



LIBRARIES

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

History of Thiensville. [1937]

Sitkiewitz, John

[s.l.]: [s.n.], [1937]

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/UC2I73AO4LE6484>

This material may be protected by copyright law (Title 17, US Code).

For information on re-use see:

<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Copyright>

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.

A+++
If you have any
very creditable piece of work, get
in fact, an unusual job for
freshman.
That you have given at a lot
of time is very evident. I am sure
though, that you were happy and
were completed, you were happy and
the "big job" of having done
a big job, and done it in the
truth the things happened
many times, a real
I always to work
you should you, in
have on one a plan
attitude and of doing
a "good" - remarkable
impression, your
me in, really a pleasure
to you, or a need of
any, to go
also, I hope you
always has
ambitious child

DEDICATED TO
MY GRANDFATHER, MR. J. F. GIERACH AND MR.
J. O. CARBYS.

BY JOHN SITKLEWITZ

I did not speak English
error discovered for I
did not want to spoil,
in any manner, the appearance
must to have, no doubt,
of the village.

Harry C. Steffen
P.O. of Lakeland
June 9, 1937

Cover grade and comments from Principal Harry C. Steffen of Thiensville School to his student, John Sitkiewitz, author of THE HISTORY OF THIENSVILLE:

A+++

You have done a very credible piece of work, and, in fact, an unusual job for a freshman.

That you have given it a lot of time is very evident. I am sure, though, that after all the hard work was completed, you were happy in the realization of having done a big job and done it well – a truth this brings happiness to many.

It has been a real pleasure to work with you this year, Jr. You have ___ a splendid attitude and I have witnessed a remarkable improvement in your marks, surely a pleasure to you, and, need I say, to your teacher also.

I hope you will always keep such an ambitious attitude.

*Harry C. Steffen
Prin. Of Schools
June 9, 1937*

I did not mark English errors discovered for I did not wish to spoil, in any manner, the appearance since you will, no doubt, wish to save this history of the village.

HISTORY OF THIENSVILLE

Thiensville is one of the oldest villages in the country. In its 101 years of existence it has a very interesting back-ground. No one has ever made a study on its history or ever wrote one up. I have gathered information on its history for nearly three weeks. Some of the dates may vary a bit, because the men I have talked to did not know them exactly, but they are not more than five years away from the actual happenings. I have interviewed the following two men. Mr. John F. Gierach and Mr. J. O. Carbys. Both men have given me almost the same amount of information. Therefore I hope in future years this authentic information I have gotten to-gether will be of some use.

By Mr. John Sitkiewitz.

HISTORY OF THIENSVILLE

The first families to settle where Thiensville now stands were the John Weston and McBean families in the year of 1834. Later a man by the name of Henry Thien came in 1854, he built one of the earliest industries in the village, a grain elevator or a saw and grist mill. Some of the old logs can still be seen where the old mill stood. These buildings burned down in the year of 1876. Henry Thien then set out and built the new mill or present day mill. He then sold it to a man by the name of Memmler, while he owned it he modernized it with all new equipment. In later years Memmlers sold it to a man named P. J. Kroehnke. Kroehnke had it for some time, then in 1915 he sold it to Mr. Liebcher who still is the owner of it. The old grain elevator across from the railroad tracks was built by Wilson, he bought up grain from the farmers and then sold it to the cities. The mill dam and canal was built in the year of 1846. There is no foundation for the dam. The bottom is just laid out with the logs. It was remodeled by each man who owned it thus far. The large cement wall on the other side was built by Mr. Liebscher in 1917. The slide was also built by him, but in what year he did not know.

The first general store was owned by a man by the name of Mr. Zimmerman. He had his store where Mr. Helm now has his. Later Mr. Thierman bought the store from Mr. Zimmerman and ran it.

The first blacksmith shop was started by a man by the name of Doove in the year of 1872. The next one was started by John Gierach when he came to Thiensville in the year of 1888.

The first Fire-house was located just south of the shoe factory. It was then moved to where Staudy's south driveway is located. After that it was moved where the first school in Thiensville stood. In the year of 1914 the new village hall

was built it was then moved there. They had an old hand pump which disappeared in future years. The old canon they had for frightening away the Indians, can still be seen at the new fire house. There is also a jail in the fire house.

The first hard-ware store was a tin-shop owned by A. Hilger Sr. The tin smith before Mr. Hilger was a man by the name of Lucyan, later he was bought out by Mr. Hilger when the latter started his own business. The present tin-smith is Mr. R. F. Bergin.

Herman Macheith was the first harness maker. He was here in the year of 1865. Later a man by the name of Ernst Geidle built a shop where Mr. O. Hadler now stands. Later when Mr. Hadler started in the harness making trade he bought Mr. Geidle out. Mr. Hadler still is in the harness business and is the only one in it for miles around.

The first tavern in Thiensville was started by Wm. Obitz. He had his tavern where Mr. Kieker's tavern now stands. There were two others before 1900: Henry Haas and Wm. Golterman.

At one time there was a brewery in the village, it was owned by a man named Mr. Engels. It was located where Gierachs store now stands. A government distillery was run by a man named Mr. Hausburg. It was located where Rowes garage now stands.

The first printing shop was run by J. O. Carbys, he started as a boy of about 14 years old, and ran it in his home. He printed name cards and election ballots. Later Henry Morhusen had it where Miller's Meat Market now stands. Carl Zimmerman had it just opposite the town hall. Later Mr. Hadler owned it and moved it next to the harness shop. After A. Hadler became post-master Mr. Ben Hadler took it into his hands.

The first lumber yard was started on the place where it now stands. It was first owned by Mr. Ferdinand Duve and Wm. Zimmerman.

August Mass then bought it, after that Charles Mass bought it, after that it became Thiensville Lumber Company.

The first Hotel was built by Fred Memmler. Now it is Aussem's Hotel. He built it some where back in the 1880's. Later Mr. Fred Memmler sold it Mr. Aussem who still is running it. Haeusler's Hotel was built by Nic Wilson. He later sold it to Riemers, then Mr. Riemer sold it to Mr. Haeusler who still owns it.

At one time there was a broom factory which was located right in back of Konitzer's Home. A dam can still be seen where the factory once was standing.

The first automobile was owned by Dr. Albers, the second was owned by Mr. Fritz Linden.

Mr. Thierman had the first telephone office. It was located where Mr. Helm now has his store. There was only one telephone in the whole office. It was started in 1882. In 1909 they moved it where it now stands. There they put modern equipment into it.

Mr. P. J. Kroehnke, owner of the mill, furnished the first electricity to the following families: Thiermans, Rosenthal and Gierachs.

The first garage was owned by Mr. Theodore Wegeman, a filling station was also included. He had it where Mr. Rowe's garage now stands.

The first doctor in the village was Dr. Rosenthal, he came in the year of 1855.

The first sidewalks of the village were built in 1913. That was a decided improvement to the village.

The Lutheran Seminary which is found on top of a large hill west of Thiensville was built in the year of 1928.

Thiensville was without a church for 75 years until the the Catholic church was built in 1913, this being the first one.

Then in 1929, the Grace Lutheran Church was built.. It is the only Lutheran church in the village up to now.

The first bank was built in 1910, this being the Finance Company. The new one was built in the year of 1929.

In the year of 1904 a man by the name of Mr. Wilcox had an excursion boat on the Milwaukee river. He ran two launches, and made four round trips a day. He charged 25¢ for a round trip. The trips were usually made on Thursday and Sunday. He sold refreshments to his passengers, some of these being ice cream, soda and candy. Besides having two large boats he had about 30 small row-boats. He later sold this to Mr. Max Pcelzig who in turn sold the land to the Athletic Club.

In the year of 1880 there were about 50 dwelling houses. Besides this, there were 2 stores, 2 wagons and blacksmith shops, 1 tailor, 2 shoe-shops, 3 taverns, 1 hotel and a post-office. There also was a cheese factory which was located just out of the town of Mequon, and was run by Mr. Louis C. W. Wagner.

The first murder in Ozaukee county was committed by a man by the name of Maurice O'Connell in Port Washington. He was charged for killing a fellow sailor, Michael Doyle. When they returned to their boat after a quarrel, they again started to quarrel, and O'Connell took up a knife and stabbed his friend in the neck killing him almost instantly. After his arrest he was taken to the county jail. The first jury failed to agree on his murder. At the next trial he was accused of first degree murder and sentenced to life in prison at the State penitentiary. In 1863 he was pardoned by Gov. Solomon, because of good behavior.

The St. Paul and Milwaukee railroad was run through the village in 1872. In some places they had a hard time getting the land.

The first white settlers to settle in Mequon were Mr.

Isaac Begelow and Daniel Strickland. They came from British possessions and came straight to Wisconsin. When they came, the land was all wilderness and the only paths were Indian trails. They came with their families in the year of 1836. In the year of 1837 Mr. John Woodsworth came and took up claims. In 1839 Wm. Opitz and Mr. Adolph Zimmerman settled in Mequon, now that section is Thiensville. A few years later five more families came over from England and settled in Mequon. A ^{little} later the Friestadt colony was started with about 60 families. The first means of shelter were tents. A man by the name of Timothy Wooden, the first Grafton settler helped the men of the Friestadt colony build their new homes. Mr. Ed. H. Janssen was the first German school teacher in the town of Mequon. After a while he became greatly interested in politics. Later he became a member of the constitutional convention. In 1851 he was elected to the office of the State superintendent of schools. He died in the year of 1877.

The first lawyer of the village was J. O. Carbys. He served under the first president who was John F. Gierach.

The zoning act was passed in the year of 1930. A map of the zoned village can be found at the Thiensville School. It was made by Carl Wiese.

A tin shop at one time was located where the Finance Co. now stands. It was torn down when the first bank was built.

The first jail was in the fire-house, one window had bars while the other did not. The first prisoner was Bill O'Connell, he was put in jail ~~jail~~ because he threw his wife out of the house. He also was the last one.

The Cooperative farmers creamery was started in 1907. It was built by John Miller and it took ~~between~~ six to eight months to build it. The cost of the building was 3200 dollars. They only made butter and cheese. A man by the name of Otto Gierach

from Friestadt was the first butter maker. The first cheese maker was Albert Kopmann. The Luick Company bought it in the year of 1917. They didn't make much money because most of the farmers hauled their own milk to Milwaukee. He ran his plant till 1930. It was idle till the year of 1936 when A. Maus bought it and remodelled it into a modern garage and filling station.

The first shoe factory was run by Allen and Spiegle. It was built in the old school-house. Later Mr. Gilbert bought it out. He later added new buildings on the east and west ends.

The first fire was in the old mill which was located right behind the new mill. The fire happened in the year of 1876. The mill was then an old frame shack.

The first men to take an aeroplane ride in the village were as follows: Mr. Sitkiewitz, Mr. Kieker and Mr. Wiese.

The Thiensville Park or Now Rhiengans' park was owned by Mr. Henry Haas. Then a man named Mr. Ed. Simmin bought it. Later Wm. Rienemschnider bought it, he in turn sold it Mr. Wm. Holnagle. The last and present man who owns it is Mr. Wm. Rhiengans. Every School picnic was held in this park. They were always held on the Fourth of July.

The first carpenter was a man named Schnuckel.

The first undertaker was Wm. Haeft, he also owned a wagon shop. He had his establishment in the year of 1887. The next undertaker was Mr. Louis Bartelt, who had his parlor in the year of 1913. In the year of 1918 Mr. Walter Bublitz started his own establishment, and his own furniture store.

The first person to have a boys bicycle was J. O. Carbys. The first person to have a girls bicycle was Mrs. John F. Gierach.

The first major flood in Thiensville was in the year of 1881. It was caused by an ice blockade. The only means of tran-

sportation then was with row-boats. The flood lasted two weeks. During the ice blockade the southern half of the dam gave out. There were men and women on the scene trying to repair it, by piling sand bags into the open gap. There wasn't much damage done to the village. It cost about 1600 dollars to repair it. The second major flood was in the year of 1924. This happened on the fourth of August. It was caused by heavy rains. There wasn't much damage done to the dam or the village. The water was about three feet deep.

The bridge at the fire house was built in the year of 1922. The bridge before that was built in the year of 1836. Mr. John Miller built the new one and it cost about three thousand dollars. The first bridge down at Maus' garage was built in the year of 1853. Mr. John Miller built the one before the new one was made in 1936. It was built by the State and County.

The concrete products was built by a man named Mr. Schnider. He sold concrete and cement blocks. Now it is a Pickle and Vinegar factory.

At one time the old Turner Hall was a pauper house. It was then owned by Mr. Henry Morhusen Sr. A stranger could stay only one night. He got good food and beds. Bill Morhusen was the cook. All expenses was to be paid by the town of Mequon. They had to get a pass from John F. Gierach before they could be admitted. Most of the time they took the name of John Doe. The passes would read as follows: Keep John Doe overnight and charge to the town. The average number a night were 6 to 8. They had to get out the next morning. This was going on for six or seven years. They didn't keep it up, because too many people came. Some people came from Milwaukee at night, stayed over night, and then walked back to Milwaukee. Most of them also gave false names.

A man by the name of Stark had the first movies in Rhiengans' hall. They were not talkies. He charged 5¢ for children,

and 10¢ for adults. He started in 1916, and ended in 1920. He had them twice a week and on Sundays. He had a lot of business till the talkies came out. He didn't have enough money to buy the talkies.

They also had baseball games before 1900. The playing field is where A. Maus now has his garage. The games were always for nothing, one of the opposing teams was Mequon. Two of the players Arno Hilger and Jim Flynn, who still live here.

The plank road which is now Highway 57 was built in the year of 1836. It was built by John Weston and T. Wooden. They called it a plank road because it was first laid with planks.

The village of Thiensville was incorporated in the year of 1910.

The street lights were first in when the village was incorporated in the year of 1910.

In the year of 1896 there was a club who called themselves the Turners. Their main purpose was to stage acrobatic stunts. They held very large dances and exhibitions to raise money. The club slowly broke in future years.

Up to about 15 years ago there were cattle fairs held every first Monday of the month. The men came from far and near trying to sell their stocks. This lasted for about 60 years. A few years ago they tried to start this again, but failed.

The first surveyor was a man by the name of Mr. Brown. He mapped out the whole country and the state. After that a man by the name of Tennyson. Then Wm. Jahn Sr.

The first court was held in School District No. I. A man by the name of Bonevels built it. It was a log cabin. The fine he received was to split rails for a fence.

The first post-office was in Mequon. It was called the Milwaukee River post-office. Mr. John Weston was the post-master. While the post-office was at Thierman's store, the following

were postmasters: Mr. Louis Wagner, P. J. Kroehake and Mr. Thierner.

When it was moved to Alber's place the following were post-masters: Louis Kriker, Mollier and Jack Albers. After it burned down it was moved to where now stands. Mr. Al. Hadler is now the new post-master.

The following men were here in the past and in the future: Riesenheuer, Conrad Wiesler and Mr. Wiese.

The first school was held in the old shoe factory. Some of the teachers were in 1874: Miss Adele Alten, in 1872: Mr. Brian, in 1905: Miss Emly Reloff, and in 1880: Mr. Arno Kratzsch. The school was held here till 1922, when Mr. Gilbert came. The new school was then built. It has only two years of high school. Some of the pupils of 1874 were, Otto Hadler, John Bauer and John Jordan. In the year of 1872: Ida Nehls. In the year of 1880: John Miller and Otto Carbys. In the year of 1905: Asta Gierach, Ed. Hadler, Frieda Hadler, Ray. Gierach and Irene Gierach. The superintendent in the year of 1880 was Mr. Scott from Cedarburg.

The first barber was Henry Morhusen. He had his shop in Loertcher tavern. The cost of an haircut then was 15¢. The next barber was a man by the name of Mr. Troxel. He had his where Hoffman's meat market is. The next barber was Andy Glavas. After him came a man by the name of Mr. Kelly, first he had it where Mr. Schmeling is now, but later moved to Loertcher's tavern. He is now in northern Wisconsin. Then came Mr. Weisjahn, who has his shop next to the northern station, and Mr. Schmeling who has his in Riemer's tavern.