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HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF MEQUON

BY

CARL F. WILBERT * FIRST MAYOR OF MEQUON

NOTES COMPLIED BY DAUGHTER:

Marion R. Thurk
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Mequon - 1870 - 1957

From the early 1830, when the first settlers reportedly came to Mequon, up to 1870, the time when some of the early history of Mequon was recorded and compiled by several prominent attorneys, J. O. Carbys, Walter D. Corrigan, and others who from time to time recorded some of the many interesting adventures and happenings as they experienced them or discovered some record left by someone preceeding them, such as letters, documents, etc. Some of these were compiled by the first two gentlemen and put together in history form. The latest of such histories was compiled by Walter D. Corrigan with the help of many others. This history was sponsored by the Mequon Club as a civic enterprise. Being one of the older residents born in Mequon and having lived here all of my life, I was requested to continue the history of Mequon from 1870, the date which the history of Mequon was compiled by Walter D. Corrigan Sr. to the time Mequon was incorporated as a City of the fourth class, May 24, 1957. For these 30 years, 1870 to 1900, I have to rely on the records found recorded in municipal documents, records, and memorandums made by a number of prominent men, etc. From the year 1900, although a young lad then, most of the information pertaining to the Town of Mequon, I have gained from my own knowledge and experience and from municipal

records of the Town Clerk dating back to the first town meeting in 1846, which office I held for 25 years, 1932 to 1957. No office space having been provided by the Town for their officials, all records of their respective offices were kept in private homes of the officials then in office. All records, minute books (the first town meeting was held in 1846) and prior thereto, were placed in a vault built in the first town hall in 1936. Most of the old records were found by me in an old machinery storage shed owned by the Town, others, as time went on and after diligent search, were found in some homes.

While I am not a historian or a knowledgable writer, I have tried to give you accurate information of the events and happenings within the Town of Mequon (including the Village of Thiensville, which was an integral part of Mequon up to Oct. 11, 1910, the date of their incorporation as a village) and up to 1960 in an unbiased or prejudicial way. I hope that this humble effort on my part will be of some public good.

Carl F. Wilbert
Former Clerk and
Mayor Emeritus of the
City of Mequon

Natural Assets

The Town of Mequon bears the marks of the glacial age that left it a gentle rolling fertile region which over a hundred fifty years ago was covered by a dense forest of oak, maple, beech, ash, with hickory and butternut trees scattered here and there as well as other species. Tamarack and cedar trees were abundant in the swamps. Wild grapes grew profusely as well as blackberries and raspberries.

When God created the universe, he certainly did not forget to bestow upon the Town of Mequon some of the natural beauties with which Mequon is so richly blessed. The entire east boundary is Lake Michigan, one of the greater inland lakes in the United States. The lake shore bluff is rather steep, from 50 feet to 400 feet deep, but in several instances one can walk down to the water's edge and enjoy the beautiful beach. Most of the bluff is overgrown with trees and shrubs. These lessen the erosion of the lake bank which has taken place in the last few decades. In some cases large portions of the lake bank suddenly gave way and slid down into the lake and washed away. In some cases where homes were built too close to the edge of the lake, enough of the bank eroded so as to endanger the dwelling. In one case recently, the home of Mr. John Hurth and family was put in such danger. Being quite an expensive home, Mr. Hurth immediately retained a contractor to move the house back 150 feet and thereby

saved his home. A core of government engineers from Chicago were retained to determine the cause of the erosion, but so far have not come to any definite answer nor have they proposed any prevention.

The Milwaukee River has its inception in the Town of Farmington in Washington County. It then meanders south and southeasterly through Fredonia, Saukville, Grafton, Cedarburg, through the entire Town of Mequon from the north to the south town line into Brown Deer, River Hills, Glendale, through the City of Milwaukee and into Lake Michigan. Until the last several decades, the river was clean and sparkling with spring fed water. It abounded with such fish as northern pike, lake suckers, red horse, bass, and bullheads. It was also a haven for wild geese and ducks who nested in the lowlands and bays along the river. The entire course of the river runs through both shores lined with beautiful trees and shrubs even in most areas to this day. But as time went on and the Town was growing in population, people built houses near the shore, farms were developed nearby. Cattle were allowed to get to the river for water and to cool off in hot summer days. In so doing, they would work up the shore and thereby cause the shore soil to be carried and washed into the river along with the offall of the cattle. As larger tracts of land were tilled as farms, the easier it was for surface water to drain to the river and thereby

taking with it all the loose materials and impurities with it into the river. Zoning ordinances, restricting land uses, designating flood and wet lands and restricting the use thereof, have been passed and revised ever since 1930. Enforcement of these ordinances have not always been carried out too carefully. Therefore, the present problem of water pollution.

Near the center of the Town, flowing from the northwest several miles, Pigeon Creek empties into the Milwaukee River. This is at the point where the Green Bay Road branches off the Cedarburg Road and runs northeasterly to Hamilton and Grafton. Pigeon Creek received its name from the Indians. In their annual migrations, it is said, the wild pigeons were so numerous at this location that when they flew up to continue their migration, they were in such great numbers that they darkened the sun. This creek at no point is wider than 20 feet and no deeper than 5 feet. It adds to the beauty of the scenery along its path and is also a haven for muskrats, mink, and other wild life.

The Menomonee River in the western part of the Town, starts in Section 9 and continues south through Sections 19, 29, and 30 and continues through Milwaukee County and into the Menomonee River. The course of the Menomonee River in Mequon was through a swamp covered with a dense forest of cedar and numerous other varieties of trees. It was

only a trickle of water for many years until the early 1900, the farmers got together and dredged it so it provided better drainage. Due to this drainage improvement, many trees in the swamp died.

Early Settlers

The Town of Mequon was within the original boundaries of Washington County, and was established by an act of the territorial legislature, December 7, 1836. Washington County then comprised all of the territory then embraced in Ozaukee and Washington County.

The lands in this section in 1679, and many years thereafter, were occupied more or less in common by the Sacs, Foxes, Pottowatomies. Later the Pottowatomies occupied the land west of the Milwaukee River and the Menominees east of the river to the lake. This was the situation in 1831. The title which the Indians had in this section was completely extinguished by 1838. The Indians came back many years thereafter to look over their general neighborhood. The title of the Menominees was extinguished by a treaty made September 26, 1833. The treaty was not satisfied until Feb. 21, 1835, and their rights did not expire until February, 1838.

It was by virtue of these treaties that the white man gained the proprietary right to take up lands. It is observed that the County was open to the white man to obtain land in the territory east of the river about seven years before it was open west of the river.

When the opportunity to take lands first opened to the whites by the government, about 1835, speculators as usual were first on the spot to pick out land. The

rest of the land was later picked up in a large part by well intending and actual settlers. The rapidly growing immigration that set in thereafter came principally from Ireland and Germany who bought out the speculators or bought directly from the government. The Irish settled largely in the northwestern part of the Town, while the Germans, who predominated in number, settled practically all of the rest of the lands in the Town. The latter came steadily and sometimes in waves. During the end of the 18th century, a large group came over from Germany and founded Freistadt colony under the leadership of Pastor Krause, a group of old Lutherans.

The first entry of land made in the Town of Mequon, is said to have been made by G. G. Hubbard. A few speculative entries were made in 1836 to 1838. A few settlers came from 1837 to 1840, but the Town did not greatly fill with settlers until about 1841 and 1842.

The Mequon peoneers came here when not even a wagon thoroughfare existed. There were nothing but Indian trails to guide one through the dense forests. Traffic was difficult, sickness prevalent, and money scarce. These pioneers were hard workers. They had to be to survive as they did.

Daniel Strickland and Isaac Bigelow were the first settlers near the river. Bigelow in Section 12, Township 9, and Daniel Strickland in Section 36, Town 10, the latter being just north of Mequon Town line. Woodworth

who was married March 1, 1838, claims that his marriage was the first one to occur in the county. He reported that the first male child born in the Town of Mequon was Gideon Bigelow and the second child was Watson Woodworth. Woodworth relates that in the summer of 1838, he and his wife reaped their first crop of wheat with case knives and in the fall he made a trip with a borrowed oxen to the mill at Kilbourntown, now a part of Milwaukee and thence to Harts mill on the Menomonee River where he succeeded in getting the wheat ground. This is said to have been the first grist of wheat to a mill from the Town of Mequon.

The survey of the land in the Town of Mequon was made in 1834 to 1836. The head surveyor was a man by the name of Brink. From 1833 to 1841 the Township began to show signs of white race settlements. In 1833, Joseph Wood, his brother Ephram Wood, Peter Thurk, Reuben Wells, Ishman Day, and several Irish families made settlements in the Town. The pioneers followed the Indian trails north of Milwaukee until they reached Pigeon Creek, where they erected some shanties. In 1838, Peter Thurk set up a saw mill. The next saw mill was built by Reuben Wells. He also established a grist mill. John Weston had entered 160 acres which he sold to John Willet. John Weston then bought a quarter section in what is now the Village of Thiensville. This he sold to John Henry Thien.

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

Wm. F. Opitz stated that it was in the spring of 1839, that he concluded to leave Germany. His party consisted of himself and his wife, his father, and mother, Adolph Zimmerman and his wife, (the latter being a sister of Opitz). On arrival in Milwaukee, they at once proceeded to prospect the country. It resulted in their settlement in the Town of Mequon in August, 1839. They entered five 80 acre parcels of which Opitz took a quarter section, Adolph Zimmerman a quarter section, and the father of Wm. F. Opitz, 80 acres. This land was in Section 22, near the Green Bay Rd.

Soon after the arrival of Mr. Opitz, a large group of Germans settled in 1839 in the western part of the Town of Mequon. This was a group of old Lutherans under the leadership of Pastor Krause, and was known as the Freistadt Colony. However, the real tide of Germans did not migrate into the colony until two years later. This settlement grew very fast. A church and a school were built in the spring of 1840. This building was 20 feet wide and 30 feet long and \$45.50 for material, the labor was contributed by the members of the congregation. This was the first Lutheran Church erected in Wisconsin (more about

the early churches and schools later).

Among the early Irish settlers were the Dockreys, Reynolds, Desmond, Clare, Corcoran, Murphy, and Flynn families. Later came the Coyles, Dineens, and Corrophy's. The Germans, Yankees, English, and Irish, all furnished many forceful public spirited persons who constituted the early settlers.

Mr. Bonniwell was born at the Bonniwell Settlement, which was at the intersection of Wauwatosa Road and Bonniwell Rd, May 12, 1847, and died August 1929. He was one of the first to answer President Lincoln's call to arms. As he failed to get his father's consent, he ran away from home. He trudged through the mud for 20 miles to get to Milwaukee to enlist in the Union Army. He was only 14 years old, but told the recruiting officer he was 21. On November 12, 1861, he was enrolled as a private in Company #1, Second Wisconsin Calvary. Here he served 3 years. By the time he was 17, he was listed as a veteran volunteer.

There was very little hostility between the early settlers and the Indians. It seemed that the Indians desired rather to add to their comfort than to annoy the settlers by Hostilities. Solomon Juneau is generally credited for this. His excellent management in respect to his relation with the Indians established friendly feeling between the races. Solomon Juneau was much beloved by the Indians

and by the early settlers of the Township and this vicinity. It appears that no man other than Wm. Penn ever wielded in the settlement of America a more powerful influence or established better relationships with the Indians. He dealt justly with them and was regarded by the Indians as the agent of the great father of Washington.

When the first requirements for the sustances of life and shelter for the body were taken care of and the population of the area grew, more attention had to be given to the clearing of the land of trees and the preparation of the soil to raise more food and shelter for man and beast. This then also necessitated the building of dams on the river to harness the power of the river to run the saw and grist mills. One of these dams was built by Mr. Thien. The little village or settlement was baptized Thienville by the then residents of the community. Other such dams were built north and south of Thienville along the river for various purposes.

As more people settled in Thienville and vicinity, more persons with various occupations and abilities able to contribute some vocation to the society, as it then existed. Some could weave cloth, others could make shoes and other articles to wear and prepare different foods and drinks for human consumption. But the main and primary vocation most of the people followed was farming. Some of the families financially able to do so imported some good stock of holsteins, guernsey, and jersey cows to build up a good herd.

From this humble beginning, a very determined, sturdy and hard working group of imigrants built up a successful and enterprising community, evidence of which can be seen aftet 100 years of this, the beginning of the Town of Mequon, now the second largest 4th class city in Wisconsin, embracing a beautiful little Village of Thiensville.

For the various reasons mentioned why the Indians as well as the early settlers chose to settle near streams and lakes, was also the reason why in later years when the white man cleared the land and tilled it, that they found an abundance of stone made spears of various sizes and shapes. These spears were placed on the end of a wooden stick and used for hunting and the spearing of fish and other animals. It was no coincidence then when tilling the fields or just walking over them, that the farmer found many of these stone arrows or stone hatchets especially in those areas at or along the places where the Indians settled as in the case of Mequon and Thiensville.

Town Government

The framework of American government started originally with the Articles of Federation. This was abandoned and a complete newly formed plan was used. This was similar to the Constitution of the United States. This has been the basic pattern for this country ever since. The national government had certain powers which were set forth explicitly in the Constitution. In all other powers were delegated to the state or to the people. The states then created subordinate units of government to carry out state functions and to administer local affairs. These units are called counties, towns, villages, and special districts. In Wisconsin were normally created by individual laws. All units of local government in Wisconsin were handled by general laws which provide that when certain conditions are met, the local unit may be created by local action.

Boundaries of towns were largely arbitrary, normally of a six mile square area. The governing body of a town was a chairman and two supervisors, elected at large annually first and later on every two years. Other elected officers were a clerk, treasurer, justice of the peace, assessor, and constable. The chairman represented the Town on the County Board. Actual power was vested in citizens through their annual town meetings.

It was not until January 21, 1846, that the Town of Mequon was incorporated by the Legislature of Wisconsin. Up to that time, it was a part of the Town of Washington which embraced all the townships of old Washington County. Although it contained within the present limits, a voting precinct, it had no town organization. These voting precincts were established as settlements grew up.

Railroads

The record of the railroads as mentioned in the last history of Mequon published by the Mequon Club, is up to the year 1870 did not change since then, except for the fuel used. Then it was coal and now diesel oil.

The Milwaukee and Northern railroad, now a part of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific system, was completed and in operation in 1871. (It is now known as the Milwaukee R. R.).

The Milwaukee, Manitowoc and Green Bay Railroad Company was incorporated March 10, 1870 (No known as the Chicago and Northwestern R.R.). Both of these railroads are still in operation. The Milwaukee Road runs approximately through the center of the City, closely in the vicinity of the Cedarburg Road. The Northwestern Railroad is in the easterly part of Mequon and follows Lake Michigan shoreline within a mile west and also in close proximity to the Port Washington Road.

Both of these railroads at one time operated both passenger trains and freight trains. Both lines had a depot, one at so called East Mequon and one at Thiensville attended by a full time agent. They not only did the clerical work, but also received and dispatched telegraph messages, both for the railroad and for the American Express Company. Both of these depots and agents received small freight

shipments made by the citizens as well as car load lots, either in-coming, such as coal, lumber, flour, and feeds, etc., and out-going such as grain, cattle, etc. Both of the railroads had a thriving business until the advent of the automobile and trucks.

As time went on, these vehicles took more and more business away from the railroads, both freight and passenger. In time, it became unprofitable to continue a full time agent. The Chicago and Northwestern was the first of the railroads to engage only a part time agent who would come only at specified times to meet a passenger or freight train. He would flag a train for a passenger wishing to travel or would receive instructions on a freight shipment.

Carload lots of cattle shipped to Chicago were also loaded from here. Also carload lots purchased by the co-op were also unloaded here. Finally this service was also discontinued and the depot was razed.

The Milwaukee Road, which operated from Milwaukee north through Brown Deer, Mequon, Cedarburg, Grafton, Saukville, and points northwesterly continuing its operation up to the present time, except for passenger service. It still has a large carload freight service together with its smaller freight and express parcel service. Running through and connecting numerous villages and cities, north and northwesterly up to Green Bay, etc., it serves these thriving localities and numerous business and

manufacturing plants with in-coming material as well as outgoing manufactured products. The Mequon Cooperative also shipped carloads of cattle from Mequon to Chicago as well as received carloads of feed.

The Milwaukee Road had two bad accidents in Thiensville, both of them close to the site of the depot. The first one when two freight trains collided head-on. The depot is located at a curve in the right-of-way extending from the Freistadt Road south to nearly the intersection with the Mequon Road. The railroad switch track are on the west side of the tracks. The timing of the two trains were to be such that one train was supposed to be in the switch track when the other train came through. These instructions were presumable misunderstood, causing the collision. The engineers on both trains saw that a head-on collision was unavoidable, and jumped from their engines. Luckily no one was hurt. A number of loaded freight cars derailed, and the contents were strewn along the right-of-way. Considerable damage was done to both engines.

The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad maintained a large inch diameter artesian well on their right-of-way, near the Mequon Road. This well was used by the railroad for the furnishing of water for their engines. In 19 an agreement was reached by and between the railroad company and the Town of Mequon whereby the township was permitted to use the well in case of a fire. After

removing the cap of the well a hose was inserted into the well lowered into the water. This was a powerful artesian well. In 19 this agreement was terminated.

The Milwaukee northern and Sheboygan Electric Railroad was built in 1907-1908. It was powered by electricity furnished by a large power plant located in Port Washington and distributed by several sub-stations along its right-of-way. Later it also supplied electric current for lighting and power over a large area. It has grown and several times has added additional facilities furnishing more power and light to a large area.

The Milwaukee Northern and Sheboygan Electric Railroad was built starting from their station located at 5th and Wells Street, Milwaukee, north to a point south of Brown Deer from where it continued with along and bordering the west right-of-way of the Milwaukee Road continuously to a point where the Milwaukee Road crosses the Cedarburg Road or Hwy. 57 about one half mile north of the present Highland Road. From this point the Milwaukee Northern proceeded northerly crossing the Milwaukee Road via a viaduct to the City of Cedarburg and the Milwaukee Road proceeded in a northeastly direction.

When the news spread that a group of enterprising citizens from Cedarburg and Milwaukee were contemplating the building of an electric railroad from Milwaukee to Sheboygan, great excitement was created.

When the survey of the road was completed and the actual building of the road was commenced, this was the subject of conversation. At that time, a large percentage of the help required was in Mequon and vicinity was hand labor. As the work progressed and when possible several box cars were on the site, wherein the laborers were housed. Here they ate, slept, and did their washing. A large number of them were of foreign decent. Their earnings were small and they had to make ends meet and live accordingly. As a young lad, the writer would as often as permissible from my father, walk to where they were working to watch them.

An incident I will never forget, was when I watched them one day long enough until it was lunch time and the group prepared for dinner. I noticed a number of the workers walk along the undisturbed part of the right-of-way, dig out some nice fresh dandelions, pick out the center of the plant, place it between two slices of rye bread and that was their lunch. I learned later that this was very nourishing and healthy.

It was a great event when the construction of the railroad was completed. A trial run was made with the officials of the road and other V.I.B. of the Cities along the way to Sheboygan.

When the automobile and trucks came more in use, and the roads were built for better transportation, passenger service by the railroad became less, the railroads could

no longer operate profitable and had to discontinue operations.

The right-of-way was partially sold to the Wisconsin Electric Power Company. They built large steel towers on this right-of-way for the purpose of transmitting electric power from their electric power plant at Port Washington.

Coonie Plautz - Station agent

John Jorden - Station agent - 1st Agent and also Farm
Implement Dealer

Log Raising

Log raising in the early 1840 was an event that gave the early settlers a spirit of helpfulness to each other.

It is noted that in 1841, one Mr. Dibble built a dam across the Milwaukee River in the towns to the north, Grafton. In the fall of that year he sent word to the town to the south that he would build a saw mill. To do this, it would take a lot of help. Some were expert ax men with great skill, preparing the logs, trimming them and knotting them at the ends so as to fit them and give rigidity to the building. Others would lend their man power to lift and slide them into place. It is recorded that on this particular occasion, that from our Town of Mequon, there participated old settlers from Mequon such as Fred W. Horn, Ephram Woodworth, William North, and Peter Turk, and many others. Since this raising took several days, the helpers had to sleep in an old shanty, half log and half bark, built several years earlier and in a few wigwams put up by the Indians.

Despite these hardships, they had a good time after the work was done. They got a fiddler to call the turns of the square dance. "Never," said Mr. Horn, "have I enjoyed a dance as I did at the saw mill raising".

Mr. Horn was a man of culture from Germany!

During the settlement of the Town of Mequon, there were many house and barn raisings. In these early days, most houses and barns were built of logs, etched, notched,

and built upon one and another. This took a lot of help. As the settlers had established themselves with better facilities for entertainment, these raisings became more and more occasions for feasting and merry-making. Housewives began to compete in the preparation of tempting foods, and the tables groaned with substantial dishes and goodies. If the new settler did not have them, the neighbors brought them. When the building of log structures began to come into disuse, it was followed by frame structures. Dwellings only acquired a few carpenters to erect the framework of the structure.

Plank frame barns were built up to the middle of the 19th century. These barns were built of eight or ten inch by two inches thick of oak plans, 8 - 10 - 12, or 16 foot planks or as the length required. These were spiked or bolted together on the ground floor in sections. They were then raised to a perpendicular position and bolted to the section nearest. These sections were mostly 14 or 16 feet high. The roof was again built in sections called hip roof in contrast to a gable roof. These barns were of various lengths, 36 - 60 - 80 or even 100 feet depending on the need of the farmer and head of cattle and horses.

At that time the octagon frame barn came into being. They were particularly favored by farmers by the name of Clausing, who had their farms along the old Port Washington Road. The reason for this particular type of barn

was claimed as having more room available in the lower part of the barn where the cattle were kept. Evidence of these barns is still visible in this area.

As the building of log structures began to come into disuse, the threshing bee took its place as an example of neighborliness and is a social event of the first order.

Thiensville

The era mentioned up until the year 1910, included the Town of Mequon, that portion of about one square mile in area in approximately the center of the Town, known as the Village of Thiensville. It was that portion originally settled by a Mr. Wm. Thien, who erected a saw mill and a grist mill at or about the intersection of the Pigeon Creek and the Milwaukee River. He also took up a portion of land, part of which he later donated to the school district. This little community was named after Mr. Thien, being called Thienville. From this little hub, business and residences grew to a thriving little community. At the turn of the century, a great number of business and residences had few added to the original cluster. By this time, a number of residents thought it an opportune time to incorporate as a village, have their own form of government by which they could govern themselves better than by staying with the Town. This they then did in 1910. They received their charter, elected their own officers, etc. There always remained friction between some of the residents of Thiensville and Mequon, which at this writing is still smoldering. This entered into not only municipal government but also seeped into the school, fire department, police department, the dam, etc. This is the reason for a jt. school district #3 with Thiensville and jt. high school district #1, a portion of Mequon which was annexed to Thiensville, was still in Mequon.

While it could and would be a whole lot more congenial and harmonious in working with one and another in many ways beneficial to one and another, one would not know that such a "feud" existed, judging from the healthy economical condition of Thiensville and the surrounding area of Mequon. There is a sound axion which says that to judge an economical condition of a village, look at the area surrounding it.

The incorporation of the Village of Thiensville took along with it a number of thriving businesses. A few of them were the grist mill of Mr. Thien, and a saw mill of Mr. Hayssen.

Due to the excellent water power, the first real industries established in this new land were the grist mills built near the Milwaukee River. One of the earliest of these mills using natural water power were located in Thiensville. A portion of this grist mill is still there, remodeled for other uses. The dam is also there and in good shape.

Early Churches

Gossip had it that the people of Thiensville in the early days were Godless people because they had no church building with a tall steeple in its midst. This was a silly conception. Just because there was no physical building in Thiensville called a church, it cannot be said that the people were Godless. They could, and quite a number did, belong to other churches located in Mequon or other communities. Still others carried their church right with them in their hearts.

In the late 18th century and early 19th century, the following churches were already built in Mequon, namely, Freistadt Trinity, Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Church on the Wauwatosa Rd., Ev. Wisconsin Lutheran Church on the Cedarburg Rd., 1/2 mile north of the Milwaukee County Line, St. James Catholic Church on Range Line and Mequon Rd., St. John's Ev. Lutheran Wisconsin synod on Mequon Road, 1/4 mile south of Hwy. 141. Since that time the following churches were built in Mequon: United Methodist Church, St. Boniface Episcopal Church, Crossroads Presbyterian Church, Missouri Synod Lutheran, A United Church of Christ, Wis. Lutheran Synod, Thiensville, St. Cecelia Catholic Church, Grace Lutheran, American Lutheran in Thiensville.

Early Churches

In the early stages of the settlement of the Town of Mequon, there weren't any churches. Ministers of several denominations went from one resident to another and prayed. It is on record that the first minister was a Methodist.

In the spring of 1838, a Reverend Tork, an Indian missionary preached at the Jonathan Loomer home.

At a time when Milwaukee was still spelled ending with "ie", a band of German immigrants was making their way to the shores of a free land, America. They left their comfortable homes because of religious persecution. They learned that school land was still available in Wisconsin. They headed for this location and settled in the same neighborhood, today known as Freistadt, meaning free city. This village is located at the west side of Mequon, near the Town line.

When Freistadt was founded in 1839, Wisconsin had only about 30,000 inhabitants, about 5000 of these living in Milwaukee. These Prussian immigrants had real money, which they spent for land, food, and goods.

The first 40 acres were purchased for a church, parsonage, and school. The cost was \$1.25 per acre. The first building to be erected was a house for Henry von Rohr, the leader of this group. School and church services were held in this house. In 1840, the first church was erected at a cash outlay of \$45.50. This church proved

too small, due to many other German immigrants, and another church was built in 1841. Each family had to provide 300 hand hewn shingles for the new church. The sawing of timbers cost \$70.00 and the bricks were made for \$2.75 per m.

The church was large enough until 1884 when the present stone building was erected. A complete remodeling job was done, complete with new furniture. Also a new organ was purchased.

The Reverend L. Krause was the first pastor and since then ten pastors have served the congregation, including Pastor H. Wehrs, and the present incumbant Pastor H. H. Wiechmann.

A christian day school was conducted from the beginning. Three teachers conducted the eight grades of 97 pupils. Many of the farms in Mequon are still in possession of the decendents of the original owner such as Radue, Barthe, Schoessow, Pipkorn, Wille, Dobberfuhl, Frenz, and others.

Trinity Lutheran Congregation is the oldest Lutheran congregation in the State of Wisconsin. Trinity Lutheran school is also the oldest Lutheran school in Wisconsin.

St. James Catholic church is the oldest Catholic church in Mequon. It is located on the Mequon Road and the Range Line Road. It was originated Feb. 22, 1853.

Evangelical Lutheran Congregation on the Wauwatosa Road, north of Mequon Road of west Mequon, was known and nicknamed the "Kuemel Church". It was said the parishioners after service stopped at Wagner's tavern, and the ladies partook of a Kuemmel, a so-called ladies' drink, in the store part, and the men had a drink of whiskey in the tavern.

Evangelical Lutheran Church located on highway 57 near the Milwaukee county line, another church.

Evangelical Lutheran Congregation on Mequon Road near Oriole Lane, 1616 W. Mequon, Road, another church.

Levy Family

One of the most interesting of the early settlers in the Town of Mequon was that of the Lippman Levy family. They emigrated from Germany to the United States and then to the Town of Mequon where they bought a farm and rooted themselves in and raised a family.

Lippman Levy came here without any money and started from scratch. He went to visit a few farms around the town and collected chicken and pigeon manure. He did not succeed the first venture, went bankrupt and started over again. This time he earned enough to buy a horse and wagon and used that to get around. He succeeded and made a living for his family. By this time he had a wife and a son named Ben.

When the boy was older and could help the father, they started buying and selling cattle. They also bought a wagon and a horse. A closed box was built on the rear of the wagon with a door which opened up and inside displayed was an assortment of meat. With this horse and wagon, Ben Levy drove around the country to the customers and sold whatever the housewives wanted. This he practiced twice a week, Wednesday and Saturday, and was usually able to sell all the meat and sausage he had by the end of the trip. The son, Ben, married, raised a nice family, all on the original farm and the cattle buying and selling, and the butchering of beef, hogs, etc.

As time went on, Ben Levy had a family of several girls and a son named Henry. Henry followed in the footsteps of his father and also traded in cattle and also was very successful in his trade. They began buying cattle and when they had enough, shipped a carload to Chicago, where the market was a little better. After a few years, Ben Levy purchased a 60 acre farm located across the street from the original homestead, and Henry moved on it. Henry was married and also had two sons, Lowell and Donald. Here was where the cattle buying and selling stopped. When they were old enough to enter college, they both insisted to study law and succeeded over their father's wish to continue in the cattle business. As it turned out, both sons became very successful attorneys. They established their business in Cedarburg, with a branch in Mequon. Both are married.

It was until about 1950 that the Levys consisting now of four generations, were the only ones of the Jewish faith living in Mequon. They were accepted as one of the early settlers and highly respected. After this when Mequon expanded in residential living, more of the Jewish faith moved to Mequon, but no objections were raised in general. All lived in harmony and peach together. Some of the highest priced residences were built and owned by these people.

Farming In Mequon

The land in the area on which the early settlers settled and made their homes was very heavily wooded with numerous kinds of hard wood trees such as maple, oak, birch, etc. This had to be cleared first to make room for the building of a small log dwelling and shelter for the domestic animals. Then some more had to be cleared and worked for the planting of grain, potatoes, and vegetables for human consumption. From this primeval beginning, it was only the natural course to eventually and primarily to enter into the vocation of farming. This these sturdy emigrants did and soon had a nice growing farming community including such vocations necessary to give service in manufacturing and repairing the tools necessary in their operation.

By cutting the trees, an abundance of fire wood was available. Since there were no roads available as yet to haul it to Milwaukee, other means to get it here had to be provided.

They contrived the idea of building piers into Lake Michigan, about 300 feet out from shore and built a platform on it. Piles were driven into the lake bottom for support. On these platforms the farmers would pile the wood in the winter and sail boats would come out in the summer and load it on the boats and take it to Milwaukee for fire wood.

The slope from the top of the bank to the waters edge was

quite steep. The farmers had steel shoes put under the rear wheels for brakes. Once the brakes let go, and the wagon, load of wood, and the team of horses were all pushed into the lake.

One of these piers was built and owned by Thiesenhusen in Sec. 20 and the other one by Bernhard in Section 5, R. 22 E.

Later when transportation was better, the farmers would cut quite a few trees to be used as piles to be driven into the ground to provide a foundation to erect a building on it. Some sections of Milwaukee have a mucky quicksand subsoil.

Louis C. Kieker whose farm consisting of 140 acres and located in the S.E. 1/4 of Sec. #30, T9N, R21E. north of Donges Bay Road, was the breeder and producer of a large number of heavy Norman Percheron horses. He sold his farm to Julius Schmidt. Mr. Schmidt did general farming successfully. He then sold the farm to Louis Lemke. Mr. Lemke purchased this farm to enlarge his growing of pedigree corn and other seeds such as oats and barley. Rotation of crops was also necessary for the successful raising of these seeds. Mr. Lemke was the pioneer in Mequon of this growing of pedigree seeds. On his homestead farm located across the Donges Bay Road and in the NW Quarter of Sec. 32 in the same T9N, Range 21 East. This 80 acre farm being the north 1/2 he purchased from his father who owned 160 acres. The district #14 school house with one acre was in the extreme northwest corner,

which left only 79 acres. But this farm, Louis with his wife (Nee Suelflow and sons and daughter) did general farming first and gradually progressed in pedigree seed growing in which he made a great success. He gave all of his children a good education, but none of them followed their father in the venture in which he was so successful. His seeds became known in Wisconsin and in several adjoining states. Mr. Lemke gave a lot to the farmers in his success in raising pedigree seeds.

Mr. Lemke also received a permit from the Town to mine gravel on the Schmidt farm. After removing the gravel of a portion of the farm, Louis graded and landscaped the gravel pit and thereby created a beautiful little lake on his farm. At this writing Louis Lemke is still active in his seed raising.

Immediately to the west of the Schmidt farm, the O'Connell's owned an 80 acre farm. On this farm was considerable limestone which the O'Connells proceeded to take advantage of started to mine it. This limestone was in great demand for the building of barns foundations. The O'Connells sometimes employed 10 to 15 men in the quarry. Mr. O'Connell at one time was also an official as well as a stockholder in the telephone company.

Two limestone pits were situated, one 1/4 mile north of the Freistadt Road on Granville Road and the other one about 1/4 mile south of the Freistadt Road on the Granville Road. Limestone was used for building purposes but soon too expensive to mine, when crushers were used. Both these quarries were abandoned when gravel pits became prevalent.

Dairy Farming In Mequon

Theodore Kurtz at one time owned a farm in Sec. 3, R21E, west of the Milwaukee northern R. R. And the north side of Bonniwell Road on which he had a fine herd of Brown Swiss cattle. Andrew Armbuster owned the farm immediately west of the Kurtz farm. He specialized in the raising and breeding of heavy Percheron horses. The Henry Riemer farm on the east side of the Wauwatosa Road, about 1/4 mile north of the Freistadt Road, had a fine herd of Guernseys of about 50 to 60 head. Son Erwin eventually took over the farm and purchased a farm on the Bonniwell Road.

The Frank Weyenberg farm was owned by Frank Weyenberg President of the Weyenberg Shoe Company. It comprised of about 572.6 acres, all in Section 25-30 and 36, in Range 22 E. On this farm he had a herd of Guernseys of a very good breeding. Upon his retirement, he sold the entire herd at auction. He also disposed of nearly all of his land with the exception of the original farm that he bought in the southeast quarter of Sec. 36, R22 E on which he still resides. The North Shore Country Club purchased a portion and Harry C. Formann, a builder and investor, purchased the balance.

George O'Neill of the O'Neill Oil Company of Milwaukee owned a Guernsey herd and a farm which is now known as Country Club Estates and extends from the Milwaukee River south to the Mequon Road and east to the River Road, all in Sec. 23, R21E.

Ben Schoessow on the Farmdale Road, and Ed Nieman on the Highladn Road owned two large herds of Holsteins. All of the above at sometime belonged to the Ozaukee Country.

By 1890, the Town of Mequon had been divided into smaller farms of 160 acres or less with one exception, that of Fred Dobberphul who had 200 acres. Most all of these farms had some cows, a few pigs for slaughtering for family meat supply, chickens, maybe a few sheep kept mainly for the wool. They also had a few horses, depending on the size of the farm.

Some of the grain they raised was fed back to the animals. Some grain, such as winter wheat and some barley, was grown to be sold. Later cash crops such as peas for canning and for seed, sweet corn and beets for canning, and sugar beets. An abundance of maple sugar was made from the sap gathered in the spring from maple trees of which there were plenty.

Then there was the dairy farmer who depended mostly on the income received from shipping milk or cream to the City for homes and institutional consumption. At first there was not too much supervision. Milk was generally accepted as shipped to the milk distributors. Later on, cleanliness of the container (milk cans) wherein shipped was closely scrutinized. Then the barns where the cattle from whence came the milk that was shipped were inspected for cleanliness. Later on the inside of the barns had to

be whitewashed twice a year. The cows had to be kept very clean. No containers with open seams, rusty spots or indentations caused by rough handling were not allowed. The barns had to be cleaned daily. Manure had to be hauled out in the field. No stacking of manure around the barn was allowed. The milk from the evening milking had to be kept cool to a temperature of 35 degrees until the following morning when it was collected by a refrigerated tank truck. These foregoing requirements were all made by the Milwaukee Health Department through periodic inspections.

Farmers joined the Milk Producers Association, and bartered with the milk distributors on price. In 1931, they could not come to an agreement with the distributors and the farmers went on strike and shipped no milk to Milwaukee. As is usually the case, there were some that could not be without this income, so they hauled their milk during the night. This was soon detected and some striking farmers watched for them, followed them, and tipped all the milk cans into the ditches. During this strike, some farmers were stationed on the main roads leading to Milwaukee, stopping all cars going in the direction to Milwaukee to see if they had cans of milk in their cars. Some cars would not stop, so they took planks, hammered spikes through them so that they protruded several inches, had one man on each side with a rope tied to each end, and when a car would not slow down and stop for inspection, they would pull the plank with the spikes turned up across the road. If they would drive over the plank,

a punctured tire would certainly result. This strike created a lot of enmity, even between the farmers. This strike lasted about ten days, and agreement as to price of milk was made.

Several months before the strike, a few of the distributors in Milwaukee defaulted in the payment to the farmers, a few of them receiving nothing for a month or two for their milk. This added to the ill feeling between farmers and the distributors.

Milk hauling to Milwaukee was agreed upon by the farmers and several men who agreed to haul the milk for an agreed price, usually \$.15 for a 64 pound can of milk. Mr. George Kaul, who lived on the east side of the Wauwatosa Road near the Donges Bay Road, Herpich who lived on the Mequon and Range Line Road, and John Klauck who lived on the Oriole Lane and Mequon Road, were the principal milk haulers.

Producing and shipping of milk was a profitable way of farming, if properly managed. But super demands made from the farmers, such as caring of the cows, cleanliness of the barns, and refrigeration of the milk before shipping and fat test required, increased the cost of producing milk to such an extent that it did not prove to be profitable any more and slowly one farmer after another quit the dairy farming and sold out their herd and went into steer raising. In the fall of the year, the farmers would buy a number of young steers, shipped into Milwaukee from the western states, fed them to maturity, fattened

them, and resold them after keeping them for about six months. Depending upon the market, this generally proved more profitable than milk producing. The high cost of labor, the long hours devoted to the milking and the constant demands of the farmer to be there to feed the cows, milk them, and keep the barns clean, forced the farmer to be at hand every day of the week. This in spite of all the labor saving tools such as milking machines, electric barn cleaner, and others.

Little Farms Subdivision - so called in depression meaning that on a little farm one can earn a living.
Proven correct.

Method of Harvesting and Threshing of Grain

The first method of harvesting the grain was done with a grain cradle (a tool similar to a scythe) with long wooden prongs extending behind the sickle, and catching the grain when it was cut. The farmer would then reverse the sweep and lay down the cut grain in small piles. After this, some sort of a rope was twisted from two lengths of the grain and the piles were tied into bundles to be shocked, eight or ten bundles to a shock of grain. They were then left to dry for about a week, when they were hauled into the barn. Here it was left until all of the grain was handled in the same manner and stored for several weeks before it was threshed. The farmers called it curing the grain so it would not spoil.

The early farmers would use wooden flails for separating the grain from the straw. These flails were pieces of hard wood about 30 inches long and about 4 inches in diameter, fastened to a long wooden handle about five feet long, fastened to a wooden ladel by leather straps. These flails were used to pound the grain and separate the seed from the stalks.

Later on the threshing was done by a grain separator and a steam engine for power. It took a crew of three men to take care of the engine to supply it with coal and water for steam, one man to take care of the separator, and one man to operate the engine. It also took one man

to cut the bundles of grain and push them over to another man who would then feed it into the separator. This was later done by knives in the separator and thus eliminated one man. It took about three to four men to pitch the grain from the mower on to the platform. It took two men to carry the grain in bags to the grainary or elevator. It took one man on the separator to handle the ladder taking the straw to the straw stack where another man shaped the stack. Together it took about thirteen men to operate the whole threshing.

Threshing Crew

It took from 6:30 A.M. to 2:00 or 3:00 P.M. to thresh the average farmer's grain. This threshing crew would eat breakfast, lunch at 9:00 A.M., dinner at 12:00 P.M. and lunch at 3:00 P.M. The night meal was then had at the next farmer. This meant that the farmer's wife was obliged to prepare four meals for fourteen men. This also meant a lot of preparing of food and baking bread and kuchen the day before threshing, serving meals four times for a bunch of hungry farmers and cleaning of kitchen and washing dishes, was no small job. She had to have someone to help her.

As time went on, new improvements were made on both grain binder and threshing machines. The grain binder was equipped with a sickle cutting the grain, carrying the grain with a canvas elevator to a mechanism that tied the stalks of grain into equal sized bundles and pushed them out, falling on the ground. After this a bundle carrier was invented by which the farmer was able to drop four or five bundles on a pile, thereby eliminating a lot of walking for the man shocking the grain. After a few days of drying in the shocks, the grain was hauled into the barn, or if the barn was full of hay and grain, the balance of the grain was put in shocks on the outside.

By and by after the turn of the 1900 century, a number of improvements had been made. A blower had been installed on the separator, blowing the straw out on a stack instead of

being elevated out by a carrier. A self feeder feeding the bundles into the separator instead of cutting the bundles by hand was also added. In 1940-1950, grain was also threshed from the fields, instead of first hauling the grain into the barn or putting them into stacks first and then threshing from there. At this writing, a large amount of heading of grain when ripe enough, is practiced. This is done by a machine that is driven by a tractor cutting of the heads of the grain threshing it, and elevating it into a wagon box running along side of the heading machine.

Threshing Crews

Both grain and clover:

Peter Ellenbecker, Farmers on Wauwatosa Road - 120 acres
main operator

Others:

Geo. Schubert

Laabs in Freistadt

George Sperber on east side of Town

Length of season, about 60 days for grain, 30 days for clover.

Some clover was left to ripen for seed, red, alsike, and white. If the season was right, this proved quite profitable. After threshing the clover, the remaining was fed to the cattle in the winter as roughage.

Ice Harvest

An interesting occupation or industry in Mequon occurred every year in the winter when the Milwaukee River was frozen to 12 or more inches in thickness. Ben Herziger took it upon himself to organize the help and the teams of horses necessary to prepare and to haul the ice from the river to the ice houses. Nearly every tavern keeper had an ice house where he stored the ice he needed in the summer months, mainly for the refrigeration of the beer he sold, but also for cooling the liquor and soft drinks as well as for his private ice box in the kitchen. Mr. Herziger also arranged for cutting the ice into square blocks of whatever thickness generally over 12 inches. The ice was frozen pulled them out of the water on to a platform and from there on to the wagons or sleighs equipped with platforms. They hauled it to the icehouses. This also served as a source of revenue for the farmers and to Mr. Herziger to earn a little extra money in the winter. It was a hard, cold job but everybody sort of enjoyed it, being a diversion from the regular farming duties. It also happened that at one time the ice was too thin and a team of horses went through the ice and into the ice cold water. Both horses and driver were rescued. Aside from a very cold dunking, neither man or horse suffered too much. The driver of the team was taken home by a co-worker to receive a good rub down and after a brisk

walk, the horses also warmed up.

Two large ice houses were also built by Mr. Frank Gerlach, a beer distributor, on the west side of the railroad track of the Milwaukee Road in Mequon. These ice houses were also filled with ice and the ice was sold to taverns who did not have the facilities of an ice house storage. Some of the ice was hauled from Thiensville to Donges Bay Rd. and Port Washington Road, a distance of about five miles.

Indian Scare

(By copy of other printed matter)

In September of 1862, a rumor which grew into a frenzy, passed from neighbor to neighbor that the Indians were on the war path and were already very near. This caused an immediate fear and terror among the settlers and made everybody run for their lives. The fact was that no Indians were seen, and there was no cause for flight. The panic extended from about Fond du Lac to Milwaukee and from the lake shore to Schlesingville.

Seized with fear, people abandoned their farms and personal property and fled to the nearest town. Some rode on the farm horses in a mad gallop with foam on their horses calling to the people and waving white rags and calling out "Fly--the Indians are coming. A rider on horseback traveled north from Milwaukee gave warning when reaching Thiensville that the Indians had set fire to Cedarburg.

Women and children were put on wagons and dashed to Milwaukee. It is said that as far as one could see, there was a string of horses drawing wagons so close that the heads of one team almost touched the rear of the wagon ahead. There were maimed horses and broken wagons. The Milwaukee hotels were filled to capacity and hundreds slept on the sidewalk.

Some people however refused to be scared and stayed in their homes being prepared to throw pepper into the eyes

of the Indians, another stood pat with a pitch fork in her hands. Some obtained a toy cannon which they loaded with powder and spikes, all ready for the meeting with the Indians.

Within a day or two everybody returned to their homes, embarrassed by their behavior.

Transients

In the last decade of the 18th and at the turn of the 19th century, it was quite common when one was driving along the highway to meet one or more transients or tramps or hoboes, whatever one would call them, walking with a stick of wood with a bundle of clothes on one end upon their shoulders. These men would walk along the roads during the day, stop and rest under a shade tree when tired, ask the farmers for something to eat and drink, when hungry or thirsty, something very few farmers refused to do. Some would ask for money, but this the majority would not give them knowing full well for what purpose it would be used. The majority of these transients were harmless. They also knew where they would get something to eat and a cup of coffee or milk and would return every year. Some of them were known as "Big John" or "Black John", having black hair and beard, and other nick names.

The Town Board would designate a place where the transients had to go for a ticket entitling them to supper, lodging, and breakfast. This ticket they received from the Town Clerk and which they presented to Mr. John and Emma Rennhard who operated a tavern at the southeast corner of the intersection of Hwy 57 and the Mequon Road. They would be paid by the Town for these services. Mr. John Gierach was also appointed for the Village of Thiensville, performing the duty of issuing permits for vagrants. He received therefore the big sum of 5 cents per vagrant

but not exceeding a total of five dollars per year.

One would rarely hear of a transient being arrested for vagrancy or a misdemeanor. When it got too cold for them, they would ask to be sentenced to jail for the winter months to which the Justice of the Peace would accomodate them and have them jailed for vagrancy.

Mr. Rennhard operated the same tavern until they died. During their lifetime as operators of the tavern and so called tramp hotel, they never had any trouble with the transients which they could not handle. The Rennhard family together with a daughter, Emma and two sons, John and Carl, lived a quiet and peaceful life. Mrs. Rennhard would buy dandelions from those who had time to pick them, and there was an abundance of them along line fences and make wine from them. Some of this was sold to the transients for their consumption if they had any money to pay for it.

Mr. Rennhard had a separate building on his premises in which he accomodated these transients with sleeping quarters. About 20 bunk beds were available. After having breakfast, these transients would pick up their stick with their clothes and whatever they had, and were on their merry way to be sure to return for the evening or some other evening when they were near Mequon.

During the hunting season, Mrs. Rennhard and afterwards their son and daughter, would prepare a delicious racoon

lunch and serve it to their customers. The raccoon was usually donated by some hunter or trapped or shot by their son John or Carl. This lunch attracted quite a few customers. A few beers or glasses of wine were always sold.

This tavern building was sold to the state highway department for widening of highway 57 (\$40,000.00).

Prohibition

In 1919 a federal law was passed prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquor or beer containing more than 3 percent of alcohol. This proved to be a very unpopular law, and was flagrantly violated. Only near beer and soft drinks were permitted for sale in saloons.

It did not take long before a number of people purchased distilling apparatus and distilled their own liquor and other brewed their own beer. Some made it only for home consumption but others made it for sale at least until they were apprehended by the Federal agents. This was also true of the saloon keepers. Instead of the number of saloons decreasing in Mequon, the number of soft drink parlors increased from sixteen to 27. The law was repealed in 1933, and regular beer was allowed for sale. The liquor law was finally repealed in 1935 also. Some saloon keepers purchased entire books of prescriptions for liquor from the druggists and dispensed the liquor that way. If they were apprehended, most demanded a jury trial and obtained a competent attorney to defend them. They usually came out with a small fine, a short term in the house of correction or were freed entirely. This law was very unpopular. It is said that people always want most that which they cannot obtain or should not consume for personal health reasons. It was said at the time, people who never drank intoxicating drinks before

prohibition, either purchased them or made them for their personal use.

When the prohibition law was finally repealed in 1935, and intoxicating liquor could be again legally dispensed, the joy to some people was great and they sometimes celebrated the occasion too much. There never was so much wine made privately, pure alcohol purchased and mixed with some flavoring like Kummel, Apricot brandy, etc. and near beer brewed (some of it very tasty) as there was in this period of prohibition.

Monthly Fairs

One of the interesting occasions occurring on every Monday of the month were the monthly fairs held in Thiensville, Cedarburg, Grafton, and Saukville. Mequon and Thiensville held their fair on the first Monday of the month. At these fairs, the farmers of the neighboring communities would bring their wares, mostly calves, cows, small pigs, chickens, horses, or anything else they wanted to sell. They would start to arrive early in the morning. Some regular buyers would station themselves at a certain intersection on the road to be the first one to negotiate a deal if possible. After the sale was concluded, buyer and seller would usually go to a tavern and have a beer or two, sometimes more, to establish or keep up the friendly relationship.

Snow Storm of 1936

In 1936, we had one of the worse snow storms in the memory of the residents of Mequon. Snow fell and drifted for five consecutive days. At that time the Town id not have big snow plows to work with, only regular gravel trucks equipped with scrapers attached to the front of the truck. These were attached to the trucks every fall and removed every spring.

There was not a highway in Town that was not blocked with snow at one point or another. Highway 57 had a one way traffic for about 1/4 mile south of Cedarburg. Hwy. 181 was blocked with two story drifts 1/4 miles south of Donges Bay Road. Highway 141 or the old Port Washington Road was drifted shut at several places, so was the Range Line Road and River Road.

After the storm subsided, the Town Board sent out word that anyone willing to earn some money could do so by applying at the highway office with a shovel. Work being hard to obtain elsewhere, a lot of men applied. In some instances, they had to shovel out the road in tiers, having drifts of two stores high. In due time, one road after another was made passible.

This experience prompted the Town Board to look into the possibility of purchasing a large snow plow. This needed a referendum by the voters to raise money for the purchase

of such a large plow. Arrangements were made with the Drott Tractor Company to purchase a plow, subject to the approval of the voters annual meeting. A purchase agreement was entered into that if voted down, a rental for x number of dollars would be paid the Drott Tractor Company for the use of the same.

Roads

In the early 1830, there were only well trodden Indian trails from Milwaukee north through the Town of Mequon. The main tract was along what is now called or known as the present Green Bay Road. This roadway was surveyed by the U.S. government in 1832 to 1833. Up to 1835, it was only blazed. From 1836 to 1837, it was cleared north of Milwaukee for a few miles. In 1839, John Weston and Tim Wooden were given the contract to clear it to Port Washington. It was 2 rods wide. This road was known as the Milwaukee-Fond du Lac Road. To build this road, material for the road bed was used as found on both sides of the roadway. Also wood for bridges was also used as available. There were many patches of corduroy road and the bridges were of the most primitive types.

The Milwaukee-Fond du Lac Road owners attempted to maintain a plank and graveled road along the route of the present Cedarburg Road. Shortly before 1860, a mortgage on the road was foreclosed. Henry Kirchoff and John Hiltz who held the mortgage bid on it and became the owners of the road. In 1860, the Wisconsin legislature granted a charger to the Milwaukee-Cedarburg Plank Road Company with a capital stock of \$10,500. and the right to maintain a plank, graveled or turnpike road along the right of way of the Fond du Lac Road. Toll gates had to be three miles apart, the road bed at least 18 feet wide. The road bed was to be a bed of broken stone or gravel faced

with broken stone. Planks were to be laid the long way and sleepers or ties laid transversely. When the planks went out, travel on the roads was nearly impossible. Where the White Coach is (Spring Inn) is now located on the south limits of the Village of Thiensville was a real bad spot. On the west side of the railroad tracks across the White Coach Inn, there were springs which run under the tracks to the Cedarburg Road crossing, thus to be a bad spot for travel. A spring on the west side of the railroad tracks was continually running in a ditch leading to the Cedarburg Road and then into the river. This caused a continual wet spot in the road and a natural sink hole was created. Very often this required a second team of horses to be hitched on to the mired wagon and horses to pull them out of the mud. This road leading to Milwaukee was used very much by farmers hauling their produce from as far as Sheboygan. Another bad spot was a little south of Brown Deer where the Green Bay road and the Cedarburg Road part. Farmers were accustomed to carry big log chains on their wagons when hauling their produce to Milwaukee in the spring and fall of the year. If it was a rainy season, the road was nearly impossible to drive on this particular spot. They would help each other if one got mired, by unhitching one team and hooking it on to the other by means of the chain and this way pulled first one and then the other out of the axle deep mud.

It was quite an adventure to haul produce from the northern part of the County to Milwaukee especially in the late fall. Frequently, the farmers would travel as far as the Donges Bay Road and Green Bay Road, where a tavern was located. Here they could either shelter and feed their teams in the barn and if that was filled, in an open shed. This place was conducted by an Mr. August Gruenwald. Another such a stopping place was at Brown Deer, conducted by a Mr. Schweitzer.

In the fall of the year from Sept. 15 until Nov.1st, these places were usually crowded from about 2 to 4 o'clock in the morning. They would unhitch the horses, feed and water them and thereby giving them a rest. The farmers would partake of a drink or two, eat a sandwich, and have a chit-chat with each other, weather conditions either good or bad and outcome of their crop and either complaining or rejoicing about the income. There was no bedding provided for the men. They would either take a nap on a chair and when the noise subsided or put their buffalo robes on the floor and fall asleep for a short while. By three o'clock most of them were ready or getting ready to proceed on their way to Milwaukee, the tavern keeper wishing them a safe journey. Those were trying days but they were also enjoyable if their produce brought a fair price. On their return trip home, many times they would again meet at the same place. Either they would be cheerful about the day's results or moody,

depending upon the prices received or the sales made.

The farmers or others with single or double means of conveyance from Cedarburg south to Milwaukee, had to pass through 2 toll gates. This would cost 4 cents per horse or eight cents for a double horse vehicle. And the money so collected was used for the upkeep of the road. People driving to church were not required to pay toll.

These toll gates, 2 of them, were placed on 1/4 mile north of Highland Road, and the second on 1/2 mile south of Donges Bay Road. These toll gates required an attendant to be on duty 24 hours a day and night. In the picture, we see the toller, Mr. Oppel, sitting on the bench with his sister, Anne, standing next to him. The rest of the people were transient guests. This picture was taken in 1912. The second toll gate was situated about 1/4 mile north of the Highland Road.

These gates were made from a cedar pole about 6 inches in diameter and long enough to extend from one side of the street to the other. One end was connected with a steel bar fastened to two posts acting as a lever or fulcrom, and the other end when lowered rested on two other posts. One end had a basket filled with stones, which when lowered, would rest on the two posts. This pole was lowered after the vehicle passed through and after payment of the fee. It was raised and lowered with a rope fastened to the light end of the pole.

On June 16, 1913, the Cedarburg Plank Road was purchased

from the owners by the County for \$1500. It was considered a four rod road. It was resurveyed and described as best as could be determined and recorded as such. It was known as County Trunk Highway and was maintained as best it could be.

The highway was transferred to the State in the year 1922 and was then designated as State Trunk Highway #57.

The State highway department began to prepare the road by grading and preparing a solid foundation for future paving it with asphalt or concrete surface. In the grading process, at times some of the wooden planks used in the original Plank Road as surfacing were rooted up. Later a concrete road bed was laid, 4 inches deep and 20 feet wide. Some years later 2 feet of concrete were added on either side, giving the traveled portion of the road a width of 24 feet and where possible a four foot shoulder on either side. The entire roadway was then covered with a layer of asphalt.

In May 1935, a movement by the State Highway Department for the widening of State Trunk Highway 57 was underway. This was to start at the south end of the Town of Mequon and continued north through Mequon, Thiensville, Cedarburg, and Grafton and then on to County Trunk X to meet the present Hwy 57 just east of Saukville.

A petition was circulated by residents living on either side of Highway 57 and on side roads nearby and particularly

the merchants requesting the State Highway Commission to relocate Hwy 57 one mile west of the present location or on Wauwatosa Avenue. The Milwaukee Journal not only gave it prominence in its news column, but also dealt with it editorially. The relocation of the highway would save the stately trees that line both sides of Highway 57, but would not necessitate the razing of quite a few nice residences. It would also hurt the merchants along the highway because it would increase the speed of the fast driver and endanger those who want to enjoy this beautiful highway by a leisurely drive.

Harry Bolens, the State Senator representing this district did his utmost to convince the highway commission of this relocation. Over 90 percent of the property owners along the highway signed the petitions asking that the trees be saved and the road be left as it is now. These petitions were sent to the State Highway Department. A hearing was to be held, but as far as the public was concerned, no meeting was ever granted.

A resolution was passed by the Mequon Park Commission introduced by George Virmond and seconded by Herbert Wuesthoff, asking for the preservation of the trees along Highway 57 especially a large and beautiful elm tree located on the east side of Hwy 57 just north of the new Town Hall. The citizens of the Town were especially anxious to preserve it as it was one of the last sentinels of the first growth trees in this area. Months went by

and no information from any source was forthcoming. The next thing that was known when work was started and the tree was cut down. It was argued by the State that the tree was in the path of the planned travelled part of the highway. Later on when the road was covered with a layer of concrete, it was found to be several feet away from the travelled portion.

The Mequon Town Talks, gave this proposed widening of Hwy 57 a lot of publicity, being very much opposed to it. This seemed to be the beginning of a feeling of dissension between the Town of Mequon, residents and the Planning Commission and the State Highway Department. The residents felt that there was a lack of cooperation between the State Highway Dept. and the Town officials who represented the residents. Up to the writing of this history, nothing has been done about the widening of S.T.H. 57 and State Trunk Hwy 167. A change in the administration at Madison it seems that there is closer cooperation between local officials, the residents and the State department.

On February 24, 1841, a special meeting of the Road Commission was held at the Bonniwell House in Mequon. Six road districts were laid out in Mequon. The balance of Ozaukee County was created as one road district.

The Town of Mequon was divided into 14 seperate road districts. Each district had its own road master to

supervise the maintainance of the road. He was appointed by the Chairman of the Town. A special road tax was levied on all real estate within the town for the purpose of maintaining the roads.

After the spring thaw or after the rainy season in the fall of the year, the roads received their hardest wear. Due to the softness of the roads, deep ruts were made by the wagons. These had to be smoothed over as soon as possible after drying. This was accomplished by two teams of horses being hitched on to a large grader. Each farmer drove his own team, one team was hitched in front of the other. Two farmers were stationed on the grader to raise the blade or lower it, so as to create a smooth surface on the road.

This was hard work for both men and horses. Each road district had given each taxpayer an opportunity to work in proportion to his road tax if he so chose. After the grading was completed, gravel was hauled on to the road where most needed. This was done at a time when the farmers could spare the time from their farm work. The farmers were credited on their road tax.

After a snow storm, the road master would ask a farmer who owned a sleigh and a team of horses to drive over the roads in the district to find out where the drifts were where one could not get there. Six or eight men usually would accompany him, all equipped with snow shovels. If it was drifted too much to shovel, a place would be looked

for, permission received from the owner to cut the wire fence and then drive through the field and on to the road again. This was done sometimes all winter long. In the spring the roads were plowed first by a team of horses and the snow then shoveled out by hand.

In the winter of 1935-36, one of the worst snow storms was experienced in the memory of that generation. Drifts 2 to 25 feet high were at some places in the road. Cedarburg Road at the north end of the town line, had only one lane open for traffic for about one half mile south. Traffic had to wait until one way was clear and then proceed. The Wauwatosa road south of the Donges Bay Road was closed for several weeks. Traffic traveled through the farmers fields as mentioned before it was finally shoveled out by hand and in several tiers high. This was a winter where everybody that was willing and able could earn some money even at .35 per hour. The Town Board finally purchased on a lease basis, a \$35,000. tractor and snow plow, subject to the approval of the public at the annual Town meeting in April, 1936. Approval was given by the electors.

Expansion - Mequon Expansion In Building, etc.
1860 to 1910

From the time of the expansion of the Town of Mequon and the building of homes and other structures started, material for the construction of the same was in demand, lumber especially. The walls of the buildings were mainly of field stone, gathered from the land as it was cleared. After the construction of homes and barns changed from logs, sawed lumber came into demand. This caused several saw mills in operation.

One was operated and owned by John Bublitz on the upper end of the Pigeon Creek, north of Highland Road and west of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad tracks. The other owned and operated by Mr. Haysen, west of the dam at Thiensville on the Milwaukee River.

New roads were laid out in the Town, which had to be covered with gravel, to build a good foundation for a track for horses and vehicles to travel on. By this time a new map was made, which showed that nearly all of the land in the Town of Mequon was sold to individual owners. Some farms of 300 to 400 acres were sold to one owner, usually the father of a family of 3 or 4 sons. He would then divide it into several parcels and deed it to the sons. Some of these parcels were purchased by such fathers as Gustav Seifert purchasing 240 acres and deeding it to Herman, William, and Richard Seifert into 3 - 80 acres adjoining 80 acre farms. Wm. F. Jahn, Philip Dobberfuhl, August Lemke, and others did the same.

Times Between 1846 and 1890

By 1892, a complete map was published, showing all the separate farms and properties laid out and owners of the different parcels. School sites were designated, numbered, and named. The boundaries of the several school sites were occasionally changed, but not very often. Only when it was deemed that it was to the advantage of operating the school, the proximity for students to attend, were the boundaries changed by referendum. Road districts were also laid out by this time, and districts superintendents were appointed to oversee the roads and keep them in good condition to travel on. Nearly after every rain or especially after the spring thaw, the roads had to be graded, usually with a four horse team. Snow plowing to keep the roads passable was also under the duties of the district supervisor.

A great many pits were opened from which gravel was hauled on the roads for repair. These gravel pits were dotted all over the Town, and the one which was in the district, was used to take out the gravel. The farmer on whose farm the pit was located and gravel taken there from, was paid for the material. The farmers were credited for the hauling of the gravel on the road on their road tax assessment.

Some of the main pits were the Knuth pit, Seifert pit, Ozaukee Sand & Gravel pit, Thierman pit, Milbrath pit,

John Mueller, and Chas. Kiekhaefer. The Ernst gravel pit was privately owned and operated.

During this time of expansion in buying of farms, etc., the clearing of the land to be used for the raising of crops, there developed many innovations in the lives of the settlers. Population increased, and business increased and prospered. A lumber yard was started by Carl Maas on the west side of the Cedarburg Road, a wagon shop opened across the street from the lumber yard by August Maas. The post office was moved from Mequon to Thiensville.

Floods

Periodically, usually after the spring thaw of the ice on the river and the rains accompanying, Mequon and Thiensville were plagued with a flood of the Milwaukee river and contributing creeks. This flooding was not only typical of Mequon, but in the whole of the Milwaukee River watershed. When it really was at its worst, was when the ice broke up and got blocked some place in the river where the ice was still frozen solid and did not break up. This also happened at some obstruction such as the Brown Deer bridge, at an island in the river or obstruction by trees, etc. This caused the flooding of considerable land along the shores of the Milwaukee River inundating not only the land but also entire homes where surrounded by water several feet deep. This caused the inhabitants to vacate their homes with boats and seek refuge with friends, hotels, etc. Such flooding caused considerable damage to property. At times one could see small buildings such as chicken houses, outhouses, trees, and lumber floating down the river.

Considerable damage was also caused to Thiensville property. Many basements were entirely filled with water. Some first floor areas were also covered with water. Near and around the old mill, the water was the deepest. The writer can vouch for a boat entering the front door of the Hotel Aussem, rowing through the barroom and emerging out of the rear door. Many roads both in Thiensville and Mequon were blockaded for high water.

This flooding and the damage caused by it induced the Chicago Core of Engineers to make a survey of it and also recently the Southeastern Regional Planning Commission got interested and studied the situation. The Federal government through its engineers made several recommendations as to how this danger from flooding could be prevented. One such recommendation was the building a large and deep open ditch from the Milwaukee River to Lake Michigan from the vicinity about 1/2 mile south of Highland Road to cost several million of dollars. None of these projects were ever fulfilled. Another was to build a large lake or reservoir near Kewaskum to impound the water. A lot of flooding was also caused from the high water backing up in the river causing the overflow of the creeks. Floods were common nearly every spring but one bad flood was experienced in August of 1924. This was caused by rains of cloudburst dimensions for several days. These rains not only caused heavy flooding but also large crop damages.

In 1880, the bridge on Hwy 57 was carried away by a large flood but was replaced.

In March 19, 1918, the Mequon bridge on the Mequon Road was hit by an automobile and caused it to collapse and fall into the Milwaukee River. This was a steel suspension bridge. The automobile and driver in the car also plunged into the river but he was not hurt badly. The

bridge was replaced by a concrete bridge which to this day is still there. On conclusion of building of the new bridge, a celebration was arranged by the officials of the Town. A band was engaged to furnish the music for dancing on the bridge and also for entertainment. Several state officials including Governor Zimmerman gave talks. Refreshments were served suitable for the occasion. A very large crowd gathered for the celebration.

When the river was at its peak, it was several feet higher than the top of the dam and barely missed spilling over the upper dam. Several times some daring men tried to row over the dam with a canoe. Several succeeded but two of them did not and drowned in the attempt. The force of the water was great and one body was recovered near the Mequon Bridge about 1/2 mile down from the dam.

In 1862, there was a regular Johnstorm flood in the Milwaukee River. The Mequon Bridge washed out, and every bridge south to Milwaukee. Thiensville was flooded.

Drainage Ditches

When the early settlers first purchased their land, it was usually of a quarter section (160 acres) or more, in size, some of this was of a varied topography. There were flat areas, some rolling, and some of a swampy complex and some areas containing water for a time. As time went on, more land was cleared of trees, etc. and made available for farming or for placing the necessary buildings thereon. In order to make this wet land usable, the water had to be drained. In order to do this, trenches had to be dug and tile laid. This sometimes necessitated quite a long stretch to another depression or an outlet to a creek or to a ditch along the highway. Clay tile of four or more inches in diameter were usually laid in this trench and covered with soil. In the early stages all trenches of up to eight inches in diameter were tiled. The larger ones were left open. These drains at times extended from one farm to and through another, in order to get to a low spot to drain off. These tile drains were known as farm drains. They were kept in working order by the individual farmers.

In due time, when more land was cleared for farming, it became necessary to combine several farms into a drainage area so as to reach an outlet for the surface water. Five or more farms usually were combined to form a drainage district. A petition was filed by a certain number of farmers to the County Drain Committee to form such a

drainage district. Surveyors were retained to survey the area. This was done to ascertain the area which was to be included in the district. All land three feet or more below the high water mark were usually included. The digging of the drain was then let out on bids. The low bidder usually received the contract if deemed responsible. Assessments of cost were determined according to acres benefited. Questions then usually arose as to the benefits and costs of the venture. They were usually finally agreed upon even so if not always agreeable to the individual. These drains were then numbered and named by such titles as Drain #1, Town of Mequon (description of property), the Town of Mequon had twelve such County and Town drains in 1950.

Establishing the area and who should come in on a certain drain sometimes caused terrific ill feeling on the part of neighbors or the Town officials. At one of these decisions to be made by the Board, a certain property owner who was to be included in the area of one of these drainage districts, stationed himself on his property armed with a shot gun on his arm, threatening anyone who would trespass on his property. He was arrested, proved guilty of threatening and resisting the Board, and fined 10 days in jail. When he was released from jail, he found that the drain through his land was dug and closed up. This property owner subsequently held office in the Town of Mequon.

In a growing community such as Mequon, surface water has become a problem in several areas. Eventually, the entire Town had to be studied and laid out into a drainage district or two. One district leading into the Milwaukee River and the other into the Menomonee River area.

In 1916, the Town Drainage Law was put into force. Drainage District #1-3-5-6 and 7 were formed and recorded. These drainage districts were either open ditches, dug by hand labor or by horse drawn plows and scrapers, depending upon size and length. Others were drained by laying of tile, either clay or cement, from four inch clay to 24 inch concrete.

Frank Kenney and John Walach, both single, hired out to dig drains by hand digging with a spade. Their price per foot was determined upon the width of the tile, from 4 inches and up, and the number feet. They were both hard workers. They lived in a small house near the west side of the Milwaukee Road Railroad and the south Ozaukee County line.

Industry in Thiensville

Mr. Nic Wilson of Thiensville, then a part of Mequon, owned and operated a tavern on the southwest corner of Wilson Avenue and Hwy. 57. He also operated a grain elevator west of the Milwaukee Road tracks on Wilson Avenue. He bought the farmers barley, sold it and shipped it in bulk in box cars to Milwaukee and other breweries used in the manufacturing of beer. Only good barley was used for this purpose, the poorer grade was used for cattle and hog food.

There was a busy wagon factory conducted at Thiensville by Ferdinand Dowe on the east side of Hwy. 57. These wagons were called lumber or farm wagons and had a reputation that sold them out of the state as far west as the Dakotas.

A lumber yard was conducted by Carl Maas on the west side of Main Street in Thiensville. This lumber yard is still in operation and owned by Mequon Distributing Yards with a branch at Mequon on the south side of Highway 167 along the tracks. Also one at Brown Deer.

One of the old pioneer stores in Thiensville was the one on the east side of the Green Bay Road. The building although it has been extensively remodeled, is still there. In the early days, it was a grocery, dry goods, and general store. It was owned and operated as such by Wm. Zimmerman. Later it was purchased by August and Frederick and Johana

Thierman. P. J. Kroenke, who had purchased the Thiensville grist mill was also postmaster, occupied the front portion of the north side of the store for a post office. He held that appointment from 1900 to 1914. In 1914 when two rural mail carriers were appointed, the entire store portion of the building was used for post office purposes. In 1921, the Gilbert Shoe Co. took over the store portion and kept their offices in there.

Gilbert Shoe Company

One of the most outstanding industries in Thiensville is the Gilbert Shoe Company. It was established by A. P. Gilbert. He came from the Simplex Shoe Company of Milwaukee.

When School District #3 built a new school building at Grand Ave., they sold the old building to the Gilbert Shoe Company. The factory was started in the two story stone building formerly occupied by the Thiensville School as school rooms, from first to tenth grade and dwelling for the principal and his family. They manufactured children's shoes and walking shoes for women and named them "Kali-sten-iks". They were and still are sold all over the country as a very well built shoe. They are also built on the principal of allowing children's feet to grow and develop naturally and normally, to correct incipient deformities, and prevent them, to allow the freedom of motion that the bare foot enjoys, to promote and insure foot health. The walking shoes for women are intended to do the same for them, not omitting features that make them appear "chic" and at the same time feel comfortable.

The depression did not slow down the work of the Gilbert Shoe Company which was kept busy to meet growing demands for its Kali-sten-iks. About 200 employees turn out about 1200 pair of shoes every day. They worked all during the depression days, never a total lay-off, every worker received a check every week, even though they were small at times.

Gilbert Shoe Company Statistics

Gilbert Shoe Company was incorporated Feb. 1926.

Original officers were A. P. Gilbert, Rose Gilbert,

E. W. Wiese, A. H. Carthaus, M.D.

They moved to Thierman store with their offices in 1927.

They purchased old stone school building in 1923 or 1924.

Purchased by Gilbert Shoe Co. 1926 from Allen Spiegel of
Belgium, Wi.

Fred Thierman, who was a sort of investment counselor, banker, etc. occupied the rear of the store as office space. The whole building is now remodeled and used as living quarters, a liquor store, and a television and radio store.

Mr. John Gierach owned and operated the village blacksmith shop. He retired from the blacksmith trade and remodeled the building into a grocery store on the lower level and living quarters on the upper level.

Next door to the blacksmith shop was Hilgers Hardware store and coal business. Most of their coal business was done on orders. When the coal car arrived at Thiensville, the farmers were notified and they would come with their teams and wagons and get their winter supply of coal. Those without means of conveyance were supplied with coal by the Hilgers with their teams. (Threshing coal).

In the same building was a small shoe store and cobbler shop owned by Henry Kurtz. Another outstanding shoemaker in Thiensville was Gottlieb Haas. Jacob Conrad operated a cobbler shop at Donges Bay Corners and Wauwatosia Road on the southeast corner. Michael Vogel was near Wagners corner and Phil Mueller, who lived where the former Jungles were, was also a shoemaker before he became a tanner. It is said that one Mr. Merz, conducted a tannery on what is now the north part of the Carbys property, with power furnished by the little spring creek.

Logs were sawed at the Thien and Haspssen saw mill at Thiensville on the Milwaukee River between the dam and the Green Bay Road. Later Mr. Thien built and operated a grist mill at the river and Green Bay Road. He ground wheat and rye into flour on stone wheels. Power was furnished by the dam. Gates could be opened and closed at the river and mill race built, letting the water run under the mill and turn the stone wheels grinding the grain into flour. A coffer dam was also built extending from the dam northward to Elm Street, so as to contain the water and not let it flood the property near the river. The embankment between the river and the mill race was about 10 to 12 feet wide, permitting a wagon to travel on it to haul ground and gravel to the dam to repair the erosion caused by the rise of the river at flood stages. This narrow road was called "Lovers Lane", named after young and also older people taking a leisure stroll on a nice moonlight evening with their "sweetie".

The Thiensville mill was a very busy place. A line of farmers with one or two horse wagons loaded with grain and corn on the cobs waiting to have it ground into feed for their cows and swine. It was a regular meeting place for farmers. After unloading their load of corn and grain, they took their team across the street to one of the two taverns open shed for their horses. They would then meet in either Kieker's or Aussem tavern, have a glass of beer or two, and have some lunch, always prepared gratis by these tavern keepers. At this time, the political issues

of the present were discusses, stories told, and general "gemutlickeit" enjoyed.

At certain times when the mill race needed cleaning from debri that collected, the gates near the dam were closed and the gates at the mill were opened, leaving nearly all the water out of the race. At this time, fish, mainly carp, were speared out of the little water left, some of them between 15 and 20 pounds in weight.

This mill was owned and operated by Mr. Thien first, then he sold it to Mr. P. J. Kroehnke. Mr. P.J. Kroenke later sold it to Mr. Oswald Liebscher and Schaefer May 1, 1912, then an employee of Mr. Kroehnke (Liebscher), and Schaefer, a former school teacher.

They always used water power for operation of the mill. They started to generate electricity with the water power of the dam. This they provided for the village. But when the time came when more and more residents requested electricity, and the village grew in size, it bedame too much for Mr. Liebscher and Mr. Schaefer and they sold out the franchise to the Wisconsin Electric Light Company. When the time arrived when Mr. Liebscher and Mr. Schaefer felt they could no longer stand the hard work connected with running of the mill, they sold it to Gieratz, June, 1944. Then sold to Werner to Brinkman and Clarence Lauer to Braatz, and Vogel.

Thiensville State Bank

In the year 1910 when the Village of Thiensville and the surrounding community of the Town of Mequon grew in population, and in the business transacted, a few enterprising citizens and business men thought it was timely to have a bank of their own in Thiensville. Mr. John F. Nieman and D. M. Rosenheimer of the Jackson Bank proceeded to organize such a bank. After \$16,000. capital stock was subscribed for, they proceeded to incorporate. John F. Nieman was elected president, Louis G. Kieker, vice-president, D. M. Rosenheimer, cashier, and second cashier, Conrad Wiesler.

A small brick building was erected across the street from the Aussem Hotel and directly north of the Thiensville mill. This building is still there but it outgrew the banking needs of the thriving community and village. A new two story brick building was erected in 1930 on the west side of the Thiensville mill, on the property of the former post master and owner of the mill, P. J. Kroehmke. The two story residence was moved one lot to the west, with the Pigeon Creek on the west side of it and the Milwaukee River on the south side. This offered a beautiful sight from all windows in the working area. This new building greatly improved teh working area as well as provided additional office space for a physician and office facilities for the Fox Farm industry.

The former bank building was sold to the Ozaukee Finance Company which was in the small loan and insurance business. This company is still in the same building and in the same business.

The Village of Thiensville and the surrounding area of the Town of Mequon bloomed out to a prosperous and beautiful community of nice farm and residential buildings. Farmers were prosperous and in addition, several commercial enterprises located in the area.

The Thiensville State Bank, under the leadership and conservative supervision of the President, Mr. John F. Nieman, thrived with the community. This was exemplified in the time of the depression, 1930-1940. When some banks found themselves in financial difficulty, the Thiensville State Bank after examination by the State Banking Commission, was allowed to open within a short time and do a normal business.

In 1962, the directors of the Bank being aware of the necessity to increase their working area in the bank, due to the increase of their banking business, again decided to build a new bank structure. They decided to purchase the old J. O. Carbys property on the northeast corner of Green Bay Rd. and River View Drive. This was and is a beautiful site, dotted with beautiful pine trees on a slightly elevated lot. They built a beautiful building on it in colonial style.

Their bank statement of 1972 showed a tremendous increase in their assets, at \$21,631,516.98.

The Thiensville State Bank must be congratulated for their generous donation of uniforms for the entire membership of Homestead High School and other donations.

Under the good leadership of the past officers and directors of the bank, the business and direction was in good hands as is demonstrated by its present financial status. The residents and stockholders can be proud of their achievements.

Industry in Mequon

In 1857, Wm. Opitz and Adolph Zimmerman owned and operated the first brewery in Mequon. It was located about one block west of the Milwaukee railroad tracks on the south side of Hwy. 167. When the brewery stopped operation, Mr. Frank Gerlach operated a wholesale beer distributing business at the same place. He had the agency from the Youngs brewery whose beer he sold to taverns, etc. He had a large territory to cover, considering that he had only one team of horses to do it with. This was the era before the advent of the automobile. He covered such towns as Mequon, Germantown, Jackson, Brown Deer, Cedarburg, etc. Mr. Gerlach continued in business for many years.

Louis C. Wagner, the grandfather of the late L. C. Wagner, who owned and operated the tavern and restaurant on the southeast corner of the intersection of highway 167 or Mequon Road and Wauwatosa Road, operated a tavern, general store, and a pickle processing plant on the same premises. It is also said that he also operated a cheese factory on the same premises.

The farmer would plant the pickle seed furnished by the Wagners. This pickle seed was predominately Chicago pickle seed, claimed to produce one of the best dill pickles. They would pick them when they were about the right size and haul them to the factory. This was done mostly in the evening after chores when a regular line of

wagons formed by the farmers in front of a receiving platform by the factory, waiting to have their pickles weighed and examined whether or not they were of proper size and well formed. They then received a weight slip showing how many pounds of pickles they delivered. They would then go to the store and buy groceries or other necessities and either receive the balance due them in cash, but most of the farmers had a book in which was stated the pounds of pickles received, the value thereof, and the amount of commodities purchased, which was charged against them. At the end of the season, they either received the balance in cash or made further purchases until it was used up. The price paid for pickles was from 80 cents per hundred weight and up, depending on quality and size. This property was in the possession of the Wagner family for over one hundred years. The late Louis C. Wagner, III, remodeled the grocery store into a restaurant and also remodeled the tavern a bit. He served good home made meals.

In 1965, the property was acquired by the State of Wisconsin, to be used for widening and for better visibility. In 1967, the buildings were razed.

Mr. Philip Mueller specialized in the tanning of cow hides and was located on County Trunk S or Mequon Road. He tanned the hides with the hair remaining in tact. These were used by Mr. Mueller in making so-called cow hide overcoats, which were very durable. The output of these coats was considerable.

Pioneer stores were conducted by Koenig at Mequon, Schneider at Freistadt in the western part of the Town on Hwy. S. These were general stores which had to supply all the needs of the pioneers from cough medicines, by way of food, and hardware to clothing. They were also the meeting place of the early statesmen who discussed the weighty political problems at these stores.

The Town of Mequon, in its early days, had located their three breweries. They were the Adolph Zimmerman and Opitz brewery at Mequon, the Engels Brewery at Thiensville, and the Leonard Bodendorfer Brewery in the western part of Mequon near the Swan Road and Mequon Road. The latter brewery stored and lagered their beer in a cellar dug on the north side of the hill at the aforementioned site, once a fox farm and used for the storage of vegetables. The entrance to the cellar on the north side of the Mequon Road could still be recognizable until recently. Another beer cellar was north of Thiensville at the fox farm curve. The entrance on the east side of the Cedarburg Road is still partially visible.

The grandfather of the present Herzigers who by this time all passed away, conducted the first meat market in the Town of Mequon on the site of the Ed. Herziger meat market on the corner of Mequon and Cedarburg Road. This was a slaughter house, ice house, and meat market. Ed. Herziger, the father of the last Herziger family, that lived on the

premises before it was purchased by the State of Wisconsin for highway purposes, not only sold meat and home made sausages from the shop, but he would drive out with one horse and a wagon, on which there was a removable box with a door that could be raised and an array of meat and sausages displayed for sale. Twice a week, Wednesday and Saturdays, he would drive out among the farmers and sell his wares. The box was also equipped with a scale. Mr. Ben Levy also had a route such as this with the same wares for sale. Each had his own route and customers. Later on, Ed. Herbst and then his brother Arno, operated the same way. They were all in the cattle buying business. They would individually at times buy enough cattle so that they could ship a whole carload to Milwaukee or Chicago at one time.

Wm. Bruss of Freistadt knitted woolen hoisery and sweaters by machine. These sweaters and socks were warm and sold in large quantities to the pioneers.

Hanche and Gerbothe were pioneer tailors.

Ed Mueller was the only commercial photographer the Town ever had.

A cheese factory and a distillery were operated on the premises owned by Mr. Roethal. This was at the northern part of Thiensville.

A saw mill was operated by John Bublitz on a farm located west of the Milwaukee Northern Railroad tracks and north of the Highland Road on the shores of the Pigeon Creek.

Super Sky Products Co. was organized in 1957.

The Kelch Corporation, located at Mequon Road and Wilson Avenue, was organized in 1956, is a manufacturer of plastic products, and is doing a thriving business.

Schmitz Ready Mix, organized in 1955, producer of ready mix concrete is situated on Industrial Drive, south of Mequon Rd.

In 1908, the Milwaukee River Canning Company was organized. It was located immediately west of the Milwaukee Road tracks and north of the Mequon Road. After several years of successful canning of peas, they sold.

The Scott Pump Company, organized in 1956, an assembly of water pumps, is situated in the building used for the mixing of fox foods, on Wauwatosa Ave., north of Mequon Rd.

Large piles of logs could be seen on the premises which were brought there during the winter by the farmers on sleighs. These were sawed into lumber in the spring of the year. The power used was a large steam engine also used for power for the threshing.

Mr. Arnold Schmechel operated a machine shop on the Donges Bay Road west of the Baer Road. Here he invented and manufactured a combination potato-digger and bagger. He took his son in the business and manufactured quite a number of them. They shipped some as far south as Mississippi. He later also operated a saw mill on the same premises. The power used was also a coal fired steam engine and later a large tractor.

The more recent industries in Mequon were the Riverside Dunbrik Company, situated and operated at a gravel pit south of Donges Bay Rd. on the River Road. They manufactured cement brick, window sills, etc. using the sand from the pit. They dug out a large hole, sucking out the sand from beneath the water's surface. When they discontinued the operation, the owners of the property graded and beautified the shores and made a beautiful lake out of it. Later a subdivision was laid out around the lake, and beautiful homes erected on it.

After the demise of the Fox Farms, the buildings on the Federal Fox Farms were used in the manufacture of dog, mink, and other small animal foods.

Rendering Plants - Owners and Operators
Northern Reduction Company From Milwaukee

Some time in early 1900, Northern Reduction Rendering Plant was built. This plant was built about a half mile south from Bonniwell Road on the bank off Lake Michigan. There was a pier built out into the lake. There was also a ramp built up the lake bank up to the plant, the carcasses of the dead animals were shipped in from the stock yards from Milwaukee by boat on the lake, The carcasses loaded on to carts from the boats at the pier then pulled by horse up to the ramp, from there on the carts were pulled up to the factory by cable, from thereon the carcasses were processed (rendered) at the plant. The carcasses were cooked in large cookers, then the fat was skimmed off, pumped into containers ready for shipment. The rest was used for meat scraps and for fertilizer. Then in later years, a spur was built from the Chicago North Western Railroad track to the plant which made it more convenient to ship out the processed product, and ship in the carcasses from the stock yards from Milwaukee. This spur was used for a number of years.

The Chicago North Western which runs north and south is only about one fourth mile west from the plant. Then about in the last several years, alot of the animals from the stock yards were truck in, up to the time it closed down some where within the mid twenties.

A second rendering plant was built within the area. A Mr. Hubert Eische built and started a rendering plant located at the very end of the Bonniwell Road at the lake about in 1914 or 1915. The operations were very much the same as at the Northern Reduction Rendering plant. The dead animals were brought in by horse and wagon from whatever area at the start. Mr. Eische, a brother, was the main one in the Milwaukee area to pick up and bring in animals from the Milwaukee county area. Mr. Eische had a brother-in-law that also brought animals in from Racine several days a week. Later when the trucks were more available, Mr. Eische bought a truck about in 1918 or so. He then hired a driver so as to have a more distant pickup, such as Menomonee Falls, Holy Hill, Jackson, West Bend areas. This plant was operated by Michael Sperber. Mike as he was known, had previously worked at the Northern Reduction plant.

Mr. Eische had one of the very early model Kissel trucks. As time went on, for several years, Mike, a son, took part in the operation. Melvin ran the truck to pick up the dead animals from where-ever the call came from. Manfred worked with his father at the plant. He worked and operated the plant until one day unfortunately, it burned down in July 1922. The plant was not rebuilt again. The land was later sold to a developer and investor.

The family of George Sperber Sr., the father, consisted of four boys, John, Mike, Fred, and George Jr., and two daughters. Business-like, George Sr., operated a milk route to Milwaukee. He collected a wagon load of eight gallon cans of milk from the farmers and hauled it to the Milwaukee distributing companies every day. He also owned a threshing rig. He did custom threshing, grain and clover, for the farmers on the east side of the Milwaukee River. He also operated a meat market for a while, this shop was located on the northwest corner of Port Washington Road and Donges Bay Road. He also was a horse dealer. In general, he bought and sold anything of value. Over and above all this wheeling and dealing, he with his family, owned and operated over 100 acres of farm land. His wife died in 1908 at the age of 66 years. He died in 1913 at the age of 66 years. His acreage was right across the Port Washington Road from where the new fire station is, that was his home. He also owned the acreage to the north of the station up to the Glen Oaks Road which now belongs to Mrs. Maul.

On or about 1905, Hubert Icke owned a rendering plant at the foot of Bonniwell Road, on the shores of Lake Michigan. When Mr. Icke went out of business, Mr. Sperber worked for the second plant, which was operated by the Northern Reduction Company. When a fire broke out in 1927 and destroyed the entire plant, many complaints started to come from neighbors about the objectional odors emanating from the rendering plant and it was never rebuilt.

Town Government

The framework of American government started originally with the Articles of Federation. This was abandoned and a complete new formed plan was used. This was similar to the Constitution of the United States. This has been the basic pattern for this country ever since. The national government had certain powers which were set forth explicitly in the Constitution. In all other powers were delegated to the state or to the people. The states then created subordinate units of government to carry out state functions and to administer local affairs. These units are called counties, towns, villages, and special districts. In Wisconsin, they were normally created by individual laws. All units of local government in Wisconsin were handled by general laws which provide that when certain conditions are met, the local unit may be created by local action.

Boundaries of towns were largely arbitrary. Normally of a six mile square area. The governing body of a town was a chairman and two supervisors, elected at large annually first and later in every two years. Other elected officers were a clerk, treasurer, justice of the peace, assessor, and constable. The chairman represented the Town on the County Board. Actual power was vested in citizens through their annual Town meetings.

It was not until January 21, 1846, that the Town of Mequon was incorporated by the Legislature of Wisconsin. Up to that time, it was a part of the Town of Washington which

embraced all the townships of old Washington County. Although it contained within the present limits, a voting precinct, it had no town organization. These voting precincts were established as settlements grew up.

The first voting precinct within the Town of Mequon was in the house of William T. Bonniwell. This was established April 4, 1843, and the judges of election appointed were James Bonniwell, Samuel McEvony, and Fred W. Horn, all of whom lived within the present Town of Mequon.

On October 21, 1843, William T. Bonniwell was appointed Register of Deeds of the County. On January 1, 1844, the County Commissioners in meeting at Hamburg Village which is now Grafton, granted John Henry Thien of Mequon a license to keep a tavern. On July 17, 1844, Fred W. Horn, then of the Town of Mequon, petitioned the County Commissioners for the building of a bridge across the Milwaukee River in the Town of Mequon, between Section 23 and 26. The petition was granted and the contract let to Reuben Wells for \$600.00 to be finished by February 1, 1845.

The first named supervisor representing the Town of Mequon in the County of Washington was E. H. Jansen, who served from 1846 to 1850 inclusive.

For purposes it may be considered that the Bonniwell home was a quasi seat of county government, but it was never actually declared to be the county seat. Nevertheless, it has the honor of having been a place for the administration of

about all the county government that existed during that period from February 18, 1841, to about 1845.

When the old Bonniwell house was raised in 1936, the corner stone of that house which had the year 1846 inscribed was taken and placed as the corner stone of the new Town Hall built in 1936 and so inscribed.

On April 7, 1946, the first town meeting and spring election were held at the house of John Henry Thien, the man who had developed the water power at Thienville, and built a grist mill there, and after whom the settlement was names.

The town meeting was called to order at 10:30 A.M. and Patrick Doekerey was chosen moderator and Edward A. Janse, Clerk. They took their oath of office before F. W. Horn, Justice of the Peace. Edward H. Jansen taught school, became superindentent of schools and State Treasurer. F. W. Horn was sent to the legislature many times, was speaker of the house, was the leading parliamentarian of his day in the State. He founded the Cedarburg News now published by his grandson.

The Town meeting resolved that the compensation of Town officers not regulated by law be fixed at \$1.00 per day and further that one-half of one percent be raised for the support of the common schools.

The polls were then opened. There were 140 votes cast. The following officers were elected: Supervisors, Edward H. Jansen who served from 1846 to 1850 inclusive; Patrick Dockery and J. M. Clarke, Commissioners of highways; Chas. Kanfung, Samuel McEvony, school commissioners; Edw. Jansen, J. P. Bailey, Adolph Zimmermann, Assessors; Stephen Westcott, Andrew Geidel, Henry Koemr, fence viewer; Philip Herbold, constable; Jacob M. Sutton, Town Clerk; James Cleare, collector; M. F. Opitz, Justice of the Peace, F. W. Horn. These constituted the first officials family of the Town. Later in September 1846, the assessment of 25242 acres of taxable lands was fixed by the assessors at 74,513.00. One half of 1 percent of this raised for school purposes amounted to \$372.56.

Town Hall

Up to the time of April 1, 1935, all Town meeting were held alternately in either the so-called Turner Hall, owned by Mr. Wm. Riemenschneider or at the Ben. Herzinger's hall. It was quite frequently mentioned and discussed by and between some residents of the Town why the Town should not build a town hall for the purpose of having office space for the several Town officials, a regular meeting place for all Town meetings and regular or special Town Board meetings and such other uses as may be necessary. Mr. Wilbert was elected for the first time in 1932, in the spring election held in April, 1932, he and his family lived on the ground floor of a frame duplex owned by Ben Heraiger, at a rental of \$11.00 per month. There was no garage on the premises, outside toilets, and no pure drinking water in the shallow dug well. After a few months, the property owned by Paul Seyfert was vacant and Mr. Wilbert leased it for \$25.00 per month. This did not include a garage. However, this tenancy was short lived. Mr. Seifert's daughter and family decided to ove there and so a new sight had to be obtained. This was very hard to find.

Finally Mr. Wm. Scherer's brick duplex was vacant and we were able to rent it. A large two car garage was on the premises. The rear 10 feet of the garage was partioned from the rest of it and an office was prepared. A stove

was put in the office. The safe which was purchased by the Town Board for the purpose of safekeeping of Town records was also placed in this office. There was sufficient room for a table and chairs for the Town Board members and the Clerk to meet and perform their official duties. If a public meeting was required for some reason, they were kept in one of the two large halls owned by Mr. Ben Herziger and Mr. Wm. Riebenschneider. These two halls were usually available from the owners as it attracted people and was usually profitable for them.

One afternoon when performing some of my duties as Town Clerk, I took time out for a few minutes, gazing out of the office window at the old gravel pit across the street which was then owned by the County of Ozaukee. An old galvanized iron shed was directly across, housing one truck used by the county road maintenance man at the south end of the county. Part of the pit was still used to mine the gravel out of it for maintaining county roads.

While gazing at this site, I was thinking of the Town of Mequon purchasing this old pit site and placing a garage in the basement of a building to house our newly purchased fire engine and building rooms for town offices on the upper level which would be level with the road. The more I gave thought to the necessity of a place for the fire apparatus and especially for office space also, the more the idea appealed to me, and I finally proposed it to our then Town Chairman, Oscar A. Sommer. The chairman at first did

not think too much of the idea expressed and expressed himself to that extent. At our next Town Board meeting shortly thereafter, I also gave my idea to the two supervisors, Mr. Werner Mueller and Wm. Stuckenbrock. Finally Mr. Sommer told me if I thought so much of the idea, I should try my luck, prepare a petition to be signed by the required number of taxpayers and if enough signatures were obtained, we could then present it to the public. I asked Mr. Wm. C. Lange, who was then our fire chief, if he would circulate the petition, which he gladly did and in no time had the required signatures.

This was the start. The Town Board then asked three architects to present a plan. All of them presented a drawing of the building they proposed as to Architecture. The size and offices to be housed were submitted by the Town Board. The board finally decided on a more modern building and selected the firm of Satre and Senescall of Sheboygan to draw plans and specifications for a building and also an estimate of the cost. This was presented to the voters at the annual spring meeting for their approval. A referendum was had asking whether or not the Town should build a Town Hall and also a referendum on whether or not they would approve a bond issue of \$40,000.

The next cause of concern was financing of the cost of such a building. Those adverse to the building used this as a major reason for opposing it. Since Mequon had never had a bond issue against the Town, nor had any town tax levied

against it, this was choice morsel for talk against the project. One taxpayer vowed he would never set foot into the Town Hall when finished and he never did!

The site upon which the new Town Hall and Fire Dept. building was to be built was a parcel of land owned by the Ozaukee County and contained about 13 acres. This parcel extended from the railroad tracks east to the State Trunk Hwy. 57 and from Division Street, south to the Opitz cemetery. This area was a former gravel pit, gravel having been removed from all of it except approximately three acres. The Town of Mequon had purchased all but the three acres, which the County was prone to see for they wanted to use the gravel. Finally the County agreed to sell it to Mequon. With the exception of the three acres, this parcel was the remainder left over after all the gravel had been removed. This left a large hole which needed no more excavation from the west border of S.T.H. 57 to the Milwaukee railroad.

The next move was the financing of the cost of the building. President Roosevelt since his election had inaugurated several laws to help those who were out of work and destitute. The Public Works administration law was passed. This required that any contractor who was selected to build a public building had to employ a certain number of men proportionate to the total and taken from the County unemployed. Also all plans and specifications for the building had to be submitted to the P.W. Administration for approval. When approved or corrections made and

approved, the Town Board made a request for an outright grant from the government of \$30,000.00. The Town of Mequon agreed to issue a \$40,000.00 bond issue, payable in annual installments of \$4,000.00 plus interest. The balance of an estimated \$2000. was to be paid out of the general funds of the Town of Mequon treasury. The P. W. agreed to this request and prepared the necessary papers for the Town officials signature. After this, the work started to build the Town Hall. This was the first and only bond issue by the Town of Mequon in its 109 years of existence. The building was completed in about six months.

But this was not all that easy. For every change that was requested to be made in the building, permission had to be granted in writing from the P.W.A. All changes had to be made in writing, from four to seven copies, all signed and one returned to the Town.

Mr. Arthur Bartelt was appointed Inspector for the Town of Mequon. An inspector for the P.W. A. inspected periodically the progress of the building and if something was found not to be conforming to plans and specifications, was ordered immediately to be corrected.

The Bonniwell residence, situated on the Wauwatosa Road, a short distance south ^{from} on the Bonniwell school house, was no longer occupied as a residence. When it was first built, permission was granted to allow several Town Board meetings in it. There was also a corner stone place in the northeast

corner of the building with the year 1846 inscribed. The Clerk asked permission from the present owners to remove the stone and place it in the northeast corner of the new Town Hall and fire department building. Permission was granted. Mr. Paul Gruenwald was notified and together with the Clerk proceeded to remove the corner stone from the Bonniwell house and placed it in the proper corner of the new Town Hall and the year 1936 inscribed in under the year 1846. The building was inspected by the officials of the P.W.A. on Dec. 27, 1936, and found everything in order to their satisfaction.

On Saturday, January 2, 1937, the dedication of the new Town Hall and fire department building was held. A large gathering of residents and neighbors of the surrounding area also attended. A band was present and played appropriate music for the occasion.

A suitable tin box was at hand for the purpose of placing several momentos with it. Jeanette Wilbert, a grade school student at Thoreau School, wrote a short history of the Town of Mequon which was placed in the box. A number of articles such as a late copy of the Milwaukee Journal, a copy of the Town Talks, coins of the year 1936, and a few other articles were placed in the box by the Clerk. It was then closed and Paul Gruenwald with the help of Alfred Breustedt place it in the corner stone which was then sealed with mortar. Mrs. Herbert Wuesthoff took moving pictures of the erection of the Town Hall at different

times and also took pictures of the corner stone laying and dedication ceremonies.

The program of the dedication was as follows: Mrs. Herbert Wuesthoff, chairman of the dedication committee, introduced the chairman of the day, Mr. Cornelius Dineen, a former resident of the Town. Mr. Wuesthoff received lively applause. Mr. Dineen extended praise to the voters and officials of the Town for their wisdom and zeal in the matter. He expressed gratitude to the dedication committee, and then he introduced Mr. Leo J. Voell, state Director for Wi. and Mr. Voell, in well chosen words extended the greetings of the government to the assemblage. He congratulated the Town of Mequon for having been foresighted in taking advantage of the offer from Washington and he expressed the satisfaction of the administration as to all this.

The next speaker was Mr. J. O. Carbys who was born in the Town of Mequon, moved and now again lives in the house he was born, although this is not in the Town of Mequon now. Mr. Carbys who was introduced as the speaker of the day, pointed out some interesting review of some of the outstanding events and facts connected with the history of the Town of Mequon. He stated that the Town received its name from the the little stream emptying into the Milwaukee River at Thiensville. This stream we now call "Pigeon Creek". Originally it was known as "Mequon-ssippi", later as Mequon River. The stream was given the name of Mequonssippi or Mequon River because the wild pigeons in

the early days came here in great numbers during the season of its migration.

Mr. Carbys congratulated the citizens of the Town of Mequon upon the renaissance of community spirit. He concluded by saying that to us the Town of Mequon constitutes sacred ground and that we should try to keep it what it has always seemed to be to us, the finest town in the country.

At the conclusion of the address, Mr. Gruenwald who had the contract for the erection of the building, delivered possession of the same, symbolically to Mr. Oscar Sommer, Chairman of the Town, by presenting him with a large key. Mr. Sommer accepted this and in a few well chosen words expressed the gratitude of the officials of the Town to the citizens and voters to the contractors and all others connected with the erection of the building and to the representatives of the government.

At the conclusion of the addresses, more music was rendered after which the large audience inspected the building and retired to the hall below where coffee and doughnuts were served as refreshments. Many pleasant visits were had by old residents, visitors, and old friends.

The dedication of the Town Hall was followed in the next several weeks by an open house, orchestra of the Milwaukee Rufus King High School rendering stirring and delightful music. Miss June Patton rendered several solos. Music was under the direction of Miss Ellen Sargeant and a fair-bazaar was also held. These occasions will long be remembered.

On January 3, 1937, the officials of the Town moved into their new quarters, namely, the Town Board in its spacious meeting room, the Clerk in his office with a fire-proof safe, the Treasurer in his office with a fire-proff safe, and the assessor. All were very happy in their new official home.

The lower level was prepared for a public meeting room, a kitchen fully supplied with dishes, and cooking utensils, and a spare room later prepared by the fire department as an area to which refreshments could be served. The building had quarters for the fire department vehicles, and a meeting room for their regular meetings and social occasions. The upper auditorium was used as a recreational hall, where basketball and volley ball games were held. Home talent plays were presented by various groups both school and adults and were enjoyed very much.

When the Town Hall was completed, dedicated, and the official occupants all nicely settled, attention was given to the landscaping of the thirteen acres adjoining and being a part of the Town Hall complex.

Being a part of the plan, the swimming pool was next. Mr. Robert Boerner was asked to prepare plans and specifications of the swimming pool, bath house, and general environment. This Mr. Boerner did with the help and consultation of an architect.

This entire project, swimming pool, and bath house was financed through the Works Project Administration, an arm of the government. All plans and specifications had to be approved by the W.P.A. before work was started. This having been complied with, the W.P.A. paid for most all material, such as cement, steel reinforcement, etc. needed in the construction of the swimming pool. Labor was furnished by the Ozaukee County Relief Department. The Town of Mequon had to engage a superintendent for the project. The W.P.A. also furnished material for the bath house with the exception of the bricks for the veneering of the building. A cement sidewalk was laid both inside and outside of the pool with a six foot high wire fence surrounding it. Shower stalls for both male and female swimmers were provided. Machinery for the chlorination of the water in the pool was installed. Wardrobe baskets were also provided.

A nominal charge for swimming was made either for individual swims or seasonal tickets provided. Swimming lessons given by authorized Red Cross swimming teachers were provided for a nominal fee. This pool was enjoyed by not only Town of Mequon residents, but by residents from adjoining localities such as Shorewood, Fox Point, Granville, Cedarburg, Fort Washington, Menomonee Falls, etc. As the population of Mequon increased, the usage of the pool had to be restricted to Mequon and Thiensville only.

The pool was not built to be a financial bonanza, but mainly for the enjoyment of the residents. The expense of operating the pool and the income obtained nearly equalled each year. This pool was certainly enjoyed by the residents and neighbors.

The adjoining grounds were laid out as a hard and soft ball diamonds playground areas equipped with the proper swings, etc. Lawns were seeded, trees, and flowers planted. The total cost estimated at \$32,000.00.

The dedication of the swimming pool and the appropriate celebration was arranged for. It was held on a Saturday afternoon and evening. A goodly number of State officials of the swimming associations were invited and they responded very well. Appropriate speeches were given, praising the Town officials for the wisdom and foresight in providing such wonderful enjoyable facilities for the residents of the Town and vicinity. All kinds of features were demonstrated for the enjoyment as well as good advice in safety rules in swimming. Refreshments were served after the performance.

Additional Swimming Pool Information

The pool is 100 feet wide and 150 feet long, oval in shape starting from 18 inches deep on one end for the smaller children to use, to 9.5 feet deep for high diving. A three foot diving board and a nine foot board was also installed. Every effort was made to keep the pool in a most sanitary condition.

Swimming lessons were given to the boys by Clarence St. Peter and to the girls under the supervision of Miss Ruth Sagunsky, all under the W.P.A. recreational program. Season tickets were sold to the children for \$1.00 and to the adults for \$1.00 who were residents of the Town of Mequon and Village of Thiensville. For non residents, the fee was \$1.50 for children up to 14 years and \$2.00 for adults.

Although the pool was opened late due to not being ready the first year, 160 children season tickets and 160 adult tickets were sold. In warm days, five hundred and more attended the pool. This number increased tremendously the following year. Busses full of children from surrounding communities came five days a week, so that hours had to be scheduled for each one to avoid over-crowding.

The second year of operation was concluded by arranging of a swimming meet. Competition was arranged for the several age groups and medals were awarded to the winners. Performances by State A.A.W. swimming champions, under whose jurisdiction the meet was held, were given in swimming,

diving, and other acts in trick diving, life saving, and correct ways of righting a capsized boat and climbing in again. About 2500 spectators were present. Medals and trophies were donated by Burkhardt and Sons and E. P. Schandein, Mr. Ray Telson, President of the State A.A.W. was in attendance. Eleven people acting as scorers, judges, Clarence St. Peter manager, and county recreational director, and others assisting. The first swim meet was a tremendous success. Several meets were held later. A small group of people who were very interested and helpful in staging this swimming meet feted all those in assistance with sandwiches, beer and coffee and doughnuts at the close of the performance. It was a great enjoyment for all those responsible of the meet as well as the public.

A small portion of the north end of land surrounding the pool area still had some usable gravel on it and the County was reluctant to sell it to the Town. After some negotiation and persuading, they finally relented and sold it to the Town of Mequon for \$1000. This made a total area of 2/13 acres the Town owned and could plan for a park, recreation area for the children and a baseball diamond and ample room for municipal buildings as they became necessary. Immediate action was taken for grading and planning for the planting of trees, flowers and shrubs. Trees from two to six inches in diameter were being bought and some were donated, dug, and planted by the highway crew according to the plan prepared by Mr. Boener.

Mr. Pat Patterson, who was hired as the caretaker of the premises, took great pride in the tree, shrub and flower planting. A large parking area, a playground with play equipment for little children, benches and tables were provided. A very good hard ball diamond and a soft ball diamond were built. All this under the direction and supervision of Mr. Robert Boerner. After completion great joy and pride was emanated by most citizens.

Fire Department

Up to the incorporation of the Village of Thiensville, there was one fire department, called the Thiensville-Mequon Fire Department. It served the entire Town of Mequon and the unincorporated Village of Thiensville. The cost of upkeep at first was minimal and was supported by voluntary donations by Thiensville and Mequon, and by individual donors. The first fire house was situated on Elm Street, across the street from the stone school building, about one block east of the Green Bay Road in Thiensville.

It was a hand pumper, manned by six or eight men, four on either side, who did the pumping and placed the water on the fire. The next engine was a horse drawn machine, usually by a team from the Thiensville Lumber Company. This fire engine was followed by a motor driven pumper.

In 1912, the residents of the Village of Thiensville decided to incorporate as a village form of government. The area to be included as a village was described and the necessary incorporation papers prepared, and voted on by the residents included. The vote was carried and the incorporation properly recorded. It was then known as the Village of Thiensville. The fire department was still recognized as the Thiensville-Mequon fire department.

The town of Mequon agreed to pay the fire department the sum of one hundred dollars for each fire reported and responded thereto.

In 1932, Mequon decided to have a fire department of their own and subsequently organized their own. A meeting was held on May 15, 1933, and officers elected. The first president elected was Elroy Schubert and Oliver Gerlach, secretary, and Carl Gruenwald, treasurer.

A committee of three was selected for the purpose to draw up a constitution and by-laws. On May 15, 1933, the constitution and by-laws were adopted. On June 19, 1933, Wm. C. Lange was appointed the first Chief of the Mequon Fire Department. He was a retired Milwaukee policeman and served the Mequon Fire Department until his death in 1947. He served for 14 years.

Two kinds of membership were decided upon, active and inactive. Active members were elected upon application and approved for membership by election by the members and admitted on approval by a doctor for physical fitness. Inactive members were voted on and approved by the membership. They were members of a social nature and paid dollar for permanent membership. Only the active members were allowed to wear the fire department uniforms. The Town Board under whose direction the Fire Department operated, then advertised for bids on a two pumper, motor driven. A Sterling truck with a Peter Pershing Equipment was purchased along with 1000 feet of hose and some ladders.

Mr. Al Breustedt agreed to build a garage to house the engine with enough spare room for meeting purposes.

Later meetings were held by the firemen in the basement of the new firehouse which was attached. This was equipped with tables and chairs for card playing, a pool table, and a large table and chairs for use at the meetings. It also was equipped with a cupboard and utensils for serving sandwiches and beer or coffee. Twenty-two volunteer firemen were admitted to the active department.

The active members of the department were paid per call. The men who succeeded Mr. Lange as chief were Charles Bublitz, George Johnson, 1951 to 1955, and Manfred Sperber 1955 to 1969 who resigned Dec. 31, 1969, as provided by the ordinance mandatory at age 65. Milton Krumhus, assistant chief, succeeded Mr. Sperber with a full time salary. The department at present has 35 volunteer members.

The department equipment at present, consists of one Sterling truck with Peter Pirch Fire fighting equipment. In 1936 a diamond T truck with a 600 gallon water capacity and power take off pump was purchased. In the absence of municipal water, the department was forced to haul the water needed to extinguish a fire in large tanks. An International Truck equipped with a 500 gallon tank and a 500 gallon pump was added in 1939. The latest piece of equipment added in 1955 was a tank truck with a capacity of 4200 gallons of water. The Mequon common council authorized the purchase of a additional 100 feet of hose.

On Jan. 23, 1941, the Fire Department was host to the Fire Dept. Association to a mid winter meeting and banquet at the Mequon Town Hall. About 490 attended and were served dinner in the large auditorium. The overflow was taken care of in the lower hall. Mrs. Thomas Hirt was the chief cook, assisted by fifteen volunteer ladies of the Town, and thirty-four waitresses.

After a delicious dinner, Mr. Wm. Gruenwald, State Fire Marshall and Mr. C. Melvin of the Chicago Division of the F.B.I. delivered the addresses followed by short talks by Judge Peter Huiras and Milwaukee Fire Chief, John Wischer. They all had praiseworthy remarks about the beautiful Town Hall building, the delicious dinner and the efficient waitresses and the chief cook, Mrs. Hirt. Chief Lange gave brief remarks in response, thanking the visitors for their attendance, the speakers, and all the ladies for their help in making this dinner a success.

The first fire was an automobile at Club Forest. The second one was on New Years Eve 1939 when the Thiensville Post Office burned and John Albers, the postmaster lost his life.

Rescue Squad

On May 2, 1939, at the meeting of the Town Board, Mr. Donald Dailey, president of the local Red Cross chapter, informed the board that the Red Cross chapter decided to purchase a pull motor provided that the Fire Department and the Town Board would contribute to the purchase of the same. The Board took the matter under consideration and at a later meeting decided to contribute toward the purchase. The Fire Department was contacted and all agreed to contribute. The pull motor was then purchased by the local Red Cross chapter and turned over to the Rescue Squad for their use. Some charitable donors bought an ambulance and gave it to the Rescue Squad for their use.

In 1950, the Town purchased a rescue squad truck for the use of the department. Members are trained in all phases of advance first aid and are on call any time of the day or night, just as the fire department is also.

Library

Mrs. Ruth Niss, conceived the idea of organizing a Mequon library. She proposed it to the members of the Mequon Club and it was well accepted. She asked several members of the Club to assist her. They asked for donations of books in good condition with interesting reading. They succeeded in receiving quite a collection of books. These were placed in the office of the Treasurer, which was at that time only used at tax collection period. Steel shelving was purchased for the books by the Town Board. Several willing ladies were in attendance every Saturday morning to serve the people wishing to rent the books and record their names. A small rental was charged. The Village of Thiensville and Mequon shared the expense of the library on a 80% for Mequon and 20% for Thiensville basis.

This was the start of the Mequon library. After this it was taken over by the Mequon-Thiensville Library League, which was organized earlier. They rented quarters in a building on Main Street in Thiensville. In a few years, the space proved too small and they took over the room adjoining, having then doubled the quarters.

The library proved so popular, that this additional space became too small to operate efficiently. The members of the Library League were to a great extent responsible for the success of the library by their interest and untiring effort to make the Mequon-Thiensville library a success.

Sign Ordinance

August 1937, the sign ordinance was passed and notice given to all sign companies displaying signs in Mequon and to all those farmers and property owners having advertising signs on their buildings and lands to have them removed at a specific time as designated by the sign ordinance. This caused a lot of opposition, both by the property owners and the advertising firms. The ordinance also received favorable comments by those who appreciated the enhancement of the country scenery it would create. In due time, the displaying of the advertising signs disappeared. One could tell when you entered the Town of Mequon by the absence of the signs along the highways.

An ordinance regulating slaughter houses was also passed.

Oct. 13, 1938 Hunting Ordinance No Shooting of Firearms

Due to the careless and misuse of firearms by people and the disregard of other people's property, a petition was presented to the Town Board requesting that the Town of Mequon be closed to hunting and the shooting of firearms. Mr. C. R. Dineen, Town Attorney, was requested to draw an ordinance to that effect and a public meeting was scheduled for October 13, 1938, at 9:00 A.M. At this meeting a petition signed by 325 residents who were against the proposed ordinance was presented. About 350 people were present. After discussions, pro and con, an amendment to the proposed ordinance was introduced and passed that shooting of firearms would be allowed if written permission was granted and signed by the property owner on forms available at the office of the Town Clerk. The Clerk and the Town Chairman after signing the ordinance, the same day posted three copies of the ordinance. That same day the Clerk was served with a writ of Certiorari and restraining order signed by the Hon. Judge C. M. Davidson and petitioned by Ben Koopman by his attorney, Rick Bonner, restraining the Town from enforcing the no shooting ordinance. A meeting of the Town Board was called by the Chairman for 8:00 P.M. that evening, together with Mr. C. R. Dineen. Mr. Dineen was asked to try and have the Judge vacate his order. The judge did vacate the order the next morning, Oct. 14, 1938. The ordinance was later amended only to be in force in areas designated by the Town Board.

Assessor Plat #1

Due partly through errors made by surveyors, which after many years were found by other surveyors, surveying the same property and using the same government survey, many hard feelings were caused by neighbors both claiming that their lines or corner stones were correct, many lawsuits ensued. Also the erecting of fences, after the government survey, most of which were rail fences and then were replaced by wire fences, were also a reason for errors. When erecting new fences and an obstacle was encountered, causing a hardship to overcome, the fence was merely put up a foot or so to avoid the obstacle which then over a period of many years went unnoticed, until a new survey was made and the error found. This was especially bad when smaller parcels were sold and the survey was proved wrong and no agreement could be reached as to the property line by the owner of the property.

In order to solve such differences of opinions or errors in surveys, the legislature gives the municipal government the right to order what is called an assessor plat. By this method, all evidences are taken as they are at the time of making the plat and the property lines are taken as they then exist and are so recorded.

This was done on all property extending from the Village of Thiensville south limits to the Ozaukee County line and between the Milwaukee Railroad the Milwaukee River and called Assessor Plat #1 of the Town of Mequon. Since then Assessor Plat #2 and three, four, and five have been made in different areas in the Town.

Zoning Ordinance 1938

The Town of Mequon has had a zoning ordinance since 1930. While this ordinance has served its purpose well, the Town Board, being aware of the changing conditions in the Town, determined that a more comprehensive zoning ordinance was necessary in order to regulate the development of the various areas in the Town and promote the welfare of all the residents and property owners.

Accordingly, pursuant to a resolution at the annual April 1936 meeting of the electors of the Town, the Park Commission was directed by the Town Board to make the necessary arrangements to prepare a new zoning ordinance and to employ the necessary expert help in that work. The Town Board appropriated \$2000. to be taken out of the general fund for that purpose. They submitted a proposed new zoning ordinance and plan. This ordinance and plan was explained to the citizens of the Town at the several public hearings held in the Town hall during the past year, giving the property owners an opportunity to express their views.

Realizing the importance of agriculture as the fundamental industry in the Town and a desire of farmers to continue their occupation without unnecessary restrictions, the Town Park Commission was careful that no where in the new ordinance should there be any restrictions that would materially interfere with or discourage the continuation of agricultural pursuits and their progress. Accordingly the ordinance contains definite exceptions where land is

to be used for agricultural purposes which permit the continuance of use for that purpose and specifically provides opportunity for the farmers of the Town to make proper use of their lands.

While at present most of the area in the Town is zoned for agriculture and residential use, some areas have been set aside for potential business and manufacturing growth, regulated however, that the welfare of those who live in Mequon or own property in the residential area will be best protected. Since a large portion of property was recently purchased and is being used for the purpose of the raising of foxes for breeding purposes and for the use of the pelts, a portion of land was zoned for that purpose. A rumor that a certain five acres on the Range Line Road was to be used for fox farm purposes, disturbed the residents in the area and clamored for protection by zoning the area for residential purposes only. The ordinance if adopted is to insure an orderly regulated growth and to stabilize and protect property values. It will also act as a warning to speculators in land development that the interests of all property owners must be taken into consideration when new developments are proposed. The Town of Mequon because of its location adjacent to Milwaukee County, the largest metropolitan area in the State, was in need of zoning protection probably more than any Township in the State.

The Planning Commission in their wisdom chose Mr. Chas. Bennett of Milwaukee as their professional advisor and

planner in preparing the zoning and Mr. C. R. Dineen was retained to advise on legal matters and prepare the ordinance in legal form, ready for submission to the Town Board for their consideration. The Plan Commission approved the Zoning Ordinance, Sept. 1938, and submitted it to the Town Board who approved it October 17, 1938. The referendum on the zoning ordinance Nov. 8, 1938, passed by a vote 453 in favor and 350 against, 110 not voting. The zoning ordinance passed and was in effect after signatures by proper officers and publication.

The ordinance was written up in numerous professional and planning magazines as well as other news media. It received very favorable comment and the Clerk received many inquiries and requests for a copy of the ordinance from different areas in the United States and South America. Mr. Bennett also received very complimentary remarks for his work. He was requested to be the planner of Los Angeles, California, which proposition he accepted. The ordinance with occasional small changes and additions stayed in force until 1958, when again it was reviewed and rewritten.

George Virmond

Mr. George Virmond, a resident of Mequon for some time, a member of the Mequon Plan Commission and the owner of a 64 acre farm located in Section 29, Range 22 East, Town of Mequon, and bordering on Lake Michigan, died in June 1939.

A resolution was passed and a copy thereof was sent to Mrs. George A. Virmond, expressing their deep regret and sorrow at the passing from this life of George R. Virmond.

Mr. Virmond first bequeathed in his will his 64 acre farm to the City of Milwaukee in which he first resided and conducted his shoe store. If the City of Milwaukee would not or could not accept it, then to the County of Ozaukee to be used for the same purpose. After some considerable pressure on the part of Mequon residents and the Mequon Club, the County Board finally accepted the bequest in 1940. Some improvements have been made to the grounds since then. It was agreed that the Town of Mequon police the premises and the Lake Michigan shore appurtenment thereto.

The Thiensville Dam

The Thiensville Dam was always a great attraction for young and old who visited the village. This was especially true of Saturdays and Sundays when the days were long. One could see people taking a walk along the upper dam, starting from the mill and up to the dam proper and watch the water falls. This was a romantic walk, seeing a young couple slowly walking hand in hand. This is where it received the name Lovers Lane and is called by that name to this very day.

On either side of the upper dam are very large willow trees. On a bright night the stars would blink through the leaves and give it a perfect picture. The level of the water above the dam is about eight feet higher than the lower river. For some time, small leaks were observed. In the spring of 1939, the river was so high near the head gates that the work to stop the leaks, and the work could not be finished.

In 1940, leaks were noticed on the south portion of the river. Although the dry season left the water level considerably lower, the head gates were opened and the water level was further reduced to its lowest level possible. This was done to make it possible to pinpoint the exact damage done to the dam. It was determined by the engineers that the repair plan involved the driving of approximate eighty feet of steel sheeting along the downstream edge of the fish run and the filling in with concrete between the steel barrier and the hole-packed existing dam face. It was estimated to cost about \$1000. if done now. If not done

now and left to wash out completely, restoration would cost many times more, construction authorities said. The damage to fish and wild life, the view of the river and stench in the interim would be incurable. The rapidly dropping of the water level in the river leaving ugly mud flats and tin cans, bottles and other debris, exposed to the view along the shores, prompted many river shore residents to burn up the telephone lines asking, "How come".

The dam being under federal supervision and control complicated matters. Many of their rules and regulations had to be strictly complied with. One of the rules was that no money could be voted for and given to anyone but the owner. The present owner of the property (dam) agreed to transfer ownership to the Mequon Township Advancement Assoc. for the purpose of receiving the money to be used for the repair of the dam. Title to the dam was transferred as per agreement. A special meeting of the voters of the Town was called for to be held on August 12, 1940, for the purpose of whether or not the Town of Mequon should contribute the sum of \$1000. toward the repair of the dam. Since the title to the dam was in the name of a private individual, which was ruled illegal, a motion was made and carried that there raised by a general tax upon all taxable property in the Town of Mequon, the sum of one Thousand Dollars and that the Town Board be hereby authorized to disburse said amount as a contribution to the Mequon Township Association, to aid such association in the undertaking to reconstruct and repair the dam in the Milwaukee River located at the Village

of Thiensville on condition that the title to such dam be placed in the name of the Mequon Township Advancement Association. On a vote taken thereon there were 134 votes cast of which 80 were in favor and 54 against, the motion was declared passed.

The Thiensville-Mequon dam is and has been since it was built along with the 5 story stone grist mill, a great source of beauty and interest all over the State of Wisconsin. It was photographed and was printed on many front covers of books and magazines.

The area including the dam, north about 1/2 mile, west to the Cedarburg Road, south, including the Pigeon Creek area entering into the Milwaukee River, and the area along the shore of the Milwaukee River, was the nucleus of the Village of Thiensville. This, legend has it, was the area where the Indians first set up their rude shanties, on their way migrating north. They called it Mequonsippi or Pigeon Creek.

In 1838, Peter Thurk set up a saw mill on this land. The next saw mill was built by Reuben Wells. He also established a grist mill. John Weston had entered 160 acres which he sold to John Willet. John Weston then bought a quarter section in what is now the Village of Thiensville. This he sold to John Henry Thien from which Thienville received its name. He built the first regular flour mill in Mequon on the east side of the Green Bay Road where it turns west to Cedarburg Road. The name on the mill was Thienville, not Thiensville.

The mill changed ownership several times. The water power generated by the dam was discontinued in 19 . Until that time the dam was always taken care of by the then owners of the mill, Liebscher and Schaefer. When leaks occurred in the dam, they were immediately taken care of by placing burlap bags filled with sand and dumping them on the spot where the leaks were. A Mr. Ehrling who owned the farm to the south of the dam, provided an easement from the farm to the south portion of the dam, to provide access to the dam so that gravel or other material could be transported by horse drawn vehicles to repair the dam if necessary.

Another very interesting and enjoyable pasttime was that of deep net fishing. When the time came that fish would spawn, they would move to look for bays or creeks along the shore of the river. There they would enter and lay their eggs and return to the river. This usually coincided with the time the ice would break up on the river, usually the latter part of March and the first half of April.

This was the time when the fishermen would set up their dip nets, sometimes a dozen in number. They would set a post into the ground near the shore, leaving about five or six feet out of the ground. On top of this post was a with a fifteen foot long four inch cedar pole with a net on the other end. This way they would heave the net in and out of the water. If a fish happened to swim across the net at this time, the fisherman would swing his pole over to the

shore and take out the fish. Oh, what fun this was. These fishermen had to have a lot of patience. This patience was exhibited all times of the night. Some real good catches were made of pickerel, lake sucker, bass, etc.

From this little nucleus of activity sprung a very nice little village. An age old axiom read follows:
Show me a thriving village and I shall show you a thriving community surrounding it. This certainly was evidence by Thiensville and Mequon.

World War I

On April 6, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson, declared war against the Germans. One of their U Boats sank the United States passenger ship Lusitana. Everyone drowned. The declaration of war by the President naturally created a lot of anxiety and worry.

The draft board was immediately called into action. More than 72 boys from Thiensville-Mequon either enlisted or were drafted. Some of them were wounded in action. Only two died in service. A book entitled "Wisconsin in the World War" will give one a complete resume of all of those within draft age at that time, whether drafted, enlisted or exempt from serving. Those that where not in active service were called upon to do some kind of duty at home, such as acting on committees to sell War Bonds, etc. The ladies were asked to knot socks and mittens, sweaters, etc. Every one was willing to participate.

Great joy was had when the word spread that a truce was made on Nov. 11, 1919.

In 1918, the influenza epidemic struck Wisconsin, and especially so, the Town of Mequon. In 1919 it was worse. One death after another occured. Dr. A. C. Carthaus was very busy taking care of his patients which included all the members of the family. Adding to the misery was the terrific snow fall those winters. This prevented the doctor from using his automobile. He had to hire a team of horses

along with the driver to take him from one place to another. The affected families were not always living close to one another, so the Doctor would take advantage of the time and take a nap. The driver of the team would also take advantage to unhitch his team, and feed them at the farmer's place.

The declaration of war was an era of great prosperity for those who were privileged to stay at home, or those that were too old or too young to be drafted. This prosperity lasted until 1929, when the stock market took a tumble, the banks closed and business was practically at a standstill. No credit was extended for the purchase of essentials or otherwise. Mequon was exceptionally lucky in that the Thiensville State Bank was given permission to open for business within a few days. This bank was rated as sound financial condition due to the management and sound collateral. In November of 1932, a presidential election was scheduled and held. The annual spring election was held in April of 1932.

Due to the death of the Town Clerk, Harvey Schubert in Feb. of 1932, a vacancy existed in the office. The Town Board had appointed Mrs. Irma Schubert to fill the vacancy up to the time a new one was elected. There was a mad scramble for the office. Seven candidates ran for the office. Carl F. Wilbert was elected by a small majority. In the 1933 annual election, he again had two opponents. He was elected Town Clerk by the great majority in the 1933 election. He was reelected every time up to and until 1957, when the township was changed from a township to a City of the 4th Class.

At that time, the term of office was for two years. Mequon was and is the second largest 4th class city in the State of Wisconsin.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, a democrat, opposing Herbert Hoover, a republican, was elected as president and took office in Jan. 1933.

All the town officials were reelected to their respective offices, excepting Oscar Milbrath, who was defeated by Werner Mueller. Mr. Milbrath was very cative in the 1933 farmer's milk strike.

At the meeting of the Town Board in April of 1937, Mr. Rank Rothe made a motion to increase the salary of the Town Clerk from \$800. to \$1000. This motion was seconded and passed.

1933 was a dark and dreary year for the president elected, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Due to the stock market collapse, and the bank depositors all clamoring for their money, he was forced to close all the banks in the country. This left many people with little or no money to purchase the necessities of day to day living. However, Thiensville Bank depositors only had to wait several days and its doors were opened to do business. But while it helped some, it did not solve the problem. Many people were left without work or a job and were forced to seek relief from the Town. Work was so scarce that mechanics such as carpenters and masons gladly accepted .35 for an hour wages.

The Ozaukee County Relief Administrator appointed the Town Clerk as Deputy Relief Administrator. It was his duty to every two weeks be at a certain place to hand out food orders to the heads of the families requiring relief. These orders the recipients could present to several stores designated by the Town Board to give to the recipients food orders authorized by the Clerk to receive. He also distributed allotments of meat, flour, and clothing to the needy. The food allotments were granted by the United States government and specified according to the size of the family. These allotments were not always accepted or received with gratitude but were criticized and misused. Every family was entitled to a number of pounds of dried fruit as to size of family. One particular father always asked for the maximum amount of raisins he was entitled to as dried fruits per the size of his family, 4 children. The Clerk got suspicious and upon a little investigation found that the raisins were not used as food but the father made raisin brandy to satisfy his desire for a potent drink. He was real nasty and used vile language when told that he no longer could receive his allotment of dried fruit with raisins but had to take some equivalent dried food such as dried apples, etc. All foods offered were a part of a good diet. Those that really were in need of help, received the foods offered with gratitude. Those that were not in dire need were the ones complaining and at times were real nasty and insulting.

Rationing of fresh meats were also made according to the size

of the family. This was of the best pork, such as baby pork chops, prime ribs, ham steak. Even these meat allotments were criticized by some of the recipients. Small portions of the meats were given to the administrator for sample of the food offered to be able to counter act the complaints. Some of the recipients were so offensive as to threaten the deputy administrator of foods with the burning of his dwelling. These threats, although they were few in number were still not too quieting for his nerves. Flour was also allotted. So was clothing which was donated by the citizens of Mequon. Gasoline was rationed. Each farmer or employee received a certain number of coupons entitling him to a certain number of gallons of gas necessary to take him to work or for usage on the farm. Meat and cheese was also rationed.

These were also the years when the so-called Alphabet in the works program was instituted such as the C.C.C. for the youth; C.W.A., W.P.A. and others. These were work grants or financial grants by the U.S. government to the local governments.

The Town Board in addition to the relief grants, also instituted a public works program. At this time all children had to walk to school or if fortunate to have a bicycle, ride to school. A petition was presented by several parents that a path be built so that the children could use it to walk to school. This was authorized and a gravel path was built on the west side of S.T.H. 57 for about 1/2 mile south of the Mequon Road, a half mile west of the Cedarburg

Rd. and a 1/2 mile east of the Cedarburg Road on the Mequon road. This was done under the W.P.A. program. Groups of boys who applied were also taken to the northern part of the state to plant trees under the C.C.C. program. This was all done under the supervision of appointees by the C.C.A. program. Trees were planted along highways, a certain number of feet inside and parallel to the road. This was done to minimize the drifting of the roads. This proved to be very effective.

Fox Farms

Among the outstanding industries in Mequon were the fox farms. These farms were all conducted and controlled by the Nieman's or the Fromm's. Large sums of money were spent by these fox breeders annually in maintaining experimental stations to curb diseases of foxes raised in confined quarters.

For reasons not understood, reciprocal trade agreements with foreign countries reduced the tariff on fox pelts from 50% to 37½%, and by reason of increased importations the fox pelt market for the United States was considerable demoralized. For instance, during July 1938, the importations were thirteen times as great as the same month in 1937. Some relief had been afforded by fox farms in Wisconsin having been exempted from Social Security laws, which had been a burden.

After the pea canning factory was discontinued and sold, it was taken over by John F. Nieman, for fox farm operation. Logs were shipped from Hermansville and sawed into lumber for fox huts. The saw dust was used for insulation on the huts.

A resolution was presented at an annual Town meeting pursuant to a complaint filed by farmers that the crows and starlings attracted by the fox farms through the food given them in their pens, and they dug out corn that was planted and ate it, and did other damage. The resolution also provided that a bounty of 5 cents for each starling and 15 cents

for each crow would be paid for every head of these birds delivered to the Town Clerk. This resolution was passed for a number of years until the time when the fox farms were discontinued.

Mequon Country Clubs

Ozaukee Country Club

The Ozaukee Country Club is the oldest country club and golf course. It is on an area of 164 rolling acres and is considered as one of the toughest courses to play. It is an 18 hole course, beautifully landscaped, swimming pool, and Milwaukee River frontage. This gives them the advantage of having excellent facilities for sprinkling. The club house is situated on the highest spot on the course, overlooking the entire course. It has a large dining area, nicely decorated and a spacious bar and lounging room. The course is very good.

This club was at one time in the 1940's in financial difficulty. Ben Zieler and Company, holder of the bond issue, started to foreclose the mortgage, but enough people were interested enough and financially able to reorganize and put it in good workable condition. When the economy was again on the upgrade, and under good management, it again thrived and became one of the best country clubs. Every 4th of July, the management displays an enormous fireworks. This is enjoyed by hundreds of people parked on the streets for miles around. The Mequon police patrol the streets very efficiently.

North Shore Country Club

The largest of the country clubs is the North Shore Country Club. It is situated west and east of the Range Line Road, connected by an under the street passageway. It is an 8 acre plot north of the Donges Bay Road and is a portion of the former holdings of the Weyenberg farms. This is also a very pretty setting. It is now surrounded by very substantial homes all ranging in value of \$50,000.00. This was promoted by a Mr. Forman, a wealthy investor and builder who also promoted the Lac du Cours subdivision to the west of the country club. This golf course is a 24 hole course, the only course of this size in the vicinity.

River Oaks Country Club

The third country club is situated north and west of the Freistadt Road and is called River Oaks. The club building is also situated on a high spot in the entire area, surrounded by a beautiful wooded area. The country club and golf course was first started as an entire project. It was then divided and interest sold to several separate operators. A golf course, a subdivision owned and operated by Nordale Realty Company, and a dining venture operated by Mr. Hoffman. The subdivision was started by the Nordale Realty Co. with the building of very nice homes. As time passed, portions and lots were sold to different realtors, builders with different ideas of architecture, which changed the appearance of the layout. The subdivision part of the venture is in the northern part of the layout. The golf

course extends from the boundary of the southerly portion from the Milwaukee River to and across the Freistadt Road, from parts of the River Road boundary to nearby the Freistadt Road to the east. The entire area contains portions of the Arno Lau farm, the Kurtz farm, and the Thierman Bros. farm.

Mequon maintains 13 acres west on Hwy 57 of Division St. on which are located a hard and soft ball diamond. On these 13 acres also located the municipal Town Hall, library and fire department buildings, plus a swimming pool and a park area equipped with tables, benches and playground equipment. Mequon has also within its confines, 2 Ozaukee County parks, one of 64 acres and one of 80 acres, a farm just recently acquired for park purposes. Bids are now advertised for building an 18 hole golf course on it together with a caddy building.

Recreation

The early settlers, especially from and after 1870, after they had cleared more land for the purpose of raising grain, corn, potatoes and other crops suitable for food for both the people and their domestic animals and after shelter was provided for both man and beast, some of their spare time, if any, was devoted to that of amusement and pleasure of some kind. Hunting and fishing were both pleasure and of necessity, it was source of food for the people.

Many evenings were enjoyed by young and old by having a fiddler play and they would dance. A great occasion for merriemtn would be after a log raising for either a barn or a house was completed. A dance would be had, food and drinks served and great enjoyment would be had by all. Simplicity and gemutlichkeit was the main objective in these get-togethers.

As time passed and the community progressed, several dance halls were erected. Some of the earlier ones were the Turner Hall at the Mequon Park. This hall was as the name suggests, owned and used by a group of men who were interested in gymnastics, and was also used for dances and other purposes of entertainment. A dance hall at the Range Line and Mequon, Road; Mohrhusen dance hall on the second story of the tavern by that name located on N. Green Bay Road and

Elm Street in Thiensville, a dance hall built across the Pigeon Creek next to the fire engine house (Kiekers dance hall); Herzigers hall at Mequon, and Barth's hall at Donges Bay Rd. and Hwy. 141 (Stuckenbrock Tavern), Hall at Range Line and Mequon Road. Public dances were held in these halls and also for any other use for recreation. The Turner Hall and Herzigers Hall were also used for voting purposes at elections. They were also used for large group meetings.

At the turn of the century and shortly after and since that time, Thiensville became a mecca for weekend vacations for sight seeing as well as fishing. Transportation to and from Milwaukee to Thiensville and Mequon was first by horse and buggy and then by the Milwaukee Northern Electric R.R. Single men or man and wife plus children, if any, would come out on a Saturday morning, loaded with fish poles and lunch, stay for the day and sometimes overnight and Sunday, returning home on Sunday evening. They were sometimes rewarded by a nice mess of fish they caught. Fish such as pickerel, lake suckers, red horse, and bull heads were abundant in those days. When the ice on the river broke up, one could see several dip nets along both sides of the river below the dam, using this method of catching the fish. This was at a time when fish were on the move, looking for creeks and shallow places to spawn. This type of fishing was mostly done by local residents. Most of the time it proved successful. In the latter part of the 18th century it was common for the elite of Milwaukee to have their coach man drive them out to Thiensville in their coach and a span of nice horses, stop at the hotel, partake of a

drink or maybe a cup of coffee and some home made coffee kuchen and then drive back to Milwaukee.

When the automobile became popular, more people made this trip to Thiensville on a Sunday, taking a walk up to the dam, enjoy the scenery, walk back to the hotel, have a chicken dinner, including coffee and dessert, for .35, a little later, 150 cents, and then drive back to Milwaukee. Some would take a launch ride for about 3 miles east and north from the dam for a small fee. This was operated by a man named Wilcox, after a while by Max Poeltzig.

Public masquerade dances were held here and were quite popular and lots of fun. Mequon also became quite a skat and sheephead playing town. Skat and sheephead was played in a few taverns as well as in the homes. Many asociable evening was spent by neighbors playing alternately in their homes or 4 men meeting at some tavern and playing several games of so-called Beer Skat. Two losers paid for 2 winners, 2 beers or a total of .20. A game consisted of 16 deals. Large card parties were conducted by some organizations. Businessmen were usually asked to donate the prizes. These were usually held by school or church organizations and were well attended.

Before the Volsteed Law was passed, there were also sixteen taverns licensed to do business in Mequon. At that time they were called saloons. Those that enjoyed that kind of entertainment or recreation could avail themselves with that kind of recreation. After the Volsteed act was repealed, there were 27 so-called taverns or saloons available for recreation.

Mequon Restaurants

Mequon has long been known as a place where one could find some of the finest restaurants serving the finest of cuisines. One of the early places of such restaurants connected with a place of recreation was Schucks resort. This place was located in the southeastern part of Mequon, on the Lake Michigan shore line. A pier was built extending out into the lake. This was located at the entrance of a creek, called Sucker Creek. The name of the creek originated from the time when the neighbors to the resort and others who had permission came here with dip nets and went home with bountiful catches of fish. This creek flowed east and west through a ravine bordering on both sides with a 17 acre parcel of heavily wooded land. Species of trees and shrubs were found to grow here that were not found anywhere north of this location. This parcel of land still is property in which each landowner of Fairy chasm subdivision lots has an interest. Attempts were frequently made by individual owners who owned a parcel of land in the Fairy Chasm Subdivision, but were defeated every time. The opposing lot owners wanted to reserve it as a nature park where other people who were not lot owners could by permission have access to and enjoy nature at its finest.

A passenger boat came from Milwaukee loaded with passengers for Schucks Resort. This boat was loaded with passengers that could afford this kind of recreation. The pier was built out into the lake for the passengers to be able to go

ashore. A band accompanied the boat and played for the passengers all day. These people came out here and had a gay old time until evening when the boat returned back to Milwaukee. A very elegant meal was served at the resort. This was one of the most enjoyable days in those days.

Schucks was destroyed by fire and the building known as the Chalet was built. It was owned by and later sold to Sam Johnson.

Happy Birthday.

Mequon Town Talks, Happy Birthday!
Your many friends they wish you well,
For our hearts you've won completely;
Our admiration you compel.

You're of us, our township paper,
Most eagerly we wait your coming,
Bringing news of friend and neighbor,
Affairs of town considering.

Bygone days and scenes recalling,
You 'waken interest and respect
For the pioneers creating
That which brain and brawn reflect.

Long may you be our leader;
Unite us firmly in our aim,
Mequon to make great and greater,
And keep its beauty, name and fame.

May, 1937.

--A Mequon Farmer.

*Mequon Town Talks
% Paul Seifert Donger
June 1937*

Town Talks

In 1936, a number of interested citizens headed by Mr. & Mrs. Wuesthoff were organized for the purpose of publishing a newspaper. The paper was issued monthly, free of charge to all citizens of Mequon and Thiensville. The purpose of the paper was to keep the citizens informed of the activities and news of the Town, Town Board proceedings and when the Town Board meetings were held. The cost of printing the paper and postage was covered by the merchants and business people placing advertisements for which they had to pay. All of the work of putting out the paper such as gathering the news, editing it, etc. was done gratis by willing helpers. Many points of interest in certain civic affairs were aired. No side of an issue were taken, only the facts printed.

This little paper was very popular, but financially it did not prove very successful. After some years of publication, interest failed and the paper was discontinued.

The Buchel Family

Although they were not one of the first settlers in Mequon, they made quite a contribution to the growth and assets to the Town. They came here from Switzerland, their mother country. Their father was a well known chef in Switzerland and the sons followed in his vocation. There were five boys, Werner, Eugene, Walter, and Joe, and ? who were all tutored by their father. They served their apprenticeship as chefs under such able tutors as Mike Goldman, Maders, Carl Raasch, etc. They bought the original stone construction from August Gruenwald brick and stone residence and tavern on the northwest corner of Cedarburg Plank Road and Donges Bay Road. Their prime goal in operating a restaurant was to offer their customers the best food they could buy, cook it and season it to make it the most tasteful food. This they accomplished which is evidenced by the great number of people eating there. Their annual Mardi Gras celebration is always well attended. Nearly every few years another addition to the building is made. Each addition is decorated differently and as one will notice in the restaurant business, the Buchel (Alpin Inn) is three places put into one building. In the past few years, Werner Buchel occupied his spare time to the writing of songs and the appropriate music thereto. It took about two years to complete the songs and music. This he would then show to the public, which also was charged for the show and a meal. About eight or ten of these performances were given. In the past four or five years, Mr. Buchel with the help of some local and professional help, showed two different performances.

Ozaukee County - Excerpts from Walter Corrigan History

Ozaukee County was created by an act of the Wisconsin legislature from Washington County in 1853. Before this both counties were one. The boundaries of Ozaukee County remained the same. The name of Ozaukee County was derived from a Chippewa term which is said to mean "people living at the mouth of a river" or "people of yellow earth", the soil being mostly of that color.

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

Though in 1936, the seat of justice had been established at what was then known as Wisconsin City, near the present City of Port Washington, that place was very remote from the settlements then existing. Hence the legislature provided the County commissioners might hold their meetings at the house of Wm. T. Bonniwell. Pursuant to that provision on Nov. 18, 1946, the first Board of County Commissions met in the house of Wm. T. Bonniwell. At that meeting, Wm. T. Bonniwell of this Township of Mequon was elected Clerk of the Board.

On Feb. 24, 1941, a special meeting of the Commissions was held at William T. Bonniwell house and the road districts

were then laid out, some of which were in Mequon. At that meeting, Wm. T. Bonniwell was appointed road supervisor of the district, which at least composed a portion of the Town of Mequon. It was at one of these meetings in 1941 that the first application for a liquor license within the territory was presented October 11, 1941. The application was made by Samuel Drake. But it was postponed and never acted on. However, on Oct. 18, 1941, seven days later, John Weston was granted a license to operate a tavern.

It is to be noted that as early as 1842, the tax levy for the whole of the then Washington County was but 2200.23 and the total amount for school money was \$257.49. It also appears that on Oct. 3, 1842, one Cass and one Samuel Place were paid \$3.00 each for the scalps of 3 wolves. The first coroners inquest held within the County was on Oct. 3, 1842, over the dead body of one Jacob Kloppenburgh.

The first voting precinct within the Town of Mequon was the one in the house of Wm. T. Bonniwell. This was established April 4, 1843, and the judges of election appointed were James Bonniwell, Samuel McEvony and Fred W. Horn, all of whom lived within the present Town of Mequon. Oct. 21, 1943, our fellow townsman, Wm. T. Bonniwell was appointed Register of Deeds of the County. On Jan. 1, 1944, the county commissioners in meeting at Hamburg Village which is Grafton, granted Fred W. Horn then of the Town of Mequon, petitioned the County commissioners for the building of a bridge between Sections 23 and 26. The

petition was granted and the contract let to Reuben Wells, for \$600. to be finished by Feb. 1, 1845. This bridge was located on the Mequon Road, a little east of Hwy 57. Up to 1941, almost the entire population of the then Washington County was on the southeastern part of the County of which the Town of Mequon had by far the largest population.

The first named supervisor of the Town of Mequon was E. H. Jansen, who served from 1846 to 1850 inclusive. He was also chairman of the Board of County Commissioners for the session of 1849-1850.

The Town of Mequon was incorporated in 1846 under the Town system and consisted of exactly the same territory that it contains today including the Village of Thiensville. By 1850, the German population in the Town numbered 310 and the Irish 38. The Yankees and Irish were so few, they were not noted.

The act of the territorial legislature, December 1, 1836, established the county seat at Wisconsin City, now Port Washington. This was an empty honor. None of the functions of the County government were assumed at that early date. The act organizing the original Washington County was passed August 13, 1840, and by that time Wisconsin City had fallen into decline and was nearly deserted, but thrifty neighborhoods had been established in Mequon and Grafton. The organizing act provided for a vote on the location of a county seat, but it also provided that the county commissioners

might hold their sessions in the house of William T. Bonniwell. Grave doubts had arisen concerning the legality of the proceedings held at the Bonniwell home, but that was settled by an act passed Jan. 20, 1844, ratifying the acts of the commissioner and determining that the commissioners might meet where they wished. It appears that no court proceedings whatever took place in the Bonniwell house. Therefore, for some purposes it may be considered that the Bonniwell home was a quasi seat of county government, but it was never actually declared to be the county seat. Nevertheless, it has the honor of having been a place for the administration of about all the county government that existed during that period from February 19, to about 1945.

Sewerage

In 1938, the question of joining with the Village of Thiensville in the laying of a municipal sewer from and including Federal Foods Inc. then and including the Village of Thiensville south to the county line and including the area in Mequon from the Milwaukee River west to the railroad tracks. A meeting was scheduled with the Milwaukee Sewerage Commissions to find out whether or not they would agree to accept our sewerage. Also that a special sewerage district had to be created and a special sewerage commission had to be appointed by the county judge and also a special election had to be held to approve or disapprove the project.

Order by the State Board of Health on August 19, 1952, that the Town of Mequon on or before June 30, 1953, provide for elimination of discharge of inadequately treated sewerage from private premises to the Milwaukee River in the area of the unincorporated Village of Mequon, by requiring owners of premises to install effective individual disposal facilities or to jointly provide for adequate treatment.

Pursuant to complaints received by the Town Board and Health Board from residents that certain residents were having their raw sewerage flow into the Milwaukee River, causing a stench and polluting the river, the Town Board decided to consult with an engineer regarding to formation of a sewer district. Mr. Laurie Kurtz of Milwaukee, a consulting engineer, was selected and an agreement was

signed that he make such a study of ways and means for disposing of all sanitary sewage originating in the built up portion of the Village of Thiensville and that portion of the Town bounded east by the Milwaukee River south by the county line west by the railroad and north by the Village of Thiensville. The fees for such a study to be \$250. for Thiensville and \$150. for Town of Mequon for that portion of Town described above.

Mr. Kurtz made his report and based on this report both attorneys, Mr. C. R. Dineen for Mequon and Mr. Walter Corrigan for Thiensville agreed that they could not make a recommendation to their respective boards. They requested that Mr. Kurtz make a further study and report back. After this report was received, it was determined that the area to be served did not have a value high enough to cover the cost of the sewer bonds.

Board of Health

The pioneer doctors of the Town of Mequon were Doctors Munk, Neitze, and Dr. Rosenthal. Dr. Egry pulled teeth and ? for blood-letting. Mr. Schindler dispensed homeopathic medicines and practiced mid-wifery and lived in a small cottage immediately south of the wagon pickle processing plant later owned by Fred Rosin and wife, grandparents of Carl F. Wilbert. Mrs. Schwarz was also a midwife and lived near where the Ozaukee Country Club is located.

Later Dr. Henry Albers practiced medicine in Mequon and Thiensville for many years. He lived in the building on St. Trunk Hwy 57 on the south end of the present limits of Thiensville and across from the present Stemmlers White Coach Inn, which Dr. Albers built and resided there until he retired. Pursuant to Section 141.01 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town Board at its regular by-monthly meeting held on April 18, 1939, elected Messrs. E. W. Krumhus, Werner Mueller and Frank Dehling from its own members and Mr. Louis Clausen to serve as members of the Board of Health for a period of one year. Dr. H. F. Scholz was elected to membership on the Board of Health by the Town Board in 1938 for a term of 2 years. On April 24, 1939, the newly elected members, mentioned and the Health office, Dr. Scholz met to organize as the Town of Mequon Board of Health. Mr. Krumhus was elected chairman and Mr. Werner Mueller, Clerk. It was agreed to have regular quarterly meetings on the last Monday of the months of Jan., April, July, and Oct. commencing at 8:00 P.M.

Being nearly impossible to make regular inspections of certain properties, it was decided that definite verbal or written complaints be made to the Health Department if required. Other matters to be discussed and to maintain sanitary conditions in our swimming pool.

Dr. H. F. Scholz was health officer for fifty years in 1973.

U. S. Mail Delivery

In the early days of the Mequon settlers at about 1840, mail was received as often as was humanly possible to transport it from Milwaukee to Mequon on foot and later on horseback. After the railroad was in operation, about 1871 or 1872, the mail was shipped by train from Milwaukee arriving at Mequon at about 8:00 A.M. The Post Master received it and took it to the log building called the Mequon River Post Office, located at Mequon. Mr. John Weston was the first postmaster and was appointed in June 24, 1840, and ehld the office until Oct. 6, 1841, according to the records of the Federal Records Center, 111 W. Winnebago St., St. Louis 18, Missouri. The Zimmermann family, Adolph and William, occupied the postmastership at different times for 15 years, the Carbys family for 3 appointments for 11 years, and others for 27 years for terms of 1 to four years. Mr. Louis C. Wagner received his appointment Dec. 11, 1893, and served until Jan. 28, 1898. Mr. Henry Mohrhusen Jr. was appointed Jan. 28, 1898, post office at his place, Mr. Peter J. Kroehnke was appointed Dec. 11, 1900. post office at Thierman store; Mr. L. C. Kieker was appointed Feb. 4, 1914, operated post office in building S. Main St.; Mr. Harry Mollier appointed Nove. 20, 1918 operated post office in same place; Mr. John M. Albers, appointed Sept. 12, 1922. On Dec. 31, 1933, the frame building 2 doors north of the Thiensville fire department building which he and his family occupied, caught fire while he was sleeping.

He was alone in the building when the fire broke out and by the time firemen extinguished the fire, they found him near a window presumably suffocated from the smoke. Mrs. Albers was appointed to succeed him immediately. She served until May 30, 1934, when Alfred Hadler was appointed to succeed her on April 8, 1944. Mr. Reuben Hein was appointed. He moved the post office to his building where he lived. He served until Oct. 31, 1954, when Mr. Donald O. Miller was appointed and who served as the Thiensville Post Master up to this present date. Mr. Donald Miller continued to operate the post office in the Reuben Hein building situated on south main street in Thiensville, south of the Thiensville Lumber Company on the west side of the street.

The U.S. government post office department then advertised for the construction of a building to be erected and used for such a purpose. They finally found a suitable site on Green Bay Rd. and had a large enough building suitable for post office requirement for future use. It was built in 1960 and dedicated on Oct. 9, 1960, as the Thiensville-Mequon post office.

In the early days when mail was first delivered either on horseback or train, when it was received by the post master, it was sorted and divided into two substations, one at Wagners and one at a store in Freistadt. From here the farmers and others could get their mail twice a week, Tuesday and Fridays. The mail was sorted and put into individual post office mail cubby boxes.

On April 1, 1902, upon the petition of numerous residents, in the Town of Mequon asking that 2 rural mail routes be established in the Town. Upon due consideration, the U.S. postal department decided to establish 2 rural mail routes in Mequon, one on the west side of the Town and one on the east side of the Milwaukee River designated as route #1, and 2. Mr. Jack O'Leary was appointed rural mail carrier #1 and Frederick Linden, rural mail carrier #2. They each had to furnish their own conveyance, a horse or two and a buggy or sleigh on which to carry their mail. The route for each carrier was laid out by the government and was about 30 to 32 miles with about 300 to 500 patrons. Travel during summer and fall was fairly good at that time, but not so during the winter. It was a tough route to travel in the deep snow, both for horse and man. It was also hard to get close enough to the mail box to place in the mail and he would get out and get his boots full of snow. Several times during the winter, it was sure to happen that the cutter would tip and all the mail still in the cutter would spill into the snow. This the carrier would have to pick up and clean off the snow. After several years closed wagons and sleighs were used which at least kept out the rain and mud. Mr. Fred Linden, carrier on route 2 was the first to purchase an automobile to be used on the route.

Schools

Old school, two story, stone building in Thiensville built in 1837 where Gilbert Shoe Factory is now occupied. It was the first public school built in Thiensville. Original 8 grades, 4 down and 4 grades on second level. In 1908, an addition was built to the east. The lower level was used by the principal as living quarters and the upper level for 2 years of high school. During the building of the addition to the "old school" the first year of high school was conducted in Henry Mohrhusen's print shop, now the office of Dr. Witte, a dentist.

The first public school house in Mequon was a log structure erected by the Bonniwells in 1840. The Thoreau school building was built in 1849 being the second school in Mequon. It is a frame, 2 room school building with a bell in the tower. This bell was tolled at the opening of school and for recess, noon, and closing. This building was first a one room rebuilt and second room was added as it grew. It then was also changed in construction to meet certain standards required. Thoreau school was discontinued when consolidation of school districts took place. It was purchased by the American Howard Schroeder Legion post for a club house. Calvary Lutheran Church rented it and used it for parochial school purposes for several years. Thoreau School enjoyed a real active parent teachers association for many years. This parent teachers association among other activities produced and showed numerous

home talent plays in the nearby dance hall. They were a sellout each time. The net receipts were used to purchase playground equipment, etc. for the school

In 1870, the first construction of the "Jahn" school situated at the corner of Wauwatosa and Freistadt Roads was built. This was a log cabin. In 1876, a new school was built across the street, being the northeast corner of Sec. 21, R21E. This land was donated by Mr. Peter Ellenberger for 50.00. This was a 1 room frame building. It was heated with a pot-bellied wood or coal fired stove. Water was carried to the school by the children from a neighbor about 500 feet away. This was the school attended by Carl Wilbert, up to 5th grade. After 5th grade he attended the "Old School" in Thiensville from which he graduated in 1908. Up to 1913, all school meetings were held and recorded in German. When objections were raised by the writer, a motion was made and carried to conduct them in English and so recorded.

As time went on, 10 more schools were built and fourteen school districts formed. These 13 districts were finally consolidated into two District #10 and Jt. School Dist. #3 - Thiensville and Mequon and Jt. School Dist. #7 with Cedarburg and Mequon. Mequon-Thiensville Jt. School Dist. #3 comprises all of the Village of Thiensville and that part of the City of Mequon lying west of Hwy 57 north of Thiensville and west of the Milwaukee River south of Thiensville and Mequon Country Estates Subdivision., that part of the North one half of Sec. 26 lying east of the river.

School Dist. #10 comprises the balance of the City. Jt. School Dist. #7 is north 1/2 of Sec. 4 & 5. Jt. School Dist #3 has 3 sets of buildings, Grand Ave. school in Thiensville, Middle and Steffen schools in Mequon. School Dist. #10 has 3 sets of buildings, Range Line, Donges Bay, and Middle School.

The high school comprises one Dist. #1 and at present has on set of buildings on an 80 acre site. This building was built in 2 stages. The first stage was built in 19 The addition was built in 1969. It is now large enough to accomodate 1800 students. It is expected that a new school will have to be built to be occupied in 1974.

Usually commenced school year in the middle of October for 5 months so that the older children could help harvest the crops. This was prevalent at the turn of the century up to about 1910 when the older children started school at about middle of Oct. and again stayed out from April 1 to close of school year. They made up the studies missed at home and periodically conferred with the teacher who helped them so that those that were ambitious enough could catch up with the studies missed in class. At the annual meeting at which minutes were kept some of the penmanship misspelling of words and language used, left much to be correct. But they were excused because they did not have the education being all hard working people, being more interested in giving their children an education than their own.

On the 30th day of August, 1880, the annual meeting of School Dit. Bigelow School Dist. #11, a motion was made and carried that the school board hire a male teacher if one was to be had, otherwise, a female teacher would be acceptable, school to be kept for 7 months. The sum of money raised to be \$125. or as long as there was money in the treasury. The following amounts for goods and services rendered were then awarded: 3 cords of good birch wood to be delivered for \$7.00 by Homer Woodworth; sawing and splitting of the 3 cords of wood to D. Nero for .40 a cord or 1.20; August Sunderman the cleaning of the schoolhouse,

polishing of stove, washing the bench and windows for the sum of 1.30. . Next year the 3 cords of wood was given to Mr. Werner for 9.00, Aug. Sunderman for sawing and splitting the 3 cords for 1.35. Job of cleaning the school house, polishing the stove, washing the windows and scrubbing the floor twice before start of school and at Xmas time for 2.50. Balance in the treasury for year ending Aug. 31, 1881, was 2.48.

Notes

Then came the summer sausage and pork sausage. This was the larger amount of sausage and lasted through the summer, sometimes until the following butchering. The next step was the curing and smøking. All hams, shoulders, bacon sides etc. kept for any length of time was salted in a brine of salt water for a certain length of time. After this operation, the meat was smoked, with a cool smoke of either apple wood, hickory or maple. The meat was hung on strips of wooden hangers, high enough above the smoldering fire so as to not to get hot. After smoking the meat sausage until it was deemed by the farmer to be sufficiently penetrated, they were stored in a cool dry room, usually an extra bedroom that was not used. Sausage kept put in boxes with dry hard wood sawdust so it would not dry out. This supply of meat and sausages usually lasted from one butchering to another.

Carl Nitchky - early butcher

Later Wm. Mohrhusen

Liberty Pole

Does anyone know or remember the Liberty Pole raising its height with a liberty cap on top, located in front of the mill at Thiensville? The cap had been adopted as a symbol of liberty in France at the close of the 18th century, and the idea was brought to Europe by the pioneers. It was shaped somewhat like the half of an egg. A cap like this was originally given by the Greeks to the slaves when they were liberated.

Butchering

Butchering hogs on the farm was an event that is quite interesting. Usually this took place just before Thanksgiving and sometime in February or March. The first one supplied the farm family with meat and sausage over the winter and the second one for the rest of the year. The number of hogs butchered was 1 or 2 at Thanksgiving and 3 to 5 in the spring, depending on the size of the family. Most of the families at the early stage and after that, retained a butcher by trade, who would go from one farmer to another by appointment. Each event took from 2 to 3 days depending on the number of pigs to be slaughtered and sausage to be made. The first day was needed for the slaughtering and cleaning of the carcasses. The second day was needed for cutting up the carcasses into hams, shoulders, bacon sides, ribs, pork chops and other meats that were put into the various sausages. The second day was also spent in boiling the meat for the certain sausages, cutting it up and grinding and seasoning it ready to put it into intestines cleaned for that purpose. It was then boiled once more for the final finish. This sausage was called boiled sausages and was of various kinds.

Louis Keiker - Clydesdale Horses

Mr. Kieker purchased the tavern at intersection of Green Bay Ave. and Wilson Ave., N.W. Corner from Wm. Selle, Kieker owner and operator of a farm. Main business was the raising of pure bred Clydscale horses. Mr. Kieker also held a public office after moving to Thiensville.

Max Poelzig - owner of boats at river. Launch to go take people for a boat ride up and down the Milwaukee river for about 2 miles. Owned about a dozen row boats to rent for rides or fishing by the day. Father of Max Poelzig was the owner of a 40 acre farm about 1 mile east of Thiensville on the shore of Milwaukee river. It was located on the east by the River Rd., on the north by the river 40 rods east and west and south about 40 rods north and south. It was sold by Max Poelzig Sr. to a developer who sold small lots to buyers who built summer cottages on them for their enjoyment on Saturday afternoons and Sundays. Some of these cottages were occupied as summer homes all summer long. Fishing and swimming were the main enjoyments. This was one of the first subdivisions recorded in Mequon.

Mr. Louis Lemke is living and operating with his family an 138.50 acre farm in the N 1/2 of the northwest 1/4 of Sec. 32, T9N, R21E. This farm has been in the Lemke family for over 100 years. He also owns and operates the farm land of 138.5 acre in the Se 1/2 Sec. 30 T9N, R21E. He

urchased this farm in 19 for the purpose of extending his operation in the production of more hybrid seed corn. In order to be able to rotate the use of the land which is very important, he also leases approximately another 200 acres from other farmers, usually for a period of 3 years, in order that he will be able to prepare and fertilize the land for the proper raising of the hybrid seeds.

When did he purchase farm from Jul Schmidt?

What did he do with excavating part of farm for gravel and later make a nice little lake of the excavation.

Mr. Lemke and the entire family is highly respected by his neighbors, residents of Mequon, and by his customers all over the State of Wisconsin, buying his seed corn. He is trustworthy in his dealings with his clientele. His help in giving of his knowledge to his customers is greatly appreciated.

Notes Continued

April 1940 - Start of agitation for a Town nurse - a lot of opposition. Petition circulated for Town Nurse, voted on referendum. Passed.

April 4th, 1940 - Board agreed to pay all truck drivers .55 cents per hour. The City attorney to receive an annual retainer fee of 150.00 dollars for which he was obliged to attend every meeting, regular and special, not to exceed 24 meetings per year.

May, 1941 - Telephone Company representative, Mr. Faber explained the company contemplated installation of underground telephone lines in the Town and furnishing a plat thereof to the Town Clerk. The Board and other officers were invited to witness of the first burial of the wires on the Lake Shore Road.

William North occupied town where Town Hall is located.

Mar. 7, 1853 - Ozaukee and Washington Co. were divided. Bonniwell house used as a courthouse 1840 legislature.

1848 the Town was established by the legislature. Wisconsin admitted to State.

Questions

When did Dr. Albers, a local physician, return from practicing. Lived across the street from the present White Coach Inn, which he built and had office there. Driven to patients by his son, John, first by horse and buggy, bob sleigh, then with automobile, the first one in Mequon. Second one by

Fred Linden, a rural mail carrier on route 2.

C. C. Schneider settled in Freistadt in 1842 and became post master in 1850. Later started and succeeded in the making of woolen sweaters. John W. Milbrath settled in 1842 and held various offices. Louis C. Wagner settled in 1849, was a cigar maker, etc. Ad. Zaun was born in Mequon in 1845.

Parents settled here in 1940 in section 21, R21. Henry Haas who came in 1855 and operated the Mequon tavern.

August Hodann was one of the later proprietors of the Mequon House in the present Village of Mequon. At one time he was also Town Treasurer. Wm. F. Jahn settled in Mequon 1844 was once postmaster, later a Justice of the Peace. Also owned the sixty acre farm in the SW 1/2 of Section 15 and an 80 acre farm, called Mineral Springs Farm in the northern 1/2 part of Section 22, both in R21E. and north and south of the Freistadt Road and east of the Wauwatosa Ave. He afterwards deeded one 80 acre farm on the south side of Freistadt Rd. to his son Gustave keeping an acre for his residence. Two of the old settlers already mentioned, Adolph Zimmermann and William F. Opitz built what was known as the Mequon Brewery. After the brewery was discontinued it was used by Frank Gerlach as a storage of ice and beer he was selling to the taverns. He represented the Jungs Brewery in 1857 for many years. Frederick Becker, the father of the Becker family came from Saxony and settled in 1842.

Japanese people

Japanese people moved to Mequon, worked for the Mequon canning company hired by Jno. F. Nieman. These people came mostly from California. Residents objected vehemently and asked that a meeting be held by the Town Board in regard to the invasion as they called it. Meeting was held in the Town Hall. The hall was packed with residents objecting to the Japanese invasion. Mr. Nieman agreed that no more would be employed.

Arno Herbst - Questions and Answers

Ask Arno about Wagner pickle factory, was it also a cheese factory at one time. What does he know about the old log house on west side of 181. Who lived in it. The great grand father of Louis the 3rd. He bought wheat and clover seed from farmers and sold it again. Some wheat kernels were found in the walls before it was razed. When was it razed? Where was cigar makers house? Have you got some old pictures?

1926 - 1928 Pickle factory stopped. 60 x 24 bldg.

Fritz Timbel Cigar maker

Jno. Milrath father of Arno Herbst

Jno. Milbrath, bro. of Arno Herbst's mother

Notes - Turner Hall

Riemenschneider owner - sold to

Riemenschneider had a barn for the use of farmers from the north hauling produce to Milwaukee as a stop over to rest the horses.

Place sold several times - Brother-in-law of Wm. Seifert Arthur Kemp - the last owner was Chas. Toy, Chinese restaurant operator from Milwaukee who operated a Chinese restaurant for several years. He sold it to Frank Frey, who established and built the Piggly-Wiggley, shopping center on the premises. The Turner Hall was used for numerous purposes before it was wrecked.

Kenpel before Hirt

Kemp sold to Hurth - 1945

Statelman bought from Hirt 1953

Knaepel to Kemp

Kemp to Hirth - 1945

Hirth to Statleman - 1953

Statleman to Semmler

Canning Factory

Pea canning largest industry. Stopped canning peas and sold factory buildings. After a few years of canning peas, sold it back to Nieman who then froze sweet corn on the cob and mixed vegetables. The freezer plant and grounds were then sold to Ross-Wells Co. who used it for freezing fox food and other fur bearing animals. Canning in Mequon discontinued entirely.

Notes - Becker Family

From whom did Wuesthof purchase farm - 800 per acre.
Becker family. Wm/ Elizabeth all single Purchased 1928
Donated a substantial amount to church and to Homestead
High for the library. When did Wm. Becker die - the last
of the family? One of the oldest residents of Mequon. Two
brothers Wm. and ? and Elizabeth - none married. All died
single. Very good citizens. frugal owners of 80 acres,
S.W. quarter T9N, R21E. Sold to Herbert Wuesthoff and
family, the last of the large sales made in time of de-
pression. Moved to Thiensville on 2 acre plot. Mr.
Wuesthoff operated a modern dairy farm, holstein cows.

Notre Dame School

Julia Wessel sold to Sisters of Notre Dame 77 acres south
of Highland Rd. 133 acres north of Highland Rd. on shores
of Lake Michigan 1/2 mile on shore.

Lutheran Seminary

My Life History

I was born on February 18, 1892, to Jacob and Anna Wilbert, in a half log and one-half frame dwelling. The laths were hand split, some of them 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick. These were nailed to the logs and the cracks filled with mortar strengthened with pigs hair mixed into it. The above farm house was situated on a sixty acre farm, on the east side of Wauwatosa Road, the second set of buildings south of the Freistadt Road. In the year 1894, my parents decided to build a new home, which they did. This was a large home. The foundation was built of fieldstone walls, thirty inches thick and partition walls of 24 inches. The first floor had a large kitchen, pantry, dining room, parlor, and one bedroom and closet. The upper story had 4 large bedrooms. There were no extra facilities. Heating was provided by a hard coal self heater, located in the dining room, heating the bedroom and parlor. The kitchen had a wood burning cook stove, also providing heat. Kerosene lamps provided light when it became dark. So lanterns were used. One hand pump for well water and hand pump for rain water were situated over a sink and provided water for cooking and washing dishes, etc. This was the only plumbing in the house. There was no plumbing on the second story level.

The sixty acre farm was owned by my grandparents, Fred Roosin, until they sold it to my parents. They were unable to take care of themselves, so they lived with us for several years. My mother died when I was about 3½ years old, and

my brother, Gustave was about two years old. She gave birth to a little baby sister. She lived only about eight days when she died and my mother died shortly after that. That left my father with two real small boys. Both my grandparents were laid to rest in the Lutheran Cemetery on the Wauwatosa Road on the same lot that my mother and baby sister were buried.

A neighbor's daughter, Minnie Klumb and a daughter of Ergot Krell, both in their twenties, took care of us for the following two years. My dad then engaged a housekeeper, a Mrs. Clara Seitz who had two daughters, two and four years old. Mrs. Seitz stayed with us for about 13 years. She was like a mother to us, and also a good housekeeper. When Mrs. Seitz left, her daughters were about fourteen and seventeen years old. My dad then engaged another housekeeper with two sons, the younger of the two being a retarded child. This proved quite a problem at times. He was not able to walk nor use his entire left side of his body. She was often advised by other people to take him to a school for retarded children, but refused. He lived to be 65 years old.

In December of 1898, my dad went to Germany to visit his family and take care of some state matters. He returned in March of 1899. Mrs. Seitz, the housekeeper then, took care of the few cows and chickens we then had. I used to go to the barn with her, not for the help I could give her, but for company sake.

In March of 1900, I started my school years by attending the one room school about 1/2 mile north of our farm, called the Jahn's school. This was situated on the southwest corner of the intersection of the Wauwatosa Road and Freistadt Road. It was common in those days for children to attend their first few months starting after Easter and get acquainted until the end of the year. The following year, they were then in first grade. There were about an average of 12 to 15 children attending.

In the absence of a well, water was supplied by way of two boys being assigned every day to carry a pail full of well water from a neighbor to the school. Heating in the winter was derived by a wood stove. In real cold weather, the children would sit around the stove to keep warm. There was no plumbing. A separate boys and girls outhouse was available to the rear of the school building. The above school, my brother and I attended until we were through 5th grade. My father then took us out of Jahn school and entered us in the Thiensville graded school. This was a two room school. For this privilege my father had to pay \$48.00 per pupil for a year's tuition. This was for 6th, 7th, and 8th year when we graduated from grade school. Our class was the last one to graduate. By this time, Thiensville school added two years of high school. To finish your high school, you would have to go to Cedarburg High, or some other high school. The attendance at Thiensville three years of grade school and two years of high school, were a hardship as well as a lot of fun.

I had to walk about one and three quarter miles to school, for very rarely did I get an opportunity to get a ride except in extremely bad weather, rain, or snow or sub-zero weather. Wearing leggings at that time in the winter, they were frozen stiff on your legs and had to be thawed dry from morning to four P.M. so I was able to put them on again. The lunch was frozen solidly by the time we got to school and also had to be put around the stove to thaw out. The walking to school for 1 3/4 miles one way, was also no small chore. We had to walk on the narrow track made by the horses on either side of the road. At that time, the town had no machinery to scrape the snow away. One snow fall would pile upon another until spring. Then the farmers would come out and plow the roads and shovel out the snow by hand, sometimes three to four feet high.

My days at Thiensville school were a lot of fun, hard work, both at home and at school. Every spring about in April, my father would keep me at home to help with the spring seeding and planting. The same would happen from the beginning of the school year until the 1st of November. I stayed home for the harvest. My lessons in school I made up studying in the evening. Mr. Fred Plagemann would send the lessons home with my father who was a good friend, and would also review my written lessons. When examinations were had, I would attend that day in school until noon and was marked accordingly. There was great competition between Alfred Gierach, a classmate, and myself as to who would have a higher mark. This would be about even.

One time he might have a 1/2 or 1 percent more and then I would. Very good competition.

I wanted to complete my high school education, but my father said I should help him on the farm and after my brother finished high school, I could continue. This time never came. I stayed and helped on the farm and my brother continued to attend the University of Wisconsin studying law. He finished his law degree at the University of Wisconsin and practiced law in Milwaukee.

War was declared in 1913 with Germany and my brother enlisted in the Air Corps. After the war, he lived on the farm with us, and then in 1925, he left, and I never saw him again.

As time went on, I realized that my dad became less able to run the farm alone. I resigned myself to the fact that I was destined to stay at home and work the farm. However, this was nearly impossible. My father would not improve, repair, or purchase one new machine needed. Under these circumstances, it was impossible to run a farm. One day I made him the proposition that in order for me to stay on the farm, I would either have to buy, or lease the farm. Not being willing to rent the farm to me, he decided to sell it to me for \$12,000. for 60 acres. I knew then that the condition the farm buildings were in and the amount of machinery I would have to invest in, that the price asked for was too high. I purchased an old 1914 Ford automobile in 1915 for \$200.00 and I purchased the farm in 1915. My

dad would not stay with me on the farm, but sought a place to stay and board in Thiensville. This was the Hotel Aussem. When Dad left, I notified the housekeeper, Mrs. Albrecht, to also leave, and I lived a bachelor's life for 2 years.

After war was declared and the draft came, I was drafted in the first contingent to leave Ozaukee County. After a few weeks after being drafted, I received notice from the draft board that I was exempted, being the only one on the farmable to run it. This was in May 1917. Miss Elsie E. Aussem, with whom I kept steady company for several years, did not decide to get married before we knew what my status was in regard to the war. Since we knew now for sure, we announced our engagement in August, 1917, and decided on a Nov. 8, 1917 wedding date.

Nov. 7, 1917, happened to be Elsie's parent's 25th wedding anniversary. We celebrated our wedding the first part of the evening up until 12:00 P.M. and from that time on until about 3:00 A.M., November 9, we celebrated a joint wedding 25th anniversary and our marriage. We had invited friends and relatives of both weddings and had a joint dinner at twelve o'clock. Elsie and I were married at 4:00 P.M. by the then County Judge Uselding at Port Washington, Wis. Walter Bublitz furnished the car to take us to the Judge and back home again. The bridesmaid had a separate car. The weather was perfect, a bright sunshine day. We had a perfect wedding, everything turned out alright. The next day my new bride and myself left for Chicago, to Elsie's

uncle, for a one week honeymoon after which we came back to our home on the farm. While we were gone, a hired man took care of the farm animals. The outside work having been completed. The bridesmaids and attendants took a morning trip to Milwaukee to the hair dresser. They hurried home at 30 miles an hour. Thought we were speeding, to be home in time to drive to Port Washington to the Judge. We came home to the photographers to have our pictures taken.

Soon after we came home from our long honeymoon trip of one week, our hired man left. This left my wife and myself alone on the farm. This we enjoyed immensely. I could well take care of the farmchores alone.

In 1918, a flu epidemic broke out in the state and Mequon First I came down with it, and the next day Elsie got down, too. There we were, one in one bed and the other one in the other, each trying to console each other. Mr. Sachse, our neighbor was kind enough to feed the animals and milk the few cows. This was greatly appreciated by us. Elsie's mother and sister, Louise, occasionally walked through the field to see us. Elsie contacted pneumonia, and I was very worried. After several days the doctor said she had changed for the better, and was progressing. This sent my hopes way up and in due time, we were able to leave the bed and recuperate.

In Sept. 1920, our first child was born, a boy, but died in birth. This was a tremendous shock to both of us.

By consoling each other, we were able to live through the ordeal. We loved each other dearly, and I always thought that this was the reason for succumbing through the hardships we lived through the following two years. After the birth of the first baby, Elsie was in need of a doctor frequently for about two years. At this time, she again felt like herself. This baby was buried in the Opitz cemetery on the Mequon Road in Mequon.

In 1922, Jan. 6, our second child was born, a baby girl, whom we baptized Jeanette. She was baptized in the Lutheran faith by Rev. Wehrs at the Freistadt church. She was a little dickens but a great source of pleasure to both of us.

At this time we planted a great deal of cash crops such as pickles, green and wax beans and corn. This called for teenage help to pick it. It also had to be supervised to prevent as much as possible destruction of the plants. This Elsie did in the morning when the help arrived and I had not yet returned from the market. I usually left for the market to arrive there at four o'clock. My vegetables, no matter what kind, were always of good quality, hand picked and guaranteed to be the same from top to bottom of the bushel basket. The baskets were generally new or nearly so. Several of the grocery and produce dealers found this to be true and sometimes one of the dealers would purchase all or most of the load having confidence in me. I would then take the produce to their place of business, unload, take back their empty baskets and return home. Sometimes I would

return home with fresh buns for breakfast before 6:30 or seven o'clock. If I came late, then Elsie would be out with the boys, supervising their work and telling them what to do. When Jeanette was two years old, she would take her along. This we followed for three or four days a week for about two months. This was nice cash money to help for running expenses and other necessary things on the farm. Another good cash crop were peas for canning. The Canning Company would furnish the seed and the farmers planted them. When they were grown to be fit to be canned, the Canning Factory would come and cut them and haul them. Another good cash crop were potatoes and barley. If one had a good crop, one could get up to 300 an acre net.

The barn being in such condition that one could not keep cattle or horses or store grain and hay in it, I had to do something about it. The only solution was to tear down the old and build a new one. The old one was in such state that it was impossible to repair. Help on the farm was next to impossible to get. I used to stop on my way home from the market to see if I could get someone to work on the farm, but was not very successful. Every good able bodied man that could work on the farm was employed in a factory. I would sometimes pick up a willing man that I thought could be of some help to me. I took him along with me to the farm and gave him a good breakfast. After breakfast, I would take him to the barn, tell him to curry the horses and harness them. After returning in an hour to see how he was coming along, I found him in a real mess.

He not only did not know how to handle a fork, less a harness. Some of the men would disappear altogether after getting a good breakfast.

In the winter of 1922, I drew plans for a modern farm barn, 36' x 66 feet long with a silo attachment, 12' x 20' high. These plans I sent to the College of Agriculture in Madison, Wisconsin, with the request that they would review them and favor me with their criticisms and corrections. They sent them back with but one advice, that I should put cork flooring where the cows would stand with their front feet. I had given it some thought before and realized it would be better, but also more expensive, which expense I could not afford. The cost of the barn was nearly prohibitive already, but it was my only salvation if I wanted to continue farming.

I was so elated with the response I received from the Department of Agriculture on my plans for a new barn, I proceeded to plan for the new barn. I got prices on concrete block, lumber, stanches, and steel pens, plumbing, etc. and I proceeded to let the same out on bids.

Paul Gruenwald was the successful bidder on the cement block and concrete work; John Schmeichel on the carpenter work; James Mfg. Co. on the stanchions and ventilating system. The lower part or cattle and horse barn was built of concrete block, with a plank frame and hip roof upper. It was 36' wide by 66' long with a complete line of James stanchions, box stills and ventilating system.

The concrete approach to the upper level contained a storage room underneath and a large concrete tank holding water from which a forced water supply line furnished the water for the cattle and horses. A concrete block silo, 12' wide and 36' feet high and connected to the barn, was also built at the same time.

I then proceeded to look for a good man to help me. I found the source in Rudolph Seifert, who agreed to work for me. He was a very capable and responsible help. Every alternate Sunday he had off from that Saturday night until the next Monday morning. To this we both agreed and kept it. During the winter months of 1922-23, Rudy and I wrecked the old barn and cleaned up the place for the new barn. We also provided shelter for the cattle and horses in a nearby machinery shed and granary. We hauled all the concrete blocks necessary for the new barn foundation and walls. The lumber for the barn was delivered by the lumber yard. The barn was built by bolting 2 - 2" x 8" planks together for the frame work, one of the first barns built in that manner in the Town. The work on the new barn started early and was concluded by July 1, in time to store the new crop of hay and grain.

When the building of the barn was completed, we celebrated by having a barn dance which were popular those years. We had a terrific attendance and everybody seemed to enjoy themselves. Some farmers charged to attend the barn dance

and it is alledged that enough money was made to paint the building and pay for the expenses. We did not do this. We wanted to give those many people who so willingly helped us with the raising of the barn to be partially reimbursed by giving them a good time. We served them all the sandwiches they could eat and all the soft drinks and beer they could drink. A friend of ours unbeknown to us, went around and took up a voluntary collection to pay for the musicians, the amount helping to pay part of the expenses. We cleaned up the yard and barn the next day. We were just in time so that we could store our hay in the new barn. However, we did not enjoy the use of the new facility very long. To obtain good help on the farm became harder over the years, as nearly everybody was working in factories where they received high wages which the farmer was unable to meet and consequently, only mediocre help was obtainable.

Rudy worked for us that year, but then told us he had something else in mind which I was later informed that it was for the Electric Company, being a station agent. I could not blame him for this change, as he got a good position. Not being able to get a substitute for him, I had to do what I could and work the farm alone. This was impossible to do and do it right. This was the hardest year on the farm. I had 5 acres of sugar beets and 5 acres of potatoes to dry and haul to Milwaukee and to the R. R. in Mequon.

We decided to sell the farm. A broker tried unsuccessfully to sell it for 6 months. We decided to try to sell it ourselves. One evening we were surprised with a visit from

our neighbor, Julius Sachse and his son, Walter. They came over to ask what our exact asking price was for the farm. We told him and they went home to think it over. He came back the next day and tried to bargain. I told him that the price was asked for he had to take care of all the plowing for that year and in return, I would give him a pile of sawed lumber and leave about 3 tons of alfalfa hay in the barn. For this we were given the privilege of living on the premises until April 1, 1926. The date of the sale was Oct. 13, 1925, for \$18,000. which was unheard of at that time. This was agreed upon and the sale completed. We had an auction of all our farm personal property, which also brought a good price. Elsie and I then proceeded to look for a place to rent. We were lucky to find an upper flat on Hwy 57 two blocks south of the Mequon Road, for a rental of \$11.00 per month. No conveniences but that was the only place we could find and we took it. Instead of waiting until April 1, we proceeded to move. We occupied the rental place Dec. 1, 1925. We had Christmas there and were happy to be relieved from the burdens of the farm work which we were convinced was a losing venture. I never did believe that farmwork was for a wife or woman to perform and I did not intend to have my wife loaded with such hard work.

After moving from the farm to Mequon, I started in the insurance and real estate business. It was a new way of life for us, especially for me. I had no future to look forward to earn a living.

In Feb. 23, 1923, I took on the Saukville Mutual Fire Insurance Company to write insurance, a predominately farmers company, writing only fire insurance. The number of farm buildings were very limited in a given area especially with a very successful company as the Cedarburg Mutual Fire Insurance being entrenched in the Mequon area. It was hard to compete. So after a strong search for about one year for a very reliable company was found, I contacted the Travelers Insurance Company, and they agreed to appoint me as an agent for Mequon and vicinity in 1924. Having my class motto in mind (Perseverance Conquers) I kept on plugging. I attended the University of Wisconsin Extension Division evening classes, twice a week in insurance and real estate courses. This I did for five years. In the year 1928, I received my certificate in Real Estate practice which included such courses as Real Estate Law, Real Estate Practice, Sales and Financing, etc. This was the first class receiving such certificates on graduation. With a short oral examination, this certificate entitled us to a real estate license. This license I kept in force from 1928 until the time of this writing, 1974. To attend evening classes twice a week, study and read a lot to be prepared for classes and trying to earn a living during the day was not an easy job. But in about 3 years, I finally managed to keep the wolf from the door. With this license, I started to gradually get interested in the sale of property. By this time, I had barely earned a living in insurance. With a little sale of a lot or small property, we managed

to survive. The tenants in the lower flat of the building we lived in moved and we moved from our upper flat to the lower which was some improved. This was in 1930. About this time, the automobile insurance company which was the main company my competition represented went broke and had to make assessments on their policy holders in order to pay their claims. Even so, some claims were only partially paid. This was a break for me. I had warned the people about this, that it could happen, and it did. This company sold a so-called comparative auto policy for only approximately two dollars more than I had to quote. A 10-20,000 liability policy was then priced at \$18.00. Competitors sold it for 2.00 less or \$16.00. This was only a difference of \$2.00 but it was 2.00 and the people bought it for the difference.

In February, 1932, the Town Clerk of the Town of Mequon died, and left a vacancy in that office. The Town Board in view of the proximity to the spring election appointed Mrs. Schubert, wife of the deceased clerk, to fill the unexpired time as Town Clerk. Before the funeral of Mr. Schubert was over, already some men announced their intentions of running for the office. At the spring election, there was a clamor for the office. Seven candidates for the office sought election, including myself. Upon due deliberation, I decided to take a stab at it. There was a salary of \$800.00 annually for the office, which I considered a help economically to us. I was successful in winning the election by a small margin. In 1933, I had two opponents, but won

by a large majority. From then I had only one opponent in the next 24 years, up until 1957, or for 25 years. The Town was then voted to become a city of the fourth class.

In 1928, our third child was born, a girl, which we named Marion. She was baptized in the Lutheran faith by Rev. Paul Birkholz, then living in the village of Mequon, we enjoyed Marion very much. Both Jeanette and Marion attended Sunday school in Grace American Lutheran church, which was just started in Thiensville. Neither Elsie nor myself were confirmed and were not members of any church. Rev. Walter H. Behrens of Grace Church approached us and convinced us to attend an adult class for confirmation. This we did and together with about 20 others were confirmed. Both of us became very interested in the Church. When the children were small we took turns in attending church. Elsie was a Sunday School teacher for many years and I was elected to an office in the church of some kind for 14 years. In due time, both of our children were confirmed at Grace Lutheran Church by Rev. Walter H. Behrens.

In 1932, being Town Clerk, and insurance real estate broker, with real hard work and a lot of it, we were progressing economically. Being elected clerk necessitated larger quarters for the office. Rentals were real scarce. The residence of Mr. Paul Seyfert's father was vacant, but he continually hesitated to rent it. Until one day through my continual persuasion, he agreed to lease it to me. This place was property next to the former town clerk. We moved all the contents from there to our new place in

several boxes. There was only a small safe to put the valuable papers and books. The Town Board agreed to purchase a larger safe which was fire proof for 24 hours. We moved and had my office in the dining room. Here we held our meetings. We had to brace up the floor to hold the heavy safe.

In 1935, the Town Board decided to build a new Town Hall. The machinery was set into motion and the necessary details were taken care of. In 1936, the bids were let and the contracts awarded. Then the heavy load was on the Clerk. The financing of the cost of the building was made through the newly created public works administration who granted a certain amount of the cost of the building. In our case it was approximately \$32,000. leaving \$40,000. as the balance to be absorbed by the Town. This was then financed by issuing a bond issue of \$40,000. to be paid at the rate of 10,000.00 plus interest for ten years. The objectors to the building of the Town Hall were hardly aware of paying their share of the debt. The amount of paper work to be done through the P.W.A. was tremendous. All plans and contracts had to be submitted to them for approval with from 4 to 7 copies each. We had to live up to the minutest detail and also in every change made. This meant a lot of extra work for the Clerk.

In 1957, Mequon was incorporated as a City. I decided to run for the office of Mayor of Mequon. I was elected out of a field of 7 candidates for the remainder of the term and reelected for 2 more 3 year terms or about 8.5 years, when I decided not to run for the office again. I

held the office from May 25, 1957 until April, 1965. I have never been defeated either as Clerk or Mayor and have been in public office for 33 consecutive years, 25 as Clerk and 8 as Mayor. I have been interested and active in public affairs ever since I became of voting age. I was appointed several times as one of a committee of auditors on Clerk and Treasurers books, etc. I was also very interested in school affairs. My first meeting I attended after becoming of voting age, was conducted in German. Last year I attended my 38th consecutive annual school meeting in my school district - #3 in Mequon.

During my tenure in office as Clerk and Mayor, I have had some interesting experiences. First I was elected in the beginning of the depression, serving my first term at an annual salary of \$800. As the duties and responsibilities increased, my salary was advanced to \$900. - \$1000. - \$1200. annually. In 1936, the voters decided to build a new hall which was done by a great majority vote, at a cost of approximately \$72,000. \$32,000. of this was federal grant and the Town 40,000. in bonds, payable at 4000 for 10 years. This was the first time the City was in bonded debt. The swimming pool in 1938 was next and was built with W.P.A. money. Those were the interesting but hard days. Help was available as carpenters, masons, etc. at .35 per hour. Many people were on relief at that time and as Clerk and Deputy Relief administrator, it was my duty to allot every two weeks orders for groceries, meat, clothing, etc. to those who were in need of it.

I lived through two world wars, but was not fortunate not to experience active duty in the services. I was picked to go with the first contingent from Ozaukee County, but at the last moment was excused (not through my efforts) from duty because I was the only one left on the farm capable of working it, my brother having enlisted in the air force, and my father was not physically able to assume the duties of the farm. In the second war, I had attained the age which the government did not accept any more. I decided to bow out of public office after serving the Town and City of Mequon for 33 years, and devote more time with my family which I felt I had somewhat neglected by not enjoying life with my wife, daughters, and grand children, to the extent I should have. Should I be fortunate to live a few years, this is what I expect and yearn to do. I will continue to be interested in the City of Mequon and will always be ready and willing to help guide and council whenever possible if requested to do so.

Life History

Born: Feb. 18, 1892

Baptized: Ev. Luth. Church also known as Kummel Kirrche

One Brother and One Sister (died at birth)

Married: Nov. 8, 1917 - Elsie Aussem

Children: Boy (Died at birth 1920) Jeanette (1922) Marion (1928)

Feb. 23, 1923 - Sold insurance for Saukville Mutual Fire Ins. Co.

Feb. 3, 1926 - sold insurance for AETna Insurance Company

Travelers Insurance Co. 1924

Sold farm in 1926

Real Estate License in 1928

Michigan Fire and Marine Ins. Co. Feb. 21, 1930

Held membership in the following until time of death:

50 year member and past master of Victory Lodge #320 F. & A. M.,

Wisconsin Scottish Rite Bodies A.A.S.R. Valley of Milwaukee, Wi.

Tripoli Temple A.A.O.N.M.S. of Milwaukee, Wi.

Wisconsin Consistory

Tripoli Temple A.A.O.N.M.S. of Milwaukee Wi.

Lincoln Chapter #236 and Past Patron O.E.S. Cedarburg, Wi.

Charter Member and organizer of the Mequon Men's Club, Mequon, Wi.

Wisconsin Licensed Real Estate Broker since 1928

Associate Member of the Chapter of Real Estate Appraisers, Mil. Wi

Ozaukee County Historical Society

Town Clerk 1932 - 1957

City of Mequon Mayor - 1957 - 1965

Sold Travelers Auto. Ins. business to Tom Collins, Ced. Wi.

Sold Germantown Mutual Ins. business to Falls-Ideal, March 1, 1973
completely retire

Crossroads Presbyterian Church

Trips taken: First short trips or vacations taken in Wisconsin mostly in the northern part at a cottage for a fishing week. Starting about 1950, we took our first jaunt out of the state and drove to Florida. From then on Elsie and I took about 14 trips in U.S.A. including east and western Canada, Mexico, and a tour of 11 countries in Europe, a life long ambition. To us these trips were an education.

