



LIBRARIES

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Highway and bridge building in Manitowoc County 1836 to the present. Monograph 30 1976

Ehlert, Edward

Manitowoc, Wisconsin: Manitowoc County Historical Society, 1976

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/WWLMBPME3332O9C>

This image cannot be copied or reproduced without the written permission of the Manitowoc County Historical Society. For information on re-use, see <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Copyright>

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

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

HIGHWAY AND BRIDGE BUILDING IN MANITOWOC COUNTY 1836 TO THE PRESENT

by EDWARD EHLERT

The History of Highway and Bridge Construction in Manitowoc County

Manitowoc County was inhabited by Indians prior to 1836. There were at least five different tribes of Indians in Manitowoc county between 1600 and 1836, they being the Chippewas, Menominees, Pottawattomies, Winnebagos and Ottawas. These Indian tribes lived in three villages which were located at Two Rivers, Manitowoc Rapids and the forks of the Manitowoc River in the western part of the county. In summer, the Indians followed the rivers and trails to points where they felt that hunting and fishing was of a kind to satisfy their needs for food and clothing. Tepees were the temporary homes of Indians during the summer months. These could be transported easily by a horse, or perhaps even could be carried. Only the French fur traders, chiefly one named Jacques Vieau, visited Manitowoc county prior to 1830.

The Indian, of course, used the lakes, rivers and small streams as a means of travel. If his travels took him over land, the routes were trails through the woods. Most of these trails later became the routes used by the white inhabitants as they laid out their systems of roads which were connecting links between the interior and the lake ports on which the larger cities and some of the villages were built.

What was true of Manitowoc county before 1830 was typical of the rest of Wisconsin also. For more than a century and a half after Marquette and Joliet made their journey from Green Bay to the Mississippi River by way of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, these rivers remained the only known route to the western border of Wisconsin. So far as history records, until May, 1829, no man had traveled overland through the wilderness west of Lake Michigan to emerge on the banks of the Mississippi.

At that time James Duane Doty (afterward territorial governor of Wisconsin),

Henry S. Baird, Morgan L. Martin, and an Indian guide made the journey on horseback from Green Bay to Prairie du Chien. This was the first land pilgrimage by white men, and records of the trip reveal that much of the course followed was over well-trod Indian trails. These same men had made the trip in canoes by way of the Fox and Wisconsin rivers in 1825, 1826 and 1828.

John Stacy, a Winnebago Indian, writes, "There is a road running through the central part of Wisconsin in an east and west direction. Going from Manitowoc to LaCrosse, the Winnebago Indian used these places for stamping grounds in his everyday living. He lived on both sides of the Mississippi from below Prairie du Chien to Red Wing, and the shores of Lake Michigan where he crossed by canoe to the shores of the State of Michigan. It was the Winnebago Indian who laid out 'the Winnebago Trail,' which begins at Manitowoc, follows the present Highway 151 to Fond du Lac, and then north by way of Highway 45 to Oshkosh, then west on Highway 21 to Sparta, and Highway 16 to LaCrosse. These were the home grounds of the Winnebago. This trail was the most beautiful on earth, according to the Winnebago boys and men."

While these pathways and trails through the woods may have served the needs of the Indians well, the white people required more than mere trails since they were accustomed to using wagons and sleighs as a means of conveying their possessions from place to place. This created a need for wider roadways and also for roads which would make transportation possible in all kinds of weather.

Manitowoc County Opened Up to White Settlement

Manitowoc County was opened up to white settlement in 1835. In 1830, treaties

had been signed by the Indian tribes inhabiting the county in which they gave up all rights to a land that met well their needs in the way of food, clothing and shelter. They were promised reservations in other states, which was claimed to be the equal in value of the land which they had called home for so many years. Government surveyors were sent to lay out the county into townships, sections and 40-acre plots. When the surveyors completed their work the county was opened up to white settlement. A government land office was opened at Green Bay, and land could be purchased at \$1.25 per acre.

The sale of public lands, of course, was a means by which the U.S. Government could finance many of its operations in the early years. Alice E. Smith in "The History of Wisconsin, from Exploration to Statehood," said, "America's wealth in public lands in the mid-nineteenth century was so vast that it staggers the imagination. Within three-quarters of a century, barely a life span, the domain had spread from the Appalachians to the Pacific. Beginning with the relinquishment of the individual state claims (Wisconsin was claimed at one time by Virginia and Massachusetts) based on colonial grants, the young country had acquired by purchase, annexation, conquest, or treaty negotiations, the huge Louisiana territory, Florida, Texas, California, and other Mexican war cessions, and the Oregon country. During those years population growth, institutional evolution, communications, and transportation development, technological improvements and other indexes measured the rush of change that accompanied this phenomenal territorial expansion. The possession of a source of great natural wealth and strength engendered in the American people a boundless optimism about the future of their country." (p. 411)

Of course, land speculators came early to Manitowoc county. Benjamin Jones, a Chicago merchant, was one. He acquired 2,000 acres of land in Manitowoc, most

of it south of the Manitowoc River. He was a dealer in real estate the rest of his life. Examination of twelve pages of an assessment roll in 1870 shows that Benjamin Jones still possessed about 170 lots in the part of the village covered by those pages of the assessment roll. But many settlers came too. There were those who were interested in lumbering, e.g. the Conroe's at Manitowoc Rapids, and a Mr. Burnham at Shoto, who later sold his interest to Fred Borchardt. Then there were those who were interested in converting the forests into crop land.

The numbers of those coming to Wisconsin and Manitowoc County is seen by a study of population tables:

**Population of Wisconsin
and Manitowoc County
1830 to 1970**

| | Wisconsin | Manitowoc Co. |
|------|-----------|---------------|
| 1830 | 5,000 | --- |
| 1840 | 30,000 | 235 |
| 1850 | 305,000 | 3,702 |
| 1860 | 775,881 | 22,416 |
| 1870 | 1,054,670 | 33,364 |
| 1880 | 1,315,480 | 37,505 |
| 1890 | 1,686,880 | 37,831 |
| 1900 | 2,069,042 | 42,261 |
| 1930 | 2,939,006 | 58,674 |
| 1940 | 3,137,587 | 61,617 |
| 1970 | 4,418,083 | 82,294 |

As the table indicates, in the decades between 1830 and 1850, population growth of Wisconsin and Manitowoc county was not great. Soon after land became available by purchase from the U.S. Government, the Panic of 1837 began, and with it a scarcity of money with which to purchase land. Those who had bought land oftentimes had no money with which to pay the taxes, and so lost their land holdings. Recovery from the years of panic was slow.

Unrest in Europe

There was unrest in Europe due to the military ambitions of the rulers, government restrictions on worship and religious instruction, economic conditions, etc. The people began receiving news about the availability of cheap land in America. Christian H. Sieker, a resident of a province in northeast Germany received this letter from a Manitowoc county settler who had come here in the early 1840's: "Come to America, and then to Manitowoc County, Wisconsin. It is a veritable paradise in which the cows all summer long are up to their bellies in luxurious grass and clover. And when winter comes there will be enough left to feed them all winter long. The farmers need not gather it since the stock can find it themselves. Land can be had for the asking or for

almost nothing." (The Sieker's paid \$860 for 160 acres.)

The Sieker family was one of a great number of families who left the homeland to come to the "land of opportunity" where even the poorest could own land. Sales of public lands flourished and the influx of these settlers from foreign lands affected almost every township in Manitowoc County. With this influx of new settlers the clamor for improved highways and for bridges began to intensify.

In the 1830's Manitowoc County benefited because a military highway passed through it from north to south. It was a highway that connected Fort Howard at Green Bay with Fort Dearborn in Chicago. The federal government provided the funds for this highway, but the cost was minimal for the soldiers in the garrisons furnished the labor needed to build the road. The postal service also used this highway, and were involved in some of the expenditures of road building. The first mail route was from Green Bay to Milwaukee with mail deliveries coming to post offices three times each week. The first post office in Manitowoc County was at Manitowoc Rapids.

Stage Coaches Travel on Highways

As early as 1845, stage coaches were seen on the military roads. Alice E. Smith, in "The History of Wisconsin, from Exploration to Statehood," describes what traveling was like on these roads thus, (p. 443) "The stage coach had four seats running crosswise, intended for eight persons, but more often twelve were squeezed inside. There were no springs under the coach; it was simply suspended by two leather straps, one on each side, extending from the front to the rear axle. When the front wheels dropped down into a hole, its occupants pitched ahead; when the rear wheels dropped into a hole, all were pitched back, and so we kept it up day in and day out. I do not believe there was a rod of the whole distance but some wheel was out of line either in a hole, or climbing over a stone, stump, or root."

By way of an aside, Alice E. Smith in her book says (p. 442) this about the postal service: "Until 1838 sending a letter of a single piece of paper cost 6 cents up to thirty miles; 10 cents up to 80 miles; and 25 cents over 400 miles. Letters of two pieces of paper called for double postage. Complaints over failure of the mail were common and not always justifiable."

The Fort Howard - Fort Dearborn Military Highway

In a publication entitled "Wisconsin

Highways," published by the State Highway Commission of Wisconsin in 1947 we find this description of the Fort Howard - Fort Dearborn Military Highway: "It was a crude type of road that had been cleared to a width two rods wide, with corduroy construction over the marshy areas and with timber bridge construction over the many streams encountered." Corduroy construction involved placing the trunks of large trees close together across the low and marshy places. Over the logs ground was placed. Because these logs were often in water most of the year, they remained in a remarkable state of preservation for many years. Congress made an appropriation of \$15,000 for this road. The total estimated cost of construction was \$48,381 for 158 miles of road. On page 6 of "Wisconsin Highways" we find this statement concerning the importance of this military highway: "Such a road would afford facilities for marching troops to a point not to be reached, except by an overland route during the winter, and at the seasons of the opening and closing of the lake navigation." However, Congress never appropriated the necessary money to complete construction of this road. In fact, money for any kind of internal improvements came hard in those days.

But there was always the public land in the states west of the Appalachian mountains. In the Act of 1841 there was this statement, "There shall be granted to each state... five hundred thousand acres of land for purposes of internal improvements... to be made as the Legislature of the state may direct. ... The land herein granted to the states shall not be disposed of at a price less than one dollar and twenty five cents per acre."

Thirty miles of the military road was between Manitowoc and Sheboygan Falls. Louis B. Falge in the book, "The History of Manitowoc County," (Volume One) states, "There are several settlers between Manitowoc and the Sheboygan River. At Sheboygan Falls there is water power of great force, and an active business in pine, lumber and shingles. The same industries are important at Manitowoc Rapids. Between the two places most of the land is owned by the United States government. The land between Manitowoc Rapids and Green Bay is largely uninhabited."

Highway Construction in the 1840's

As early as 1840 there was clamoring for highways to be improved in directions other than north and south of Manitowoc Rapids. A territorial road between Two Rivers on Lake Michigan, and Clifton on

Lake Winnebago was ordered on January 13, 1840. Earlier, Benjamin Jones, Pliny Pierce and Horace Conroe were ordered to lay out a road from Manitowoc Rapids to Clifton. Being ordered to lay out roads and to build these roads were two entirely different matters. Chiefly, the problem that these men had involved money. The tax rolls of the four towns that comprised Manitowoc County in 1840 had the following sums appropriated as "road funds." \$94.65, \$90.28, \$126.53, and \$100.12. The total amount of these sums was \$411.58. Obviously, not many miles of roads and bridges could be built for that amount of money even in those days. Building improved highways was a bigger problem than any local township could undertake and resolve. Thus, the Congress of the U.S. was appealed to for "federal aid." (Not a twentieth century idea at all.) We have already remarked about the response of the U.S. Congress to pleas of this kind. They seldom voted to support internal improvements of any kind.

Plank Road Construction Is Approved in 1850

It was in February, 1850, that the U.S. Congress approved the construction of a plank road between Manitowoc and Neenah. The charter permitted other road building materials to be used, including gravel, charcoal or timber. Construction of a plank road began at what is now North 11th Street at Waldo Boulevard, and continued in a northwesterly direction on what is now Menasha Avenue. This plank road was built as far west as Four Corners. (The junction with the present Highway 141) Then the funds were depleted, and it was never built beyond this point. Incidentally, this was also a toll road; people had to pay a dime to use the road. This entitled the person to travel ten miles on a toll road, but the Menasha Avenue toll road was never longer than two miles. There were other plank roads in the county. Falge in his "History of Manitowoc County" described this toll road thus, "In November, 1850, it had been planked across the swamp, graded as far as the bluff, the ravine bridge had been completed, and the river bridge considerably advanced. It was thought that the road would be passable by January 1, and the planks laid in early spring." The planks for such a road were usually of oak, and these were laid across timbers. It was believed that a road made of oak planks should last for many years. However, many of these roads needed to be rebuilt in as few as six years, so it was early realized that plank roads were not the answer to the transportation



— Plank road. Traffic going east has the right of way. Road wide enough for a team and wagon.

problems of the pioneer settlements. Other plank roads for which charters were issued were from Two Rivers to Green Bay in 1850, Manitowoc to Green Bay in 1852, Manitowoc to Two Rivers in 1856, and thence to Mishicot. There was a plank road in the Kiel area also in 1870.

A Road Tax is Authorized

The road tax referred to earlier was by authorization of the territorial legislature. It was enacted in 1838 as a tax on real estate for both residents and non-residents and not to exceed one per cent of the assessed valuation. A person might satisfy the tax requirements by furnishing labor or equipment. The Laws of 1838 provided that, "Every person who shall at the request of the supervisor furnish a plow or a wagon with a team of horses or a yoke of oxen, and a driver, and perform one or more day's work with the same, shall receive credit of three day's work with them." These road tax requirements were only slightly modified through all the years of the 19th century.

The Wisconsin State Constitution prohibited the state government from participating in works of internal improvement. The state could not incur any indebtedness. While the state was empowered to set up regulations as to the kind of roads that could be built, they had to depend on county and township initiative to do the road building. In Manitowoc County, it was the townships that had to do the road building. In view of the unwillingness of townships to tax themselves to build roads, there was little progress made in construction of improved highways.

Railroads Divert Interest In Road Improvement

Railroads had been built to transport people and freight from the eastern coast

into the interior since the early 1830's. It was not until the mid-1850's that the people of Manitowoc County began to show interest in railroads as a solution to the transportation problems of people. Railroads were usually built with private capital. It was in 1856 that we read of a railroad to be built between Manitowoc and Menasha. Actual construction of the road bed began in the fall of 1856. When the road bed had been completed as far west as Reedsville, the money available had been expended. The Panic of 1857 had just begun to affect the economy and so for some years no additional funds were available for continuing the construction of the road bed from Reedsville to Menasha. Then came the Civil War, and the resources of the country were needed to resolve the issues which had caused the war between the states. It wasn't until the early 1870's that another effort was made to build a railroad to Manitowoc. It was the Milwaukee, Lakeshore and Western railroad that then came to Manitowoc with the first train arriving on September 24, 1873. This was a great day for Manitowoc. More than five hundred people were at the railroad station on Franklin and South 13th Street to watch the locomotive and passenger cars come to the depot. In the years following, the railroad line was extended to Two Rivers, to Green Bay, and also to Menasha. The Wisconsin Central (now called the Soo Line) came from Fond du Lac in 1895. Incidentally, the Manitowoc community learned that nothing is ever really free. To receive a benefit a price must be paid. Before the railroad was built to Manitowoc the people had to subscribe personal funds in the amount of more than a half-million dollars to support the railroad construction program. They received railroad bonds as evidence of their investment.

• It was not long, however, before people realized that their transportation problems had not been completely resolved with the coming of the railroad into the county. They realized that to use the railroads, there had to be highways which would take people to the population centers where the railroad depots had been built. Then there was the issue of railroad rates, especially for the hauling of freight and the products of farm and industry. Railroad rates became a political issue which was not resolved until the early years of the 20th century. Thus, highway improvement again soared into the forefront as an issue challenging attention and solution.

"Horseless Carriages" Interest People.

It was in 1871 that the first "horseless carriage" made its appearance. Two of these were built with encouragement for their construction inspired by the State Legislature which set up a grant of \$10,000 to the person who could build a horseless carriage. Dr. J.W. Carhart of Racine was the first to build such a carriage. It was a two cylinder steam engine with wagon wheels and was a sensation!

The grant by the state legislature inspired two persons to demonstrate the feasibility and practicability of a mechanical contrivance called a horseless carriage. The legislature prescribed that these men demonstrate the carriage in a race to begin at Green Bay and end at Madison. The two entries in this demonstration were from Oshkosh and Green Bay. It soon became apparent that the Green Bay entry had superior speed, but it broke down about twenty miles from Madison, and did not finish the race. The Oshkosh machine completed the trip in 33 hours and 27 minutes with the average speed slightly in excess of six miles per hour. When it came to paying the \$10,000 to the victor, however, the legislature hedged. In their opinion the contrivance was not "a cheap and practical substitute for the horse and buggy." They finally appropriated \$5,000 to be given to the race winner, however, because they wanted to encourage further experimentation in the manufacture of a horseless carriage. It was in 1897 that the "Jeffrey Car" made its appearance in Kenosha. It was a carriage driven by a gasoline engine which had a much greater speed than the steam driven carriage of two decades earlier.

The development of the motor vehicle can be seen in the table which follows. Obviously, as the number of automobiles



A young couple on way to city with a yoke of oxen. An early model horseless carriage beside the road.

increased, there would be a corresponding pressure for improved highways.

Automobiles Manufactured, 1800 Through 1912

| | No. Automobiles Manufactured |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| 1899 | 3,700 |
| 1904 | 21,281 |
| 1909 | 127,731 |
| 1912 | 356,000 |

With the increase in the number of automobiles manufactured, the clamor for improved highways increased again. Hard surfaced roads were demanded, which would permit the use of automobiles in all kinds of weather. For winter driving of automobiles, the snow removal problem had to be resolved. Thus, it was in about the year 1915 that a highway improvement program was attacked earnestly. It was apparent that towns and counties alone could not resolve this matter and that "state aid" was a prime prerequisite. Although Wisconsin had never looked with favor on state indebtedness, there were ways of appropriating funds for highway and bridge construction other than outright state funding. It was by means of automobile licensing and also the use of fuel taxes that would make possible the funds for highway improvement. "Let those who use the roads pay for their construction," was the policy.

Other Issues in Highway Improvement

From what has been said up to this time, it might appear that the lack of progress in highway improvement was due entirely to a lack of sufficient money with which to do the work. One of the problems that needed attention was a better use of the funds that were available for highway improvement.

Earlier mention was made of the fact that road construction was the responsibility of town governments. Towns were divided into highway districts, and each district had its highway supervisor. These supervisors were elected at the annual town meeting. Very often no attention was given at all to the qualifications of persons named to be the highway supervisor. The term of office usually was for one year. Without any previous training and little in the way of knowledge about highway building, it was purely accidental if monies for road construction and improvement were expended wisely.

At one of the Highway Commission road schools a speech was given by a Madison attorney which had a far-reaching effect on highway improvement. The speaker called for the abolishing of the road supervisors in towns and the road district system. He said that the smallest unit of government to be responsible for road building should be the town — not road districts in a town. Because distances between villages and cities often required that several towns and corporate units of government cooperate in the building of highways, it was his opinion that road construction for the most part should be the responsibility of a county, and the county should work under the supervision of the state highway commission.

Because the building of a good system of highways required large sums of money, it was apparent that some kind of state aid would be needed, and this required a change in the constitutional provisions as they related to internal improvements. Most of the suggestions made by this clear thinking, forward looking and courageous speaker were favorably received and the legislature took the action needed to set up a high-

way improvement program which became the envy of many other states in the U.S.A.

Macadam Roads — A First Kind of Hard Surfaced Road Construction

Hard surfaced roads were of various kinds. There were the macadam roads which were built of crushed stone, usually of igneous and similar kinds of rock. Concrete roads were an early favorite kind of construction, and Wisconsin soon had many hundred miles of these. There were roads that were made of asphalt or bituminous materials, and streets in cities sometimes were made of brick, cement blocks and other kinds of hard surface materials. Obviously, not all of these materials proved successful answers to the problem of providing better roads.

State Highway Commission Authorized in 1920

It was in the early 1920's that the road building programs of the state were put under the authority of the Wisconsin State Highway Commission. All plans for new highway construction were required to be approved by the Commission and the work was done under their supervision. Previously, road builders had little training in highway construction. All this was changed when the Wisconsin Highway Commission was set up. Schools were held in which members of the County Highway Commission and highway personnel, especially the foreman of construction crews, were in attendance. They were trained in good highway construction procedures, and were made familiar with highway building equipment. Manitowoc county benefited by these schools, just as other counties of the state did. The men who built the highways and who maintained them became experts in their field of work. Manitowoc County was a part of Division Three with the department offices located in Green Bay.

Highway Safety Standards Set

While the techniques of road building were very important matters that needed to be attacked and resolved, these were by no means the only problems that required attention. Safety standards needed to be set up. There were many railroad crossings where accidents were frequent. A system of warning signals needed to be provided, and in many cases the answer was an "overhead" to eliminate the crossing. Many of these overheads were built during the depression years as a Public Works project. This construction was done during the 1930's when the

LaFollette family were powers in state government. The overheads were called by some "LaFollette's Roller Coasters". However, time supported these projects as practical answers to highway safety, especially at railroad crossings.

A system of highway and street arterial highways was set up at which stop signs and stop lights were placed at strategic locations. The legislature of the state cooperated in setting up programs of highway safety and appropriated the funds necessary to expedite these programs. Included were a vast number of features which space does not permit us to mention in this treatise.

All-Season Use of Highways Demanded

Wisconsin is a state in which hard surfaced roads were useable only during those seasons of the year when there was no snow. In the first three decades of the 20th century an automobile could be used during winter months only when special equipment was provided. Sleighs were used for hauling loads when the roads were snow covered, and the width of the runners of sleighs was narrower than the width between wheels of automobiles.

A Manitowoc doctor is said to have equipped his automobile with sleigh runners on the front wheels, and a "caterpillar" driven device on the rear wheels. While this worked well in some cases, it did not resolve all problems. It was the exceptional automobile that was equipped as this doctor had done. Many people had to put their automobile in storage through the winter months, and resign themselves to the use of horse and cutter or to walk, especially during the seasons of deep snow. Obviously there was agitation that something be done to resolve this problem.

In the city of Manitowoc the City

Council was asked to set up some kind of snow removal program, but there was resistance to the idea, the aldermen insisting that snow removal was an impractical idea and far too costly a venture to warrant implementation of such a program. Following a heavy snow storm a group of citizens, on their own initiative, and with the use of road graders, tractors and much hand labor demonstrated that if there was a will, it was possible to free city streets of snow. The first street on which this was demonstrated was Eighth Street from Washington Street to State Street. That was the beginning of snow removal in this part of Wisconsin.

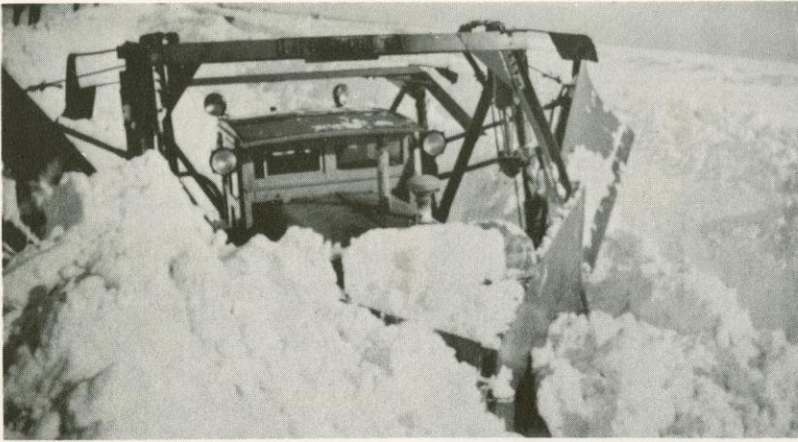
Manitowoc County soon began to attack the problem of snow removal also. Trucks were equipped with snow plowing equipment. This equipment worked well under normal conditions. However, a heavy snow storm in one of the years in the early 30's, the snow was piled up in drifts that reached a height of from eight to twelve feet, and demonstrated the need for special equipment. The county then purchased a rotary plow in which the snow was driven from the highway and blown thirty to forty feet away. Snow fences were set up at places where there was possibility of drifting snow. Thus began the era when automobile transportation became an all the year around possibility.

Bus and Truck Transportation Industry Begins

With the all-season use of highways the trucking industry and bus transportation developed. This, of course, affected the railroads. The result was a decline in passenger train service and also in freight hauling service via the railroad. There was an appreciable decline in the number of miles of railroad tracks in Wisconsin. Manitowoc County was affected significantly to a point where the time came



A mud road — 1910



Feb. 16, 1935. Highway 42, Two Rivers — along the lake.

when there was no passenger train service at all.

Manitowoc has always been a city in which ship building was a major industry. It was a town which since the 1880's had carferry service for crossing to Michigan. Railroad cars were brought across Wisconsin and were taken to Ludington and Frankfort, Michigan, to continue their trips to the eastern sea coast cities. It was both a cheap way of transporting freight, and a fast way since it avoided the congestion in the Chicago freight switching yards. We do not need to elaborate on the problems in these times to maintain the carferry service that this part of Wisconsin has enjoyed for well nigh 100 years. Without doubt carferry and train services are important adjuncts to the fine transportation system that has been developed here through the years.

Highway Maintenance Important

Highways once built need to be maintained. A good maintenance program is an important feature of any program of good roads. Specialized equipment is needed for these operations and the use of this equipment requires skilled labor of several kinds. Manitowoc County has been fortunate in having a county government willing to provide the funds for the fine system of highways that have been developed. In addition to the federal and state trunk highways most of the town roads have been graveled or have a hard surface of some kind and are useable in all seasons.

Bridges

In the early years there were few bridges even over the smaller streams. The streams were forded, or if that was not possible, there were ferries. In the writings of the early history of Manitowoc it was reported that to cross the Manitowoc River at a point near our present Eighth Street, an Indian maiden provided ferry service. She had a canoe and for a penny a crossing she would take a person across

the river. In those days even a penny was more money than some cared to spend. When Manitowoc became a village in 1852 one of the first items on the agenda of the Village Board was to order the construction of a bridge at Eighth Street. The bridge was made of wood, wide enough so that a team of horses and a wagon or sleigh could cross. The first steel bridge was built in 1872 when Manitowoc received its charter to become a city. It was also built on Tenth Street. It was a lift bridge so that river boats could go up river as far as the shipyards. The Eighth Street bridge was built a few years later.

Bridge Charters

These were the bridge charters granted by territorial and state legislatures from 1836 to 1921:

1848 — Village of Manitowoc, Seventh Street

1852 — Village of Manitowoc, Eighth Street

1858 — Village of Manitowoc, Ninth Street

1859 — Manitowoc County, S½, NE¼, Sec. 19, T 19N, R 24 E

1860 — Village of Manitowoc, west end of York Street.

The book entitled "Wisconsin Highways" (p. 91) has this to say about bridge construction from 1836 through 1848: "Because of the scant population and the inability of local units of government to

raise sufficient funds, bridge building was confined to the construction of timber or masonry structures over the smaller rivers and streams. Traffic across the larger navigable rivers and bodies of water was invariably by ferry or on the ice in winter. From 1818 through 1836 seven ferries were licensed in the Wisconsin section of Michigan territory."

Bridge Building Only by Legislative Permission

Streams were one of the transportation links between the interior of Wisconsin and Lake Michigan. Bridges would limit the use of a stream for navigation purposes. Thus, special permission had to be gotten to build a bridge, and when permission was given, the specifications for building it were specific. The regulations applying to this were so rigid that only the Secretary of War in the President's cabinet could give permission to build a bridge. These regulations applied all through the 19th century. Then the number of bridges proposed for construction became so numerous that it became impossible to form judgments on all the requests submitted. It appears that authorization for bridge construction then became the responsibility of the State Highway Commission, subject to the review of the Secretary of War, who had the right to use his veto power in certain cases.

Toll Bridges

Because bridge construction was a costly venture, in some states the right to build a bridge was approved with the provision that those who use the bridge should pay for its construction. Thus, it was required that a toll be paid by those using the bridge. Wisconsin, for the most part, has frowned upon toll roads and toll bridges. The trend through most of the years has been to build bridges at public expense, and to permit crossing of bridges without payment of a toll, even by non-residents of the state. In all of its history Manitowoc County has not had a toll bridge.



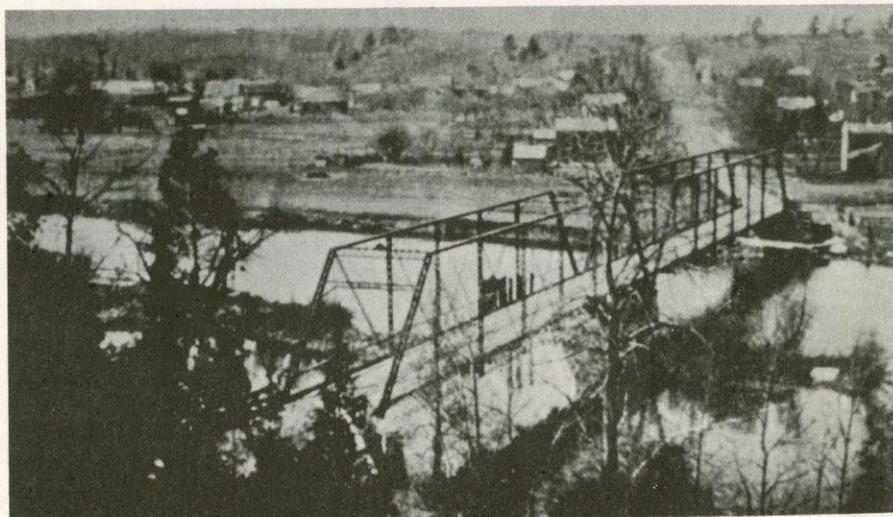
Local Units of Government Build Bridges

In the early years, local units of government were expected to assume the responsibility for bridge construction and payment of costs associated with it. Many of these units of government were very cost conscious. The contract was usually given to the bridge builder who submitted the lowest bid, regardless of the bridge design, quality and manner of construction. This resulted in some cases in an inadequate and inferior construction of the bridge. Specific load limits had to be set up to insure the safe use of the bridge. When the State Highway Commission was set up, specific specifications were set up on which bids for construction were to be submitted. Bridge construction then was done under the supervision of the State Highway Commission. Generally when the span for the crossing of a stream was greater than six feet, a bridge was to be constructed. Below six feet, a culvert would be adequate.

It might seem that a stream having a width of six feet would be too small to require a bridge. However, in seasons of heavy rainfall, such a stream could quickly become a raging torrent. This was demonstrated in 1905 when the stream crossing Highway B on the north limits of Manitowoc became such a raging torrent. The bridge was washed out at a time when several people were crossing. The automobile and men soon were at the mercy of the angry waters. The next day the daily newspaper carried an article about the experience of these men during the storm. A picture was taken of the washout. It was as a result of experiences such as these that improvements in bridge design and construction came about, so that today travel in all seasons and in all kinds of conditions can be undertaken without fear of adverse experiences.



On August 22, 1924, one of the worst storms ever to visit the area, a veritable cloudburst which began at midnight and continued for about two hours, flooding streets, washing out roads, and in some cases inundating homes occurred. Train service was crippled by washouts. George Siebold of Mishicot lost his life while attempting to open the dam. Three men, E. Sogge, James Dorey and Elmer Elfner, were injured when their auto was washed into an open culvert at the Muth farm on Highway B, just to the north of Manitowoc.



The bridge at Manitowoc Rapids built in 1886 by Weinhausen Bridge Construction, Milwaukee.

Manitowoc County, Town Treasurer's Office.
Town of Cato January 14th 1895
Received of Thomas Larson the sum of Sixteen 87/100
Dollars in full for all Taxes assessed upon the hereinafter described property, in the Town of Cato
for the year 1895, including the delinquent School and Road Tax for the year 1894, to wit:

| DESCRIPTION. | SEC. | T. | R. | ACR'S. | 100THS | TOTAL TAX. |
|--|------|----|----|--------|--------|------------|
| part of the M ¹ / ₂ of M ¹ / ₄ | 35 | 19 | 22 | 21 | 00 | 8, etc |
| M ¹ / ₂ of M ¹ / ₄ | 26 | " | " | 80 | 00 | 16.87 |

Thomas Thornton Town Treasurer.

MOTERING IN THE EARLY DAYS

It took a great deal of planning to make a 50-mile trip by motor car in the early days of Manitowoc County.

Three Manitowoc couples attempted – and completed – a tour all the way to Appleton and returned one summer day in 1904.

Messrs. and Mesdames William Rahr Jr., Dr. and Mrs. A.C. Fraser, A.J. Endries and Mrs. E.G. Nash, attired in duster coats and goggles, made the round trip in two autos. Rahr and Fraser were at the wheels of the motor cars. A large crowd gathered to see the traveling party off and to wish them luck.

The excursion ended just after dusk. The traveling party was hot, dusty and weary – but happy. The motorists spoke of the many interesting sites along the country roads.

And as Dr. Fraser explained – “We had only four tire explosions along the entire route!” Excerpt from John Harmon's Early Manitowoc County History, Episode No. 88.

A Brief History of Highway and Bridge Building In Manitowoc County (1836 to Present)

by EDWARD BERKEDAL and WALTER HANDL, former Manitowoc County Highway Commissioners

First means of travel — Rivers and Indian trails.

1839 — First Military road from Green Bay (Fort Howard) to Chicago (Fort Dearborn). Through Manitowoc Rapids.

1848 — The State Legislature laid out and opened a road called state road from Manitowoc to Fond du Lac. Said road had to be maintained by the township through which it passed. First main stage service from Milwaukee to Green Bay 1849. Chapter 16 was passed setting up a state road system. Roads then laid out by townships. Township Organization 9. Poll Tax — Clergy exempted.

1848-49 — Plank Roads

1850-60 — Railroad Era. 900 miles railroad by 1860. Total railroad miles reached by 1920 was 7,456. (None in Manitowoc County.)

1870-90 — Road construction lost interest.

1871 — Dr. Carhart — 2 cylinder steam auto.

1875 — Legislature offered an award of \$10,000 for first practical horseless carriage.

1890-1900 — Bicycles created interest in highways. First good roads Association.

1900 — Automobiles started to increase so that by 1905 there were 1,492 autos registered in Wisconsin. License fee \$1.00. By 1909 there were 3,040 autos licensed and an increase of the fee to \$2.00.

1912 — License fee was \$5.00.

1905 — A joint resolution was passed by state legislature which provided that the state appropriate monies to be raised by property tax for construction and improvement of highways.

1907 — Again passed.

1908 — Approved by the people.

1907 — A law was also passed empowering counties to aid in construction of rural roads and levy taxes and also further provided that the county boards elect a Highway Commissioner.

1911 — First state aid law — cooperation between State, County, and Towns; also created a State Highway Commission.

1911 — Manitowoc elected first Highway Commissioner for 1912. Salary \$600.

1912 to present — Highway Commissioners — Schmook, Muth, Connell, Breuer, Berkedal, Handl, Halverson.

1916 — Autos increased to 124,603. First Federal Aid law.

1917 — Establish and lay out State Highway system not to exceed 5,000 miles and accepted number system of marking the routes later adopted by the rest of the states.

Manitowoc County: Highway 16, now 141 Sheboygan County Line through Manitowoc to Brown County Line. Highway 17, now 42, from Manitowoc through Two Rivers to Kewaunee County line. Highway 18, now 10, from Manitowoc to Calumet County line near Brillion. Highway 148, now 32, from Kiel to Sheboygan County line. Total 78.8 miles.

1918 — May — Every county erected signs. System of patrolling roads.

1919 — State added 2500 more miles to State Highway system. Highway 56, now 151, from Manitowoc to Chilton was added. 95.5 miles in county roads that were part of state highway system.

1923 — Auto license hiked to various weights and first 2 cents gas tax. The State Highway Commission was directed to expand highway system from 7,500 to 10,000. Roads added in Manitowoc County — 147, 148, 149, 163, and 32 from Kiel to Brown County line. 42 from Four Corners to Sheboygan County line for a total of 87.5 miles. Making the total of State Highways in the County, 182 miles.

1929 — Snow removal money ran out.

1931 — State added 2 cents gas tax and revised system of payment to counties, towns, and cities. First time state paid for snow removal.

1933-43 — Amount appropriated by legislature for highways \$87,530,000 out of \$121,930,000 revenue from Moto. Vehicle or a difference of \$39,400,000

plus \$2,000,000 transferred to general fund by Chapter 140 — Laws 1953.

1945 — Segregation laws passed.

1950 — Added 1,000 more miles to State Highway System, Manitowoc County got 4 miles.

Concrete Road Program

1914-15 — First concrete road — 9' wide, stretched between Manitowoc and Two Rivers. Money raised by the business men of Manitowoc and Two Rivers. Money in gold brought to Treasurer, Chas. Drumm in field. Second project — from Kiel to Brooklyn on what is now State Highway 57.

1920 — Third project, what is now Reed Ave., Federal Aid No. 2 in the State. Fourth project, about 4 miles on what is now 141 from Newton toward Manitowoc. After 2nd referendum bond issue failed the County Board.

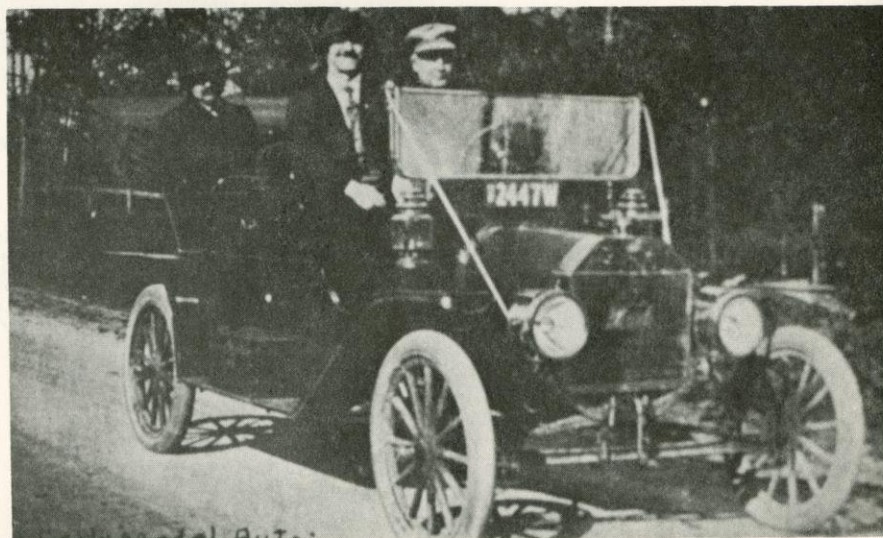
1927 — Floated a bond of \$1,049,000. Together with about \$200,000 direct taxes per year and State Free Fund, various projects were built.

1937 — A \$660,000 bond issue was floated. Today there are 108.2 miles of concrete roads of State Highway and 68 miles of Black Top.

1947 — Retirement of bonds, by state, last bond retired. State Aid allotment \$143,000. State Highway paid for by state.

Cost of concrete and other projects — Manitowoc County from 1917 to 1957

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| County Bonds | 1,709,000 |
| State Hwy Allot, Fed. | |
| Aid & Co. Allot | 9,066,000 |
| County Funds | 2,585,000 |
| Railroads & Cities | 115,000 |
| Total | \$13,475,000 |



Reminiscences of EDWARD BERKEDAL

Highway Commissioner in Manitowoc County from 1930 to 1963



Ed Berkedal, Manitowoc County's Highway Commissioner from 1930 to 1963, was born in Manitowoc on February 21, 1898. He attended a rural school in the town of Rockwood, his parents having moved to a farm in the town of Kossuth soon after his birth. With only a grade school education, but with plenty of ambition, an aptitude toward things mechanical in their nature, a good deal of curiosity about what makes things work, and an alertness and interest in the experiences associated with work and living, the subject of this biographical sketch at the age of 16 years began working for the J.J. Stangel Hardware Company in Manitowoc. He was a clerk in the store, the driver of the delivery truck, and general handyman. One of the customers of the J.J. Stangel Store was Frank Muth who was the Highway Commissioner of Manitowoc County at that time. He was attracted to this young clerk by the way that he applied himself to his work. He took note of his interest in things mechanical, especially in trucks, which obviously were about to replace horses and wagons which had been the common means of transporting heavy loads before that time.

It was in 1916 that the Highway Department was in need of a truck driver, and Ed Berkedal applied for the job. His application was accepted and he began working for Manitowoc County at a wage of 27½ cents per hour.

Trucks in those days had solid rubber tires, and with dirt roads common, truck driving hardly was a job that could be regarded as a sinecure. His job required that he do other work also. One of the jobs was to operate a two wheeled scraper which was the common device by which earth was moved in those days. The

scraper was held in place by what was known as "the Johnson bar." It was not easy to hold the scraper in place, especially if earth such as heavy clay was being moved. The work became even more arduous when there were stones or roots in the way. These two wheeled scrapers often were pulled by two teams of horses, thus, the man on "the Johnson bar" had to be physically strong, and one who could stand the rigors of hard work.

A truck driver in the early days usually was required to haul two dump wagons in back of his truck. To pull these loads over the roads of that day required that the truck be operated in low gear. By the time that the trucks arrived at the place where the wagons were unloaded, the engines were steaming. Trucks could not long stand use in this way. Mr. Berkedal persuaded his foreman that it was not a good use of time or machinery to overload a truck, and so the hauling was done with the truck alone. He demonstrated that more loads could be hauled that way than formerly were hauled when both trucks and wagons were used. Mr. Berkedal was a truck driver for five years. Men on these jobs had work only during the summer season and were laid off during the winter months.

After World War I the U.S. government offered to state and county units of government army surplus equipment such as trucks. Most of these were equipped for military service. To make the trucks useful for highway work it was necessary to remove the ammunition boxes and to put bodies on the trucks so that gravel and other highway supplies could be hauled.

The U.S. government set up a school at Clintonville to instruct those who were purchasing army equipment how to overhaul the trucks for civilian uses. Truck maintenance was also taught. Ed Berkedal was the man that the Manitowoc County Highway Department sent to this school. The horse barns on the grounds of the Manitowoc County Fair were used in those days for doing truck repair work. A fire, however, made necessary other facilities where such work could be done. Thus the first highway shops were built at a cost of \$5,000. Mr. Berkedal then was put in charge of all truck maintenance work. In 1927 he became the highway shop superintendent. A person doing truck maintenance work in those days had to be very versatile. Repair parts were not always on hand, nor were they even available. Often it was necessary to make the parts using a lathe and other tools.

The Highway Commissioner in those years was Frank Muth, who was also a contractor. There were some on the County Board of Supervisors who felt that there was a "conflict of interest" and that one person should not hold both jobs. Thus Frank Muth resigned his position of Highway Commissioner and kept his contracting business. He was succeeded by Joe Connell who died several years after having been named to this position. Mr. Connell was succeeded by Orval Breuer, who previously had been a surveyor and the County Engineer. When the opportunity came to him to acquire the Bahr Construction Company, he resigned as the County Highway Commissioner.

Although Ed Berkedal had no formal engineering training, his genius around machinery was recognized. Thus, he was prevailed upon to be a candidate for the office of Highway Commissioner, a step, which incidentally he took reluctantly. In the County Board election held on November 16, 1929, he was elected on the first ballot. He took office on January 1, 1930, and for 33 years served in that capacity.

Road Building and Maintenance Problems

When Ed Berkedal began working for the County Highway Department the clamor for improved highways was just beginning in earnest. The increasing number of automobiles in service brought on a furor for hard surfaced roads. Macadam roads were the first answer to building hard surfaced highways. Macadam roads were built of stone. The bottom layer of stone was crushed to about a size of 1¼ inches. Water was used to bind the rock, and a heavy roller was used to compact the roadbed. Over this was placed smaller pieces of rock, these being about ¾ inch in size. These were compacted in the same manner as the larger pieces. Over this was put a layer of sand. The first macadam road to be built was on Menasha Avenue in Manitowoc from North 11th Street to Four Corners — or to the present Highway 141. Other macadam roads built in Manitowoc County were on Highway D and Highway 141. There were only short stretches of this kind of road. (Incidentally, the road on Menasha Avenue had also been the first plank road, constructed about 1850, and this was succeeded by a "corduroy road." The plank road in the early days was a toll road. A plank road was also built in or near Kiel.)

The first concrete highway to be built was from Manitowoc to Two Rivers. The roadbed on this stretch of road was very sandy, and was almost as impassable as were those roads that went through swampy and marshy areas. The first concrete highway was only nine feet wide. Later this was increased to a width of 30 feet and with the increasing amount of automobile traffic, it later became a two lane highway.

It was in 1925 that snow plowing became an issue. The plows were attached to the county trucks. There was no state aid for snow removal in those days, and each county was on its own as it tried to devise ways and means of keeping the roads open and passable in the winter season. When the two cent gasoline tax law was passed, snow removal became a state funded project on state roads. Snow removal was done only on state highways of which Manitowoc County had many miles, due largely to the efforts of Mr. Frederick, who at the time was the assemblyman from Manitowoc County.

In 1925, when the department first started plowing snow, Mr. Berkedal built one of the first snow plowing units. It consisted of a specially made quarter inch sheet of iron with makeshift attachments to hold it to a truck. "That one-way plow worked fairly good too," Mr. Berkedal recalled with a smile.

While road construction work generally was seasonal, there were certain kinds of work that could better be done during the winter season. This was especially the case where the roads went through swamps. One of the roads that was constructed in winter was Highway 177 north of the Point Beach State Forest. Sand was hauled for the roadbed from a pit in the area. Gravel was put on top of the sand. Another road that was built in a similar manner was the one at Menchalville. Highway JJ east of Collins was a bit different, for this had a solid bottom of clay.

During the 1920's culvert construction work was largely done by private contractors. One year no bids could be secured on work to be done, thus it was necessary that the county get a crew of men of its own to do the work. One of the early crews to do culvert work for the county came from the School Hill area. This crew of men worked so efficiently and well that they proved that it would be cheaper to do this type of construction in that way. Thus, after that year all culvert and bridge construction work was done by county crews.

During the Korean War in 1954 there was a shortage of structural steel. Bridge abutments had been built for a bridge on

the Lakeshore Road. However, the I-beams were not available which were necessary to provide a roadbed for the bridge. One day an agent of the Hulbert Company, a concrete construction company from Green Bay, suggested that pre-stressed concrete beams be put over the bridge abutments. Mr. Berkedal was able to persuade the Highway committee members of the feasibility of this solution to the dilemma in which they found themselves due to the shortage of steel for bridge building purposes. The idea was an entirely new one. No other bridge of like size had been constructed in this way west of the Allegheny mountains. The Green Bay company had gotten the idea from a company in Germany and had seen the idea used for a bridge in eastern U.S.A. The use of pre-stressed concrete beams for bridge construction work thus was first used on the Lakeshore Road bridge. Now all bridges in Manitowoc County are built in this manner. Altogether there now are about 75 bridges of this kind. Soon after, this type of bridge construction was approved by the State Highway Department of Wisconsin. Incidentally, when Mr. Berkedal retired from his position as Highway Commissioner in 1963 he became a consultant for the Hulbert Company. Pre-stressed concrete beams for bridges were feasible for the work of bridge building for it was a cheaper and faster type of construction than was the former method of steel construction.

At this point we would digress a bit to note that Mr. Berkedal served in an office which generally requires training in a School of Engineering. He had no such training. While such training can be very helpful and useful for a person required

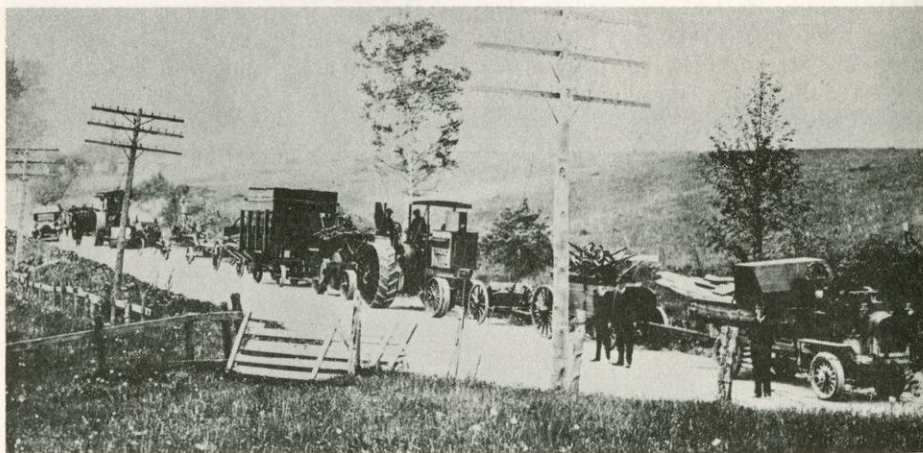
of one who must make the decisions involved in highway and bridge construction work "a little bit of good common sense and practical experience went a long way," said Mr. Berkedal.

The Construction of County Highway Shops

Earlier we remarked that when the Highway Shops were moved from the Fairgrounds, a building costing \$5,000 was constructed. It was during the depression years that the Highway committee proposed new Highway Shops be built on a 7½ acrea plot on Waldo Boulevard west of the overhead. Mr. Berkedal strongly supported this recommendation of the committee. There was vociferous opposition to the proposal, however, as it was felt that it was an unnecessary expenditure during a period of depression. Cost of the original 200 x 700 foot building and adjacent railroad spur amounted to \$42,000. This perhaps was one of the best public expenditures that the county ever made.

Mr. Berkedal Active in State Organizations

During the years when Mr. Berkedal was a County Highway Commissioner he was active in organizations related to his work. He served as secretary, vice president and president of the Wisconsin Highway Commissioners' Association in the 1940's and later held similar offices in an organization comprising commissioners and committeemen in Highway District No. 3. He headed a county organization which promoted highway safety for many years and served on the Wisconsin State Safety Council as highway representative for six years.



On the way to a road construction job in 1918 (perhaps a macadam road job). From right to left, Ed Berkedal, driver of first truck on which the tool box was carried. Tom Fagan, construction foreman standing beside truck; wagon containing small scrapers, etc., behind the first truck. Standing beside this wagon, Frank Muth, Highway Commissioner, and an unidentified man; behind the wagon is a 2-wheeled scraper. Art Fleckner is the engineer in the Case tractor, which is pulling a gravel crusher and also the gravel bin in back. Two road graders are also being pulled by the Case tractor. Bringing up the rear is a road roller.

WALTER J. HANDL



Manitowoc County's sixth highway commissioner was Walter J. Handl. He began working for the Manitowoc County Highway Department with one of their road construction crews on May 1, 1934. In 1936 he was transferred to bituminous, snow removal, marking and signing operations. These responsibilities were his until 1946 when he became the office manager, a position he held until 1961 when he was named the highway maintenance patrol superintendent. In 1963 he was elected to the position of County Highway Commissioner by the Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors, a position that he held until his retirement in January, 1976. Altogether, Mr. Handl served the Manitowoc County Highway Department in some way or other for 41 years and 8 months.

During his term as Highway Commissioner, these were some of the actions that were taken:

1. The hot-mix black top plant was replaced by a larger plant to increase production.
2. Three small stone crushers were replaced with one large machine.
3. Smaller material hauling trucks were replaced with larger trucks.
4. A new outlying shop was built at St. Nazianz for faster service, especially in winter.
5. Over 50 miles of town roads were added to the county trunk highway system.
6. A modern two-way radio communication system was installed for closer contact with operations.
7. Employees were put on a 40-hour week except for emergencies.
8. State and county roads were divided into maintenance sections, so that

all areas received the same service.

9. A uniform marking and signing program was instituted.
10. More than 700 miles of roads were serviced winter and summer.
11. During the 13 years of the years he served as Highway Commissioner, annually about 35 miles of county and town roads were constructed (or reconstructed).
12. Many antiquated bridges, many in the 90 to 100 foot class were replaced by county crews.
13. Some of the larger bridges built were at Fisher Creek on the Kossuth - Gibson town line, the Branch bridge, and the Cato Falls and Wetenkamp bridges in Manitowoc Rapids.
14. Over 60 miles of new black top was laid and an average of 200,000 cubic yards of gravel produced annually.
15. Major county trunks rebuilt were Q north of Manitowoc, JJ west to Clarks Mills, J south of Valders, AA south of State Highway 32, X and M in the town of Meeme, and GG and K in the town of Maple Grove.
16. Construction of roads and bridges on other than county and town roads were handled by the State Department of Transportation. Major improvements by them have been: a. The Melnik overhead on U.S. Highway 141, State Highway 147 from Two Rivers to Mishicot, State Highway 163 north of Mishicot, and the Waldo Boulevard and overhead on the Boulevard from Lake Michigan to the west Manitowoc city limits.

A Concluding Statement

Road building had its beginning about 1840 as one sees when the records of town and village records are read. There was agitation that a system of transportation be set up so that people could get their crops and other farm products to market. However, there was uncertainty as to the best solution to these problems in view of the development of railroads in America. In the 1850's and after the energies of people were directed toward bringing a railroad to Manitowoc county. In the later years of the century some attention was given to highway and bridge construction, but until the automobile became prominent as a means of transportation, improved highways remained more or less a local community problem.

The development of our county highway system, and all that is involved in it occurred during those years when Mr.

Berkedal was employed by Manitowoc County in some capacity or other. Walter Handl succeeded Mr. Berkedal in 1963 as County Highway Commissioner, and he, in turn, was succeeded by the present commissioner, Herman Halverson, in January 1976. We would direct your attention especially to the "Brief History of Highways of Manitowoc County." This shows the great progress made in providing for our people an all-weather and all-season system of highway transportation for nearly all people. Most people have hard surfaced highways at hand, a circumstance which in 1930 seemed very remote.

While this monograph relates especially to land transportation, we would remind you that we are a county bounded on the east by Lake Michigan. This lake has always been an important avenue of transportation. As a matter of fact in the early years it was about the only means of transportation that the people of the county had. While car ferry service did not come to Manitowoc until about 1880, it has been an important adjunct to the railroad and highway transportation system which is ours. Should we ever lose this avenue of moving the products of Manitowoc industry to world markets, it will represent a void which cannot be fully estimated now. Let us hope that we can continue to only improve and expand on transportation systems which are vital to the life style to which we have become accustomed. And let us not forget the many who had a part in bringing us where we are now. People with vision, and the will to work for the good of the many are resources that we must not overlook as we think of what we are now as a community. We do well to occasionally pause and reflect on where we are, and how it came about that we reached the pinnacles that we have attained.

The History of Bridges in the City of Manitowoc

We are indebted to Miss June Fetzer, Manitowoc City Clerk, for the following information about bridge construction in Manitowoc.

Aug. 30, 1858 — Bid awarded to B. Hiko-torth of Waukegan for \$6,474 for 8th Street bridge.

Mar. 12, 1872 — Awarded bids for "Main Street Bridge" to Loverlein and Meyer for \$20,660 (Manitowoc County Atlas for 1878 through 1921 shows 10th Street indicated as Main Street).

Jan. 29, 1874 — Awarded bid for new 8th Street bridge to August Meyer for \$9,490.

May 5, 1897 — Contract for Main Street bridge awarded to Wisconsin Bridge and Iron Co. of Milwaukee for \$4,875., Manitowoc Steam Boiler Works for \$2,275., Matthew and Kirch for \$2,390.

Dec. 21, 1896 — Petition of 309 citizens to move bridge from 10th St. to 21st St. was received.

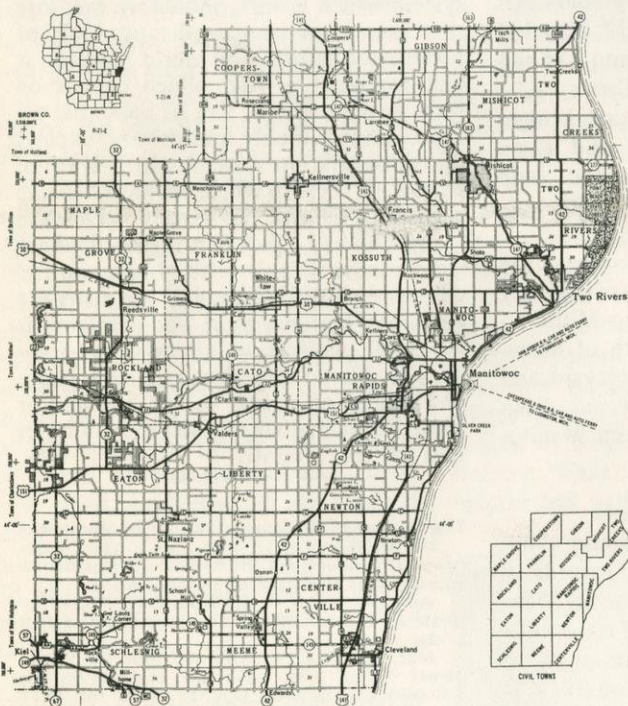
Mar. 1, 1920 — Bids received for the removal of 10th St. bridge and construction of 21st St. bridge and also for a pontoon bridge at 9th St. Accepted bid of McMullen and Pitz Construction Co., for a total of \$31,500. (The pontoon bridge at 9th St. was used while the 10th St. bridge was under construction.

1925 — The bridge on 8th St. was replaced in 1925 with the present bridge.

The 10th St. bridge that was moved to 21st St. was later replaced;... date of replacement was not learned at time of writing this monograph. Probably about 1940.



Paving Washington Street



MANITOWOC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Address all Communications to:

NEWSLETTER

1115 North 18th Street

Manistowoc, Wisconsin 54220

Mr. & Mrs. Robert C. Madson
712 N. 11th Street
Manistowoc, Wis., 54220

5593 8013

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Manistowoc, Wis.

PERMIT No. 388

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED.
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED.**