

HISTORICAL ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Old Settlers Society,

OF

RACINE COUNTY, WISCONSIN,

By CHARLES E. DYER.

ALSO,

CONSTITUTION. BY-LAWS AND LIST OF MEMBERS.

RACINE:

A. C. SANDFORD, PRINTER AND BOOKBINDER.

1871.

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OFFICIAL RECORD  
OF THE  
OLD SETTLERS SOCIETY

OF  
RACINE COUNTY, WISCONSIN.

WITH THE  
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

OF  
CHARLES F. PYER,

DELIVERED AT BURLINGTON, WIS.

FEBRUARY 22, 1871.

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RACINE, WIS :  
A. O. SANDFORD, PRINTER AND BOOKBINDER,  
1871.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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The importance of making and preserving some historical record of the early settlement of Racine County has been a theme of discussion for several years among the early settlers.

Nothing, however, was done towards accomplishing the object, until a call was prepared and circulated for the purpose of organizing an "Old Settlers' Society," at Racine, on the 14th day of March, 1870, at which time a Society was formed, the original and subsequent proceedings of which, including the address delivered by Charles E. Dyer before the Society at Burlington on the 22d day of February, are herein published.

Believing that this record contains much that is valuable to those who now read it, and that it will be doubly valuable to those who come after us, and hoping that the Society may long continue, and that other valuable historical facts may be obtained and recorded, the Executive Committee of the Society now present this history of the settlement of the County to the members of the Society and to the public.

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## PUBLIC MEETING.

At a meeting of Old Settlers of the county of Racine, held at the court house, in the city of Racine, March 14th, 1870, LORENZO JANES was chosen chairman, and S. B. PECK secretary.

The following call for an Old Settlers' meeting was then read :

"All residents of Racine county, who have been in the State for more than thirty years, are invited to meet at the court house, on Monday evening, March 14th, 1870, for the purpose of organizing an Old Settlers' Society.

"By request of       MANY OLD CITIZENS."

On motion, it was voted that the Chair appoint a committee of five to prepare a Constitution, and present it to the meeting for adoption.

The chair appointed J. A. Carswell, A. Cooper, Alanson Filer, Benjamin Pratt and C. J. True, as such committee.

During the absence of the committee, many incidents connected with the early settlement of Racine were narrated by L. S. Blake, Eldad Smith, and others.

The committee returned, and reported the following Constitution, which report was accepted, and the Constitution adopted :

PREAMBLE.—For the purpose of reviving old associations, and renewing the ties of former years, the undersigned do hereby unite in an association, to be known as the "Old Settlers' Society of the county of Racine," and adopt the following

## CONSTITUTION.

*Article 1st.* Any person of good moral character, who has resided in the State more than thirty years, and is now a resident of Racine county, may become a member of this Society by signing his or her name, and paying an initiation fee of fifty cents.

*Article 2d.* The officers of this Society shall consist of a President, three Vice Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and an Executive Committee of five members.

*Article 3d.* The President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer shall perform such duties as usually pertain to their respective offices, but all matters relating to the Society



shall be under the control and management of the Executive Committee.

*Article 4th.* The officers of this Society shall be elected by ballot, on the second Monday of January in each year.

*Article 5th.* New members may be admitted by the Executive Committee, provided that thirty years shall have elapsed since the applicant's first residence in the State of Wisconsin.

*Article 6th.* The Executive Committee shall give notice, through the papers or otherwise, of the time of the funeral of any of the deceased members, and all members, if possible, shall attend said funeral, wearing the Society badge.

*Article 7th.* Whenever seventy-five persons shall have signed this Constitution, they may elect officers and organize the Society; and it is understood that women may become members of this Society without paying the initiation fee.

*Article 8th.* This Constitution may be altered or amended at any annual meeting, by a majority of the members present.

Those persons who were entitled to become members were then invited to sign the Constitution. The following are the names, and date of first residence :

Names.	Date of First Residence
L. S. Blake.....	February 15th, 1835.
Benj. Pratt.....	February 15th, 1835.
Eldad Smith.....	September 22d, 1835.
A. Raymond.....	September 22d, 1835.
Sheridan Kimball.....	December —, 1835.
Alanson Filer.....	November —, 1835.
Samuel G. Knight.....	August 20th, 1836.
A. Cooper.....	October —, 1836.
J. O. Bartlett.....	November 6th, 1836.
Adney Wooster.....	March 14th, 1836.
Nathan Joy.....	June 1st, 1836.
C. J. True.....	December 28th, 1836.
Lorenzo Janes.....	July 15th, 1836.
Wm. S. Derby.....	June 5th, 1837.

Samuel Hood.....	May 24th, 1838.
Seth P. Phelps.....	————, 1839.
J. H. Gipson .....	June —, 1837.
Wm. S. Hoyt.....	June 21st, 1837.
W. H. Gresitt.....	May 27th, 1839.
H. Raymond.....	March 2d, 1839.
J. A. Carswell.....	June 16th, 1839.
R. H. Baker.....	June 27th, 1839.
S. B. Peck.....	June 9th, 1839.
James T. Elliott.....	August —, 1839.
Norman Clark.....	October —, 1836.
Thomas Place.....	July —, 1835.
Levi J. Billings.....	November —, 1836.
Angus B. Crane.....	May 15th, 1839.

After a sufficient number had signed to constitute a Society, it was voted to proceed to ballot for officers for the present year, which resulted in the following choice :

*President*—LUCIUS S. BLAKE.

*Vice Presidents*—BENJ. PRATT, WM. S. HOYT, THOMAS PLACE.

*Secretary and Treasurer*—S. B. PECK.

*Executive Committee*—A. COOPER, R. H. BAKER, J. O. BARTLETT, A. RAYMOND, PLINY M. PERKINS.

On motion, it was voted that the Executive Committee be instructed to fix upon a time and place for holding an "Old Settlers' Meeting."

On motion it was voted that a copy of the proceedings of this meeting be furnished the papers for publication.

The Executive Committee then announced that they had fixed upon the first Wednesday in June next, at the city of Racine, as the time and place of the first meeting of the Society, and that further notice would be given of the same.

On motion—adjourned.

S. B. PECK, *Secretary*.



Names.	Date of First Residence.
James Walker.....	April, 1835.
Charles Bunce.....	—, 1838.
E. R. Cooley.....	May, 1838.
Nelson A. Walker.....	October, 1835.
R. M. Walker.....	September, 1836.
John Adams.....	April 28th, 1835.
Joseph Adams.....	April 28th, 1835.
Edward Adams.....	April 28th, 1835.
Walter Cooley.....	May, 1835.
A. G. Knight.....	April, 1836.
J. R. Slauson.....	May 18th, 1838.
Geo. W. Slauson.....	May 18th, 1838.
Seneca Raymond.....	June 20th, 1836.
Eseck B. Sears, Caledonia.....	October 20th, 1836.
Thomas Spencer, “ .....	November 27th, 1836.
Orrilla Spencer, “ .....	May 27th, 1836.
Wm. Sears, “ .....	October 1st, 1836.
Annis Sears, “ .....	October 20th, 1837.
Alonzo Sears, “ .....	October 20th, 1837.
Luther R. Sears, “ .....	May 25th, 1836.
Geo. F. Roberts, “ .....	October, 1836.
Cyrus Nichols, “ .....	August, 1836.
Mrs. D. D. Nichols, “ .....	August, 1836.
Mrs. L. J. Warner, “ .....	August, 1836.
Daniel B. Rork, “ .....	June, 1835.
Mrs. D. B. Rork “ .....	June, 1835.
Mrs. P. S. Parker, “ .....	August, 1836.
Stephen Campbell, “ .....	—, 1835.
Mrs. Mary Roberts, “ .....	September, 1836.
Mrs. S. B. Peck, Racine.....	September, 1838.
Mrs. H. R. Walker.....	October, 1838.
Fordice Lincoln, Yorkville.....	June, 1836.
C. E. Waite, “ .....	March 12th, 1837.
Lorenzo Waite, “ .....	April 8th, 1838.
Carlisle Waite, “ .....	April 8th, 1838.

Carlos Waite, Yorkville.....	April 8th, 1838.
Samuel Ormiston, “ .....	July, 1837.
Mrs. S. Ormiston, “ .....	July, 1837.
Jacob Bussa, “ .....	June, 1837.
Chas. Scofield, “ .....	August, 1839.
Mrs. C. Scofield, “ .....	August, 1837.
James H. Morgan, Racine.....	May, 1837.
A. H. Blake, Racine.....	April, 1835.
Mrs. Edith Bartlett, Mt. Pleasant.....	July, 1835.
Miss Minerva Newman, “ .....	July, 1835.
A. G. Newman, “ .....	July, 1835.
Mrs. Susan Place, “ .....	May, 1840.
Dorance Secor, “ .....	May, 1840.
Luther Secor, “ .....	May, 1840.
David Secor, “ .....	May, 1840.
Charles L. Morris, “ .....	July 7th, 1838.
Wm. Place, “ .....	July, 1835.
Patrick G. Cheves, “ .....	May, 1840.
Joseph S. Longwell, “ .....	May, 1835.
Mrs. Jos. S. Longwell, “ .....	April, 1835.
S. H. Sage.....	February 7th, 1836.
E. Everit.....	May 17th, 1839.
Samuel E. Chapman.....	May 17th, 1836.
L. D. Merrills.....	April, 1837.
Thad. Earle.....	November, 1836.
Lewis Royce.....	August, 1837.
Edwin Lincoln.....	June, 1840.
Henry B. Roberts.....	September, 1836.
Wm. Ballack.....	March, 1840.
John Ballack.....	June, 1840.
James Ballack.....	December, 1839.
Mrs. A. H. Blake.....	———, 1837.
Thomas Adland.....	May, 1840.
Knud Adland.....	May, 1840.
Joseph Bishop.....	December, 1839.
Newton Peck.....	September, 1836.

John M. Cooper.....	May, 1840.
Mrs. Fanny Pratt.....	September, 1839.
Mrs. Mary Derby.....	June 5th, 1837.
Norman Huntington.....	December, 1836.
Martin Beardsley.....	January, 1835.
Elam Beardsley.....	January, 1835.
D. R. May.....	October, 1838.
Chas. Scofield.....	August, 17th, 1839.
Mrs. Simeon Whiteley.....	April 1836.
Timothy Sands.....	———, 1835.
L. O. Whitman.....	June, 1836.
James Cooper.....	October 5th, 1838.
N. H. Palmer.....	October 5th, 1838.
Ransom Reynolds.....	———, 1837.
Benj. Reynolds.....	———, 1837.
Geo. Allen.....	June, 1839.
Wm. Bull.....	September, 1837.
Samuel N. Basey.....	April, 1835.
S. F. Heath.....	August 9th, 1837.
Loring Webber.....	May, 1838.
Mrs. E. M. Baker.....	December, 1839.
Elihu D. Filer.....	June 27th, 1837.
Mrs. Delia M. Filer.....	June 27th, 1837.
T. D. Morris.....	October 5th, 1838.
Mrs. T. D. Morris.....	October 20th, 1840.
John Newman.....	July, 1835.
Mrs. Maria Filer.....	October, 1835.
Rufus Billings.....	November 1st, 1836.
Mrs. Rufus Billings.....	November 1st, 1836.
P. M. Perkins.....	May 20th, 1837.
E. G. Dyer.....	June, 1839.
Mrs. E. G. Dyer.....	June, 1839.
Chas. E. Dyer.....	June, 1839.
Francis Meinhart.....	June, 1839.
T. W. Durgin.....	———, 1838.
James Mather.....	August 18, 1838.

J. P. Mather.....	May, 1838.
E. Brainard.....	May 14th, 1839.
John W. Edmonds.....	———, 1840.
Mrs. John W. Edmonds.....	———, 1840.
Mrs. James Mather, (died Feb. 23, 1871).....	August, 1838.
F. H. Nims.....	July 2d, 1835.
Mrs. L. S. Nims.....	July, 1835.
Mrs. L. A. Everitt.....	July, 1835.
Patrick Callahan.....	———, 1840.
David Smith.....	———, 1837.
Mrs. Lewis Royce .....	August, 1837.
David Bushnell.....	———, 1836.
Ruth Thompson.....	———, 1840.
Chas. Loomis.....	———, 1838.
Samuel Toombs .....	June, 1839.
Geo. Jones.....	November, 1839.
Mrs. S. Gardner.....	———, 1836.
Nelson R. Norton.....	March, 1837.
Mrs. Nelson R. Norton.....	March, 1837.
Wm. Peck.....	January, 1838.
Wm. L. Rooker.....	August, 1839.
C. R. Rooker.....	May, 1839.
Mrs. C. R. Rooker.....	May, 1839.
J. C. Rooker.....	August, 1839.
E. S. Sawyer.....	May 14th, 1838.
Liberty Fisk.....	October, 1838.
T. W. Gault.....	October 19th, 1837.
Mrs. Samuel E. Chapman.....	December, 1838.
Hiram Page.....	August, 1837.
Ira A. Rice.....	May 24th, 1836.
Mrs. Ira A. Rice.....	May 24th, 1836.
Alfred Lockwood.....	June, 1836.
P. R. Mygatt.....	May, 1836.
Sarah Mygatt.....	May, 1836.
Edwin Wood.....	May 27th, 1838.
Daniel Wood.....	May 27th, 1838.

C. E. Hunt.....	May 27th, 1838.
Mrs. O. Sheldon.....	July 1st, 1836.
Mrs. Van Valen.....	July 1st, 1836.
O. Van Valen.....	January, 1837.
Jefferson Brown.....	September, 1837.
Wm. Brown.....	September, 1837.
Mrs. Wm. Brown.....	September, 1837.
N. Van Arman.....	June, 1839.
A. Van Arman.....	June, 1839.
J. Van Arman.....	June, 1839.
Mrs. Harriet Wood.....	—, 1835.
Mrs. Elizabeth Beardsley.....	February, 1839.
Mrs. Nancy E. Beardsley.....	—, 1837.
Ezra Beardsley.....	April, 1839.
Martin Beardsley.....	January 20th, 1835.
Elizabeth Beardsley.....	May, 1838.
A. M. Taphorn.....	—, 1838.
Mary A. Merrills.....	April, 1837.
H. D. Morse.....	March 29th, 1836.
Marilla Morse.....	December 11th, 1835.
D. N. Niblack.....	April 1st, 1835.
Samuel Niblack.....	December 20th, 1834.
Mrs. Harriet Buttles.....	June, 1836.
Mrs. Ezra Buttles.....	June, 1836.
Mrs. Emeline Buttles.....	June, 1836.
Mrs. S. M. Cooper.....	October 11th, 1837.
Thomas Hood.....	May 18th, 1835.
Theodore S. Lane .....	June, 1836.
Joshua Pearce.....	—, 1840.
Mrs. Catharine Pearce.....	—, 1840.
Samuel Cooper.....	October 20th, 1840.
Jedediah Healy.....	October, 1839.
J. D. Wright.....	(born) January, 1840.
Mrs. Catharine Brown.....	September, 1838.
Aaron Putnam.....	November, 1839.
Mary E. Buttles.....	December, 1836.



Joel Horner ..... May, 1835.

Mrs. Sarah A. Carswell..... June, 1839.

## FIRST ANNUAL MEETING OF "OLD SETTLERS' SOCIETY," OF RACINE COUNTY.

BELLE CITY HALL, RACINE, June 1, 1870.

The first meeting of the "Old Settlers Society," convened at Belle City Hall.

At 10 o'clock A. M., the meeting was called to order by the President, L. S. BLAKE.

The Rev. CYRUS NICHOLS then read the 33d Psalm, and led in prayer.

The Rev. M. P. KINNEY, of Rockford, Illinois, then addressed the meeting. He first stated that he was one of the Old Settlers of Wisconsin, and gave a most cordial greeting to the old pioneers who had gathered at this first meeting of those, who, for more than thirty years, had toiled and labored to transform this, then wilderness, into its present fruitful fields. He paid a glowing tribute to the patriotism of those, who, when the first gun was fired at Fort Sumter, had rushed to the post of danger to save our common country.

He warned his hearers, by the review of the past thirty years, to be as vigilant in the years to come, that this beautiful land might ever remain the "Land of the Free and Home of the Brave."

A Committee on Resolutions, consisting of J. A. Carswell, S. Raymond and J. O. Bartlett, having been appointed by the chair, reported the following, which were unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That we, the early settlers of Racine county, extend a cordial greeting to each other on this, our first gathering, to revive the recollections and renew the friendships of the early days; and we would return devout thanks to Him who has sustained and blessed us hitherto.



*Resolved,* That we deem it becoming the Association, and not improper in us, that we congratulate ourselves that our early struggles to organize and develop the resources of the country were not a failure, but a success of which we need not feel ashamed.

*Resolved,* That we greet with hearty welcome, all our fellow citizens, of every nationality, who, though at a later day, have come in to cast their lot with us, and to aid, we trust, in building up a community not unworthy of a position in the "Great Republic;" and hope they may perpetuate the remembrance of the early days in the settlement of this county by annual gatherings like this, after we shall have passed to that land from which there is no return.

*Resolved,* That for beauty of landscape, fertility of soil, and easy access to market, for agricultural improvement, for improved stock, for general thrift, intelligence and morals, Racine county will, in our judgment, compare favorably with any other in the State.

*Resolved,* That we feel proud of our county seat, LA BELLE CITY OF RACINE, which, from the first until now has struggled for success, with an energy and self-dependence we admire, and which success we rejoice to see she has so well maintained, in her manufacturing and commercial prosperity of to-day.

*Resolved,* That we this day recall with sadness, the memory of those who, though they came in to possess the land with us, are no longer with us; the good and true, the earnest and steadfast men and women who shared with us the toils and burdens of the earlier days; ever will we bear them in affectionate remembrance.

*Resolved,* That we honor with our highest regard, those heroic women who shared the hardships and privations of frontier life, to settle and improve, and beautify this goodly county of ours; and we earnestly hope their examples may not be a lost lesson upon their fair daughters.

Captain GILBERT KKAPP then came forward, and spoke of his first visit to this county, and his selection of this city—till then occupied only by the wandering savage—as his future residence, he making the first claim upon the banks of our beautiful lake.

He paid a feeling tribute of respect to those whose familiar faces he missed in this gathering. Though now absent at the post of duty, he still cherished the liveliest interest in the prosperity of this city and county.

The meeting was further addressed by S. E. Chapman, of Waterford, and Lewis Royce, of Burlington, and Hon. W. C. Allen.

At two o'clock the meeting adjourned for dinner.

At four o'clock, the meeting was again called to order, and was addressed by Hon. J. R. Doolittle and Elam Beardsley.

Voted, that our next meeting be held at Burlington.

After singing "Auld Lang Syne," adjourned, *sine die*.

S. B. PECK, *Secretary*.

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## REGULAR MEETING.

RACINE, January 9th, 1871.

The Society met at the court house, in the city of Racine, agreeably to a notice published in the papers of the county, at ten o'clock, the President, L. S. BLAKE, in the Chair.

The Court being in session, it was voted to adjourn to Lawton's Hall, to meet at two o'clock P. M.

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LAWTON'S HALL, 2 o'clock, P. M.

The meeting was called to order, and proceeded to the election of officers for the ensuing year.

The result of the first ballot was the election of Nelson R. Norton, of Burlington, for President.

The meeting then proceeded to elect the remaining officers by ballot.

On motion, it was voted to amend the second article of the Constitution so that the Executive Committee shall consist of seven, instead of five; and two more were added to the same.

A motion was then made to change the first article of the Constitution so as to require a residence of twenty-five years, instead of thirty; which motion, after full discussion, was laid on the table.

It was then voted to instruct the Executive Committee to call a meeting of the Society at Burlington, on the 22d of February next, and provide speakers and make all necessary arrangements for the same.

After a full discussion of the best means of keeping up an interest in the Society, and securing the objects sought to be attained, the meeting adjourned.

The Executive Committee then decided to hold their first meeting at the Supervisors' room in the city of Racine, January 20th, at 10 o'clock A. M.

The officers elected for the ensuing year were—

*President*—NELSON R. NORTON.

*Vice Presidents*—ALANSON FILER, ELEAZER EVERIT, JNO. NEWMAN.

*Secretary and Treasurer*—S. B. PECK.

*Executive Committee*—J. A. CARSWELL, A. COOPER, E. D. FILER, T. D. MORRIS, J. O. BARTLETT, WM. BALLACK, CHAS. WAIT.

S. B. PECK, *Secretary*.

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## REUNION.

A re-union of the Society was held at Burlington, February 22d, 1871, agreeably to arrangement made by the Executive Committee.

At one o'clock P. M., the meeting was called to order in Yunker Hall, by the President, NELSON R. NORTON, who invited the officers of the Society to the platform.

The Rev. C. D. Pillsbury, on invitation of the President, then opened the exercises with an appropriate and impressive prayer.

The President then introduced Hon. CHAS. E. DYER as the orator of the day, who gave a most interesting discourse on the early history of Racine County, beginning with the city of Racine, and then taking the towns in their order. The narrative was one of deep pathos, interspersed with scenes of the ludicrous and mirthful, which held the attention of the audience for more than two hours.

The address was followed by a song from the Teutonia Club, of Burlington, in German.

The audience then gave a unanimous vote of thanks to Mr. Dyer for his eloquent address.

On motion, it was—

*Resolved*, That a subscription be taken up, and the proceeds placed in the hands of the Executive Committee to procure the publication of the address in pamphlet form; and further, that every subscriber shall be furnished said pamphlet at cost for the amount of their subscriptions; and also that the committee are requested to add further items of history, under the supervision of Mr. Dyer.

On motion, the following committee were chosen to solicit further subscriptions: A. Filer, J. A. Carswell and Samuel Hood, Racine; T. W. Gault, Waterford; Samuel Ormiston, Yorkville; Franklin Nims, P. M. Perkins, Burlington; Joshua Pearce, Mt. Pleasant; Evan Kaepscadt, Norway; F. E. Hoyt, and R. North, Rochester; H. L. Gilmore, Raymond; T. D. Morris, Caledonia.

The meeting then adjourned.

S. B. PECK, *Secretary*.



# ADDRESS OF CHARLES E. DYER.

## *Early Settlers of Racine County:*

I am commissioned to tell the story of the first settlement of white men in the several towns now comprising the county of Racine. It is a story replete with interest, instruction and romance. It will refresh in your memories, the energy, genius, adventures, achievements and hardships of the Northwestern pioneer.

The character and extent of this task, I must say to you in the outset, I did not sufficiently appreciate, when I accepted the invitation of the Executive Committee of your Society to address you. You would have been more fortunate, had you selected one to relate this history who had shared with you the experiences and fortunes of a frontier life, the memory of which you would now recall. Sketches are more vivid, and narrative is more truthful, when they proceed from the pen and tongue of him who was a witness of the scenes described, and a participant in the events related. To such an one, the past returns again as a reality of life; the days of thirty years ago come back at his bidding, and the story of the wilderness, of storm and flood, of vicissitude and trial, is clothed with an interest as fresh and inspiring, as the native forest and prairie where western civilization began its work.

I must acknowledge my indebtedness and express my thanks to those, who have so kindly aided me in collecting facts and data connected with the original settlement of the county. I have been supplied with every source of information at the command of the first settlers who yet survive, and, snatching such time as I might, from professional labor, I have, as faithfully as possible, aimed at accuracy and method in obtaining and arranging the materials for this address. Doubtless, inaccuracies and omissions will be observed, names may be overlooked, and dates may be imperfect. If so, I trust that such errors will be attributed to the difficulties at this late day, of obtaining information which all men who took part in the early settlement of the county, will concur in pronouncing

exact. Many of the first settlers have either died, or gone to other regions, and the recollections of such as remain, occasionally differ. It is sufficient to say, that I have consulted the best sources of information within my knowledge and at my command.

In 1832, there were but four white men in that part of what is now Wisconsin, south of Green Bay and east of Rock River. They were French traders. During that year the Sac war broke out and attracted the attention of the whole country to this region. The title to the land was in the Indians. By the treaty of 1833, between the Pottawatomie and other tribes of Indians, all the tract of country now comprising the southeastern portion of Wisconsin was ceded to the United States—the Indians, however, to remain in possession until 1836, the Government reserving the right, meantime, to survey the tract. In November, 1834, Captain Gilbert Knapp came to the mouth of Root River, and I find it recorded in such form that I deem it worthy of implicit credit, that he was the first permanent American settler upon any portion of that tract of country now included in the counties of Racine, Walworth and Rock.

On the 20th of April, 1836, the act of Congress was passed establishing the Territorial Government of Wisconsin. Severed from Michigan, it embraced all its present territory, with that of Minnesota and Iowa, and a portion of Nebraska and Dakota. There were then six counties in the Territory—Milwaukee, Brown, Dubuque, Iowa, Des Moines and Crawford.

Under proclamation of Henry Dodge, Governor, the first election of members of the house of representatives and council of the Territory, was held on the 2d Monday of October, 1836. Gilbert Knapp and Alanson Sweet were elected from Milwaukee county to this, the first council in the organized Territory. The election of Captain Knapp was, as we shall hereafter see, signalized by demonstrations of satisfaction which must have surpassed all modern political jubilees.



The first session of the Territorial legislature was held at Belmont, in the county of Iowa, on the 25th day of October, 18<sup>o</sup>6. On the 3d of December, 1836, the seat of Territorial government was located at Madison, but it was provided that until the 4th day of March, 1839, the sessions of the legislative assembly should be held at Burlington, in the county of Des Moines.

On the 7th of December, 1836, the county of Racine was created by the passage of an act at the Belmont session, and the seat of justice was located at the town of Racine. The county then included its present territory and that of the present county of Kenosha, with the counties of Walworth and Rock attached for judicial purposes. In January, 1850, the county of Racine was divided, and the county of Kenosha created and organized.

By an act of the Legislature, passed January 2d, 1838, the three original towns in the present territory of Racine county were established, and their limits prescribed, namely: Racine, with the polls of election established at the hotel of John M. Myers, in the village of Racine; Mount Pleasant, with the polls of election at the house of George F. Robinson; and Rochester with the polls of election established at the house of Stebbins & Duncan, in the village of Rochester, and also at Moses Smith's in Burlington.

In the imperfect narrative I have prepared, I have thought it most methodical and satisfactory to take up the settlements of the different towns of the county, according to their present names and limits, beginning with

## RACINE.

As already indicated, Captain Gilbert Knapp was the first white settler at Racine. He came in November, 1834, on horseback from Chicago. At Skunk Grove there was an Indian settlement and trading post, at the head of which was Jambeau, the name of a French trader, with an Indian wife, and

well remembered by many of the earliest settlers. The route from Chicago at that time, and for a considerable period thereafter, was upon an Indian trail, *via* Grose Point, and thence to the trading post at Skunk Grove. Captain Knapp came by that route, accompanied by two men in his employ, one of whom, was William Luce. An Indian piloted him from the Grove to the mouth of Root river. With the assistance of his men, he built a log cabin on the south bank of the river, and at about the spot where the planing mill of Miner & McClurg now stands—the river then flowing in its original channel, at the foot of what may yet, with close observation, be discovered to be its former bank, passed round to the southward at the point where Captain Knapp located his claim, and emptied into the lake between the present east terminus of Second and Third streets, but at rare intervals, on account of new and temporary formations of the beach, discharged its waters into the lake near the grounds of the old light house.

Captain Knapp, by virtue of his location, made claim to all the land comprised in the original plat of Racine, namely: the east fractional half of section nine, subsequently known as lots No.'s 1 and 2, on the north side of the river, comprising 74 acres, and lot No. 6, on the south side, comprising 66 98-100 acres. During the winter of 1834-35, Captain Knapp went away, returning again in March or April, 1835. He immediately interested Gurdon S. Hubbard of Chicago, and Jacob A. Barker, of Buffalo, in his claim at Port Gilbert, on Root river, and I have in my possession the letter written by him on the 30th of March, 1835, to Mr. Barker, setting forth the value of his claim, and soliciting his co-operation in the enterprise of founding and building up a settlement.

On the 2d day of January, 1835, Stephen Campbell, Wm. See, Paul Kingston and Edmund Weed came from Chicago to Racine. When these persons arrived, they found Wm. Luce and another man, in the employ of Captain Knapp, in charge of the Captain's cabin. Mr. Campbell immediately cleared

away a spot in the dense forest, at about the place where the homestead of Edwin Colvin is now located, and built a shanty. He soon found that he was within the limits of the claim of Knapp, Hubbard & Barker, and he thereupon removed farther west and built a log house, on what was, in early times, known as the Campbell fraction, and in later years, as the harbor addition to the village and city of Racine.

William See, meantime, had located at the Rapids; Edmund Weed had made a claim where Nicholas D. Fratt now lives, and Paul Kingston had built a cabin and located on the south limits of the lands claimed by Captain Knapp. After some conflict he was obliged to yield his claim, and the premises he occupied, became the homestead of Captain Knapp.

In April, 1835, Norman Clark, with five companions started from Chicago in an open yawl boat, rigged with sails, belonging to the Government, and which they procured at Fort Dearborn, for a cruise along the west shore of the lake. Upon reaching the mouth of Root river, with their canvass spread before a favoring breeze, they sailed into the river, "wing and wing." Alanson Sweet, now of Milwaukee, was captain of the craft, and quite bewildered by the wild and beautiful scenery around them, almost before they were aware of it, they had reached Captain Knapp's cabin on the bank, and "hove to" with all the skill and pride of able and experienced navigators. Mr. Clark was prospecting: looking for town sites and corner lots, but he found the present site of Racine a dense forest, the banks of the river lined with cedar and most luxuriant foliage; and though, not quite pleased with the results of his adventure thus far, he and his fellow voyagers again spread their sails and went to Milwaukee, where there were two log houses, and where a white woman had never been. He looked over Solomon Juneau's muskrat skins and returned to Chicago.

In May, 1835, Joel Sage arrived. He came from Chicago on a pony belonging to Captain Knapp. A hoosier, whose

name is unknown, had made a claim on the west side of Root river, in what was subsequently, (and is yet) known as Sage Town. Mr. Sage bought the hoosier's claim, and in the summer of 1835, went into occupation of a log house which stood on the top of the bluff, at a point which is now in the center of State street. One day in the fall of 1835, he found his shanty torn down to the bottom log. With the perseverance and and courage of a pioneer, he immediately rebuilt it, and with renewed determination asserted his claim to the 107 acres of land which he afterward, as we shall see, successfully pre-empted, and which subsequently comprised that part of Racine known as Sage Town.

At this point in our history, we find Knapp, Hubbard & Barker the claimants of the original plat of Racine; Stephen Campbell in possession of the harbor addition, and Joel Sage settled upon the tract on the west side of the river. The warfare which they were obliged to wage in maintenance of their titles, are not an unimportant or uninteresting feature of those romantic times. Let me, therefore, give you a brief record of the fortunes of these pioneers in acquiring their rights to the lands, upon which to this day, valuable muni-ments of title are founded.

In 1836, Captain Knapp, not feeling entirely satisfied with his rights as a settler to the lands to which he made claim, procured from Jaques Vaux, a float title to lots one and two, section 9, which was the Receiver's receipt issued June 19th, 1834, under the pre-emption act of 1834, and on the 25th of July, 1836, procured its assignment to Gurdon S. Hubbard. At the same time, he also obtained from Lewis Vaux, a float upon lot 6, section 9, on the south side of the river, and on the 25th of July 1836, procured its assignment to Gurdon S. Hubbard.

In the winter of 1835 and 1836, the city of Racine was laid out in lots and blocks.

Subsequently, Congress passed the re-emption bill, by the



terms of which, no right of pre-emption was granted to actual settlers upon lands within the location of any incorporated town, or to any portion of lands which had been actually selected as sites for cities or towns, or specially occupied or reserved for town lots.

The float title to the village was consequently decided to be invalid. But, by an act of Congress, approved May 26th, 1824, the right had been granted to counties, of pre-emption to quarter sections of land for seats of justice within the same. The seat of justice of Racine county had been, in 1836, located at Racine, and so on the 2nd day of January, 1838 an act was passed by the Territorial Legislature authorizing the county commissioners to sell and convey the right and title of the county, under the act of 1824, in and to the east fractional half of section 9 to Gilbert Knapp, his heirs and assigns, upon his paying to the board, within two years from the date of conveyance, at the rate of ten dollars per acre therefor, with ten per cent. interest; and providing further, that the county commissioners should immediately enter up and secure the pre-emption to which the county was entitled; and the money arising from the sale by the county to Captain Knapp, to be disposed of in the erection of county buildings, for the county of Racine, according to said act of Congress.

The county officers refused to carry this law literally into effect, and the title remained uncertain until the winter of 1838 and 1839 when an arrangement was made between the original proprietors and the county officers, by which the former should erect or procure to be erected, county buildings, consisting of court house and jail, and building for county offices, and the latter should release and convey their interest in the lands to the first claimants.

On the 9th day of February, 1839, Samuel Hale, jr., and John Bullen, as county commissioners, procured a duplicate of lot 6, east fractional half of section 9, under pre-emption act of 1834, which, on the 11th day of February, 1837 was,

assigned to Captain Knapp. On the same day, Captain Knapp gave to the commissioners his mortgage on the property, conditioned for the performance of the agreement that had been entered into. The county relinquished all of its interest in lots 1, 2, and 6, in section 9, and the contract for the construction of the county buildings was assigned to Roswell Morris and Wm H. Waterman, who, in 1839, built your present court house. The jail was built in 1841, in connection with and as part of the log jail built in 1837, and the brick building now occupied by the Clerk and Register was constructed in 1842. Thus, after adversities and sacrifices, the proprietors of the original plat, secured to themselves the rights which they originally supposed they had acquired by virtue of settlement and possession, and the county of Racine secured the construction of county buildings, which it is high time were torn down, to give place to more commodious and modern structures.

In consequence of legislation by Congress, which I have already alluded to, Mr. Campbell, who had settled on the harbor addition, found himself dispossessed of the rights which he supposed he had acquired by virtue of original settlement. The village of Racine, by M. B. Mead, its President, on the 17th of October, 1843, obtained the title to this property, but made arrangements with Mr. Campbell, by means of which he retained a quarter interest, the village securing a three quarter interest. This three-quarters interest was disposed of by the village, and the proceeds were expended on the harbor, which fact gave to this tract of land its name as the harbor addition.

Joel Sage, in retaining his claim and title to the 107 acres, upon which he located, was spared the trials and troubles which Congressional legislation had brought to other settlers. But he had a long and discouraging conflict with fraudulent float holders, who sought, by all means that were not honest, to oust him of his possessions. He journeyed to Green Bay, and there resisted their pretences; he went to Chicago and



employed lawyers to assist him in his warfare, and with a just conception of the first great right and duty of an actual settler, he took good care to maintain the actual possession of the lands upon which he had located. His theory was that his cabin was his castle; that possession was nine points in the law, and adhering with courageous pertinacity to his position, fraudulent floats and bogus titles could not prevail against him, and his rights culminated in actual title in 1838, by virtue of pre-emption.

Having thus stated the manner and circumstances under which the first title to the lands embraced in the original plat of the city of Racine, and in the harbor addition, and Sage's addition to Racine was acquired and perfected, let us return to the history of the original settlement following occurrences as near as may be in their chronological order. Up to May, 1835, we have found Capt. Gilbert Knapp, Stephen Campbell, Paul Kingston, William Luce and Joel Sage permanently located at what was then called Port Gilbert. In the summer of that year, E. J. Glenn, Levi Mason and Jas. Beeson arrived. On the 1st of October, 1835, Alfred Cary came, and later in the fall Dr. Bushnell B. Cary, Amaziah Stebbins and John M. Myers, joined those settled here.—Dr. Cary was the first physician who came to the county for permanent settlement. In December, 1835, Dr. Elias Smith arrived, and found, in addition to the persons already named, Samuel Mars, Eugene Gillespie, Joseph Knapp, Henry F. Cox, Mr. Stilwell, and Mr. William Saltonstall.

During this year, 1835, five or six frame buildings were erected, one of which was a two story tavern. In January, 1836, Wm. H. Waterman arrived. On the 7th of February, 1836, Sidney A. and Stephen H. Sage, sons of Joel Sage, joined their father, and in August, 1836, Mrs. Bethiah Sage wife of Joel Sage came with Rev Cyrus Nichols and family. Before the arrival of Mrs Sage, Stephen H. Sage and his father kept bachelor's hall. They began housekeeping together with a barrel of flour and half a barrel of beef.

They lived on beef, bread and tea, without furniture, crockery, or beds, until after the opening of navigation in the spring of 1836.

Albert G. Knight came in the spring of 1836. He arrived at Southport on the 1st of April, 1836, and remained there one week. He traveled from Wayne county, N. Y., to Chicago on horseback, and from Chicago to Racine upon foot. He made a claim near Mygatt's Corners, and another adjoining the farm now owned by David Wiltsie, in Caledonia.

On the 1st of June, 1836, Marshall M. Strong arrived, and was the first lawyer who settled in Racine county.

During the same month, Norman Clark came. He walked from Southport along the beach of the lake. In the fall of that year (1836) his family removed to Racine. He tells me that on his arrival he found the following persons: Amaziah Stebbins, Capt Knapp, Alanson Filer, Dr. Cary, M. M. Strong, Alfred Cary, John M. Myers, Edmund Weed, Wm. H. Waterman, Jonathan M. Snow, Paul Kingston, Stephen Ives, Wm. H. Chamberlin, Albert G. Knight, Joel Sage, Eugene Gillespie, Wm. Saltonstall, Enoch Thompson, Dr. Elias Smith, Seth Parsons, and in all, about 25 or 30 persons.

Lorenzo Janes came to Racine in August, 1836, but did not permanently locate until July, 1837.

Samuel G. Knight came in August, 1836, on board the schooner *Paul Jones* from Oswego. His father, Timothy Knight, came with him. Mr. Samuel G. Knight took up his residence in a small frame house which was standing where the drug store of H. & W. Smieding is now situated.

James O. Bartlett came in November, 1836. He was accompanied by Wm. H. Waterman, who had been after a stock of goods, and his conveyance was a horse and sulky. The next day after his arrival, Mr. Bartlett started for Fox River. He went first to Skunk Grove, thence to Rochester, following the Indian trail, from Rochester to Burlington, thence 7 miles below, to a place called Big Bend, where he made a claim. At

that time, there was not a house between Call's Grove, (now known as Ives' Grove) and Rochester. He staid at Rochester with Levi Godfrey, and at Burlington, with Lemuel Smith. Mr. Bartlett erected a log pen, about five feet high, and six feet square on his claim, and slept in it through a long and rainy night. He inscribed his name on his cabin and on a tree near by, when he left his claim, and though he has never since returned to it, he supposes it to be there still!

In 1837, David Wells came, and it is recollected of him, that while hunting along the Nippersink, in 1843, a fire was kindled in the tall grass of the prairie, and unable to escape, he perished in the flames.

On the 14th of May, 1838, Eli R. Cooley came to Racine, but remained only a short time, returning again in December, 1838, to make it a permanent residence.

In 1839, John A. Carswell arrived. He came on the steamboat *New England*, and thinks there were two hundred people at Racine and in its vicinity at the time. In this connection, I owe it to Mr. Carswell to say, that to his letters entitled "Early Sketches," published in the *Racine Argus* a few years since, I am indebted for many facts which I here relate.

S. B. Peck settled in Racine on the 9th day of June, 1839. He had been here before, in 1837, and at that time in passing over the prairie on horseback, at the head of Blue river, south west of what has long been known as the Wright farm, now owned by Mr. Francis Holborn, the water was so deep that his horse had to swim where now roads and streets have been opened and residences established. Charles Smith has speared musquelage weighing twenty pounds, on the same ground.

Among the other early settlers at Racine, were Benjamin Pratt who came in March, 1835, Charles Smith who arrived on the 2d day of June, 1836, coming with his father Lyman K. Smith, and with Marshall M. Strong and Stephen N. Ives,

on the steamboat *Pennsylvania*; Samuel Lane who came, also, in 1836; William and John Chamberlin, and Wm. S. Derby, who came in '37; Truman G. Wright, and Charles Bunce, who came in 1838. Lucius S. Blake with his father and two brothers came out in Feb. 1835, but as we shall see, located in Caledonia. In 1839, however, Mr. Blake adopted Racine as his home, and experienced as much of the adventure of pioneer life, as any settler in the county. Samuel Hood was also one of the settlers of 1838.

I can not undertake to give you a statistical list of all the persons and their families who settled in Racine prior to 1840. It is quite impossible to do so. Emigration began actively in 1835, and through the memorable year 1836 it increased and continued beyond expectation. The people who came in 1835, probably suffered greater privations than any who came subsequently. Without the products of agriculture, without mechanics, and without roads or means of ready communication with other parts of the world, together with the absence of society and protection of law, the difficulties of obtaining residences, food and clothing, were almost insurmountable.

Nevertheless, the earliest settlers concur in saying, that with all their severe experiences they had much enjoyment. A common alliance naturally sprang up between them; each was undoubtedly inspired by the thought that he was doing his part to develope and open up a wild and new country before untrodden by the foot of civilized man, but destined even in their lives, to greatness in civilization, growth and progress.

As early as 1835—36, the village of Racine, as I have already stated, was laid out in lots and blocks. In January 1836, Root river post office was established at the Rapids, and A. B. Saxton was appointed postmaster. In May of the same year, however, this office was discontinued, and the Racine office established. Dr. B. B. Cary was appointed postmaster. The amount of the first quarterly returns to the P. M. General



was \$37. At the time this office was established, the mail was carried from Chicago to Green Bay on horseback once a week.

The first survey of that part of the village north of the river, was made by Milo Jones, and of that part south of the river by Joshua Hathaway. The first established store was opened by Glen & Mason, though Capt. Knapp had previously sold goods to settlers to a limited extent. Eugene Gillespie engaged in the same pursuit, and on the arrival of Dr. Smith and Mr. Waterman, or soon after, they established a mercantile business, and it is said that in the temporary absence of Dr. Smith, the location for their store was selected near the subsequent site of the store of Lee & Dickson. This was then a spot far away from the river and far up in the woods, and there are old settlers who distinctly remember the dissatisfaction with which Dr. Smith on his return, learned of the location of his store and said, they had "got so far up in woods that business wouldn't reach them in twenty years!"

Marshall M. Strong and Stephen N. Ives upon their arrival also opened a store under the name of Strong & Ives.

The first hotel was kept by Amaziah Stebbins and John M. Myers, and stood in the center of what is now Main Street just north of Smith & Waterman's store. It was built by John Pagan.

In 1837, the Racine House was erected at a cost of over ten thousand dollars. Alfred Cary built it, and Albert G. Knight hauled the lumber for its construction from the Rapids. A clearing was made in the woods of sufficient extent to enable the frame work to be done and the raising to be made. It was an old fashioned raising. Everybody turned out, and everybody had a good time. Lucius S. Blake burned a portion of the lime for the new hotel on a log heap in the woods, and got fifty cents a bushel for it, which was more than potatoes were worth. Tom O'Sprig, whose name may conjure up many incidents and traditions in the minds of old settlers, had the job of plastering the house. He was a man who always

put off until to-morrow what he could avoid doing to-day, but when he was fairly started in an enterprise, the vigor of his exertions was unsurpassed. He was a mason by trade, and had, as I have said, engaged to plaster the Racine House, but procrastinated his job until the patience of the people who were waiting for the "grand opening" was quite exhausted. He finally concluded that the better the day the better the deed, and so that Sunday was the day when the job should be done. Upon beginning his work he found materials were wanting; they must be had; but for that purpose a conveyance was needed with which to bring them. He had none. It occurred to him, however, that Stephen Campbell and Paul Kingston each had a yoke of oxen; they were probably grazing in the woods. He knew it would never do to seek the owners and ask their permission for the use of their oxen on that day, as both were Sabbath observing men, and at that moment were probably attending Divine service; and, therefore, Tom O'Sprig followed the inclinations of his nature, and set out in pursuit of the oxen without the leave or liberty of the owners. Wandering alone in the woods, to his joy he came upon them quietly grazing. They were docile and submissive, and he soon placed upon their stalwart necks the yoke he carried with him. He endeavored to drive them by persuasive "gee's" and "haw's," but to be driven as he would have them go, they would not. It is said that Tom woke the echoes of the forest with his demonstrations of rage, but had ultimately to abandon his adventure in despair. The Racine House remained over Sunday unplastered, and Tom was inconsolable, until he found that the unruliness of the oxen was attributable to the unfortunate fact that he had yoked up Stephen Campbell's off ox, and Paul Kingston's off ox, and, therefore, that they pulled a contrary way from that desired by Tom O'Sprig!

The Racine House was, however, in due time completed. A celebration was had, and in the dancing room which had been particularly prepared, from the close of day until early



morn a happy crowd danced away the night under the inspiration of music, furnished by a hod carrier, on a three stringed fiddle!

John M. Myers was the first landlord of the Racine House. He subsequently removed to Milwaukee, where he died, and the following obituary notice was published in a Milwaukee paper:

“DIED.—In this village, of pleurisy, Mr. John M. Myers, “aged about thirty. Mr. Myers was keeper of the Milwaukee “House. He was taken ill on Sunday, and died this morn- “ing at five o’clock. In him the wife had an affectionate hus- “band, the children an exemplary father, who live to mourn “his loss, and the community an enterprising and useful “man.”

His son, Henry S. Myers, whose lamented death occurred nearly two years since, was the first white male child born in Racine, and his excellent mother who has experienced all the adversities and hardships of a pioneer life, yet survives.

The first white child born in Racine was a daughter of Levi Mason.

During the spring and summer of 1836, common labor was from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per day; mechanics labor from \$2.50 to \$3.00 per day. Hardwood lumber from \$20.00 to \$30 per M. Flour \$12.00 to \$20.00, and pork \$20.00 to \$30.00 per barrel. In the fall of this year, Messrs. Strong & Ives sent to Chicago for two barrels of pork at a cost of thirty dollars per barrel. It arrived, and a crowd of hungry customers gathered for supplies. Alas for their appetites and hopes! The first barrel opened contained nothing but brine and pig tails, and it was well written at the time, that “no Bashaw of ancient history ever had more tails than the wonderful hoosier hog that had been packed in that barrel!”

Joel Sage and Alfred Cary were the first Justices of the Peace at Racine under legally constituted authority. Mr.

Sage did not desire or intend to qualify as a magistrate, but Mr. Cary wanted to get married, and wanted Esq. Sage to marry him, and so he was induced to qualify!

It has been said that Rev. Cyrus Nichols preached the first sermon ever heard in Racine. This is a mistake. Mr. Stephen Campbell tells me that the first sermon was preached by a Rev. Mr. Robinson, who came as a missionary. Jonathan M. Snow and Wm. See also preached occasionally, before the arrival of Mr. Nichols. Mr. See always began his sermons by saying: "In my preface, or exordium, I will make but very few remarks." Rev. Mr. Nichols was undoubtedly the first clergyman of the Presbyterian denomination in Racine or the vicinity.

On the 1st of January, 1839, the first Presbyterian Society was organized, and its members were the following persons: Mr. and Mrs. Heman Rice, Mr. and Mrs. Benj. E. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Cary, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Wells, Mr. and Mrs. Elias S. Capron, Messrs. Julius Colton, Nelson A. Walker, Joel Sage, Mrs. Sylvester Mygatt, Mrs. J. P. Hurlbut, Mrs. Cyrus Nichols, Miss. L. L. Wells, Miss Susanna Traber and Miss Sarah C. Hall.

The first school house erected at Racine was a structure sixteen feet square, located where McClurg's block now stands, and the first school was opened by a Mr. Bradley, in the winter of 1836. The first school district in the town was established in 1840, and included all the district of country north of the present south line of the county, and extending one mile north and west of the present city limits. There were six voters present at the organization of the district, and the whole number of children in the district at that time was twenty-eight.

Samuel Lane was the first shoemaker, and Wm. Chamberlin the first blacksmith at Racine. Lane opened his shop in the old claim house, built and first occupied by Captain Knapp,

on the bank of the river. Mr. Benjamin Pratt opened the first brick yard in 1836, and furnished the brick for the chimnies of the Racine House and for the old Light House.

At times there was a great scarcity of provision. In the winter of 1837—8, Mr. Myers, landlord of the Racine House, hired L. S. Blake to go to Chicago to buy for him a load of hams and a barrel of flour. Mr. Blake was gone ten days; when he returned there was great rejoicing at the hotel-quarters, and Mr. Myers is remembered to have said on the occasion: "Now, boys, we shall live again." There was one winter when families got entirely out of meat, and could get none until suckers came, in the spring. In the fall of 1835, a vessel loaded with provisions arrived from Chicago. In order to facilitate the discharging of the cargo, the vessel was by some means pulled up, stern on the beach. The settlers from the surrounding country came in to assist in getting the provisions ashore. It was an exciting time. Capt. Knapp superintended the business. The wind was freshening; the waves were beginning to roll; the sky was dark and lowering. Gulls were flying over the waters as if to admonish the wayfarers on the beach of the coming storm. One who was present, says he shall never forget the excitement of the moment, when Capt. Knapp with the clear voice of a mariner, sang out: "Boys, those birds indicate stormy weather!" But so faithful and vigorous were the exertions which were made, that before the storm came, the cargo was safely landed and securely stored.

Lorenzo Janes was the second lawyer who settled at Racine. When he came, Gilbert Knapp, Henry F. Cox and Joseph Knapp were carrying on a forwarding business, and Heath & Parsons were conducting a general dry goods trade. Albert G. Knight was keeping the public house previously kept by Stebbins & Myers. Mr. Janes went first to Gardiner's Prairie, in Walworth county, and made a claim. The prairie was a garden of flowers, and presented a scene as beautiful as the

eye could rest upon. The hand of man had marred not its grandeur, his voice had scarcely disturbed the solitude; Nature had planted lilies in the valley "to waste their sweetness on the desert air," and "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

All the land within the present limits of Racine on the west side of Root river and south of State street, between Huron and St. Clair streets, was covered with a dense forest and was cleared off by hand. The lowland just west of the river and bordering it, was covered with maple trees in 1837, and converted into a sugar camp. It was the abiding place of deer and prairie wolves, and in the spring of that year, Joel Sage discovered a nest of young wolves at the spot where McGinnis' tavern now stands.

In the winter of 1836—7, it was extremely cold, and the snow deep. Mr. Norman Clark lived that winter in a small frame house he rented of John M. Myers, and which protected him from the inclemencies of a rigorous season, only by its oak and bass wood clapboards. He had made a claim of one hundred and sixty acres which is now the farm owned by Mr. John Carlin.

In March, 1837, Peter Wright, who had been living with Mr. Clark, died of consumption. Consultation was had among the settlers as to the place that should be selected, not only for this, but for other burials. Mr. Clark, and a deputation of settlers went in search of a suitable locality, and, wandering far away in the woods, at last selected the spot where now the Racine third ward school house stands, as the village cemetery. The people were of the opinion, that the location had been made in too wild and distant a region, but acquiesced in the selection, because it was a spot that would never be disturbed! There was at the time, one other grave east of the river which was that of a woman, buried near the present site of Hart's mill.

In the winter of 1838, the people in the neighborhood of Mr. Clark's cabin on his claim, got out of salt. They were



placed in sore extremity, for baked potatoes and salt were their staples. It came to be understood that a man by the name of Mitchell, who lived far away on the prairie, in what is now Kenosha county, had a barrel of salt. Mr. Clark was commissioned to go for a supply, and not to look backward until he had found it. He started on a cold, winter's day, traveling on horseback, through deep snow, and after great search, found the Mitchell cabin on the prairie and the barrel of salt. He bought a peck, and after a wearisome two day's journey, returned home, the bringer of great joy, to his waiting neighbors. The Mr. Mitchell referred to, is Henry Mitchell, of Racine, now eminent as a prosperous and successful manufacturer of wagons.

The year 1836, was, as all know who experienced its business history, a remarkable year. It was as memorable in Racine as elsewhere. The mania of speculation raged wildly. Capt. Knapp, in the spring of the year, procured his float title already spoken of. Speculators were traversing the country looking for water powers and village sites; farmers and mechanics threw aside their work, and began to buy and trade in village lots that were located in an unbroken forest. Racine was to be a great city, even three years before the land sales, and I have in my possession, the estimated value of town lots in Racine, made Sept. 17th, 1836, which discloses the interesting fact, that at that time, the value of the property in what is now the original plat of Racine, was \$348,100. Upon the strength of such an assessment as that, what a pity they didn't issue some city bonds in anticipation of a railroad, *via* Balls Bluff, a charter for which was obtained in 1838!

The first law suit tried in Racine, I believe, grew out of a squirrel hunt. Norman Clark and Marshall M. Strong as the respective leaders, chose sides. On one side were Mr. Clark, Dr. Cary, Eugene Gillespie, and others; and on the other side were Mr. Strong, Charles Smith, Joseph Knapp, and others. It was arranged that all kinds of game should be hunted; a squirrel to count a certain number, a muskrat



another, a deer head counting three hundred, and a live wolf one thousand. They were to obtain their trophies by any means, foul or fair. Clark and Gillespie heard of a deer hunter on Pleasant Prairie who had a good collection of heads. Appropriating a fine horse owned by one Schuyler Mattison, who was a stranger in town, Messrs. Clark and Gillespie traversed the snow drifts, found the hunter, and obtained their trophies. Meanwhile, Mr. Strong's party had heard of a live wolf in Chicago. It was sent for. Its transportation was secured in a stage sleigh. But, while at a stopping place at Wil is' Tavern, a party of sailors with one Capt. Smith at their head, came out from Southport, and Capt. Smith killed the wolf with a bottle of gin. Meanwhile, also, Mr. Strong went to Milwaukee and got a sleighload of muskrat noses, which out-counted everything. The squirrel hunt was broken up. Mr Clark had ruined Schuyler Mattison's horse and had to pay seventy-five dollars damages; and Mr. Strong brought suit against Capt. Smith for killing the wolf with the gin bottle. George Vail was plaintiff, Esq. Mars was the justice, Norman Clark was on the jury. Verdict, six cents damages and costs!

The first newspaper published at Racine was the *Racine Argus*. The first number was issued on the 14th day of Feb., 1838, J. M. Myers, Alfred Cary, Gilbert Knapp, Stephen Ives, Lorenzo Janes and Marshall M. Strong, proprietors, and N. Delavan Wood, editor. Its editor announces that, as an early admirer of Mr. Jefferson, and recognizing in the Democratic party, political principles of a close affinity to those of this distinguished man, he shall yield his feeble support to that party. A feeble support it was, for while he had enlisted the settlers in his newspaper enterprise to the tune of fifteen hundred dollars, he had provided ink and paper for only one copy of his paper. He tried to take from them five hundred dollars more, but something was saved through the activity of Mr. Strong, who pursued him to Chicago, and in the second number it was announced, that "all connection with this paper, of N. Delavan Wood, its former editor, has ceased. The

causes which have led to this premature separation are of such a character that we feel unwilling to disclose them, and shall not do so unless circumstances require it." From and after this time, Mr. Strong and Mr. Janes alternated in the management and editorship of the paper. I find it stated in the *Argus* of March 24th, 1838, that during the year previous, fifty thousand dollars worth of goods were disposed of at Racine. In June, 1838, the census returns for Racine, Mt. Pleasant, and Rochester, as posted up in the hotel of John M. Myers, showed a population of one thousand one hundred and ten, but it was ascertained that seventy-six persons had been omitted from the list, so that the population in those towns, at that time, was in fact, one thousand one hundred and eighty-six.

At the July term, 1838, of the district court, Judge Frazier presiding, the court sat but four days, and only eight days had been occupied by court in the three terms held during eighteen months.

At the summer term of the district court of Racine county, in 1839, the revised statutes of Michigan were administered by Hon. Andrew G. Miller, successor of Judge Frazier, and before the close of the term, they were superseded by the revised statutes of Wisconsin. Judge Miller first went upon the bench November 8th, 1838.

At, and before this time, the land sale was advertised to transpire on the 19th day of November, 1838. In consequence, however, of the necessities of the settlers, and after the most persistent applications, President Van Buren postponed the sale until March, 1839. Mr. Norman Clark was chosen by settlers in the eastern part of the county, to bid off their lands, and did so. It is said that there were but three men left in Racine, during the land sales, which took place in Milwaukee. At this time there were twenty-two families in the village.

The marine lists of 1839, record the periodical arrival at this port of the steamboats *Madison*, *Columbus*, *Dewitt Clinton*, *Constellation*, *Jefferson*, and others, whose names are associated with the earliest navigation of the lakes, and their arrival was always the occasion of a joyous demonstration.

In the settlement of the country, the word *claim* was used to denominate both the tract claimed, and the right to that tract. The right under a claim was asserted much upon the same principle that nations claim islands or continents, *viz* :— discovery and possession. In the increase of emigration, government lines not being yet established, it sometimes happened that two persons would locate upon the same quarter section. Disputes arose. All the settlers were, in fact, trespassers, and the law of the land could not settle these conflicting claims. Accordingly, in consequence of the frequency of these disputes, a “mass meeting” of the settlers of Racine and of the county, was held on the sixth day of June 1837, at the house of Benjamin Felch, to organize an association for protection, and to adopt a constitution and code of laws, under which, conflicting rights and claims could be adjusted. Gilbert Knapp was appointed president; Eldad Smith, Walter Cooley, Zadock Newman, Marshall M. Strong, Samuel Mars, Isaac G. Northway, Oren Stephens, E. S. Sill, Jason Lothrop, John Cogswell and E. G. Ayer, were appointed a committee to draft a code of laws and constitution. At an adjourned meeting, a constitution was presented and adopted, which provided, among other things, that if a person claimed one quarter section, he must improve and cultivate at least three acres within six months from the time of entering his claim, and within one year build a house suitable for a family, or, instead of building a house, cultivate three acres more on his claim. If his claim was situated in woodland, improvement and cultivation consisted in clearing off the down timber and brush, and all trees two inches in diameter and under, and enclose the requisite quantity of land with a good fence. If his

claim laid on a prairie, then he must enclose the proper quantity with a fence, and plough and put in a crop, or plant in part and make hay in part. A judicial committee or court, was created, before which cases could be tried, and by which questions could be settled, and all the necessary machinery put into operation for adjusting disputes, or deciding them by means of the arbitrament provided. The scheme was as successful as it was sensible, and it has been well said, that "when we call to mind the number of inhabitants occupying this tract at that time, the improvements which they had made upon their farms, the mills they had erected and the villages they had built, and recollect that, from the first settlement of the county until 1839, there had been no legal titles to real estate, and that most of them had invested their all in improvements upon their lands, we can not but wonder at their security, and be astonished that the rights of a community so extensive, should be so long and so well protected by the mere force of public opinion of right and wrong."

I have spoken of the election of Capt. Knapp to the territorial council in 1836. Many of the old settlers look back with pleasure, to the jollification had over his election, at Racine. He had been nominated as the Racine candidate, at the first political convention ever held in the county. The convention convened at Rochester, and was ever after known all over the country as "Godfrey's Convention." Milwaukee was dissatisfied with the nomination. William See joined the disaffection, and headed the opposition ticket. An old fashioned campaign was had. The little village of Racine was alive with excitement; caucuses were held; electioneering parties traversed the county. Modern "wide-awakes" and "tanners" pale their ineffectual fires in comparison. On the evening of election day, the villagers gathered at the hotel to get results. Returns came rapidly in, and Capt. Knapp was found to be triumphantly elected. Dignity, staid propriety, and temperance pledges were all laid aside. At the foot of Main street a tar barrel was fired, and around it a crowd was gathered,



dressed in disguise, dancing an Indian pow-wow. The lurid gleams of the fire lighted up the tall oaks; dinner bells, cow bells and sleigh bells made music in harmony with the whoops and yells of the villagers; stumps and anvils were loaded with powder, salutes and minute guns were fired. processions were formed, stump speeches were made from stumps, and for five joyous hours—

Captain Knapp's constituents were glorious,  
"O'er all the ills o' life victorious."

I am told that at this time, Dr. Elias Smith, Wm H. Waterman, Eldad Smith, Samuel Mars, Alanson Filer, Charles Smith and his brother Lyman K., constituted the Whig party in Racine.

The *Racine Advocate* was established in 1842. It was announced as a newspaper devoted to politics, foreign and domestic intelligence, mechanic arts, education, temperance, agriculture and general news. The name of the editor was not given, but on the 21st of October, 1842, Marshall M. Strong took the editor's chair, and raised the stirring motto at the head of his columns: "*Westward, the Star of Empire takes its way.*" No better newspaper has ever been published in the county than was the *Advocate* while under the editorial charge of Mr. Strong.

I find in the year 1844, another newspaper, which may be remembered by some, devoted to the cause of temperance and anti-slavery, and called the *Wisconsin Ægis*, was published at Racine. It preached a doctrine strong enough on the slavery question to suit the most radical abolitionist in the days of Holly, Lovejoy, and Birney.

In 1840, the temporary work on the harbor was begun. A survey of the same had, however, been made in 1836, for which the citizens paid one hundred dollars. Subsequently, the mouth of the river was dug out on a straight cut, and the people of Racine assessed their property fifteen per cent., to build piers and to keep the harbor open, so that lighters could come in. The assessment was made at a public court house



meeting, and Levi Blake is remembered to have said on the occasion: "It'll only cost each of us another lot; let's have a harbor." Mr. Blake furnished and hauled the first load of stone that was used in the harbor work. The first pier work was commenced in 1840, at an expense of three hundred dollars, and in 1841 it was continued at a cost of sixteen hundred dollars. Up to 1844, six thousand dollars had been paid by citizens in endeavoring to secure a harbor before they commenced building a permanent one. On the 16th day of March, 1844, the citizens learning that their harbor appropriation had been lost in the United States Senate, assembled at the court house, and raised a subscription of ten thousand dollars to build a *permanent* harbor. On the next day, the work was commenced, and the first piles were driven with a hand pile-driver. Where the mouth of the river now is and where the water is fifteen feet deep, at the time the harbor work was commenced the stream could be forded without difficulty. On the 2d of November, 1844, the people again in response to an address from Thomas J. Cram, of the U. S. Topographical Engineers, voted without a dissenting voice, to raise five thousand dollars more for work on the harbor. From this time forward by means of taxation and private subscription the village of Racine prosecuted their great enterprise. Its history in detail, with the thrilling story of the "Rock in the Harbor," and the time when Ira Dean traversed the streets of the village, ringing a bell, and shouting: "There's a rock in the harbor! turn out, turn out!" time and space forbid my narrating. On the 14th day of July, 1844, the steamer *Chesapeake*, Kelsey, Master, entered the harbor and passing up the river, tied up at the dock before Taylor & Cather's warehouse. She was the first steamboat that entered Racine harbor, or any other artificial harbor in Wisconsin.

In 1839, Congress appropriated ten thousand dollars for opening a road from Racine to Green Bay, and ten thousand dollars for a road from Racine to Janesville, and these ap-

appropriations were expended in 1839—40, under the supervision of Col. Thos. J. Cram.

The first wheat brought to Racine to be *marketed*, was in 1840. Mr. Charles Wright purchased it, and paid fifty cents a bushel in trade. Mr. Eldad Smith purchased the first wheat for shipment, in 1841, and shipped it in August 1842.

In 1839, the old light house was built, and at that time there were not more than half a dozen buildings on the school section. The school section was laid out in blocks in 1838.

On the 8th of June, 1844, a great commotion was created in the village by the arrival of the propeller *Racine*, and the ceremony of presenting a stand of colors took place. Thomas Wright, esq. presented the colors and made an eloquent speech concluding it by saying: "May prosperous winds and favoring waves attend her fleet career, and the riches of her earnings reward the enterprise of her projectors." Capt. Hawkins, of the vessel made a felicitous response.

The first steam dredge used in the harbor, arrived from Chicago on the 17th of June, 1844. It was welcomed in the newspaper as "Mister Steam Dredge" and created a sensation.

The first celebration of the National anniversary occurred on the 4th day of July 1844.

I have already stated that Judge Frazier was the first judge who ever held a Court of Record at Racine, or in the county. Henry F. Cox was the first Clerk of the Court; Edgar R. Hugenin the first Sheriff; Wm. H. Waterman the first Register of deeds; Eugene Gillespie the first Treasurer; Fred'k S. Lovell the first Clerk of the Board of Supervisors; and Alvin Raymond the first Coroner. They were elected on the 1st Monday in April, 1837.

The first training, was had, or attempted to be had, in the fall of 1840. Albert G. Knight was Captain of the company. He had been ordered by his superior officer to call out his

company for parade, preliminary to general muster. For some reason, the new militia law contained no authority at all, to call out the companies of militia. A few knowing ones were aware of this omission, and thought the Captain was not. But he was well advised of the fact and determined to act accordingly. Having duly warned out the company, and as they were mustered in line in the morning, Capt. Knight ordered the name of each man called and as he responded, said to him: "*Sir, you are excused for the day.*" The Captain's duty was done, and he retired amidst the consternation of his company.

But Tom O'Sprig rallied and re-organized them. The ringing of a steamboat bell at the head of the column filled up the ranks, and the Racine militia gallantly trained till noon, when they adjourned to the Fulton House for dinner, where they all got so drunk they couldn't muster at all in the afternoon!

On the 8th day of December, 1836, authority was obtained from the territorial legislature to build a bridge across Root river, but the first bridge was not built until 1838. It was constructed by Geo. Fellows and a Mr. Pool. It crossed the river at the foot of Main street, and was used until 1843, when it was carried away by the ice in the spring.

On the 27th of December, 1837, the Racine Mutual Fire Insurance Company was chartered, and on the 11th of Jan., 1838, an act was passed incorporating the Racine Seminary. Both of these institutions, I believe, were actually organized.

I may appropriately conclude what I have to say of Racine, by adding that on the 13th day of February, 1841, it was made a chartered village, and on the 5th day of August 1848, an incorporated city.

## MT. PLEASANT.

Wm. See and Edmund Weed settled in Mt. Pleasant, in January, 1835. Mr. See located at the Rapids, and Mr. Weed on a claim which now comprises the farm of Mr. Fratt. At the time of their arrival, two men, one by the name of

Carpenter and the other Harrison K. Fay were at the Rapids. In the fall of 1835, Carpenter left the Rapids and settled within the limits of Capt. Knapp's claim on the north side of Root river. After his death, his widow, who was the first white woman who came to Mt. Pleasant or Racine, removed further north, and continued to occupy what was long known among the old settlers as "the Widow Carpenter's claim."

In January, 1835, Wm. Smith, now of Pike Grove, made a trip from Chicago to Milwaukee. George Smith, in later years the eminent banker, accompanied him, and they came through to Milwaukee upon an Indian trail *via* Grose Point, Skunk Grove and the Rapids. Mr. Smith tells me, that at that time See was the only white man living between Grose Point and Milwaukee on the route which they traveled. In this connection it may not be uninteresting to mention that on the 13th of May, 1836, Mr. Wm. Smith sold eighty acres of land which he owned or claimed in Milwaukee, for ten thousand dollars, and re-purchased it in 1838, for one thousand dollars.

In April, 1835, James Walker came to Racine on a vessel, with Capt. Knapp. He was just starting in life, made a claim in Mt. Pleasant, built a cabin, purchased at the land sales in '39 the lands to which he had previously made a claim, and has ever since resided on the same. After Mr Walker's arrival, Carpenter, whose cabin was on the north side of the river, died, and was buried on the bank of Duck creek, in the depths of the forest. Mr. Walker made the coffin in which Carpenter was buried, and this was the first burial of a white man within the limits of Mt. Pleasant or Racine.

During the same year, Wm. See built a saw mill at the Rapids, and Mr. Walker established a turning lathe at the same place. Mr. Walker also laid the original foundation for the dam, in the river at the Rapids.

The Pottawotomie Indians were then abundant in the neighborhood. The principal Indian trading post was at Skunk Grove, on what is now the farm of Benjamin Reynolds.—



Another saw mill was also erected at the Rapids, and a stock of goods brought in by James Kinzie. James Walker was a member of the jury convened at the first term of court held by Judge Frazier in Racine county.

In July 1835, Thomas Place settled in Mt. Pleasant. He was accompanied by his father, Andrew Place, and by Alva and Zadock Newman. They came with ox teams from Chicago to Skunk Grove, overtaking Daniel B. Rorke at Grose Point, who became their companion the remainder of the journey. Andrew Place, Alva and Zadock Newman, had been here in June before, and made their claims, upon which they now permanently located, and which comprise the farms ever since respectively occupied by the families. During the first season Mr. Andrew Place and the Newmans had to go to St. Joseph, Michigan, for flour. They went in the winter, with ox teams, and were gone two months. In 1836, they were obliged to go to mill at a point sixty miles distant, on Fox River, and in subsequent years they had their grinding done at Geneva.

Mr. Thomas Place lived six months with Jambeau and was employed as his clerk. Twice a year the Indians had their great corn dance, when prayers were vehemently offered for a good crop of corn.

Mound Cemetery was an Indian burying ground, and filled with large mounds.

Mr. Place remembers the burial of an Indian chief. A pen was constructed large enough for the reception of the body, and chinked up with moistened earth and other material; the Indians then placed their dead chief within it, in a sitting posture, surrounded by some of the relics of his race. For a considerable time thereafter, the survivors habitually visited the grave, where they moaned and wept, pouring whisky on the body of the dead as their offering to the Great Spirit.

In November 1835, Mr. Alanson Filer made a claim in Mt. Pleasant of a fractional half section, and subsequently purchased at the land sales. His premises were the same now



known as the homestead of Judge Doolittle. Mr. Filer came first to the west in the spring of 1833, and settled in Chicago. It was also in the year 1835, that Samuel N. Basye, Mr. Hague, Silas Lloyd, Orville W. Barnes, and Mr. Cleveland settled in Mt. Pleasant.

In September 1837, William Bull and Daniel Slauson came together by their own conveyance from Detroit. They had previously met Jonathan M. Snow, at Grand Haven, who had there told them of the "promised land" on the west side of lake Michigan. Upon their arrival here, they stopped at a log tavern kept by Lewis G. Dole, where now Orville W. Barnes resides. They then learned that Mr. Snow held a claim near Dole's tavern, upon which there was a frame house. Mr. Bull immediately located in Caledonia, and Mr. Slauson purchased a claim from a sister of the wife of Samuel Mars, upon which he planted fruit trees, in '37, and which, ultimately became the noble farm upon which he lived to a ripe old age, and where he died after a career of usefulness and prosperity unexcelled by that of any of the early settlers who preceded or followed him, in the journey to their last home.

In the spring of 1839, Mr. Bull removed from Caledonia, and having purchased the claim of Jonathan M. Snow, settled in Mt. Pleasant and has ever since occupied the farm upon which, nearly thirty years ago, he began his career as a successful Racine county farmer.

E. D. Filer, June 27th, 1837, bought a claim in Mt. Pleasant, upon which there was a poorly constructed log house. Mr. Filer could not buy a cook stove at that time in Racine, and the cooking had to be done in the yard by the side of a log. Mr. F. assisted Morris and Waterman in building the court house at Racine, and was also for a considerable period, engaged in the construction of Racine harbor. One cold, blustering Sunday, Mr. Filer, with his rifle on his shoulder, while in pursuit of a wolf, encountered an elder of the church, and after considerable discussion, permission

to pursue the hunt was granted, on condition that he proved himself a good shot, and gave the elder a good dinner.

Nathan Joy was one of the early settlers in Mt. Pleasant. He came in June, 1836, by the lakes, from Buffalo to Chicago. He sailed in the first three master that made a voyage around the lakes. At Chicago he took passage on a little schooner called the *Llewellyn*, for Racine. He bought the claim which in late years, was the farm of Albert DeGroat. Wallace Mygatt was then at the corners named for him. Mygatt had a little square frame house on the heights at the corners, which on a clear day could be seen miles away, and which the settlers called the light house. Soon after his arrival, Mr. Joy and his brother Orsamus made a trip on foot to Fox river.

They took with them a piece of pork for food and a compass for their guidance. They followed Indian trails, going by the way of Rochester. Returning, they traveled by night as well as by day. As the shadows of evening began to fall, and they on a wild, untrodden prairie, they set their compass by the stars, and far into the night they journeyed on alone, until they were worn and weary. Pausing to rest for a moment, they heard in the distance the murmuring tinkle of a cowbell—indicative, surely, of a human habitation. They listened again, then turned their course in the direction from which the sound of the bell seemed to come. Pushing on in the same direction, dismissing compass and stars from their thoughts, they soon found themselves in Alva Newman's house, where, thanks to the music of a cowbell on that lonely prairie, they rested until morning.

In 1838, as the expected land sales were approaching, the settlers found themselves without means to make their purchases. It was a critical time. Many had made valuable improvements, and there was danger, in consequence of the expected sales in November of that year, that many would lose all, which, through many hardships, struggles and privations, they had hoped to secure. A plan was, therefore,

inaugurated to raise money at the east. A public meeting was held and it was determined that the settlers of the county should execute their agreement to mortgage all their lands after getting title at the land sale, and that Nathan Joy and Michael Myers, should go as their delegates to eastern cities to make a loan of \$50,000. The bond was executed, giving Messrs. Joy and Myers full authority, and promising to make their mortgages as mentioned. Schedules of the names of the subscribers to the bond, and of the lands claimed by each, with the improvements they had made upon the lands, and stating the amount of money each settler required, were also prepared. Messrs. Joy and Myers proceeded to the east upon their great enterprise, and after months of absence, returned, and made the disheartening report, that not a dollar could be borrowed upon any or all the lands in the county of Racine! Fortunately, however, the postponement of the land sales until the spring of 1839, relieved the settlers of the extremity apprehended, and banished the cloud that appeared to be darkening their fortunes.

Among the other early settlers in Mt. Pleasant whose names I now recall, are two who are members of your society, Augustus B. Crane who came into the town May 15, 1839, and Seth P. Phelps who arrived during the same year. Joseph Nixon and John R. Bassett should also be numbered among the earliest settlers.

## CALEDONIA.

I have the word of Mr. Elam Beardsley, for saying, that he was the first actual white settler in Caledonia. It has been said that John Davis preceded him, but though Mr. Davis may have first asserted a claim in the town, I think that Mr. Beardsley established the first actual settlement, and that Mrs. Beardsley was the first white woman who came into the county for a permanent home. He came from Michigan, *bringing with him his family*, and on the third night after he set out on his perilous journey, he and his household jewels slept in a shanty on his claim in Caledonia.

In February, 1835, Levi Blake and his three sons, C. H. Blake, E. S. Blake and Lucius S. Blake, set out from their home near Niles, Michican, for—— some place they scarcely knew where. They arrived at Chicago on the 10th of Feb., where they provided themselves with supplies, and a Mackinac blanket. They left Chicago, and at night, arrived at Grose Point, 18 miles north, and were hospitably entertained by the French traders. The next morning they set out for the next point of prominence, which was Skunk Grove. It was a cold, winter's day. The snow obscured the trail on which they were traveling, and they had a long, long, weary day, with apprehensions of a still more dreary night. Night found them in a grove about three miles west of the present site of Waukegan. The cold was intense; they kindled a fire with the last match that was left them. They spent the night standing around the fire and constructing a sled. In the morning, leaving behind them their wagon, they proceeded on their journey. At noon their eyes were delighted with the sight of a human being leading a pony.

On his approach, he informed them, that he and that pony were the United States Route Agents on the way from Chicago to Green Bay with the mail. He gave them directions and informed them of the land marks that would guide them to Skunk Grove, which they reached after the darkness of night had fallen upon them, and after much suffering from the severity of the weather. Arrived at a trading post at Skunk Grove, they were the recipients of the hospitality of Jok Jambeau and his squaw, and remained over night. On the next morning they began explorations for a place to locate. At a point on the river three miles northwesterly from Jambeau's they found John Davis, who had entered a claim and was residing upon it. They remained with him several days, and looked over the country. The representations of the country which they had heard from others, proved truthful. They took exception only to the climate, but Mr. L. S. Blake thinks the winter of 1835—36, the coldest he ever experienced in Wisconsin.



On the fifteenth day of February, they made their claim. They staked out as they supposed, enough land for four; but when the survey was made, it was found that they had only secured a sufficient quantity of land for two claims. They then visited the Rapids, and found there, Mr. See, who was building his mill. Upon returning to their claim, they built a log shanty without a window in it. They soon returned to Michigan and removed to Chicago where the family lived two years. Meanwhile, Lucius S. Blake and his brother, A. H. Blake, came back to the claim and resided in their cabin two seasons. They ploughed a portion of the land, made some fencing, and held the claim by actual occupancy until Mr. Levi Blake removed to it with his family in the fall of 1837. Capt. Blake's capacious log house, which he built on his premises, was a land mark in the country. It was always open to the settlers, and the hospitality of its proprietor gave it the appropriate name of "Our House." The farm now owned by James Wilson, constituted part of the Blake claim. Early in 1835, Edward Bradley and his brother made claims in Caledonia, and during the summer of 1835 and spring of '36, other settlers arrived with their families; among them were Simeon Butler, Isaac Butler, Thomas Butler, Joseph Adams, and Shintafer, whom Mr. Blake describes as a daring specimen of a borderer. I think at about the same time Ezra Beardsley, the father of Elam Beardsley, and Ira Hurlbut, also, settled in the town. Ezra Beardsley was known as a sturdy pioneer of great heart and noble hospitality.

About the 22d of Sept. 1835, Walter Cooley and his family came to Caledonia, accompanied by Eldad Smith and Mr. Elisha Raymond, sen. and family. Mr. Cooley came first to Racine alone, in May, 1835. He settled on a claim southwest of the Rapids, but afterwards located about one mile north, on or near a line of blazed trees which at that point, marked the route from Chicago to Milwaukee. In the spring of 1836, Mr. Cooley removed to the premises which until a late day he continued to own as his homestead, and as his



country resort after he became a resident of Racine. His removal in 1836 was occasioned by the fact that he one day discovered, that he had located on the southeast corner of another man's claim.

Eldad Smith was one of the early settlers in Caledonia. He arrived in Racine on the 22d day of September, 1835, and remaining there a short time, went into Caledonia and purchased the claim of John Davis. It was a claim covering two hundred and forty acres. He built a log house and went there to live, on the 1st day of November, 1835, remaining until the winter of 1841, when he removed to Racine. He says that in the fall of 1835, in addition to those already named, Trystam Davis, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Stillman, Hugh Bennett, and Hiram Bennett were settled in Caledonia.

Mr. Smith built his house by rolling up logs and putting on a roof made of shingles of about the size of staves, split out of white oak logs. He and his family did not suffer for want of provisions in their new home. He had in the fall of 1835, bought two barrels of flour at Chicago, and enough other supplies to last them through the winter. In January or Feb., 1836, James Kinzie brought in a drove of hogs called "prairie racers," and the settlers supplied themselves with pork.

Prairie wolves and Pottawotomie Indians were equally abundant. During the winter there were three encampments of Indians uncomfortably near Mr. Smith's house. In 1837 or 38, the Indians were removed west of the Mississippi.

Mr. Smith says that in those days they had neither rats, beggars nor thieves!

As early as December, 1835, Sheridan Kimball settled in Caledonia. During the summer of that year, Mr. Kimball, while living in Chicago, heard of a settlement on Root river in Wisconsin, and in the month of December, in company with Sandford Blake, Stephen Sandford and a man whose name he cannot now recall, he set out for the Root River settlement. In the evening of their first day's journey, the party arrived at

Patterson's tavern, about eight miles from Chicago, where they spent the night. On the next morning, they resumed their journey upon a new wagon road through the woods, which had been previously an Indian trail, one of the evidences of which, was a dead Indian child, deposited in a rude coffin and lodged in a tree which stood by the wayside. On the second night of their journey, they arrived at Sunderland's tavern. In the evening of their third day's journey, Mr. Kimball and his comrades arrived at a log tavern in the edge of the woods, and were rejoiced to learn that they had reached the Root River country. Some of the settlers called at the cabin that night and talked cheerfully of the richness of the land, the future prospects of the town of Racine, and the general developement of the country.

The proprietor of the tavern was a Mr. Strong who died long ago, and was buried near his cabin, two miles north of Mygatt's corners, and the crumbling walls of which, yet stand. Leaving Mr. Strong's cabin, Mr. Kimball and his companions traveled on until they reached the cabin of John Davis, where they breakfasted.

At the crossing of Skunk Creek, where Mr. Hood now resides, men were building the first bridge across the stream. Among them was Symmes Butler who had located near what is now called Caledonia Center. Resuming their travels, Mr Kimball and party soon reached the house of C H Blake, who was living in a log cabin on the claim which was afterwards the home of Capt. Levi Blake. Resting there until toward evening, they continued their tramp until, at night, they arrived at the residence of Symmes Butler. He was living on what was called Hoosier creek. Several families were living in the neighborhood, among them Mr. Janes, the founder of Janesville. They were cordially welcomed. The next morning, as they were preparing to depart, Mrs. Butler remarked: "When you get out in the woods, you will know the reason why my husband is so ragged; he has been running through the woods so much he has left a *rag on every*

*bush.*" With Mr. Butler as their guide, they rambled through groves of timber and openings, and crossed beautiful prairies and meadows, with only here and there a claim, and greatly exhilarated by the thought that all this goodly land could be bought for one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre! Mr. Kimball made a claim at that time, and settled on it. In the latter part of February, 1836, he returned to Chicago, and immediately made preparations for removing to Root river, with his aged parents. His brother, Leonard Kimball, preceded them to make preparations for their arrival. About the middle of March they started with three yoke of oxen and a wagon, and were two weeks making their journey. Arrived at their destination, they found an unfinished cabin on the premises, which was soon completed with its shake roof, rude stone chimney and elm bark floors.

During the first four or five years of his adventurous life in his new home, Mr. Kimball was compelled to struggle against hardships and destitution. He had in store a small quantity of provisions and nine dollars in money. Bereavement soon followed in the death of his brother, which occurred about the 16th of May, 1836.

In the beginning of '36, Mr. Kimball went to Chicago, and delivered stone for Chicago harbor, continuing through the summer and part of the fall. In the summer of 1837, Mr. Kimball conceived the idea, also, of getting wheat from a brother, who lived west of Chicago, and taking it to a mill on Fox river to be ground into flour and then hauling it to Wisconsin to be sold for twelve dollars a barrel. He began hauling soon after harvest, and made three trips, often times supplying on his journeys, the necessities of settlers whom he met and who were without bread or money.

At the land sale in 1839, Mr. Kimball secured the land which he had claimed, and continued to reside upon it, until he removed to Racine which has since been his home.

In 1836, Wm. Sears, Luther R. Sears, Jas. Bussey, Joel

Horner, Emanuel Horner, Daniel Wooster and his sons, and Alexander Logan and Thomas Spencer made their settlements.

Daniel Wooster and his son Adney, on the 1st day of January, 1835, started from the town of Derby, Connecticut, with his team for the west, in search of a location where he could settle and make a home for himself and family. Traveling through the states of New York, Mich., Indiana and Illinois, he reached Wisconsin, in the month of March of the same year, and located in the town of Caledonia. The spring following, Mr. Daniel Wooster's son, Julius Wooster, with the family came to Caledonia by way of Buffalo, around the lakes. Mr. Wooster remained on the farm where he first located until his death, which occurred about four years since. John Wheeler and Joseph Cannon were also among the early settlers, but the years of their arrival are unknown to me. Esek Sears came in 1838.

1836 is remembered as the year in Caledonia, and even elsewhere, when the settlers received from Michigan, an importation of flour which nearly cost some of them their lives. It was called in those days "sick flour," and nobody but Shintafer could eat it.

Samuel Hood located in Caledonia, May 24th, 1838; Geo. F. Roberts and Henry B. Roberts in 1837, and John Trumbull in August 1839. Timothy D. Morris came in October, 1838, and made a claim, which he sold in 1840. In 1839, he and his brother, who owned land adjoining, broke up twenty acres, which was the first land plowed on the north side of the prairie. During the following winter and spring, Mr. Morris made rails and fenced the breaking. He procured his timber for rails on the adjoining section, belonging to the government. Isaac Place thought he would make rails from the same timber. Each tried to get in advance of the other by claim—marking Uncle Sam's best trees with all the speed of men running a foot race. A few years later, Mr. Morris sold his original eighty acres and bought the tract where he



and Isaac Place had cut the timber without leave of Uncle Sam, and now owns and resides upon it.

Dan'l B. Rork, settled where he now lives, in Caledonia, in June 1837. He bought the claim of Jok Janbeau. Janbeau asked him \$2,000 for it, but finally sold it for \$525.— It was fenced in 1834, and was probably the first claim fenced east of Rock river. Mr. Rork came to the county in 1835, and in that year made a claim at Burlington. Other parties jumped it, but he succeeded in maintaining it, and afterwards sold it to Silas Peck for \$200. Mr. Rork knew all the settlers east of Rock river, and assisted in the erection of the first frame house built in Milwaukee.

Rev. Cyrus Nichols settled in Caledonia in the fall of 1836. He bought a claim and built a log house, about forty rods from his present residence. He was a missionary, and traversed the country preaching to the settlers. On one occasion, when he held religious services at the trading post at Skunk Grove, the settlers attended, among them, Mr. Lucius S. Blake, armed with guns, and he administered to them a sharp rebuke for carrying fire arms to church.

Mr. Nichols and family, were victims to the "sick flour" that came from Michigan, although it cost him \$22 a barrel. He says that, although the settlers had but one apartment in their houses, there was always room for all who came. He had previously lived in Missouri, and there had but one room in his house and that the kitchen. On coming to Wisconsin he resolved he would have a parlor. He kept his resolution, and had a parlor, and lived in it; but that was the only room in the house!

The first white child born in Caledonia was Mrs. Maria Bacon, daughter of the late Joseph Adams. She was born on the 2d day of September, 1835, and it is an unsettled question whether she, or Helen Mars, daughter of Samuel Mars, who was also born in 1835, in Mt. Pleasant, was the first white person born in the county.

## BURLINGTON.

About the fifteenth day of December, 1835, Moses Smith and Wm. Whiting made the first mark at Burlington; Whiting claiming on the east side of the river, and Smith on the west side, near the spot where the Perkins mill now stands. They made what was called a "jack knife" claim, by putting names and dates on a tree.

On the 27th of December 1835, Moses Smith, Wm. Whiting, B. C. Perce, and Lemuel Smith built a shanty in the little grove in the river bend on the east side of Fox river. They cut a large white oak tree near where Muth's brewery now stands, built a rude log hut on the present farm of David Bushnell, spent three days prospecting and surveying on both sides of the river, and finally constructed a cabin on the west side.

In January, 1836, Enoch D. Woodbridge built the body of a log house on the east side, which afterwards formed part of the tavern kept by Ruel Nims.

In February, 1836, Nathan H. Darling made a claim for Nelson R. Norton, on what has since been, and is yet known as the Rooker farm.

In April, 1836, Moses Smith took up his residence in a shanty on the west side of the river, and in May built a log house near where the Perkins mill is situated.

In the latter part of May, 1836, James Nelson built a log house and blacksmith shop near what is now the south end of Durgin's bridge.

In June of the same year, B. C. Perce erected a building for a store, which is now, or was recently, standing on the bank of the mill pond, just outside the present fair grounds.

In July, 1836, Daniel B. Rork came, and claimed the fraction of land upon which the greater part of the present village stands.

In July of the same year David Bushnell located on his present farm, and reconstructed the cabin which had been put up in 1835, by Whiting and others. He acquired his interest in the claim from Whiting, all other parties having, I suppose, abandoned it. The same property was purchased at the land sales in 1839, by Stephen Bushnell who came to Burlington in March 1837. George Bushnell had been here in March, '36. At this time Burlington was known as "the Lower Forks."

In August 1836, Origen Perkins made his claim in Burlington. In September of the same year, Heman Loomis made a claim to the land which was afterwards his homestead, and is known as the "Loomis farm," southeast of the village.

In 1836, also, Silas Peck and family arrived, and built a house adjoining the store building previously erected by Benj. C. Perce. Later in 1836, George Newman made a claim and built upon what is known as the "Ayer's farm." Jared and Chas Fox came during the same year.

In February, 1838, Nelson R. Norton located on the claim which had been made for him by Nathan R. Darling, and constructed a frame house with lumber which he brought from Chicago. Mr. Norton had previously resided at Chicago, and built the first bridge that ever spanned Chicago river.

Early in 1837, Origen Perkins and family permanently located at Burlington, and began their residence in a log house which he had built in the preceding year near the brick yard. Wm. F. Lyon came, also about the same time, with his family, but remained only a few months, and finally settled at Lyons, in Walworth county.

Ruel Nims and family arrived in Burlington, (which was then known as Foxville,) on the 10th day of January, 1837, and went into occupation of a log house on the east side of the river, built by Woodbridge, and which during its occupation by Nims, was the first established public house for travelers in Burlington.

In May, 1837, Pliny M. Perkins came to Burlington from Joliet, Illinois, with a drove of hogs and cattle, but did not remain.

From the best information I have, I think Samuel C. Vaughan came in 1837, and that during that year, he and Moses Smith built the first mill, which was known as the "up and down saw mill." It is said, also, that the mill house built by Mr. Vaughan was the first frame building erected in the village.

On the 1st of September, 1837, Lewis Royce, Esq., settled in Burlington and built a house west of the present Burlington railroad depot. He came by way of Racine, and there met Ephraim Perkins and family and having a team and conveyance, conveyed them to Burlington, bringing also with him a barrel of flour. He found at Foxville, Origen Perkins, occupying his new homestead: Ruel Nims, on the east side of the river; a small board shanty had also been put up to maintain a claim on the N. W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 33. and was occupied by one Putnam, as a trading shop. Silas Peck had just finished a log house which still stands near the village mill. There was also an unenclosed frame for a building, on the premises afterward occupied by Origen Perkins. The log house built by Moses Smith, near the mill, was also standing, and these constituted at this time the improvements on the present site of Burlington village. Soon after his settlement in Burlington, Mr. Royce established a lime kiln, and burnt about three hundred bushels of lime, during the first year of its operation.

Pliny M. Perkins permanently settled in Burlington in 1838: Richard Brown settled in the town in 1839: Liberty Fisk, in 1838: Ephraim S. Sawyer on the 14th of May 1838, making a claim where he now resides, and buying two hundred and seventy-five acres at the land sale; Henry Edmonds also came in '38, and was the first blacksmith in the village. His shop was in a little log house near the present site of the mill.



Clark K. Norton, Thomas Toombs, George Batchelor and L. O. Eastman settled in Burlington in 1839; Ephraim Perkins, father of Origen and Pliny M. Perkins, Joseph Rooker and James Thompson settled in 1840. I am pained to hear, that on yesterday, [21st of Feb., 1871,] Mrs. Ruth Thompson, widow of James Thompson, was carried to her tomb. Respected and honored by friends of thirty one years acquaintance, a good and noble woman, whose long residence in Burlington is associated with my earliest recollections, has passed away. I take this occasion to cast a little leaf upon her grave, in tribute to her sterling worth of character, and to those noble, womanly virtues that adorned her life, and will long be cherished by mourning friends.

In 1840, John W. Edmonds settled in the town and was the first wagon maker who located in the place.

The first physician who settled in Burlington, was Doctor Edward G. Dyer, who came with his family, in 1839. He had visited the place of his future home in 1836, and had on the night of his first arrival, slept on the bank of Fox river in a shanty 10x12, on a puncheon floor, with seven other inmates. He walked most of the distance from Chicago, following Indian trails, guided occasionally, by a stray settler, whose hospitality he sought and received, and thus journeying on by the dim traces of obscure foot paths in the woods and on the prairies, he crossed a stream and sat down, in his weariness, beneath a great oak that was a landmark on his journey, and smoked his pipe! At sundown of that day he arrived at Foxville. At this time Origen Perkins and his hired man, Moses Smith, Silas Peck, Bostwick Beardsley and Wm. F. Lyon were the inhabitants of what is now the village of Burlington.

Later in 1839, when he and his family arrived they took up their abode, and for a considerable time continued to live in the log house built in 1836, by Origen Perkins, near the brick yard, Mr. Perkins having removed to the claim he had made

on the west side of the river. One whom I have long known, recalls to-day with vivid distinctness, the early years spent in that humble cabin. He remembers the rude fire place by the light of which he read his testament at evening; the Indians peering darkly into the windows; and the wild forests to the northward, the little events that childhood magnifies into epocs, the foot bridge across the river, the log house and saw mill on the west side of the pond, and the luxuriant wild grass that flourished on the bottom land west of the stream. It has passed away like a dream and I will not pause to recall it.

In 1840, Francis and Joseph Wackerman came to Burlington from New York. They were the first German family who settled in the town, but were soon followed by others in considerable numbers.

Mr. Pliny M. Perkins purchased the saw mill that was built by Smith & Vaughan, and subsequently built a grist mill in which was ground the first flour shipped from Wisconsin to New York. He opened the first store, in 1839, in a log house built by Moses Smith, and continued the business there about a year. He then, with Hugh McLaughlin erected the frame structure which constitutes the present "Burlington Hotel." The west half of the building was used for a store and the balance for a hotel, which was for several years kept by Mr. McLaughlin. The completion of the house, in 1840, was signalized by a grand New Year's ball.

In the earliest days of trading at Burlington, much of it was done with the Indians encamped in Milwaukee woods.

In the days of the settlement of Mr. Norton, fish and game were the staple meat. The settlers sold muskrat skins to buy butter, and ammunition with which to shoot prairie chickens.

They ground grain in coffee mills, and Mr. Norton has yet the mill in which he once ground grain for samp.

In 1840, however, times were improved. In April of that year, David Bushnell planted a crop of corn; on the third day after planting, the rows were visible, and on the 4th day of July it was ripe and ready to harvest.

Game was abundant. Long-billed snipe and sand-hill cranes were marks for every hunter. On frosty mornings in the fall, the cranes were accustomed to gather in great numbers, and hold what David Bushnell calls "regular camp-meetings," preparatory to their long flights. Prairie wolves and deer were also, numerous.

In the winter of 1839, one hundred and five deer, in a single drove, by actual count, were seen to ford Fox river near the claim of Mr. Bushnell.

The first crop of grain in the town was raised by Moses Smith, and harvested in 1837, on the east end of the present fair grounds.

The first election was held at the house of Moses Smith, in the fall of 1836, for member of territorial legislature. This was the election at which Capt. KNAPP was the candidate and elected.

The first town meeting was held in the spring of 1838.

The Foxville post office was established early in 1837; Moses Smith, postmaster. There was a weekly mail from Racine to Mineral Point.

The first school house was built in 1839. The first school was taught in the summer of 1838, by Sarah Bacon. The first bridge across Fox river was covered with hewed logs, in the fall of 1837.

Origen Perkins was the first justice of the peace in Burlington. On one occasion a man called upon him for a warrant with which to make an arrest. He found Mr. Perkins digging a ditch. The complaint must be made then and there, but the justice had neither paper, pen nor ink. Perhaps, Mr. P. did not deem the offense a very grave one, but in the emergency of the case, he pulled off one of his boots, took from his pocket a piece of chalk, wrote the complainant's statement on the boot leg, made him hold up his hand and swear to it, and then told him he would issue a warrant as soon as he went to the house!

The first 4th of July celebration was held in the grove on the east side of the river in 1839. Dinner furnished by Stephen Bushnell; address by Elder Lothrop, of Southport.

The first death in the town was that of Miss Amanda Hayes, who died in July, 1836. The first birth, was that of a son of George Newman, born in May or June, 1837.

The first woolen mill established in the county, was built in Burlington, by Ephraim and Pliny M. Perkins in 1843.

In the summer of the same year the "Burlington Academy" was established, and was in operation with R. D. Turner as principal, in December, 1843.

I must draw to a close what I have to say of Burlington. Let me add that one of its present citizens, Capt. Francis McCumber, as commander of vessels on the great lakes, brought to Wisconsin, many of its settlers in 1836-'37-'38-'39 and '40. In July, 1833, he sailed up lake Michigan in the vessel *Thos. Hart*, without meeting another craft between lake St. Clair and Chicago.

The original plat of Burlington constitutes the N. E. fr  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 32, comprising 144 acres, or 160 acres including the river. It was purchased at the land sales in March, 1839, by Silas Peck, and was surveyed and platted May 21st, 1839, by A. W. Doolittle.

## ROCHESTER.

Levi Godfrey was the first white settler in the town of Rochester. He came into the country on foot, accompanied by John B. Wade, and arrived in the fall of 1835. He was looking for a water power, and upon finding it at the present site of Rochester village, he made a claim on the west side of Fox river. He built a shanty sixteen feet square, the first structure erected for human habitation in the town, and brought out his family to their future western home, in 1836. Mrs. Godfrey did not see a white woman during the first six weeks she spent in her new residence. Her nearest female neighbor



at that time, was Mrs Betsey Call, at Call's Grove. G. W. Gamble, Gilman Hoyt, Martin C. Whitman, L. O. Whitman, and Mary Skinner came into Rochester in 1836, but general emigration to the town did not begin until 1837. Philo Bel-den came in June of that year but remained only a short time, returning to Rochester, however, in June, 1839, when he made it a permanent home.

The settlers of 1837, were George E. Duncan, George Stebbins, James H. Gipson, Benj. Flanders, Alonzo Snow Philander Bartlett, Benj. Bartlett, Thaddeus Earl, G. W Hoyt, John Freelove, David M. Fowler, Philander Cole, Wm. Creirston, Sela Whitman, Joseph Clark, Horace Frost, Patrick Laughrin, Seth Warner, Royal Flanders, and Trystam C. Hoyt.

The settlers of 1838, were Horace Andrews, William G. Lewis, H. S. Hulburt, I. O. Parker, Calvin Earl, Hilliard Hely, and Mrs. Robert Adams, who was one of the pioneer women in the western part of the county.

In '39 Obed Hurlbut, Eleazer Everit, Jacob L. Myers, Jed-ediah Healy, J. H. Hickox, Abial Whitman, Pinkston Wade, Luther Whitman, G. M. Hely, Richard E. Ela and Henry Cady made their settlements in the town. William S. Hoyt, and F. E. Hoyt made permanent settlement in 1840. William S. Hoyt was in Rochester in '37, but returned to Vermont where he remained three years before coming west to remain permanently.

Mr. Eleazer Everit purchased two hundred and forty acres of land at the land sales. There was a saw mill at Rochester, and preparatory to the erection of a dwelling on his farm, he hauled two saw logs to mill and got them sawed into lumber. He hauled the lumber back to his farm, cut down some trees for corner posts, and with this material he built his shanty, which constituted the first place of shelter and abode for himself, his wife and two children, in the wild interior region where he was destined to build up a fine estate.

The first season that Mr. Everit was on his farm, he broke up six acres upon which he sowed his first wheat, which produced a good crop. He sold his first load at Southport for \$13, and was paid for it in the currency of a bank, which he afterwards discovered had failed two years before!

Levi Godfrey kept the first hotel in Rochester which was opened in 1837. It was at his log house, in October 1836, that the celebrated "God-fry" convention was held. Delegates came from a great distance on horseback, and staid with him two nights, though it is said to this day that some of those who left their homes got lost in the wilderness and never found Godfry's cabin. The convention was evidently anticipated as a great event, for preparatory to it, Mr. Godfry went to Skunk Grove and bought an ox for beef with which to feed the delegates. Dr. Cary was president of the convention; its members slept in their blankets on the floor at night, and dreamed over democratic resolutions, as sweetly as if Pottowatomie Indians were not slumbering in an adjoining camp.

In the fall of 1837, Martin Whitman began the improvement of a water power on Muskego creek.

The present Rochester water power, was located and established by Philo Belden, Timothy S. Green and Jeremiah Ford in 1842.

The first bridge over Fox river, at Rochester, was built in 1836, by Ira A. Rice and John T. Palmer.

In the winter of 1836, Wm. H. Waterman, of Racine, made a claim in behalf of himself, Elias Smith, Henry F. Cox, Amaziah Stebbins and John M. Myers to the lands in Rochester village east of Fox river, and north of Main street; and, in 1839 and 40, they operated a mill on Muskego creek.

On the 26th of October, 1839, Martin C. Whitman, Levi Godfry, Obed Hurlbut, Hiland Hurlbut and Philo Belden, as proprietors, caused to be platted, all the village property in

Rochester, on the west side of Fox river and that portion also on the east side of the river south of Main street.

On the 9th day of May, 1840, Elias Smith, Consider Heath, David Anderson and Margaret A. Cox, as proprietors, caused to be platted that portion of the village tract situated east of the river and north of Main street. The village was first called the "Upper Forks."

In the earliest years of the settlement, the settlers experienced the usual hardships of a new country. The storms would beat into their cabins; the deep snows of long winters put an embargo upon travel, and fish and game were at times the chief means of subsistence.

In the summer season, women walked four miles following Indian trails, and carrying their babies in a basket, to visit their neighbors. Mrs. Adams tells me that the women of those days made light of jaunts like these, and that a pan of johnny cake and a good supply of Old Hyson made a feast for many a tea party in those wild times. The country was singularly free from underbrush, and travel through the woodland was therefore free from obstruction or difficulty. As new settlers came in, they were welcomed to the cabins of the earlier inhabitants, and when night came on they would take their resting places on the floor, in rows, and sleep as sweetly as if reposing on pillows of down, with angels expressly commissioned to watch over them.

Richard E. Ela established, in Rochester in 1839, the first fanning mill establishment in the county. He built his first mills in the cellar under his house.

Rev. C. C. Cadwell was the first resident minister in Rochester. He settled there in 1839.

The first church building erected in the town, was built in 1844, by the Congregational Society.

I ought not to omit to mention that Emily Hoyt, daughter of T. C. Hoyt, and now the wife of Allen Stetson, when a girl but

thirteen years of age, came to Rochester with her father and brother, in 1837. She was their housekeeper, while they were making improvements preparatory to the removal of the remaining members of the family to their western home.

During the mornings of the summer of 1837 she was in the habit of rising early, to prepare breakfast for her father and brother. The morning meal over, and while the oxen were being placed before the plow, she would hastily finish her work, fasten the door of their rude cabin, go with the team in company with her father and brother to the breaking field, and there from morning until night, she followed the plow in wearisome rounds, rather than remain alone in the cabin, exposed to dangers from the Indians who were prowling about in great numbers.

Philo Belden built the first brick chimney in Rochester and went to the mouth of Root River for the brick.

Mr. Oren Wright settled in Rochester on the 2d of January, 1840. He established a turning lathe, and manufactured the first chairs and bedsteads that were made at any place within a distance of sixty miles west.

The first death in Rochester was that of Mrs. Wade, which occurred on the 1st day of January 1837; and the first white child born in the town, was Henry Warner, son of Seth Warner.

Mr. Cole and Miss Fowler were the first persons married in the place. In those days a license was required, and Mr. Cole journeyed to Racine, on foot, for his license, which cost him \$4.00.

The first Justice of the Peace in Rochester was Seth Warner, the first doctor, Solomon Blood, and the first religious society, Baptists, organized in 1837.

In 1839, the principal Indian trail run west from Rochester to Spring Prairie. In that year and in 1840, there was a great contest among the people, concerning the establishment



of roads, and the lines upon which they should run, and there were not wanting many persons, who believed and urged, that the Indian trails would and should be adopted, as the lines for highways and thoroughfares of travel.

I think the most marked Indian trail to be now found in the county, crosses the Rochester & Burlington road, southwest of Rochester village, and winds along the crest of the bank of Fox River for a considerable distance, among forest trees that stood where they now stand, before Levi Godfrey's adventurous spirit had guided him to his early home in Wisconsin.

## WATERFORD.

The settlement of what is now the township and village of Waterford began in 1836. The settlers of that year who yet survive and retain their original residences, are P. R. Mygatt, Samuel E. Chapman, Ira A. Rice, Archibald Cooper and Hiram Page. The first family settled in the town was that of P. R. Mygatt.

A list of the settlers of 1836 may be stated as follows: Ira A. Rice, Samuel E. Chapman and their wives, May, 1836; Archibald Cooper, September 1836; Hiram Page, August, 1836; Levi and Hiram Barnes, summer of 1836; Benoni Buttes, June, 1836; John T. Palmer, May, 1836; Arad Wells, May 1836; Alpheus Barnes, Samuel C. Russ, Adney Sampson, Philip R. Mygatt, Henry and Austin Mygatt, Elisha Elms and Osborne L. Elms all during the season of 1836. Among the settlers of 1837, were Louis D. Merrills, Harvey Weage and Frederick A. Weage, Sautell Whitman, Israel Markham, Orrin Barry, J. S. Cooper, Dyer Buskirk, Wm. Wade, Mr. Burbank, John Cooper, James Cooper and Lorenzo Ward.

Nelson H. Palmer and Elijah K. Bent, were among the settlers of 1838.

In the spring of 1836, Joseph and Tyler Caldwell settled in the town of Waterford, made their claims and built a shanty on the prairie since known as "Caldwell's prairie."

In July, 1836, Abram Ressigue, Wm. A. Cheney and Calvin Gault located at the same place, with their families. They lived in their wagons until they could build a log house. In the same year, Charles Dewitt, Paul W. Todd and Wesley Munger made their settlements on the prairie.

In the fall of 1837, V. M. Willard and T. W. Gault came. In 1838 Jefferson Brown and D. Wood and families, Ira Coleman and N. Van Aerman and their families also settled on the prairie.

In 1839, Lorenzo Ward, John Larkin and Edmund Flagg made their settlements.

The first frame house built on "Caldwell's Prairie," was that of Joseph Caldwell, in the fall of 1837. T. W. Gault and Mrs. O. Van Valin are now the oldest surviving residents on the prairie.

I imagine that the first settlers of 1836, when they arrived on the bank of Fox River, at the place which was destined speedily to become a prosperous settlement and village, were at once attracted by the picturesqueness of the scenery which broke upon their view in its native beauty, and by the high promise of future prosperity and happiness, which the land to which they had come, seemed to afford.

On the spot where the dwelling of Samuel E. Chapman stands, was an Indian council house, called "Cadney's Castle," and all around it were Indian cornfields. The river offered unusual facilities for the establishment of a waterpower, and it was soon determined to found a village, taking its name from Waterford in the state of New York. The Indians had also, for a long time selected the place as their ford across the stream, which gave the name adopted, additional appropriateness.

The founders of Waterford village were Samuel E. Chapman, Levi Barnes and Samuel C. Russ. O. W. Barnes and a Mr. Beebe had first made the claim, but Levi Barnes and Mr. Chapman bought them out. At the land sales in 1839, Eliphalet Cramer purchased the lands for Chapman and Barnes, and conveyed to them.

Mr. Ira A. Rice made a claim on section No. 27, where he now lives.

The hardships of these pioneers, during the first seasons of their settlement, were often severe. They had not only to contend against thieving Indians, but were obliged to transport their provisions and seed with ox teams, from Racine, Southport and Chicago. There were no roads in the country; streams had to be forded, marshes traversed, and all the difficulties of travel which prevail in an unsettled region, encountered. At some seasons, hunting and fishing afforded the chief means of subsistence. The men worked days, and hunted game and speared fish by torch-light at night.

But amid all their privations, the settlers were very happy, for they enjoyed the freedom and independence of their rugged life. New comers were always welcome to their humble hospitality; every cabin and shake-roofed house was open; friendship and brotherly love prevailed. There were no drones in those days. Every man and woman had work to do, and did it, and when one of the settlers had a job on his hands that he could not manage alone, all his neighbors gave him their gratuitous assistance.

When Mr. Merrills came into the town in 1837, he was obliged to pay \$20 for his first barrel of flour, and had to split rails to pay for it.

During his journey to the west, in 1837, Mr. Merrills was one day wandering in the woods on the Nippersink, and came upon a log pen about three feet high and four feet square,

covered and closely chinked. Curiosity prompted him and his companion to investigate the newly discovered structure. Through a crevice in the roof they beheld a solitary Indian, sitting in the corner, painted and feathered, and well armed with rifle, tomahawk and knife. A hasty and inglorious retreat to the depths of the forest was immediately made, in momentary expectation of a farewell shot from the Pottawotomie "redskin," whose dominion was thus invaded.

Samuel E. Chapman and Levi Barnes built the first log house in the village of Waterford, in 1836. It was regarded "headquarters," and with its shake roof, still stands, slowly going to decay, but in its speechless old age, reviving in the minds of the old settlers interesting memories of the past.

In the fall of 1837, Messrs Barnes & Chapman, assisted by L. D. Merrills, Archibald Cooper, Ira A. Rice, Wm. Jones, John T. Palmer, Osborn L. Elms, Elisha Elms, and John Fisher, built the first dam across the river. The first saw mill was built in the fall of the same year, and the first grist mill in 1840 by Mr. Chapman.

The first mill stone used in the grist mill was 22 inches in diameter, and is yet preserved by Mr. Chapman.

Archibald Cooper scored the first timber, and Lewis D. Merrills hewed it for the saw mill.

The first crops raised in Waterford, were potatoes and rutabagas. Rutabagas became a regular farm crop. Mr. Cooper says that at one time he lived on them alone, fourteen days. Mr. Chapman brought with him the first rutabaga seed sown in the town.

For the first johnny cake Archibald Cooper ever ate, he ground the corn in a coffee mill at the house of Osborn L. Elms. They had with it molasses made from watermelons.

Among the settlers of 1839, was George Eaves; and I judge him to have been a pretty sharp character from the following circumstance. A traveler from Milwaukee stopped,



with his team, over night at the hotel of Mr. Russ. He had in his wagon what appeared to be a bag of oats. Eaves wanted oats for his own horses, and so he appropriated the bag and contents ; but upon giving his horses a liberal supply, he concluded that the defrauded traveler was an honest shoemaker, since the contents of his bag proved to be shoe pegs !

In the spring of 1836, Arad Wells plowed seven or eight acres on what is now the farm of Ira A. Rice; this was the first plowing done in the town, and upon the land plowed was raised the first crop of red clover grown in Waterford.

In the midst of all their hard work and struggle, the settlers indulged in many amusements. The wolf hunt of 1838 was one, when the settlers armed themselves with guns, clubs, scythes, dinner horns and pitchforks and went in pursuit of wolves and wolf scalps. It is said that the hunters, under competent officers, endeavored to close in on an entire township. Concentrating their forces, however, they finally surrounded a tract of forest, every man watching for his game, and finally all gathering in the center of the wood, without encountering a solitary wolf. As a wolf hunt it was, therefore, not a success; but returning home over the "big marsh," they overhauled a wayfarer with his horses and wagon, journeying to Elkhorn, with a cargo of whisky aboard. This was game the hunters could appreciate ! The driver had turned his horses loose, and was reposing. The party, under the direction of their officers, formed a hollow square around the wagon. Details of further proceedings are unnecessary. Weariness overcame many of the hunters, and the sequel gave celebrity to the wolf hunt of 1838 !

It is said that there were scolding wives in Waterford, for a considerable time thereafter, and that the traveler who had been thus defrauded, successfully obtained the redress for his wrongs to which in equity and sober conscience he was justly entitled !

Samuel C. Russ built the first hotel in Waterford. Levi Barnes was the settlers' first preacher. He was accustomed to gather his flock beneath the roof of Mr. Chapman's rude cabin. Some of the settlers were fond of Sunday fishing, and in one of his sermons he administered reproof for this profane practice, by saying: "Pioneers and sinners! I come to call 'you to repentance; and as one so called, I declare to you 'that unless you repent of your sins, you are gone, hook and 'line, bob and sinker!'"

The first district school, and the first Sunday school, were taught by Harriet Caldwell in 1840.

The first justice of the peace in Waterford, was Samuel E. Chapman, who was appointed by Gov. Dodge.

Ira A. Rice was the first Captain of the Waterford militia. Archibald Cooper was first lieutenant. Mr. Chapman had been a captain of light infantry at some time in his life, and had a wooden sword six feet long, but Capt. Rice reduced him to the ranks.

One time, when Mr. Rice was a magistrate, a man was brought before him, charged with stealing sheep. He was tried, and convicted. For want of a statute sufficiently penal, justice Rice sentenced the offender to twenty days hard labor on the highway, and he had to help build a bridge across Muskego creek.

The first bridge across the river was built by all the settlers.

The first white female child born in Waterford was Louisa Markham, born in 1837. John T. Rice, son of Ira A. Rice, is the oldest of the present residents born in the town.

Mr. Merrills made the first cradle and with it, in July 1837, cradled the first winter wheat that grew in Waterford. He bought five bushels of the wheat, which was threshed on the ground with oxen, and cleaned with a hand fan made from boards split out of an oak log. He paid \$3 per bushel for the

wheat, and fifty cents a bushel for carrying it to mill, at Root river. He got from the grinding a little bran, a little fine flour, and a good deal of shorts, but he says it all made good bread!

The first physician who came into Waterford, was Doctor Blanchard, but Dr. G. F. Newell, in May 1844, first made it a permanent location and home.

In May, 1844, a writer in the *Racine Advocate*, says of the village of Waterford, that it contains one hundred and fifty inhabitants, two saw mills, two grocery stores, one public house and business enough for another; that it has a good school, a good state of society, moral and religious, and now and then an abolitionist.

## RAYMOND.

Among the very first settlers in Raymond, were Nathaniel Rogers and his son Joel Rogers. They were living there, on the arrival of Elisha Raymond, Sen., and his son, Alvin Raymond, who made their settlements in the town, on the 22d of September, 1835. Mr. Raymond, Sen., and his son Alvin, came on the vessel "*Agnes Barton*," to Chicago, and from Chicago to Racine, on a little schooner manned by a Frenchman and two Indians. Upon their first tour into Raymond, they found the branch of Root River, which extends into the town, a full, clear stream, with a gravelly bottom, pleasant banks and unbroken current. Mr. Alvin Raymond in the following October, went to the Rapids and labored a year for Wm. See. Mr. Elisha Raymond bought a claim already made, covering a quarter section, for \$25. He immediately rolled up some logs in cabin shape, put on some shakes for a roof, and lived there through the winter of 1835-36.

On the 20th of June, 1836, Seneca Raymond, son of Elisha Raymond Sen., landed at Racine. He came on a vessel from

Oswego, with his own and his father's family, and at once joined his father.

Nelson Bentley also arrived and settled in Raymond, in June, 1836. He drove a double team and wagon all the way from Manlius, N. Y. He and Seneca Raymond left Manlius on the same day, and both arrived at Racine on the same day, one coming by water from Oswego, and the other by his own conveyance, each making the journey in precisely six weeks.

In the summer of 1836, Mr. Raymond, Sr., built a capacious two story log house on his claim. A stone chimney was built in the house from the ground floor, and it gives one a happy feeling to know of such comfort in a wilderness, as was afforded in that house by the great old fashioned fire place with which it was provided.

Timothy Sands, Orson Bump, Reuben Rogers, John Rogers, Joseph Drake and John Brewer settled in Raymond in 1836; Caleb J. True, Niles Bentley, Wm. O. Mills John Jones and Zachariah Sands in '37; Walter Shumway and Leonard Upham, in 1838, and Thomas E. Parmelee and Daniel McPherson in 1839.

On the 12th of May, 1838, Mr. Loring Weber came into Raymond. He and his family remained at the house of Mr. Raymond six weeks after their arrival. When I saw Mr. Weber he could recall none of the settlers yet remaining in Raymond who were there when he came, except Mr. Nelson Bentley and Mr. Timothy Sands.

Mr. Weber made his claim in May, 1838, and continued to occupy it as his homestead, until he recently left the county. He built the first frame house in the town with oak lumber which he procured at the Rapids.

Among the other early settlers, were Philetus Crandall, who settled in 1840; and Christian, Frederick and William Schwartz, who settled in 1837.



Reynolds Scofield, George Scofield, Charles Scofield and Dr. John E. Scofield also settled in Raymond in 1837. Dr. John E. Scofield was the first physician who located in the town.

In September, 1839, James T. Elliot settled in Raymond, Peter Reynolds in '38, and William Elliot in 1840.

Like the early settlers in other parts of the county, those of Raymond were subjected to dangers and inconveniences. They had to grind corn in their pepper mills, for their bread, and suckers, rice and codfish were staple commodities. Some, however, brought supplies with them to meet emergencies. Seneca Raymond brought twenty bushels of potatoes with him, planted them on the 4th of July, 1836, and had a good crop of one hundred and fifty bushels. At one time, also, Mr. Weber and Elisha Raymond, Sr., went south and brought into the settlement thirty head of cattle and fifteen hogs. Later in 1841, Mr. Raymond raised three thousand bushels of grain on one hundred acres of land.

The Indians were troublesome. The Raymond settlement was not far distant from Jambeau's trading post, and the Indians with their thieving propensities and meddlesome dispositions, annoyed the settlers.

On one occasion, Mr. Alvin Raymond fell asleep in the field where he had been cutting grass. He had his rifle by his side and was suddenly awakened. Thirteen ponies with two or three Indians astride of each pony, was the sight which met his eyes as he awoke. He grasped his rifle, and upon their inquiring if he had a squaw and a wigwam, they all went directly to Mr. Elisha Raymond's house. Charles Raymond, son of Alvin Raymond at the age of three years could speak the Indian language.

The first religious society in Raymond was the Congregationalist. Mr. Loring Weber assisted in building the first meeting house.

The first marriage in Raymond was that of Miss Eliza Raymond to Willard Flint, which was celebrated on the 27th day of May, 1838.

The town of Raymond was first called "Black Hawk." by act of the legislature in 1846, but at the same session an act was subsequently passed, reorganizing the town, and giving it the name of Raymond, for the pioneer who had so sturdily established and maintained his settlement in the town.

## YORKVILLE.

Joseph Call was the first settler in Yorkville. He located at what is now known as Ives Grove, in the summer of 1835. He built a log house which he afterwards kept as a tavern.

In the fall of 1835, Nelson A Walker bought a quarter section claim, from Call, at the Grove, immediately went upon it and worked it from March, 1836 until the fall of that year, when his family joined him. Mr. Walker says that when he bought his claim, the only white woman in Yorkville was Mrs. Betsey Call, and there was no house between the Grove and Rochester. He found at the Grove, in addition to Call, Samuel Kerr, Daniel Whitmore and Samuel Daniels, who each had a claim, but lived together.

Mr. Walker lived on his claim until 1838, when he removed to Mt. Pleasant, where he has since resided. It is worthy of mention that when Mr. W. came into the country, he walked from Toledo, Ohio, to Wisconsin.

George Nichols and Charles Nobles were among the earliest settlers in the town, coming in, in 1836. Early in 1837 or late in 1836, Marshall M. Strong and Stephen N. Ives purchased Joseph Call's claim, upon which his tavern was situated, and in May, 1837, sold it to Roland Ives, who then located upon it, his family arriving in May 1838. The grove has ever since been known as "Ives Grove." John Nobles settled at the same place in the spring of 1837.

In 1837, L. S. Blake made a claim of 160 acres in another part of Yorkville, and sold it to Cornelius Brezee, who settled on it with his family in June 1837, and there lived until his death.

Charles C. Wait and Alexander Gray, accompanied by Geo. Nichols came to Yorkville, in 1837. Mr. Wait and Mr. Nichols had made their claims in November, 1836, and located with their families in March, 1837. Mr. Wait, in 1835, came from Vermont, to Troy, N. Y., *via* the Champlain and Troy canal, thence to Buffalo by canal, from Buffalo to Detroit on the steamer *North America*, from Detroit to Niles, Michigan, traveling upon foot, from Niles to St. Joseph, and thence across the lake on a vessel to Chicago; thus, in his own experience, realizing the difficulties and vicissitudes of a journey to the remote west in that early time.

Mr. Wait is yet the owner of one hundred and twenty acres of land in Yorkville, for which he received a patent from the government, and which he has never removed from, conveyed or incumbered.

Reaben Wait, father of Charles C. Wait, settled in Yorkville on the 8th of April, 1838. The first school in the town was taught in Reuben Wait's house, in the winter of 1839 and 40, by Levantia Barnum. There were eight scholars in attendance, and the teacher was employed by Mr. Wait at his personal expense.

Among the other early settlers should also be named Edward Buchan, Robert Bell and Col. F. F. Lincoln who came in 1837. He made his claim in June, '36, then went away, and returned in September, '37. Mr. Lincoln is remembered to have traveled through the settlements in the early days threshing with a flail.

Mr. Collar and the Northways came in 1836, and were among the earliest settlers.

Abram Gilmore, in September, 1840, also settled in Yorkville where he has ever since resided.

In 1838, Arba B. Terrell located at Ives Grove. He was a carpenter by trade, and a great mimic, when amusement among the settlers was desired. He built Elisha Raymond's first barn in Raymond.

In September, 1838, Owen Campbell bought the claim of Nelson A. Walker, paid \$1.000 for it, and purchased the land at the land sales. He came out first with Roland Ives, in 1837, and in the subsequent year settled on his claim as the future home of himself, his wife and ten children, who were thus early in years introduced to the hardy experience of pioneer life. Forty acres of his claim was improved land.

The settlers in this locality were particularly exposed to prairie fires. The grove standing like an island in the prairie, all around it the fires were accustomed to sweep, by night and by day, exposing property and sometimes life to danger.

Dr. Homer Campbell, a son of Owen Campbell, tells me, that although exposed to some privations and dangers, the settlers were contented and happy. For meat they depended chiefly upon game, in the summer season, which was everywhere abundant. They ate their meals from pewter plates, and submitted cheerfully to the inconveniences of their situation.

Religious services on Sunday, were held at the houses of the settlers, when a passing missionary came, or opportunity was otherwise afforded.

Mr. Campbell was a justice of the peace, in his town, seven years, and was familiarly known as Esquire Campbell far beyond his neighborhood.

Ebenezer Heald settled at Ives Grove, in June, 1837. He occupied the claim of Samuel Daniels, until May, 1838, when he made a claim in Dover, where he built a log house, which was burned. This misfortune pushed him further west, and he made a claim and permanently settled in Burlington, where, in 1840, his daughter, now the wife of Mr. John Wilson, of Racine, taught school.



The first white child born in Yorkville, was Mrs. Mary Jane George, daughter of Nelson A. Walker, born May 13th, 1838.

## DOVER.

Capt. John T. Trowbridge settled in Dover, in '36, made his claim, which was long a landmark in the county, and was the first settler. His wife, Mrs Mary Trowbridge, who lived to a ripe old age, and died but a few years since, and his two sons, Stewart and Henry, came with him. He had been a sea captain for twenty-five years, had gone on whaling voyages and been a prisoner at Calcutta and Dartmoor, and after buffeting the storms of ocean from early manhood, he sought a quiet refuge in the wilderness of the west. His two-story log house was a point in the travelers journey, and I scarcely remember the time in boyhood, when "Capt. Trowbridge's place" was not a familiar expression.

He was the first postmaster in the town. He gave to his town the name of Brighton, from the place whence he had come, but in the re-organization of towns, it received the name of Dover.

He was a justice of the peace, and distinguished himself in his office as employing it to promote peace rather than litigation. I believe that he also represented his district in the territorial legislature. The second settler in Dover was Mr. Samuel Ormiston, who came in August, 1836. The first child born in the town was Mr. Ormiston's daughter, Elizabeth, who was born on the 12th of November, 1838.

J. Sellers accompanied Mr. Ormiston in his settlement in Dover, and settled on a claim which is now the farm of Mr. Walter Bryce.

An incident in the experience of Mr. Sellers is worthy of notice. He started one morning to go to Pike Grove, and on his journey called at the house of George Nichols,, in York-

ville. He tarried a few moments, and bidding his friend "good morning," set out on his travels. He journeyed to the end of the day, and at evening found himself again at the house of Mr. Nichols; nor could he be made to believe that he had not arrived at Pike Grove, until he was introduced to the hospitalities of Mr. Nichols' cabin, and was told that on a prairie without roads, guiding posts, or human habitations, a bewildered traveler sometimes made a circuitous journey, arriving at the precise place from which he departed!

Among the other early settlers were Geo. and Rob't McKey, James Ballock, James Graham, William Cruikshank, Aaron Putnam and Joseph Scott, all of whom made their settlements in 1839. Samuel Stenhouse located in the town in 1840.

In the fall of 1838, John Duffus, Archibald Brown and Peter Manny made adjoining claims. In the same year, Robert Beatty and Thomas Green also made claims in Dover.

Mr. Duffus built a shanty on his claim, 10x12. In March, 1839 his daughter, now the wife of Nicholas D. Fratt, and his son, joined him. Mr. Duffus, his son, and Mr. Brown and Mr. Manny lived together in Mr. Duffus' cabin, and Mrs. Fratt kept house for them. She describes the shanty in which they lived as without a floor, and with a roof of boards that was slight protection against the storms. It was like the house that was builded upon the sand; for one day when she was making bread and had placed it in the kettle over the fire, in the corner, for baking, a thunder storm came up, and at the first flash of lightning, followed by a clap of thunder and a gust of wind, the roof of her father's cabin was swept away, "and the rain descended and the floods came," and there was no bread to be eaten in the house that day!

The first marriage celebrated in Dover, was that of Peter Manny to Margaret Duffus.

## NORWAY.

The first settler in the town of Norway was Thomas Drought, who came from Lower Canada, with oxen and wagon, and in September, 1838, made a claim of 160 acres in section No. 12, in the northeast part of the town, where he has ever since resided. He was accompanied in his settlement by a sister, and was afterward followed by other members of the family, and the section of the town where he located has ever since been known as the "Drought Settlement." James Ash came into Norway, in the autumn of '38, and Alfred Thompson and George Drought in '39.

In the summer of 1839, a vessel arrived at Milwaukee, laden with a party of sturdy emigrants, about forty in number, fresh from their homes among the Norway mountains.

They were destined for Illinois, but were prevailed upon to delay their journey, Mr. George Walker, whom good health had made ruddy and corpulent, urging them to settle in Wisconsin, and another person, from Illinois, whose countenance fever and ague had sadly blighted, urging them to carry out their original intention. The healthfulness of climate, as then judged of by the appearance of the representatives of the two states, decided the question with the rugged Norwegian pioneers, and they chose Wisconsin as their future home.— They had listened with wonder to descriptions of the great land beyond the ocean, the strong attachments that bind dwellers among beautiful mountain scenes to their native huts, had lost their power of restraint, and now with brave hearts and determined purpose, they were ready for hard ship, adventure and work!

A few days after landing at Milwaukee, they lost their faithful interpreter, who was accidentally drowned in the river; but furnished with guides, a party of the emigrants set out upon explorations, and soon found themselves within the

vicinity of Muskego lake. It was a dry season, and the marshes resembled prairies in their appearance, surrounded by forests. Cabins soon sprung up on the hill sides around the marshes, but the bright hopes of the settlers were quenched when the spring floods came and converted the promising prairie land into lakes and morasses. This caused a removal of the colony further south and west. Mr. Halver Thompson settled on the banks of Wind lake; John Nelson, another of the party, settled on an adjoining claim, which he improved considerably, and from which he subsequently removed to Kos Kenong prairie. An American, by the name of Flether also located in the vicinity of these settlements.

In the spring of 1840, Soren Backe and Johannes Johansen, men of intelligence and means, who had come from Norway, the preceding fall, and spent the winter in Illinois, visited this region. They were looking for a place to establish a colony. The cluster of beautiful lakes, the clear streams of living water swarming with fish, and the forests abounding with game, which they found in the town of Norway, satisfied their desires. A cabin was built on the bank of one of the lakes; reports of the country were sent to their friends across the sea, and in the fall of 1840, Even Hansen, known also as Evan Hansen Heg, arrived with a large company of emigrants and settled around the lakes. Backe having considerable capital which he invested in a large tract of land, sold parcels to the poorer colonists upon favorable terms, In a short time the colony increased in numbers, and became the center of Scandinavian emigration to the state, and Johannes Johansen, Soren Backe and Evan Hansen were regarded the founders of the first permanent Scandinavian colony in Wisconsin. Among the other colonists were Sivert Ingerbretsen, Knud Arslarksen, Johannes Evensen, Ole Hogensen, Gurder Gurtesen, Niels H. Narum, John Larsen, Hans Jacobsen, Peter Jacobsen and Ole Andersen.



A trading point was established on Mr. Heg's farm. An excavation was made in a large Indian mound, and roofed over and fitted up into commodious apartments for families. Johannes Johansen received the appellation of "King," and here the colonists recieved their supplies and mail, and the first Scandinavian newspaper in the country was published, called, "Nord Lyset," —Northern Light—and edited by J. D. Raymert. This was also the birthplace of John P. Jacobsen, to whom I am indebted for information concerning the establishment of the first Scandinavian settlement in Norway.

Evan Hansen was the father of Hans C. and Ole Heg. His name as inscribed on his gravestone, is Evan Hansen Heg, and I am told that the name Heg was derived from the place where the family lived in Norway, or the farm which they possessed, and which was known as "Headquarters."

A log church was built at the central point of settlement, by the colonists, in 1845. The settlers were a religious people, and of the Lutheran belief. In the church yard, where the log church was built, many of the original founders of the colony were buried, and here, rest the remains of HANS C. HEG, a gallant soldier, who fell fighting the battles of his adopted country.

The town of Norway was created by an act of the territorial legislature, on the 11th of February, 1847, and the people who gave to the town its name, and who have so successfully built up the colony originally projected by those I have named, have distinguished themselves, as among the most prudent, industrious, and thrifty citizens of the county.

## CONCLUSION.

And here my fragmentary and imperfect narrative closes, and I hasten to a conclusion.

But little more than thirty years ago, the first wave of civilization broke upon the borders of Wisconsin. It was then a trackless wilderness. Now, flourishing cities, towns and villages are sprinkled over her surface, and what was once her wildest prairies, the returning summer covers with ripe and yellow harvests.

The migration and settlement of the borderers, whose experiences you this day recall, reminds one of the history of ancient times, when "Abram went up out of Egypt, he and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him into the south. And Abram said unto Lot; 'Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me.' And Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan."

So these borderers seem once to have lifted up their eyes and looked abroad upon this new world, and chosen for their home, "the wilderness, which has been made to blossom like a rose."



