

Place Names In Sauk County, Wisconsin

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Places are named for various reasons. Frequently the name of a person is commemorated, many appellations are of Indian origin, and again a name is often applied because of some natural characteristic or object of the locality.

Once Governor Doty of Wisconsin pointed to a river and of an Indian asked its name. The Indian supposed the governor meant the water in the river and not the name of the stream and responded "Nee-nah". The Indian word for water is "nee-nah" and to this day the river is called Neenah

There was once a Frenchman at Portage by the name of Paquette and when the people of the village now known as Poynette desired the government to establish a post office, Uncle Sam asked what the name should be.

PAQUETTE
or
POYNETTE

when scrawled with a goose quill pen might easily enough have the "A" look like an "O", the "Q" like a "Y" and the "U" like an "N". So it was when the would-be postmaster sent the name down to Washington. The clerks had never heard the name Paquette and so decided the name was Poynette. When

the name of the office came back to the Columbia county hamlet the citizens thought it was a great joke and let the matter rest. The place is called Poynette to this day.

Not only are names sometimes applied in an unusual manner, but the place names are often changed for trivial reasons. A study of the origin of the place names in the community is an interesting one. On account of its importance the name Baraboo is here given first place, followed by the other names in the county.

Baraboo

Whence came the word Baraboo? It was first applied to the river, then to the rapids, bluffs and valleys and later to the town and city. There are many conjectures and uncertainties surrounding the appellation and it is very doubtful if the mystery will ever be cleared.

In W. H. Canfield's "Outline Sketches of Sauk County" published in 1873, he says:

"John de la Ronde, a Frenchman who settled at Fort Winnebago, May 5, 1828, and now living with his Winnebago wife upon the banks of the Baraboo River, six miles from Portage, says the river received its name from a Captain Barebeau, who was in Moran's expedition against the Indians, and who wintered at the mouth of the stream.

"On the sixpenny map of the United States brought from Glasgow, Scotland, by John Dickey, in 1842, a river bearing the name Belle Chasse occupies a position nearly where the Baraboo River is situated. Mr. Dickey thinks the map was published in 1817. Its English would be "beautiful chase,--fine hunting grounds." Upon Farnum's maps of the territories of Michigan and the Ouisconsin, published in 1830, it is called Bonibeu's Creek.

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"Upon the map of Long's Second Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1823, it is called *Mahlenak*.

"Morse & Brees' Map of Wisconsin published in 1844 is the first to call it Baraboo."

The Winnebago Indian name is *Ocoochery*, signifying "*plenty of fish*." Information is sometimes given that there once was a large sand bar in the Wisconsin River at the mouth of the Baraboo River and that at that time the latter stream was known as "*Beau*" or something of that nature. This word preceded by the word *bar* makes *Barabeau* which is easily expressed as Baraboo.

According to an article by William Hill in the "*History of Sauk County*," published in 1880, Baraboo is derived from a French surname. Aside from the mythical old Frenchman, "Barabeau" to whom legend assigned a shanty at the mouth of the river in days prior to the settlement of the valley, a number of names of real personages give hints of the name Baraboo. The Barbou family was, perhaps, the most celebrated family of printers of France from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. The same author hints at the name being given in honor of Lieutenant General de Barre, of the eighteenth century and Colonel Isaac Barre, who was a friend of Wolfe and saw him die at Quebec.

At the time the county history was published Professor Henry of the Smithsonian Institution said that it might have come from the French *Barbue* ---catfish---a not uncommon designation of rivers and creeks by the early voyageurs; or from *Barbeau*--carp or sucker. What is now Putman's creek in Essex County, New York, was *Riviere a la Barbue* of the French and is so set down on M. de Levy's map of 1748, and in Pouchet's *Memoirs of the war of 1755-60*. Other examples are given and he says that the transition of *Barbue* to Baraboo is easy.

Mr. Hill found that the term *Barbeau* was synonymous with *Barbel*, a large, coarse, fresh-water fish having several barbs of beard-like feelers pendant from the leather sucker-like mouth, which gave it the name. At that time the Baraboo River was rich with sturgeon and catfish as recorded by Archibald Barker. In the spring of 1841, while running down the Baraboo River, Mr. Barker says:

"In company with Ed. Kingsley, going down the lower Baraboo Rapids each on a crib, I halloed to him to look---that somebody seemed to have made a dam of stone across the river. As we approached we saw it was the backs and tails of fishes. We were soon among them and found they were sturgeons. I killed three with a handspike. In jumping into the water to get them I was knocked down by others running against my legs. For a short distance the river seemed to be jammed full of them.

Mr. Hill was of the opinion that "*Riviere a la Barbeau*" should in the case of Baraboo be interpreted "*Sturgeon River*." It strengthens this conclusion that the Winnebago name of the river, *Ocoochery*, signifies "*plenty of fish*."

Bearing upon this subject Louis Claude wrote March 12, 1872, as follows: "The name 'Baraboo' is now up for final judgment, and although the abundance of 'suckers' both aquatic and terrestrial, which it appears has always distinguished this valley lends so great a weight to the 'Barbeau' theory that I will not 'carp' at it, still I beg to offer the following bit of suggestion--it can hardly be called information--viz; Fifteen years ago, I brought here a map of the date 1837, which a small but dishonest boy sold me (emphatically) on the cars for one of 1857. On this map the Baraboo River is marked *Barivaut's* or *Baribaut's* Creek. I have always believed the above to be the correct derivation.

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There is a statement in the same History of Sauk County from Hon. J. Allen Barber that in 1649 and 1650 the Huron's and their allies, who had been converted to Christianity by the Father Brebeuf, were overthrown by the Iroquois, and part of them fled to Wisconsin on their way to the Mississippi. They were met and driven back by the Sioux. In 1659--60 the French traders found them stationed about 6 day's journey southwest of Lake Superior, or not far from what is now called Baraboo. Very soon after that period they had returned to Green Bay. As they were Christians, they may not have given the name of their religious teacher, whose memory they would honor, to their temporary residence near the portage? The word 'Brebeuf' might possibly leave its shadow behind in the form of Brabo or Baraboo.

John T. de la Ronde was a ready writer and gives the following as the origin of the name of Baraboo according to his narrative in the Wisconsin Historical Collections. In speaking of his journey through the region he says: "I may mention that I learned from the Perrish Grignon, older than his half-brother, Augustine Grignon, derived from his grandfather, Charles Langlade: That when Captain Moran defeated the Sauks and Foxes at the Butte des Morts, in the last century, they fled to what is now known as Sauk Prairie; and when Moran heard of their new location, he drove them down the river leaving a force under an officer named Rabault, and from him Rabault or Baraboo river received its name.

W. H. Stennett in "A History of the Origin of the Place Names on the Chicago & Northwester, Railway" says Baraboo was named from Jean Baribault, an early French trapper and settler. A river of this name was by Miss Julia A. Lapham asserted to have been named for Captain Barabear, who was alleged to have been an officer in Moran's

expedition against the Indians, but there does not seem to be any real evidence to sustain the story, as it is very certain the river was named after Jean Baribault who lived on this stream before Moran's expedition was ever thought of.

Mrs. Kinzie in "*Waubun*" spells the word "Barribault", but does not say why the river is so named. The same reference is made in Wisconsin Historical Collections.

Henry Gannett in his volume on "The Origin of Certain Place Names" says that Baraboo was named for Jean Baribault, a French settler.

In the Wisconsin Historical Collection, B. W. Brisbois says that Baribeau or Baribault was the name of an old Canadian French Trader, who had his trading post on what is now known as the Baraboo River, and which stream took its name from him. As Mr. Brisbois Sen'r. knew him well and often spoke of him, he must have traded there the latter part of the last century or early in this. Mr. Brisbois does not know what became of the trader or anything further of his history.

E. Estabrook of Omaha wrote on March 15, 1872: "Governor Doty told me as many as twenty-five years ago that when he was one of the judges of the territory of Michigan (embracing Wisconsin) he used to travel from Green Bay to Prairie du Chien by canoe up the Fox River across the portage and down the Wisconsin; that one of his stopping places was the trading post of a Frenchman named Barabeau at the mouth of the river now known as the Baraboo, that the river took its name from this trader.

His brother, Capt. M. H. Estabrook, commanded the steamboat, Sam Ward, on Lake Superior. In walking through the old French village, of Sault Ste. Marie, he saw a sign on a trading house on main street,

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On May 12, 1872, B. W. Brisbois wrote from Prairie du Chien that Baribaut had a permanent trading station where the county seat is now located, about 12 miles west of the Wisconsin portage. When the place was settled the American people could not well pronounce the name Baribaut and to come as near as they could to the name, it was changed to Baraboo.

James G. Soulard wrote from Galena on May 26 of the same year: "I received my information in boyhood from Pierre Baribeau (which Brisbois spells Baribaut) whose name was spelled in my father's account book Pierre Baribault. He was a carpenter and worked many years for my father in St. Louis, Mo., in that capacity. He was a truthful and remarkably honest man, and a native of Montreal, Canada, or of that immediate neighborhood, and established and kept for many years a trading post, as explained by my friend Brisbois. Baribeau's statements were made to me in the years 1808 to 1810 in St. Louis. Baribault went to Wisconsin Probably in 1800 or before."

On John Farmer's map of the Territories of Michigan and Ouisconsin printed in 1830, the name is Bonibau's creek.

S. Augustus Mitchell's map of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, Philadelphia, 1831, the name is Bonibau's creek.

On another map by the same map maker, Philadelphia, 1835, the name is the same.

One map printed in 1836 by Phelps & Squire of New York and now in the Sauk County Historical society, the name of the river is given as Bonibau's creek.

In General William R. Smith's history of Wisconsin, published in 1838, the name of the river is given as Bonibau's creek.

On a state map of Wisconsin, 1840, the name is Baraboo.

On a state map of Wisconsin, 1844, the name is Beribeau River.

Miss Louise Phelps Kellogg, of the State Historical Society, adds the following account concerning the Baribeau family found in Tanguay's Genealogical dictionary:

"The first of the name in New France was Francois Baribeau, who was born in 1624, (probably in France although the record does not say so) was married in 1669 and died at Batiscan, leaving a number of children, who spelled the name in various ways; Baribaut, Baribault and Baribeau. The pronunciation is the same in every case and should be given a long o, like o in robe).

Francois' sons were Louis, Jean (1), Pierre, and Francois Junior, some of whom lived at Batiscan and others at Ste. Anne de la Pirade.

Of the third generation there were Michel and Jean Baptiste, sons of Louis; Jean (2), Francois Antoine, Francois (2) Joseph, sons of Jean (1). Michel had a son of the same name; and Jean Baptiste three sons. Jean (2) had a son Louis, Joseph, Francois (3), a son of the same name; Francois Antoine, a son named Jean Baptiste, and Joseph a son of the same name.

So the family widens and the plausible conclusion is that there was a Frenchman by the name of Baribeau who established himself as a trader on the Baraboo River early in the last century or near the close of the century before. When Dr. Reuben Gold Thwaites of Madison edited the Mackinac Register he found that Sieur F. Baribeau (pronounced Baraboo) voyager was god-father at the baptism of a female neophyte, July 22, 1847. There is nothing to indicate which one of the Baribeau's came to Wisconsin, and had a trading post at the mouth of the Baraboo river. Tanguay's record does not come beyond 1791; and all it proves is that there was a

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well known family of the name and that the "F. Baribeau" mentioned in the Mackinac Register (1747) was probably Francois, the progenitor of the family. Francois (3) was married in 1742 at Montreal, and was probably the signer at the baptismal service as written in the register in 1747.

One writer says that Baribeau was a young man, only seventeen years old, when he sought the Wisconsin wilderness to secure pelts for the Hudson Bay Fur company. Portage was the nearest settlement and when speaking of him it would be natural to say down at Baribeau's or Baraboo's. Hence the name appeared in various ways on the early maps and in the early annals of this region.

From whence this Frenchman came or whither he went there is much uncertainty. Of him we know so little that he is a veritable man of mystery.

Other Place Names

Ableman--The founder called it Excelsior, the motto of his native state, New York. Later it was called Rock Springs due to the springs at the base of the rocky bluff. Next the village was called Ableman's Mills after the first settler, Col. Stephen Van Rensselaer Ableman, who constructed a sawmill and gristmill there. In 1947 the name was officially changed to Rock Springs.--See *Excelsior*-

Adams -See *Baraboo*-

Babb's Prairie--Level tract near Reedsburg, named for James W. Babb and son John, who settled on the prairie in 1845.

Babb's Crossing--A bridge crossing the Baraboo River in Reedsburg. It is named after John Babb's grandfather, one of the earlier settlers in that region.

Badger--In connection with these pages on Sauk County place names it is interesting to note why Wisconsin is called the Badger State and the residents Badgers. Dr. R. G. Thwaites in his "Stories of the Badger State" says: "In the old mining days of Wisconsin, miners from southern Illinois and still farther south returned home every winter, and came back to the 'diggings' in the spring, thus imitating the migrations of the fish, popularly called the 'sucker', in the-flowing rivers of the region. For this reason the south-winterers were humorously called 'Suckers.' On the other hand, lead miners from the far-off Eastern states were unable to return home every winter, and at first lived in crude dugouts, burrowing into the hillsides after the fashion of badgers. These burrowing men were the first permanent settlers in the mines north of the Illinois line and called themselves 'Badgers.' Thus Wisconsin, in later days, when it was thought necessary to adopt a nickname, was by its own people dubbed 'The Badger State.'"

Badger Valley--Vale nine miles east of Spring Green, named for animals once numerous there.

Badger Village--Built during World War II to house workers for the Badger Ordinance Works. After the war the village housed University of Wisconsin students who bused to the University.

Bald Bluff--Hill in the eastern part of Greenfield. Years ago there was no timber on the land but since the coming of the early settlers trees have covered the hill. From this elevation or from that region several streams have their origin and among them are Jackson, Sibertz, Calydon, Clark and Palmer creeks.

Ball Prairie--Small level tract in the western part of the county, named for a resident.

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Baraboo--City, town, river, valley and bluffs. See first article. The town of Baraboo was originally in the north-western part of the county. (See map)

Baraboo--The County seat which, on the maps and in early accounts, was spoken of as "On the Baraboo", similar to saying "On the Wabash" or "On the Lemonweir." Later it was "Baraboo Rapids" and "Baraboo Mills." When a plat was made by Charles O. Baxter for Prescott Brigham, Mr. Brigham decided to call the place Adams as he held John Q. and the Adam's family in Massachusetts in great esteem. Soon after George Brown made a plat of his property and called it Baraboo. Much of Brown's land was south of the river. On January 14, 1849 the board of County Commissioners ordered the plats of Adams and Baraboo to be called Brooklyn, but the villages continued to be separate until May, 1866, when a village charter was obtained uniting the two under the same name. At the suggestion of the postal authorities in 1852 the name of Adams was dropped and the post office was afterwards known as Baraboo. As to the origin of the word (see first article)

Bassinger Island--Island in the Wisconsin River opposite section nine in the town of Merrimack, named for Dr. Samuel H. Bassinger, formerly of Prairie du Sac and member of the legislature.

Bear Creek--Town and stream in the southwestern part of the county so called on account of the prevalence of bears in the vicinity in the early days. The town was named after the stream. The Winnebago word for Bear Creek is Hoonge-Nee-Shum-ick.

Bessemer--(See North Freedom)

Big Creek--Stream in the town of La Valle. Name suggested from the size of the stream.

Big Hollow--The name of a canyon or valley three miles long and three miles wide in the town of Spring Green, named for size. There are a number of these so called hollows along the bluffs.

Bisch's Bridge--

Black Hawk--Discontinued Post Office in the town of Troy named for the Indian Chief, Black Hawk, leader of the Indians during the Black Hawk war. After the battle near Sauk City the Indians fled through the wilderness near where the hamlet is located.

Blakeslie Prairie--Level tract of land in Ironton, named for an early resident.

Bloom--(See North Freedom)

Bluff Post Office--Located on the on the east Sauk Road in the town of Sumpter on the Baraboo Bluffs.

Brilliott's Hill--

Brooklyn--One of the original towns in the northeast portion of the county. See map. It was named by R. G. Camp for Brooklyn, New York, the city being named for Breuckelen, Holland. The name signifies "broken up land" or "marshy land".

Butterfield Bridge--

Calydon--When the United States geological surveyors were at Durward's Glen at the time of making the contour map of this region, they asked B. I. Durward, the poet-painter who resided there, for the name of the stream flowing through the glen. He replied, "The Calydon." It comes from Caledonia and is the poetical expression of the word,--"*Oh Caledonia, stern and wild,*"--says Scott in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel"--"*Not thus in Ancient Days of Calydon,*"

Caledonia is an ancient name in Scotland, the native land of Mr. Durward.

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Cahoon Mine--Iron mine opened in 1911 about two miles south of Baraboo and named for former Assemblyman Wilbur Cahoon.

Carr Creek and **Carr Valley**--Stream and vale in Ironton named for David Carr.

Cassell--Discontinued post office in the town of Troy. See Cassell Prairie.

Cassell Prairie--Level tract in town of Troy, named for Dr. J. N. Cassell.

Chapman Lake--Small body of water in Fairfield named for Parkman Chapman.

Christiehood Prairie--Level tract of land between Baraboo and North Freedom, named for James Christie.

Clark Creek--Stream which enters the Baraboo River in Glenville, about a mile southeast of Baraboo, named for Judge A. M. Clark.

Cliff House--Abandoned hotel and discontinued post office on the north shore of Devil's Lake. It was originally called Minnewaukan after a lake by that name in North Dakota.

Climax--A railroad siding between La Valle and Wonewoc. The farmers in the neighborhood called it Poor Dickie and finally it simmered down to the meaningless word, Podunk. The place is sometimes called Crossman's crossing, for a land owner there.

Clinton Square--Park in Lyons named for Governor Dewitt Clinton of New York. Governor Clinton was one of the projectors of the Erie Canal and W. H. Canfield was a surveyor on the new water-way. Afterwards, in 1846 Mr. Canfield, deputy district surveyor for Sauk County in the territory of Wisconsin, made a plat of Lyons and named the public square or central park for the Empire state executive.

Collamer--See (Merrimack)

Congress Hall--Glen between Delton and the Wisconsin River named by the Topping family about 1850 from the form of the first chamber at the entrance.

Coon Bluff--Elevation in Dellona where the animals are numerous.

Copper Creek--A stream in Winfield named because copper ore was found there. The ore came down from the north in glacial times and was known as "floating Ore." The land was held by the government for a long time on account of the supposed mineral wealth and in the meantime most of the ore was hauled away.

Cramer's Corners--(See Plain)

Crawford Creek--(See Draper Creek)

Crossman--(See Climax)

Dawn--Summer house of the Kerfoot family on the Wisconsin River near Kilbourn. When S. H. Kerfoot, Sr., and bride came from Virginia to Lake View, Chicago, they called their home Dawn, as symbolic of the beginning of their married life. The Wisconsin home was named in memory of the Chicago residence.

Dead Man's spring--is located on section 21, town of Excelsior. In 1846, a man died near the spring and it was afterwards named Dead Man Springs, by James Babb. The man who died there was a surveyor. His name has been forgotten.

Dell Creek--A stream in the north-east portion of the county. The word Dells, as applied to the region of the Wisconsin River above and below Kilbourn, comes from the French, Dalles, meaning the narrows of the river or between the cliffs. No doubt the place was given the name by early Frenchmen who came to this region. From the word Dells we get Lower Dells, Upper Dells, Dell Prairie, Fern Dell, and Dell Creek. Delton, as applied to the town and village, is a

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contraction of Dell Town. Dellona, the name of a town, is from the same source. Dell Creek was named from a number of dells along the stream. The name appears as early as 1845 as shown by the government plats of the surveys.

Dellona--One of the towns. (See Dells)

Dellona--Discontinued post office in the town of Dellona. (See Dells)

Delton--One of the towns. (See Dells)

Delton--Village in the Town of Delton platted by Edward Norris and called Norris, for himself. When the post office was established it was called Loretto, the first name of Mrs. Norris. After words the name was changed to Delton.

Denzer--Discontinued post office in Honey Creek, named for William Denzer.

Devils Lake--Going back to the days of the Indians this body of water was called Minnewaukan or Evil Spirit Lake. The lake has unusual echoing powers and for this reason the Indians supposed the bluffs were infested with spirits. The belief is current that the Indians were afraid to camp there because of the evil spirits in the hills. When I. A. Lapham visited the lake in the fall of 1849 he wrote in his field notes, now in the Sauk County Historical society; "The lake is vulgarly called Devil's Lake from the wild, rocky place in which it is found." The first recorded visit of any person to the lake is James S. Alban, the first permanent settler in Sauk County. While wondering through the hills in 1839 he caught a glimpse of its sparkling surface through the trees. On the early maps it is called Lake of the Hills or Devil's lake.

Devils Lake--Station formerly called Kirkland, for Noble C. Kirk. When the Cliff House was occupied the post office there was called Devils Lake and at the same time the railroad called the station at Kirkland, Devils Lake. This was

confusing to the post office and railroad company so the post office at Kirkland was changed to Devils lake when the one at the Cliff House was discontinued.

Devils Nose--The eastern extremity of the south range of bluffs, named by the employees of the Chicago & North-Western Railway, who built the road.

Draper Creek--A stream which flows into the Baraboo River at the pumping station named for John Draper. It was formerly called Crawford Creek for James Crawford.

Durward's Glen--Bernard Isaac Durward of Scotland, an artist and poet, found this secluded place in 1861. He bought 40 acres and built a house, a studio and a chapel of native stone. In his studio, built in 1887, are the paintings by Bernard and his son Charles, as well as some of the family possessions.

Eagle--One of the original towns in the county, named probably for the national emblem, (See map)

Excelsior--One of the towns, named by Col. S. V. R. Ableman. The name appears in the seal of the state of New York, the native commonwealth of Col. Ableman.

Fairfield--Town, probably named for Fairfield, Massachusetts. The town was first named Flora by Timothy Adams for an old sweetheart. The residents did not like the name and a petition was circulated by John Crawford which resulted in a change, The towns and counties of New England named Fairfield were so called from the beauty of the fields.

Featherston Creek--Stream in Ironton, named for Thomas Featherstone.

Flora--(See Fairfield)

Franklin--Town, named for Benjamin Franklin or geographical division of the same name in another state.

Freedom--The name no doubt is patriotic. Freedom was formerly part of other towns and the residents worked

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hard to be separated. When the new town was formed the word Freedom may have been used as typical of their efforts.

Gallus Slough--A slough off from the Wisconsin River just west of Merrimac on the north side of Highway 113/78.

Garrison--Abandoned village and discontinued post office at the Lower Narrows of the Baraboo River, named for Mr. and Mrs. Garrison, residents there.

Giddings--Discontinued post office. section one, town of Excelsior, probably named for Joshua Reed Giddings, an American statesman.

Glenville--Region southeast and near Baraboo, named by C. L. Pearson for the glen-like appearance of the locality. The little red school house was once the name of the section.

Gordon--A telegraph station established between Reedsburg and La Valle when the Chicago & Northwestern built a second track. The origin of the name is unknown unless it is for William W. Gordon, president of the railroad of Georgia.

Greenfield--Town named by Nathan Dennison for Greenfield, Mass., his former home. Greenfield, Mass. was named for a river which intersects it. Before its incorporation as a town the settlement was known as "Green River District."

Hackett's Corners--(See North Freedom)

Hanger's Pond--See Slentz Pond

Haraszthy--(See Sauk City)

Harrisburg--Discontinued post office, section 17, town of Troy, named for John W. Harris. It was originally spelled Harrisburgh.

Hay Creek--Stream near Reedsburg where the early residents cut hay, hence its name.

Haystacks--Elevation in Dellona having fantastic shapes, as the name implies.

Happy Hill--In 1864, the first settlers arrived and settled on the high portion of this area as it was high & dry. Most of the lowland was marsh at that time.

Hill Point--William Burmester built a new store and wanted a name for the area. On a Sunday afternoon in 1907, he and Mike Drea, Henry Kohlmeyer, Henry Schluter, Dick St. John, Frank Krueger and Sam Roberts selected this name. See (Tuckerville)

Hill Settlement--An area named after the Hill family that settled near the Southeast part of the Town of Freedom, later renamed Maple Hill.

Hubbell Prairie--Level tract of land in La Valle, named for an early owner.

Hulbert Creek--Stream in the town of Delton, named for Joel Hulbert.

Honey Creek- I. A. Lapham in his History of Wisconsin, published in 1836, says the stream is called Naumatonan or Honey Creek. The former name is probably Winnebago but its meaning is unknown. The name of Honey Creek was applied to the stream on account of so many wild bees with rich stores of honey being found there by the early settlers. Honey Creek is the largest stream wholly within the county.

Honey Creek--Town named for the stream. The town was originally much larger. (See map)

Horse Bluff--An elevation just west of the village of La Valle named in a peculiar way. H. C. Palmer relates that in an early day several hunters were camped there and while seated around the blazing fire, smoking their pipes, they were startled by the neighing of a horse. Pretty soon a pony, saddled and bridled, came trotting into camp. For two days a search was made for the owner without avail. The only white men known in that vicinity at the time were James W. Babb

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and his son, John, on Babb's Prairie. The mystery was never cleared and since that day the elevation has been known as Horse Bluff.

Humboldt--Discontinued post office, section thirty-five, town of Ironton, probably named for the geographer, Baron Alexander von Humboldt.

Ironton--Town and village, named by Jonas Tower on account of the presence of iron. Early surveyors reported iron on account of the variation of the needle.

Iroquois Mine--An iron mine in the town of Freedom, first called the Sauk Mine for the name of the county. It was originally owned by the Iroquois Iron Company, which operated the Iroquois Furnace Company. When the Oliver Iron Mining Company purchased the plant the name was changed to Iroquois for the name of the furnace. The word Iroquois is from one of the five great Indian nations which once inhabited central New York and is said to come from "hiro", I have said, and from "koue", a vocable, which expresses, joy or sorrow, according to the rapidity with which it is pronounced.

Jackson Creek--A stream which enters the Baraboo River near the Jackson Bridge in Greenfield and is usually called Jackson Creek for J. Jackson, an early settler. On the United States topographical map issued about 1897 the stream is called Rowley Creek, the name being that of another resident. In territorial times the stream, or at least the upper portion of it, was known as Leambros Creek. Leambro lived with a group of Indians at the headwaters of the creek. He was a Frenchman and had a squaw for a wife.

Jonesville--Discontinued post office, northeast corner of section nineteen, town of Spring Green, named for Thomas Jones, the first postmaster. The office stood on an Indian

burying ground which has since been eaten away by the Wisconsin River

Karstetter Prairie--Level tract of land in La Valle, named after an early owner.

King's Corners--Discontinued post office in the town of Sumpter, named for Solomon King. The village plat was called New Haven.

Kingston--One of the original towns, named for Kingston, New York, the home of the King family, early residents in the town. (See Sumpter).

Kirkland--(See Devil's lake)

Kirkwood--Railroad siding west of Baraboo. Stennett says the name was given for N. C. and Timothy Kirk.

Kosin's Hill-- A hill in North Freedom just south of the bridge over the Baraboo River and adjacent to and west of South Maple Street. Great for skiing and sledding even though the river is at the foot of the hill.

Kosin's Slough--Slough off of Baraboo River just south of the North Freedom Bridge and behind Kosin's Hill on the west side of South Maple Street. This is referred to as Slough No. 2. There is another slough just south of Kosin's slough behind Ulrich's Farm referred to as Slough No. 1.

La Bars Pond--(See Mirror Lake)

Lake Gurgel--See Slentz Pond

Lake of the Hills--(See Devil's lake)

La Rue--Village site platted in the town of Freedom and named for W. G. La Rue, a former resident of Baraboo, who was instrumental in locating the vast beds of ore in the region.

La Valle--Town and village. The name means "the valley." There is some dispute as to who should have the honor of applying the term.

Place Names In Sauk County, Wisconsin

Leach Creek--John Brink named Leach Lake and creek from the fact that the water leached or percolated through the soil. Brink was a United States surveyor from Crystal Lake, Ill., and when he made the subdivisions of Fairfield he camped near the creek.

Leach Lake--(See Leach Creek)

Leambro Creek--(See Jackson Creek)

Leland--Discontinued post office in the town of Honey Creek, named for Cyrus Leland, member of the legislature.

Lime Ridge--Village in the town of Ironton, named for a lime ridge about a mile west of the place, where the first post office was located.

Litchfield--Portion of the plat of the city of Baraboo, named by R. G. Camp for Litchfield, Conn., which in turn was named for Litchfield, England.

Little Prairie--Level tract in town of Troy, named from the small size of the prairie.

Lodde's Mill--Discontinued post office in the town of Prairie du Sac, named for Martin Lodde. The post office was once called Rowell's Mills for Henry Rowell.

Log Town--(See Plain)

Loganville--Chauncey P. Logan was given a quarter-section of land by his wife's uncle, and built a one-room house in 1853. Mrs. Logan was the first school teacher in the little red school house which also served as a church, town hall, meeting house, lecture hall and singing school. When a two-room school was built the old one was moved downtown and used for a wagon shop. Main Street was laid out by Logan and Kinsley and Logan named the village Loganville. Steven Kinsley had the first post office and Chauncey Logan, had it next, and then it was moved to the village store.

Loretto--Discontinued post office in the town of Bear Creek, named by Rev. Fr. T. A. Byrne for Loretto, Italy. It is sometimes spelled Loreto.

Loretto--(See Delton)

Lower Narrows--(See Narrows)

Lyons--Suburb of Baraboo named by Harvey Canfield, for Lyons, New York, where he once resided. Lyons, New York, was named for Lyons, France.

Manchester--Abandoned plat and village where the city pumping station is located, named for eastern city.

Man Mound Park--A park in the town of Greenfield, named for large Indian Effigy mound shaped like a man, the only known man mound in the world.

Maple Hill--See Hill Settlement

Marian Park--A park at Prairie du Sac, named by W. H. Jacobs for his daughter.

Marston--Town formerly in the northwestern part of the county, no longer on the maps, probably named for some resident or eastern town by the name of Marston. There was a post office called Marston which was changed to La Valle on account of it being similar to Mauston in the next county.

Matt's Ferry --(See Merrimack)

McCoy Bridge--Probably named after Alfred McCoy who had to ford Seeley Creek when he settled here in 1854.

Merrimack--Town and village, named by Mrs. J. G. Train for the county of Merrimack in New Hampshire. It should be spelled with the final K, the same as the New Hampshire name. The village of Merrimack was first called Matt's Ferry for Chester Mattson who operated a ferry there. When the post office was established there it was called Collamer for the post master general. The name was afterward changed to Merrimack. Gannett says the Indian word Merrimack means "sturgeon" or "swift water".

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Military Road--This route was surveyed in 1831 and 1832 to connect Fort Crawford at Prairie du Chein with Fort Howard at Green Bay, the first overland route to replace the water route by way of the Fox River and Lake Winnebago. The Blackhawk War was an important factor in its construction, thus the name Military Road. It was completed in 1838, but was passable chiefly when the ground was either very dry or frozen. Hunters, traders, pioneers, soldiers, Indians, trappers and confidence men traveled it, as well as military personnel.

Mill Pond--See Slentz Pond

Minnewaukan--(See Devil's Lake)

Mirror Lake--Once known as the "upper" or La Bar's Pond. It was formed in 1860 by the erection of a dam near the village of Delton. As the people came to visit it for pleasure or fishing, the remarkably clear reflections attracted attention and exclamation, "what a mirror," and the like. In this way the name gradually changed. It is said that Mrs. C. A. Noyes of Kilbourn is credited with first applying the name.

Narrows Creek--A stream which flows through the Narrows and into the Baraboo River at Ableman.

Narrow Prairie--A level tract west of Ableman, named for Narrows Creek which flows through the prairie and quartzite narrows.

Narrows, Upper and Lower--Narrow gorges in the quartzite hills where the Baraboo River enters and emerges from the canoe shaped Baraboo valley.

Natural Bridge State Park--South of Baraboo, comprises of 530 acres of Oak woodlands, dry prairie, and a natural sandstone arch serving as its focal point. This out of the way park features one of the oldest inhabited sites known in the Midwest. The **Raddatz Rock Shelter** at the base of the base of the natural arc is 60 ft. wide with a depth of 30 ft. and

is believed to have been inhabited by Paleo-Indians approximately 11,000 years ago.

New Buffalo--Town once in the northeastern part of the county but no longer on the map. Many of the residents came from Buffalo, New York, to New Buffalo.

New Haven--Abandoned village plat in Sumpter, named for New Haven, Conn. (See King's Corner)

Norris--(See Delton)

North Freedom--Village located in the northern part of the town of Freedom, hence North Freedom. Where the roads meet in the center of the section was originally called Hackett's Corners from the families living there. When the railroads were built two plats were made, one called Bloom for George W. Bloom and one called North Freedom. Afterwards Bloom Station was changed to North Freedom. Iron ore used for paint was later discovered and the name became Bessemer in honor of Sir Henry Bessemer, who invented the process of reducing iron ore. The name of North Freedom was later decided upon.

Oaks--An abandoned post office in the town of Woodland that was once called Friendswood from the friends in the neighborhood.

Oliver--Village site, platted in the town of Freedom in 1911 and named for Henry W. Oliver who was engaged in the mining industry.

Otter Creek--A stream in the towns of Sumpter and Prairie du Sac, so named for the animals which once inhabited the stream.

Oterville--An abandoned post office near the head waters of Otter Creek.

Palmer Creek--Stream in Greenfield, named for Isaac Palmer.

Place Names In Sauk County, Wisconsin

Parfrey's Glen--Beautiful glen in Greenfield, named for Robert Parfrey. There was once a mill and distillery there.

Peck's Prairie--A level tract east of and adjacent to the city of Baraboo named for Eben Peck.

Pewit's Nest--A water-fall and gorge on Skillet Creek. W. H. Canfield says in his "Outline Sketches" that the place received its name in 1843 from the circumstances of an ingenious eccentric mechanic building a workshop in a recess of the solid sand-rock, ten feet above a deep pool of water, confined within the walls of this canyon, dug out by the plunge of water over a fall of eight or ten feet in height.

The approach to it was either through a trap-door in the roof or a trap-door in the floor. If through the roof it was by climbing down the rock wall to get to it; if through the floor it was by a floating bridge upon the pool with a ladder at its end leading to the trap-door in the floor. The shop could not be seen from the mouth of the canyon or from the top from any direction save one. Hence, by the early settlers it was dubbed "Pewit's Nest".

Pronunciation "Pee-whet's" as in "Whet-Stone" although the "T" may be silent.

Pine Creek--A stream which flows into Skillet Creek, named for the timber on its banks.

Plain-- Village in the town of Franklin, once called Cramer's Corners because Solomon Cramer, John Cramer and Adam Cramer owned the land. A Number of rough buildings were put up at the corners and the place became known as Log Town. J. H. Carpenter of Spring Green says the place was called Plain because the inhabitants were plain people. It was also suggested that a Catholic Priest stopped there one time and said that the land reminded him of Maria Von Plain in Austria.

Pleasant Prairie--(See Webster's Prairie)

Plumb Creek--Stream in Woodland named for wild fruit once abundant in the locality.

Plummer Lake--A lake in Fairfield named for Edward Plummer.

Plum Valley--(See Plum Creek)

Point Sauk--The highest land in Sauk County, being about 1,620 feet above sea level. The point was named by the United States Geographic board in 1907 and is located on the P. Fitzsimmons farm near the center of section 15, town of Greenfield.

Podunk--(See climax)

Poor Dickie--(See Climax)

Prairie du Sac--Town and village, named for the sac or Sauk Indians once residing there--Prairie of the Sacs or Meadow of the Sauks.

Prentice Creek--Stream in Greenfield named for Alexander Prentice.

Quiggle Creek--Stream in Merrimack, named for D. M. Quiggle. It was once called Searl Creek for H. Searl who built a mill there.

Quisisana--Resort on the Wisconsin River near Kilbourn, "Here you will find Health." The name was given by Mrs. Lydia Ely, Kilbourn.

Raddatz Rock Shelter--See Natural Bridge State Park

Reedsburg--Town and city named for D. C. Reed. The city was originally spelled Reedsburgh.

Rattlesnake Den--Later, about 1916, became a quarry near LaRue operated by the Harbison Walker Refractories Company of Pittsburgh.

Rattlesnake Knob--An elevation in the town of Dellona inhabited by rattlesnakes.

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Rebock Prairie--Level tract of land in La Valle, named for an early owner.

Riches Post Office--Discontinued post office in the northeast portion of the town of Troy, named for Robert Riches.

Rock Springs--(See Ableman)

Rosalietown--Deserted Hamlet on the Wisconsin River between Merrimack and Prairie du Sac, named for Mrs. Rosalie Naffz, wife of Charles Naffz.

Rowell's mills--(See Lodde's Mill)

Rowley Creek--(See Jackson Creek)

Russell's Corners--Discontinued post office in Fairfield named for John B. Russell.

Sandusky--Post office in the town of Washington, named by William Dano and Joshua Holmes for Sandusky, Ohio, their former home. Gannett says the name is derived from the Huron Indian (outsandouke) or (ot san-dosti), "*there is pure water here,*" or from sa-anduste, "*large pools of water.*" Another authority gives the meaning a "*cold spring.*"

Sauk--The county, from the tribe of Sauk or Sac Indians. When the county was organized January 10, 1849, the word Sauk was familiar, the Indians having formerly dwelt in Prairie du Sac where they had quite a village. They lived in Michigan, according to the earliest records, were driven to Wisconsin, then across the Mississippi River afterwards into Iowa, Kansas and at last to Indian Territory. Carver visited the village at Prairie du Sac in 1766 and wrote that the Indians had comfortable houses. The word Sac, Sauk and Ozaukee are synonymous and Ozaukee is the Chippewa form for the tribal name of Sauk. According to Legler the word is commonly asserted to mean "people living at the mouth of a river," while Gannett interprets it as signifying "people of the yellow earth." In 1849 Alfred Brunson wrote

that Sauk County received its name from Sauk Prairie within its limits.

Sauk City--Village first called Haraszthy for Count Augustine Haraszthy, one of the founders. The name was difficult to remember so it was change to Westfield but as the word "City", when attached to names of places, became popular; it was called Sauk City, after the name of the county.

Sauk Prairie--(See Sauk County) in his history of Wisconsin published in 1846, I. A. Lapham says: "The prairie is about eight miles wide and extends eighteen miles along the Wisconsin. Its name is given in illusion to its form, being that of a sack or bag and not from Sauk the tribe of Indians.

Saukville--Section between Prairie du Sac and Sauk City, now included within the limits of the villages.

Searl Creek--(See Quiggle Creek)

Seeley Creek--Empties into the Baraboo River on the northeast corner of Section 11 in the town of Freedom. Thought to be named after an old settler by the name of Seeley who was a logger and logged all of the best White Pine along the creek. The logs were probably floated to the Baraboo River and then to the Baraboo Saw Mills during the spring freshet.

Seeley Lake--See Slentz Pond

Shale's Corners--A curving part of Highway 136 about 1 mile north of North Freedom.

Sibertz Creek--A stream in the eastern part of Greenfield, named for Jacob Sibertz.

Skillet Creek--Captain Levi Moore built a cabin near Skillet Falls and named the stream and falls from the water-worn holes in the soft sand-rock because they looked much like iron vessels called "skillets."

Skillet Falls--(See Skillet Creek)

Place Names In Sauk County, Wisconsin

Skull Canyon--An area south of College Avenue in Baraboo by the quarry and slaughter house...named after cattle skulls found in the area.

Slentz Pond-- A lake or pond formed by virtue of the Slentz Dam being constructed on Seeley Creek. South of North Freedom about 1 mile....A dam constructed by Sam Slentz on Seeley Creek.

Slentz Grist Mill--Constructed on Seeley Creek by Sam Slentz.

Sligo--An early Irish settlement in Winfield, named for Sligo in Ireland.

Spring Creek--In Winfield, named for the many springs along its course.

Spring Green--Town and village. There is much uncertainty and there has been much discussion as to the naming of Spring Green. The Spring Green News of July 10, 1902 says that according to the Late Samuel Huntley the prairie was the first in the spring of the year to show vegetation. Hence the town was known by that name many years previous to the existence of the village. Some believed the name came from Garwood Green, the second postmaster, but this is not likely as the town was named Spring Green some years before the village, where the post office was located. J. F. Morrow writes to the Baraboo News as follows: "Mary Williams named Spring Green, all old settlers know this. There was a spot on the south side of the bluffs that always 'greened up' sooner in the spring than did the prairie under which is a stratum of cold clay that keeps it back. Mrs. Williams could see this from her house which stood until some years ago northeast of the town, and no doubt, after the long, lonesome winters, viewed this spot in an exaggerated way. As Spring Green lies in the bend of the river the cold ice

water keeps the vegetation back, but when it comes it comes with a rush."

Sproul's Slough--Probably named after William Sproul who owned a farm in section 11 upon which the slough was located.

Sumpter--Town once called Kingston. When Fort Sumter was fired upon the name of Kingston was changed to Sumpter on account of there being another Kingston in the state, the name Sumpter was wrongly spelled on an early map and the letter "p", is still inserted. Fort Sumter was named for Thomas Sumter of the revolutionary war and the word means a pack-horse or the driver of a pack-horse.

Stead Prairie--Level tract of land in Baraboo Valley, named for an early owner.

Troy--Town named by Jonathan W. Harris for Troy, Richland County, Ohio, his former home. Troy is the name of a city in Asia Minor.

Tuckerville--Discontinued post office in the town of Washington named from William Tucker. The vicinity is now called Hill Point, from a hill located there.

Twin Creek--Streams in Winfield, so named because there are two alike.

Upper Narrows--(See Narrows)

Valton--Post office in the town of Woodland, probably a contraction of Vale Town or Valley Town.

Washington--Town probably named for first president and not for Washington Gray, a resident of the town.

Webster Prairie--Level tract between Baraboo and Delton, named for H. H. Webster. On the early maps it was called Pleasant Prairie.

Westfield--Town, named for the village of Westfield, now Loganville. C. P. Logan came from Westfield, New

Place Names In Sauk County, Wisconsin

York and gave the name to the village. The original Westfield was in Massachusetts, so named because on the western boundary of an early survey.

Westfield--(See Sauk County)

White Mound--Post office in Franklin, named for a hill called White Mound.

Wilson Creek--A stream in the southwestern part of the county named for Thomas Wilson, a Scotchman, who came to Helena to work in the shot tower. He crossed the Wisconsin River as early as 1838 to explore the country and moved into Sauk County in 1840.

Wisconsin--When a new country is discovered the first objects to be named are the bodies of water, streams, elevations and other natural features. The first name in this section of the state to appear on any map was the name of the river which bounds Sauk County on the northeast and southeast -- the "Wisconsin". The name was spelled far differently two hundred or more years ago and it is interesting to note some of the changes which the word has undergone.

In 1673 Marquette and Joliet discovered the river and Joliet wrote it Riviere Miskonsing.

Henry E. Legler says in his "origin and Meaning of Wisconsin Names" that on a map supposed to have been made by Engineer Franquelin (1681) he calls Wisconsin "Miskous."

Marquette spelled it Meskousing.

Franquelin map, 1688, R. Ouisconsing.

Coronelli map, 1688, Ouisconsing.

Hennepin, R de Ouisconsins.

Hennepin, R. Ouisconsing.

Hennepen, 1697, Riviere Ouisconsing,

(engraved for book)

La Montan, 1709, R. d. Ouriconsing

La Montan, 1703, Ouisconsink

All these in time crystallized into Ouisconsin, this orthography being used on Mitchell's Traveler's Guide, 1634, and by Phelps & Squire, 1836. Copies of the last two named maps are in the Sauk County Historical collection.

Mr. Legler further says: "As with other geographical names derived from Indian sources, the real meaning of the word Wisconsin (Chippewa origin is so obscure as to be in dispute) The popular translation is 'wild, rushing channel,' a definition that accords well with the nature of the stream, but which nevertheless is of doubtful authenticity. Another rendering, "the gathering of the waters", is pronounced absurd by students of the Algonquin tongue. Mrs. Charlotte Ouisconsin Van Cleve, in her "Three Score Years and Ten", says that the Indians termed the stream Nee-na-hoo-na-ninka (beautiful little river).

It is claimed by Consul W. Butterfield that the name is derived from the physical features of its lower course, where are observable the highlands or river hills. Some of these hills present high and precipitous faces toward the water. Others terminate in knobs. The name is supposed to have been taken from this feature being derived from Missi, "great." and Ossin," a stone or rock."

"The word Wisconsin is the result of considerable change from the first rendering. On Marquette's genuine map, where the stream is indicated for the first time, no name is put down. Joliet's map gives it as Miskonsing. Friar Hennipen wrote it Ouisconsin and again Misconsin, and the French traveler Charlevoix, who visited this country early in the eighteenth century, gave his preference to this form: Ouisconsing. It was not long before the final letter was

Place Names In Sauk County, Wisconsin

dropped, and this form was retained until the present English spelling superseded that of the French.

"From its source in Lake Vieux Desert on the northern boundary line, the stream flows through this state for four hundred and fifty miles. Its descent from the lake to where, at Prairie du Chien, it debouches into the Mississippi is about a thousand feet. From the famous portage that has played such an important part in the Western history, where the Wisconsin turns to the southwest, the current is exceedingly rapid, and the distance to the mouth a hundred and eighteen miles.

The same authority says Wisconsin means Muskrat house."

Dr. R. G. Thwaites in his "Wisconsin" says that the meaning of the aboriginal word thus variously rendered is now unknown. Popular writers declare that it signifies "gathering of the waters," or "meeting of waters," having reference possibly, by the occasional mingling of the divergent streams over the low lying watershed at the Fox-Wisconsin portage but there is no warrant for this. In order to preserve the sound in English, it became necessary on the arrival of the Americans to modify the French spelling. At first it was locally rendered "Wiskonsan"; (which is closely phonetic, (then "Wiskonsin"; but congress seemed to prefer the hard c, and this was retained in place of k, despite the protests of Governor Doty and many territorial newspaper editors. Thus the official spelling became Wisconsin and the territorial legislature on January 30, 1845, approved by resolution the act of congress nine years before, concludes the historian.

The territorial legislature, January 30, 1845, passed a resolution declaring the name of the territory, "Wisconsin." The same orthography was used by congress in establishing

the territorial government. The act by congress was approved April 20, 1836.

W. H. Stennett of Chicago says that Wisconsin comes from a Sauk Indian word having reference to holes in the bank of a stream in which birds nest.

Wisconsin Creek--Discontinued post office in the southwest corner of Troy, named for Thomas Wilson.

Winfield--Town named for General Winfield Scott of Mexican War fame. He had been nominated by the Whig Party to run for president of the United States against Franklin Pierce..

Witwen--Discontinued post office in the town of Troy, named for G. and J. P. Witwen, who built a mill there.

Woodland--Town, there is some doubt as to the origin of the name but probably named on account of the abundance of timber.

Woodlawn--Discontinued post office in the town of Washington named for Dr. William A. Wood.

Place Names In Sauk County, Wisconsin

The prior pages acknowledged "Place Names" as recorded by H. E. Cole, a prolific historian and writer of the nineteenth century and published in December of 1912.

Since that time there obviously has been more "place names" established. Feel free to notify the writer of any you may be aware of.

Mr. Cole in his "Acknowledgements" wrote:

Many letters were written to persons in various parts of the county and country in order to obtain the information in these pages. To all these, thanks are due. The following books have also been consulted.

Origin of Certain Place Names in the United States, by Henry Gannett, 1905.

A history of the Origin of the Place Names Connected with the Chicago & Northwestern Railway, by W. H. Stennett, 1908.

Outline Sketches of Sauk County by W. H. Canfield. 1861. History of Sauk County, 1880.

Origin and Meaning of Wisconsin Place Names by Henry E. Legler, 1903.

Wisconsin Historical Collections