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THE HISTORY OF PORT WASHINGTON,
IN OZAUKEE COUNTY,
WISCONSIN

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
IN PART FULFILLMENT
OF THE
REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

SISTER M. JANE FRANCES PRICE, S.S.N.D.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JULY, 1943

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PREFACE

In this History of Port Washington, Wisconsin, the writer has attempted to tell the story of the transplanting of a people from the civilization of a 19th century Europe to the wilderness home on the Wisconsin shores of Lake Michigan.

Although the Yankee and the Scotch-Irish blazed the original trail to the settlement, the preponderance of the Luxemburger settlers, from the 40's to the 70's, has stamped Port Washington and its environs with the mark of the Grand Duchy. The Americanization of this colony is a story of conflicting patriotisms, of failure to judge rightly the ideals of a democracy, of a gradual development of a spirit of intense loyalty toward the land of their adoption, which has culminated in the brave sacrifice of their sons and grandchildren in the First World War. The Honor Roll of 1943, kept in a prominent place in the County Courthouse, already carries the names of nearly two hundred

boys, grandchildren and great grandchildren of the men and women who have made this history. Considering the fact that the population of Port Washington has never been much over four thousand people, her percentage of men in service is proof of the death of conflicting patriotisms; they think, and feel, and cherish only American ideals.

Much of the information was gathered or corroborated in Port Washington, from personal interviews, from parish and school records, from newspaper files, from county records, and from county histories. The publications of the Wisconsin State Historical Society have proved invaluable.

The writer wishes to thank Reverend Peter J. Hildebrand, pastor of St. Mary's, for permission to use the parish records; Colonel A.D. Bolens, County Historian, for his kind cooperation; Mr. O.E. Moeser, president of the Wisconsin Chair Factory, for his valuable information in connection with the history of the factory; Mr. William Schanen, Junior, for his photographic prints; and

Miss Louise Deppisch, in the office of Register of Deeds, for her helpfulness in the research work done in the county records.

She also acknowledges her indebtedness to her advisor, Reverend F. Martinez, and to the many friends in Port Washington whose helpful suggestions and aid have made the gathering of this information not only possible, but very pleasant.

Sister M. Jane Frances, S.S.N.D.

July 3, 1943

Chicago, Illinois

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CHAPTER I

OLD PORT WASHINGTON

Port Washington, the County Seat of Ozaukee¹ County in Wisconsin, was originally platted in a bluff-protected recess in the form of a letter "U". To the north, west, and south, three bluffs form natural walls, from the base of which the land gradually slopes to Lake Michigan. Through an opening in the west bluff, Sauk Creek flows to the Lake. Behind these bluffs are a number of smaller elevations over which the settlement has now spread out into a "city built on seven hills." A wild profusion of oak, maple, birch, beech, elm, hickory, basswood, butternut, poplar, ash, sumach, alders, willows, creeping watervines, tamarack, cedar, wild grape, blackberries, and raspberries covered the hills which swept back from the lake shore.² The wild, untamed nature of this landscape

¹"Ozaukee", an Indian word meaning "yellow earth" or "clay", the soil being mostly of that color.

²Western Historical Company, editors and publishers, History of Washington and Ozaukee Counties. Chicago: 1881. p. 309

played its part in the history of the people who were going to subdue it. It would take a sturdy, strong pioneer to attempt the cultivation of this wildly beautiful section.

It is difficult to determine just which of the numerous Wisconsin Indian tribes inhabited this particular region. Alfred Brunson maintains that most of the territory was once claimed by the Sioux, then by the Sauks, followed by the Winnebagoes and by the Menomonees.

The Hurons, Iowas, Illinois, Kickapoos, Miamies, Ottawas and Pottawatomies, appear to have had no permanent residence within the territory. They were but straggling adventurers passing through the country, and fourteen of those represented as "the Indian Tribes of Wisconsin" appear to have been but other names or mere nicknames given to villages or small bands of those tribes already mentioned.³

In his monograph, Indians of Wisconsin, I.A. Lapham states that it is hard to say definitely just what tribes inhabited specific regions because of the "different names by which they were known, and the

³ Reverend Alfred Brunson, "Early History of Wisconsin," Collection of the State Historical Society, IV, ed. Lyman Copeland Draper. Madison: The Society, 1906. p. 243

doubts in some cases, whether reference is made to whole tribes, or to local bands."⁴ The tribes moved about continually, the stronger forcing the weaker out of more desirable hunting grounds. However, the Sauks and the Pottowatomies were friendly to the point where they shared each other's hunting grounds and frequently intermarried. In 1674, Father Marquette and his two French Boatmen, Jacques and Pierre, skirted the western shore of Lake Michigan and may have stopped somewhere near, if not precisely at Sauk Creek.⁵ In 1679 Father Hennepin and LaSalle were obliged to stop at the first landing north of the Milwaukee River to procure provisions at a "Pottowatomie village at the mouth of a

⁴Increase A. Lapham, "Indians of Wisconsin," Old Settlers' Club of Milwaukee County, Milwaukee: Starr's Book & Job Printing House, 1870. p. 1.

⁵Father Marquette's Journal, entry for November 20, 1674: "We sleep near the bluffs, and are very poorly sheltered. The savages remain behind while we are delayed 2 days and a half by the wind." "Marquette's Journal," Jesuit Relations, LIX, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites. Cleveland: The Burrows Bros. Co., 1900. p. 169.

"The bluffs" are believed to be those of Port Washington, Wisconsin.

rivulet." This "rivulet" was, most probably, Sauk Creek.⁶ In 1699 Tonty and St. Coame' stopped at a Pottowatomie village at the mouth of Sauk Creek and found that a cross had been erected there by the Jesuit Father Marest.⁷

By the early 19th century the Pottowatomies had gained considerable strength and were

thinly scattered in tents over a very great extent of country stretching, on the south along both sides of the Illinois river; on the western shore of Lake Michigan to the Menomonees of Millewacky and to the Winnebagoes of Green Bay.⁸

⁶Father Louis Hennepin, A New Discovery of a Vast Country in America. London: printed by M. Bently, J. Tonson, H. Bonwick, T. Goodwin and S. Manship, 1698. p. 93. Inasmuch as the average day's journey for an Indian or coureur des bois would be about twenty-five miles, the village Father Hennepin speaks of must have been at or near the mouth of Sauk Creek, (the first landing north of the Milwaukee River).

⁷Robert Cavellier De LaSalle and Chevalier Henry De Tonty, Discovery of the Mississippi and on the South Western and North Western Boundary of the United States. A translation from the original manuscript of Memoirs, etc., relating to the discovery of the Mississippi. London: Thomas Falconer, 1844. p. 123. The recent discovery of a medallion, which the Jesuit Mission of Quebec has identified as having belonged to Father Menard, has led to the belief that Father Menard must have lost his life in the swamps of Saukville where the medallion was found.

⁸Increase A. Lapham, op. cit., p.11

The Pottowatomies were no longer in the immediate vicinity of Port Washington, but their friends, the Sauks, still roamed and hunted in the hills and valleys on the lake shore.

Solomon Juneau declares that Sauk Creek was named for a sever encounter between the Sauks and the Chippewas which took place not far from its mouth and that the victory achieved by the Sauks was so decisive that the Chippewas from that time never showed their faces in the vicinity.⁹

From 1816 to 1824, although Wisconsin was under the protection of the flag of the Union, little attention was given to her citizens or to her general welfare. The rule was military and frequently was very unfair to the Indians. The Black Hawk War of 1832 did much to bring this section of the country to the attention of the general government; its natural resources and possibilities then became known.¹⁰ The soldiers who tracked Black Hawk through the lovely wilds of Wisconsin came back later to

⁹ John G. Gregory, ed. Southeastern Wisconsin, Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1932. Vol. II, p. 1186

¹⁰ Henry S. Baird, "Early History and Condition of Wisconsin", Collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, II, ed. Lyman Copeland Draper, Madison. 1903. p. 84

locate on the sites they had marked as desirable. The coming of "squatters" compelled the Government to take steps to protect these new settlers, and this led to the speedy extinguishment of the Indian title to the territory.

The Indian cession of 1833 cleared the territory so that by 1834 the region was surveyed and a land office was opened at Green Bay. Government Surveyor's records were made available to prospective purchasers. By 1836, an office was opened at Milwaukee.

The first military road, surveyed after the Menomonee Treaty of 1831, extended from Dekorra (Decorah, Iowa) east to Port Washington and was opened by General Dodge in 1832. The Green Bay, Lake Shore road from Chicago to Green Bay, was surveyed between 1832 and 1833. This road, passing through Port Washington, met the Dekorra Road so that even before any white man had settled on the Port Washington site, the place had become a rather important spot in the wilderness. The Green Bay Road was only "grubbed out" between Milwaukee and

Port Washington from 1836 to 1839¹¹ and was merely an Indian Trail¹² from Port Washington to Green Bay, yet this was the road which had been taken by the missionary, the soldier, the Indian, the fur trader and the early settlers who traveled by land. One of these traders, General Wooster Harrison, passing this way, noted the advantages of the Port Washington site. In September of 1835 he became the first "squatter" in this section. He succeeded in interesting several other land speculators and at the first sale at Green Bay on November 24, 1835, the site was sold to Wooster Harrison and James Doty.¹³ Harrison, who had

¹¹Western Historical Company, op. cit. p. 313

¹²Colonel Ebenezer Childs of La Crosse in his "Recollections of Wisconsin since 1820", in the Collection of the State Historical Society, IV, p. 171 tells of how he and a few Indian companions drove 250 head of cattle over this road in 1827. He passed through the site of the present city of Port Washington because he had been warned by the friendly Pottowatomies to avoid the Winnebago territory for those Indians were then on the war-path. John H. Fonda carried mail over this same trail in the year 1827, in an adventurous journey from Fort Howard to Fort Dearborn. "Early Wisconsin", Collection of the State Historical Society, I, p.230

¹³Records of Register of Deeds, Vol. A, Port Washington, Wisconsin. p. 1

entered 75 acres, was the only purchaser who took up his residence in the section. In the fall of 1835 he drew up the plan for Port Washington, which he called "Wisconsin City". Later he changed the name to "Washington" under which name the first post office was established.¹⁴

The street nearest the Creek, Harrison called Canal Street; this was to be the main thoroughfare to the docks and wharves. Parallel to Canal Street and to the north were Main, Washington, and Jackson Streets. Lake Street was to run along the lake front. City Street from Lake and Canal was to run due north and south. Parallel to City Street and moving west, came Franklin, Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Montgomery, and Clay Streets. Main and Wisconsin Streets were to be eighty feet wide; all other streets were to be sixty-six feet wide. The space bounded by Washington, Wisconsin, Jackson and Milwaukee Streets was to be reserved as a public

¹⁴William R. Smith, Observations on the Wisconsin Territory. Philadelphia: E.L. Carey and A. Hart, 1838. p. 117. The popular name of the first settlement, after the name "Wisconsin City" had been changed, was "Sauk Washington". Only in 1844 did George C. Daniels have the name altered to the less awkward "Port Washington".

square. Twenty-foot alleys were to intersect each block; lots were to be 60 by 120 feet.¹⁵

About sixteen acres were cleared. A tavern, two stores and several dwelling houses,--among them the home of Wooster Harrison at 317 Pier Street,--were built. Even a dam was built on the creek some distance from the city and a small saw mill erected.¹⁶

Hopes ran high, for the city was advantageously situated for a manufacturing center and it soon competed favorably with Milwaukee, thirty miles to the south, and Sheboygan, thirty miles to the north.

On December 7, 1835, Milo Jones entered 100 acres. The first transfer of property took place on December 1, 1835; Harrison conveyed to Thomas Holmes one-half of about eleven acres for \$100. In January, 1836, Holmes sold about four acres of this to Solomon Juneau for \$500. In February, 1836 Levi Mason bought $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of a tract adjoining the town plat for \$600 per acre.¹⁷ Land speculation ran riot; the names of Solomon Juneau, Morgan L.

¹⁵Original Plat in Office of Register of Deeds, Port Washington, Wisconsin.

¹⁶Western Historical Company, op. cit. p. 508

¹⁷Register of Deeds, Port Washington.

Martin, G.S. Hosmer, Allen O. Breed, Wooster Harrison and Thomas A. Holmes, appear in several of the land transfers of this year. The highest sale recorded took place on August 3, 1837 when Solomon Juneau sold to Jasper Bostwick one "city lot" for \$300 (about \$1800 per acre). Trade was brisk from 1835 to 1837; the price of produce was extortionate; land quadrupled in value and speculation went wild. Then came the crash of 1837.

Andrew Jackson's Specie Circular had been issued in 1836. A large portion of the most valuable lands in Wisconsin had, before this time, passed into the hands of unscrupulous speculators. Now

the great mass of emigrants in search of new homes, during the years 1836, 1837, and 1838 avoided those counties which had been affected by the mildew of speculation and swarmed upon the counties of Kenosha, Racine, Waukesha, Dodge, Jefferson....¹⁸

¹⁸ Moses M. Strong, History of the Territory of Wisconsin, 1838-1848. Madison: Democrat Printing Company, 1886. p. 219

Practically the entire city plat of "Washington City" was in the hands of land speculators as Harrison had been the only "squatter". The settlers who had been induced to take up residence in what seemed to be a promising city, rapidly grew discouraged when new settlers failed to arrive. The cost of securing necessities became so high that one by one the discouraged pioneers left for more promising sections.

Harrison seems to have stayed on for a time, finding it hard to give up hope for the development of his plans. His wife, Rhoda, died in December of 1837 and was the first white settler buried in Port Washington.

Sometime in 1838 or 1839 Asa Case opened a little trading store in Saukville which was a part of the early site of Port Washington. Andrew Vieau, Senior, a son-in-law of Solomon Juneau, spent the winter of 1838-1839 in the deserted town; in his "Recollections" he describes the town as he found it:

In the fall of 1838 I moved to Port Washington with a small store of Indian goods and was appointed postmaster. A

little settlement had been established here by Wooster Harrison and other Michigan City speculators, but the place had been starved out and practically abandoned. When I reached there, there were perhaps a dozen empty houses and stores and a small deserted saw mill. A post office having been established, somebody had to hold the office of postmaster, so I took the office for the winter. The only mail that ever arrived there during my term was for either my family or the family of Asa Case up at Saukville. There were no other white people in that region.¹⁹

Vieau returned to Milwaukee in the spring of 1839.

A little later in the year another enterprising "Yankee", Aurora Adams, took possession of one of the vacated houses and opened a "half-way" house to accommodate travelers taking the Lake Shore route between Milwaukee and Sheboygan.

When, in 1840, Washington County was organized for Civil purposes, the little town of Port Washington had but two families,--that of Aurora Adams and of Asa Case. For three more years the wilderness

¹⁹ Andrew Vieau, Senior, "Narrative of Andrew Vieau, Sr.", Collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, V, ed. Reuben G. Thwaites, Madison: Democrat Printing Company, 1888. p. 231



HOME OF WOOSTER HARRISON
317 Pier Street

CHAPTER II

PORT WASHINGTON - ITS POLITICAL, INDUSTRIAL,
AND SOCIAL BEGINNINGS

General Wooster Harrison was not a man to give up a project which had meant so much to him. In 1843 he led a small group of newcomers back to his lake shore "city". No pier had been built, so the men waded ashore and made rough rafts by which they conveyed the women, children, and luggage from the boat to the shore. Among the men whom Harrison had now interested in his project were Orman Coe, Ira C. Loomis, Solon Johnson,²⁰ O.A Watrous, and Colonel Teall.²¹ These were the first of the "Yankee" groups who came with the intention of establishing homes.

Again the little town became a center of bustle incident to the re-establishing of pioneer homes.

²⁰Solon Johnson became the town's first representative on the County Board of Supervisors in 1846 and was the first assembly man from Port Washington to go to Madison in 1849, the year after Wisconsin had attained its Statehood. In Stagecoach and Tavern Tales of the Old Northwest, by Henry Cole, ed. Louise P. Kellogg, Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1930, p. 376, Solon Johnson is described as "slender of body, lank in limb, standing more than six feet five inches.. kindly and magnanimous but somewhat eccentric with a sense of humor revealed in various drolleries".

²¹Western Historical Company, op. cit., p. 508

The house which Aurora Adams had converted into a hotel had become the property of Colonel Teall, a young surveyor in the new group. When the owner of the premises arrived and demanded his property Aurora Adams refused to vacate. Colonel Teall secured a writ of restitution and, having been refused admission, attempted to force an entrance. A rifle shot fired from the building caused the hasty retreat of the group who had come to enforce the law. Mrs. Adams, blamed for the assault, was arrested and taken to Milwaukee for trial, but was later acquitted for lack of evidence. Colonel Teall recovered his property and Aurora Adams moved his hotel to other premises.²² Port Washington had had its first legal tussle.

The office of Postmaster was taken over by O.A. Watrous; it was at this time that the official name of the Post Office was entered as "Port Washington". Hansen and Reymert, two enterprising "Yankee" lawyers, opened a store. Asa Case had abandoned his Saukville store late in 1842, moving on to Dodge

²²Ibid., p. 509

County where he operated a "Half-way House" between Milwaukee and Fond du Lac.²³

The "Yankee" groups had just been established when, in 1844, German, Luxemburg, and Norwegian immigrants began to arrive. The Luxemburgers came in the largest numbers from the year 1845 to 1856.

Erst im Jahre 1845 kamen einzelme Familien (Luxemberger) nach Wisconsin und liesen sich in Port Washington nieder. John Longeley eröffnete dort ein hotel und zog bald (1846) weitere Landsleute nach sich.²⁴

When writing to friends left behind in the Grand Duchy, the Wisconsin settlers stressed the fact that the climate of Wisconsin was much like that of Luxemburg, the soil was productive, the necessities of life were cheap, employment easily obtained. To them, because of the denuding of the woodlands of Luxemburg, forests were a luxury, so they established their early settlement on the wooded hills of Port Washington,

²³Increase Allen Lapham, "A Winter's Journey from Milwaukee to Green Bay", The Wisconsin Magazine of History, IX, #1, September, 1925. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin. p. 91

²⁴Wilhelm Hense-Jensen, Wisconsin's Deutsch-Amerikaner. Milwaukee: Printed by Deutschen Gesellschaft, 1900. p. 41

Fredonia and Belgium.²⁵ Here timber was immediately available for the homes they had to build, and because of the underbrush, the land was cheaper than that of the cleared sections. The underbrush presented difficulties, but the men were willing and strong "rich for a great part in a sturdy wife and family, scant clothing and an ax".²⁶

In 1847 Germans from the Mosel, from the Rhineland, the Eifel, and Hunsbrück, came to join the hardy pioneers who had settled on the western shores of Lake Michigan.²⁷ They, too, were poor, but year by year as they managed to clear away more and more of the underbrush, their farms grew larger and their prosperity took the form of more comfortable homes and, being truly German, carefully tended flower gardens.

²⁵Kate Everest Levi, "Geographical Origin of German Immigration to Wisconsin", Collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, XIV, ed. R.G. Thwaites, 1898. p. 377

²⁶Henry C. Campbell, Wisconsin in Three Centuries, II. New York: The Century History Co., 1906. p. 241

²⁷Kate Everest Levi, op. cit., p. 377

Wisconsin became a state in the year 1848.

Her Constitution was a very liberal one as regards the rights of foreigners, only one year's residence being required before the privilege of voting was allowed. The European upheaval of 1848, particularly in the German speaking countries, sent large numbers of the poorer classes to America where one could hold processions, political or religious, without a police permit and where one could go through the entire country without being obliged to present a pass to a gendarme.²⁸

28. [Although Washington County had been separated from Milwaukee County in 1836,--at which time Port Washington had been made the Seat of Justice,--it was virtually still a part of Milwaukee judicially and civilly until 1840, at which time a Board of three Commissioners was elected for the purpose of taking care of the civil business of the County. In 1845 the County was also organized for judicial purposes and made the Third Judicial District. The following

²⁸ Christian Traugott Flicker, Freundlicher Rathgeber für Alle welche nach Amerika und vorzugweise nach Wisconsin auswandern wollen. Leipzig: J.G. Mittler, 1853. p. 99

year the form of County Government was changed from the Board of Commissioners to a Board of Supervisors elected under the Town System. Solon Johnson was the first Port Washington supervisor on this Board.

The Town of Port Washington, incorporated on January 21, 1846, comprised towns 11 and 12, ranges 21 and 22, including the present towns of Fredonia, Saukville, and Belgium.²⁹ The first poll list totals seventy-six voters,--a sizeable list for a three-year-old town.³⁰

The officers elected at the first Town Meeting in the school house in April of 1846, show that the political reins at this time were in the hands of the "Yankee" or Irish groups:

Board of Supervisors:

Solon Johnson
William Teall
John McLean

Commissioner of Highways:

Allen C. Daniels

Assessors:

Wooster Harrison
Alva Cunningham
William Hudson

²⁹ In 1847 Fredonia, Saukville, and Belgium were detached and made into separate townships.

³⁰ See appendix for copy of original list, p. 68 ¹¹

Collector: Isaac C. Loomis

School Commission:

Sylvester Watson
Abram Bates
Jerome Young

Constables: Sylvester Watson
L.D. Cunningham

Justices of the Peace:

George C. Daniels
George W. Foster

Sealer of Weights:

Orlando Watrous

Town Clerk: F.W. Merritt (31)

Now began the dispute regarding the location of the County Seat, a dispute begun in 1845 and which was to end by a division of the county in 1853.

An Act of December 7, 1836 had made Wisconsin City (Port Washington) the seat of justice, but by 1840 Wisconsin City had declined while Mequon and Grafton (Hamburg) had flourished. According to the Act of 1840, the County Seat was to be chosen by vote. Hamburg (Grafton) was the choice so determined. However, the County business went on being conducted at the home of Commissioner W.T. Bonniwell at Mequon.

³¹Washington County Records, West Bend, Wisconsin.

Three years after the appointment of Grafton as the County Seat, when a question of legality arose as to the business settled at Mequon, a meeting of the Commissioners was held at Grafton for the purpose of passing the following amendment:

Hereafter it shall be lawful for the County Commissioners of said counties (Dodge and Washington) to hold their sessions where they, or a majority of them may deem most expedient for the general interest and convenience of the citizens of their respective counties.³²

The Commissioners had to advertise the place of the next meeting in three public places, twenty days before the proposed meeting. The first and second district courts met at Grafton. By September, 1845, the Commissioners' powers ended with the adoption of the Town System. Each town then had a representative on the County Board. The seat of justice was to be decided by vote. No place received a majority vote. The dispute became a nuisance, for the population of the County had increased considerably; county officers were holding office in their own homes; a deed had to

³²Act of Washington County Commission, Section 2, February 19, 1843.

be recorded in one town, taxes paid in another, and court held in still another. In 1847, Port Washington was made the County Seat for a five-year trial period; but the Madison Legislature was not to have a five-year rest from the County dispute. In August of 1848, the State Legislature passed an act which all believed would settle the affair permanently. The Act ordered an immediate election:

Section 2: Every inhabitant, as aforesaid, shall be authorized to cast his vote in the town where he has resided for at least ten days preceding....

Section 3: If any one place or point shall receive a majority of all the votes cast, the Clerk of Supervisors, as aforesaid, shall send immediately a certified abstract of the vote thus taken to the Secretary of State, to be by him laid before the Legislature.

Section 4: If no place or point shall receive a majority as aforesaid, it shall be the duty of the said clerk to make that fact known by posting up three notices in each town, containing an abstract of the vote by him canvassed, and a second vote shall be taken on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November next, and the vote thus taken shall be on the three places or points having received the highest number of votes at the previous election.

Section 5: If no place or point shall receive a majority over the other two places or points, said fact shall be made known and proclaimed as before mentioned and a

third and final vote shall be taken on the first Monday of January next.... and the votes thus taken shall be on the two places having received the highest number of votes at the last election.³³

In August, therefore, in 1848 a vote was taken with the following results:

West Bend	336	
Newark	149	
County Farm	180	
Scattering	11	
Cedarburg	570	
Port Washington	697	
Saukville	82	
Newburg	11	
Total		2036

No one place or point received a majority so another vote was taken in November of the same year with no better result:

Cedarburg	944	
West Bend	1117	
Port Washington	640	
Total		2701

no place having a majority.

A third vote was held in January, 1849 giving

Cedarburg	1643	
West Bend	1111	
"Neither"	986	(34)

Port Washington, in violation of the plan, had introduced the "neither" element. The votes in Belgium,

³³Act of the Wisconsin Legislature, August 8, 1848

³⁴Washington County Records, West Bend, Wisconsin

Grafton, and West Bend were suspiciously large. The State Legislature was besieged by partisans from the different towns; people were growing tired of the dispute. At a Board of Supervisors meeting held in Port Washington it was decided to ask the State Legislature to appoint a County Seat. Contrary to all expectations, the Legislature decided to divide the county into Tuskola County to the south with Cedarburg as the County Seat, and Washington County to the north with Port Washington as the County Seat. A vote on the division of the County was to be held in the new Tuskola County; 1,716 votes were registered against the division, 275 for it.³⁵

In 1852, the Legislature temporarily placed the County Seat at Grafton until it could be decided by vote whether the County Seat was to remain at Grafton or be removed to West Bend. Port Washington and Cedarburg were to be barred from this vote because they were somewhat justly blamed for the "Tuskola Plot". The results of this election were 1,789 for removal to West Bend; 2,496 against the removal.³⁶

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

The town of Belgium, which is very close to Port Washington, registered 763 votes, whereas in the Presidential election they had cast a total of 184 votes. The Board of County Canvassers sent in the election results, together with a protest of the Belgium votes. However, the votes of West Bend and Grafton were also suspiciously large. The Madison Legislature, thoroughly weary of this eight-year-old fight, in desperation rushed through a bill which divided the county in two,--the southern half being called Ozaukee County with Port Washington as the County Seat; the northern part retaining the name of Washington County, with West Bend as the County Seat. The officers residing in Ozaukee County were to remain in office in that county; the same applied to Washington County. Each County was to float an issue of County Bonds to the amount of \$8000 for building purposes.³⁷

The inhabitants refused to yield to this decision. On March 14, 1853, the Board of Supervisors passed a Resolution terming the Act of Division unconstitutional, and the members of the Legislature

³⁷Western Historical Co., op. cit., p. 340

were instructed by another Resolution to introduce a Bill immediately to repeal the Act of Division.

West Bend demanded the removal of the County Records to West Bend. Adam Schantz, Register of Deeds, was the only officer ready to comply with the order from the Legislature. An injunction, granted by Commissioner S.A. White was served on Adam Schantz, forbidding him to remove any records until he was ordered to do so by the court. West Bend petitioned Justice George E. Ryan of Milwaukee to dissolve the injunction. Court was then being held by Judge Larrabee at Marquette, so L.F. Frisby and Paul A. Weil of West Bend, in spite of roads made nearly impassable by a very rainy spring, made the trip to Marquette, secured the order from Judge Larrabee, and stopped at the home of Adam Schantz on their way back to show him the order. Adam Schantz and Paul Weil went directly to Port Washington to secure the records. Sheriff Silverman, not knowing that the injunction had been dissolved, was on the watch to prevent the removal of the records.

After dark, A. Schantz and P. Weil, carrying large sacks into which they intended to place the records, entered the building where the Register of Deeds kept his books. Sheriff Silverman, seeing the light in the building, sounded the alarm. The town sprang into action; a bugle called the "Union Guards" as well as most of the town's population. The West Bend delegation hurried away; in the morning the records were missing.

The following June, R.A. Bird, editor of the Washington County Times, notified West Bend that he had part of the records and if they would call for them unobserved, he would turn them over to the West Bend officers. L.F. Frisby and P. Freer went to R.A. Bird's home at one o'clock in the morning, received the volumes and information as to where the remaining volumes could be found. Later, these volumes were fished from between the walls of the Arcade Building. Volume "M" was not found until 1878 when some alterations had to be made in the building.³⁸

³⁸Western Historical Co., op. cit., pp.340-347

...building 20' x 14' x 9' high of hewn timber 8 x 10 inches, corners well pinned with timbers running through the building sufficient to spike the floors and partitions to⁴⁰

was completed. One hundred fifty dollars was appropriated from the County funds to cover the expenses; later, another appropriation of \$50.00 was made to "plank up the inside and furnish with a stove and bed".⁴¹

The legal profession was well represented in the first townsmen. In 1848 Leland Stanford had come to Port Washington to become a partner in

Pierce & Stanford, Attornies and Counsellors at Law and Solicitors in Chancery, Port Washington, Wisconsin. Will give prompt attention to all professional business entrusted to their care in any part of the state.⁴²

At this time Stanford, too, hoped for a great future for the town. Even the Milwaukee Sentinel of 1852 wrote enthusiastic reports of the progress of the town, summarizing its growth by stating that the arrivals of steamers and sailing craft in 1849 had

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 327

⁴¹Ibid., p. 327

⁴²Port Washington Democrat, October 19, 1848

been 414, whereas in 1851, the number had grown to 740.⁴³

Later, whether it was due to his loss sustained through a fire which destroyed his law offices and library, or to his failure to capture the office of District Attorney in the election of 1852, Stanford yielded to the plea of his brothers that he follow them to California to seek his fortune there.

Stanford's report on the development of the town's industry was accurate. Cord wood, racked hoops, barrels of wheat and rye flour, tons of saleratus and potash, bushels of potatoes, thousands of bricks, fish, lumber and hides were loaded into the ships that called daily at the town piers. A lighthouse, built on North Bluff in 1849, served as a beacon light to the many steamers plying between the ports of Chicago and Green Bay.

Building prospects looked bright. Voit, Hegwein and Kinderly were planning to build a new steam mill;

⁴³George T. Clark, Leland Stanford. Stanford University: Stanford University Press, 1931. p. 37

J. & G. Tomlinson had made plans to erect a water mill; an expensive new brewery was even then (1852) in the process of being erected.⁴⁴

[Socially, too, the town was progressing. The school census of 1846 registered 1238 children for the Town of Port Washington; this was the largest school in 27 districts. The allotment made to the town school for that year from the County Funds amounted to \$93.44.⁴⁵ Teachers' salaries were low, but Ozaukee County teachers have always been among the best paid teachers in the state.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was the first to hold religious services in the town. In 1843 the members met in private homes; later they used the schoolhouse. Reverend Lewis, a visiting minister, conducted the services. Their first meeting house was erected in 1851. The Presbyterian and Baptist members also met in the schoolhouse, but after a short time, they discontinued holding services.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Milwaukee Sentinel, January 28, 1852

⁴⁵Western Historical Co., op. cit., p. 517

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 519

The first Catholic Church services were held in the home of John Gengler in 1847; there were then three Catholic Families in the town. Two years later the number had grown to twenty families, and a small frame Church was erected on Lighthouse Bluff, on two lots which had been donated by Hiram Johnson. The Church had no resident priest but was visited by Fathers Fabian, Glenbauer, and Bradley. The parish records state that "Im Jahre 1848 wurde zu Port Washington eine kleine Frame-kirche gebaut. Rev. Bradley leitete hier eine kurze zeit als erster residirender Pfarrer die Seelsorge."⁴⁷

The first newspaper, The Washington Democrat, was started by Flavius J. Mills in the summer of 1847; two years later James Vail took it over and merged it with The Blade which had been founded in 1849 by R.A. Bird.⁴⁸

The old Pottowatomie village had developed into a bustling little commercial center. Teamsters drove sweating horses down Canal Street to unload

⁴⁷ Parish Records, St. Mary's, Port Washington.

⁴⁸ Western Historical Co., op. cit., p. 521

their produce on the busy wharves on the lake front. Sailors, dock hands, merchants, travelers, settlers and curious citizens of the town itself walked between the merchandise stacked on the wharves while they waited for the ships which came in daily or watched those same ships sail away from their harbor laden with the rich produce of Port Washington's fields and industries.

CHAPTER III

GROWTH FROM 1853 to 1865

A joint committee from Washington and Ozaukee Counties brought about a final and amicable settlement between the two Counties late in 1853. The County Board of Equalization evaluated Ozaukee County property at \$395,681.42; Port Washington's share in this wealth was \$92,432.50. The population of the town had grown to 2,500. Buildings were springing up along the platted streets of Harrison's city. There were now 300 dwellings, 10 stores, 5 hotels, 3 mills, 2 breweries, 1 foundry, 5 blacksmith shops, 4 wagon shops, 6 shoe shops, 5 tailor shops, 2 good piers, and 1 church⁴⁹-- the other denominations were still holding services in homes or in the schoolhouse. The "one church", St. Stephan's, erected by the English-speaking Catholics of the town, was in charge of Father Bradley. St. Mary's, the German-speaking parish of

⁴⁹Warren Hunt, Wisconsin Gazetteer. Madison: Beriah Brown, Printer, 1853. p. 179

Most of the advertising letters gave a detailed description of the land, its agricultural possibilities, the helpfulness of neighbors who formed "a 'bee' to cut his logs and haul them, and another 'bee' to frame the corners and raise the logs".⁵³ The homes of the settlers were described as delightful "log cabins, poor outside and elegant within".

Das errichten eines solchen hauses
kosted dem Anfänger nur seine eigene
arbeit und ein paar Flaschen guten
whisky's für die helfenden Nachbarn.⁵⁴

His "landsmann" was advised,--if he was lucky enough to possess about \$600.00,--to purchase at Milwaukee a yoke of strong oxen and a wagon.⁵⁵ A strong team was needed to pull the heavy wagon over the poorly constructed road between Milwaukee and Port Washington. Oxen were used by most of the farmers in this region up to the time of the Civil War. If they were

⁵³Henry C. Campbell, Wisconsin in Three Centuries, II. New York: The Century History Company, 1906. p. 234

⁵⁴K. Ludloff, Amerikanische Reisebilder. Milwaukee: Schnellpressendruck des Milwaukee's Herold, 1881. p. 49

⁵⁵Carl de Haas, Nordamerika - Wisconsin - Calumet Winke für Auswanderer von Dr. Carl de Haas (farmer in Wisconsin). Elberfeld und Iserlohn. Verlag von Julius Bädcker, 1848. p. 46

slower, they were stronger than horses and could be converted into corned beef in case of need.

The possession and cultivation of the soil was the bait held out to the land-loving European peasant. Between 1854 and 1857, as a result of harvest failures, over 6,000 Luxemburgers came to America, the greater proportion of them seeking homes in Wisconsin.

The settlement was predominantly Catholic at this time. In 1854 the first Catholic School was opened by Father F.X. Sailer, the first resident priest at St. Mary's. Judge Adolph Heidekamp taught the first classes until 1856 when the school was taken over by the School Sisters of Notre Dame from Milwaukee.⁵⁶

In every German group there must be music; this was also true of the group which had settled in Port Washington. In 1859 Major John C. Schroeling organized the Gesang Verein, which was soon followed by the organization of the inevitable Turn Verein. The Port Washington Zeitung and the Milwaukee See Bote

⁵⁶ Parish Records, St. Mary's, Port Washington

were the most popularly read newspapers. The English, or so-called "Yankee" groups, had their literary circles and Journals. The Literary Chip Basket, a journal "handsomely set in artistically designed covers" was edited by Henry L. Doe and Nettie Wilmot. Society Journal, What Not, Whimsical Mirror, and Allspice⁵⁷ furnished the vehicles by which the budding literary talent presented essays and verses to an interested public.

German and English were spoken on the street, in the business houses, on the school playground,-- in fact, both languages were taught in the classrooms. The use of German by the teachers became so prevalent that the English-speaking settlers refused to send their children to schools where most of the teaching was done in a foreign tongue. A law of 1854 making "all teaching in any other (than English) language illegal" was merely ignored and harassed school superintendents usually were compelled to yield, for the Germans would have no one but German teachers and the German teachers of that day generally

⁵⁷Western Historical Co., op. cit., p. 489

spoke a labored English or none at all. However, the German love of order and respect for authority made for well-disciplined schools. They were progressive in their own way; Ozaukee County was the first to use the single long term for school instead of a short winter and a short summer term. By degrees, but very slowly, English became the teaching medium in the schools, but German was heard more frequently than English in public gatherings until well on into the twentieth century.

The courthouse, built in 1854, was a three-storied brick building, the first floor of which served as a jail and the living apartments for the jailer; the second floor housed the county offices; the third floor, the courtroom.⁵⁸

St. Mary's Cemetery was incorporated in 1854 and the following year the Port Washington Cemetery Association was formed.⁵⁹ Perhaps the terrible cholera plague of 1854, during which time there were 65 deaths in ten days, necessitated this action.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 489

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 502

Two or three steamboats arrived at the piers daily. Disasters were all too frequent. In August of 1856, the Steamer Niagara caught fire just four miles north of Port Washington. Before help could arrive, half of the two hundred passengers were lost. In October of the same year, the Steamer Toledo was dashed against the pier by the fury of a storm. Onlookers stood by helplessly while all but three of the passengers were drowned. It was impossible to launch a rescue boat in the rough waters. The victims were buried in "Union Cemetery where the commemorative Anchor still stands to mark their graves".⁶⁰

A busy shipping center needed a bank to facilitate the handling of negotiable papers, so in 1853 James Vail began his banking career, a long period of service to the Ozaukee County farmer and merchant.⁶¹ To the town's produce carried to the pier in ever

⁶⁰Port Washington Centennial Booklet, Port Washington, 1935. p. 22

⁶¹James Vail was one of the first newspaper men of Port Washington as well as the first banker of the town.

larger quantities, were now added hides and leather from Paul Wolf's tannery opened in 1854. The products from the flour and grist mills ranked first in value of exports during the next two decades. Wisconsin's dairy-mindedness was to come later, in her "agricultural revolution".

The German newspapers of the day, particularly the Milwaukee See Bote which had a very wide circulation in the town, did much to mold the political opinion of the people. Election returns generally showed a large majority favoring the Democratic candidates.

The outbreak of the Civil War meant little to the town so intent on building its own prosperity in a region which offered success only to those who were willing to labor long and well. They had not voted for Lincoln; the war was a Republican War, so let the Republicans fight it. To them, any "Republican" cause was a "Whig" cause, and with the name "Whig" they associated the "Nativism" movement which had been so hostile to Catholics and to Foreigners

who were non-English speaking.⁶² Some few enlisted, but the majority went on clearing their land, following the usual daily programs, interested in community projects and those things which touched their own lives.

The first note which jarred this peaceful scene was the Indian scare of September, 1862. The Minnesota massacres had just occurred and news somehow spread that the Indians all over the country were on a wild rampage. A stampede ensued. Farmers hitched up their teams and galloped away, passing other farmers going in opposite directions on the same roads. No one seemed to know from what direction the Indians were supposed to be coming, but the panic was genuine. Children were lost and not missed until frantic parents arrived in Port Washington. Men armed with pitchforks, axes, anything they had managed to pick up and which might possibly serve

⁶²Work Projects Administration, Wisconsin, A Guide to the Badger State. Compiled by Workers of the Writers' Guide Program of the W.P.A. in the State of Wisconsin. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1941. p. 43

as a weapon, drove teams of sweating horses into town. Word was rushed to Milwaukee to send out troops to subdue the Indians. All along the route the soldiers found abandoned farmhouses well stocked with supplies, but no Indians. The soldiers feasted well and picnicked gaily before they returned to Milwaukee⁶³ to "lay the bogie".

The next episode did not have so happy an ending. It must be remembered that the land in and around Port Washington was thickly wooded; unlike the land in Racine and Kenosha Counties, which was flat, open country, that of Ozaukee County presented farming difficulties of far greater proportion. Every hand was needed to clear this land. Volunteers from other Wisconsin Counties had been more numerous than those from Ozaukee. This was partly due to the fact that they did not regard the war as their own,-- it was a "Republican" war. Many of them had left their European homes in order to escape the militaristic nightmares of Napoleon, Metternich, and Bismarck. Furthermore, they failed to understand the Civil War;

⁶³Western Historical Co., op. cit., pp. 498-500

the country was not being invaded and their political opinions were molded mostly by the Democratic journals which poured out a constant stream of inflammatory articles against the government, conscription and war. The Milwaukee See Bote, a German Catholic newspaper published in Milwaukee, has been blamed for the attitude of the Germans of Ozaukee County toward the Conscription Act of 1862. "Catholic newspapers as a rule were solid in their reprobation of slavery from a moral standpoint, but repudiated abolition and war as a means to remedy it and were content to tolerate the situation until some better day would right it".⁶⁴ This was the attitude of the Milwaukee See Bote, an attitude held by most of the Catholic clergy of that day.⁶⁵

When, in 1862, Lincoln called for an additional army of 3,000,000 men, Governor Salomon of Wisconsin was informed that the State's quota was five regiments

⁶⁴Reverend Peter Leo Johnson. "Port Washington Draft Riot of 1862", Mid-America, XII (January, 1930) p. 216

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 216

of infantry. The 24th regiment was to be called from Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, Sheboygan, and Dodge Counties. This regiment was soon ready, but it was filled mostly by Milwaukee men where Colonel Page, the commandant of the regiment, was well known.

In August, 1862, Governor Salomon was ordered to draft 11,904 men.

Enrolment of all persons liable to military duty and sheriffs of several counties were directed to make such enrolment, to appoint deputies, to make lists of all able-bodied men between 18 and 45 years of age, to exhibit such lists for public inspection.All persons discouraging volunteering and enlistment, resisting military drafts, etc., should be subject to court martial or military commission and suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in such cases.⁶⁶

When the people of Port Washington learned that a draft was to be made in the County to fill the quota of Wisconsin troops, a meeting of the prominent citizens of the town itself and of the adjoining towns was held for the purpose of selecting a satisfactory

⁶⁶E.B. Quiner. The Military History of Wisconsin in the War for the Union, Chicago: Clarke & Co., 1866. p. 140

man to conduct the draft. They selected A.M. Blair for Draft Commissioner and Dr. H.W. Stillman as examining surgeon. A petition, asking for these two men, was circulated, signed and sent to the Governor. Contrary to all expectations, William Pors was appointed Draft Commissioner and his friend, Dr. S. Hartwig of Cedarburg, was made examining physician. Dissatisfaction grew when the rumor spread that position and wealth had a great deal to do with procuring exemption. Accordingly, when, on November 10, 1862, the lists were published, a thousand people crowded into the city and going to the court house they destroyed the rolls, threw Draft Commissioner William Pors down the steps and proceeded on a wild orgy of destruction. They ransacked and damaged the homes of William Pors, H.W. Stillman, A.M. Blair, and of L.C. Loomis. When the saner element,--by far the majority of the crowd,--tried to reason with them, the noisier and more violent group, stimulated by drink and radical speeches, threatened like punishment to all who opposed them. They compelled the editor of The Ozaukee County

Advertiser to print a placard stating "No draft, no destruction of property". Carrying this sign about the town they next proceeded to the public square where they seized a small cannon, loaded it with the single cannon ball in Port Washington and dragged it to the top of South Bluff. Here, armed with pitchforks and clubs, they defiantly gathered, determined to take their stand against any government interference.⁶⁷ Government troops sailed into the harbor that night and easily gained control over the rioting mob. About 130 were arrested, sent to Camp Washburn and later removed to Camp Randall where they were retained for some months. "The sufferers...presented their claims to the Legislature at its next session. They were allowed, and the amount charged to the Government."⁶⁸

The Madison Legislature, because of its strong Copperhead element, found it difficult to secure official condemnation of the Ozaukee Riot. The

⁶⁷ Writers' Project, W.P.A., op. cit., p. 339

⁶⁸ E.B. Quiner, op. cit., p. 147

Copperhead faction claimed that the riot was not directed against the general government, but against a state officer, the Draft Commissioner.⁶⁹

In 1866, Commissioner William Pors was again elected District Attorney, (he had held this office in 1857) by the people of Ozaukee County,⁷⁰--ample testimony to the fact that the frenzied violence of a small group, was not the expression of the sentiment of the people at large.

Despite the Riot, Port Washington had its Civil War Honor Roll.⁷¹ One hundred and ninety names are listed on the roll,--names of many of her German sons⁷² mingling with the Irish, Scan-

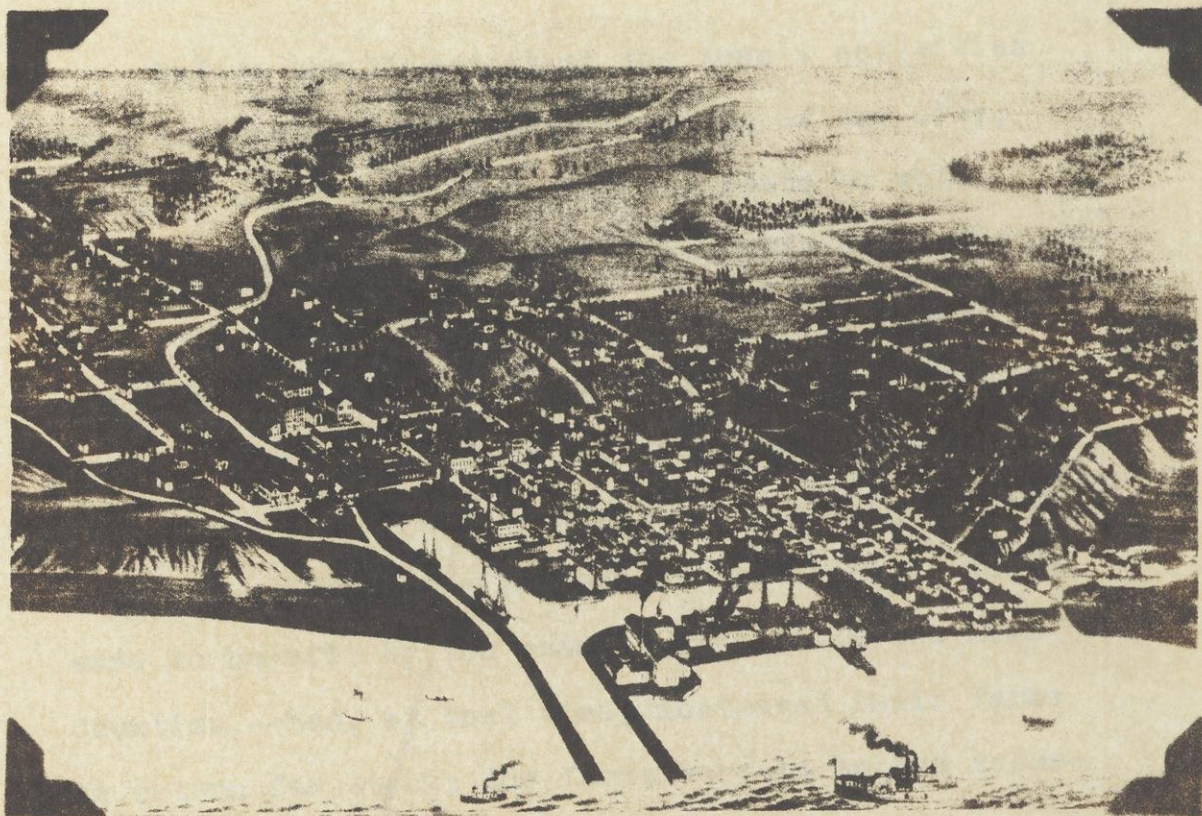
⁶⁹Milwaukee Sentinel, March 11, 1863. No. 76

⁷⁰Records, County Courthouse, Port Washington

⁷¹See appendix, pp. 72-76. Town population 1860, 2,558.

⁷²One of these was Captain Beger who was at Fortress Monroe when President Lincoln made an inspection tour of the Fort. The President asked Captain Beger the name of his home town and when the Captain answered "Port Washington, Wisconsin", the President told him that he had once stayed at Port Washington with a gentlemen by the name of Wooster Harrison, while on a "walking tour from Milwaukee to Sheboygan". This must have been in October or November of 1835, shortly after the death of Anne Rutledge.

dinavian and "Yankee" names which have been added to the history records of which Port Washington has been justly proud.



CITY AND HARBOR OF PORT WASHINGTON, 1883

CHAPTER IV
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
1865-1900

Before the 70's most of the town's activities were centered in the eastern section of the city; the Lake was the natural shipping route by which produce was carried to other Lake Ports or to the railroad center of Chicago. Occasionally there was talk of a railroad, but the Milwaukee & Lake Superior Railroad episode of the 60's made the people of Ozaukee County wary about joining another such enterprise. The farmers of the counties which were to benefit by the road,--principally the Lake Counties,--had, at that time, mortgaged their farms in return for stock; the farms were to be the security upon which the railroad was to raise money. Tracks were laid to Mequon, just south of Port Washington, when the president of the road absconded with the company's funds. The company was dissolved, the mortgages distributed among the directors and a few favored office holders for as low as twenty-five cents on the dollar. The stock eventually reached

unscrupulous speculators who proceeded to foreclose on the farm mortgages. Many of the farmers lost their farms. A Hartford Wisconsin newspaper editor summarized the unjust proceedings of the directors as follows:

1st. They took stock of the farmers upon the express condition that the roads should be laid in certain localities, and after the stock was thus obtained the right of way was altered to suit the private speculations of the director.

2nd. They made out false reports and false statements in order to show the road to be in better condition than it really was, and to induce the farmers from such statements to mortgage their farms for stock.

3d. They issued large amounts of bogus and fictitious stock in order to overshadow the farm mortgage interest and perpetuate themselves in office.

4th. They sold the capital stock of the company at a ruinous discount in order to raise money with which to pay semi-annual dividends that they had declared, falsely representing that the money thus paid out was the legitimate earnings of the road over and above expenses.

5th. They colluded with each other and made contracts with themselves for the building and operating of the road at the most extravagant prices.

6th. They bought up large tracts of real estate and then altered the lane of the

road so as to accommodate their own land and enhance the value of their own property.

7th. They continued to take farm mortgages when they knew that their corporations were bankrupt.⁷³

Everywhere the fraud was denounced, so the farmers found it easy to satisfy themselves that resistance to the payment was not only permissible but laudable under the circumstances. Leagues and semi-secret clubs were organized for the sole purpose of enforcing non-payment. In Ozaukee and Washington Counties groups of farmers set fire to depot buildings, destroyed railroad bridges and cut telegraph poles. "The Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway was obliged to abandon its night passenger service between Milwaukee and Portage in 1865, because of the danger of such outrages."⁷⁴

It took stern measures on the part of the State Legislature to convince these farmers that their ob-

⁷³"Home League Editorial," Hartford, Wisconsin, September 8, 1860, as quoted in Publications of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, ed. Milo Quaife. Madison. n.d.

⁷⁴Milwaukee Sentinel, December 2, 1865.

ligations would have to be met, in spite of the fact that public sympathy was strongly in their favor.

However, although the reverberation of fore-closed mortgages and lost farms reached the town of Port Washington and made her citizens approach a railroad venture cautiously, in 1870, when a charter was granted by the Legislature to the Milwaukee and Northern Railroad for the purpose of extending its tracks through Ozaukee County, strife arose between the east and the west divisions of the County in regard to the location of the road. Port Washington made liberal offers in land privileges and was willing to subscribe \$20,000 to be secured by bonds. The Railroad favored the western route, but offered to touch at Saukville which is three miles west of Port Washington. A competing group of New York speculators then offered to build a Lake Shore Road which would pass through Port Washington. The Milwaukee and Northern Railroad's objection was overridden, but the Lake Shore Road did agree to a compromise. The Milwaukee and Northern was to petition for a charter first; the Lake Shore Road would petition

later. Port Washington had agreed to do this, but when they presented their petition, the lobbying against them was so strong that the bill was at first defeated, the Legislature claiming that Ozaukee County was too narrow to warrant the building of two roads running parallel. However, the Lake Shore Railroad forced the reconsideration of the bill and it passed.⁷⁵ Port Washington not only secured its railroad, but also had the satisfaction of seeing the Lake Shore Railroad in operation before the Milwaukee and Northern. A 600 foot shack housed the horse-treadmill which sawed the wood supply to be burned in Port Washington's own engine.⁷⁶ The Lake Shore is now a part of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad.

Although the acquisition of a railroad was important, the lake transportation was not to become secondary. In 1870 the town busied itself about harbor improvements. The Government had made an

⁷⁵Western Historical Co., op. cit., p. 502.

⁷⁶A.D. Bolens, Ozaukee County Historian, interviewed June 12, 1943 at Port Washington, Wisconsin.

appropriation of \$181,527.17; the town had voted \$15,000 for the building of "two crib piers which were gradually extended until they reached out 800 feet into the lake."⁷⁷ A channel, 14 feet deep and 180 feet wide was dredged 1,500 feet back from the shore east and west, and the same distance north and south. In those days, when one of the principal exports of the city was grain, boats were loaded directly from two large grain elevators built at the end of the piers.

In 1872, the Wisconsin Dairymen's Association was organized and by promoting the production of milk, butter and cheese, caused an agricultural revolution in the state. Port Washington, too, became dairy-minded and cheese,⁷⁸ cattle, and eggs were added to the list of the town's exports. Small fishing tugs began to take their places with the

⁷⁷Port Washington Centennial, p. 20.

⁷⁸Colonel A.D. Bolens states that the pioneer cheese factory at Port Washington was started by Jacob Eckel about 1880. The factory had two vats, with a capacity of ten thousand pounds each, in the basement of the factory; the unloading platform and scales were right in front.

schooners and other craft in the town harbor; as early as 1881 the annual income from the fishing industry amounted to more than \$15,000.

Although the railroad had come and the harbor had been improved, there was danger of the town becoming nothing more than a sleepy village. J.M. Bostwick, one of the town's most interesting, yet typical citizens, was the man who injected a new industrial impetus into the economic life of the city. Just before 1890, he was instrumental in establishing one of the town's two largest industries. The economic history of the city has been so closely associated with the economic development of The Wisconsin Chair Factory, that the history of this plant is closely allied with the industrial development of the town itself. The old Port Washington Sash and Door Plant had gotten into financial difficulties and had been acquired through mortgage by J.M. Bostwick. Collaborating with F.A. Dennett of Sheboygan, these two men, with a capital of \$10,000, a breadth of vision, determination and ability, began the operation of The Wiscon-

sin Chair Factory. In September, 1888, the whistles of the factory called the first crew, thirty-five men, to work in the new plant. The beginning was difficult, but in 1891 they acquired the MacLean swing rocker patent; this rocker gained the favor of the public and the factory started out on a career of large scale production. Branch factories were opened in several other cities; large timber tracts were acquired in the northern peninsula of Michigan, Chambers Island, Green Bay, and Harbor Springs. The Company's own barge, the "Seymour" brought the lumber from the timber lands to the company's own dock. The factory had been built on the shores of the lake and, inasmuch as the only transportation available at this time was by lake, had built their own dock in the harbor.

The success of the Chair Factory meant the success of the town. The 1,659 population of 1890 increased in the next decade to 3,010. The company whistles became the town's clock regulators.

During the depression of 1893, the company was unable to pay wages; nevertheless, they continued

operation for a number of months without a pay day. Wood, which had been brought down from Chambers Island, was given to the men in part payment. The Company's due bills, a form of script, were honored by the city merchants so that the cooperation of employees and city business men helped to tide the factory over this rough spot.⁷⁹

The town's second largest tax payer, the Gilson Manufacturing Company was established in 1894. Their garden tractors and tractor lawn mowers are still being shipped all over the states and have found a market in the Latin American countries.

In 1899 the Chair Factory was destroyed by fire, but the loss was fully covered by insurance. Mr. Dennett wanted to move the plant to Sheboygan, his home city, but John M. Bostwick, a pioneer resident of Port Washington, insisted that the factory remain in Port Washington. The city and the Chicago, Northwestern Railroad offered to cooperate by building a siding to the new factory; this was the deciding

⁷⁹Records of The Wisconsin Chair Factory, secured in an interview with O.E. Moeser, president of the factory, June 13, 1943.

factor which induced F.A. Dennett to agree to the rebuilding of a new plant on a much larger scale at Port Washington.⁸⁰

The town took out its city charter and was officially incorporated on the mayor-alderman plan in 1882. It had begun to spread out beyond the bluffs where "handsome residences, many of them having terraces fringed with shade trees and flower beds"⁸¹ now took the place of the cruder cabins of the early settlers. There were dreams of walling the channel of Sauk Creek and its tributaries in order to form an artificial lake, where "a going summer hotel erected near the grove on the shore of the artificial lake would be a very inviting spot for tourists."⁸² Not all these plans have materialized, but there are still men of vision in the City on the Lake and year after year finds a little more of each dream becoming a reality.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Western Historical Co., op. cit., p. 507.

⁸²Ibid., p. 507.



MAP OF THE CITY OF PORT WASHINGTON, AS
PLANNED BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
1930

CHAPTER V

PORT WASHINGTON IN THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY

The present City of Port Washington covers an area of 908 acres, or about 1.4 square miles. The early spirit of "busy-ness" is still a characteristic of its people; they are industrious, capable, with a tenacity of purpose which pushes to a successful conclusion any enterprise they undertake. Along the Lake Front they have platted a Sauk Creek Recreation area and farther to the north the winding road of Lake Bluff Park entices many a tourist to stop in admiration of the glorious view of lake and hilly shoreline. Music still has its place in the lives of its people and the Port Washington Band gives its weekly concerts throughout the summer months in the new shell at the foot of Lake Bluff Park.

Although this section of the country is essentially agricultural, the little city is intensely industrial for its size. The early flour and grist mills run by water power ranked first in production output in the 80's; lumber and timber exports super-

ceded the flour and grist mill production in the 90's, only to make way for butter, cheese, and condensed milk in the twentieth century. Fully eighty percent of Port Washington's income comes from dairy products. In the city itself factories produce chairs, office equipment, bent woodwork, rubber goods, clothing and machinery. The Wisconsin Chair Factory employs about one-half of the town's workers and is the city's largest tax payer. The relationship between employer and employee at the factory has always been harmonious. An incident which occurred during the Rich Man's Panic of 1907, is indicative of the confidence with which the city regards the Chair Factory as a vital part of its industrial life. During the 1907 Panic, specie was scarce, so the Company's checks, made out in small denominations, circulated as money in the city.⁸³

Next in size, and the city's second largest tax payer, is the Gilson Manufacturing Company,--now The Bolens Product Company,--which employs about two

⁸³Records of the Wisconsin Chair Factory, interview with Mr. O.E. Moeser.

hundred workers.

The Wisconsin Electric Power Company maintains that its Port Washington Plant is the most efficient steam power plant in the world. Work on this project was begun May 26, 1930 and the task of removing part of a one-hundred-foot bluff, widening the harbor, building a large coal dock, placing building foundations of concrete, erecting the buildings, constructing tunnels, and installing the equipment was done within one year's time at a cost of about \$7,500,000.⁸⁴

At dawn of each day, steel tugs and power launches sail out of the mouth of the artificial harbor and head north toward Sheboygan. In rough weather or in calm, hardy fishermen, clad in their oilskins and rubber boots, go out to gather their harvest of the deep. Six hundred pounds of trout and chubs constitute a fair day's catch. The gill nets used daily by the Port Washington fishermen would span the lake from shore to shore. Whitefish, trout, chubs, herring,

⁸⁴Port Washington Centennial Booklet, p. 28.

carp, perch, suckers, and burbots (lawyers)⁸⁵ are caught in the gill nets; an average day's catch totals about 800 pounds, although some days the catch may be as large as 2,500 pounds.⁸⁶

The names of the town's financiers have gone out beyond the boundaries of city and state, carrying with them the name of the City on the Lake. In the industrial markets of the country the names of O.E. Moeser, President of the Wisconsin Chair Factory, of H.W. Bolens, President of The Bolens Production Company, of D.H. Smith, President of Smith Brothers, and of several other of the town's industrial leaders have gained not only the personal respect and recognition they have earned, but have made known the name of the City of Port Washington, Wisconsin.

The Literary Chip Basket, the Zeitung, the See Bote have now been replaced by The Ozaukee Press, The Port Washington Pilot, and The Port Washington

⁸⁵When the writer asked a fisherman why burbots were called "Lawyers" by the fishermen, he answered, "I don't know, unless it's because they're so slippery."

⁸⁶Gregory, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 1233.

Herald, published weekly in the city by young, enterprising newspaper men.

The shore line Indian trail from Milwaukee to Green Bay has developed into Federal Highway 141; the Dekora Road now stretches out into a well-paved State Highway 33, meeting a maze of other Federal, State, and County Highways. The American born sons and daughters of the early settlers drive in comfort over the ghost trails and plank roads of a century ago. The Chicago, Northwestern Railroad, the Milwaukee Electric Railway and Transport Company, and a Bus Line furnish ample transportation facilities to Sheboygan and to Milwaukee.

There is a quaint old-worldliness about the lovely little city. The buildings of St. Mary's Catholic Church and School⁸⁷ on North Bluff seem to dominate the entire site. To the west, another hill, separated from North Bluff by the valley of Franklin Street, is crowned by another but smaller

⁸⁷The "new" Church was built in 1884; the school, in 1916. The parish now numbers 650 families.

church, the Lutheran. "Old Port Washington," the business section of the city, lies in the cupped hollow formed by the bluffs. Here the courthouse,-- its greystone solidity reminiscent of the old Guild Halls,--raises its eagle-crowned spire high above the tree tops. The roofs of neatly painted homes show reds, blues, and greens through the leafiness of tree-covered bluffs and hills where houses cling tightly to the steep hillsides. Behind the bluffs, to the north and to the west, are the new homes, simple and beautiful, surrounded by well-kept lawns and flower beds, and shaded by lovely old trees. The new residential section is typically twentieth century suburban America.

At the northwest end of the city one of the most modern and beautiful hospitals of the state has been erected. St. Alphonsus Hospital, in charge of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, has a seventy bed and twelve bassinet capacity. Its twelve acres, the excavating and landscaping of the attractive boulevard approach, were contributed by the city.⁸⁸ Port Wash-

⁸⁸Records of St. Alphonsus Hospital, Port Washington, Wisconsin, secured in an interview with Sister M. Bartholemeo, Superior, June 13, 1943.

ington had long wanted a hospital, so when, in 1941, this dream became a reality, its citizens stamped "our own and one of the best" on another of their acquisitions.

The town may not have come up to the expectations of Wooster Harrison, for its harbor has become merely a refueling stop for Great Lake Steamers and a port for a welter of fishing tugs. Seamen call it a "fair weather harbor," for whenever a storm threatens, fishermen and shippers still rush the boats out into the lake to keep them from being dashed to pieces against the concrete breakwaters.⁸⁹ If it is not the most thriving of cities, it is a city in one of the most beautiful of nature's settings. Harrison's hopes and dreams live on in a modern Comprehensive City Plan, which has been worked out by the City Planning Commission of 1939.⁹⁰ This worthwhile study maps out possibilities that deserve the earnest consideration and cooperation of the

⁸⁹ Wisconsin Writers' Project, W.P.A., op. cit., p. 335.

⁹⁰ City Planning Commission, Comprehensive City Plan of Port Washington, Wisconsin. Milwaukee: Arthur J. Rabuck, 1939. p. 35.

people of Port Washington. As "Rome was not built in a day" so time and zealous effort may once more develop a great "city built on seven hills."

Many of Port Washington's citizens may not want to see the town grow into a large industrial center; too much enterprise and bustle might rob it of its beautiful residential section or push back the homes from the rugged beauty of the shoreline. It is a "home" city, not an industrial center in spite of its industries; these are just enough to supply interest and employment for the non-farming groups, and to make possible the slogan, "No city taxes."

One may turn from the smoke stacks of the Power Plant and the Chair Factory to the still wild bluffs and gulleys, to the quiet pasture lands to the north, west, and south of the city, or out across the wide blue expanse of Lake Michigan,--all part of the panorama viewed from the hill tops of The City of Port Washington, Wisconsin.

APPENDIX

Abram Bates
 Abram Ingersoll
 Wooster Harrison
 William Teall
 A. Cunningham
 John Barrett, Jr.
 R.B. Freeman
 O.A. Watrous
 Barney Kelly
 A.C. Klinglen
 S. Tallakson
 J. Duige
 Benjamin Safford
 Hilgen Altendorf
 John Burrow
 Charles Bourtow
 Joseph Altendorf
 John Schole
 M. Persow
 John Suell
 Martin Mix
 John P. Watry
 Peter Wolf
 A.E. Bosswater
 I.N. Loomis
 Joseph Poncelly
 Jean Weycher
 Thomas Michael
 Clarke Bourtow
 Jacob Pors
 Loring Cunningham
 Allen C. Daniels
 W.P. Thomas
 J.B. Young
 Washington Leonard
 John Longeley
 George W. Foster
 J.P. DeContres

Jonathan Loomis
 Jacob Anderson
 John Chion
 Charles Lunderberg
 John Thomas
 Andrew Wetterstrom
 William Rice
 Orman Coe
 Hugh Owen
 Nicholas Watry
 Solon Johnson
 Harvey Moore
 Henry Schmidt
 Francis Opladen
 Theodore Stemper
 William Mix
 William Coe
 Nicholas Poncelly
 John Ditz
 Pierre Holtigen
 P. Biever
 John Virland
 George Daniels
 Steffen Mix
 N. Riding
 R. Griswold
 David Acker
 E. Sloutenborg
 Theodore Gorman
 Lemuel Hyde
 Lewis Jones
 Isaac C. Loomis
 John McLean
 S.P. Watson
 F.W. Merritt
 Harry Williams
 B.F. Pidge

The foregoing is the poll-list kept by me at the town election held at Port Washington on the first Tuesday of April, 1846.

I certify that the above is a true copy.

(signed) F.W. Merritt
 Town Clerk

CIVIL WAR HONOR ROLL

FOR THE TOWN OF PORT WASHINGTON

Barnes, Mansel
Bartel, Fred
Barth, Ernst
Bates, Charles
Bates, George
Beard, John - died August 14, 1863, at Vicksburg
Beck, Ludwig
Becker, William - wounded September 25, 1862
Beger, Charles - Captain
Bichler, Henry - prisoner at Stone River, Tenn.
Bisch, Charles - wounded and prisoner at Stone River
Blake, Edward - Sergeant
Bold, William - Sergeant - wounded at Chickamauga
Boos, Peter
Brabender, Johann
Burg, Peter
Burkel, John
Busch, Carl

Case, Jerome
Caween, Andrew
Christenson, Nehem
Coleman, Robert - killed in action, July 21, 1861
at Atlanta
Coleman, William - wounded February 11, 1865 at Atlanta
Colling, Nicholas
Collins, James
Conrad, David
Conrad, Franz
Cooley, William - Corporal
Cooper, George - died July 25, 1863 at Lake Providence,
Louisiana
Crosby, William

Daily, Michael
Daniels, Stewart
Davis, Wallace
Decondres, James
Decondres, Louis - wounded at Corinth; right arm amputated
Derickson, John L. - second Lieutenant
Downs, Albert

Eder, John - killed December 31, 1862 at Stone
River, Tenn.

Ellenbecker, Frank - killed May 17, 1864 at
Adairville, Georgia

Erd, Xavier

Evenson, John

Feusseder, Francis

Fidler, Maurice

Fiedler, Ernst

Fclipse, Dingenie

Fry, Julius

Gardiner, Joseph

Gatfield, Charles

Gear, James

Gee, Edmund - died March 2, 1862 at Madison

Gitzen, Anton

Goggin, John

Goggin, Richard

Golather, Stephen - died August 21, 1863 at Vicksburg

Goldsmith, Gustave

Gough, John

Gove, Richard

Graf, Herman

Gunther, Samuel - wounded at Shiloh; died August 21,
1861 of wounds at St. Louis, Mo.

Haak, William

Hatch, Allen - Sergeant

Hausener, Leonard

Hedding, George

Helm, Charles - Corporal

Hennesy, John - killed in action April 6, 1862 at
Shiloh

Heuser, George

Hoban, James

Holland, Thomas

Hoyt, Franklin

Hunt, Alexander

Ingersoll, Frank - died February 1, 1864 at Milwaukee

Ingersoll, Robert - Corporal; died October 2, 1864
at Chicago

Jacobson, Jacob
 Jacobson, Peter
 Jacquinet, Mathias
 James, David
 Janish, Gregory - wounded at Shiloh
 Johann, John - Second Lieutenant
 Johann, Joseph

Kaehler, William - Corporal
 Kalteaux, Jacob
 Kann, Richard
 Kellogg, Daniel
 Keogh, Patrick
 Kerney, James
 Kershaw, Richard
 Kiefer, John N. - First Lieutenant
 Klein, Charles - Band
 Klopp, John B. - Corporal
 Kommes, Nicholas
 Kracht, John

Large, Christopher - died September 10, 1863
 at Memphis

Last, John
 Laws, John

Mangin, Dennis
 Marsh, Horace
 Martin, Christian
 Martini, Robert F. - Second Lieutenant
 McCarthy, Felix
 McCarthy, John
 McEvoy, Luke
 Menge, Charles
 Merkle, Anton
 Metzger, Nicholas
 Meyer, Leopold - wounded at Kenesaw Mountain
 Michel, John
 Miller, George
 Miller, Louis F.
 Mills, William
 Milward, William
 Murphy, Cornelius - wounded at Shiloh
 Murphy, Thomas

Nehf, John H.
Nehf, John M.
Neisen, Franz
Nelson, Abraham
Neusladle, Nathan

Ohare, James - died July 13, 1863 at Lake Providence
Oleson, Newton
Orcutt, Samuel
Osgood, Lorenzo - Sergeant
Oswald, Nicholas

Pagget, George
Parr, Erastus - Corporal
Patch, Asa J.
Pawlett, William
Pfau, Simon
Pfleuger, George
Pierce, William - died May 26, 1862
Porter, David A.
Powers, Alanson
Powers, Charles - Sergeant; wounded at Kenesaw Mt.

Ramsay, Henry
Richards, William
Ruppelt, Leonhard

Sabish, Oliver
Samuel, Nicholas
Sands, John P.
Schlimm, Peter - wounded at Franklin
Schmidler, Jacob
Schroeling, John - Major
Schuquendt, Mathias
Schutler, Herman
Schutter, Bernard
Schutz, Gustave
Shaw, Lineus
Shaw, Thaxter
Sheehan, John - Corporal; wounded and prisoner at
Chickamauga; died July 30, 1864
at Andersonville, Ga.

State, John
Stone, Abner
Sullivan, Daniel - Corporal; prisoner at Chickamauga

Taylor, William A. - Corporal; died July 31, 1864
at New Orleans

Teed, Nathaniel

Tennesson, John C.

Thomas, Charles - killed in action July 21, 1864
at Atlanta

Thomas, Henry - wounded at Atlanta

Thronsdon, Ole

Tousley, Stoel A. - killed in action April 6, Shiloh

Tousley, William - killed in action April 6, Shiloh

Towle, James

Tronch, Herman

Trumbull, Selby - wounded at Shiloh

Turner, Allen - Sergeant

Ubbink, Bernhard

Vail, David - Second Lieutenant; wounded at Shiloh

Wachter, Adolph

Wagner, John

Wagner, Thomas

Wagner, William

Walker, Benjamin - Sergeant

Wareham, Charles - Sergeant-Major

Warling, John B. - Sergeant; prisoner at Chickamauga

Weinbauer, Franz

Weiskopf, Joseph

Welch, Patrick - 1

Welch, Patrick - 2

Wentink, Albert

Whedon, Milo - Sergeant

White, Luther

Wildman, Thomas - wounded at Shiloh

Williams, Samuel - died January 15, 1862 at Camp Randall

Williams, George C. - Captain

Wilson, James

Winkler, Herman - wounded June 25, 1864 at Petersburg, Va.

Winkler, Moritz

Witte, Friedrich

Wols, Joseph

Yaeger, Adolph - Corporal

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