crawford County.

On Oct. 25, 1836, 15 additional counties were formed: Calumet, Dane, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Grant, Green, Jefferson, Manitowoc, Marquette, Portage, Racine, Rock, Sheboygan, Walworth and Washington. In those early years, the counties in the southwestern part of Wisconsin used the older system of county commissioners

rather than townships, which the eastern counties had. In 1839, Prairie du Sac was made the county seat of Crawford County. In 1841, a petition to the territorial legislature was granted to separate Sauk County from Crawford County, and in 1844, another petition to organize Sauk County was granted.

In early 1848, more counties were officially added to Wisconsin: Chippewa, Columbia, LaFayette, LaPoint, Richland, Sauk, St. Croix, Waukesha and Winnebago.

Wisconsin became a state on May 29, 1848. At first, the county seat of Sauk County was the village of Prairie du Sac. In 1849, the county seat was moved to Baraboo and the county was subdivided into six townships — Honey Creek, Prairie Du Sac, Kingston, Eagle, Brooklyn and Baraboo. Brooklyn was in the northeast corner of the county (including the city of Baraboo), Kingston

was south of it, and Eagle and Baraboo were in the northwestern part of the county. At that time, Sauk County included land now in Richland, Juneau and Adams Counties.

In 1850, the township of Eagle was eliminated and the townships of New Buffalo, Flora, Spring Green, Dellona, Reedsburg and Freedom were created.

In 1851, the townships of Marston, Winfield, Jackson, Quincy and the Dells were created. Jackson and Quincy were part of present-day Juneau County and the Dells extended into present-day Adams County. Also, the Dells was changed to Baraboo, and Prairie du Sac was split into Lower Prairie du Sac and Prairie du Sac.

In 1852, the townships of Greenfield and Winfield were created, part of Brooklyn was changed to Baraboo, and other changes were made in townships now mostly in Juneau

County.

In 1853, the township of Flora was changed to Fairfield. In 1854, the townships of Merrimac (from Kingston) and Franklin (from part of Honey Creek) were created. The township of Washington (from Marston) followed in 1855; Woodland, Troy and Excelsior in 1857; Bear Creek in 1858 and Ironton in 1859. In 1861, part of the township of Kingston was changed to Sumpter, and part of Marston was changed to LaValle. Since that year the number of townships and their names have remained the same, with only minor boundary changes.

Those are the highlights of the many political changes that brought about modern-day Sauk County. It must have been fascinating living in those times.



**Skillet Creek Falls should have been a state park, or
At least a wayside**