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History
of the
Town of Mequon

OZAUKEE COUNTY, WISCONSIN



BROUGHT DOWN TO ABOUT 1870

Publication authorized by the Mequon Club
as a civic enterprise.

Author:

WALTER D. CORRIGAN, SR.
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Cedarburg News Print



THIENSVILLE MILL

1873

HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF MEQUON

INTRODUCTION

This history of the Town of Mequon is sponsored by the Mequon Club as a civic enterprise. It takes us shortly beyond the end of the war between the states. It presents the results of a search for the facts relative to the pioneers who conquered the forests and laid the foundation for what we have today. It was thought necessary to do this now to preserve some record of early events. Those who follow us can go the rest of the way. This production does not carry us to the time of that event, but it should be noted that the Village of Thiensville was organized October 11, 1910 out of territory within the township. Therefore much is to be said about Thiensville because it was part of the town as of the days we have researched and written.

This work has involved a tremendous amount of research, involving many hours of hard work. Mindful of my great responsibility to the Mequon Club and as a citizen of the town, I have tried to give to the work an honest endeavor to discover the truth and record it so it will be available to our generation, and helpful to those who follow. I deeply acknowledge the helpfulness of A. D. Bolens, Paul Seyfert, Marguerite Hoffman, P. W. Dean, Edward Dineen, Charles Dineen, Louis Lemke, Rev. Father Zingsheim, Elmer Schreiber, and Carl F. Wilbert; also those connected with the State Historical Society, the Milwaukee Public Library, the Milwaukee Public Museum, the members of the Civic Committee of the Mequon Club, and many individual members of the club, all of whom have steered me to the discovery of useful material. I have found this work intensely interesting—so much so that I have found myself on occasion side-tracked from my professional work. I hope I have reached accurate results. It has been well said that history is rarely written truthfully until one hundred years after the event. This is because historians remote from the events considered are likely to be free from the prejudice of the time concerned. Prejudiced writers do not write accurate history. While I am far from being a historian, I hope this humble effort may find some favor and approval, and serve some public good.

Walter D. Corrigan, Sr.,
Chairman of the Civic Committee
of the Mequon Club.

THE ORIGIN AND MEANING OF THE NAME "MEQUON"

The name "Mequon", originally "Miguan", is Indian. The authorities indicate that it is of Ojibwa (Chippewa) origin. This may seem a bit strange in view of the fact that the township was populated largely by Menomonees and Pottawatomies. The name may be of earlier origin. These lands were formerly occupied by some other tribes. It is likely there was some tribal relationship, or some common origin or possible connection of our earlier Indians with the Ojibwas (Chippewas). It may be accounted for by what is stated by distinguished authority, that the Indians about this section also included Renegadoes from a number of tribes, among them Sacs, Foxes, Chippewas, Menomonees and Ottawas. They were all of Algonquin stock, which may partly account for their mingling.

Some authority states the Indian word "Miguan" means feather, but this is not the exact word for feather. There is better authority that "Miguan" means "ladle." We gravely doubt the view of those who claim it means "feather," because the Indian word for "feather" is mequin." "Mequin" was also the name of a famous Indian crack shot of the Pottawatomie tribe. If "Miguan" does not mean "feather," then the only definition left is "ladle." This meaning is plausible because the river at that point is shaped like an Indian ladle.

We must briefly refer to the fact that it is said in our community that the word now "Mequon" means "pigeon." This cannot be, because the Indian word for pigeon is "Meeme," or "Mi-nee," or "Mi-mi-yo" in different tribal languages. Whichever the word is, it is not much like "Miguan," the original Indian word out of which "Mequon" has developed. The idea that "Mequon" means "pigeon" may be accounted for by the fact that the creek at Mequon had two names—"Pigeon" and "Miquansippi."

It sustains my conclusion to turn to the name of our nearby city, Mukwanago. The original Indian name as it developed was "Me-quon-i-go", from "Me-quan-i-go-ick." This name signifies a "ladle". The bend which exists in each stream known by such a name resembles a ladle. The fact that an Indian ladle is a very crooked utensil, having the handle turned quite over the bowl, is convincing that our "Mequon" was so named because the bend of the river resembled an Indian ladle. The change of "Miguan" to "Mequon" is not accounted for, but probably is the result of translation.

THE PRONUNCIATION

The "i" must have had the sound of our long "e", because the Indian pronunciation, according to the authorities, was "Mee-gwaun." The Indian word "Minong" was pronounced "Mee-nong." In the Chippewa language "i" is generally pronounced as a long "e", as in the word "scene." The "Mee" indicates the sound of the long "e". Since but one "e" is now used in place of the original "i", and the "i" was pronounced as "ee", it seems positive that the proper pronunciation of the first syllable is "Mee". There is not much reason, therefore, for the pronunciation "Mek" now commonly indulged, except possibly that long and continued mis-pronunciation may result in the claim that the pronunciation has been changed by common consent.

We think, however, it is a very erroneous pronunciation to pronounce it "Mek-won." This makes the "e" a short "e", whereas the original "i", pronounced "ee", obviously makes a long sound. Our common pronunciation gives the "e" a short and abrupt sound. The "k" sound is introduced without any license which the writer can find justified. The "guan" in the original Indian word was pronounced "kwon." The common pronun-

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ciation gives harshness to the whole word. It would seem that since the pronunciation of the original Indian word is "Me-kwon," that the first syllable is to be pronounced "Mee". It is apparent that the Indian pronunciation of the last syllable "guan" must have been to disregard any sound of the letter "q", for the letter "q" is not there.

Scholars with whom we have come in contact consider the proper pronunciation as "Mee-kwon", whereas the common pronunciation which now prevails puts the accent on the first syllable, and gives it the harsh sound of "Mek". In seeking the proper pronunciation, some consideration must be given to the original meaning of the word. Ladle is by no means a word of harshness. Further consideration should be given to the softness employed by the Indians in the pronunciation of their words. The word is one upon which it is said by high authority that the Indians placed no accent on either syllable.

The error in pronunciation, if indeed it be an error, undoubtedly arises because the spelling of the Indian word "Miguan" (pronounced "Mee-kwon") has been changed to "Mequon." "E" substituted for "i" in the first syllable makes plausible the erroneous application of the rule that a single "e" is to be given the short sound. Thus the changed spelling of the syllable "guan" to "quon" (pronounced "kwon" by the Indians) changes the Indian word and makes plausible the application of the rule that "guon" is to be pronounced as "kwon." However, this changed spelling of the last syllable seems to have had no effect on the pronunciation.

We believe the Indian word, though the spelling is changed, should still be pronounced as the Indians pronounced it. No new word was created or intended to be created. The name was not changed, though the spelling was. "Mee" is not to be pronounced "Mek." There is no apparent dispute about the last syllable, though its spelling has been changed. It would seem, therefore, that the proper pronunciation is "Mee-kwon." A. D. Bolens of Port Washington, the person most entitled to be called county historian, is definitely of this view. He is upward of ninety years old, and a man of great ability, who has made a comprehensive study of the history of this part of the state.

In fairness to those who err in the pronunciation, it should be noted that there is authority that "Meq", when a syllable, is pronounced as "Mek." That may be the occasion for the "Mek" of the common pronunciation of our time. But to do this we must consider that "Meq" is a syllable, whereas it is not. The "Me" is the "Mi" of the original name, and "Mi" is pronounced as "Mee". Then it must be acknowledged that the "q" displacing the original "g" in the old Indian name "Miguan" is a part of the syllable as now spelled "quon", originally spelled "guan", and that has always been pronounced "kwon." The "q" or the "g", whichever we use, is no part of the first syllable. It must be a part of the second syllable in order to give us the pronunciation "kwon." Furthermore, if we cut the "q" or the original "g" off of the last syllable and put it in the first syllable, we have a meaningless, unfathomable, unpronounceable second syllable of the original Indian word, for it would then be "uon" or "uan."

It is a rule of Indian pronunciation that when the double vowel "ee" occurs, the syllable should have a thin, prolonged accent. Note the pronunciation of the "kee" in Milwaukee, and the "kee" in "Muskeego." We recognize that the original Indian word we are dealing with had the syllable "Mi", not "Mee", but the guide to pronunciation directs that the "Mi" be pronounced as "Mee", hence the "Mi" or the "Me" is to be pronounced as "Mee."

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THE EARLY GEOGRAPHY

The Town of Mequon was within the original boundaries of Washington County as established by the act of the territorial legislature December 7, 1836. Washington County then consisted of all the territory now embraced in Ozaukee and Washington Counties. This whole territory, particularly from the high hills to our west to Lake Michigan, was covered with a heavy growth of timber. This was particularly true of the Town of Mequon. On the high ground the timber consisted of oak, maple, birch, beech, elm, basswood, and butternut, with occasional clusters of poplar, ironwood, ash and sumach, and bordering the streams and ponds there were alders, willows and creeping water vines. Many of the swamps contained tamarack and cedar. Wild grapes grew profusely, and in sections which had been invaded by fire or severe winds blackberries and raspberries abounded.

This territory had much game, and the rivers and streams were full of fish. The game consisted of deer, bear, gray squirrels, occasionally a black squirrel, foxes, wildcats, raccoon, partridge, ducks, and other water fowl, and pigeons. At certain seasons of the year the pigeons were so thick that they darkened the sun, and their numbers were such that in some instances they broke down the limbs of trees. There were also wild bees, mink, muskrats, and beaver.

The Milwaukee River was quite different in those days than the sewage saturated, slow current stream we have now. It was then known as a rapid river, having many falls and rapids, and in those early days was one of the loveliest streams in the west, capable of furnishing, as it did furnish later, valuable water power. This whole country was said to have been honeycombed with underground water courses which gushed out of the ground in then never failing springs on every hand. We have some remaining evidences of this today. The lakes and streams were spring fed.

The lands in this section were in 1679 and for a long time thereafter owned more or less in common by the Sacs, Foxes and Pottawatomes. Indian lodges were established along the shore of Lake Michigan. There are Indian mounds near the lake shore. There was at one time an Indian village where Thiensville now stands. Indians were in possession of the forests of this region. Later the Pottawatomes occupied the land west of the Milwaukee River, and the territory east of the river and to the lake was occupied by Menomonees. All this territory was somewhat mixed with others, as has been noted. This was the situation in 1831. The title which the Indians had to the lands in this section was completely extinguished by 1838, though the Indians frequented this general neighborhood for many years thereafter. Like other human beings, some of them sought their old homes for many years. The title of the Menomonees was extinguished by a treaty made February 8, 1831, and the title of the Pottawatomes extinguished by a treaty made September 26, 1833, though they reserved possession and occupancy for three years thereafter. However, the treaty was not ratified until February 21, 1835, and their rights did not expire until February 21, 1838.

It was by virtue of these treaties that white men gained the proprietary right to take up land. It is observed that the country was open to white men for the attaining of land in the territory east of the river about seven years before it was open west of the river. This accounts for the earlier taking up of land in the region east of the river.

When the opportunities to take land first opened to the whites about 1835, speculators, as usual, were first on the spot and picked from the lake shore fractional quarters. The rest of the lands were later picked out in large part by actual and well intending settlers.

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THE WHITE MAN COMES

The first visit of white men to the shore of Lake Michigan in this vicinity was in August and September, 1673. This was by Louis Joliet and Jacques Marquette, a Jesuit priest, with three other companions. It is not definitely known whether they landed or camped on the shore of what is now the Town of Mequon, but they coasted that shore and are known to have landed and camped within this county. In 1769 La Salle, with thirteen men, among them Father Hennepin, paddled along this shore. Their objects were to convert the Indians to the Catholic faith, and to establish trading and military posts. On this trip they were confronted with raging storms and driven ashore at many places. They finally suffered a wreck not far north of Milwaukee, and probably on the shore of what is now Mequon.

As early as 1825 a herd of 99 cattle was driven along the length of the lake shore through the Town of Mequon. They were en route from southern Illinois to Fort Howard. The leader of that enterprise was William Stephen Hamilton, son of Alexander Hamilton.

The first roads were surveyed by the government soon after the Memomonee treaty of 1831. The Green Bay Road seems to be the first one surveyed within the Town of Mequon. That survey was made in 1832 and 1833. It is probable that the present Green Bay Road through the Town of Mequon is almost exactly now where it was when it was first surveyed. This road was first merely blazed. It was not cut out through the Town of Mequon until about 1836 or 1837, perhaps as late as 1839, for there is one record that in 1839 John Weston and Timothy Wooden took a contract to cut it through. Mr. Graves helped. That may, however, have been supplemental work. It was then grubbed out two rods in width, but no bridges were built except the most primitive kind. This road was so difficult that it took five days to carry the mail from Chicago to Green Bay. A wheeled vehicle could not be operated north of Milwaukee. Before that, the only passageway through the township was well trodden Indian trails. Up until 1844 those who were settling the region usually followed these trails left by the Indians. The Cedarburg Road was of much later origin. It was constructed by a corporation organized by special legislative act, and at least in part became a toll road and continued so down to about 1912. The toll gate was one and one-half miles south of Mequon village. In the early days the toll was one cent per horse per mile.

THE EARLY SETTLERS AND SETTLEMENTS

The survey of the land within the Town of Mequon was made from 1834 to 1836. The head surveyor was named Brink. His assistant was a Mr. Follett.

Between the years 1833 and 1841 this township began to show signs of white race settlement. The earliest settlers came mostly from the state of New York and from England. These were followed by Germans and Irish and some others.

In 1833 Joseph Wood and his brother Ephraim Wood, Peter Turck, Reuben Wells, Isham Day, and several Irish families made settlements in the town. Isaac Bigelow and Daniel Strickland settled in 1836. The Town of Mequon was then a dense wilderness. The pioneers followed the Indian trail north of Milwaukee until they reached Miguansippi, sometimes called

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Pigeon Creek, where they erected rude shanties. That may occasion the idea some have that "Mequon" means "pigeon."

The first entry of land made in the Town of Mequon is said to have been made by G. S. Hubbard. A few speculative entries were made in 1836-37. A few settlers came from 1833 to 1837, and many settlements were made between 1837 and 1840, but the town did not generally fill with settlers until about 1841-42.

The Mequon pioneers came here when not even a wagon thoroughfare existed. There were nothing but Indian trails to guide them through the dense forest. There was no market for their produce. They made their own candles and soap. Traffic was difficult, sickness prevalent, and money scarce. These pioneers were workers. They had to be to survive and to thrive as they did.

The first postmaster within this township was John Weston. He maintained the post office in 1836-37 in a little log house near or in the present Village of Thiensville. It was named Mequon River post office, and remained under that name until 1883.

An interesting story is told by James Wood Woodworth of his trip from Milwaukee immediately following the 16th of June, 1837. He was in search of the Isaac Bigelow and Daniel Strickland homes. Bigelow and Strickland had moved the winter before into the Town of Mequon. Woodworth tells that he followed the trail for fourteen or fifteen miles, calling at two shanties on the way occupied by Taylor Haverlin and John Weston. The next shanty on the left of the trail was then occupied by Isham Day, who had a wife and family. Mrs. Day was a niece of Bigelow. There he got final directions as to how to reach Bigelow, and thence traveled two miles north to a blazed tree which showed the course and distance to Bigelow's. This marked tree indicated that one and one-third miles to the east and by the river would be found Isaac Bigelow's. Woodworth made it late that night, but his brother did not fare so well, and had to crawl out on a tree which leaned over the water to escape the wolves. Daniel Strickland and Isaac Bigelow were the first settlers by the river, Bigelow on Section 12, Town 9, and Daniel Strickland on Section 36, Town 10, the latter being just north of the Mequon town line. Woodworth, who was married March 1, 1838, claims his marriage was the first one to occur in the county. He reports that the first male child born in the Town of Mequon was Gideon Bigelow, and the second was Watson P. Woodworth.

Woodworth tells that in the summer of 1838 he and his wife reaped their first crop of wheat with case knives, and in the fall he made a trip with a borrowed ox to the mill at Kilbourntown, now part of Milwaukee, and thence to Hart's mill on the Menomonee, where he succeeded in getting his wheat ground. This is said to have been the first grist of wheat taken to a mill from the Town of Mequon.

In 1838 Peter Turck set up a sawmill. The next sawmill was erected by Reuben Wells. He also established a grist mill. Thien built the first regular flouring mill in the Town of Mequon. John Weston, the first postmaster, had entered 160 acres which he sold to John Willett. John Weston then bought a quarter section in what is now the Village of Thiensville. This he sold to John Henry Thien. Mail was delivered two or three times per week by a carrier on horseback.

The Bonniwells, consisting of an aged mother, with six sons and one daughter, settled in the township in 1839. The first schoolhouse (on the present Bonniwell school site) was erected in their settlement, and within

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one year after their arrival. In the same year, 1839 or in the early part of 1840, Edward H. Janssen, Henry Heisen and John Hansen made a clearing. Edward H. Janssen was a well educated German. More will be said of him later.

William F. Opitz, who was the first president of the Old Settlers Club, stated in a public address that it was in the spring of 1839 that he concluded to leave Germany. His party consisted of himself and wife, his father and mother, and Adolph Zimmermann and his wife (the latter being a sister of Opitz). On arriving in Milwaukee they proceeded at once to prospect the country. It resulted in their settlement August, 1839 in the Town of Mequon. They entered five 80 acre pieces, of which Opitz took a quarter section, Adolph Zimmermann a quarter section, and Opitz's father 80 acres. This land lay near the Green Bay Road. This party was the first Germans, with the possible exception of Janssen and Heisen, to come to this township. The inhabitants of the township before that were wandering Indians who had lost their land rights by treaties, and a few English and American settlers, many of them referred to above. There was a Densbrey place on the town line, owned by a Mr. Smith. The next settler north on the Green Bay Road was Taylor Heavilon, a place later owned by William Jaeger. The next place was owned by John Willett. Farther north was a William Worth, and George Manley, and then the place then occupied by John Weston, later sold to John Henry Thien. William Worth donated the school site now in the village of Mequon. The foregoing were all the settlers of the Town of Mequon until the later part of the year 1839. Strange to say, these early settlers might have purchased so-called canal lands, now located right within the limits of the city of Milwaukee, at \$2.50 per acre. Their lack of foresight, if it was such, caused them to travel fifteen to twenty miles into the wilderness because they could there purchase lands at \$1.25 per acre.

Then followed a settlement of Saxons known as the Saxe-Altenburg settlement, under the leadership of Andrew Geidel, and three bachelors, Ed Jalpen, H. Haypen, and John Thomson, and Michael Mueller, Andrew Lanzendorf, W. Schumann, and Gottfried Baer, who settled on lands near the then William Worth place on the Milwaukee River. This was followed in the fall of 1839 by the immigration of forty-three families, consisting of 192 persons of a Lutheran congregation under the leadership of Captain Heinrich von Rohr and Lieutenant William Vogenitz. This congregation took up nearly the whole of the western part of the Town of Mequon. They first sheltered themselves in tents. This colony was known as the Freistadt colony. The influx of Germans, however, did not fully set in until two years later, when they commenced to swarm into this territory in great numbers.

These Freistadt immigrants were North German people. They had sent an able and alert agent, Captain Heinrich von Rohr, in advance of their coming. The primary cause of this movement was religious persecution, the suppressing of worship according to the old Lutheran ritual, and the imprisonment of a number of non-conformist pastors. Captain Heinrich van Rohr came from a prominent family having a military career of about 200 years, and an intimate acquaintance and association with the sovereign family. He was a man of great ability and the highest standing. He considered the state church was a great departure from Lutheranism as

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he understood it. He asserted his right to worship as he chose, with the result that he was deprived of his military rank, and was finally thrown in prison. He escaped and finally fled to America, and became the leader of a great movement of Germans similarly wronged in respect to religion who sought the famed religious liberty of America. It is said that many of his descendants have been marked leaders in many parts of this country.

The land selected was high rolling land, heavily timbered, well watered, and neighbored by an extensive marsh on the public domain which would furnish free hay and pasture. The nearness of water power for saw and grist mills was considered, as were the prospects of Milwaukee becoming a considerable metropolis.

The first church services in the Freistadt colony were held in a log cabin church in the winter of 1839-1840. In the spring of 1840 the colony erected a building for church and school. The building was 30x20. This was the first Lutheran church erected in Wisconsin. The material for it cost \$45.50, and the labor was contributed by the congregation. Within a few months a site was chosen for church school and parsonage purposes. It was paid for by assessment of one shilling per acre against members of the congregation. That site is still in possession of the congregation. It was the anchorage for the whole settlement.

Rev. Krause came to this congregation September 26, 1841. A parsonage for him was constructed and was occupied by him June 23, 1842. On November 7, 1843 the congregation resolved to build a stone church. This enterprise was under the leadership of Johann Knuth, Carl Wille, Michael Heuer, Frederick Schoessow, Michael Helm, Joachim Pipkorn, Carl Hilgendorf, Michael Bellin, Wilhelm Klug, Carl Friedrich Klug, Johann Goetsch, Johann Ramthun, August Radue, Joachem Wendt, Franz Lemke, Friedrich Barthel, Friedrich Hilgendorf, Benjamin Schoen, and Christian Knuth.

This church was dedicated June 1, 1845. The cost of the church was \$78 for material. The congregation furnished the labor.

The men in this settlement immediately declared their intention of becoming American citizens. Seventy of them signed their petitions in a single day.

Edward H. Janssen, above mentioned, was the first German who taught school in the town. He became a member of the first constitutional convention, was two terms a register of deeds, and in 1851 and again in 1853 was elected state treasurer. He gave little personal attention to the affairs of that office, and owing to the infidelity of an assistant it was found at the close of his term that there was a default of \$32,000. He was finally exonerated of any claim of personal wrongdoing, but he suffered greatly in mind and sacrificed the hard earnings of his pioneer days in making up the loss and in saving the state harmless. He was further vindicated by being elected and serving as county superintendent of schools for many years.

Among the early Irish settlers were the Dockery, Reynolds, Desmond, Clare, Corcoran, Murphy and Flynn families. Later came the O'Learys, the Doyles, Dineens and the Conophys.

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The Germans, Yankees, English and Irish settlers all furnished many forceful, public-spirited persons who were amongst the early settlers.

Among others who were prominent in county affairs during the early days are the following: F. W. Horn (1841), who later apparently moved to Cedarburg, and who served several terms in the legislature; A. Zimmermann and W. Zimmermann, who conducted a store; Carl Zimmermann, who was once Town clerk; William Voegnitz, Henry Blaser, W. F. Jahn, and several of the Bonniwells. Frederick Becker came from Saxony in 1842.

The names of other early settlers, some of whom now have descendants living in this community, are noted as follows:

C. G. Schneider, who settled in Freistadt in 1842 and became postmaster in 1859.

Stephen Loomer, a Nova Scotian, came in 1837. He at one time sort of held open house, and his place was known as the "Farmer's Inn."

Adam Jochem, who was born in Mequon in 1845. His parents were Adam and Gertrude Jochem, who apparently settled on Section 28 in 1840.

John W. Milbrath, who settled in 1842, and held various offices later on.

Louis C. Wagner, who settled in 1849, and was a cigar manufacturer.

A. Zaun, who was born in Mequon in 1845. His parents had settled here in 1840, apparently on Section 21.

C. W. Lehmann, who resided here for a few years commencing in 1854. He later resettled in Cedarburg. The family ultimately dropped the last "n" of the original name.

Edward Solomon, who afterward became governor of the state, had charge of a private school in Mequon a part of the year 1850.

The Becker family was one of the prominent ones of this community.

Henry Haas, who came in 1855, and operated at some time the Mequon Tavern.

August Hodann, in 1864, who was one of the later proprietors of the "Mequon House" in the present village of Mequon. He was once town treasurer.

William F. Jahn, who settled in 1844, was once postmaster, and later held various offices.

During this period there were others, among them Pipkorn, Bublitz, Thiermann, Herziger, Seyfert, William Davis, Jacob Brazilton, James, Joseph and Ephraim Woodworth, Willit, Upham, Isaac Lyon, who built a dam; Cowan, who ran Cowan's Tavern and was a mail carrier; Joseph Amley, Cyrus and Jonathan Clark, Jesse Hubbard, Peter Rattery, Hooper, Kurtz, Armbruster, and others.

Two of the old settlers already mentioned, William F. Opitz and Adolph Zimmermann, built what was known as the Mequon Brewery in 1857. In the early days this neighborhood was blessed with a good woman who went by the name of "Tante" Schwartz, who did the midwifery work in the neighborhood. She accepted only what was offered.

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INDIAN RELATIONS

There was very little hostility between the early settlers and the Indians. It seemed that the Indians desired rather to add to their comfort than to annoy the settlers by hostilities. Solomon Juneau is generally credited for this. His excellent management in respect to his relations with the Indians established friendly feeling between the races. Juneau was much beloved by the Indians and by the early settlers of this township and of this vicinity. It appears that no man other than William Penn ever wielded in the settlement of America a more powerful influence or established better relationships with the Indians. He dealt justly with the Indians, and was regarded by the Indians as the agent of the great father at Washington.

THE PIERS BUILT INTO THE LAKE

At an early day two piers were erected off the shore of the Town of Mequon to be used for shipping wood before the highways were serviceable. They extended 300 feet into the lake, and were built on piles which were driven into the lake bottom. These were used up until about 1860, when the roads got better. One of these piers was built and owned by Thiessenhusen in Section 20, the other one by Bernhard in Section 5.

THE COUNTY SEAT AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT

It is a tradition in this community that the court house of what was then Washington County was once located on the Bonniwell place on what is now Wauwatosa Avenue, the Bonniwell house being a short distance south of where the Bonniwell school was then and is now located. This tradition probably arises from numerous facts which we shall record.

Though in 1836 the seat of justice had been established at what was then known as Wisconsin City, near the present city of Port Washington, that place was very remote from the settlements then existing. Hence the legislature provided that the county commissioners might hold their meetings at the house of William T. Bonniwell. Pursuant to that provision, on November 18, 1840 the first board of county commissioners met in the house of William T. Bonniwell. At that meeting William T. Bonniwell of this township was elected clerk of the board.

On February 24, 1841 a special meeting of the commissioners was held at William T. Bonniwell's house, and the road districts were then laid out, some of which were in Mequon. At that meeting William T. Bonniwell was appointed road supervisor of the district which at least composed a portion of the Town of Mequon. It was at one of these meetings in 1841 that the first application for a liquor license within this territory was presented October 11, 1841. The application was by Samuel Drake, but it was postponed and never acted on. However, on October 18, 1841, seven days later, John Weston was granted a license to keep a tavern.

It is to be noted that as early as 1842 the tax levy for the whole of the then Washington County was but \$2,100.23, and the total amount of school money raised for the whole county was \$257.49. It appears that on October 3, 1842, one Scheil Cass and one Samuel Place were paid \$3 each for the scalps of three wolves. The first coroner's inquest held within the county was on October 3, 1842 over the dead body of one Jacob Kloppinburgh.

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December 26, 1842, one Henry T. Bonniwell, one of our fellow townsmen, was allowed \$3 for killing a wolf. The first poor commissioner in Washington County was William T. Bonniwell. The county commissioners allowed him \$20 in pork and flour to be distributed among the poor of the whole county.

As early as March 31, 1843, German people were so rare, except for the Freistadt community, that a man named Egry was referred to in the public records as "Dutchman Egry", who it seems was in distress, and was furnished some provisions. In fairness to the Germans, it should be noted that some people of other nationalities were on the poor list and probably shared the \$20 worth of provisions.

The first voting precinct within the Town of Mequon was the house of William T. Bonniwell. This was established April 4, 1843, and the judges of election appointed were James Bonniwell, Samuel McEvony, and Fred W. Horn, all of whom lived within the present Town of Mequon. October 21, 1843 our fellow townsman, William T. Bonniwell, was appointed register of deeds of the county. On January 1, 1844, the county commissioners in meeting at Hamburg Village, which is now Grafton, granted John Henry Thien of Mequon a license to keep a tavern. On July 17, 1844 Fred W. Horn, then of the Town of Mequon, petitioned the county commissioners for the building of a bridge across the Milwaukee River in the Town of Mequon, between Sections 23 and 26. The petition was granted, and the contract let to Reuben Wells for \$600, to be finished by February 1, 1845. This bridge was at the Village of Thiensville.

Up to 1841, almost the entire population of the whole of then Washington County was within the three townships in the southeastern part of the county. The Town of Mequon probably then had by far the largest population.

The first named supervisor of the Town of Mequon was E. H. Janssen, who served from 1846 to 1850, inclusive. He was chairman of the board of county commissioners for the session of 1849-50.

The Town of Mequon was incorporated in 1846 under the town system, and consisted of exactly the same territory that it contains today, except for the Village of Thiensville.

By 1850 the population drift is indicated by the fact that the German families in the town numbered 310 and the Irish 38. The Yankees and English were so few they were not noted.

The act of the territorial legislature December 7, 1836 established the county seat at Wisconsin City, now Port Washington. This was an empty honor. None of the functions of county government were there assumed at that early date. The act organizing the original Washington County was passed August 13, 1840, and by that time Wisconsin City had fallen into decline and was nearly deserted, but thrifty neighborhoods had been established in Mequon and Grafton. The organizing act provided for a vote on the location of a county seat, but it also provided that the

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county commissioners might hold their sessions in the house of William T. Bonniwell. While the first vote on the location of a county seat determined on Hamburg (now Grafton), the honors for Grafton were as empty as those had been for Wisconsin City, because the county commissioners continued to hold their meetings and transact the county business at the house of William T. Bonniwell until January 1, 1845, under the authority of the act of February 19, 1841. Grave doubts had arisen concerning the legality of the proceedings held at the Bonniwell house after Hamburg had been designated as the county seat, but that was settled by an act passed January 20, 1844 ratifying the acts of the commissioners, and determining that the commissioners might meet where they wished. It appears that no court proceedings whatever ever took place in the Bonniwell house. The acts relating to county government done there were the acts at sessions of the county commissioners, who met there as a matter of convenience, though their acts were both authorized and again finally approved by law. Therefore, for some purposes it may be considered that the Bonniwell home was a **quasi** seat of county government, but it was never actually declared to be the county seat. Nevertheless, it has the honor of having been a place for the administration of about all the county government that existed during that period from February 19, 1841 to about 1845.

THE CONTEST OVER THE COUNTY SEAT

While the Town of Mequon only had a small part in the contest over the location of the county seat of Washington County, it was a contest so sharply fought out, and in such bitterness that it ought to be mentioned briefly in any attempt at writing a history of the town. The location of the county seat had been kicked about, as already appears, as between Wisconsin City and Hamburg (Grafton), and, in a **quasi** sort of way, the Bonniwell home. An act of the legislature of January 20, 1846, which erected the townships and established the county government more definitely, provided for a vote on the subject of the county seat, at which the location of the county farm was chosen as the county seat. It was by a plurality of votes only. Because the county farm had no buildings, and there were a large number of indefinite votes for such places as the "center of the county" and "good location near the center", those votes were all thrown out, and Port Washington was left with 164 votes, Cedarburg with 100, Hamburg (now Grafton) 74, West Bend 12. About this time movements were on foot for both West Bend and Hartford. This contest then resulted in the passage of a legislative act January 25, 1847 making the Village of Washington, now Port Washington, the county seat for five years. Port Washington was so remote from the center of population that its choice was generally very unsatisfactory.

Bad blood was stirred up everywhere on the subject. As a result, the legislature provided for a new election on the county seat by an act passed August 8, 1848. A vote was taken on that question September 25, 1848, as the result of which Cedarburg had 570 votes, West Bend 336, and Port Washington 697. There were other scattering votes. No place had anything better than a small plurality, and a second vote was taken November 7, 1848, resulting in the following: Cedarburg 944; West Bend 1,117; Port Washington 640. Again there was nothing better than a small plurality,

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and a third vote was taken January 1, 1849, at which Cedarburg received 1,643 votes, West Bend 1,111 votes, and 986 votes were cast in opposition to either of them. This vote resulted in a court contest which showed there had been ballot box stuffing, particularly in Belgium, Port Washington and Grafton, which was then much allied with Cedarburg. Scarce a town escaped imputations from some quarter of illegal action concerning that election. The controversy was thrown back into the legislature, and on February 8, 1850 an act was passed cutting Washington County into two counties by an east and west dividing line, creating the county of Tuskola, embracing the two southern tiers of towns, which of course included Mequon. This act made Cedarburg the county seat of the new county of Tuskola, and Port Washington the county seat of what remained of the then Washington County.

However, the legislature referred the determination of whether that division should take place to the people of the newly established county. The vote resulted in an affirmative vote of 275 and a negative vote of 716. It is to be noted that Mequon voted 285 no and 49 yes.

That plan having been thus defeated, the legislature on February 13, 1852 provided Grafton should be the county seat, but provided a vote might be taken for the removal to West Bend, which resulted in a vote of 789 for West Bend and 2,496 against. The vote of Mequon was 310 against West Bend, and 33 for. An exciting controversy then arose regarding the legality of that election. The matter again came up in the legislature. Different sections of the county sent large delegations of lobbyists. The legislature was heartily sick of the imbroglio. It was out of patience with the fraudulent and illegal voting and ballot box stuffing which had been going on throughout this contest. The Port Washington and the West Bend lobby combined in an effort to divide the county by a north and south line, and this was successful. This resulted in the establishment in 1853 of Ozaukee County as it is at the present day. There was very great dissatisfaction with this plan. The matter went to the Supreme Court, and that court decided the act so dividing Washington County into the two counties was constitutional. As the result of the controversy there then occurred the abduction of the records from Port Washington to West Bend, an incident which caused endless confusion for many years, but the lost records have since all been recovered.

The name "Ozaukee" is said to be a corruption of the Indian word "Ozagig", which means people living at a river mouth. Other authorities claim "Ozaukee" is derived from an Indian word meaning "yellow earth," and therefore that the county got its name from the general color of its soil. The Chippewa Indian word for "yellow" is "Osawa."

SCHOOLS

The first school held in the Town of Mequon was a private school taught by Miss Helen Upham in a log house owned by Joseph W. Wood. That school was opened in the fall of 1839. The first public school house was a log structure erected by the Bonniwells in 1840. The pioneer teachers were William Worth, Eliza Bonniwell, Edward H. Janssen, and G. W. Foster. The Bonniwell district in 1844 had 37 male pupils and 19 female pupils. The total expenditure for maintaining the school that year seems to have been \$68.82.

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SCHOOL AND TOWN AFFAIRS

The first justice of the peace in the Town of Mequon was Frederick W. Horn. John Henry Thien, pronounced "Teen", was the founder of Thiensville, located in Mequon in 1842 and erected a grist mill, and proceeded to lay out the village, though it was not incorporated until 1910. In 1843 he built a store and a sawmill. He continued in the flouring business until his death July 6, 1863.

The home of Adolph Zimmermann, who was one of the earliest German settlers, was one-half mile south of Thiensville in what is now the Village of Mequon. In that village W. F. Opitz built the first hotel for the accommodation of travelers.

The first town meeting in the Town of Mequon was held April 7, 1846 at the house of John Henry Thien, and at that meeting Patrick Dockery was chosen moderator, and Edward H. Janssen clerk. Edward H. Janssen was then elected and became the first Town chairman. The wages of certain town officers were fixed at \$1 per day.

One of the first school teachers taught for \$12 per month, boarding himself. The first school commissioners were Daniel Strickland, Henry V. Bonniwell, and Levi Ostrander, and they chose E. H. Janssen as the first teacher in the Bonniwell district. He submitted to an examination conducted by Strickland, who gave him the most difficult arithmetic problem Strickland could conjure, which was the question, "If I should sell you 100 bushels of wheat at 75c a bushel, how much money would you have to pay me?" Janssen promptly answered, "\$75." Then Strickland switched to geography, and having been once stranded on the island of Madagascar and therefore knowing where it was, asked Janssen, "What and where is Madagascar?" Janssen promptly answered, "An island off the coast of Africa." Strickland ever after said Janssen was the smartest man he had ever met. He was promptly given the school.

The Germans on one early occasion had a big celebration demonstrating their love for the new country. This was celebrated in Opitz's tavern, and was a hilarious demonstration. Beverages were served and a fiddler employed. The celebration was conducted entirely with the use of the German language. The Declaration of Independence was read, and patriotic speeches made, all in German. The dancing commenced early in the day and kept up until the musician was exhausted.

We note that the first valuation of lands made by the township was in September, 1846, when the acres accounted for numbered 25,242, the valuation being fixed at \$74,513. By 1849 the valuation per acre of land in the Town of Mequon was fixed at \$3.22. That was the highest then fixed in the whole county.

Prior to 1845, there were two school districts within the present Town of Mequon. District No. 1 was what is now known as the Bonniwell district. District No. 3 seems to have been the rest of the township. In 1842, the number of school children in the Bonniwell school district was 20, and in the other district there were 23.

One of the delegates in the first constitutional convention which assembled in Madison October 5, 1846 was Edward H. Janssen, of the Town of Mequon.

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CHURCHES

The Methodists were the first to hold services in this town. Their first religious meeting was held in the home of Isaac Bigelow in the spring of 1838. Rev. Frink, an Indian missionary, preached the first sermon at the home of Jonathan Loomers. Peter Turck, a Pennsylvania native, and zealous in the Baptist faith, preached to the settlers the importance of immersion. Turck was a man of considerable enterprise. Besides preaching the gospel, he undertook both law and medicine. He was a justice of the peace, and later elected to the state legislature. It is said he erected the first sawmill in the Town of Mequon in 1838. He died in the insane asylum.

St. Francis Borgia congregation, a Catholic congregation, held the first Catholic services in this town in the house of the first Humphrey Desmond in 1842. This home was located on what is now the Charles Dineen farm. This was principally, if not wholly, an Irish congregation. Those first church services were conducted by Father Kundig, the pastor. He was a conspicuous southeastern missionary in Wisconsin. This congregation soon established a log meeting house just over the line in the Town of Cedarburg on the O'Brien farm, on which farm the first Catholic cemetery was established by this congregation. Later other lands were obtained resulting in the establishment of the present Catholic cemetery on the town line road, but in the Town of Mequon east of Wauwatosa Avenue. The land for this church and the first land for this cemetery was obtained in 1843. This Catholic congregation later moved to Cedarburg, but the cemetery of the congregation is still in the Town of Mequon, though there are some Catholic graves still left across the line in the Town of Cedarburg.

Catholic services were also held, probably late in 1842, in the neighborhood of a parish organization now known as St. James congregation, which was established in 1845. This was a German congregation.

As above stated, the German Lutherans established the Freistadt church immediately on settlement. The Lutherans later built meeting houses in several convenient points throughout the town. Among these were the Evangelical Lutheran, January 26, 1852, and Free Congregation, February 22, 1853.

Another church established February 1, 1853 was Lutherische Gemeinde. This church was built on Highway S, just east of the River Road, near Roedel's cemetery. The church elders were Heinrich Baerenz, Ph. Paul and Traugott Schmidt. In this case each family of the congregation agreed to pay 37½c quarterly towards the salary of the preacher. This organization has long since been dissolved, and the members of the congregation joined other congregations.

OBSERVATIONS FROM JUDGE TIMLIN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The late Hon. William H. Timlin is undoubtedly the most noted human product of the Town of Mequon. He became Wisconsin's ablest lawyer, and later served and died as a justice of the Supreme Court. He was born May 28, 1852 on the N. E. ¼ of Section 21, Mequon township. His father, Edward Timlin, and his uncle, William Timlin, came from Ireland in 1843. The early Timlins were adventurous and somewhat improvident people. However, Judge Timlin's mother, Hannah McConville, came from a family of linen weavers who were thrifty, economical and inclined to be militantly religious. Edward Timlin was county treasurer

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of Washington County in 1844. The Timlin land was purchased from Marin O. Walker in 1843. Walker had purchased it from the United States in 1839.

Judge Timlin left behind him an interesting story of the early history of Mequon. He was too modest to publish it, but it fell into the hands of a few of his friends, including the writer. My respect for his memory, and the fact that it was a profound recording of early history which should be preserved, prompts me to use it. His work was founded on research and family tradition. He records that in 1843 the land was wild, unimproved, and covered with a magnificent growth of maple, beech, basswood and walnut. The soil was heavy clay. There were no roads except the old Green Bay trail. There was a primitive type saw mill and a store, and later a grist mill one mile east of the Timlin farm, probably in the present Village of Thiensville. Money was scarce, and there was an extraordinary public and governmental attitude adverse toward banks.

There was plenty to eat, plenty of fuel and shelter, but wearing apparel, books, tools, ornaments and weapons were difficult to get. People made their own cloth and their own clothes and shoes. One twentieth or more of the settlers had looms. The women made the clothing. A surprising number of settlers could make shoes for themselves and family. The provision market was always glutted. Forest products were almost unsalable. Everyone made maple sugar. Wages were about \$6 to \$12 a month, and board was ordinary compensation for labor. The working people consumed much whisky. Beer did not make its appearance until about 1857. Settlers were very expert in the use of the axe. They could build a house, put on a roof, put in windows and make furniture with an axe and an auger.

Judge Timlin's improvident father loaded his farm with mortgages, the last one in 1850 of \$800 at 20% interest. Judge Timlin's early recollection about a mortgage was the fact that it caused his mother to cry over the loss of the farm. This caused him in his early boyhood to believe a mortgage to be some sort of a ferocious animal which had caused the loss of the farm.

The Civil War attitude is shown by the following, taken in substance from Judge Timlin's article.

At the time of the election in 1860 nearly everybody in the neighborhood was a Democrat, and scoffed at the idea that Lincoln had any chance. It was about the middle of November when someone broke the news of Lincoln's election. No one in the neighborhood believed it at first.

In respect to their attitude during the early part of the Civil War, fairness to the German settlers of this township requires some exposition of the reasons for their opposition to the war, and particularly to the draft. Both psychology and economics had something to do with their attitude. The economics also had some effect upon the psychology. In an intensely wooded country such as the Town of Mequon then was, farm making was a slow and laborious process. Living conditions were precarious. To take a farmer or his son away from the partly improved farm placed double hardship on the family. It would slow up the clearing and breaking up of the farm, cut down the possibility of increase of production and lessen the income, and deprive the opportunity of the family to have earnings from work for others. The requirements of farm labor were

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much more intensive in such a community than in a prairie country. The use of machinery was less possible in such a community than in an open country. Then, too, the political alignment of the Germans was intensely with the Democratic party, and at the beginning of the war the Democratic party was pretty much anti-war.

As an example of the German attitude of that time, a prominent German Democratic politician of Ozaukee County who had been a member of the legislature and speaker of the house, and who had been a man of great political power, disclosed his partisanship on the war question in a letter to Governor Randall in response to President Lincoln's proclamation which called for volunteers. That letter denounced the war, laid it to the Republican party and President Lincoln. He referred to the war as an "unholy and patricidal war," cursed those whom he called "New England fanatics and Pennsylvania iron-mongers," and declared he did not blame the people of Charleston for their attack on Fort Sumter. He expressed the opinion that the southern states, if let alone, would have overthrown their secession leaders, and would have become loyal, and therefore protested against force to keep those states in the union. He therefore declared that the government could not have his services. He made the point that the Republicans made the war, and that they should furnish the men to wage it. The Germans also took exception to the quotas assigned to Ozaukee and Washington Counties, which were larger proportionately than the quotas of other counties. The attitude of this section toward the war is indicated even as late as 1864. This county at the presidential election gave Lincoln only 243 votes and McClellan 2,050.

These German people were intensely democratic. They had come to America for religious freedom, and were whole-heartedly opposed to militarism. All restraints on individual liberty were unwelcome. All proposals suggesting such restraint were received with hostility. The attitude of the Germans was that we had a large country without the southern states and did not need them, and had better let them go. But when it was found out that Fort Sumter had been fired on, many disagreed with the philosophy of the letter above mentioned and then supported the war, though the south still had many sympathizers.

Some of the Germans protested vigorously against the draft, and particularly the provision which furnished opportunity for anybody to be relieved of military service upon the payment of \$300. The fact is, many had volunteered and gone into the war as soldiers. Those at home, however, were enjoying great prosperity. Some of the disgruntled who preached opposition to the draft easily led others who wished to continue to enjoy the prosperity of the war. They organized and marched to Port Washington and took over that village. They obtained a sort of toy Fourth of July cannon and took charge of the foundry and attempted to cast cannon for use in resistance to the United States. United States volunteers were dispatched from Milwaukee by steamer to Port Washington. They steamed away as if to leave. The rebels thought the government's effort had been abandoned. They therefore stacked their arms and went to celebrate. The soldiers were landed on the shore below Port Washington and came from the rear into Port Washington, swept down upon the rebels and captured them, even before it was known that United States troops were in

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the vicinity. The leaders were arrested and the others were required to report at the recruiting office.

This vigorous protest against the draft was undoubtedly in part founded upon the revolutionary spirit of the German immigrants against militarism. They had just left Europe to get away from it, and then we fell into the terrible Civil War, the causes of which they did not appreciate.

There is, however, evidence that the people of the Town of Mequon took a prominent patriotic part in the Civil War. There were two commissioned officers, Emanuel Munk and David O'Connell, from this town.

An interesting story is told of Evander Berry Bonniwell, who was born in the Bonniwell home May 12, 1847, and died at 83 a resident of Philadelphia. Only 14 years old at the time of the breaking out of the Civil War, he tried to enlist, and when his father refused he ran away from home and joined the army. When his real age became known he was discharged, but he succeeded in re-enlisting. He was wounded seven times. He took part in the siege of Vicksburg under General Grant.

It must be recalled that the German settlers in Ozaukee County were in many respects quite a superior people. They came from a country in which peasant proprietorship had been the rule for a long time. They knew many economies and advantageous methods relating to agriculture. They were skillful animal feeders. Their home life was frugal and decent. They were nearly all idealists and revolutionists. They were patriotic. They very generally responded patriotically as the Civil War progressed.

It was their custom then and thereafter to erect liberty poles at nearly every prominent place. It was the custom before a church or a school house was built, or as soon as possible after constructing a house, for people to look for the tallest tamaracks, cut two of them down and carry them in. A wooden representation of a peasant's cap was put on the pole before it was erected. This was a sign of the "freiheit" they came here to find, and the peasant's cap at the top meant "Hoch der Michel." One of these poles was in the early day at Wagner's Corner, a mile west of the Mequon post office; one was at the post office; one in front of the grist mill in the Village of Thiensville; and one at the Freistadt post office. There were others in the county, and perhaps others in the Town of Mequon.

THE INDIAN SCARE

No part of Ozaukee County can escape mention in connection with what was known as the great "Indian scare," which occurred in September 1862. Rumor which grew into a frenzy passed from house to house, and from neighborhood to neighborhood, that the Indians were on the war-path and were near at hand. The result was a spontaneous outburst of fear and terror which caused nearly everybody to run for their lives. The fact is, there were scarcely any Indians about, and no cause whatsoever for flight. The scare was probably attributable to the massacres in Minnesota known as New Ulm and Sleepy Eye. The panic extended from about Fond du Lac to Milwaukee north and south, and from the lake shore to Schlesingerville. Seized with panic, people abandoned their farms and their personal property and fled to the nearest town. Some "Paul Reveres" rode by the farm houses throughout that territory. They were each on a mad gallop, with horse covered with foam. The riders were waving white rags, crying out, "Fly! Fly! The Indians are on us!" Thereafter wagons dashed by, drawn by galloping horses. A scout on horseback trav-

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eled north from Milwaukee giving warning. When he reached the neighborhood of Thiensville he was told that Cedarburg had been set on fire by the Indians, and he turned about and fled.

Women and children were thrown into wagons and dashed to Milwaukee and other places. A scene near Brown Deer is described: "As far as the eye could see north and south there was a string of galloping horses drawing wagons so close that the heads of one team almost touched the rear of the wagon ahead. There were maimed horses and broken wagons." Milwaukee hotels were filled to overflowing, and hundreds slept on the sidewalk.

Some people, however, refused to fly with the scare, among them Mrs. Oscar Bublitz, who stayed in her home and was prepared to and planned to throw pepper into the eyes of the Indians. Another woman armed herself with a pitchfork. The Zimmermann family stood pat and refused to run. They obtained a toy cannon and loaded it with powder and spikes.

Within a day or two everybody returned to their homes, thoroughly ashamed of the performance.

In 1862 there was a regular Johnstown flood along the Milwaukee River. The Mequon bridge went out. Thiensville was flooded. Every bridge down to the City of Milwaukee was carried out.

OTHERS WHO BECAME PROMINENT

Another man born in Mequon who rose to considerable fame, and is indeed in fact a man of great ability, is Balthasar H. Meyer. He became a teacher in the schools at Waubeka and Port Washington, and later a professor in the state university. He was appointed a member of what is now the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, where he served with great distinction, and was later made a member of the Federal Interstate Commerce Commission, where he served as chief director for many years. He is now in private practice in Washington, D. C.

Still another man who won distinction in his field was Humphrey J. Desmond, who was the founder and for many years chief editor of the Catholic Citizen of Milwaukee. He was born in the town, the grandson of an early Irish settler, Humphrey Desmond. The latter Humphrey J. Desmond became an authority on literature and history. The first Humphrey Desmond seems to have reached the Town of Mequon about 1842. He died in 1849. His son Thomas Desmond, father of the Humphrey J. Desmond above mentioned as connected with the Catholic Citizen, continued to live in the community, and became a self-made and distinguished scholar. He married Johanna Bowe, a neighborhood girl, in 1856. It was to this union that my friend Humphrey J. Desmond was born. Thomas Desmond later moved to Milwaukee, and later became successively clerk and secretary of the Milwaukee School Board, and took a prominent part in business and civic affairs.

Another well known product of the Town of Mequon, and descendant of a prominent Irish family of that time, is C. R. Dineen, now a prominent lawyer in Milwaukee.

THE COLD DAY OF 1862

January 1, 1862 was thought to be the coldest day that ever visited this region. Many people were frozen and cattle perished, and for five or six years the cattle all had short tails and cropped ears on account of that freeze. It is reported that the stage came into Thiensville that day with the driver frozen dead on his seat. Conscripts for the war who were on the way to Fond du Lac were caught in the blizzard and frozen.

RAILROADS

The people of this town first became interested in the building of a railroad in 1856, the first project being that of the Milwaukee and Lake Superior Railroad. The old railroad highbinder scheme of getting the farmers to mortgage their farms in return for stock was employed. Many people were captured by that high-powered propaganda. When the track was laid as far as Mequon a great public demonstration was had, and the locomotive was christened "Mequon". About that time the railroad president absconded with \$30,000 of the company's funds. The company was dissolved, and the mortgages distributed amongst the directors and a few favored office holders. Others fell into the hands of speculators. The issue was taken to the Supreme Court, but the unfortunate farmers who had been inveigled into the enterprise had to pay in full, with interest. Many farms were lost by the owners as the result of this fraud and swindle. When the enterprise was renewed, Mequon people, having learned their lesson, refused to contribute, and because of that the railroad erected a rough board depot.

The Milwaukee & Northern Railway, now a part of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific system, was completed and in operation in 1871. The Milwaukee, Manitowoc & Green Bay Railroad Company, which was incorporated March 10, 1870, was later absorbed by the Chicago & North Western.

Thus we have brought the history of the early days in this community down to about 1870. This was the object the Mequon Club had in mind when it authorized this work.

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