



Early Manitowoc and a sense of place.

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Early Manitowoc and a Sense of Place

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Kerry A. Trask is an associate professor of history for the University of Wisconsin Centers and has served at the Manitowoc County campus since 1972. During part of that time, he was also chairman for the History Department for all thirteen UW Centers. Trask holds a Ph.D. in early American history from the University of Minnesota and is author of a number of studies dealing with the Great Lakes fur trade era, as well as the forthcoming book, In The Pursuit of Shadows: Massachusetts, Millennialism, and the Seven Years War. He has also written two other monographs for the Manitowoc County Historical Society and an article for the journal Voyageur dealing with Manitowoc's entry into the Civil War. Versions of this paper have been presented to the Manitowoc-Two Rivers Area Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Manitowoc program and as part of the Sense of Place series coordinated by Mrs. Rosemary Singh and sponsored by the Manitowoc Public Library, with a grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Committee.

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Early Manitowoc and a Sense of Place

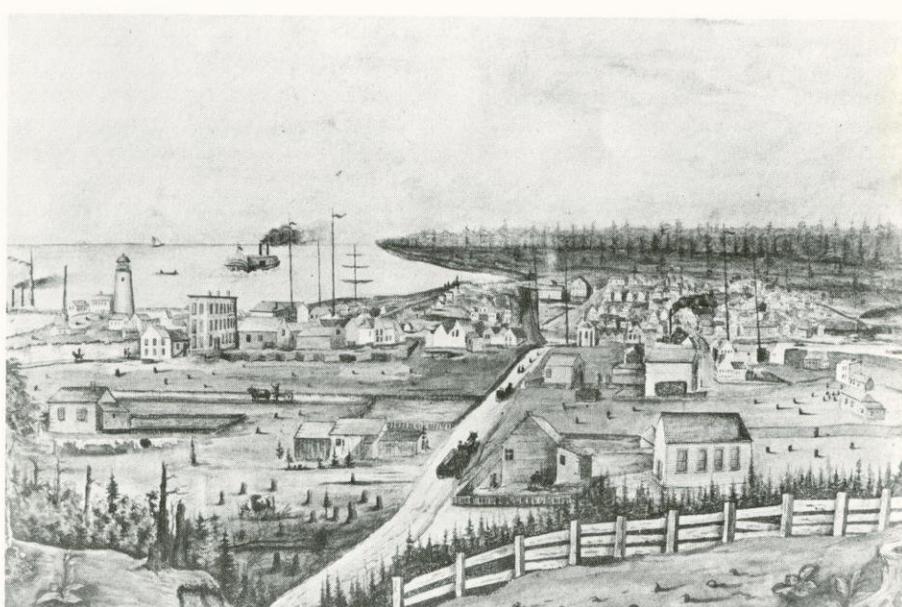
"Remember when," she said, "remember when we were kids and went downtown on Saturday nights when the stores--stores like Schuette Brothers when they still sold groceries, Huchthausens when there was still horse harnesses, and Fechter's Book Store--were crowded with families and the 8th Street sidewalks overflowed with people on both sides. It was crowded and busy, but it was also exciting. Just going downtown was an outing; eating ice cream at the Princess on North 8th, such a pleasure, even though the old Greek who ran the place yelled at us if we were just loitering around."

"Sure I remember," he responded. "They were the days of nickel beers--good, yeasty, hometown brewed Kingsbury Beer--and great perch lunches for a quarter, and the perch were fresh and big and caught right out here in the Lake. We'd often go to Two Rivers for those

on Friday nights. That was before the alewives and PCBs. You could also buy fresh fish at Tushel's Fish Market, on the river near the Tenth Street bridge."

The conversation expanded, ebbed and flowed, as more and more images and anecdotes were pulled from the past by the old people who sat around the table, sipping coffee, talking long into the evening. They talked of the great grain elevator fire which, like a volcano, spewed smoke and ash over the south side of town; the building and the tearing down of the magnificent old post office with its Greek columns and time-worn granite floors (it made way for a parking lot, like the old Opera House and the County Jail which looked like a gingerbread castle). They also talked of old man Schultz who slaughtered pigs on the hill--right in the yards of the families who raised them--how they squealed, and how he threw them into a big tub of boiling water after they were dead to more easily remove their hair. They remembered the sharp, but now almost sweet, smell of the

horse stables at Fischl's Dairy, the taste of Ed Fronk's kolaches and the warm German potato salad sold on Sunday mornings at Dunning's cluttered low, green grocery store up Washington Street, the sight of car ferries coming and going, two and three a day, back and forth across the lake, their plumes of black smoke turning grey and remaining visible above the horizon even after the black hulls had become invisible, and they could still almost hear the hoarse bawling sound of the old fog horn as they drifted off to sleep on rainy fall and spring nights. Those were the days when Polish boys went to work at the "Goods" right after eighth grade, if not before, when women and their children picked and snapped beans in mid-summer, when drivers of horse-drawn wagons came around, door to door, collecting rags, when there were still Gypsies, and when armies of lunch-pail carrying workers trudged off to the "Yards" in the dawn's early light and walked home again shirts smelling of sweat as darkness began to creep over the city. In those days, it was a city



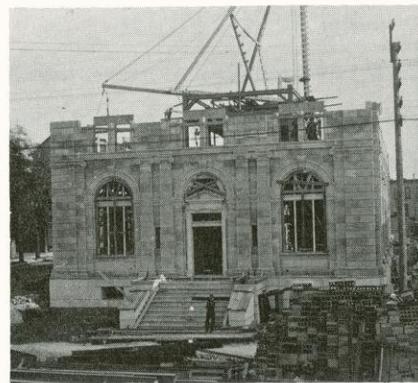
Manitowoc, 1885.

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of corner grocery stores which delivered, and neighborhood taverns which gave credit until pay day. It was a place of lathes and forges, where new ships were built and launched in the river, where trains rumbled and shunted, where men spent their days amidst hot metal and flying sparks, and where the "Medusa Challenger" came home for the winter.

Listening to them talk about simpler, smaller, now departed, but not yet quite forgotten times, made it clear that a community is much more than what you see. It includes what and who has gone before and it cannot remain a vital, creative place unless the richness of the past becomes a part of the promise of the future. Like people, towns have characters, but they take generations, sometimes centuries, to grow and mature; and it was clear from what they were saying, and how they were saying it, that the people around the table knew a lot about the character of this place and possessed a strong sense of community rooted in common experiences and shared sights and sounds. With good humor and sometimes a hint of sadness, they looked backwards to get their bearings, to better know where they now stood in time and place, and while I listened, I was helped to recall my own roots and to have a better sense of where I am. It was all a process of orientation in which remembering helped alleviate the anxieties of the community's collective identity crisis and which gave rise of a fuller, richer sense of place--a sense of belonging--in a big, confusing, and frightening world caught up in perpetual flux and flow.

The need for such orientation to time and place is discussed by Wallace Stegner in his short and delightful essay, "The Sense of Place," written for the Wisconsin Humanities Committee. In it, while asserting the importance of such a sense, he points out that "a place is not a place until people have been born in it, have grown up in it, lived in it, known it, died in it--have both experienced and shaped it as individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities, over more than one generation." "The truth," he continues, "a place is more than half memory. No place is a place until things that have happened in it are remembered in history, ballads, yarns, legends, and



Manitowoc Post Office, southwest corner of Franklin and Ninth Streets, under construction, Sept. 1, 1910.

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monuments."¹

Most of us have probably spent little time thinking about such things, not out of conscious disinterest, but simply because we are part of a culture which spends most of its time thinking about the future, planning for what lies ahead, and striving to get there at breakneck speed. In fact, America is a society founded, in large degree, by people running away from the past, their own personal pasts of failure and disappointment, and from the entire collective past of the Old World. America has been a place of fresh starts and new beginnings, a black slate upon which generations of hopefilled immigrants and aliens have sought to write their own tales of success.

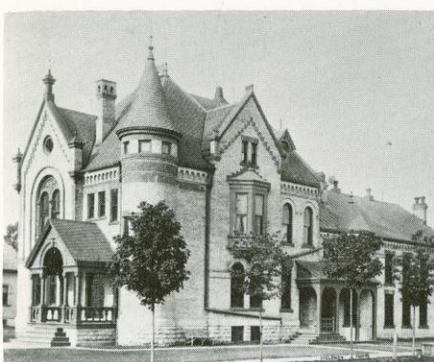
In the 1830's, at the very time when this community was being established, Alexis de Tocqueville, a young French nobleman, rode through America on horseback recording his observations. In late October of 1831, he wrote in his journal: "You must appreciate that everybody here wants to grow rich and rise in the world . . . From that there springs a wearisome social activity, ever-changing intrigues, continual excitement, and an uncontrollable desire of each to out-do the others." On another occasion, a little later in his journey, the perceptive Frenchman once again remarked: "The American is devoted by the longing to make his fortune: it is the unique passion of his life;" as a result, de Tocqueville concluded, "he has no memory that attaches him to one place more than another."²

That questing after fast fortunes, that state of perpetual motion, resulted not only in a rebellion against time--past time--but also a revolt against place--against staying in place--and America became a land filled with individuals who rejoiced over their own rootlessness. They were people on the move, and for a long time, most of the movement was westward. The great Wisconsin historian, Frederick Jackson Turner, claimed that it was that constant internal westward migration that made America unique among human societies and which accounted for its amazing creative energies and democratic ways. Turner wrote

in his most famous 1893 essay, dealing with the significance of the frontier: "American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier. This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character."³

Wendell Berry, a poet and essayist who is a contemporary of ours sees that flight to the frontiers in much less positive light: sees it, in fact, as an expression of some deep desires to escape social responsibility and to be forever boys with Huck Finn setting off for the territories. However, there is no denying the fact that the west, with all its real and imagined promises, has cast a powerful spell upon the people of this society. At the beginning of his book, *The Ordways*, William Humphrey reflects upon the influence of that spell. He writes: "When a man decides to pull up his roots and to set off in search of a new life, he instinctively heads west . . . Ever since his expulsion from the garden to a place east of Eden, man has yearned westward as towards a state of remembered innocence, and human history is one long westerward migration." There is a powerful, almost irrepressible desire to head west, he asserts, to "follow where the young and adventurous have already gone;" to leave behind the east, "to shake off the dust of age and over-refinement, to escape that worn-out land and its worn-out people." The West, Humphrey concludes, "is unfenced, unfettered, unincrusted with history . . . [and] lit by a glow which even a blind man might see."⁴

This has been a powerful fantasy that has lured men to leave home to wander the land in search of greener grass and bigger bucks. It was this same lure of the frontier, this same desire to follow the warm light of the sun westward, that moved young French-Canadians to leave behind the cold rocks of the St. Lawrence valley for the forests of northeastern Wisconsin. They came as early as the late seventeenth century, in their long bark boats, twelve and fourteen at a time, through the fly-infested bush country of northern Ontario, and then out and over the wild



Manitowoc County Jail, ca 1910.

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Man and team with sled doing winter delivery.

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Logging in Manitowoc County about 1880.

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white waters of Lakes Huron and Michigan, first to La Baye and then eventually to here. On the journey, they subsisted mainly on pork fat and corn meal, washed down with strong brown drafts of rum; and as a result of that diet, they were known as the "mangeurs du lard"--the grease eaters. They came as raiders and pillagers, intent upon robbing the wilderness of its fur-bearing animals. They, like all young men who venture to the frontiers in any age, did not plan to stay. They would make a fast killing and return home, packs bulging with riches, like conquering heroes back from some holy war. However, some did remain. They married Indian women and settled, and some of their descendants are still there.

Among them was Jean Vieux, a big barrel-chested trader, who as far as anyone knows, was the first white man to set foot in Manitowoc County. He arrived by water in 1795 with his part French-part Potawatomi wife, Angeline, and their three children, along with their voyageurs, laborers, and clerks, and established two small trading posts--mere log huts--one near Mishicot and the other at Manitowoc Rapids. The Vieux family didn't stay but Jean, who established a substantial and permanent base at the mouth of the Milwaukee River, did make semi-annual visits here to pick up pelts and replenish the trade goods at his posts. He did so until the late 1820's. The names of the men he left here to conduct his business will probably never be known now; but they were the first of us Europeans, and it was they who began the process which, in time, led to the transformation of this lakeshore area.

Of course, Indian peoples had lived here for long generations and centuries before the arrival of the fur traders. They built mounds here, shaped float copper into tools and weapons and, in fact, ancient hunters once stalked barren-ground caribou here along the very edge of the great ice-age glaciers. The Indians remained in this county until after the Civil War when they departed to live among the Menominee along the Wolf River.

After the Vieaus, the next white people to arrive were the land speculators and lumbermen. Most of them headed west out of New York and New England along the Erie Canal,

and out across the Lakes. In 1836, two years after the land office opened in Green Bay, Benjamin Jones bought up all the land where the city of Manitowoc now sprawls--thousands of acres which he picked up at \$1.25 a piece and then tried with some success to sell a year later at \$200 an acre. However, most of the people who came here then were not very interested in land. They were young men, drawn by the prospects of high pay (\$35-40 a month), who intended to work only a few seasons in the lumber camps and saw mills before returning east to buy farms. In 1837, there was the smell of both fresh cut lumber and fast money in the air. Jones built a mill at the foot of Chicago Street, Jacob Conroe had another at Rapids, and J.L. Thayer yet another upstream near Cato Falls. To the north, the Green Bay fur trade baron, John Lawe, and a saw mill near Mishicot, Oliver Longvine operated one at Two Rivers, and A.M. Burnham built a mill 8 miles up the West Twin River near Shoto. They cut planks and timber, fashioned shingles, and shipped them off to the growing Chicago market. By mid-summer, there were 180 people in the County, and they seemed optimistic about the future. By fall, however, nearly all were gone. Back East, the banks had failed. Prosperity gave way to panic, and the whole country collapsed into a dismal economic depression. The mills were closed here, the hands were laid off and let go, and by the first snows only five families remained in Manitowoc.⁵

The rhythm of growth did not pick up tempo again until the mid 1840's with the arrival of the central Europeans. They came to stay. By 1850, there were nearly 800 people living in the village of Manitowoc, and by the eve of the Civil War, the numbers had ex-

ploded to more than 3000. By then, Manitowoc had become a thriving center of commerce and culture with 646 houses, 5 churches, 4 breweries (Rahrs, Pautz, Roeffs, and Hotilmans), 3 newspapers, two schools (one on each side of town), a library, a theater, and an impressive but very expensive new brick courthouse. During that same time, the population of the entire county rose from 3702 to 22416.⁶

Throughout all this time, Manitowoc remained a lumber town. Joseph Edwards began making schooners here in 1847, but for the most part, the community remained a settlement of mill-hands and lumbermen. Its economic future built upon a shaky foundation of sawdust. It was not until after the Civil War, not until most of the trees were felled, that the transition was made to agriculture. During the 1840's, Gustaf Unonius, a Swedish immigrant who became the town's first Episcopalian priest, described it as a place full of "crude, uncultivated laborers." They, and the "camp life at the lonely saw mills," and the many saloons with their many big barrels of whiskey, gave the town, he said, "a spirit of brutality, savagery, and lawlessness." However, in summing up his views on Manitowoc, as it stood in 1848, Unonius called it "one of those embryonic western towns which resembles boys in their teens, subject to many bad habits, and yet full of life, vitality, and hope for the future." The future looked bright then, but in 1857 depression hit once again, hard times returned, and then came the Civil War.⁷

During those decades, and for many thereafter, Manitowoc was a place of coming and going, almost always by water.

Ralph Plumb, author of Born in the



The Manitowoc River crowded with ships docked for the winter.

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Schuette Bros. corner of South Eighth and Jay Streets about 1891.

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Eighties and much more, recalled that as a boy, his grandfather would take him downtown to the feed store on Saturdays where, he said "the town's old retired Yankees" gather to talk about bygone days. "But when three o'clock approached," Plumb wrote, "the little knot of gossips broke up one by one, and I grasped grandpa's hand as he limped slowly down four blocks to the steamboat dock for it was time to see the side wheelers come in from north or south or both. As you sat on one of the mooring posts and looked way out on the expanse of water, first a wisp of smoke was visible way down over South Point, and then as it grew plainer, some one would say 'there comes the Chicago'."⁸

It was by water, on the boats, that the mail arrived and gave this place a connecting link with the outer world. Boots came in from Detroit, mill machinery from Chicago, and immigrants from as far away as Nova Scotia and Norway, Scotland, Saxony and East Prussia.

The Schuette's arrived in Manitowoc in the spring of 1849. They were from the Duchy of Oldenburg, and they had departed from Bremer Haven harbor on the 17th of July the previous year, at a time when most of Europe was being rocked by revolutionary upheavals. "In those days, any one leaving for America was considered as about to pass into eternity never to be met again on this earth," wrote the young John Schuette. Their crossing took eleven weeks, and they landed in Philadelphia in early October. From there, they went to New York, took a steamer up the Hudson to Albany, then a train to Buffalo where they boarded a large side-wheel steamer named "Globe" which carried them to Milwaukee. From there, they traveled up the lake, and they passed their first Wisconsin winter in Cedarburg. With the coming of spring, John's father headed north to scout out Manitowoc. He walked the entire way along the beach. "On his arrival," John later recalled, "he surveyed the little village from the southern elevation and was at once struck by its beautiful location, as it was nestled in a half moon valley, bounded by the blue lake on the east, the north, west, and south a rising embankment, the river running through its center, a few vessels loading with lumber and shingles,

a saw mill located at South Eighth Street bridge, with its saws wafting to him the pleasing hum of industry, all combined, made upon him such a favorable impression that he decided to locate here." The rest of the family arrived by boat on May 19. "We landed on the south pier," he wrote, "Father covered me with his long overcoat, in which I must have looked like a pasha. We walked through the deep lake sand along the beach to J. Roemer's tavern, near the corner of Jay and Sixth Streets, which to me was the most fatiguing three blocks' walk I have ever experienced." The Schuette's stayed. They opened a store.⁹

Manitowoc was also a place of departures, with schooners and steamships casting off with cargos, shingles, dried fish, planks, cord wood, and barrels of Rahr's Eagle Beer. Some of the same vessels also carried a good many of Manitowoc's young men off to the camps and battlefields of the Civil War.

James Anderson was such a young man. He was an immigrant from Scotland who settled here with his parents and sister during the 1850's. He completed school here, the very spring the war broke out. He was 19 years old when President Lincoln issued his first call for volunteers to save the Union. Young Anderson joined up in the midst of a frenzied meeting on the night of April 20, 1861, and became a private in what became Company A of the Fifth Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. It was a company composed almost entirely of men from here. The town was proud of the boys. "Our hardy sons of toil who are compelled to work in the shops, fields, and forests to gain a subsistence for themselves and families will make the best soldiers," wrote Jeremiah Crowley, editor of the Manitowoc Pilot. And so they did.¹⁰

They drilled daily in what now is Union Park and on June 23, 1861, they left for war.



North Eighth Street looking south in 1887 showing the unpaved mud streets and bridge.

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Young Anderson described their departure in his journal. We "left Manitowoc on the steamer "Comet" for the rendezvous at Madison. The scene on the pier just before the boat shoved off would have melted a heart of stone. The people of the County were assembled by the thousands, and the shore of old Lake Michigan for a long distance was a dense mass of human beings, and then the sad farewell. Wives wept over husbands. Mothers blessed their sons and weeping told them to do their duty to their God and Country. Sisters hung over brothers as if they could not let them go. Fathers and brothers, though far less demonstrative in their grief, felt deeply the sad feelings, and well might they weep for the bones of many were bleaching on well fought battle fields while many fell a victim to disease caused by suffering. It was to many, a last farewell." "The lines were cast off," he wrote in another description of that day, and "the wheels of the steamer began to move. There was a great shout, which echoed and repeated from the pier to the bluffs. Good bye! God bless you boys! Good luck to you! mingled



First grade, Luling School, Huron between North Tenth and Eleventh Streets, 1894.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY MANITOWOC PUBLIC LIBRARY

with the German Ade Ade! Auf Wiedersehen! . . . We were all somewhat saddened by the parting scene through which we had passed.¹¹

In between the comings and goings, Manitowoc was a place in which life was celebrated and which knew deeply the full range of human feelings.

It was a place of good times.

Wild dances, going noisily into the nights, were held at Pfeffer's hotel on the corner of Tenth and Marshall Streets. People could get in for just a bunch of shingles. Whiskey was cheap--just 20 to 30 cents a gallon--and mill hands and bar maids, ship carpenters and shop girls pranced and pounded upon the floor boards until the building shook and the neighbors complained. Also, from very early on, there were singing societies and musical concerts, and in the early 1850's, a theater with a low stage and plank benches was opened on the corner of Ninth and Jay Streets. It was operated by Adolph Wittman, who had been a professional actor in Berlin before migrating to Manitowoc. There were picnics, and weddings, and baptisms, and in between, people simply enjoyed sitting upon their doorsteps on warm summer evenings or about their stoves on cold winter Sundays and passing the time in conversation.

It was a place of sadness and sorrow.

In early August of 1850, some Indians took sick in Two Rivers and soon began to die of mysterious causes. Soon the village's inhabitants began to take ill and within a week, fifty people were dead and many more deathly sick. It was cholera. People began to flee the settlement in panic, and the plague then spread to Manitowoc. There, more than 100 people were stricken, 22 died, mostly children, and they were buried that summer in the newly opened grave yard on the corner of Park and Eighth Streets.

Just three years before on a miserable Saturday in early winter (November 20, 1847), the steamer "Phoenix," filled almost beyond capacity with Dutch immigrants bound for Milwaukee, pulled into the Manitowoc harbor to drop off some freight and take shelter from the howling winds and thrashing waves. Everyone went ashore except the crew which remained behind to take on a new supply of cord wood for the boilers. By midnight, the winds had subsided. Passengers were reboarded and about 1:00 a.m., the captain steered his ship out into the frigid darkness of the November night with the intention of reaching Sheboygan by dawn. The "Phoenix" never made it. Two hours out, just down from Hika Bay, there was an explosion, then a roar and rush of flames, and soon the ship was engulfed in fire. There were 275 people on board that night, but only three small lifeboats. There was not hope for most. Some died in the blaze itself, trapped below deck, and many more drowned in the bitter cold black water of the Lake. Only twenty-five ever made it to shore.¹²

More sadness came in April of 1862 when the people of the village and from around the County gathered for the funeral of Captain George Waldo, the first Manitowoc man to die in the Civil War. Waldo, a young lawyer turned infantry officer, was only 27 years old when he caught a bullet in the chest at Shiloh and died in the muddy rain-soaked fields of western Tennessee. His body was brought home by the townspeople for burial in the sandy soil above the Manitowoc River. Thousands gathered and lined the way of the Captain's funeral march. The Manitowoc band played somber music as it moved ahead of the horse-drawn hearse, followed by relatives and friends, up the hill to Evergreen Cemetery on Sunday afternoon of April 7th. "Indicates of sorrow and sympathy were numerous and sincere," and "we have never witnessed a more impressive scene," wrote William Fitch, editor of the Manitowoc Herald.¹³

But it was also a place for rejoicing.

In mid December of 1864, some of the first boys began arriving home whole and healthy from the war. They came in the "Sea Bird." As they entered the harbor, they were given a thirteen gun salute. The band played. A very large crowd gathered and cheered as the boat bumped against the timbers of the north pier. They landed on a Sunday, and the next day a large reception and party was held for them at

Klingholz Hall. Everyone was there. Mrs. Adolph Wittman, a powerful German soprano, gave a welcome home speech on behalf of the Ladies Society, which had worked hard to send the boys packages throughout their service. It said in the Manitowoc Pilot that her remarks "drew tears from the soldiers and spectators" but that then after they were whipped away, a huge dinner and dance was held as the town celebrated their homecoming in time for Christmas.

Manitowoc was also a town with its share of tensions and conflicts.

The Reverend Mr. Unonius observed that: "Between the people of the two sides of the river, there was a spirit of strife and jealousy . . . Each wanted to make his side the principal and most trafficked part of the new community. From this cause, there arose parties and disagreements which resulted, among other things, in a problem of communicating between one part of the town and the other." "It was," he concluded, "one of the meanest little rivalries, and it was encouraged mainly by the big landowners on either side of the river."¹⁴

It was that spirit which led to the great row in 1853 concerning the location of the new courthouse. Each side of the river wanted it in its part of town. First it was decided to build it in Union Park. Some wealthy northside merchants put up some money to begin con-



Manitowoc Harbor Beacon.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY MANITOWOC PUBLIC LIBRARY

struction. But there was an angry outcry from the south of town. A packed meeting was held in the southside school, and the people there raised \$675 and bought the land on the corner of Eighth and Washington, which they donated to the County with the understanding that the edifice would be built there. The northsiders were upset and became even more upset when they discovered that all the plans and specifications were in German and that the project would cost much more than either the Milwaukee and Chicago courthouses. They were irate, but there was little they could do. The southsiders had the votes on the County Board and, therefore, they won that round of what proved to be a long fight.

Manitowoc was also a community which worried, almost constantly, about its future.

In September of 1860, Jeremiah Crowley complained in his newspaper of the large numbers of children not in school and who, he said, "are receiving so large a part of their education in our streets, and are, thus, forming habits of immorality and vice, and as such can only be regarded as candidates for our jails and prisons." They were to him disturbing omens of troubled times ahead.¹⁵

But Manitowoc was also a place of sharing.

When the call went out and the first company of soldiers was raised, the ladies of the

village decided to make a special flag for the boys. A collection was taken up and a delegation of women, led by Mrs. G.B. Collins, the wife of the village president, went to Chicago by boat to buy material. "The red and blue silks were obtained," James Anderson later related, "but though the stores of Chicago were searched for days, no plain white silks were to be obtained." However, "in this dilemma," he continued, "a young lady who expected soon to be a bride, brought out the whole silk purchased for her bridal gown and offered it up for the cause." It was sewn into the banner the boys carried with them southward into battle.¹⁶

It has been a place which has withstood the cold northeast gales that sweep the Lake in winter, it has survived the hard times that came and went and came again, and the sorrows and losses of the Civil War and the said succession of conflicts that followed that. People have now lived here in this place, for better and for worse, for richer and for poorer, for a long time now, and the town has begun to take on a richness and texture that only comes with handling and long use. People settled here, stopped their running and rushing westward here, shared triumphs and setbacks together and grew to love the cool lake breezes of

summer and the leaf-strewn streets of fall. Here beside the water, some of us too have stopped our wandering, and like the immigrants before the Civil War, we have acquired a feeling of belonging and a life-enriching sense of place.

Poets have a knack for summing up and saying in a few words that which some of us have only a long-winded way of getting at. My friend and colleague, Herman Nibbelink, has done that at least part of the way in his poem, "A Place to Be." In it he writes:

Under one of these old slate roofs, we will bid for a place to be at home. The children's beds will be moved upstairs; our garden will grow on the south lawn. We will forget how much we have mortgaged or that we ever lived anywhere else. What does it matter that there is not insulation? These dry rafters have gathered up generations of children's laughter, parents' sighs, and lovers' pleas for another chance. And one day, our old dust will rise off this attic floor and dance.

Now that we leave this to look ahead, we can do so with the awareness that we are only the latest of a lengthening line of people who have lived here and that what they did long before we arrived is a powerful part of the spirit of this place upon the water.

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