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The EDGERTON STORY

A History Of Edgerton, Wisconsin

For Reference

Not to be taken from this room



OFFICIAL PROGRAM

Centennial Week - July 5 - 12

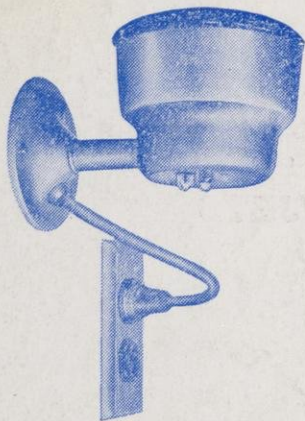
1953

McIntosh -- the oldest name
in tobacco in the State.



ROBERT B. MCINTOSH
LEAF TOBACCO
EDGERTON, WISCONSIN

NEW APPLIANCES MANUFACTURED
IN EDGERTON
BY I-K-I PRODUCTS, INCORPORATED



The I-K-I Automatic Insecticide Vaporizer for commercial, industrial and agricultural uses. For the automatic and continuous indoor control of flies, mosquitoes and other small flying insects. This type of insecticide vaporizer is especially important when dealing with insects that have a tendency to elude spray residues left by other types of insecticide.



The new I-K-I Fumer for household insect control. A specially designed Lindane vaporizer for use in homes, apartments, cottages, resorts, hotels, motels and trailers for effective insect control where automatic and continuous vaporizers cannot be used.



Greatest ironing-day work-saver since the electric iron. It clamps on your ironing board . . . a clothes rack to hang and dry 12 pieces PLUS an iron cord holder to keep cord free and reduce wear. Easily put on any board. Clamp stays on; rods on or off in a jiffy.

FROM OXEN TO JETS

AN EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

When a community proudly undertakes to celebrate a 100 years of its existence and to commemorate the deeds of those who have played a part in its founding and development, nothing is more important than the willingness of public spirited citizens to accept individual responsibility and offer their best in cooperation and sacrifice. Of equal importance is the willingness of organized groups to lend constructive force of combined effort

Now that the preparation period has come to a close and the celebration is being enjoyed, the two little words, THANK YOU, sound inadequate. However, because it is so justly deserved, and because of no better way to publicly thank all our people who have helped to make our Centennial a success, we repeat in all sincerity "Thank You."

CHESTER L. PETERS



General Chairman, Edgerton Centennial Inc.

30EPLO0014258/

STATE OF WISCONSIN

IN SENATE

Jt. Res. No. 54, S.

June 4, 1953—Introduced by COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE
PROCEDURE, by request of Senator Robinson. Adopted.

JOINT RESOLUTION

1 Relating to the centennial of the founding of Edgerton.

2 Whereas, on July 5 to 12, 1953 the city of Edgerton will commemo-
3 rate one hundred years as an incorporated municipality with a cele-
4 bration the theme of which is "From Oxen to Jets"; and

5 Whereas, the people of the city of Edgerton have, through their
6 industry, made the most of their rich natural endowment to develop
7 a community which is a happy combination of industry, trade and
8 recreation; and

9 Whereas, Edgerton, situated in the fertile valley of the Rock River,
10 early became the tobacco center of the middle west, and stimulated
11 by the establishment of a railroad in 1854 early enjoyed commercial
12 contacts denied to the more remote parts of the state; and

13 Whereas, this municipality has developed a strong community spirit
14 which is symbolized by an effective school system, deep religious
15 devotion, an abiding interest in the home, and broad participation in
16 activities designed to promote the well being of its people; and

2

1 Whereas, this community, situated on the Rock River and near the
2 beautiful Lake Koshkonong, typifies Wisconsin's widely diversified
3 recreational opportunities; now, therefore, be it

4 Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That the legisla-
5 ture congratulate the city of Edgerton on its centennial typifying
6 the progress made by the ingenious and diligent people of this land
7 from the era of the beast of burden to the supersonic mechanized age.

Centennial Committees

Space does not permit our listing of all names of people who have worked on this Centennial, we take this opportunity, therefore to thank them all for their efforts.

PRESIDENT

C. Peters

VICE PRESIDENT

N. Yeske

SECRETARY

Mrs. William McIntosh

TREASURER

C. S. Midtbon

STEERING COMMITTEE

C. Peters
 N. Yeske
 C. S. Midtbon
 Mrs. William McIntosh
 Mrs. Melvin Brenhaug
 Mrs. C. V. Sweeney
 T. W. Dickinson
 E. Dickerson
 R. Tellefson
 William Cleary
 G. Price
 L. C. Whittet
 G. Sweeney

DIVISION CHAIRMEN FINANCE

C. Midtbon

SPECTACLE-TICKET

William Cleary

PUBLICITY

John Hamburg

SPECTACLE

Mrs. Melvin Brenhaug

SPECIAL EVENTS

Sverre Roang and
 R. Marcelle Pett

HOSPITALITY

Mrs. C. V. Sweeney

LEGAL

J. Roethe

CENTENNIAL SEAL

Virginia Skau

FINANCE

UNDERWRITING
 R. Ruland
 HISTORICAL PROGRAM

C. Sprenger
 NOVELTIES

Dave Love
 OFFICIAL HAT
 C. Schindler

BEARD CONTEST
 (Brothers of the Brush) and
 (Sisters of the Swish)

Robert Bruni
 Freda Wille

CONCESSIONS
 Theo. Brown
 D. Hart
 R. Yoss

DECORATIONS
 Paul Schulze

SPECTACLE TICKET

ADVANCE TICKET

Dr. L. E. Dodson

QUEEN CONTEST

Mrs. A. Cunningham

PATRONS TICKET

D. C. Jones

RESERVE SEAT

D. Holman

GATE and USHERS

Stanley Ore

PUBLICITY

PRESS

H. Everson

DISTRIBUTIVE

E. L. Genthe

SPEAKERS

Stanley Slagg

PROMOTIONAL

S. Schriner

SPECTACLE

CAST

Mrs. Russell Silverwood

SCENARIO and TITLE

Helen Dickinson

COSTUME and MAKE-UP

Mae Hitchcock

MUSIC

Mrs. Gerhard Jenson

PROPERTIES

Dr. F. C. Meyers

CONSTRUCTION

John Anderson

Robert Stricker

R. Short

SPECIAL EVENTS

PARADE

Wayne Ratzlaff

HISTORICAL WINDOWS

Mrs. M. Jarlsberg

CELEBRATION BALL

Dr. F. C. Meyers

FIREWORKS

J. Wedeward

SPECIAL DAYS

Martin Deignan

T. Dickinson

1st DAY—Leo Duerson

2nd DAY—H. Murwin

3rd Day—Ed. Beers

4th DAY—C. Sprenger

5th DAY—C. Venske and

E. Pluess

6th DAY—W. Welch

7th DAY—S. Ore and

W. Shumaker

HOSPITALITY

HOMECOMING

Royal Ladd

TRAFFIC SAFETY

George Sweeney

HOUSING

Mrs. C. Venske

TRANSPORTATION

J. Ford

J. Ellingson

The Edgerton Centennial Committee

— Presents Pictures Of —

Edgerton's Past and Present

The Edgerton Centennial Steering Committee



Front row, from left to right—Walter Williams, L. C. Whittet, Mrs. William McIntosh, Mrs. Melvin Brenhaug, Mrs. Charles V. Sweeney, Chester Peters, Norman Yeske. Back row, from left to right—Earl Dickerson, William Cleary, Rolland Tellefson, Conrad Midtbon, Glen Price, George Sweeney, T. W. Dick-
inson

Edgerton At The Time of the Stage Coach



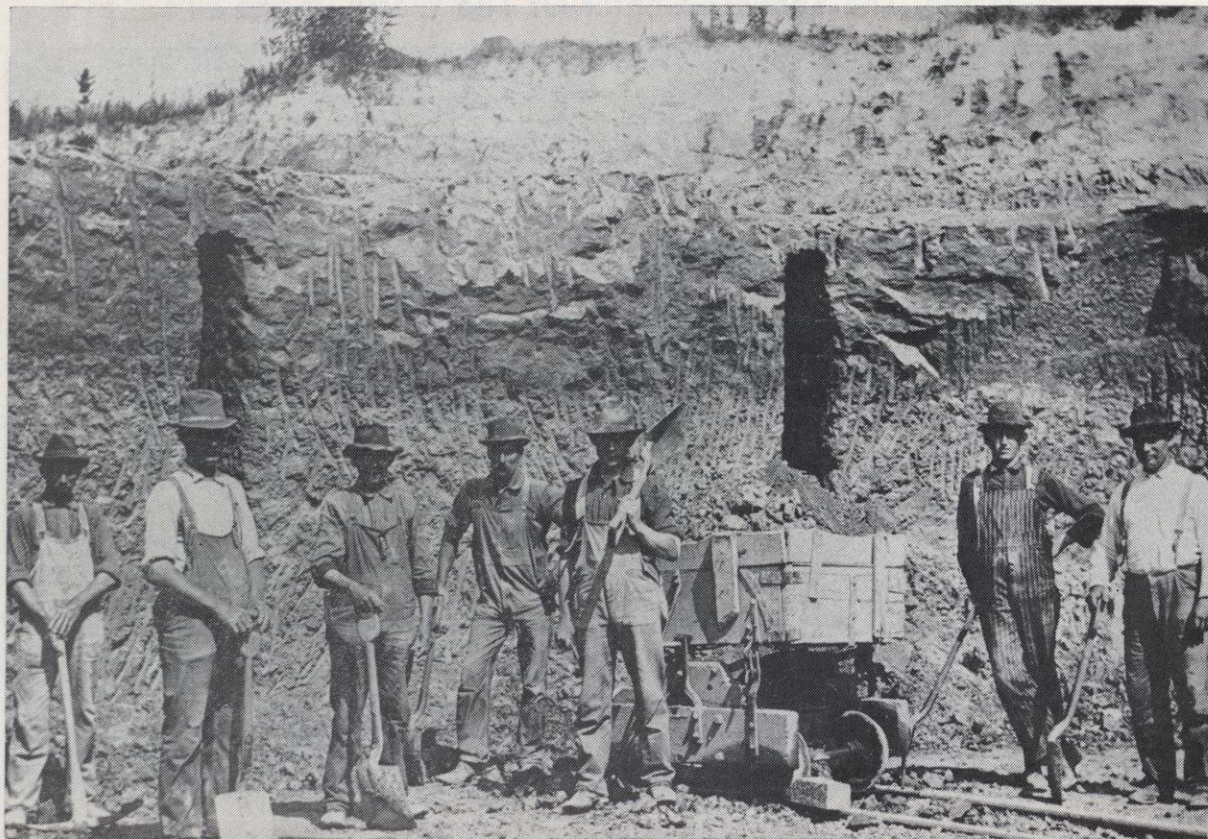
Edgerton, The Tobacco Center Of The World, in the 80's



Edgerton In The Horse and Buggy Days



The Clay Pits



1853 — 1953

The Early Irish Picnics



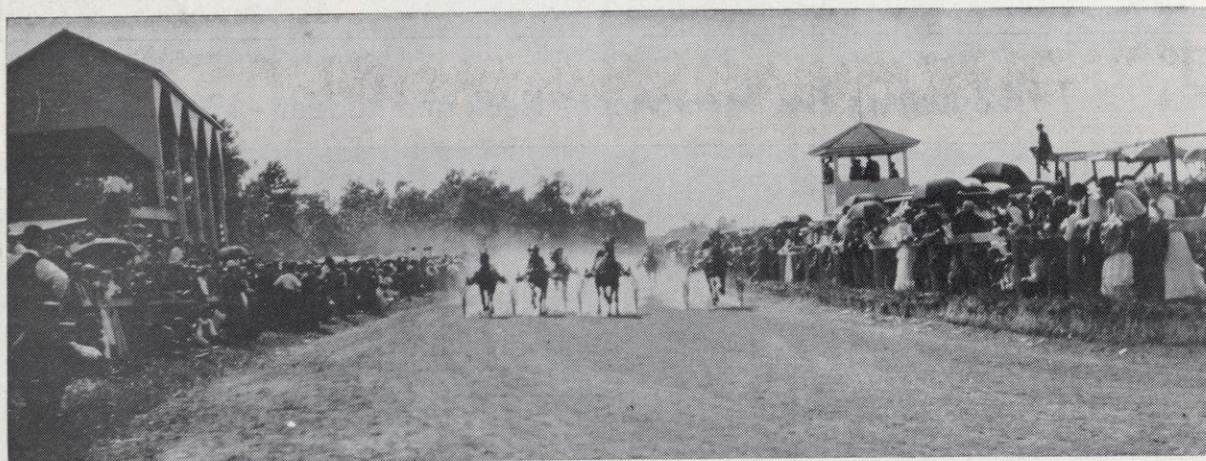
Edgerton's Fire Department - Hook and Ladder - 1901



Delivering Tobacco in Early Edgerton



The Home Stretch at the Race Track



The German Band at Royal Hall



Edgerton Baseball - 1906



Edgerton G. A. R.

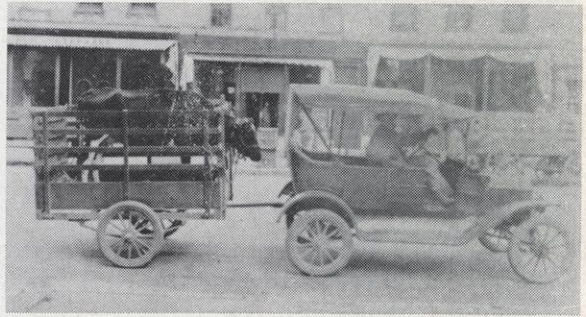


1853 — 1953

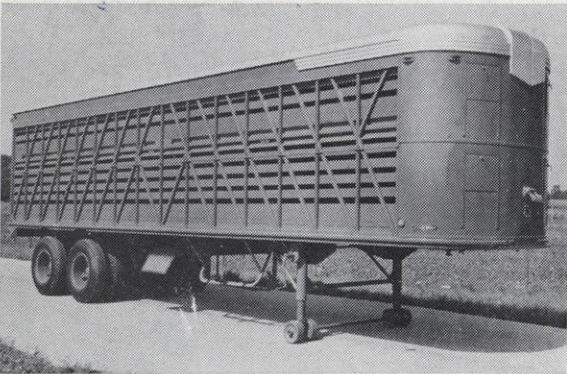
Early Highway Trailer Plant



The First Highway Trailer



Today's Highway Trailer



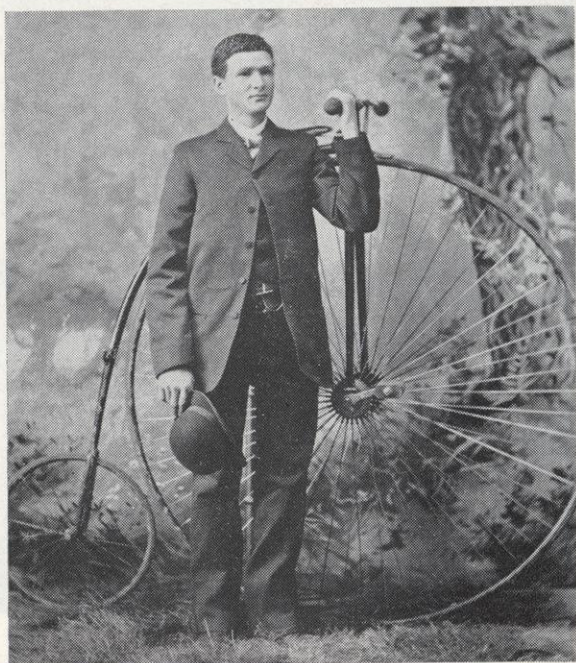
The Horseless Carriage



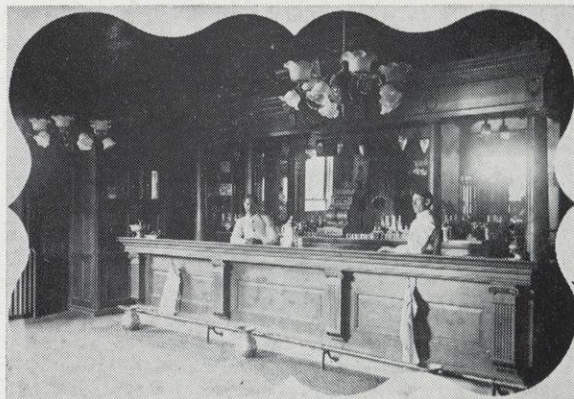
Edgerton Sheep Feeding Yards



Early Mode of Travel



Old Carlton Bar



The First Taxicab



1906 Hot Rod



CENTENNIAL QUEEN CANDIDATES



CENTENNIAL QUEEN CANDIDATES



CENTENNIAL QUEEN CANDIDATES



OXEN TO JETS

The Centennial Story

Where the thriving cities and villages of Rock County are now teeming with activity and life, the woodman's axe had not broken the primeval silence and the red men were the owners of the soil a little over 100 years ago. The great natural wealth was unknown even to the natives, and the water powers were awaiting to be harnessed by the hand of the white man. But the time was ripe for the restlessness of the first settlers to seize and develop the hidden riches of this land.

Th soldiers who had pursued Black Hawk, the Sac Indian chief, up the Rock River were charmed by the wealth and beauty of this region. When the war closed some of them, with their friends, formed the first settlement of the county near Janesville in November, 1835.

The pursuit of the Indians carried them through the vicinity of this city and the deeply cut tracks of the five inch tires of the supply wagons were still visible to the early settlers. One of the army wagon trains passed along the north side of the City limits and south of Mud Lake, to the foot of Lake Koshkonong, where a camp was made on what is now known as The Mounds.

Traveling from mouth to mouth, gaining in inspiration with each telling, the news reached New York. Filled with enthusiasm, and urge for adventure, three young men determined to take their families, go West and grow up with the country. They spent a winter in cutting logs and constructing a huge raft on the lowlands of the Allegheny River. Three shacks, or cabins, for shel-

ANDERSON & FARMAN COMPANY

"Edgerton's Only Exclusive Men's Store"

MEN'S CLOTHING, FURNISHINGS AND SHOES

Marv Jarlsberg and Luke Lein, Props.

ters were built on the raft and as the spring freshets overflowed the banks, they loaded their wagons, tools, and supplies on the raft which the rising waters soon swept down the river on its westward course.

Being compelled to tie up at night to avoid passing boats, and treacherous shoals, for many weeks they manned the fifteen foot sweeps that kept their craft in the current and clear of snags and projecting headlands that would have piled up the raft in a hopeless mass with all the worldly goods they possessed. Sickness and disease sought to stay them, but liberal use of the standard remedy and specific of the day "fetty" (assafoetida) routed the grim spectre. They were a strong people and unless a medicine were strong it could not be any good, and "fetty" is certainly strong enough in both smell and taste to satisfy the most exacting.

Arriving at Cincinnati they sold the raft and took passage on a steamer down the river for Cairo, Illinois, the head of navigation, where they disembarked, the Land of Prom-

ise almost in sight, less than half way across the Territory of Wisconsin.

At Galena a yoke of oxen were bought, the women and children and such immediate necessities as they could carry, were loaded upon the wagon they had brought with them and the remaining goods were left in storage at Galena, to be obtained upon a return trip.

Though a pathless, unmapped expanse lay before them, by following explicit instructions to go northeast by south about five days until you strike a big river, then follow up the river two or three days travel, William Bliven, his wife, two sons and the family dog, arrived at Albion after three months travel, in the summer of 1844.

Three of four log cabins situated in and near Albion housed twice that many families, ten to twenty persons often being sheltered by a single roof.

Leaving his family at his brother's house, and getting another ox team, the next two

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TOBACCO EXCHANGE
BANK

FROM OXEN TO JETS

EDGERTON SHOPPER

City, Rural and Lake Coverage

Phones: Office 531, Home 557

101 W. Fulton St. Edgerton, Wis.

E. Roeber Advertising
Owner Mimeographing



The Centennial has a special significance to the Spikes'—for it was just 100 years ago in 1853 that Joseph Spike came to this community.

Shown above are two of his sons—Charley and Ike who served the public in the livery business shortly after the turn of the century.

Now still serving the public are Clayton Spike (Joseph's son) and Ike Spike, Jr., at

IKE SPIKE'S TAVERN

13 N. Swift Street Edgerton, Wis.

COMPLIMENTS

**NORM & BILL'S
SERVICE STATION**

Phone 443

Norm Kittleson Bill Schoenfeldt

GULF PRODUCTS

211 South Main St. Edgerton, Wis.

COMPLIMENTS OF

JONES FUNERAL HOME

2 N. Catlin St.

Successor to

TELLEFSON FUNERAL HOME

Established 1905

weeks were spent in a return trip to Galena for the rest of his goods. A few wayside taverns dotted the route, but were always filled to overflowing, and as lodging generally consisted of enough space on a floor to spread a blanket, night found them on the grass carpeted shelter of a spreading tree, undisturbed even by the howling wolves.

It would be interesting to follow that trip with its difficulties—the impassable streams and marshes that required hours of ingenious labor to cross, at imminent danger of losing or crippling the oxen in depthless mire, and frequently unloading and repacking each article so necessary for the very life ahead. A slab of bacon or jerked venison, parched corn or wheat, a small handful of salt and saleratus, supplied their daily food and needs. The spirit of independence and self reliance and determination enabled them to accomplish the wonders they wrought.

Broad expanses lay before him from which to choose a spot for a home, as only

a few widely scattered settlers had entered homesteads, though land speculators had purchased tracts in 1836 and 1837 comprising the most thickly built part of Edgerton of today, except the part west of Albion Street, which was entered nine years later in 1854.

Daniel Webster had bought a number of tracts in the town of Albion. The panic of 1837 slowed up the western movement and entries were few and scattered until the 40's.

A quarter section of good timber and soil, fairly level and near water were the main essentials. Catfish and Rock Prairies were considered too barren of timber, and it was predicted these prairies, or "openings" were least desirable and the last to be chosen by actual settlers. Land with trees big enough to get the building logs and fence rails from their trunks were needed, and where they grew indicated a rich soil that compensated for the additional labor and time required to take out stumps and clear the land for crops.

160 acres next to the county line and ad-

PHILCO and WIZARD
TELEVISION - APPLIANCES

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AUTO PARTS - TOOLS

BICYCLES - TOYS

Easy Pay Terms

WESTERN AUTO
Associate Store

Fred Jordan, Owner

Phone 456

COMPLIMENTS

- of -

CARRIER'S ELECTRIC
STORE

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING

and

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

124 W. Fulton

Phone 257

COMPLIMENTS

SCOTTEN, DILLON COMPANY

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

MANUFACTURERS OF FINE TOBACCO

Adjacent to the Shannon farm was selected, a furrow plowed around it to indicate entry, four trees felled and their trunks hewn on two sides, ends notched and overlapping were placed in a square and the foundation for a home was laid.

An Indian trail ran near it, trending southward to Chicago, crossing Saunders Creek at the north angle of Broadway, striking Main Street, through the cemetery to Indian Ford and Fulton, where there was a large Indian village. Locating near an Indian Trail assured close proximity to a future highway as well as the companionship of the passers by. Neighbors five and ten miles away, having heard of a new arrival, gathered to lend a helpful hand, ax and adze rang on the air, stone for a fireplace collected and in a few days the curling smoke was drifting over the first building in Edgerton.

Two open spaces in the walls marked the places where one small window and a door would afterward be put in; the floor was lasting and durable — of nature's making —

the bare earth. Crevices between the logs were chinked up with clay, a process to be repaired each fall. A single room on the ground floor sixteen by eighteen feet in size, was the home and a fireplace capable of taking a eight foot log served warmth and for cooking. Later, poles laid from eaves to eaves and covered with hay, over which wolf skins were spread, made an attic bed-room for children or guests. This attic was reached by long wooden pegs driven in the side of the cabin for a kind of ladder, requiring no small amount of skill to climb. Roofs were made of shakes which were a rough shingle six to ten inches wide, three feet long and about an inch thick and made by splitting thin slices off a log by means of wedges; and also by laying poles from ridge to eave and covering with hay and sod; no method was proof against driving rain or winter snow. In the picturesque language of E. A. Burdick, "in the winter of '43 our family of twenty-two had only a thin bass-wood siding between us and all outdoors, and the snow would sift in through the

Donald Balis, D. B. A.

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AND SEED

Feeds - Seeds - Grains

Custom Grinding and Mixing

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AND BOTTLE GAS
CO.**

- Representing -

GENERAL ELECTRIC

STROMBERG - CARLSON

THERMOGAS BOTTLED GAS

MEYERS PUMPS

PITTSBURGH PAINTS

Phone 137

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OPTIMO CIGARS

TAMPA

FLORIDA

BADGER PETROLEUM CO.

GULF PRODUCTS

Ras Ronde, Mgr.

Phone 258

Edgerton, Wis.

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PLUMBING & HEATING**

Plumbing, Heating and Sheet Metal Work

Edgerton, Wisconsin

Phone 639J

ARVID KJENDLE

Building and Remodeling

Box 131 Dorow Ave.

Edgerton, Wis.

1 8 5 3 — 1 9 5 3

cracks, but we would huddle close together under our Buffalo robes, pull them up over our heads, sleep soundly all night and come out in the morning steaming like hogs out of a hay stack". J. D. Hain who came to Edgerton in 1855 tells of a log cabin being built in a single day by a bee of twenty-five neighbors.

Wild berries of every kind were abundant honey of wild bees was found in the hollow trees, fish in the streams and wild fowl filled the sky and a store and grist mill at Fulton supplied all other needs. Austin Burdick killed three deer on the slope of the hill where Dr. Burpee lives now, for his Christmas. A good sized log was hollowed out, the ends being left in, filled with hardwood ashes, dampened and packed down hard, a few pails of warm water poured over it daily, which seeped slowly through the ashes and drained into an iron kettle through a hole bored in the bottom of one end of the log. When the kettle was full of the dark brown pungent lye, refuse animal fat and grease skimmings were added to the lye,

boiled down and the result was a gooey, slippery viscid mass that was strong enough to cleanse the apparel, skin and soul of the vilest sinner.

A good man is good to his beasts, and being dependent upon them he must preserve their lives in order that he also might live, so a shelter for the oxen was provided by putting four poles with a crotched fork on the top end, two poles laid crosswise on top of crotches and lighter poles thickly laid, crossways to the poles, making a flat surface which was thickly covered with marsh hay.

Having erected his fortress for the protection of himself and his dependents, he must further fortify against the human wolves who would wrest from him the fruits of his efforts by prior entry of the land in the Milwaukee land office. Claim jumper land speculators and their unscrupulous scouts seeking choice locations were ever on the lookout to obtain the most desirable entries and file a claim before the settler



"THE BANK WITH THE CHIMES CLOCK"

THE NATIONAL BANK OF EDGERTON

EDGERTON, WISCONSIN

"A Good Bank In A Good Town"

1853 — 1953

QUARRY RESORT

Boats - Baits - Cabins

Lunches - Beverages

Phone X-343

Milton Jct., R.R. 2 - Newville Bridge

LUCY'S COFFEE SHOP

At Charley Bluff

LAKE KOSHKONONG

Lunches - Groceries

Soft Drinks and Beer

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Boats - Baits - Cabins - Good Food

AT ENTRANCE

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(On Rock River at Newville Bridge)

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Cafe Phone 1137-J

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4 Burdick Street

PAUL W. STARK

Plumbing, Steam and Hot Water Heating

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Edgerton

Wisconsin



Enjoy Yourself at the Centennial

TRY GETTLEMAN BEER
FOR ADDED ENJOYMENT

Get Gettleman at any Bar, Tavern
or Package Store

W. A. BORGNIS

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could do so. The first public meeting was held near Sandy Sink and attended by actual settlers from many miles around, who selected a Board of Referees to determine disputes and protect their members from unjust claims. Though this Board had no legal existence, authority, defined powers or duties, it had the will and loyal support of the people back of it, and its rules and decisions were more effectual and obediently observed than many of the formally enacted laws of today.

The government surveyors had erected a slight mound of earth at the corners of sections and set it in a square stake on which was burned or cut a set of numbers to denote the descriptions of that piece of land. Unearthing his hidden pouch of gold pieces, the glittering coins were spread on the table before the rapt gaze of the wide eyed sons, and \$100 counted as the purchase price of eighty acres of land at \$1.25 an acre. The Land Office was to be opened on the second following day at Milwaukee and an eager rush would ensue from the entire southern part of

the Territory of Wisconsin. Varnum Westcott, a neighbor was reputed to be a fast traveler, and was given the gold and a description of the land and he started on foot at nightfall, guided by the stars, he walked the two nights and a day to arrive at the Milwaukee Land Office about sunup and formally made a "settling down" of the north half of the northeast quarter of Section 3 Town 4 North of Range 12 east, to William Bliven his heirs and assigns forever.

Before any crops could be raised the ground must be cleared of trees which covered the ground, standing six to eight rods apart with trunks thirty to fifty feet high before branching. The roots of the stumps were cut and by dint of much labor and the help of an ox were twisted out of the ground. A drouth in the summer of '43 had left ample fuel for a fire that swept the country from the Saunders Creek to Rockdale, and it was hoped the fire had destroyed the rattle snakes, copperheads, and spotted adders that were so numerous. Much of the underbrush-fallen and dead trees burned and many small

COMPLIMENTS

- OF -

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10 NORTH SWIFT STREET

EDGERTON, WISCONSIN

**MILK A PRINCIPAL FOOD HAS COME FROM THE COW
SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME**

THE LAST 100 YEARS HAS NOT CHANGED THE
SOURCE OF SUPPLY

Albion Co-operative Creamery Co.

Handlers of Grade "A" and Grade "B" Milk
ALBION, WISCONSIN

A Creamery Owned by Farmers—For the Farmers Benefit
Where All Farmers Are Treated Alike

COMPLIMENTS

C. M. AMUNDSON

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Edgerton, Wisconsin

COMPLIMENTS

**EDGERTON BODY & PAINT
SHOP**

FLOYD DOMINY

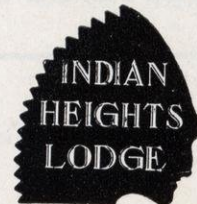
ANIMIKON

(Anna-Meekon)

EDGERTON!

(Indian meaning—WELCOME (to) EDGERTON)

"Wisconsin's Beauty Spot"



ON LAKE KOSHKONONG

INDIAN HEIGHTS
EDGERTON, WISCONSIN

The first hundred years are the hardest.

stumps to allow them to be more easily removed. Only the very best logs were saved, the rest all being piled and burned, a tremendous waste but necessary to clear the land. From 1853 to 1860 choppers cut wood for fifty cents a cord, which brought \$1.50 a cord when delivered to the railroad in Edgerton. For many years it was necessary to keep fire breaks plowed around buildings to protect them from brush fires. The first plowing was done with four to six yoke of oxen drawing a thirty-two inch plow and that hired done cost \$3 to \$6 an acre, depending upon the nature of soil and number of stumps. Small patches were sown to such crops as could produce the family food; buckwheat, corn, potatoes, beans, sorghum and barley. Wheat and oats, the money crop did not at once realize the money hoped for. Drought and insects spoiled the crops and twenty to sixty cents a bushel at Milwaukee when forty bushels could be hauled at a load and a week's time needed for it, was slow work. In 1856 wheat jumped from \$.25 to \$2 a bushel, being ascribed to the Crimean

War in the wheat raising districts of the Old World. Wheat called "Hedge-Row" was the bearded variety and produced the largest yield, while the beardless was called "bald" and made better flour and yielded less. Both were sown by hand, twice dragged over with a drag, cut with a cradle and threshed by hand with a flail. After the wheat was sown and until it was up, it was the daily duty of the small boy of the house to awaken at sunrise, go to the wheat field and stand clapping two small boards together to scare the pigeons and one could pick up a bushel of dead passenger pigeons from one double barrel gun shot.

The family clothes were made at home from wool carded and spun by the fireside or perhaps were taken to the woolen mill at Fulton, which was the market place, having several stores, groceries, a blacksmith shop, a grist mill and saw mill and distillery, and one large general store whose stock and credits required \$7,500 investment, and the proprietor made an annual trip to New York to buy goods and insure the latest fashions. The

DRESSER'S IGA SUPER MARKET

MERLE AND MARSHALL DRESSER

Where Shopping is a Pleasure

Low prices every day. Shop in comfort in our Air-Conditioned Store.

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COMPLIMENTS

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Edgerton

Wis.

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STANLEY W. SLAGG

and

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We congratulate Edgerton on its first
100 years and look forward to the future.

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110 So. Main St.

Edgerton, Wis.

effort and time required to provide the simplest necessities of life left but little opportunity for pleasures and past-times, yet they found time to gather at the house of some neighbor where an itinerant preacher held services. As schoolhouses began to be built they were the center of all social activities. Winnebago and Sac Indians were frequent visitors at cabin doors, were obnoxious and unwelcome, silently entering and boldly begging for everything in sight and taking anything they could lay their hands on. They had camps at Lake Koshkonong and one at the present site of the Towne Country Club. One woman had her patience so sorely tried by a persistent buck prying around her house, that when he picked up a jar of plum preserve she had just made, she threw a pan of hot water in his face, blinding and scalding him, pushed him out of the door and slammed it shut. No Indian was seen around that house for a long time. In another home a troublesome Indian was easily disposed of by a quick-witted woman whose child was ill and lying in a clothes basket near the

stove. The Indian inquired "Papoose sick?" and made hasty tracks away from the house when told "yes, very sick - smallpox" - that was an Indian's horror.

David Stone, Robert Stone and William Squires were the first settlers in this vicinity. They arrived during the summer of 1836 and settled on the east bank of Rock River, about five and a half miles southwest of Edgerton. After them came Thos. Quigley. He came from rent racked, famine stricken Roscommon, Ireland, some time in the '40s, worked for a time at Albany, New York, and saved up enough to venture for himself. Traveling by canal and lakesailing vessels, nearly a thousand miles passed under his eye before he found a location that just suited his fancy and purse. Traveling was not very costly, the rate by canal being about a cent a mile, and the fare from Buffalo to Milwaukee by sailing vessel, \$7.00, Milwaukee had tempted him, but the prevalence of cholera there kept him moving toward the western horizon. June first, 1849, was an eventful day for him. Walking to Janes-

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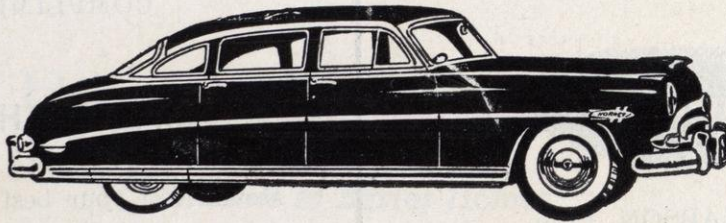
Wisconsin

ville he obtained a deed of the N. W. fourth Section ten, a half mile square, reaching from the hill where Menhall (now Swanson) apartments stands south, to the city limits and from Lord Street east to beyond Saund-er's Creek into the Sand and Gravel Co. land. This 160 acres had been entered in 1836 by William Wright, an eastern specu-lator and was bought by Mr. Quigley from an agent for \$500, which was rather a high price considering that 160 acres adjoining on the south had been sold the previous fall to Anson Moulthrop for \$300 and the 120 acres north of Washington Street was sold August 1, 1849 or two months after the Quigley purchase for \$420. 1848 and 1849 saw considerable activity in real estate and a number of parcels changed hands, though they cannot be attributed to or influenced by any possibility of a railroad, as its location had not then been even remotely considered.

The exact time of the coming of Thos. Quigley and his brothers, John and Bartley and their Uncle Daniel, and whether they came together or separately is not known.

It will hereafter appear that this 160 acres was a very important factor in the location of the depot grounds. Daniel Quigley came from Sligo, Ireland, a county adjoining Ros-common, Ireland, on the north. It is certain that the Quigleys take a front rank among the pioneers and encountered perils unknown to the land they left freed from snakes by good St. Patrick, for a daughter of Thos. Quigley was bit by a rattlesnake while play-ing near her home. The nearest doctor was summoned from Janesville and the anxious hours awaiting his arrival were successfully spent in checking the poison as pioneers nec-essarily knew how. She lived to tell her grandchildren about it. The timber wolves were very troublesome and several times Mr. Quigley defended himself from them with his Irish shillalah. He built a log cabin a little southeast of the railroad grounds, where he lived for several years, attending church at Porter, making the trip on foot until he got a team, when he would take a load of people to church with him. Money was a scarce commodity and but little used, pay-ments being made in like quantity of mater-

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ial or labor, and when a church was built on Lord Street in 1859 he contributed his quota of logs and labor.

In 1845 Arnold Collins purchased land from the government and built the first frame house on a site just north of the present Victoria Greenhouse. This same year Jacob Hendrix built a log cabin just a short distance west of the Shannon house (now Hinn). The Shannon House was built in 1858.

Silvia Bliven was the first white girl born—in 1845, and died in 1924. Frank Hall was the first white boy.

In 1846 Adin Burdick whose log cabin was heated for the first time by a stove in 1852 built a dam across Saunder's Creek, just north of the present Marcel Pett home. A mill was built and logs were hauled to the mill by ox teams, some logs were rafted down the mill pond and from Mud Lake, the water there being five to six feet deep. On a cold night in Feb. 1856 grease was being heated to grease the saws. The grease caught fire

and spread to the mill building which was destroyed. After this, most of the lumber was obtained from the Hopkins mill located at Indian Ford. Many of the first frame buildings were built from lumber sawed at the Burdick Mill. The original owner of the mill site was Lewis Beebe who purchased this site from the government June 20, 1837.

In 1846 a wing 14 by 18 feet was added to the William Bliven home, and used for a school, until 1848 when a frame building 18 by 24 feet was built on a site, just west of the present Victoria Greenhouse, and when completed it was used for a school and a place of public gathering. Mrs. Jacob Hendrix and Sherman Fassett were the first teachers.

In 1850 Samuel Breeze sold the Northeast quarter of section 9 to John S. Fassett. Most of the land sold at this time was sold at a loss due to panics and depreciation of wild cat currency and poor crops. The years 1836 to 1856 were trying ones.



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The settlement of Albion antedates that of Edgerton. Dr. Head of Albion bought of a New York speculator, a quarter section of land lying within the present city limits on the west side of Albion Street for \$5 per acre. From the surface clay, upon this land he made the first red brick for Albion Academy. Soon he discovered that immense beds of clay suitable for white brick, existed beneath the surface. This industry resulted in the first frame building on Albion Street which was built to accommodate laborers employed in the brick yard. This marked the beginning of an industry that flourished many years. By using sand obtained from a pit located at Catlin and Fulton streets, brick was made for most of the buildings in the city. Lilibridge Barber purchased the business from Dr. Head, and he sold it to John Culton. Maltpress and Son, Jensen and Parr, L. C. Whittet, and Schaller and Young were owners in turn until the yard was discontinued in 1920. Brickyard was from Albion to Mechanic Street. The pits were from Mechanic to West Street.

From 1853 to 1857 the village was platted into lots by Adin J. and E. A. Burdick, H. S. Swift, Dr. C. R. Head and Robert Lawton.

Edgerton probably owes its importance and perhaps its existence, to the disagreement between owners: Guy Stoughton at Indian Ford and Emmanuel Corker at Fulton. The exorbitant price asked for the land in those places, induced the railroad company to change its route and lay the line three miles further north, where it now runs. Thomas Quigley, who lived southeast of what was to become Edgerton on June 7, 1853, conveyed the north sixty acres of his 160 acre tract, which he had acquired for \$500, to the Burdicks, Adin the father and Julius and Austin, the sons, for a consideration of \$600. This was probably the first successful speculation in land in Edgerton. In rapid succession on June 21 and 23 of the same year, we find Lucius Page, who had acquired eighty acres of what is now the northeast part of Edgerton, for \$120, and Head, who was land poor as owner of the northwest part of what is now Edgerton, and much other land, conveying eight to ten

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acres, respectively, to the railroad, each for a recited consideration of \$100. Likewise, on June 23, 1853, Fassett who owned the land southwest, conveyed one acre for a recited consideration of \$100. These tracts made up the original twenty acres which are now the C. M. St. P. and P. Railway property. The character of the land is demonstrated by the fact that the railroad in eventually building through was forced to fill from five to six feet above the level of the surrounding country, and to build a causeway over the track from both sides for a highway crossing. It was not infrequently necessary to ferry those who desired to be guests of the American Hotel over to the hotel from the railroad station. Ducks were often served at the hotel, that were easily shot from its porch, as they landed on depot land. Three quarters of a mile west on Head's land (formerly the driving park, now the Legion Park) would have been a much better location. Nevertheless, there on the flats and in the marsh, at the cornering of four sections of land, requiring deeds and perhaps the payment of a bounteous price to four dif-

ferent owners, was located the station site, and there it was that the town developed. The railroad company made good its agreement to erect a station. In 1853-'54 there arose a building, constructed of logs cut from the hills around Clark's Pond. It stood on the south side of the tracks, approximately opposite the present passenger station, and served not only the needs of the traveling public, but also those of the community generally. Many a time it was the meeting place where itinerant pastors held services to a congregation ensconced on barrels, boxes and bags of provisions, awaiting the arrival of the next freight. With the station the railroad company built also a goodly shed 50 by 100 feet on the ground, 20 feet in height, to store cordwood fuel for its locomotives. This shed, for many years was a resort of the youth and devilry of the community in search of that succulent morsel, the bark of the slippery elm, which could be chewed to the partial alleviation of youthful hunger.

The station, at the outset of its career,

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bore the name of "Fulton Station". This was not for long. There were stores and Jim Finney's Hotel along the south of the tracks. The citizenry resented the railroads attempted intermingling of its identity with that of the village of Fulton and in informal caucus assembled. C. H. Dickinson who came to the town in 1854 headed a committee to meet with Benjamin Edgerton, Chief Surveyor for the railroad, who had been influential in determining the working route of the railroad, and ask permission to use his name for the village. In 1859 the name was changed to Edgerton. Mr. Edgerton was a man of the pioneer type and had modestly said "Better wait until I am dead. I might do something in the meantime to the discredit of the name."

The first train was an excursion consisting of one car and a locomotive. Needless to say, an enthusiastic reception was accorded it all along the line and many a baptismal bottle was broken on the cow-catcher. Everyone was anxious to make this first trip. Ans Bliven then a small boy tells us that he was

bitterly disappointed not to be able to go but he and his brother were sent instead by their mother, with the ox team and cart and with various barrels and containers to Lake Koshkonong to bring home water for the family wash. They had reached Lake Koshkonong and were loading water for the return trip, when the strange rumble of a train, the first sound of its kind ever to reach their ears, resounded clear up the river to the lake, so frightened the oxen that they ran away and reached home with no more water than enough to fill an eye drop. The first passenger car came through in January of 1854. This was a cold winter with heavy snows so the company was unable to build the road further than Stoughton. One of the first passenger trains was snowed in at the cut one mile south of town. Robert Attlesey is one of the four men called up at night, who with four yoke of oxen hauled the engine and tender out of the snow drift to Edgerton. They went back and pulled the passenger coach to the depot. They were assured that their novel motor-power was the swiftest this side of Milwaukee.

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The coming of the railroad brought mail, and William Hall was made the first postmaster with the office in his house. This was the building on Fulton Street not now standing but located where the First National Bank is. Here Frank Hall, the first baby boy was born. The post office, a little whiskey shop on the present bank corner and a store in a part of a house next to the present Masonic Temple constituted the business street. 1854 and '55 were marked by considerable development and growth. Two brick stores and the U. S. Hotel were erected as well as a number of dwellings. Of the dwellings the homes of Mr. Copley (end of Albion Street), Mr. McInnis (the brick house at the rear of the Swanson Apartments, which was formerly in the apartment location) and the old Babcock Home still stand (formerly on the corner of Albion and Rollin Streets now on Blaine Street.) They were heated with wood stoves and lighted with tallow candles. A daily chore of the children was the candle making.

Among items of importance to the growth of the town and its people we find Dr. Burdick came in 1854 following Drs. Landers and Slocum who did not stay long. Dr. Lord came in 1853. Dr. Stillman set up a drug store but did not practice medicine. Daniel Coon, the first carpenter, came in 1853.

1854, the first post office had O. D. Peck as Postmaster for a very short time, followed by William B. Hall. Charles Clark followed Hall and Schuler Fassett who had trouble keeping his silk hat smooth followed Clark. The mail was kept at the home of the postmaster until 1857 when the post office was established in the basement of the Swift Building.

1854 - Nelson Coon built the Exchange Hotel and the United States Hotel. The United States Hotel was located at the present site of the Dave Love Tavern and R. & S. Store. The Exchange Hotel was at the north east corner of the intersection of East High and South Main Streets. It became

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1854 - D. F. Coon built a dam across Saunders Creek just north of the present pumping station. A flouring and grist mill was built the same year. The basement of the mill building is still in use as a storage and is owned by the Highway Trailer Co.

1854 - the town pump was constructed. It was thirty feet deep and in front of the Jen-son warehouse (now Locker Plant). It served the community until 1890. It was re-placed by an artesian well 490 feet deep at a cost of \$823.99. This was known as "Iron Mike" and was located at the southeast corner of West Fulton and South Henry Streets.

The present water system was constructed in 1897.

1854 - after a perilous stage trip, C. H. Dickinson from New York state decided to work on the Swift house and Dickinson and Searl continued as painters for several years.

1854 - Stiles Hakes kept the first general

store and hired Christian Geisert as helper. Calico was 50 cents a yard - the same pattern was used for all dresses. Kerosene was \$1.25 a gallon, and it is said that one woman thought the glass chimney no help in lighting over a candle.

1855 - The Masonic Lodge, Fulton Lodge No. 69 was organized at Indian Ford with Isaac Miles the first Master of the Lodge.

1855 - Gilbert Randolph built the American House (present Peters Building) Patrick Mooney and wife, John Leary and wife, William Connors and others came in 1855 and the men worked in the brickyard.

1855 - Gilbert Randolph built the American House located at Albion and Fulton Streets (now the Bowling Arcade).

1856 - Charles Mabbett came to town with his wife and sister.

1856 - The first school was built consisting of two large rooms at the present site of the grade school. Later two more rooms

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Edgerton

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were added. The building was torn down later.

1856 - The Baptist Church Society of Edgerton was organized; the church was not built until 1868 at the present library site.

1857 - John S. Fassett donated three acres of land for a cemetery and it is known as Fassett Cemetery. The first person buried here was a Mr. Thornington, who was fatally injured while attempting to board a train at the depot. No record of his grave is to be found. A Roman Catholic Cemetery was laid out in 1869. A Norwegian one later.

1858 - John P. Towne opened a law office. His office was in the Swift Building.

1859 - Saint Joseph's Catholic Church was built. It was located on Lord Street at the site of the Willard Miller residence. Father James Haggerty was the first Priest. In 1858 the land for the church was donated by Daniel Quigley and was the property of Saint Joseph's Congregation, as long as it was used for religious purposes. It reverted

to the heirs in 1907. During the pastorate of Father Bowe a parsonage was built and a 900 lb. bell put into the church. Seventy-five families composed the membership of the congregation.

About 1860 Rudolph Brown opened a lumber yard at the intersection of Fulton and Main Streets and on the south of the street.

In 1861 Thomas Hutson and several helpers purchased a large number of horses and moved them overland to California. A horse worth \$150 at Edgerton sold for \$1,000 to \$1,500 in California.

In 1863 the Methodist Church was organized. The first pastor was the Reverend J. H. Jennie and services were held in a building on Albion Street (now the Printery). Construction of the present church was started in 1878 and completed in 1880. The building was remodeled in 1952.

1865 - W. H. Clark was the first undertaker, located in the basement of the present Bakery building, Fulton and Swift Streets.

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N. Main St.

In 1866 the first newspaper published here was known as the Edgerton Union and was edited by J. Wells and Q. D. Wells. It was in the Swift Block and the first copy was issued April 26, 1866. The Edgerton Union was followed by the Western Star, and Edgerton Independent. In 1877 it became the Wisconsin Tobacco Reporter.

Edgerton in the 1860's was a community of five to six hundred inhabitants. It was south of the tracks that the building had been since north it was so marshy. The principal residence section was Albion Street. Washington and Rollin Streets had scarcely a building and the streets themselves were mere trails. The hill where the Swanson Apartments are, was then much higher. In 1854 when the mill, now part of the Highway Trailer Co. was built a dam had flooded all the low land over what is Swift Street and Victoria Road. The border of the mill pond was the picnicking place of the community. In winter its frozen surface was the skating rink. In summer boats were moored there

and it was the "old swimmin' hole." The Newville Road of today was the top of the old dam.

The school meeting in 1866 voted a tax of \$50 for a library and continued this tax for three years. In 1869 the school meeting directed that a committee use \$260 on hand in purchasing books. This was the nucleus of our public library.

In 1867 the first disaster visited the town in the shape of two fires. One destroyed five or six store buildings on Fulton Street east of Swift Street. A second fire the next month destroyed a number of buildings on the depot grounds.

These early settlers sought a quick growing shade tree to adorn their streets and homes. They found the soft maple and elm along the streams and shores of Lake Koshkonong admirably fitted for this purpose. They gathered the seeds, sowed them in nurseries and transplanted the young trees and we of today are enjoying the beautiful

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streets and cooling shades that they foresaw and their industry furnished. Among all the early settlers of Edgerton, the name of Randolph Brown should be long remembered for his zeal and industry in setting out elms and maples on many of our streets. The street running north east of Albion Street bears the name of Randolph in honor of his memory.

During the gigantic struggle for the preservation of the Union, Edgerton was represented in those Wisconsin Troops that gained an enviable reputation and maintained it throughout the war.

Henry Swift, whose father, H. S. Swift, came here in 1854 with his family of fourteen children, graduated with his nine brothers from Albion Academy and after a four-year course at Albany, New York, he went south as a first lieutenant in the Civil War. He was killed and his remains brought here for burial at Fassett Cemetery. The Edgerton G. A. R. Post was named for him.

Edgerton's fame as a tobacco raising locality and shipping center had long since reach-

ed to eastern states and cities, also to German and English markets. The first tobacco crop was grown by Ed Hall and Robert Johnson in 1853 but they failed to save the crop. The first tobacco crop was marketed by Ralph Pomeroy in 1854. Other farmers soon followed his example. These early crops were sold to cigar makers in Janesville and Milwaukee. The fame of the place soon reached to representatives of the leading tobacco companies and the first warehouse was built in 1869. Previous to this time the crops were bought and stored in grain elevators and sheds on the depot grounds. In 1870 the presence of a large number of eastern buyers influenced the farmers to put forth better efforts and the acreage greatly increased, which brought a need for more warehouses. These first ones were all frame buildings set on wooden blocks. In 1885 two brick warehouses were erected. In early nineteen hundred, twelve to fifteen hundred people received employment in Edgerton in the tobacco business, and there were so on as many as fifty-two tobacco ware-

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Edgerton, Wis.

houses. First buyers representing Eastern firms were T. Pomeroy, W. A. Blutley, C. H. Wheeler, W. W. Child, and T. Hutson.

The first crop of tobacco had been sold in Chicago and Milwaukee at four to six cents a pound. The first warehouse built in 1869 was built by Thomas Hutson for an Eastern firm - Schroeder and Bond. Storing capacity was 2500 cases. The same year W. W. Child built a warehouse.

The 1869 crop sold as high as twelve and one-half cents per pound; the 1870 crop brought fifteen to twenty cents for the better grade. In 1876 4,742 acres of tobacco was grown in Wisconsin - Dane and Rock County. In 1878 Wisconsin was fourth in production and Edgerton was known as the largest market for Cigar Leaf tobacco in the world.

Among the other resources of the city is a superior pottery clay. In 1888 a stock company was formed for the development of this source of wealth. O. I. Jacobus came to Edgerton to interest citizens in the batteries. E. W. Babcock, F. W. Coon and

Andrew Jenson were appointed a committee to investigate the proposition. In March 1888 \$6,000 was raised with \$5,000 added so the E. C. Hopkins warehouse was purchased on West Lawton Street. The kiln was built by John Sargent of Cincinnati. A lot of money went into the kiln for such things as clay washers, pressers, pugmills, figgers and laths beside a forty horse power engine. Mr. Jacobus was made Supt. of the making of the cups and his wife was put in charge of the art ware. M. L. Pelton, C. F. Mabbett, O. I. Jacobus, J. P. Towne, Henry Marsden, Andrew Jenson were the officers and directors. Thirty-seven people were employed, thirteen women in the art and twenty men in the cup departments. All decorations were made by the under-glaze method. The deep blues and dark greens resembled Mojalica ware. The pottery was called the Pauline Pottery and the trade-mark was made of a crown with a "P" at each side. The finished products were marketed in Marshal Fields and at Tiffany's store in New York. Mr. Jacobus died after three years

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here. The use of dry cell batteries lost the use of the battery cups and the pottery gradually fell into disuse. Those who had invested in the undertaking had lost their investment. It had been found that it was necessary to bring in feldspar clay from Ohio to mix with his local yellow clay and was a considerable expense. Some of the original pieces may still be found in homes in Edgerton. A small collection of the Pottery is to be seen at the Wisconsin Historical Museum at Madison. It had been donated by Mr. Middleton of Madison.

After the Pauline Pottery stopped making things, the potters, two brothers named Samson, from Denmark, found it difficult to find other work and had to resort to heavy labor which was very bad for their sensitive finger. L. H. Towne then got started on a project to keep them at their art and he organized the Edgerton Pottery. Here the main line of work was art objects—plaques, statuettes, etc. Helen Mears, a young artist from Wisconsin was hired to come and direct the work. Miss Mears had been recog-

nized by Wisconsin Club women and her work as a sculptor and artist is well known. The Edgerton Pottery did not last as a business but a short time.

About 1881 the population of this village increased by the immigration of a large number of Germans.

In 1883 Edgerton was incorporated as a city. The first mayor was Perez E. Burdick. Aldermen were T. A. Perry, R. R. Brown and D. C. Son; treasurer was R. G. Robinson.

On August 1891 the city council passed a resolution requiring that the walks be made of cement. Also in November 19, 1891, articles of incorporation were sent to the office of the secretary of state, T. J. Cunningham, the Gov. was George W. Peck. Charter granted on December 3, 1891. Mayor was A. S. Flagg. Aldermen C. O. Shannon, J. W. Coon, J. H. Arthur, J. O. Henderson, D. B. Springer, W. M. Scarcliff. Clerk, Henry Johnson.

During the year of 1889 an electric generator was installed in the pottery building,

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located on West Lawton Street, transmission lines were built and a limited amount of electricity was available for lights. The use of electricity increased fast and the generator was moved to Fulton December, 1892. Water power was available at Fulton and much cheaper than steam.

Since 1886 public spirited young men have deserved the thanks of every citizen for their service in the volunteer fire department. With the constantly increasing number of tobacco warehouses and other valuable property came a need for a better water supply than wells, cisterns and brooks so the artesian well became a necessity that was completed in 1890.

Edgerton has long had telephone connection with surrounding cities. In 1896 the Wisconsin Bell Telephone Company put in a local exchange and since the formation of a local company in 1898 many of the residents enjoyed the telephone in their homes. It has grown from about 100 subscribers in 1900 to 2,500 in 1953.

Edgerton Highway Trailer

James Menhall started in business early in the 1900's as a partner with his father in a Cigar and confectionery store, in Beloit. In addition he dealt in oriental and imported rugs. In 1912 he became interested in trailers and automobiles, and bought equipment at auctions of failing companies that were sold to individuals. By different businesses he amassed \$50,000. In 1915 he invested \$10,000 in the Warner Trailer Co. in Beloit and became a partner and General Sales Manager. The Warner Co. manufactured a two wheel auto trailer; a camp trailer called "Prairie Schooner." Late in 1916 he broke with Warner to start a company on his own. The idea arose from the thought that a farmer shouldn't have to hitch a team and wagon in order to get a cow or some produce into town. The result was a small two wheel wagon a farmer could attach to his car for the livestock and at the same time take the family along in the car. Edgerton was chosen because of available building and machines at the old Edgerton

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Wagon Co. There was a railroad spur of the Milwaukee R. R. at the location also. Stock was sold to local merchants and townspeople and the company was the Edgerton Highway Trailer Co., as organized in 1917. A two wheel trailer was manufactured and the first sale was to a farmer in August 1917. During World War I four wheel platform and Rock cargo trailers were made very crudely. Late in 1918 a new building fifty by 250 was added. A disastrous fire started early on July 4, 1921, presumably from defective wiring and the loss was partially covered with a \$10,000 insurance. In 1919 a Continental Axle for truck and other trailer Co. were made for the Fruehauf Co. This was later absorbed by the Highway Trailer Co., and is now site of the forge, and electric machine shops. They produced every item except bearings and tires. From 1921 to 1927 a utility line including the foundry and forge shops were developed. Power transmissions were developed with derricks and winches for bodies for Public Utility Companies. They became the major source

of supply and this position is still held. The Stoughton plant was added and during World War II a conversion to war production turned out the same type of products for peace time use. In 1949 a tank line—the Davisbilt was added.

Menhall resigned April 30, 1922, as General Manager.

William Wallace Child, one of the representative business men of Edgerton and the oldest and most extensive dealer in leaf tobacco in Rock County, dates his residence in Edgerton from 1865. For several years he was engaged in general merchandising, and in 1869 he established the first warehouse in Edgerton. In 1884 he built a larger three story warehouse. He also engaged in wool buying and his annual purchase was about 75,000 pounds a year. Born in Rutland county, Vermont, he was the seventh generation of his family. He came to the territory of Wisconsin in 1835 and located at Eagle where he taught school for about three years. He engaged in business in Palmyra and Albion and moved to Edgerton in 1865. His

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THE BUTTON

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Edgerton

Wisconsin

COMPLIMENTS

CITY DELIVERY SERVICE

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Edgerton

Wisconsin

trip from Vermont to Buffalo was by Canal and lake steamer and to Milwaukee by foot. A trip that took four weeks then. He landed in Milwaukee with \$58 in his pocket, \$50 of which he applied as payment for land at \$6 per acre. A year later he sold the land for \$10 an acre.

His daughter, Florence, is well remembered in Edgerton for her generous gifts to the community—when a new high school was needed she offered to give \$40,000 if the city would raise a similar sum and today the Child High School is no longer adequate for the youth of the city, which has grown so much since it was built in 1907.

John Parker Towne is numbered among the oldest members of the Rock County Bar, having opened a law office at Edgerton in September, 1858. He was a native of the "Old Granite" state, having been born at Milford in 1826. His ancestors had lived in the vicinity of his birthplace since 1840. At the age of twenty-six he received his degree of AB from Norwich University, N. H. and during the following two years he was en-

gaged in teaching school in Franklin and Indianburg, Indiana. There he began the study of law. Later in 1856 he pushed westward and completed his legal studies preliminary to entering upon the active practice of his profession at Milwaukee. After admission to the bar in 1857, his first year of practice was at Palmyra, Wisconsin, after which he located at Edgerton in 1858. For many years the only lawyer in the place, it fell to his lot to be the logical leader in all matters having to do with pioneer development of business expansion, civic and educational standards. There was hardly a civic enterprise toward which his ability and time were not lavished, laboriously and fully contributed. He served as Justice of the peace for nearly twenty years; as town clerk for twenty-five years. As a member of the school board he witnessed the growth of the local school from a single room to a fine departmental High School. During this twenty-five year duty one of his tasks was representing the board in the still famous Bible Case in which the reading of the Bible in school

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was challenged and the case taken to the Supreme Court. He was one of the founders of the first bank of Edgerton and was a director from 1880 to 1897, and President from 1893 to 1897. He married Miss Rozilla Ford, a niece of the first resident Baptist minister, who with her aunt had the first milliners store.

Louis Towne, his son, was born in April 1863, and received his education at Milton College and the law department of the State University, class of 1884. He also practised law in Edgerton for many years in the same office his father had had, in the Tobacco Exchange Bank building. His interest in his home community is marked in many ways. The landscaping and planting at both the Central Park and Edgerton Memorial Hospital were both done at his expense and after World War I he engaged a golf specialist and had a fine nine hole golf course laid out on land purchased from the Shannons. In 1921 this course was maintained by a club that was organized by the people interested in the game, and he gave the grounds

rent free for years. Today this same golf course is named the Towne Country Club and is a private corp.

A third generation of Towne lawyers is the son of Angie Towne Roethe — John Towne Roethe, also a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, he is a veteran of the navy of the World War II. He has served as City Attorney for years and is Secretary of the local organization of Businessmen the —

Law Enforcement

C. L. Brown, known as Lee Brown was the first law enforcement officer. He operated a livery stable, located on Albion Street, at the location of the present city garage. Harmless drunks were locked in a box stall and tough ones were taken to the county jail at Janesville. The first jail was built of planks and was located at the present site of the Wisconsin Tobacco Company warehouse on Fulton Street. This jail burned and a cell was placed in the Andrew Berry wagon shop, (now the site of the Fire Station). The present jail was built in 1885

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and had five small cells made of brick with only one window. Steel cages and two windows replaced the old cells in 1914. "Babe" Dell Chamberlain was the first city marshal. In 1910 the title was changed to Chief of Police, today is George Sweeney, and his law enforcement department is very up to date with radio car and several assistants.

Hospital

In 1918 Miss Edith Lockwood started a small hospital in her home on Blaine Street. Dr. A. T. Shearer had found a great need of hospital care for his patients and Miss Lockwood had twelve beds but at times did accommodate as many as twenty-six patients. There were many baby and tonsil cases. Miss Clara Christianson, a practical nurse assisted Miss Lockwood who was a graduate nurse.

In 1923 the Edgerton Memorial Hospital was opened with fifteen beds, nine private rooms and six ward beds. The project was started by a group of women now known as the Service Star Legion, composed of mothers, wives and sisters of the first World War

veterans, as a fitting Memorial to the boys. The organization subscribed \$500 to the building fund, \$200 to furnish a room, and \$5,000 for the maintenance. A fund of \$50,000 for construction and \$11,000 for endowment was subscribed. The building cost about \$45,000.

In 1940 an addition of two private rooms and six ward beds was made. In 1942, as a W.P.A. project, the sun porch was converted into a four bed maternity ward; three rooms which had been used for nurses quarters were converted into patients rooms and one private room was converted into a two bed ward making a total of thirty-one beds. Since then five beds have been placed in the corridor and are in use much of the time. A payroll of forty people care for the nursing and business, meals, laundry and building care.

A portable X-ray was the gift of the American Legion in 1941. Complete diagnostic X-Ray equipment was purchased with money willed by Miss Annie Jacobs in 1948.

A clinical laboratory was opened in 1947

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under the sponsorship of the Edgerton Service Auxiliary of World War II and this was put in the basement, off the patient floor due to lack of space. In 1952 a nurses lounge was added in the basement floor with funds from a Memorial to Gailen Pierce of Edgerton.

Federation Of Women's Clubs

In 1897 the Culture Club was started by twelve young women, for pleasure and study. In another couple of years another club, the Monday Club was organized, followed later by the Marquette, Century, Educational, Progressive and Philomathean Clubs, who have formed the City Federation of Women's Clubs. Organization was on November 5, 1904. One of the first programs for civic aid was the Library. A library in a little back room upstairs over Mr. Ash's book store (now Walgreens) was presided over by a dressmaker who checked out a book if you could wait until she finished stitching a seam or completed a fitting. The Monday and Culture Clubs arranged to bring a library worker from the Madison Commission

here, who gave them information for improving library facilities. The club women dusted and mended all books, worked with the city council for more money, got some of our businessmen interested, moved the books into a small frame building on the north side of the business street (now known as the Edgerton Cleaners). The city council agreed to buy receptacles for waste paper and placed them in business sections at the request of the women. A series of lectures was a big undertaking each winter, and many famous people were brought to Edgerton Lorado Taft, the sculptor was paid \$150 for his lecture. There were three such numbers and the series made money with which the furniture in the committee room of the Library was purchased. A little later they paid \$350 for a piano for the Culton Memorial Hall. They started agitating for manual training, domestic science and music teachers for the schools. It was through their continued efforts that a rest room was furnished and a matron hired for many years in the business district. They

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have given prizes for best English student because so many failed freshman English at the University of Wisconsin; gave prizes for best flower garden; held free baby clinics where any baby could be examined by competent doctors. Their continued pressure convinced the city council of the need for a city nurse, and private donations were made for the nurses salary for the first few months. Before the war the whole community enjoyed summer Chautauqua brought here by the untiring work of the women, and during the World War I they worked with the Red Cross in making thousands of garments. Twenty-five dollars was given to maintain a French orphan one year. Clothing was sent to Belgium and France and of course the drives for wheatless, meatless, etc., meals and the purchasing of War Bonds always had their assistance. Help was furnished the school in providing milk to undernourished children and the chest clinic has been maintained by the club women's sale of T.B. stamps. A recreation director was hired each summer until it was realized

as a real city need and the city council provided a recreation program. City wide garbage collection was another of their accomplishments. All organized groups, organizations receive their contributions, and the affairs of larger scope, state and national Federations of clubs are part of the yearly program.

For many years a Men's Club was sponsored by the Congregational Church and discussions and debates attacked problems of local and national importance. John Pierson was the president of the group affairs of the day were welcome. Frank O. Holt, who was the superintendent of the Edgerton Schools was a valuable leader in this group, and was followed by his brother, Fred Holt, who was also very active.

Kiwanis, a national men's club, was organized when the church club became inactive and it did many fine civic things. Part of the City Park was known as Kiwanis Island, where they had installed different playground equipment.

Rotary Club followed the Kiwanis Club.

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106 WEST FULTON STREET

PHONE 72

1853 — 1953

Lions Club is very active in many civic projects. One of their annual efforts is the Football banquet.

EARLY SOCIAL LIFE

Union Hall, the third floor of the Swift block, had a covered passage that connected it with the American House (now Peter's block) for the convenience of those performing at the Hall. It was the Theatre, Dance Hall, Club room etc., for many years. Mrs. O. D. Peck sponsored dances in the waiting room of the depot with music provided by two violinists—Charles Robinson and Sherman Fassett. Spelling and singing bees, quilting parties, etc., were always favorite pastimes. Royal Hall was built in 1885 by Royal Maltpress and Stewart McGiffin. It was constructed from brick made by Royal Parr and Mr. Hall. Lectures, plays, minstrels, roller skating, in fact all public amusement was held here excepting dancing which was done at the Academy Hall, the top floor of the Schmeling building.

The Scenic Theatre—the first movie house,

was opened in 1909 by Theodore Clarke and Harvey Raymond. Three wonderful reels of pictures and singing to slides for all of five cents. It was in the large room over the Mawhinney meat market (now the pool room). The first regular theatre for movies was the Lyric theatre opened by Mr. Hanlon in the building next to the present Rialto theatre, that was built by Percy Palmer and is now owned by a corporation—the Edgerton Theatre Corp.—all out of town people. Central Park was established in 1923. Houses near the Saunders creek on Swift street, were purchased by the city and moved to other locations. An island in the creek was furnished with playground equipment by the Kiwanis Club, and Jim Menhall built a band stand. A pavillion and ball field were constructed and now a fine football and baseball field, tennis court and in winter a skating rink are permanent parts of the park.

The city swimming pool, formerly the ice and brick yard pond, called Culton's pond, was added to the recreation department and

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COMPLIMENTS

**THE
GIFT HOUSE**
"FOR THAT SOMETHING
DIFFERENT"

Ethel Houfe

Dorothy Andersen

guards and a dressing room building made permanent there.

The Edgerton city band was organized in 1879 with fifteen members. L. K. Jessup was the leader and they met twice weekly in the hall over Dickinson and Sherman's Paint shop on West Fulton street. The first members were Thomas Westlake, Charles Mabbett, M. Burdick, Jacob Bady, Will Hudson, John Smith, Johnny Hain, Edward Davis and Royal Maltpress. Many competitions were entered and successfully won by the band in the years past. All parades, public gatherings, etc., called for the band, and today it shares these jobs with the fine high school band.

Father Matthew T. A. and B. Society was organized in 1882. There were eighty members and their object was to promote religious habits and to discourage the use of intoxicating drinks by example and advice; to assist mutually in case of sickness and to provide in necessity for the wants of its members. The T. A. and B. picnic was an annual all day event for many years. Held

at the Driving Park it attracted free track races for the best horses and good ball teams brought hundreds of both young and old people who were transported from downtown to the park in numerous "carry-alls" busses or the family surrey.

IOOF Edgerton Lodge No. 133 was organized September 1867 with seventy members, and met every Saturday p.m. in Croft's hall.

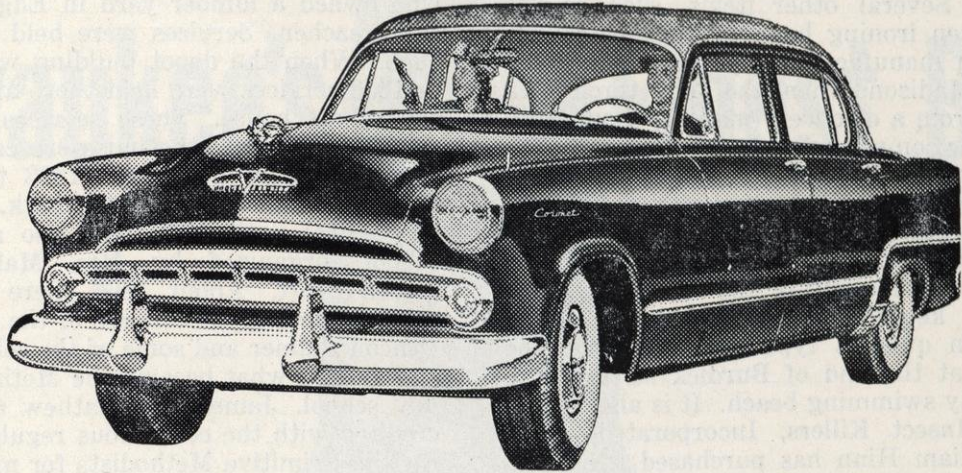
The first bank, known as the Bank of Edgerton was incorporated in 1880 with \$25,000. Capital. It was located on the corner of Main and Fulton streets. It was closed by receivers in 1897. At this time the Tobacco Exchange Bank was organized with a capital of \$35,000 and continued until 1930, when it was reorganized. The First National Bank was started where the Imperial tavern is now located, Wirt Wright was the first cashier.

The newest industry in Edgerton is that of the Pressure Can Corp. that started in 1951. W. B. Hinn is the president of a company designed to produce items of various



Ruben Tellefson Funeral Home

1853 — 1953



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KARL TEMPEL

Jewelers

BLUE BIRD

DIAMOND RINGS

The Complete Gift Store

types from small fillers for the lighters made by Parker Pen Co., to insect killers and blow-torches. Several other items, such as the Save-a-step ironing board attachments have also been manufactured by the firm. Starting in Madison when the blow-torch idea started from a discovery made by Louis Fallicant, the company was forced to move when the army took over the Truax location, and decided to locate in Edgerton after the Edgerton Development Corp. aided them in finding a suitable location. The Parker Pen Co. has taken up the making of the lighters but the company keeps busy at new items. It is housed in quonset type buildings near the railroad at the end of Burdick street, close to the city swimming beach. It is also known as the Insect Killers, Incorporated—I.K.I. Mr. William Hinn has purchased the Shannon home, built in 1858 and has remodeled it for a home. John Hinn is connected with the company also.

CHURCHES

First religious services were held in a little log school house that stood near where

the city limits on Highway 51 (north) is found. Mr. Bunting, a primitive Methodist, who owned a lumber yard in Edgerton was the preacher. Services were held here until 1853. When the depot building was erected in 1853 services were held there and later at the school house. These services were not separated as to faiths but were called "Union", and were held from 1863 to 1866 in the lower hall of the Swift block. The Sunday school until 1866 was also a "Union" school, organized by Mrs. Mabbett and James Croft. About 1866 there were dissensions among the officers of the school and Deacon Palmer and some of the scholars left, and started what became the Methodist Sunday school. James and Mathew Croft were credited with the continuous regular services for the Primitive Methodists for many years.

The Methodist Society was organized in 1854. Rev. Henry Sewell, a former local young man was invited to be the preacher in the Depot. In 1864, after many years of services held in the schoolhouse, the society purchased of Joseph Locksley, a lot on Albion



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street for \$863.00. On this lot there were a large brick building and a small dwelling house. The house was sold for \$80 and the brick building (now the Edgerton Printery) was fitted up for a church with a seating capacity of 200. The upper story was leased to the Masonic Lodge and the basement fitted up for a woodshed. In 1867 the rear part of the lot was sold to Robert Carr for \$124.00. Because the people on Albion Prairie decided to start a Methodist Episcopal church there it was possible to have a minister who would serve both groups—preaching in Edgerton in the morning and at the Prairie in the evening. W. H. Clarke purchased the old church property and the present property was obtained from Mrs. E. M. Dennison. Sept. 21, 1881 dedication services were held for the new M. E. church. The Baptist church had been used during the building of the new edifice. Rev. F. F. Lester was the first pastor in the new building. In 1884 the church was valued at \$4,000 and the parsonage at \$1800. A remodeling program was carried out recently.

The Baptist church was organized in 1856, meetings were held alternately with the Primitive Methodists in the hall and then in the school house. Elder Ford was the first minister. The church was built in 1868 and dedicated early in 1869. Many different ministers served the church but none stayed long. From 1897 to 1904 there was no regular pastor.

St. Joseph's Congregation was organized in 1870.

The German Lutheran or St. John's church was organized in 1872 with 17 members. They worshipped in Croft's hall and the first minister was Rev. G. B. Dupark. In 1880 a small church was built and it was used until 1892 when the present church was erected. This building has been remodeled and the congregation is affiliated with the Missouri synod.

The Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran or Central Lutheran church was organized by a group who met at the home of John A. Johnson in Dec. 1874. The first real service was held in Croft's hall in March 1875. In

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LITTLE CIGARS—Between The Acts

January 1884 it was decided to build a church and the building was dedicated in December 1884. A greatly remodeled and enlarged church is still not adequate for the large membership to worship at one time.

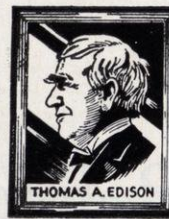
The First Congregational church of Edgerton was organized in October 1889 with 32 members, at a meeting at the home of Robert Attlessey. Henry Marsden was the first and for many years, Sunday school superintendent. Meetings were held at the Taylor house and Rev. L. H. Keller was the minister from 1889 to 1894.

SCHOOLS

In 1845, three years before Wisconsin became a state, a school was started in Wm. Bliven's log house, with Sherman Fassett as teacher. The following year a little red school house was built in the woods near the county line on William Bliven's farm and it was used for the next 10 years for civil and religious meetings. The first school meeting of District No. 8 of the town of Fulton was held July 2, 1856. A question as to the size of the building was greatly debated. Charles

Dickinson walked 5 miles after a day of painting on a farm house to attend the controversial school meeting where the vote of the meeting was for the erection of a building but won only by one vote. A two story building was then erected in 1856 on a lot 5 by ½ rods, large at the corner of Henry and Rollin streets purchased of H. S. Swift for \$150. \$1800 was raised to pay for the school and \$30 was allowed for fuel which was 173-4 cords of 2 foot wood. In 1857 \$250 was raised for teachers wages. In 1867 teachers received \$30 a month. There were 251 school age children—46 were in private schools. Mary Hubbard Burdick had a school in the old drug store, Miss Louise Thompson had a school on Fulton St. In 1867 this block burned. Mrs. Charles Dickinson had 30 pupils who paid \$1.50 per quarter apiece and met in her home which stood near where the Masonic Temple is now, and later was held in a room across the street. Mrs. James Croft was another who had a school in her home. There were two parochial schools—German Lutheran held in the church school house;

Mr. Edison Started Something!



Yes, he did start something, but even in 1879, when the first incandescent lamp was born, Edgerton was 26 years old. In 1853, candlelight and kerosene lamps were the vogue. Look around you today. Quite a change, don't you think?

Ready Kilowatt was a very small fellow in those days, but my how he has grown! REMEMBER, ELECTRICITY IS THE BIGGEST BARGAIN IN TOWN.

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and the Norwegian Lutheran school held in the church basement. This latter was a summer school.

In 1869, despite the early pessimism of some, the school being overcrowded, two more rooms were added to the building. 233 pupils were now enrolled. J. P. Towne was a member of the school board for 23 years. In 1873 four lots costing \$525 were added to the school grounds and in 1879 \$250 more was spent for land. The Edgerton Bible Case caused a great deal of feeling in 1886 when the state law excluding text books which furnish sectarian instruction was brought to a court fight. In 1904 a primary building was found necessary. Child High school was built by funds donated by Miss Florence Child with an equal amount raised by taxation.

The new gymnasium, music, art, Home ec and Agriculture department was built as a W.P.A. project, in 1934, and also houses the city council room. At present plans are being completed for the erection of a new grade

school building on 40 acres of land at the end of Albion Street.

DURING THE WARS

During the wars of 1889 and 1902 the following fought for their country—Darcy Biggar, John Marks, Charlie Mooney, William Harris, William Hammond, Ernest Simmons, John Mooney, William Marsh, William Miller, Henry Wille, Arthur Twing, Robert Maltpress, Fred Stewart, Charles Klements and Clyde White. Henry Wille is the only living veteran of this group.

EDGERTON LIBRARY

In 1869 a need was felt for funds to erect a library for the 200 volumes housed wherever the books were cared for. W. H. Stillman was appointed the first librarian in 1870 and he continued to 1873. From 1870 to 1900 the school district maintained an appropriation of \$100 per year and a salary of \$50 per year was paid. In 1885 there were 490 volumes of which only 325 were fit for use. In 1900 the city took control and the first board appointed were L. L. Moore, H.

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W. Child, Angie F. Towne, C. F. Mabbett, L. C. Whittet and J. M. Conway. Angie Towne Roethe is still an active member of the present board. There were 874 volumes, a sum of \$1,000 was raised by subscription and \$500 was given by the city in 1901, 1902, and 1903 and \$700 in 1904 and 1905. The Baptist church society was formed in 1856 and in 1866 Jas. Culton offered a lot on Albion St., for a building for which he paid \$150. The society paid him back \$50. A building was erected in 1868. In 1904 the society became inactive and gave the Culton heirs right to convey the lot to the city for a free Public Library. The deed was accepted in 1905 with the stipulation that Culton Memorial Hall would be a part of the building. Andrew Carnegie offered \$10,000 to the city with the provision that \$1,000 per year be provided by the city for maintainance. Florence and H. W. Child gave \$3,500 and \$4,000 was raised by the public. A contract for the building was signed and it was completed in 1907 for \$12,692.

MONARCH LABORATORY—

This business was started by Benjamin and Dexter I. Willson as a small drug store in 1882 and its growth was most remarkable. The original location was in a building on Fulton street now used for a Pool hall—it outgrew this location and the Commercial Hotel building on the corner of W. Fulton and N. Main streets known now as the Willson block, was purchased. Many people were employed at the factory and many more were representing them in wagons that traveled over every state with typical medicine shows—where the best singer or instrumentalist drew the best crowd and largest sales. The town of Edgerton looked forward to the annual “Round Up” of these salesmen. Monarch Oil a pain killer was one of the favorite remedies. 95,000 pounds of goods were shipped in one week to the various agencies throughout the country.

Sheep Feeding

At one time many thousands of range run sheep were brought to Edgerton for a rest and fattening before the short run to city



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COMPLIMENTS

WILEMAN'S WEST END

ONE STOP

Edgerton

Wisconsin

markets. They were cared for at the Edgerton feeding yards—located near the present Sand and Gravel Co. This enterprise was highly appreciated by the shippers to the Chicago and Milwaukee markets. It was run by Dr. Shepard who had been a doctor for many years before becoming interested in this business. Composed of 20 some acres for yards and sheds for 12,000 they could accommodate 75,000 sheep for grazing on the 400 to 1200 acres used for pasture purposes. Ten to thirty people were regularly employed. C. G. Biederman followed Dr. Shepard in maintaining the yards for many years.

A group of farmers formed a cooperative under the leadership of Mr. Van Prague and ran a tobacco factory in the early days of the tobacco industry. This was located at the site of the old part of the Highway Trailer plant. It was not a success and the same building was later used by Huxtable and Halverson for a concern known as the Edgerton Wagon Works, and today is used for storage for the Highway Trailer Company.

There was an early cigar factory owned

by Charlie Bentley in the upper part of the building now housing the Walgren Dallman Henry store. After the death of Mr. Bentley, Charley Culton bought the business and moved it into the building now known as the McIntosh warehouse. The cigars made were known as the El Incitos. Joseph Leary and Mike Mcdonough operated the Edgerton Cigar Co. that Pat Garvin had started the Imperial cigar in. It was located at the corner of Fulton and Burdick streets. Joe Leary and C. A. Fritzke employed 15 men and six women with Henry Wesendonk as foreman until 1916 when the company moved to the Leary building.

Shoe Factory

The Nunn Bush Shoe company chose Edgerton as a site for a new factory in 1933, after a survey of many Wisconsin cities. Percy Palmer of this city chanced to hear that the company was seeking a location and he got in touch with those in charge. F. A. Young, H. C. Schmeling, P. W. Palmer worked with H. E. Exner, Henry Stricker, William C. Buchholz, J. A. Ellingson, Dr. F.



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FROM OXEN TO JETS

E. Shearer and August Ratzlaff helped to organize the aid required from the city and merchants to bring the new industry here. 75 to 100 young men who were anxious to obtain employment and to assist to increase the local employment possibilities, signed up without question of wages. They had to help build the building and many worked for only a warm lunch as compensation though steady work has since been provided for many of the same workers. The factory opened in April 1934. Wages were 24 cents an hour for women and 28 cents an hour for men. From March 1934 to October 1952 a total of \$10,160,316.87 has been paid in salaries with the average number of employees about 300. Today the company is asking the city for help in an expansion program by providing more housing. "The Edgerton Shoe" is a medium priced shoe of high quality for men.

For many years our young people have been interested in flying. The first airplane to visit the city landed in a pasture near the old Driving Park (now Legion Park) and several daring people took to the air to see what it was like. Scott Hatch, Jr., is prob-

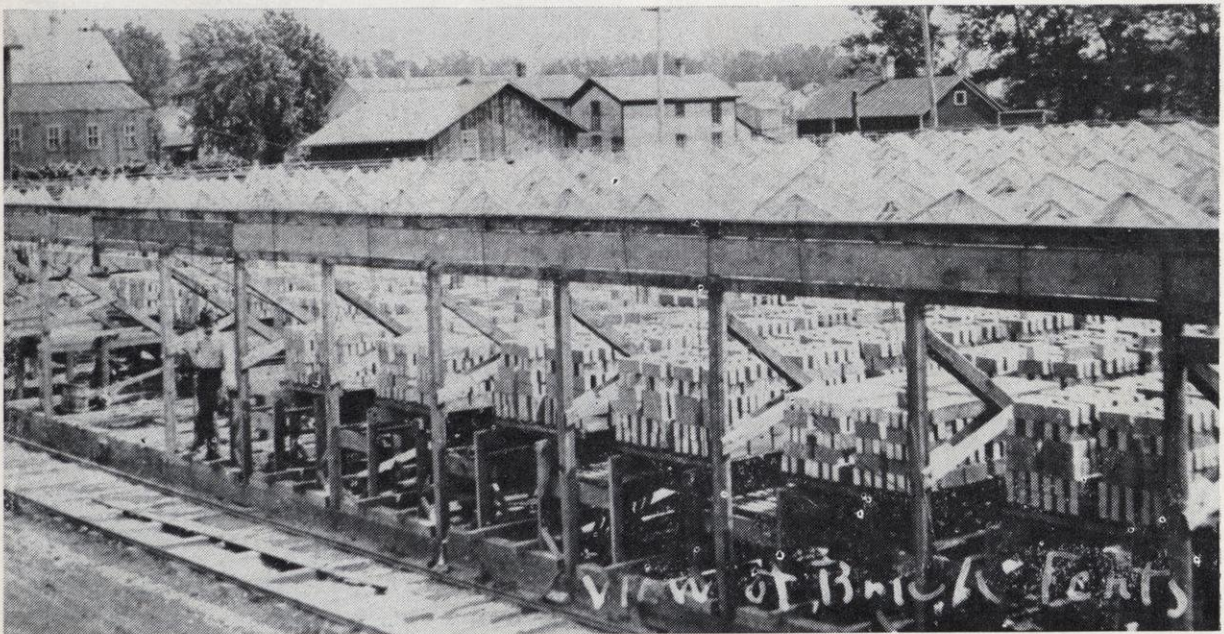
ably the first owner of a plane and he lived to buy other modern planes and to receive a private pilots license to fly. He with a group of other far seeing men tried to interest the city in purchasing from them, the land made ready for an airport just at the edge of Albion. There is a hanger and several planes do use the landing facilities there, but the city could not see the need of the field at the time.

Had it been in operation as a municipal airport during the winter of 1953, perhaps the Jet pilot who had to crash land his plane and bail out would have had help of a different nature. Lt. T. Booth Holker a Sabre jet pilot on a routine flight, ran out of fuel and when he was unable to land at the Truax field at Madison during a heavy snow storm he bailed out of his ship and landed in the neighborhood of the home of Dr. V. S. Falk on the edge of town. This same land was part of that purchased by Mr. Moulthrop in the early days of Edgerton and was cleared by great teams of oxen. Lt. Holker's plane was found near Cooksville several miles away.

And so we find the Edgerton story is truly one from oxen to jets.

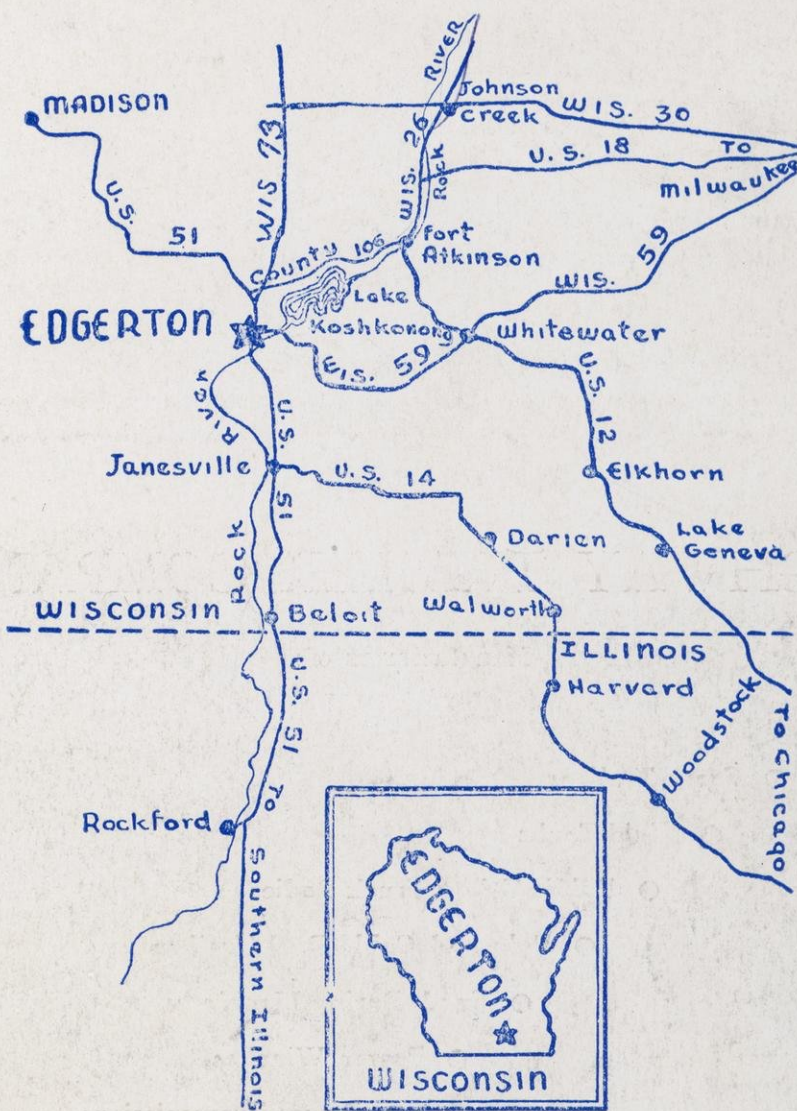
Story compiled by the Historical Committee and written by Helen Dickinson

The Brick Yards



1853 — 1953

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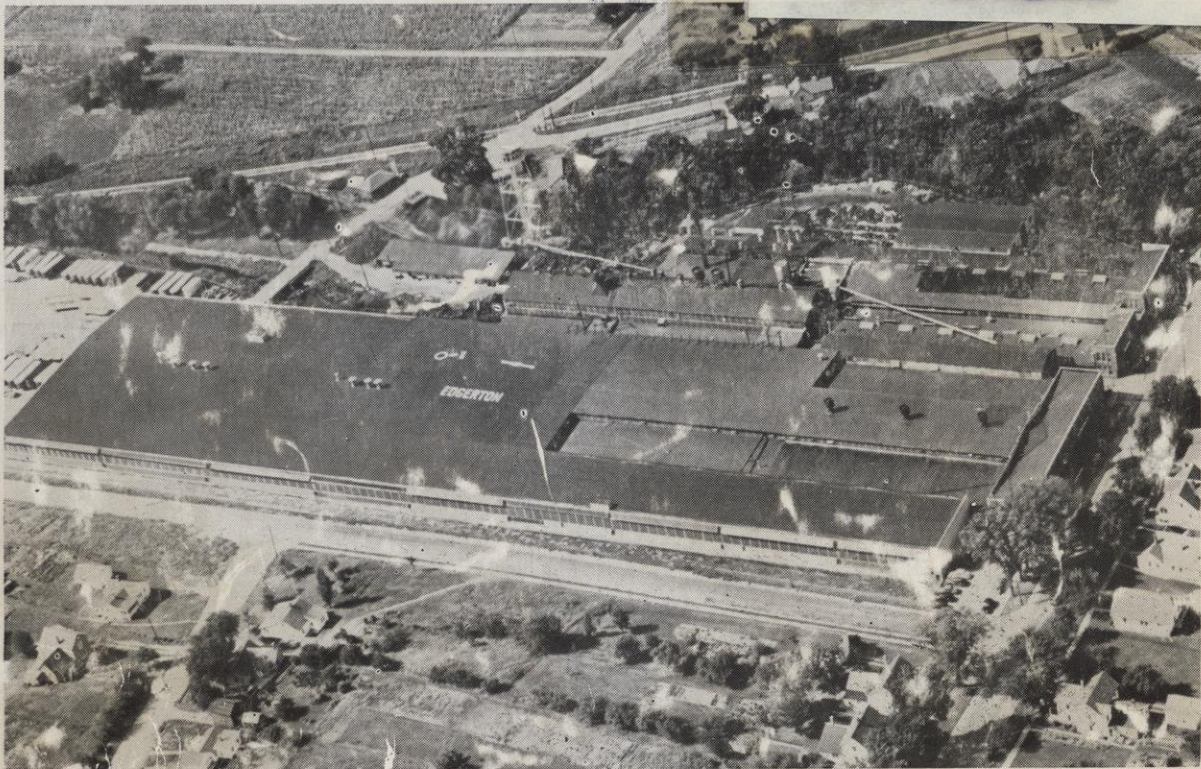
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