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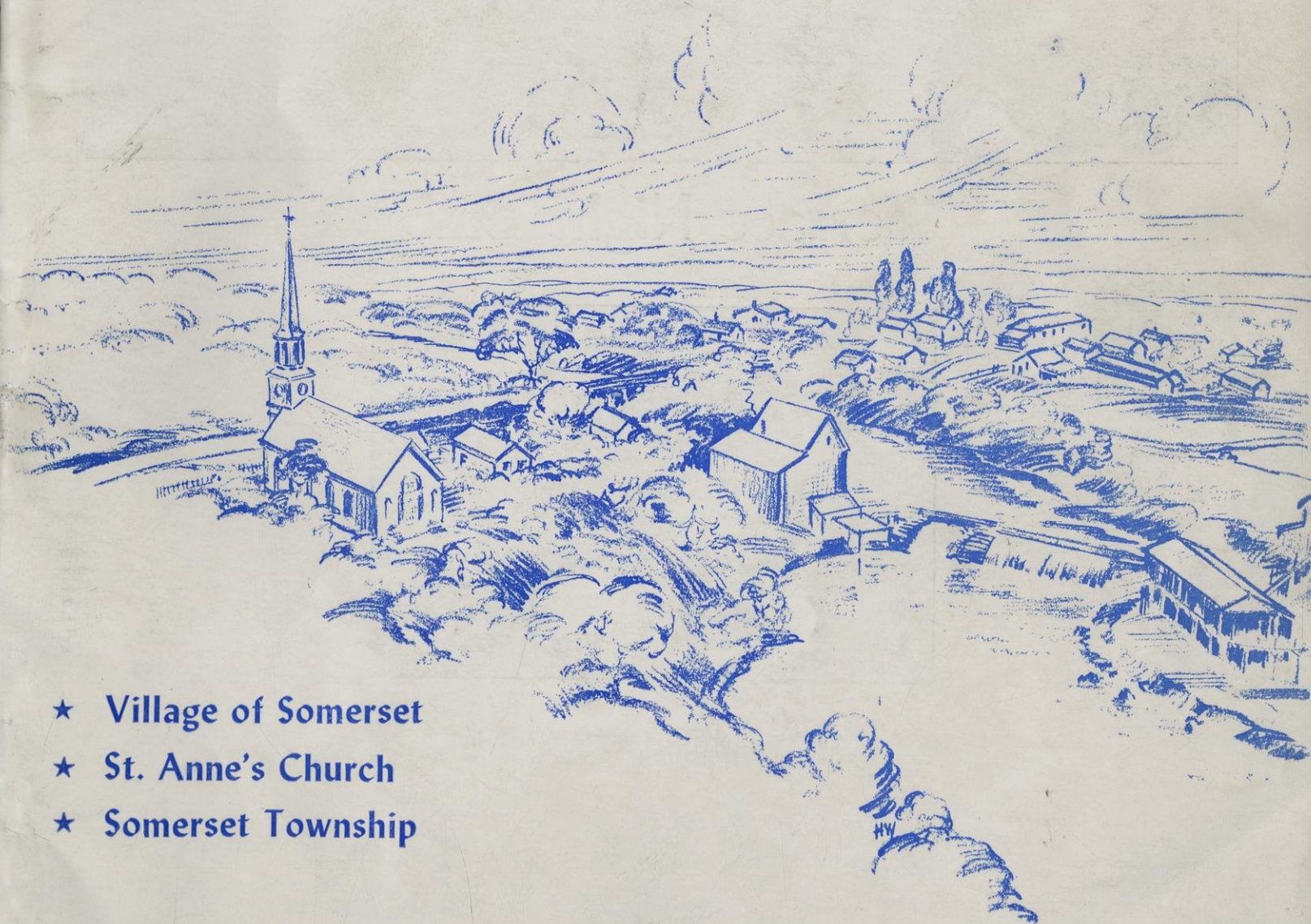
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1856

1956

# TRIPLE CENTENNIAL JUBILEE SOMERSET, WISCONSIN

June 22, 23, 24, 1956



- ★ Village of Somerset
- ★ St. Anne's Church
- ★ Somerset Township





## Terrace Night Club



Dave Breault



# Rendezvous Somerset, Wis.



The Old Somerset Hotel and Saloon

Taken In 1909



Rendezvous, 1956

AUREL CLOUTIER, Owner



# PROGRAM

## Triple Centennial - Somerset, Wis.

### Friday, June 22 — "PIONEER DAY"

- 12:00 Noon — Opening of Historical Museum
- 7:00 P.M. — Kangaroo Court Session
- 8:00 P.M. — WAVN Radio Stage Show
- 9:00 P.M. — Outdoor Square Dancing

### Saturday, June 23 — "PEA SOUP DAY"

Free Pea Soup Given To All

- 9:00 A.M. — Ball Game, Village vs. Township
- 11:00 A.M. — Awards for Beards
- 12:00 N - 2:30 P.M. — French-Canadian Dinner For All  
(French Foods), St. Anne's Hall
- 2:00 P.M. — Log Rolling and Water Sports
- 3:30 P.M. — Kiddie Centennial Parade
- 8:00 P.M. — Pageant Under the Lights
- 9:00 P.M. — Fireworks and Street Dancing

### Sunday, June 24 — "JEAN BAPTISTE DAY"

- 6:30 A.M. — Mass at St. Anne's
- 8:00 A.M. — Mass at St. Anne's
- 8:00 A.M. — Lutheran Services
- 9:30 A.M. — Pontifical Mass, Bishop Annabring
- 10:30 A.M. — Ground Breaking for St. Anne's New School
- 11:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M. — "Dinner au Buffet" —  
French-Canadian Dinner For All,  
St. Anne's Hall
- 2:30 P.M. — Centennial Parade
- 8:00 P.M. — Pageant
- 9:00 P.M. — Fireworks



# **TRIPLE CENTENNIAL JUBILEE SOUVENIR BOOK**

Containing the History of  
VILLAGE OF SOMERSET, SOMERSET TOWNSHIP  
AND ST. ANNE'S CHURCH

with  
FAMILY HISTORIES AND PICTURES

and  
Occasional Descriptions  
Both Past and Present

Author and Editor  
John T. Rivard, Somerset, Wis.

PRICE \$2.00

For additional copies  
send check or money order to  
John T. Rivard, Somerset, Wis.



GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

*to the*

STURDY PIONEERS

*of the Township and Village of Somerset*

*and the*

PARISH OF ST. ANNE

*to all the*

CIVIC OFFICERS

*Both Past and Present*

*to all the*

PRIESTS, SISTERS AND BROTHERS

*Who Have Worked In or Originated From the*

*Parish of St. Anne*

*and Finally to All the*

DESCENDANTS AND PRESENT MEMBERS

*of Those Participating In the*

TRIPLE CENTENNIAL OF SOMERSET, WISCONSIN



# Foreword

The preparation of this Souvenir Book of the Triple Centennial of Somerset has been a work of love. Anything worthwhile is worth suffering for. I have worked hard and long to find authentic material and collect data and pictures. In seeking out with curious eye the meat and bone of the past and present I have learned to love even more the richness and the quality of our history, the people and the terrain where we live. The innermost secrets of peoples and events have revealed to me a greatness and stature that is much taller than we think of normally.

I present this history and the accounts of events and families with a deep hope that this book will engender a greater appreciation of the past and a more respectful approach to the future. We who live in a given territory are trustees and stewards of the land, the buildings, the organizations and the civic life which has been given to us. We have received much more than we have given. When we realize the magnitude of the tasks performed by those who started and have gone before us, the more we are capable of carrying on in the same tradition with progress. The more we know about persons, the more we love them. The more we love people and their life and work, the more we can do for them the things that are for their good. The more we learn about our own, the more we become conscious of our own destiny. Love begets imitation. A generation filled with a glowing pride in its home and people will not stray far from the high ideals it has received.

We have received a great heritage. You can run the gamut of personal virtues and spiritual values—and our fathers and forefathers have practiced them all. They have given us much more than we can comprehend at one time. This book endeavors to present OUR HERITAGE in a form that can be digested over a period of years. Read and reread these accounts. Your children will peruse these pages in the years to come to their advantage.

In one full swoop I have brought together all the peoples, their history and their life in a panorama of colorful display. The historical, the economic, the spiritual and the political life of our peoples is molded together as one throbbing unit. As this book has been compiled through the cooperation of many, so it is hoped that the life of Our Place will progress always with the cooperation of all.

In presenting this book to the public I hope and pray that you will look benignly and forgivingly on all the errors and omissions that it may contain. I have attempted with utmost care to be factual and correct. There are several things that it could or should contain, but time waits for no man—and this book had to come to an end in order to be published.

Gratitude for the help I have received is here acknowledged with deep appreciation. I cannot mention all the names of these good souls. The names of contributors who wrote articles are given after their article. Special mention must be made to Milton Vanasse and Junior Montpetit who solicited ads to make this publication possible. The Family History Committee did stalwart work to collect data. They are Mrs. Ed Dufresne, Mrs. J. S. Plourde, and Mrs. Louis Martell. The officers of the Historical Society are thanked and their names appear under their picture. To all who brought in pictures—thank you! Thanks also for pictures to John Runk of Stillwater and Cal Humphrey who took all our present day pictures.

Thanks are due to Bernard Peterson and his Central Centennial Committee. The Centennial Celebration's success is due in large part to the cooperation of James Watters and the Village Board and Milton Meinke and the Town Board. Billy Shay and N. E. Parnell worked mightily on the Pageant. The Minnesota Historical Society furnished some of the pictures of John Till. Finally, I thank sincerely "our Sisters" and Ann Roeslein, my helpers.

May God bless all of you.

June 4, 1956

The Author





Governor of Wisconsin  
**WALTER J. KOHLER**

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

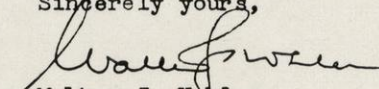
June 5, 1956

It is a pleasure to congratulate the citizens of Somerset Village and Township and friends of St. Anne's Church upon your triple centennial.

It is always gratifying when a community takes great pride in its history and accomplishments, and certainly a centennial is a valuable opportunity to consider what you have been and what you wish to become.

If the past is any indication, there is no doubt that Somerset and St. Anne's have a bright future, and on behalf of the people of Wisconsin, I send you all best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

  
Walter J. Kohler  
Governor



# Home In The Hills

## A HISTORY OF SOMERSET, WISCONSIN

### CHAPTER I EXPLORATION

The first white man to set foot on Wisconsin soil was Jean Nicolet in 1634. He had ventured forth from Quebec, Canada, to find a water route to the Pacific. He landed near Green Bay. Centuries before he came, this valley of the St. Croix River was occupied mostly by Chippewa Indians. The territory extending from the confluence of the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers at Prescott to points about one hundred miles north on each river was a peaceful ground by mutual consent between the Chippewa and the Sioux Tribes. The Sioux lived west of the Mississippi and the Chippewa roamed east and north of the St. Croix. For very practical reasons, namely, to keep their scalps where they belonged — on their heads, the two tribes avoided setting too long in this buffer zone. If one group would pitch a camp it was not long before the other tribe would raid them. All great wars between the two brave tribes were fought north or south of this double valley.

The Sioux Indians wore skins and their canoes were dug-outs, while the Chippewa wore fabrics and traveled in birch-bark canoes. The last great battle between the tribes was below St. Paul on the Mississippi in 1842. A white trader had married a Sioux squaw and was living on the east bank. A band of 200 Chippewa crossed the river and killed her. When a band of Sioux braves crossed the river to revenge the killing they were ambushed by the Chippewa. This place is called Bloody Run. A few years later the Sioux returned the "compliment" and all was even after that.

The Indians did not bother the white settlers and loggers too much. There were occasions when they were a nuisance by coming into a settlement demanding food. The settlers gladly gave them food out of fear. Who wanted to argue with the fierce looking Chippewa peering through the window and making signs that he wanted food — and quick!

There still remains to this day the remains of the Chippewa burial ground at the mouth of the Apple River. Just before the river joins the waters of the St. Croix there is an island. On this high piece of ground the Indians of this district buried their dead. Stone markings can be seen. The settlers remember seeing from time to time in the early days a group of Indians land on the island and perform their burial ritual.

The first white man to stroke the waters of the St. Croix River and pass the mouth of the Apple River was Daniel Greysolon, Sieur DuLhut in 1680. He had heard of the Sioux along the Mississippi which had been discovered by Marquette and Joliet in 1672. He was looking for a route to the Western Sea. He ascended the Brule River from Lake Superior. He wrote: "Not being satisfied with having made my discovery of the Mississippi by land, I took two canoes, with an Indian who was my interpreter, and four Frenchmen, to seek means to make it by water. I entered a river where having cut trees and broken about a hundred beaver dams, I reached the upper waters. Then I made a portage a half a league to reach (Lake St. Croix at Solon Springs) the outlet which fell into a very fine river, which took me down to the Mississippi."

DuLhut passed the mouth of the Apple River in August of 1680. He reports in his accounts, as does Louis Hennepin also, that he, DuLhut, saved Hennepin from the Indians who were keeping him captive. This occurred in September of 1680 on the Mississippi North of the Twin Cities. The city of Duluth was named for him.



Daniel Greysolon, Sieur DuLhut

First White Man in Somerset 1680

With the development of the fur trade, this Brule-St. Croix river route became the scene of great activity. Michel Curot was a great trader around 1803, traveling these waters and dealing with the Indians. He was followed by legions of others. The territory abounded in game and fish. Pierre Bouchea, who with his brother-in-law, Louis Massey, were the first white settlers in St. Croix County at the mouth of the Willow River (now Hudson) in 1840, relates that one fall he killed one hundred and thirty deer, sixteen elk and three bears. Deer skins were so plentiful that they had no market value.

The St. Croix (Holy Cross in English) River was named early by the explorers. Some say that it was named because of the natural stone cross which stands out of the rocks at the Dalles in St. Croix Falls. Other historians say it was named after one of the early parties who died and was buried near the mouth of the river at Prescott. His name was Mons St. Croix.



## ST. CROIX VALLEY

The saw mill opened up the rich St. Croix Valley to the settlers. In 1838 Lewis Judd and David Hone of Marine, Illinois explored the St. Croix River. They staked a claim at Marine-on-the-St. Croix naming it after their home-town. In 1839 with a company of thirteen they traveled from St. Louis in thirteen days arriving on May 13. By August they were sawing lumber. Their mill was the first to turn out lumber in Minnesota on the St. Croix. The following year a mill was started at St. Croix Falls. Then followed mills all along the St. Croix until in 1850 there were about fifteen mills with thousands of men working.

Before we enter into the period of the settlement on the Apple River, let us look briefly at the political subdivisions of this territory.

From 1634 to the Treaty of Paris in 1763 this territory was claimed by the French Regime in Quebec. From 1763 to 1783 when the British recognized the United States of America after the Revolutionary War, the St. Croix Valley belonged to Great Britain. After 1783 this territory had several different affiliations: Western part of Virginia, Northern part of Illinois, Western part of Michigan, and finally St. Croix County was founded within the Territory of Wisconsin on January 9, 1840. The county comprised all the land in Northwest Wisconsin plus the land West of the St. Croix to the Mississippi in Minnesota. Stillwater was the county seat. That site was selected by a vote of 45 to 13 over the site at Prescott. Stillwater was called Dakotah at that time. St. Paul and Minneapolis did not exist then. The county extended to Lake Superior.

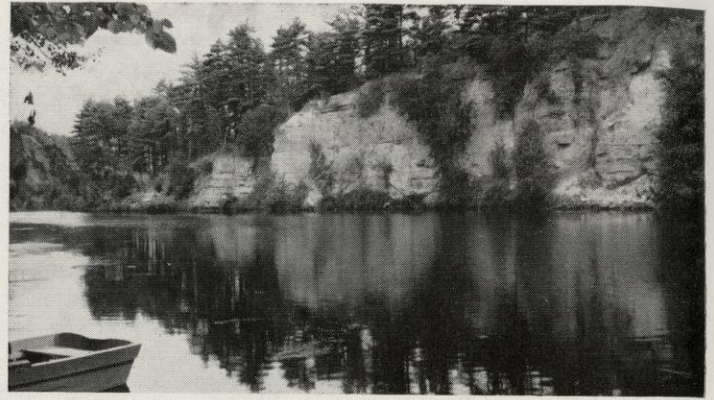
When there were plans for making the Territory of Wisconsin into a State in the Union, William Holcombe of St. Croix Falls, a delegate from the County, urged that the Mississippi should be the western boundary of the state. Congress did not accept it. The St. Croix River was made the western line.

The situation that followed the admission of Wisconsin as a state in 1848 was a peculiar one. Stillwater, the county seat of St. Croix, was now in the Territory of Minnesota! The state legislature at Madison named Buena Vista the county seat in 1848. (Buena Vista was named Willow River in 1851. In 1852 it was given the name of Hudson because the St. Croix resembled the Hudson River in New York). At this time St. Croix County comprised a territory from below Prescott north to Danbury. In 1853 the county assumed its present boundaries of 24 miles by 30 miles.

In 1850 the population of the County was 624. In 1855 it was 2040. By 1870 it had grown to 11,039. The entries for homesteads at the land office were 15 in 1850. In 1855 — 2,440. Tax roll in 1849 — \$4,949; in 1856 — \$140,000.

## APPLE RIVER SETTLEMENT

The Apple River begins its winding way to the St. Croix from five miles north of Turtle Lake. This beautiful stream flows at times majestically between the gentle rolling banks of green pines and carpets of green shrubs and waving grass, and at times it cuts its way through high banks of limestone and rock as it cascades merrily to lose itself in the swift-flowing St. Croix. About one mile from the mouth of the Apple River the water cuts through hard rock to form a beautiful falls of some fifty feet. Though the river is only sixty or seventy miles long, it has had ten mills and power stations along its route at one time.



Apple River Near Somerset

There were many French-Canadians working on the St. Croix and in the logging camps before 1850. The virgin timber fell before the onslaught of the army of the logging kings. The kings were blind to the great destruction of trees, but the simple lumberjacks had other dreams. Among the pines and rolling hills they dreamed of a "chez nous" (*home*). They would start with a little log cabin, then they would break the land acre by acre. With the help of "le bon Dieu" they would someday be able to call it "chez nous". You cannot have a home and a family by running from camp to camp in the woods. And the French-Canadian is a family man. He wants his wife as queen in the house and his numerous children ready at hand to help in the task of keeping the table heavy with food.

The Parent Brothers, Joseph and Louis, were the two first settlers in this area of the Apple River. Leaving their home in La Baie du Febrve on the St. Lawrence River in the Province of Quebec the two young and adventurous men struck out for Wisconsin. They had heard about the opportunity of working in the woods or the sawmills and the chance of acquiring some land owned by the federal government. The large families of the Quebecois had exhausted the opportunities of new farms close to the river. The West was the land of fortune, great things were going to take place in the next generation.

In 1850, the two brothers came by boat through the Great Lakes. They came by Chicago overland, or by the Illinois River, to Prairie du Chien. Thence up the Mississippi and the St. Croix. Others who came later also came down the Fox and Wisconsin to the Mississippi and up the St. Croix. Louis was married to Angele Manseau. He had left her in Chicago while he first found a place to settle. Joseph was single when he came. We read the following in the extensive notes of Rev. Father C. A. Verwyst, O.F.M. (Father Verwyst was stationed at Hudson from 1868 to 1872. Somerset was his mission. "Reminiscences of a Pioneer Missionary" by Rev. C. A. Verwyst in the Wisconsin Historical Society).

"The next year after the two Parent brothers were settled, word had been sent to Canada to their relatives to try and get listed on an expedition to "l'Ouisconsin" soon as they could, and come and join them in this new haven. Louis had gone back to Chicago after his wife who had remained there for some time (winter was over). So the boys wanted everything at its best for all to enjoy. The little plot that they had overturned with pick and shovel turned out very well, potatoes especially seemed to have grown to a second growth. At the end of the stems after the blossoms there grew small marbles, like small potatoes. A rare site for all of them, so much joking went on and they decided to call the locality such: namely — "La Pointe de la Pomme de Terre". "La Pointe" meaning the junction of the two rivers. "Pomme de Terre" means fruit of the earth (which they really are) and much shaped like an apple".



Why did the brothers choose the rolling hills around the Apple River as their new home instead of the flat territory to the north or south? This beautiful river with its cliffs and hills reminded them of home back in Canada. The brothers first built a cabin below the cliff near the Apple and St. Croix rivers. Looking over the land around the plateau above the rivers Joseph picked out a site for his new homestead. He chose the farm now known as the Fred Parnell place. Louis chose the land now occupied by Elmer Carlson, more to the north of Joseph. The brothers while breaking the land also made shingles by hand. One day when she was alone, Mrs. Louis Parent saw some Indians approaching her cabin. She was frightened and knew only one thing to do. She prayed to the Blessed Virgin for protection. Immediately a dog began to bark viciously. The Indians turned on their heels and left. She had no dog, nor had she ever seen one around the premises.

To leave the security of civilization for the wilds of Wisconsin still inhabited by savage Indians took courage, no small amount of Faith in God and a large dose of foresight and boldness that knew no fear. To come alone takes courage, to come with a family takes determination mixed liberally with willingness to work from a dead start. Coming here from Canada is akin to our taking off for the wilds of Alaska today, and with nothing but an axe and a prayer! But come they did, our mighty pioneers, and in ever increasing numbers for the next thirty years.

## THE TREK BEGINS

Joseph and Louis Parent were not alone very long on their windswept lands. They were followed the next few years by neighbors from their home in Canada and their brothers and brothers-in-law.

In 1851 and 1852 we find practically the whole family of Parents coming to the "Pointe de la Pomme de Terre". Beside brothers Joseph and Louis, there came brothers: Francois, Toussaint and Antoine. Within the same time or shortly thereafter came the brothers-in-law: Thomas Parnell, Hypolite Bovin de la Liberte, (Paul Liberty), Joseph Martell, Francois Xavier Montbriand, Ambrose Martell and Onesime Bourbeau. This family of Parents (there were two other families of Parents not related, another Joseph Parent and Charles Parent) and the descendants of Alexandre Belisle Sr. compose a large segment of the population of Somerset today. The Germains, Cloutiers, and Rivards are not far behind. Intermarriage among the above families causes one to say: everybody in Somerset is related to everybody else. Never talk about a third party because you run the chance of speaking about the second party's relative! But nevertheless, it was this "coming-together" that gave our pioneers courage and moral support. If times got rough you had someone to help you. This family loyalty and mutual help continues even today. Love and loyalty in the family is the distinguishing quality of our early ancestors. It is the mark and pride of our families to this day.

Joseph Parent married Bridget Gagin in 1866. They had no children. Joseph sold his farm to Frederick Parnell Sr. in 1873. Bridget died on May 11, 1876 and is buried in Farmington Cemetery. Joseph died at the age of 70 on Feb. 19, 1884 and is buried in St. Anne's Cemetery.

Louis Parent and Angele Manseau had six living children: Rosalie, Adolph, Abraham, Felix, Louis Jr. and Amable Sr. Louis died in 1868 and is buried at St. Anne's. At the same time Eulalie Picard, the wife of Charles Parent Sr. (no relative of Louis), died leaving seven children. What happened to these two families, one without a mother and the other without a father? You guessed it! They pooled their resources and their children and set up an enlarged household. Of this marriage two more children were born: Edmund and Angela (Mrs. Theodore Marquis) who is much alive today and gave us this bright bit of "neighborly getting together". To make



Angele and Charles Parent

double sure we had it right, we consulted Charles A. Parent, a son of Charles Sr. by his first wife. Charles A. is the oldest living native born person in the town. Born Jan. 25, 1863, he is hale and hearty at 93 years.

## COURTING IN OLD DAYS

In 1851, a neighbor from Canada, David Germain, landed and walked up the river bank to settle another "40". David Germain was the first to apply for a homestead at Hudson. He made an entry on July 18, 1851. His homestead was directly north of the place now occupied by Felix Landry. An interesting story is told of the bold courting methods of this rugged pioneer. After he had cleared a few acres he considered himself ready to have a wife and family. Did not the Holy Scripture to say: "it is not good for a man to live alone?" So David stirred himself to seek a helpmate. There were no girls of marriageable age in the small Apple River settlement, and she must be French, he reasoned. He had heard of several French families in Petit Canada, North of St. Paul. Traveling there by boat and foot he soon learned of a family where five young ladies were waiting for the "right one". David entered the house and after the necessary introductions he obtained permission of the father to "make his pitch". He launched into an eloquent presentation of his fine qualities complete with facts and figures on his "grand estate" on the Apple River, not too far away from father and mother, he was quick to add. Then the crucial moment came and David pulled a tour de force that took the girls by a very pleasant surprise. He reached in his pocket and retrieved a twenty dollar gold piece, which was no small amount of money at that time. Taking the gold piece he threw it on the floor and stated: "Each of you are as beautiful as the other, she who wishes to become my wife can pick up the gold piece and keep it as my first gift to her". The girls glanced at the parents and each other. The father nodded approval and the mother giggled at the whole performance. After a few moments of tense silence Anne stepped forward with determination and decision and picked up the gold piece. Arrangements were made with the priest, and the rest is history — exactly fourteen little pages of history were born to that family!

Thomas Parnell was the next pioneer to settle among the hills of Somerset. At the age of 34 in 1852 Thomas, an Irishman, came with his wife, Angeline Parent, sister of Joseph and Louis Parent. He settled on the farm long occupied by his son John and now occupied by Clifford Gilsoul. Father Verwyst says that his log cabin was the first on the bank. Thomas Parnell was a leader in the Apple River Settlement. It was at his house that the priest from Stillwater or Hudson gathered the faithful for mass and baptisms. He was selected as one of the first supervisors for the Town of Somerset in 1856. He served several terms.



From 1852 to 1856 we find the records of the following pioneers appearing as settlers: Charles de Carufel, Ambroise Martell, Dennis Veilleux, Zephyrin Germain, Desire "Jerry" Rivard, Charles Audette, Francois Montbriand, Isidore Germain, Antoine Parent, Basil Roy (King), Jacque Roy, Francois Lemire and sons: Edward, Louis, Ben and Abraham, Edward LaGrandeur, Damase Cloutier, Augustin Belisle, Joseph Veilleux, John Combacker, Thompson Nelson, Thoms Chappel, Louis and Henry Traiser, Thomas Champagne, Ozias Bailey, Calvin Tuttle, James McFetridge, Horace Lee, Onesime Bourbeau, Samuel, James and Patrick Berry, Christopher Simon.

From 1856 to 1861 we find the following names in the record books: Samuel Harriman, Hud Harriman, Alexander Gordon, Octave Baillargeon, Peter Cook, Caleb Cook, Charles Parent, Charles Cottor, Joseph Cottor, Isidore and Hubert Cloutier, Joseph Martell, Severe Rivard, Theodore Marquis, Paul LaLiberte, Louis Laventure, Pierre and Samuel Francois, Theophile Roque, David Sicard, James and William Maxwell, Charles Dalhman, Prescott Getchel, John Palmer, John Hennesy, Stephen Young, John Oliphant, H. S. Teall, Ed McFadden, Gilbert Richmond, Henry Wells, Nathan Corinth, T. J. Cadwell, O. B. Connor, George Strong, Scott Ross, Calphornia Walker, Antoine Germain, Francois Rivard, Louis Biron, Isidore Rivard, Napoleon Hypolite Boucher, Louis Bonneprise, Abraham Parent.

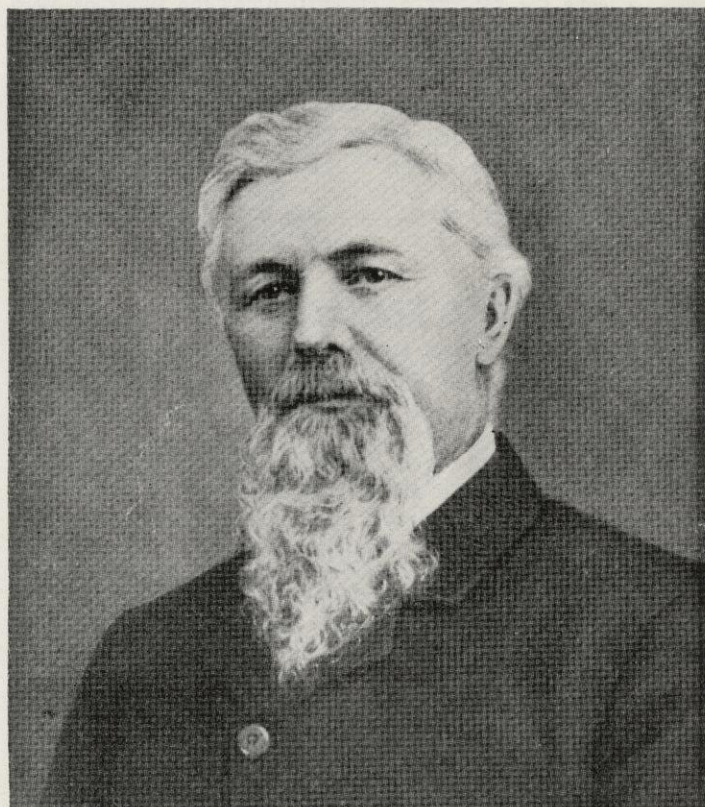
From 1861 to 1871 the following additional names are found on the tax rolls of the Town of Somerset: Theophile Onesime Rivard, David Champoux, Peter Cuenat, Joseph Maitrejean, Didace Laventure, Oliver Cloutier, Henry Bergeron, E. J. Lemoine, August Wegge, Isaac Burton, James Kelley, Jeremiah Dore, Olympe Derosier, Prudent Lamirande, Aimable Champoux, George St. Pierre, Urgel Rondeau, Hormidas Breault, Telesphore Parent, Hubert Germain, Isidore Belisle, Oliver Belisle, Joseph Belisle, Joseph Proulx, J. H. Knapp, A. Dauphin, Patrick Kelley, George Nichols, John Coon, William Walsh, E. B. True, D. H. Frisbee, Thomas Frawley, C. A. Tackie, B. Imbolt, Asa Garland, Luther Royal, John Knott, Gregorie Martell, Dosite Tellier, Zehpyr Perrault, Daniel Veilleux, Conrad Kahler, Hiram Benner, Simon Vanasse dit Vertefeuille, Flenny Belisle, Gelas Monpetit.

Pioneers who settled in Somerset from 1871 to 1881: Fred Biedermann, Adolphe Suintag, Hector St. Amant, Ferdinand Menard, Francois Laveaux, James and Mike Leverty, P. B. Crepeau, John and Philip Cote, Edward Mason, Frank Ames, John Regan, August Pappenfusz, Edward Plourde, Joseph Campbell, Francis Marcotte, Mathias Cook, Wm. Bierbrauer, Adelard Landry, Casper Nagle, Onesime Payette, Damase Morrisette, Elie Giroux, Martin and Albert Kriesel, Fred Martin, Chas. and George Krogmann, Hilaire and Ludger Dufresne, Oliver Harvieux, Damase Germain, Fred Wittig, Wm. Burch, Stephen Martell, Frank Boardman, Fred Roettger, August Nehring, Ernest and John Rehder, Louis Schrank, Eli Charland.

Pioneers who settled in Somerset from 1881 to 1890: Dr. Joseph L'Allier, Joseph Mondor, Marcel Levesques, Joseph Brochu, Felix Douville, Wilhelm Wichelmann, Theophile Decosse, Vital Barriault, Amable Martell, Theodore Cook, J. B. Desautels, Eugene Rondeau, Joseph Paquin, Timothy and Peter Beauvais, Octave Carufel, August Schiefelbein, Ferdinand Leske, John Zorn, Henry Ostendorf, Henry Hecht, Napoleon Bouillet, Antoine Constantineau, John Harrington, Philias Campeau.

## A VILLAGE IS FOUNDED IN 1856

In 1849 a young man from Orland, Maine, Samuel Harriman, who lived and worked on the farm on which he had been born in 1827 to Nathaniel Harriman and Prusella Saunders, ventured forth to "make his way in the world". The gold fever was high. Why not follow the men to California? Who knows, perhaps a fortune can be found? Journeying through Wisconsin on his way to the Pacific he noticed the virgin forests that reminded him of Maine. What a land to settle, log and farm! This idea stuck with him even in California.



Village Founder

General Samuel Harriman

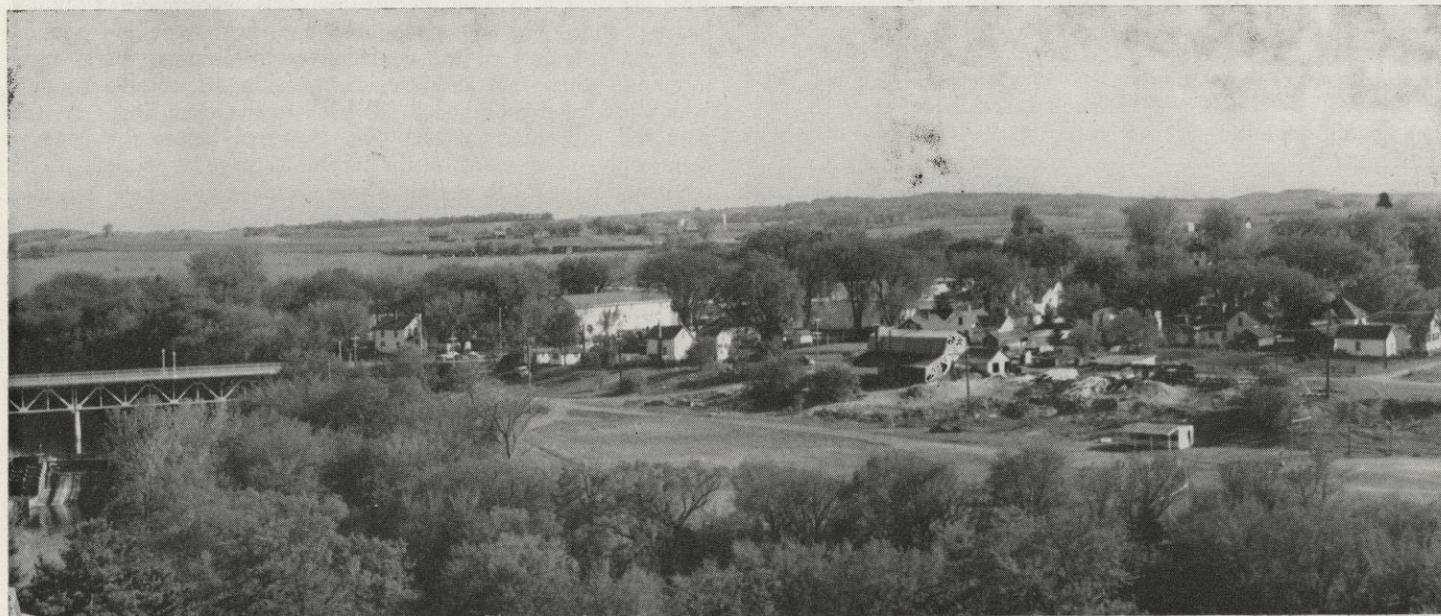
After his return to Maine he spoke glowingly of the opportunities of Wisconsin. The more he spoke the more he convinced himself. His brother Hudson was duly impressed and agreeable to the plans of Sam to found a mill, a store and logging empire. They came up the St. Croix River to the Apple River. How about a mill and town right here, they asked each other. Most of the land was settled there and besides there was a falls of fifty feet in a bad location. They walked up the river about four miles and, after looking over the land, and the flow of the river, they decided to establish "their town". On this bright day in May, 1856 Samuel Harriman named the location — Somerset. Harriman was English. There is a Somerset County in the North of Maine. His father came from Somerset County in England. There is also a Somerset, Massachusetts, although it is a great distance from Orland, Maine. Your historian's opinion is that he named Somerset after the home of his father's birth in England. Our Somerset resembles the terrain of that famous County in Merry Old England.





**Somerset Village in 1870**

**The Grist Mill, Dam, and Sawmill Are In the Foreground. Notice the Conveyor That Took the Lumber to the Present Athletic Field.**



**Somerset in 1956**

**The Heavy Growth of Trees Hides the Buildings**



Sam Harriman and Hud immediately made plans for their town. While building homes for themselves and families, they erected a saw mill and grist mill on the site of the present power dam. Until now the farmers had to go by foot or boat to Stillwater or Hudson for supplies. Sometimes walking through forest paths with tree markings carrying more than a hundred pounds on their backs. Sam Harriman built and stocked a small store. The present larger LaGrandeur store was built by Harriman in 1874.

As the little town became the center of the whole Apple River settlement there was need for facilities. So Harriman platted the town into streets and lots. Immediately he was instrumental in building a hotel, several houses and bringing Francois Xavier Montbriand into town as its first blacksmith. The first hotel was the Somerset House. The building still stands, somewhat modified, and is owned and operated by Aurel Cloutier as the Rendez-Vous. What stories this building could tell of the early days when lumberjacks, business men, distinguished visitors, state and local politicians and the townspeople would gather to discuss the affairs of the day: The price of wheat, the slavery question, the log jam at the Apple River Falls, the building of a bridge over the river on the south end of town, the Civil War, the return of the men from winter logging camps, the building of the little Catholic church near Joseph Parent, the establishment of the Town of Somerset, the sale of a pair of oxen, French mixed with English and scotch mixed with gin!

Harriman's store was another gathering place. It was also the local postoffice. For many years it was the voting place for the Town. Sam, as he was affectionately called by all, was a man of rare ability. He controlled his many enterprises with great executive ability. He was an excellent conversationalist. When he spoke a hush fell upon whatever group he was talking to. In spite of his rank he was always affable and easily approached. He lived in his house on the site of the present Ferdinand Breault home. Hud, his brother, lived in the present Fred LaGrandeur home. Sam and his family lived with him. He had married Fidelia Hobrook Fanning of New London, Connecticut in 1853. His son Charles died at the age of eight. His daughter May Francis married Cordenie A. Severance of St. Paul in 1889. Mrs. Harriman died in 1884 in Cottage Grove, Minnesota. Hud married Marcia Briggs in Somerset on May 31, 1863. They had an adopted child.



Harriman's Store

## "OUR GENERAL"

Now we must speak of General Samuel Harriman, as he was known after the Civil War. He was known for his glorious war record. At the outbreak of the Civil War Sam left his business and enlisted as a private in Company A, thirteenth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, June 10, 1862. At about the same time we find the following becoming volunteers in the Union Army from Somerset:

Edward Lemire, son of Francois Lemire and Marie Paquette, volunteered January 2, 1864 and was mustered into the 25th Regiment of the Union Army. He took part in several engagements in Georgia in May and July, 1864. He was captured during a bloody encounter at Decatur, Georgia on July 21, 1864, only seven months after entering. After several months of prison life he was released at the end of the war in April, 1865.

Toussait Parent enlisted in Co. D. 30th Regiment Wisconsin on August 21, 1862. He was mustered out on September 20, 1865 after honorable service to the Union. Others volunteering were: Hudson Harriman, Samuel and James Berry, Getchell Prescott, James Nelson, Stephen Young, Ambroise Martell Jr., E. J. Lemoine who moved to Somerset after the Civil War, also Henry Ostendorf who joined the 154th Regiment of Illinois February 16, 1865, moving to Somerset from Stillwater in 1882.

The Town Board for September, 1862, voted to tax the town for three hundred dollars to give to the families of those who had entered the army. This gesture, however, noble as it was, was declared not legal. Later another method was used to help the families left behind.

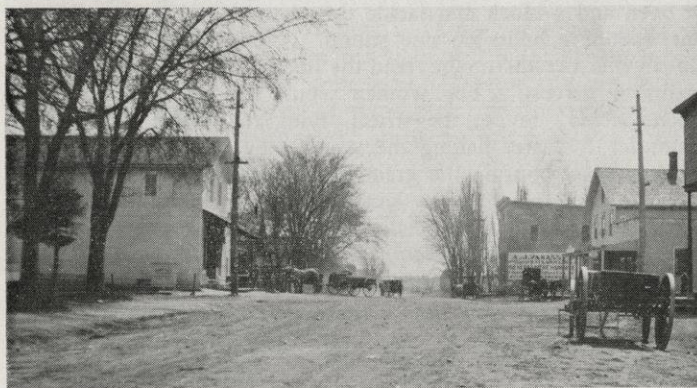
Soon after the organization of the 13th Infantry Company, Harriman was commissioned the captain. Because of his leadership he was commissioned a Colonel and ordered to the regiment of the thirty seventh Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry on April 26, 1864. The service of this regiment on many well-fought battlefield, especially about Petersburg, Virginia, are matters of history. Its most memorable engagement occurred July 30, 1864, just after the terrible mine explosion that has been made the subject of song and story. Colonel Harriman with his regiment was ordered to occupy the mine dismantled Fort Sedwidge. The occupation was accomplished under heavy fire. The regiment held the fort, repelling several desperate attempts of the confederates to dislodge them, until morning, when the union regiment, failing to receive support which had been promised it fell back to the main line. At the next roll call, of 250 men who answered before the engagement, only 95 survivors of the terrible carnage responded. The remnant of the 37th regiment was attached to a new brigade, of which on March 13, 1865, the title of Brigadier General was conferred upon Colonel Harriman. He became General of the First Brigade, First Division, Ninth Army Corps of the Union Army.

In the "Military History of Wisconsin" by E. B. Quiner published in 1866 we read the following glowing account of General Harriman. "The First Brigade under General Harriman, consisting of five regiments, formed about midnight April 2, 1865 near Petersburg and moved rapidly to the left, and about an hour before daylight, formed in line of battle in Fort Sedwidge. The 38th Regiment was the leading column. Just as the first streaks of day appeared the column emerged from the Fort and made for Fort Damnation, one of the enemy strongholds. Under perfect shot from the enemy they stormed the obstructions with a rush and pushed the enemy out the other side, and immediately turning the gun of the fort upon the late propriators. The Brigade lay on their arms all night, and moving forward next morning, found their advance was unopposed, and



that the enemy had fled during the night and that Petersburg and Richmond were ours. The joy of the army at this announcement was unbounded, and the enemy works were soon swarming with the boys in blue, and the town was quickly taken possession of. With the taking of Richmond the Rebellion collapsed. On April 26th General Harriman's Brigade went to Washington to take part in the Grand Review of the Union Army before President Lincoln. This took place on May 24th, 1865. The 38th Regiment with General Harriman at the head led the advance of the Column down Pennsylvania Avenue past the reviewing stand."

At the close of the war in 1865 General Harriman returned to the peaceful walks of civil life in his beloved Somerset. Turning a deaf ear to the requests of the War Department to continue army life, he turned rather his steps toward the blue winding Apple River where stood his mill and his store. His return was dramatic in its simplicity. They saluted and bid good-bye to General Harriman in Washington. He was greeted by friends in Chicago as Colonel Harriman. Business associates in St. Paul called him Captain. As he stepped down from the stage coach that took him from Stillwater to Somerset a small group of villagers shook his hand and said: "Hello, Sam, where have you been these three years?" He was home, he was Sam, he was happy!



Early Street Scene

Sam extended his business enterprises giving labor to many men. He held several civic positions both state and national. The most important civil service rendered by General Harriman was as agent of the State of Wisconsin for the protection of the lands known as the St. Croix Land Grant. This land under the trusteeship of the state was to be donated to the first railroad to be pushed through from Hudson to Superior. He was appointed agent by Governor Fairchild in 1868. In 1869 he organized a party to scale the logs which a company had cut on these lands without authority, claiming the state trusteeship had ended. In the spring of 1870 he seized the logs in the river. The lumbermen retrieved the logs by force and went to court. The case went to the Supreme Court of the United States (Schulenberg et al vs. Harriman, 21 Wallace U. S. 44). The result was a victory for Harriman and the state. As a result of that decision, the Chicago and Omaha Northwestern Railroad were able to build their line and cities and villages sprung up all along the line, and the northern part of the state was developed and settled. Sam had become a general again for a different purpose. He was instrumental also in bringing the Wisconsin Central Railroad through the Harriman Landing pass at what is now known as Landing Hill District, in 1884.

On September 24, 1884 Harriman sold his store to Edward Grant, E. W. Grant and Henry A. Grant (LaGrandeur). He continued to operate his other large holdings for a few years. Failing in health he traveled to Hot Springs, Arkansas and died there on August 28, 1897. He was laid to rest in the cemetery at Cottage Grove, Minnesota, the home of his father-in-law, Charles Fanning.

The following article was written by Editor Sam S. Fifield Jr. of the Polk County Press on July 30, 1869.

We last week visited SOMERSET, our neighboring town joining Polk County on the South, and in the territory of St. Croix County. We had heard through various sources that Somerset would afford us a good "item" and so we "went for it." We think Dame Rumor told the truth for once, for the "item" was there, be it good or bad.

First we noticed that the roads had been greatly improved this season within the town limits. Second that the breaking teams had literally changed the face of the country since our last visit, and in every direction improvements had been made that altered the whole aspect of things. The wheat fields were broader, and give promise of one of the largest yields ever recorded in the Valley. The farmers have already commenced harvesting their rye, and the hay crop has been well secured. In fact, among the bone and sinew of the land, the tillers of the soil, prosperity dwelleth, and although hard times have come, they see in their growing crops enough and to spare, and take courage and work on with light hearts.

The leading feature of Somerset is GEN. SAM HARRIMAN. The General is about as well known throughout the state as the New York TRIBUNE. He is emphatically a business man, and while many know him, or of him, personally, few are aware of the breadth of his domain, or of the amount of hard work he performs in running his extensive business. Sam, as he is familiarly called by his friends and neighbors, is a farmer, merchant, miller, lumberman and public official combined, and like Wood's Combined Reaper, works well in all branches. Go ahead is written in every feature of his good humored countenance, and go ahead he does, in everything he undertakes, unless the traces break, and then he don't back "worth a cent." He runs a sawmill that cuts 800,000 feet of lumber yearly, a custom grist mill, that turns out some of the finest flour manufactured in the West, and sells from fifteen to twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of merchandise per annum. His farm consists of six hundred acres, one hundred in wheat and oats, and he has just finished breaking another hundred, and will fence his whole farm this season. His stable contains as fine a lot of horses as are to be found in the St. Croix region, three span of which are this season turning over the virgin soil. He raises his own pork, having a piggery and twenty-five pigs. His cows are blooded, and his oxen are of the best. Enterprising, he has built a three mile piece of road to HARRIMAN'S LANDING, on the St. Croix River, where he has a warehouse and other buildings. Aside from this he is preparing to build a wheat elevator, and by a new road direct to New Richmond, which is already made he expects to tap the Star Prairie wheat region. He proposes to buy 50,000 bushels of wheat this fall, provided the farmers will bring it along. The "landing" is easy of access, and will, when all his plans are carried out, add such facilities to this town as will build up a flourishing trade.



Along The Beautiful Apple River



THE VILLAGE, aside from the mills, contains a hotel, store, blacksmith shop, a good substantial school house and about thirty dwellings. It is pleasantly located on Apple River, which affords an abundant water power. Such is the home of SAM HARRIMAN, where he lives, thrives and has his being, and headquarters for the Superior Land Grant Agency, "of whom he is which," by recent decision of the powers that be in Washington.

Another feature (good one at that) is ED. FANNING, right hand supporter and aid-de-camp to the General. Ed. sells sugar and calico, lumber and tape. Ed. entertains company in princely style, and attends to business like one born to the trade. To him are we indebted for much information regarding the town and its prosperity this season. Over one thousand acres of new breaking has been done this year, and the teams are still at work. New farms are being opened up, new dwellings and fences erected, and business of every class flourishing. And there is yet room for improvement. Lands are cheap and emigrants can find plenty of chances to make homes. Somerset is a success, and is destined to be one of the best towns in St. Croix County. Drive on, Somerset!

## CHAPTER III

### LIFE IN THE APPLE RIVER SETTLEMENT

The first settlers who came to the Apple River from 1850 to 1856 were drawn here by the possibility of obtaining a homestead from the land owned by the United States of America. First they would choose a likeable piece of land suitable for farming. The settler would build himself a log cabin. Between clearing the land and sowing what he had cleared in wheat and rye, he would work in the woods or on the log drive down the Apple River or the St. Croix. Our hearty pioneers were adapted to any kind of hard labor. Sometimes immediately, or being in no rush to decide permanently yet, sometimes a year or two after settling, they would file an entry or claim at the U. S. Land Office in Hudson, the county seat. This entry would be sent to Washington whereupon a patent, or first deed, signed by the President of the United States himself, would be issued to the homesteader. Upon payment of about 25c per acre the homesteader received his patent and the land was his to have and to hold. Several families in the township have to this day their original patent issued by Presidents: Fillmore, Pierce, Buchanan, Lincoln, Johnson and Grant, from 1850 to 1870. David Germain made the first claim on July 18, 1851.



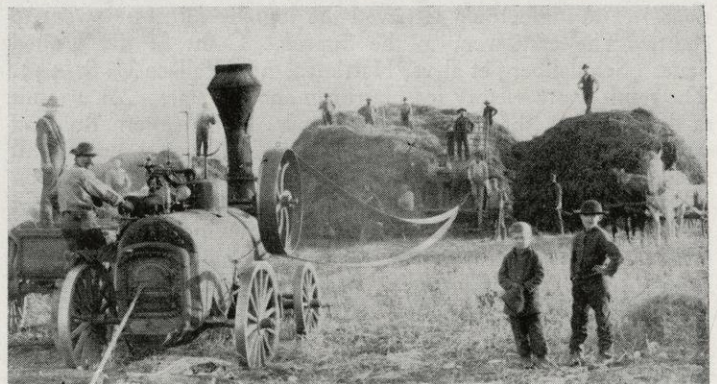
Ambrose Martell Log House  
The Oldest House, Logs Are Covered with Tin

Joseph Parent made the next claim on December 1, 1852. The claims were usually made a year or two after settling.

This whole territory was then known as La Pointe de la Pomme de Terre, in English — Potato River. This was the name given it by the Parent brothers, or the Indians. Pomme de Terre word for word means apple of the earth. When the English speaking loggers and trappers came they translated the pomme to apple and dropped de terre, called it the Apple River and let it go at that. The old Frenchmen still call it La Pomme de Terre.

After General Harriman named his little village Somerset, the French speaking pioneers by common usage began calling the territory Somerset also, but it did not come out the same way. In the Province of Quebec most small places are called after the title of the parish: St. Anne, St. Pascale, St. Jean, etc. When the Frenchmen heard the name "Somerset" it sounded to their French ear like "St. Morrisette". So the early pioneers called it St. Morrisette; Some old-timers still do.

Little by little the pioneers pushed back the forest and set their breaking plows to the virgin soil. These hardy Frenchmen would then take their poche a semence (*broadcasting sack*) and sow wheat. What about the tough pine stumps? With a team of oxen and a block and tackle they would grub and pull them out, spending hours on one stump. No dynamite those days! Le jaivelier (*cradle-scythe*) and the fleau (*flail*) were their instruments of harvest. The women would use the lighter faucille (*hand sickle*) to cut the wheat, tying the wheat into javelles (*bundles*). After flailing the wheat they would vanner (*fan*) the grains by pouring the grains from a bread pan in the air so that the wind would blow out the chaff. No grain was ever lost. The men and especially the women and children would take a rateau (*wooden toothed rake*) and go over the field. When they needed supplies or clothing they would throw in a few sacks of wheat and make their way by ox cart (*charette*) to the nearest grist mill, having it ground to flour or selling it to the miller. The dairy industry did not develop until the cheese factories came in the 80's and 90's. They had only a few cows. Mother skimmed the pans of milk and made butter with her baratte (*churn*). Outside of the cabin was a four (*oven made of masonry*) where Mother baked bread. Mother also made her own soap. Un rouet a filer (*spinning wheel*) stood handy in the main room of the house. Many an hour did our grandmothers spend at that wheel! La machine a tisser (*hand loom*) weaved the thread into cloth. And the heavy wool stuff was plenty picky! Le foin (*hay*) was cut, raked and stacked by hand — no big barns those days! La Charrette (*ox cart*) was the transportation for hay, wheat and people.



Felix and Adolph Parent threshing machine 1893. Note that first steam engines were horsedrawn. Joseph Sicard, Amable Parent, Sr., Edward Dumais, and Albert Germain.



For sleeping quarters our pioneers built wooden bunks two high. They threw some straw on the boards. The beds improved later — they took out the boards and used bands of canvas for more give. For entertainment they would deem it a great time just to visit and let the children play with the neighbor's gang. Cards were played often. If a violonneux (*fiddler*) was present the chairs and table in the kitchen were taken out and a jolly dance caree (*square dance*) shook the house to its foundation. Sunday Mass was not only their visit with le bon Dieu, but also their only chance to hear les nouvelles (*news*), and strike a good bargain with the voisen (*neighbor*) for an ox or a horse. Winter restricted them pretty well to home, but the sleigh and cutter brought visitors for a dance, a taffy pull or just an evening of talking.

When the sun went down, did our ancestors go to bed? They did not. They had lights. Not electric, not gas lamps, not kerosene lamps — but candles. Periodically they made their supply of candles. First there was une cuve de suif (*tub of grease*) and a tub of cold water. Les meches (*wicks*) of twisted string were prepared and four or five were tied to a stick. Plonge ci, plonge la — dip here and dip there! The wicks were lowered in the boiling grease and then quickly dipped in the cold water which hardened the grease and back into the grease. When this operation was repeated several times the candle took on the thickness you wanted. Chandelle al'eau (*water candles*) they called them. They were not even or beautiful and they gave off a red light and a lot of smoke — but that's all they had and were glad. Placing the candle in a tin box with an open front or some glass and they had a fanal (*lantern*) to go to the barn with to take a last look at the cows and horses.

They took the candles to church to be blessed. And when someone was near death's door they lit the candle to light his way into eternity. They lit it too when a storm came up. Later the Moules (*molds*) came along and they had better tallow. But when the kerosene lamp came, joy was without limit. "They have gone about as far as they can go" was the word when the gas light came on the market with its beautifully colored glass shades decorated with glass bubbles, and its multi-colored base.

Soon the lot of the habitant (*farmer*) became easier. La moissonneuse (*reaper*) and the binder were a God-send to his aching back. La batteuse (*threshing machine*) and the steam engine revolutionized the wheat harvest. La tasserie (*hay loft*), le poulailler (*chicken coop*), l'écurie (*stable*) were small and drafty, but, for the children, fun to play in. Let us not for a

moment pity our forefathers with their large families and small quarters. Happiness consists in being content with what you have where you are. Not knowing, and therefore, not missing, something that others consider a necessity can often be a blessing. Our grandparents not only got along but they paved the way of life for the generations to come. They handed down to us a heritage of land, civil institutions of home rule, roads, schools, churches and religion, character, family virtue, love of work and pride in doing things for others.



Harvieux Brothers Threshing Machine

The Big Crop of 1895 is often mentioned by the old timers. That year the proportion of rain, warm weather and sunshine was near perfect. The pastures were high with luscious grass. The corn, wheat, potatoes, rye, hay and oats were the best ever grown. When it came time to harvest the reapers rolled at a slow pace. They would clog up with the thick grain. The oats were as high as an elephant's eye. One farmer states that after the oats were shocked he hardly had room to walk between the shocks! Another goes so far as to say that the pasture grass was so high that he couldn't find his heifers in his forty acre pasture until fall! It is a fact, however, that oats sold for 13c a bushel that year.

The first settlers also had to contend with wild fowl and animals. Flocks of thousands of wild geese would invade the grain fields and inflict considerable damage. Prairie chickens, wolves, fox, skunks, weasels and mink would raid the fields and barnyards. Farmers protected themselves with dogs and guns against these marauders.



Mesdames et Mademoiselles

1st Row: Joan Martell, Candice Sutherland, Marie Raymond. 2nd Row: Henrietta Germain, Melina Cloutier, Emma Dufresne, Marcella Sutherland, Bessie Breault, Elmiere Parnell. 3rd Row: Cele Plourde, Donaldia LaGrandeur, Pearl Olson, Delores Belisle, Helen Plourde, Rita Voigt. 4th Row: Lucille Stoner, Odellie Harvieux, Marcella Bierbrauer, Beatrice Martell, Eleanor Vanasse, Esther Berube.



"Who said I couldn't be in the parade?" "DIG THIS BUGGY!"



## CHAPTER IV

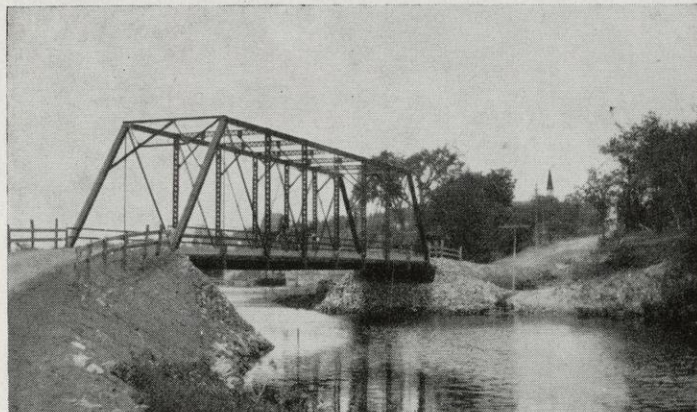
### TOWNSHIP OF SOMERSET FOUNDED, 1856

As the farms were settled near the mouth of the Apple River new settlers came further inland and up the river. Roads were necessary. There should be a school or two. There should be restrictions so that trouble about roads and lines could be avoided. Some form of government must be formed, as the county seat was too far away. Besides, they argued, we should run our own affairs.

By common agreement a petition was circulated among the farmers. This was a formal request to the County Board at Hudson to form a Township with full legal authority under the State law to conduct their own affairs. This petition was presented to the County Board on September 19, 1856. The County Board approved the petition and ordered a meeting of the people in the proposed Township at the house of Thomas J. Chappell on the first Monday of October, 1856. The meeting was held however in November and the people voted to accept the boundaries of the Township. They voted to call the Township — Somerset. Elections were held at this meeting. The town consisted of thirty-six sections in Township 31 North and Range 19 West, eighteen sections in Township 30 North and Range 19 West, plus three sections in Township 30 North and Range 20 West. With its total of 57 sections the Township of Somerset is the largest Township in the County.

At the first official meeting in November 1856 the following officers were elected: Chairman: Thomas J. Chappell, Supervisors: Thomas Parnell and Desire Rivard, Treasurer: Thompson Nelson. The first tax roll was made out and it totalled \$1,700.00. It was voted that fifty dollars be raised by tax for general fund and five mills on the dollar for highway tax. The first town road maintained by the Township was from the village to the Apple River bridge below the falls.

In the oldest book of records of the Town we find this notation on page one. "On the 23 day of March A.D. 1861, the office of the Town Clerk was destroyed by fire (Mr. Stephen Young then being the Clerk of said town) together with all the Books and Documents appertaining to said offices." Under the date of April 2, 1861 the following: "At the annual Town Meeting of the year 1861 the following officers were duly elected: Chairman, Alexander Gordon; Board of Supervisors, Thomas Parnell and Edward Grant; John F. Comebacker, Town Clerk; Prescott Getchell, Town Treasurer; William W. Maxwell, Town Sup'd. of Schools; Samuel Berry, Assessor; Stephen Young and Robert Kerr as Justices of the Peace, and Prescott Getchell and Samuel Berry, Constables; Overseers of Roads: Sam Harriman, Wm. Maxwell, Joseph Parent and Dennis Veilleux".



The Old Iron Bridge  
With the Church on the Hill

The Town Board had been meeting up to 1885 in Harriman's Store, the Somerset Hotel, the homes of Chappell and Koehler. They voted in November, 1885 to build a Town Hall for a meeting place. Edward E. Mason built the Town Hall, which still stands today, at a cost of \$478.50.

A new wood bridge was built across the river at the village in 1893 at a cost of \$2100.00. This was replaced by an iron bridge in 1910.

### SALOONS

Isaac Burton, a Jew, had the first and only saloon in Somerset for many years. He opened it in 1870. We read in the Board Records that the town voted in 1892 to restrict licenses to one saloon in the Township and forbid any card playing in the saloon. Stephen Martell received that license. Isaac Burton's Saloon, now Lynn's Cafe, was frequently used for Town Meetings. In the records the writing grows dimmer and shakier as the meeting goes on in Isaac's Saloon. Isaac's daughter, Jennie Burton Rosenholtz, wrote a book about the family while they lived in Somerset. The title of the book is "Upon Thy Doorsteps". She ably describes the village, scenery and many characters. In one passage she relates how she was forbidden to take part in any religious ceremonies of the Catholics. But the beautiful white dresses of her chums who were making their First Communion in the Church on the Hill, proved too much for her resistance and she sneaked up to church to have a look. She called the church Our Lady of the Pines. She was roundly punished.



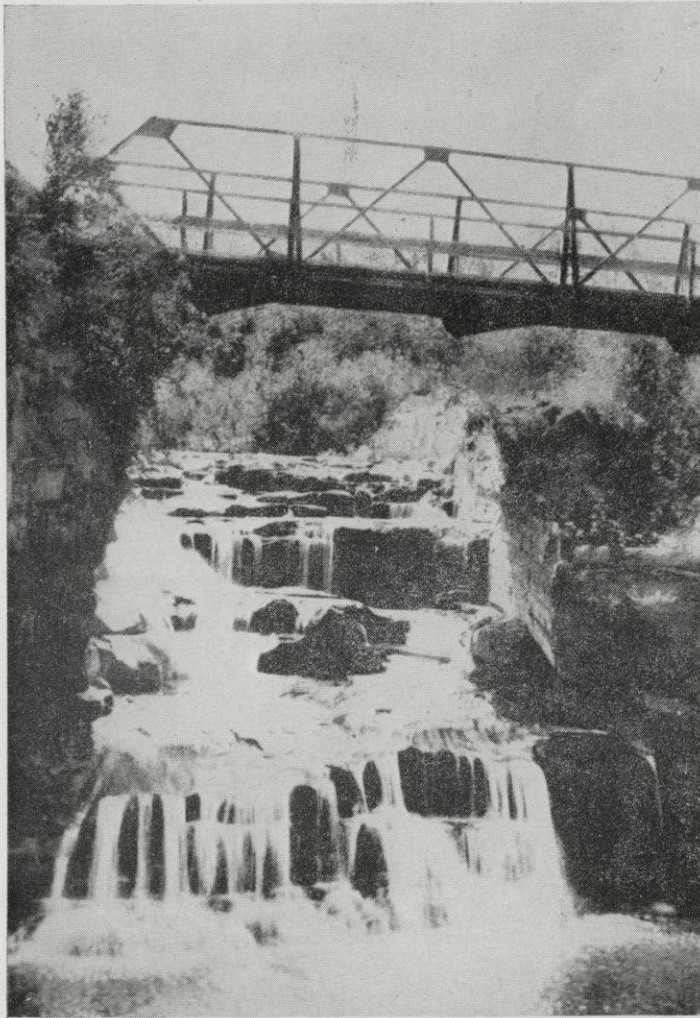
"Keep Your Hands on the Table!"

Severe Cloutier's Saloon 1910, now Lynn's Cafe. Back row: Harry Taylor, Pete Rivard, Alphonse Cloutier, August Roetker. Bartenders: Geoffrey Cote, Joe Cloutier. Playing Cards: Willie Payette, Henry Belisle, Fred Belisle, Calice Roy.

### BRIDGES

There were two bridges in the Township, one across the river West of the falls now called the Landry Flats, and the second in the village South of the present bridge. This bridge in the village was rebuilt in 1861 at a cost of \$495.00. There were four school districts in 1861 in the Township. The bridge at the mouth of the river was a bone of contention for several years. It was voted at a Town Meeting to move the bridge ahead of the falls, its present position, in 1865. But despite the vote a wrangling took place and the bridge was not built at the Falls until 1882 at a cost of \$600.00 with Hubert Germain and August Nehring as supervisors. The bridge was built by Alex Gordon with the help of the Apple River Log Driving Company. The reason the wrangling took place each time there was a bridge to build was because it happened to be the largest expenditure at that time. The citizens wanted to be convinced of its necessity before changing or building. The bridge below the falls was reached by steep grades from both sides. It was only a foot bridge. The river had to be forded with team.





Apple River Falls  
Now the Water Has Been Cut to a Trickle

Despite these differences from groups in sections of the Town, the township progressed surely but slowly in expanding the facilities for all of its citizens. The network of roads reached out to all corners of the town. School districts were formed and school houses sprung up close to the homes of the citizens. All of the political affairs were conducted by the Town Board until 1915, in which year the village of Somerset was incorporated and lifted a burden from the towns people.

The road on the West side of the river going up to the church proved to be very long. A large hill had to be cut through so that the road from the village bridge would go straight past the church, the old road wound far to the west around the hill. Narcisse Rivard contracted to cut through the first hill for \$95.00 in 1884. He lost money on it and his relatives and neighbors had to help him finish it. The second hill was cut several years later.

## CHAPTER V

### PERIOD OF GROWTH, 1870 - 1900

While the farmers were growing wheat as the main source of their revenue, the logging industry grew to great heights along the Apple River. Harriman's Mill at Somerset was turning out 800,000 feet of sawed lumber each year. Harriman also owned the Apple River Boom Company. This outfit bought, sold and drove logs down the river from its upper reaches to the mills on the St. Croix. In 1874 the Stillwater Gazette reports that the Stillwater boom handled 189,000,000 feet of logs. Of this amount 4,000,000 feet came from the Apple River. The highest price paid for logs that year was \$13.75 per 1000 feet. Many men from Somerset worked in the woods and on the boom. At one time there were 3000 men working on the boom and drive at Stillwater.



The Boom

Up to 1860 the cut of logs coming through the St. Croix boom, averaged between 50,000,000 and 60,000,000 feet each year. A few years later this was increased to 100,000,000 feet, then 180,000,000 and in 1880 to 200,000,000, steadily increasing up to 300,000,000 feet, which was the annual average in 1888. In the early days there were frequent log jams on various streams, occurring during the spring floods. The first notable jam, however, was in the dalles at Taylors Falls in the spring of 1864 and contained 30,000,000 feet of logs. Another, in 1886, at the same place, contained an equal amount. In the spring of 1886, however, occurred the most stupendous jam ever known in the valley. It was at the same old stand and was estimated to contain 150,000,000 feet of logs. This picture was taken at the St. Croix boom in 1886.

We read in a fascinating booklet "Captain Jolly on the Picturesque St. Croix" published in 1880 a description of the life along the St. Croix River. William H. Dunne writes under the name of Captain Jolly, a river boat captain. In his river boat he arrives near Marine Mills: "Where you see those piles driven in the river leaving a passage for us, the government has been at work protecting the channel so that the logs will not be in our way; yet they get through sometimes. You have noticed the long line of logs that, fastened together and held in line by piles from outside the boom, a harbor, into which the logs are driven past the trip, where their marks are examined and where they are separated into lots according to ownership (there being many logging camps on the upper reaches of the St. Croix). Then they are wedged and rigged with small lines into 'brills', or they are 'rafted' — as may be desired. Many a 'half-hitch' is made with the lines in the boom on a busy day. The 'drivers' and 'markers' are kept moving from log to log when they come in. If the mark is concealed by the water, and it is on the underside of the log, it is turned over with a 'pevey' and the owners 'catch-mark' is put on the side that floats uppermost. Every lumberman has his 'original mark' put on in the woods and his 'catch-mark' is put on afterwards, if necessary. His marks are registered in the office of the Surveyor General."





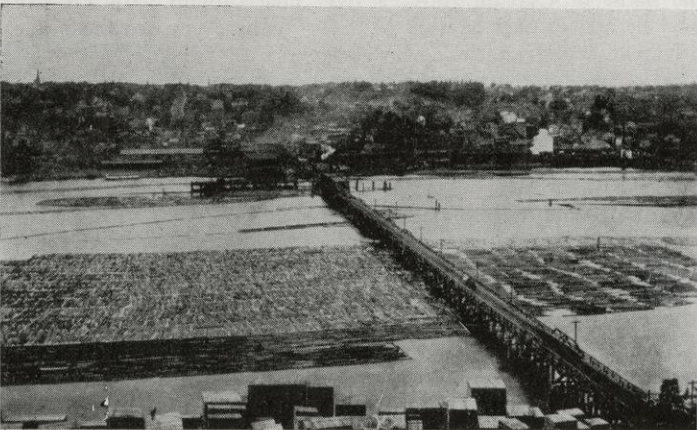
Logging operations at McDermott's Camp on Ground House. Winter of 1892-1893. Elias Mitchell, Ox Driver.



This picture shows the way that they got out wanigan knees in the woods. These men are cutting down tamarack and spruce trees in order to secure knees for use in building wanigans used on the log drives in the spring. The tree was cut off about four feet from the ground, and then dug up by the roots which grew at a right angle to the trunk of the tree. These knees were used as the framework for the hull of the wanigan which was really a sort of barge or houseboat used to transport the cooking equipment on the drive.

These wanigans were built during the winter months far up the river in the woods where everything had to be hewn out by hand, as there was no sawed lumber in these remote spots. Note the oxen which, for many years, were used instead of horses.

This picture was taken about 1902 at Willow River, Pine County, Minnesota by Parker, photographer.



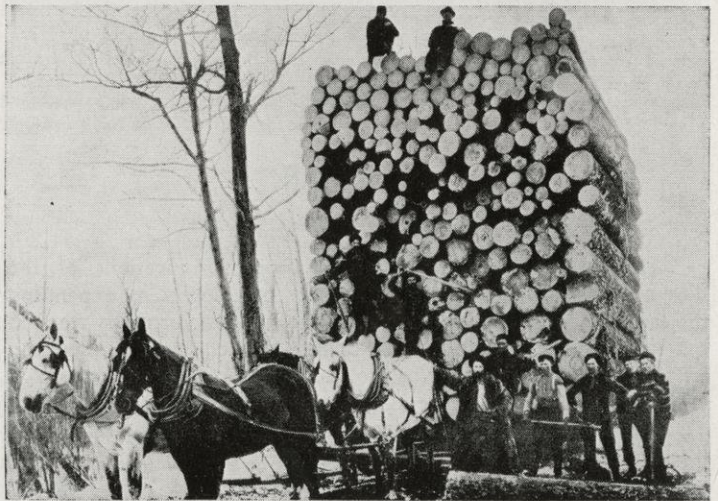
View of Stillwater, Minnesota in 1899. The pontoon bridge and millyard of the East Side Lumber Company are in the foreground, with a raft of logs on the lake.



This is a photo of the old St. Croix Boom above Stillwater taken in 1872.



Log jam at Taylors Falls, Minnesota, on the St. Croix River in the year 1886. Estimated at one hundred and fifty million feet.



Largest Load Pine Logs ever hauled on logging sleds in Wis. or Minn. March 17th, 1909. Scale 71,770 ft., 19 ft. wide, 24 ft. high. Distance 3.4 mile. Teamster: Herman Siedenkrans. Horses' Names: Ballie, Nellie, Roudy and Dan. Top Loader: Geo. Villard. Foreman: Tom Boury. Logger: Lee Hammond, who logged in the winter of 1904 and 1905, 40,000,000 ft. on Lost Lake, Wis., this being largest amount of logs ever logged in one winter on sleighs by one loader in Wis. or Minn.

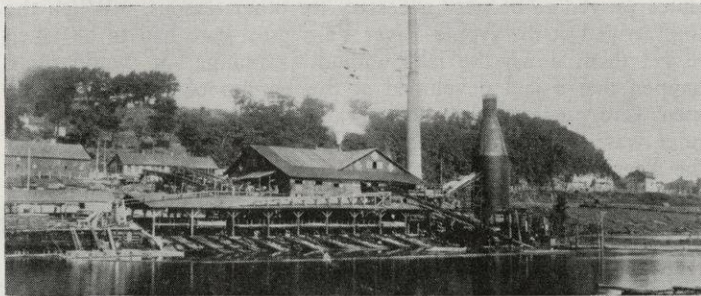




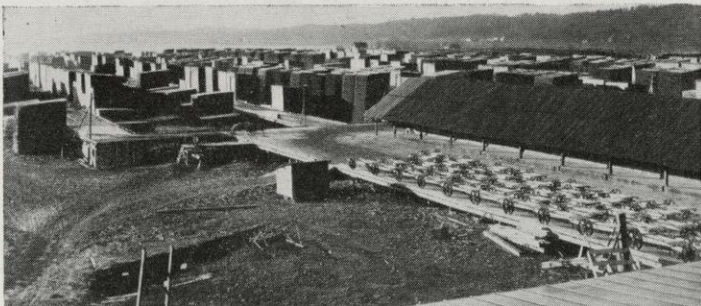
Interior of Dining Room at Historic St. Croix Boom, Stillwater, Minn. This picture shows the interior of the cook house on the famous St. Croix Boom, three miles North of Stillwater, Minnesota at the entrance of St. Croix Lake, where for 70 years the boom served as a sorting place for the many log drives that came down the St. Croix River and its 22 tributaries. This cook house served meals to tens of thousands of rivermen in its day. Many famous cooks served at this old cook house, including such cooks as Dan Elliot, Frank Garen, Henry Harvieux, Tom Wright, Joe Collins, Frank Klatt, Godfrey Mahre, Paul Gabbart, Andrew McGrath and others. Charles Mullholand was the last cook. This historic boom closed its doors June 12, 1914, and this famous cook house which served many a free, nourishing meal to visitors is now only a memory.



The cooks in the cook-house of the St. Croix Boom Company at Stillwater, Minnesota, on the St. Croix River in 1886. Back row, left to right, Tim Harvieux, C. A. Parent, D. Sicard, E. Carufel, O. Payette, Henri Harvieux. Front row, left to right, E. Payette, W. Sicard, Wm. Bergeron, F. O. Harvieux. Photo by Ed. C. Fisher of St. Paul, Minnesota.



The third Schulenburg-Boeckler sawmill at Stillwater, Minnesota was built in 1894. The machinery was brought from a St. Louis sawmill. George Atwood bought the mill in 1901 and operated it until it burned down in 1907. Photographed by Cooper, photographer, Stillwater, Minnesota.

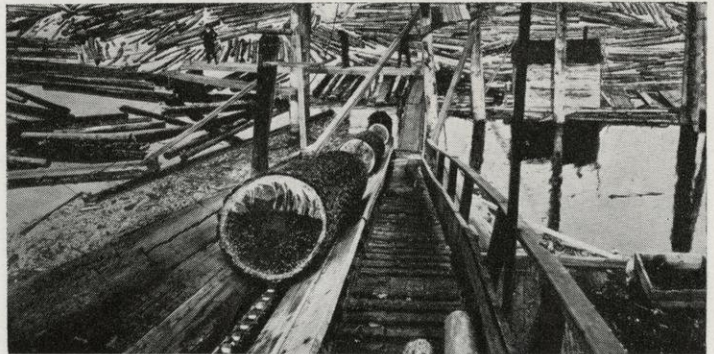


A view of a portion of the extensive lumber yards and planing mill shed of the David Tozer Company's sawmill at South Stillwater, Minnesota.

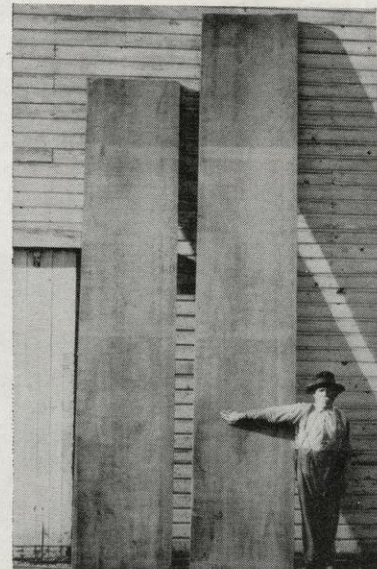


"Our Lumber Jacks"

Left to right: John O. Martell, Charles Morrisette, Henry Harvieux, Louis Parnell, George Harvieux, Amable Morrisette, Delor Harvieux. Photo taken in 1903.



A view of the log pond and log slip at the David Tozer Company's sawmill on the St. Croix at South Stillwater, Minnesota. In the background, is the steam tugboat, Edwin C., used to tow logs from the St. Croix boom to the various mills and rafting grounds on the lake. Many hundreds of millions of feet of wonderful logs of whitepine went up this log slip to be converted into high grade lumber, later shipped to all points of the world. This mill was originally owned by E. W. Durant and David Gaslin. The Stillwaer Lumber Co. (David Tozer, E. W. Durant, A. T. Jenks, and R. J. Wheeler) bought the mill in 1884. The Tozer interests acquired the mill in 1892 and operated it until 1916. Largest years cut was about 50,000,000 feet.



One of the reasons the St. Croix River was nationally known as a whitepine lumber center. View of two record breaking boards from the lumber yards of the David Tozer Company's sawmill at South Stillwater, Minnesota. These boards are 10 1/4 by 36 inches. In other words, 3 feet wide, and 2 1/2 inches thick, C Select Whitepine lumber. Frank Stenlund, employee of the David Tozer Co., is shown with arm outstretched across one of these boards.





Gap of the St. Croix Boom, Stillwater, Minnesota. Here the catch markers worked, placing their "catch mark" on all logs as they went through for sorting. Among the famous "catch markers" on the St. Croix from 1856 to 1914 were the following men: Frank McGray, Eugene and James O'Neal, Rufus Goff, Ed Rutherford, George Trask, Mat Roney, John Murphy, Frank Conway, James Doody, James Dupy, Gilbert Dupy, Duffey Peterson, Tom Musgrove, John Rump, Wm. Worset, Victor Belisle, Edward Belisle.

As the raft, brills or lone logs neared a mill along the river, the 'drivers' would 'steer-in' the logs that were to be sawed by that particular mill. It was dangerous work. Many men fell into the water, some never lived to tell what happened. With peavey or cant-hook and pike pole they were the hardy, hard-working men of the river. They were proud of their work. And woe unto that man who would by a single word make light of their profession. They worked from sun-up to sun-down. In the evening their talk was reminiscing, boasting and bragging. Each man could cut more timber, handle heavier logs and raft more logs than any so-and-so around. Often times the man was challenged in his statements and the result was a wrestling match or a fight. Their muscles were like iron bands, their endurance everlasting, they reveled in their strength come-by the hard way. It was only natural for them to flex those arms in play or, if need be, in earnest from time to time, like young bulls feeling their vibrant sinews cry for action. Hard work in the woods, close and rugged quarters in the log shacks and cold tasks on the river hardened these men to the point of bursting. They were long months away from home and finery. Who could blame them if they 'blew-up' after a drink or two when they celebrated the end of the drive and the season? And celebrate they did! The more foolish 'blew' all their winter earnings, or lost it. The more wise went home to use it for family and farm. The routine of a well-kept home did not apply in the woods. Clothes were seldom changed, bed bugs were rampant, sleeping quarters tight and sweaty. They say that a real lumberjack would take off his boots, throw his heavy wool socks against the wall, if the socks stuck to the wall, he would put on a clean pair in the morning! Paul Bunyon was king of the woods and the legends of his prowess sprung from the vivid imagination of the lumberjack like proud children speaking of the greatness of their fathers.



Fred Parnell's Camp at Gordon, Wis. 1903  
Front row: Louis Parnell, Charles Morrisette, Delor Harvieux, Victor Belisle, 2 cooks unknown, Joseph Harvieux, Henry Harvieux, Geo. Harvieux, Amable Morrisette. 2nd row: Alphone Parent, 2 and 3 unknown, Felix Germain, 5 and 6 unknown, Edward Montbriand, John O. Martell, B. Morrisette, 10 unknown.

The lumberjack was very handy with his feet, too. To be a driver you had to have a keen sense of balance to stay on the log. This work developed every man into a log roller. It became a sport. One would challenge another on a log. By rolling fast, stopping and reversing one roller attempted to un-balance the other so as to tip him off into the water. Many an hour was spent practicing and rolling in competitions. Among the great log rollers of Somerset we have often heard the names of: Leon Rivard, the Narcisse Rivard boys, the Harvieux boys, Ed St. Pierre, the Barriault boys, Fred Parnell Sr., and several others.



Driving logs on the St. Croix River between Taylors Falls, Minn., and the St. Croix Boom. These men, working for the Boom Company of Stillwater, Minnesota, are, left to right, back row: Fred Parnell, Sr., foreman, Louis Parnell, Desire Paquin, Amable Parnell, Charles Mars, Tim Harvieux. Front row: Frank Rivard, Abe Mars, Eddie Parnell. Fred Parnell, Sr., was employed by the St. Croix Boom Company for twenty years. His duty was to drive the logs down from Taylors Falls to the St. Croix Boom.

## SHUT OFF THE WATER!

Harriman had built a dam and sluice at Somerset village. The logs destined for other mills went through the sluice. This sluice proved to be very necessary for other reasons. When the logs arrived at the Apple River Falls great care had to be taken to get them down the falls without jamming. It would often happen that a jam developed at the bottom of the falls. The men were prepared. A horse was held ready and saddled. A rider was dispatched to race to Harriman's sluice and shout to the keeper to close the gates. This shut off the water and slowed the logs. Then began the delicate work of breaking the jam. After several logs were loosened they found the key-log that when extricated would cause the logs to tumble on their way down the river. Most of the time it was not easy to get it out. A team of horses on a direct pull or with block and tackle would yank it out. The rope passed over a block of wood where a man stood with a sharp axe. In case the log got caught and pulled the team backwards the axe would fall in one clean cut and sever the rope.



Fred Paquin's water tank for icing logging roads.





**Frank Lemire Saw Mill — 1905**  
Frank Lemire, Dan Lemire, Philip Rivard, Bob Lemire, Henry Belisle.

## GRIST MILLS

Besides logging there was the industry of the grist mill. Harriman had built a mill along side his saw mill where the present power dam is located. This mill ground feed for stock and made flour from wheat and rye. The farmers brought their wheat and rye and got cash or were credited for groceries and hardware in Harriman's store. In 1883 Harriman sold his grist mill to Edward Plourde I and Joseph F. Campbell. These men conducted the grist mill from 1883 until 1897 on which date they sold their mill and flowage rights to the Apple River Power Company. The old timers still say that the grist mill at Somerset was one of the best.

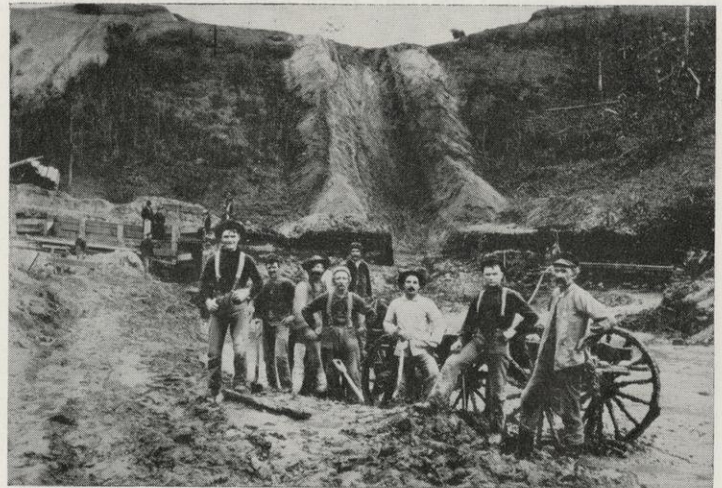
Another entrepreneur of that period was Edward E. Mason. He was a nephew of Harriman. With Frank and Francis Ames, his cousins, he built a sawmill below the village about one mile in 1881. He replaced his sawmill in 1895 with a grist and flour mill. He operated this mill until 1908 when he sold his flowage rights to the power companies. He built several dams in the territory.



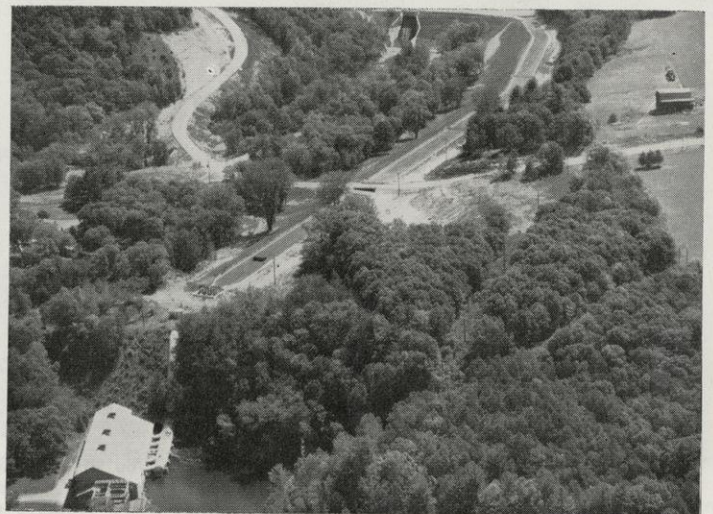
**Building the Dam in Village — 1910**  
1st Row: Louis Ringlet, Ed Parent, unknown, unknown, Amable Parent, Sr., Octave Carufel, Joseph Belisle, Chas. Carufel, Ed Mason, William Payette, Teles Harvieux, John D. Germain, Zeno Harvieux, Edward Carufel, foreman unknown. 2nd Row: Oliver Germain, Amable Morrisette, Henry Breault, Victor Carufel, David Sicard, Arthur Carufel, John S. Martell, Joe Delisle, Paul Belisle, Jr., Michel Campeau, Arthur Harvieux. 3rd Row: Ludger Dufresne, Geo. LaClaire, foreman, Chas. Parent, Eli Charland, unknown, Sam Shaw. Above: Carl Peterson, Aug. Roettger.

## DAMS

The Apple River on its swift run through Somerset on the way to the St. Croix is a mighty force of power. When electricity was sought in the county, Somerset furnished its first power line. Dr. F. W. Eply of New Richmond bought the grist mill from Plourde and Campbell in 1897. He repaired the dam and reconditioned the water wheel. He installed an alternating current generator. A line was built to New Richmond capable of conducting 6600 volts. This line was the first power transmission line in St. Croix County. Dr. Eply sold the company to the Apple River Power Co., a subsidiary of a Chicago Company. In 1905 and 1906 a dam was built up stream at Riverdale by the Apple River Power Company. The two power plants were connected by a 15,000 volt line. A ten mile 15,000 volt line was built to Stillwater. During the meantime, in 1900, a dam was built at Apple River Falls by the St. Croix Power Company, a subsidiary of the St. Paul Gas Company. They have a 25,000 volt overhead and underground transmission line to St. Paul. They needed more power so a line was built between all three plants. The St. Paul Company contracted to buy 5000 kilowatt hours per day from the Apple River Power Co.



**Breaking ground for the new power house at Apple River Falls, 3½ miles below Somerset, Wisconsin, on the Apple River, in 1898. In the background is the excavation for the flume. Shown here, left to right, are Adolph Barriault, Alex Richard, Octave Carufel, Louis Belisle, Dan Veillieux, Amie Parent, Peter Barriault, and Edward Plourde. The dam and power house were built by the St. Paul Gas and Electric Company**



**Apple River Falls Dam and Flume**



The Consumers Power Company of Stillwater, a subsidiary of Northern States Power Co. bought the Apple River Power Co. in 1910. The village dam and power house was completely rebuilt. The old Plourde and Campbell grist mill was dismantled and a new power house was erected. On April 1, 1916, the Consumers Power Company became Northern States Power Co. and the Apple River Power Co. was changed to Interstate Light and Power Co., Apple River Division, with offices in Stillwater. Subsequently the Northern States purchased the St. Paul Gas Co. and its subsidiary at Somerset, the St. Croix Power dam four miles from the village at the falls in the year 1926. The three dams constituted a 25,000 volt system.

In 1927 the Riverdale dam was converted to remote control from the village dam. In 1954 extensive repairs were made on the Falls dam. A new flume was built from the top of the dam to the power house situated one-half mile below the dam. On April 15, 1955 progress made a cruel step. The falls dam and the village dam were converted to remote control from Stillwater. Several men and families were affected. Where once there were three shifts and alternates, now there is only a skeleton crew of maintenance men. The little street of company houses at the Falls were abandoned, sold and moved out, some houses coming to the village to be remodeled and resettled. At the present time the three dams have an output of 4,210 kilowatts.

Joseph F. Campbell was the first operator of the village dam. He stayed on for 40 years of faithful service. Henry Berube has a service record of 38 years. Thirty-five years' service include Ephrem Mondor, Carl Meinke and Art Landry. Others of long service: Joe Carufel, Roy Lindberg, John Pearson, Peck Peterson, Greg Lemmer and Elmer Sicard.

On Feb. 2, 1921, Candlemas Day, Henry Berube had a terrifying experience at the Riverdale dam. After his shift he got in his model T and started up the hill to the road. It was wet and he slid back turning over. The car pinned him in the mud so that his face was in the mud and water. Unable to breathe he prayed "his last prayers" thinking no one saw him. Mrs. Schaal lived on the hill in a company house. She always watched the men change shifts. She knew Henry to be punc-

tual. When he did not come up the hill her curiosity prompted her to go and see. Seeing Henry she called help and the car was turned over and Henry was revived. Ever since that day, Henry has blessed the oft-timed cursed curiosity of a woman!

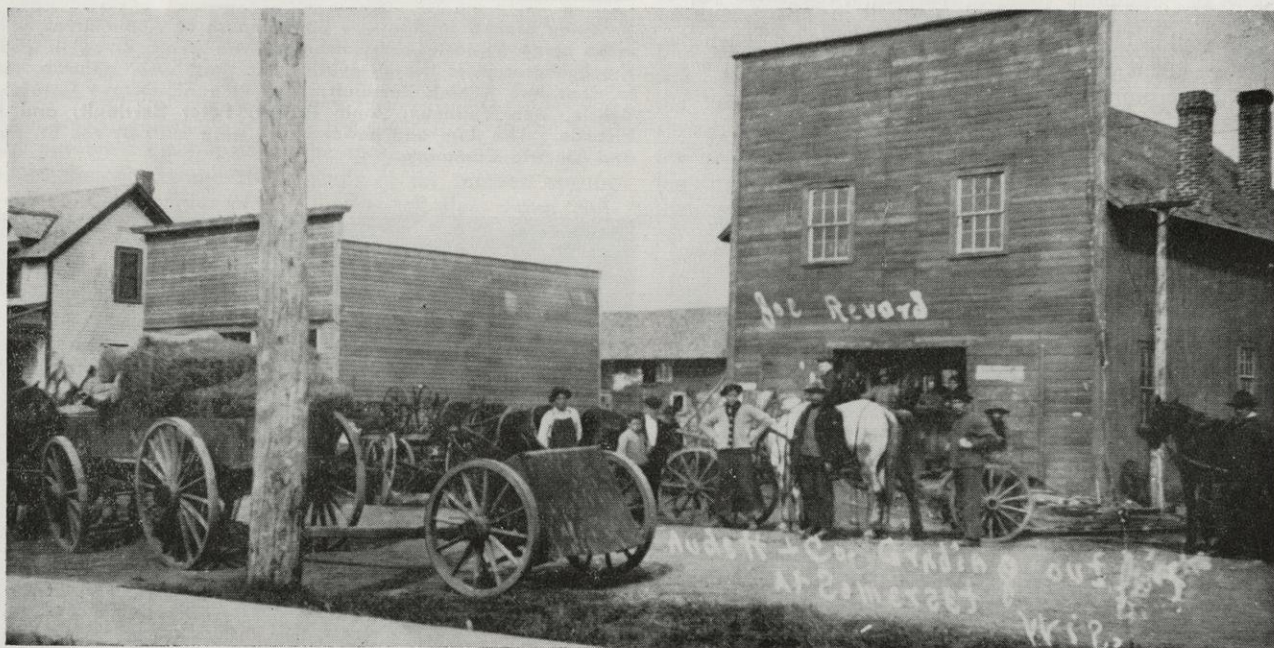
## STORES AND CHEESE

LaGrandeur's Red and White Store, Fred LaGrandeur owner, still has the old records of their daily sales in 1884, when Grant & Sons took over the store from Sam Harriman. Glancing through the books we find the following prices: one barrel salt — \$1.75. One pound of 8 penny nails — \$.04. Cotton flannel — 15c per yard. One gal. paint — \$1.50. Print — 4c per yd. Eggs — 20c a dozen. Binder twine — 16c per pd. One barrel of pork — \$14.00. Oats sold at 20c per bushel. Rye — 40c per bu. Potatoes — 20c per bu. Beef steak — 11c per lb. Butter — 20c per lb. One pair overalls — \$.90. Cheese — 15c per lb. Lamp glass — 10c. One corset — \$1.00. Shoes — \$1.50 pair. Axe — \$1.00.

In 1887 there began an era of distinctive change for the community of Somerset. Up to 1887 the farmer raised wheat and rye as his principal source of revenue. From henceforth the trend would be to dairy farming, a most happy change, because the terrain is more suitable to stock raising. The hills are rolling and there is much gravel. Grass grows good and there is a plentiful source of water.

Grant & Sons established the first cheese factory in St. Croix County. They built a frame factory of modest size on the lot east of the present fire house. In June 1887 they began operations. The farmers brought their milk in wagon and buggy. The first day nine patrons came in with an average of 50 lbs. of milk each. By the end of the month there were 31 patrons. Simon Vanasse averaged 90 lbs. a day for high man the first year. The price paid per hundredweight for the milk varied between 60c and \$1.00. In 1910 the price had gone up to \$1.52 per 100 lbs. of milk.

The cheese factory made a full cream cheese, something like a "Colby" cheese of today. They made them into "Twins" of about 35 lbs. each. Later they also made "Daisies" of 20 lbs. each.



Joe Rivard's Blacksmith Shop  
It stood where Archies now is located. Other blacksmiths: F. X. Montbriand, Joe Brochu, Joe Mondor, George Paquin, Chas. Audette and Co. "Audettes the Breakers" broke much land around Somerset.

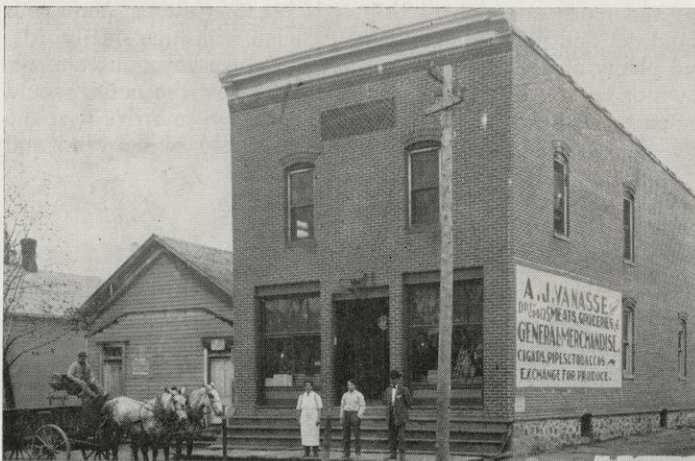


## FACTORY DROWNED

But Human Nature stepped in after a couple of years to upset the applecart. Babcock of the University of Wisconsin had not yet invented the Babcock test for butterfat in milk. The cheesemaker would make so much cheese each day. When he sold the cheese he would divide proceeds to the patrons in proportion to the amount of milk they had brought in. What happened? A few unscrupulous farmers thought: if I have more milk I get more of the profit. Why not have more milk by adding a little water to the can? So the patron would make a trip to the pump before going to the cheese factory! As a result the cheesemaker had increasing difficulty in making cheese out of water. There was no way of checking. The factory had to close down — the factory had drowned! It opened a few years later, this time with a fool-proof test against any flooding.

In the ensuing years more factories were built, and the dairy industry was on its way to great days in the beautiful valley of the Apple River. Henry A. LaGrandeur, taking over from his father and uncle, built factories at Pine Lake (Lac des Puants), County Line, 1 mile East of 35 and another at New Johannesburg near the bridge (Pont Charles Parent). The factory in the village was finally moved to new quarters in the building now occupied by the Benner Wood Works. That factory became a creamery later and closed forever in 1943, Wilfred Rivard being the last owner. The creamery located at Rehder's Corner and the first in this district was known as the St. Joseph Coop., was moved to the LaGrandeur Cheese factory. This creamery was organized by Ernest Rehder.

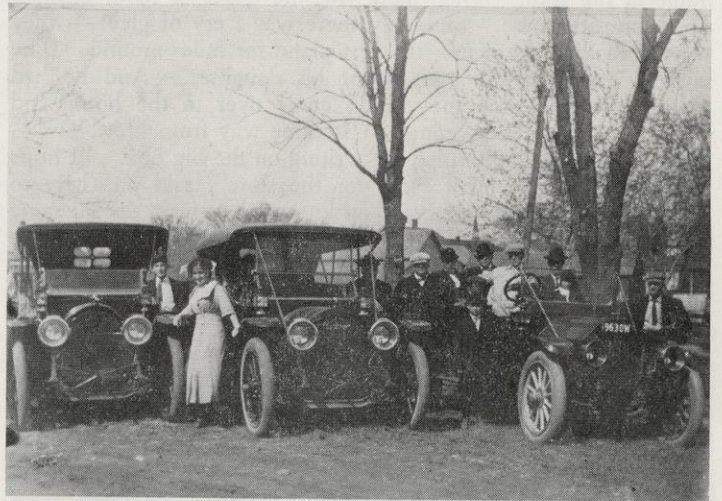
During the meantime other factories grew up. William Cook had a factory North of the village. A. J. Vanasse bought him out and rebuilt a nice plant at Sand Hill in 1909. Mr. Vanasse also built the cheese factory at Bass Lake in 1920. A. J., as he is known, built his brick store building in 1900. For over forty years A. J. ran his store, ran several cheese factories, was an undertaker, community official, operated a hall and movie house and owned one of the first cars in Somerset — a Mitchell bought for \$1475 in 1911.



A. J. Vanasse's Store and First Village School on the Left. Urgel Rondeau with team, E. A. Parnell, Archie Montpetit, A. J. Vanasse. The store is now owned by Nig Johnson. The store is in the basement, apartments upstairs.



Amable Lemire' Car "Case" — 1909  
Amable Lemire on hood, Lizzie Lemire, Carrie Trembley, Mrs. Paul Belisle, Sr.



Three of the First Cars in Somerset — 1911  
Left to right: H. A. LaGrandeur, John Pearson, A. J. Vanasse.



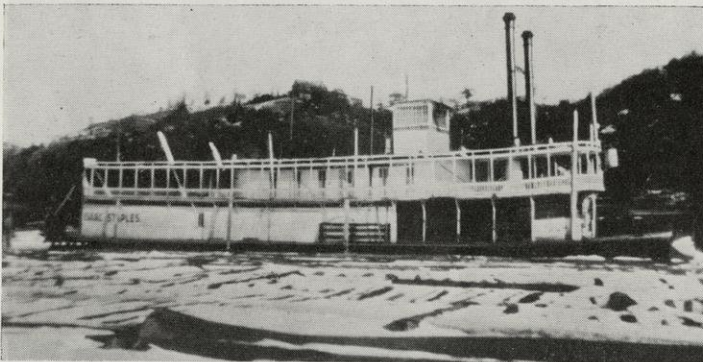
Dressed in Their Finest  
Anna and Helen Belisle, now Sr. Pauline and Sr. Elizabeth



## CHAPTER VI TRANSPORTATION

In the first days around Somerset you traveled by water or on foot. The St. Croix was well traveled. Large steamboats plied the majestic river from New Orleans to St. Croix Falls. These boats had side wheels or back-paddle wheels to carry them through low water and sand bars. They were the passenger carriers, freighters and mail carriers. The life on the river immortalized by Mark Twain was a romance all its own. A "river man" was a breed of his own. They were colorful and devoted to 'Old Man River', it was in their blood. Their life has been the subject of poem and song. Captain Edward LaGrandeur skippered the "Dispatch" on the St. Croix and Mississippi before settling in Somerset. Some others also worked on the river boats from time to time.

It was a great event when the steamboat whistle sounded away off on its way to the little docks along the St. Croix. The children from three to ninety came down to see the boat dock and unload. A passenger or two came down the gang-plank. Then they unloaded the precious freight which was the life-blood of the settlement. First of all they watched for the mail bag, that precious contact with relatives and friends back home in the East. Then there was the boxes of food, canned, dried and otherwise. Suddenly there was a cry of glee — they were unloading the piano, the first piano for miles around. The sawmill owner had bought it for his daughter. And he had assured the folks that they could come over to the house and listen and sing some evenings. "It came way from New York", cried a youngster as he spied the writing on the big box. "I hope that dry goods shipment came for the store", said one lady to an equally anxious neighbor, "you know I haven't a decent thing to wear to church." A large number of boxes to the little store meant a few happy days of shopping for much needed supplies and the few little luxuries they allowed themselves.



Famous steamer Isaac Staples of Stillwater, noted rafter on the St. Croix and lower rivers. Built by Morgan, and used by the famous lumberman, Isaac Staples, to haul out a part of his enormous output of logs from the St. Croix to the many mills on the lower river. Rebuilt by George Muller for Bronson and Folsom. Picture taken in 1902.

### HARRIMAN'S LANDING

Our pioneers came by steamboat mostly from Prairie du Chien, which was the nearest point to the river from Chicago.

If you turn right just before you arrive at the bottom of Landing Hill into a gravel road and travel windingly for one mile you will come to the St. Croix River. This spot has been called Harriman's Landing since 1856. It was here that Sam Harriman built a dock and a warehouse. Later he also built a grain elevator. The river runs deep near the bank and afforded the best place closest to the Settlement for docking a steamboat to let off passengers and supplies. This place is now owned by Karl Neumeier of Stillwater as a summer home.

The first pioneers debarked at this point with their few supplies. There were no roads, of course, for some time. A trail blazed with the axe were the best they could do for a few

years. When they needed supplies which they could not form with their own hands or grow on the land, they took off by foot for Hudson or by river for Stillwater. They would hail a steamer or smaller craft going by at the Landing. Hitch-hiking is not new stuff. Our forefathers were very adept at it. Back at the Landing they walked up the hill and to their homes with all on their backs. Oftentimes they walked way to Hudson and back with more than 100 pounds on their back.

Then came the roads. The road to Stillwater was the greatest boon to Somerset. Before the bridge there was a ferry. Oftentimes you had to wait a long time to get across. You can still see how winding and torturous the roads were, they went around every little pot-hole. Roads were built with ox or horse and hand-scraper. No road went straight down a grade. It was easier and cheaper to go down like a cow-path, on the bias. A team could not possibly hold a load on some of our grades today. After the ox cart, called la Charrette in French, came the wagon with team. If you were fairly well off you had a team of broncos and a buggy. On Sunday the roads to the church were dotted with wagons and buggies, sometimes so close as to form a little procession. In Somerset there were just a few of the more ornate buggies — the surrey with the fringe on top.



Corpus Christi Procession — 1910

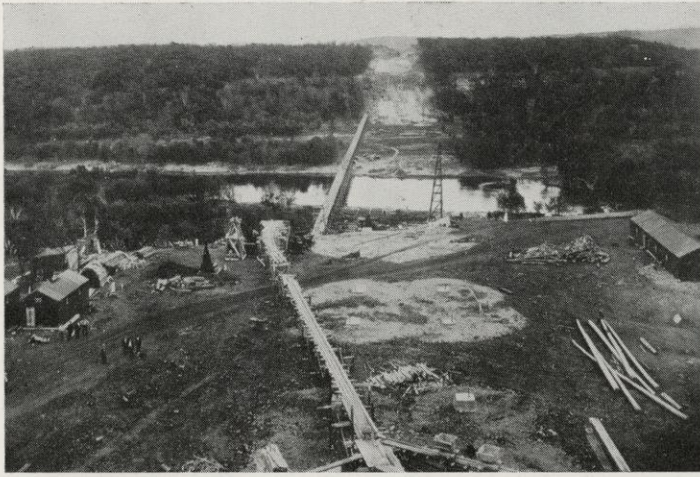
Note the sheds and the buggies. Parishioners traveled slow but surely. Going to church was more difficult those days, but go they did through rain and snow.

A trip by buggy or wagon to Stillwater was an all day affair. And a glorious day for the children it was, as it meant riding, shopping, visiting and a bag of candy or peanuts if they behaved. Back that same night the event was discussed for several months. If you did not want to go by yourself there was always a livery for hire. In winter the sleigh and cutter, or perhaps a bob sled were the modes of travel. They did not pay too much attention to the roads because after a storm you could not find the road anyhow. A sleigh with high side-boards, and plenty of straw and blankets was a deluxe voyage to church, town or on a visit to the neighbors. And how the horses would fly on the way home! You were anxious too to arrive near the fire of your cozy home after hours in a cold biting wind and driving snow.

### THE RAILROAD

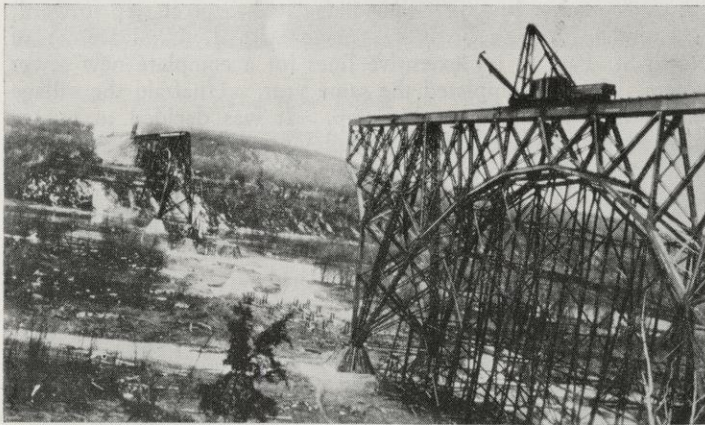
"The railroad is coming to Somerset" was the cry in 1884. Sam Harriman had used his influence to get the Wisconsin Central Railway to come near Somerset on its way to St. Paul. His success was not complete. The road had to cut through further south in order to hit a low spot over the St. Croix. It came through the draw at the bottom of Landing Hill. The depot was built  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles southwest of Somerset, a half-mile from 35 on the gravel road to the right before you reach the bottom of the hill. At least,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the railroad was an improvement. The first station agent was D. D. Harrington. He was followed by C. Simpkins, Mr. Shepard, John Philip and Cliff Ramberg.



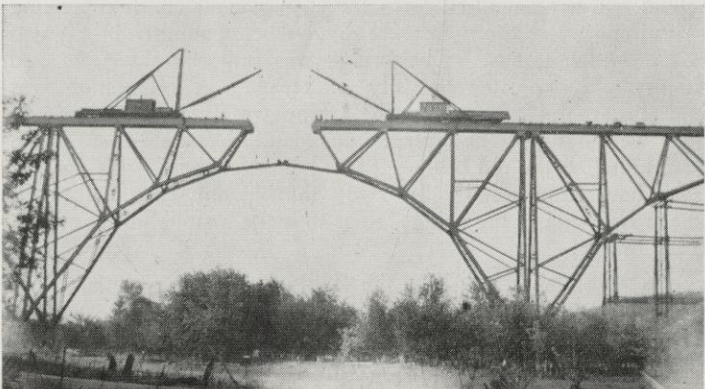


View showing the construction of the foundation for the Soo Line railroad bridge across the St. Croix river between Minnesota and Wisconsin. This work and a great deal more was necessary before the steel superstructure could be built.

The Soo Line Railroad took over the Wisconsin Central in 1909. The line from St. Paul, Somerset, Glenwood City and Chippewa Falls was abandoned. A new line from St. Paul to Somerset, Marshfield, Fond du Lac and Milwaukee was built in 1910 and 1911. The High Bridge over the St. Croix west of the village was completed in 1911. The first train over the new bridge was on June 19, 1911.



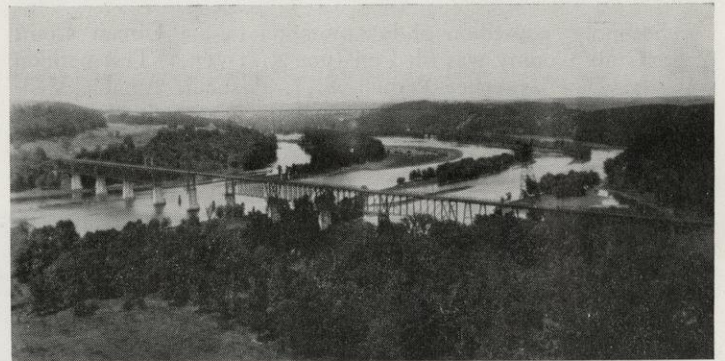
Looking northwest at the construction of the Soo Line railroad bridge across the St. Croix river five miles north of Stillwater, Minn. The Minnesota end of the bridge is to the left. The Wisconsin end to the right. Photographed in 1911.



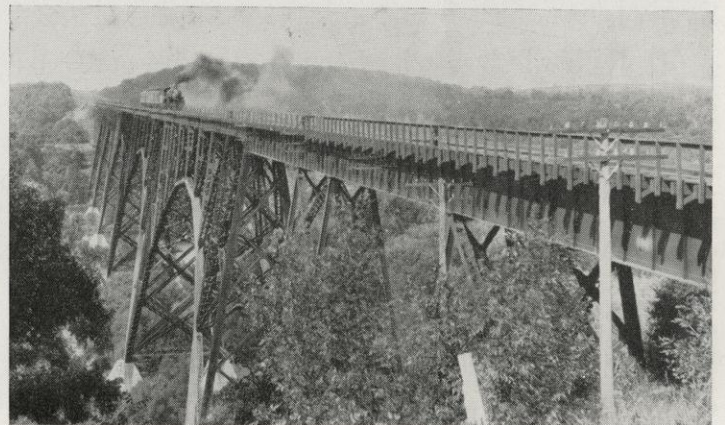
Joining the Bridge — 1910

This magnificent structure called the High Bridge was for many years the largest of its kind in the world. It is 2,683 feet long. It stands 185 feet above the river. It has six huge piers and five spans of over 365 feet each span. The symmetrical work of art standing high against the horizon was the work of Kelly Atkinson Construction Co. of Chicago. It cost \$534,045.00. The road bed was built by Foley Bros. Co. of St. Paul. The bridge was constructed by beginning on each bank. An engineering feat of no small account was accomplished when the central span was put into position, joining the bridge, with perfect alignment with no give or take an inch. There are 500 tons of steel in the superstructure, and 8,200 cubic yards of concrete in the piers. The old Wisconsin Central bridge stood 90 feet above the water and the grade on the Minnesota side was too steep. The piers of the old bridge are still there.

The depot built in 1885 at Landing Hill on the old Central was moved to Somerset Village, where it remains today. The first Depot agent at the village in 1911 was Ray Bishop. The depot has never changed and neither has its faithful agent to this day.



A view in the St. Croix valley looking north from the Wisconsin shore, about five miles above Stillwater, Minnesota. In the foreground is the old Wisconsin Central Railroad bridge, purchased by the Soo Line, and in the background is the new Soo bridge. Photographed by Harry Jackson in 1914.



The First Train — 1911



## CHAPTER VII

### INCORPORATION OF THE VILLAGE, 1915

Since 1856 the village had grown little by little. The situation was becoming a problem. The people in the village were demanding more and more ordinary conveniences for themselves. They wanted sidewalks, sewer system, better streets with curb and gutter, a water system. Now the people in the country naturally did not have an eager desire to vote appropriations that would benefit only the villagers. There was continual wrangling in the Town Board. What to do? The back-houses were a nuisance to the scenery and to the nose. The streets were muddy because the water had no place to run. And the farmers said: "We haven't any streets or sewers either!" And so it went on.

The town fathers had several impromptu meetings and it was decided to incorporate the village under the laws of Wisconsin. After incorporation the Village Board could levy taxes and appropriate monies for their own benefit. The Township people were also pleased because this would take a load off of them.

First of all a surveyor's plat was made of the proposed limits of the new village. This plat was made on March 27, 1915. The first plat by Harriman and Reed was recorded on September 29, 1857, but not for incorporation purposes. The new village plat was recorded at the Register of Deeds office, Hudson, on June 30, 1915. This plat shows that the village contains 837 and 7/100 acres of land.

Secondly, a petition of incorporation to the Circuit Court of St. Croix County was filed on June 5, 1915. This petition was signed by Lawrence Parnell, S. J. Phaneuf, Amable Veilleux, A. H. Montpetit, and C. Koehler. The petition to form a village was granted by George Thompson, Circuit Judge on June 5, 1915. An election was ordered to be held in Vanasse Hall on June 29, 1915. It was duly held with a total vote of 93 cast. There were 92 for incorporation and 1 against.

Thirdly, an election was ordered after the favorable vote for incorporation. This election was held the first part of July, 1915. Village officers were elected. The newly elected president, Fred Parnell Sr., called the first meeting of the brand new village board on July 26, 1915.

### FIRST BOARD MEETING

In the Proceedings of Village Board of Somerset were recorded these words on the first page:

"Following are the minutes of the first regular meeting of the Village Board of the Village of Somerset, Wis.: At a special election following the incorporation of the aforesaid village the following officers were elected for the ensuing year:

Fred Parnell, President; Henry J. LaGrandeur, Clerk; Desire Paquin, Treasurer; Lawrence Parnell, Assessor; S. H. Shaw, Justice of the Peace; Treffe Liberty, Constable; A. H. Montpetit, L. J. Belisle, Chas. Koehler, Trustees for one year; Amable Veilleux, John Liberty, Steve Martell, Trustees for two years. All the above mentioned officers having qualified and taken the oath of office, all officers were duly notified by the clerk to meet at Vanasse Hall July 26, 1915 at 8:00 P. M. for the first meeting. The meeting was called to order by the President, Fred Parnell. Motion made by L. J. Belisle and seconded by C. Koehler that the regular meetings be held on the first Tuesday of each and every month at 7:30 P. M. Carried. Motion made that the Treasurer's salary be \$25.00 per year. Carried. An order of business was adopted. The meeting was adjourned. Date: July 26, 1915. H. J. LaGrandeur, Clerk."



William Cloutier's Saloon — 1909 (now the Rendezvous)  
Left to right: Lactance Belisle, Amable Cloutier, Henry Bergeron, unknown, Frank Lemire, William Cloutier, Philip Rivard, Francis Rivard, Fred Fagnan. Bartender, Albert Rivard.

### IMPROVEMENTS

Immediately things began to happen in the village. A sewer was laid in 1916 from the telephone office to the river and from C. J. Montpetit's home to join the other line. This cost \$950.00 and was built by the Somerset Hardware. At last some of the odiferous privies could be eliminated. Although it deprived some of the boys their fun on Halloween — not so many privies to dump over!

Next was the laying of sidewalks, curb, and gutters. More street lights were ordered erected. Up to now after dark you couldn't tell a man from an elephant at twenty paces without a program. In 1928 the village took a great step forward. A contract for \$11,000 was made with J. C. Hammet of North St. Paul to lay extensive lines for a complete new sewer system. It was completed the same year. Unafraid the village fathers then took another big step. It was decided to put in water works for the village complete with pump, water lines and tank. At a cost of \$22,000 the task was completed in 1929. A Water Commission was formed to handle all the waterworks affairs. Before the village could convince the State Utility Commission that the people were capable of maintaining it, the first Water Commissioners had to promise that they would serve without pay. H. J. LaGrandeur kept the books and A. J. Vanasse read the meters for ten years without pay. Father W. A. Beaudette served as the third commissioner. The well, back of the Post Office, is 299 feet deep. The 2nd well in 1943 is 367 feet deep.

In the ensuing years several W. P. A. projects were accomplished. But the building of a new bridge across the River at the village was a boon. The old iron bridge was at the south end of town. People going north to church or on 35 had a long way to go around. The children going to St. Anne's School had a great distance to travel. Several children making a short-cut across the dam were always being punished. It was extremely dangerous. The bridge was built by the State and County and dedicated on July 4, 1933. A celebration was held and several braves from the Chippewa Reservation at Hayward were here to embellish the occasion. Whereas one or two were killed on the old bridge, it was better on the new bridge — seven have been killed! In 1948 the big hill was cut through on the East side of the bridge, so as to make a straighter approach to the bridge.

In September, 1932, the Village Board organized the Somerset Fire Department. Fire equipment was purchased and a Department with regulations was set up. With Edward Plourde as its first Chief the Firemen were: Gus Beyl, Harry Dieltz, Walter Winzer, Earl Parent, Ray Bishop, Oscar Graff, George Belisle, John Jacklin, Willie Belisle, Lyle Liberty,



Andre Vanasse, and Allie Cloutier. In 1954 the Township joined the Village in buying a new big fire truck and a special Fire Hall was erected. As of today the citizens are well protected in Village and in Town. Alore Anderson is the present Chief. The present Village Hall was bought in 1937 from Jerry Paquin who built in in 1912 and ran it as a store.

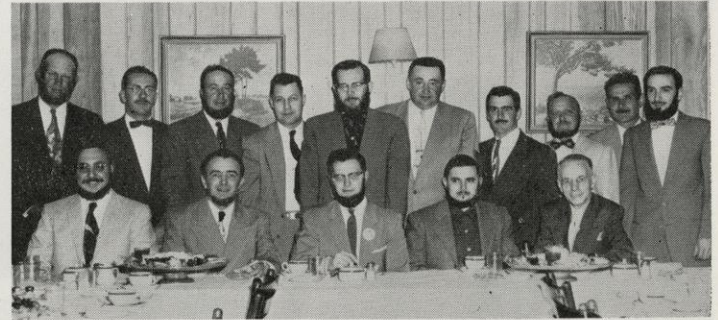
In recent years among the many improvements made in the village we note with pride the widening of the main thoroughfare. New curbs and gutters were installed and a complete new lighting system of the most modern design was installed. It was dedicated in 1955.



Street Scene — 1945



The New Bridge — 1933



Somerset Fire Department — 1956

Front Row: Harold Campeau, Lyn Belisle, John Leske, Orville Rivard, Alex Parnell. Back Row: Milton Meinke, James Watters, Alore Anderson, Elmer Sicard, Gerald Belisle, Felix Landry, Harold Paquin, Ronald Belisle, Ed Lemire, Larry Cloutier. Absent: Milton Vanasse, Keith Boardman, Eddie Germain, Chas. Traiser, Lester Martell, Martin Radke, Isaiah Roy.



The New Fire Trucks

The trucks carry tanks and pumps for fighting fires in the country. Chief Alore Anderson and Kristine.



Among the men of the Village who served for many years we find the following: Nels Cloutier served continuously as president from 1922 to 1946, a total of 24 years. Alex Parnell served a total of 29 years as faithful Clerk, retiring in 1955. Edward J. Plourde served as trustee for 27 years from 1927 to 1955. Lawrence Parnell served as Supervisor of the Village on the County Board for 26 years. Others of long service: H. J. and Fred LaGrandeur, and Albert Germain.

Among the men serving on the Town Board we find: John Comebacker serving as Clerk for 24 years and Edward Montbriand Sr. followed him for 25 years. We often see the names of Jerry Rivard, Thomas Parnell, Chas Carufel, Augustin Belisle, Chas Audette, Aug. Wegge, A. W. Nehring, Louis Traiser, H. A. Grant, and Alex Gordon. But the longest servant of all was Joseph S. Plourde who served in different capacities after 1915 for a total of 32 years.

James Vanasse, son of Mr. and Mrs. Andre Vanasse. In World Wars I and II our boys all did their bit. None were lost in W.W. I. In W.W. II Elmer Parnell died in 1944. Jimmy Vanasse was killed in action in Belgium on Nov. 14, 1944. Dennis Germain (Henry) was killed in action on Luzon Jan. 25, 1945. All three boys are buried in St. Anne's cemetery.



**Somerset Town Board, 1956**

Left to Right: Ernest J. Germain, Assessor; Paul Rivard, Clerk; Keith Boardman, Supervisor; Milton Meinke, Chairman and County Supervisor; Alley Parnell, Justice of the Peace; Donald Landry, Supervisor; Gerald Plourde, Treasurer; Harvey Bursch, Constable. The cooperation between the Town Board and the Village Board has been magnificent during the planning of this Triple Centennial. Paul Rivard is the grandson of Desire Rivard, one of the first supervisors in 1856.



**Somerset Village Board, 1956**

Left to Right: Billy Shay, Constable; Wm. Kress, County Supervisor; Bernard Peterson, Trustee; Elmer Sicard, Treasurer; James P. Watters, President; Aurel Cloutier, Trustee; Alore Anderson, Trustee; Ray Bishop, Clerk; Roland Martell, Trustee. Absent: Les Lindstrom, Trustee.

The founder of Somerset, Sam Harriman, was an Englishman. The present president of the village, James Watters, is also English, being born in England. We are proud of our village board for the fine civic work they are doing.





**The Somerset Red Sox, 1908**

Somerset's first ball team. Left to Right, First Row: Clark, Ernie Ostendorf, Marcel Leveque, Louis Payette. Second Row: Frank Montbriand, Alfred Beyl, Henry Martin, Albert Brown, Archie Montpetit, A. J. Vanasse, manager.



**The East Marine Team, 1910**

Left to Right, Seated: Eli Cook, captain; Tom Parent, Fred Steffen. Standing: Fred Mordick, Philip Ringulet, Henry Schiefelbein, Glenn Brown, Gus Schiefelbein, Henry Graff.



**The Parnell Team**

In the '20's the Parnells held an annual game with the Belises. Left to Right, First Row: Ben, Philip, Alley. Second Row: Louis, Clarence, Elmer, Ray, Andy, Ray. Third Row: William, Richard, Lawrence, Alex, Narc, Ed.



**Charles A. Parent, Age 93**

Charles is the oldest living man who was born in Somerset. He is the son of Charles and Eulalie Picard Parent, born in 1863. He has no children. He is still active and takes regular walks around the town.



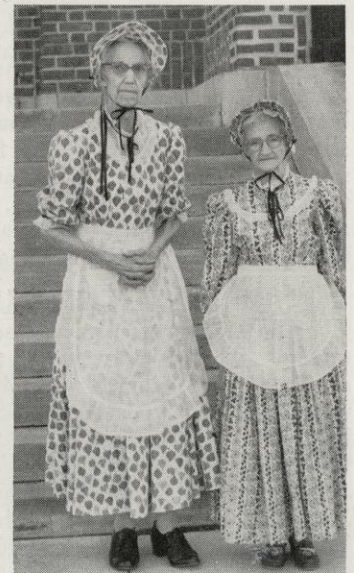
**Mrs. Frederick Kieckhoefer, Age 94**

Mrs. Kieckhoefer, who lives with her son, William, is the oldest living resident of Somerset. She was born in Naugard, Germany, in February of 1862. She had 16 children, of whom eight are still living. She was married 71 years ago.



**John P. Cook, Age 90**

John was born in 1866, son of Peter Cook. He is the youngest of nine children. He married M. Desneiges Parent and they had six children. John stays with his son, George. He helps around the place as the photographer caught him in the garden.



**Two**

"Young" Centennial Misses Mrs. Louis Germain, age 81, and Mrs. Octave Cloutier, age 90. They made their own dresses, too! Our French-Canadian lassies always remain young at heart.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MOONSHINE DAYS

The "Roaring Twenties" gave Somerset wide publicity. Even to this day men will smile and say: "Oh, yes, I remember Somerset. One time back in 1928 I went out there to pick up a gallon of 'moon'". And he will embellish the event with a few colorful remarks about "the good old days". Somerset was the Moonshine Capital of the Midwest. How did it happen?

In 1918 Prohibition, the noble experiment, took effect. Now the French-Canadian is not a notorious drinker, he drinks no more than any other race, but he has a keen sense of independence. No foolish law was going to stop him from having a nip from time to time. But there was no liquor to buy. So he made his own! One man is generally given credit for installing his own distilling outfit. He shall remain nameless as will all the people involved herein. In 1918 he made some alcohol from molasses. Naturally he sold some. It was scarce and sold for as high as \$30.00 a gallon the first years. As time went on the idea of making easy money spread throughout the community. This continued and grew until 1933 when the Amendment was repealed. However, there was still some bootlegging going on until 1939.

### "DO IT YOURSELF KIT"

First of all how do you make 'moonshine'. There being little chance of any getting away with it today except back in the hills of Kentucky, we make bold to inform you of this delicate art of bringing pleasure to the thirsty. You take a 50 gallon hogshead. Put in 45 gallons of water. Stir in 100 pounds of cane sugar and a half-gallon of cracked corn. Dissolve four pounds of yeast in lukewarm water and stir in. Keep the batch at 72 degrees. For 7 days stir twice a day. When the corn quits working your mash is ready to cook. Your still consists of a copper boiler of 1 barrel or larger. The top is soldered on. A copper coil of 50 feet comes out of the top and coils through a cold water tank. A kerosene stove of several burners is under the boiler. You cook the mash. As the steam arises inside it goes through the coil and is condensed to liquid. This liquid is alcohol. In about 4 hours your 50 gallon batch is cooked and you have 10-11 gallons of 'white mule' moonshine. The first few gallons come out about 125 proof. The more you cook it the less proof you have. So that the whole 10 gallons averages 95 proof. Several men made 100 gallons a day or more. One farmer had a 12 barrel still.

It being against the law the men had to keep a watch out for the "feds". So the stills were hid wherever they could: in basements, barns, sheds, in the woods, caves. It was stored also in peculiar places. One farmer a few years ago dug up some real good stuff underneath a stump. Another farmer's truck broke through the ground. On investigation he discovered a secret tunnel with a secret panel in his barn. He had lived there for years without knowing it.

### THE RUNNERS

The biggest problem was selling it, that is, without getting caught. The easiest way was to let the customers or 'runners' come to you. The Twin Cities were the largest source of customers. They came with cars equipped to hide and haul hundreds of gallons of moon without detection. Of course, they were caught many times. One runner broke a jug in his car. It smelled so much that he was sure the cops would smell it in passing. So he pulled out his choke on the car and 'smoked' his way through traffic unharmed.

Two loads a week went to Moorhead and Fargo. On one trip two men with a 100 gallon load took to cruising around Fargo while waiting to unload. In North Dakota it was jail, not just a fine, to peddle moon. As the driver made a left turn a cop pulled up. "You can't make a left turn into this street" he shouted. With fear in his heart lest the cop come closer to investigate our man said: "please, sir, I did not know that. I

promise you that I will never again make a left turn here as long as I live." He got through but stayed away from Fargo.

### AGING AND SUGAR

White mule sold, but more often the moon was aged a little. Charred oak kegs were used. About six months of aging and you had good whiskey. Or you could force-age it by putting in an electrical element and bringing it to a boil for five hours. One fellow had an ingenious system. He tied a rope to the top of a tree. Attached it to his barrel the breeze would rock the aging barrel very gently. The more it rocked the better.

This moon was worth \$5.00 a gallon. The tree would rock the moon and the moon would rock the client. Rock and roll is old stuff to the moonshiners!

Another big problem was getting sugar. The Feds were watching sugar shipments. One man was selling a carload of sugar a day. He had one load in the warehouse, one on the track and one in transit. There were other sellers also. Sometimes it got too hot and the bootleggers would have to travel to pick up their sugar. If caught their trucks were confiscated. Yeast was another ticklish problem because they had to buy it by the hundreds of pounds. But they got used to playing hide and go seek with the Feds in their shiny black cars. The men had a warning system when the black cars were headed this way. We do not know how many were making moon, but thousands of gallons of it was coming from Somerset!

### WHY HERE?

You might ask — why did it become such an industry in Somerset, why not in Hudson or New Richmond? To make moon you must have confidence in your neighbors. Somerset was almost all French much interrelated. They still have a fierce sense of loyalty to each other. They must not snitch. Neither must they be envious of each others good fortune. Jealousy and greed will break up any endeavor. Also a 'gentlemen's agreement' must mean something to all parties concerned. There must be a good moral background, even though the action involved is not at the time exactly legal. Also Somerset was near the State line and the Twin Cities.

Everything was going along fine with not too much trouble when the strangers and racketeers came on the scene. The French-Canadian is not greedy for great gain. When the supply became too great he quit making moon for several months to keep the price up and the Feds away. But some men from St. Paul came in to make a killing. They would high-jack the moon from the farmers. Sometimes paying for the moon and then at the point of a gun demanding the money back and running off with hundreds of gallons.

These men built a big still to make straight alcohol. They would redistill the moon and make 180 proof alcohol. They were uncouth, rude, bold and greedy. They brought the Feds down in droves. Besides they were unscrupulous and had no sense of loyalty or fairness. They would undersell the farmers and simple bootleggers to the point where it became \$1.25 a gallon. Instead of taking it on the chin they fought and threw their weight around. The Feds were out to get them, and though they did not want to hurt the 'honest' bootleggers, the Feds had no choice. The market was ruined and the 'esprit de corps' was lost. Bootlegging became more dangerous and several were fined or served up to six months in jail. In a sense the bootleggers were glad when Prohibition was repealed. The fear and pressure was telling on them too much. Because these outsiders came in to make a racket out of simple bootlegging, the French-Canadian is suspicious of strangers coming in without stating their business and intention on the level and above board. The French are a closed-group, and like it that way, although they will gladly accept you if you do not take advantage of them. They will fight among themselves, but like to work out their own problems without outside interference. The family spirit of loyalty extends to the neighbors and community.



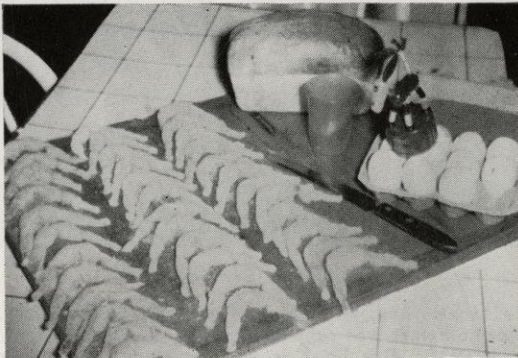
## CHAPTER IX

### SOMERSET AND FROGS

When you think of frogs you might think of frog legs. And when you think of frog legs you think of Somerset. Since 1938 Somerset is known throughout the Northwest as the Frog Leg Capital of the World. People from everywhere come to our beautiful and spacious restaurants to eat frog legs, steaks and other fine dishes. We have without a doubt the finest, well equipped, beautifully situated, and excellent restaurants in the Northwest. Sure, they have a fine restaurant here and there that may outshine ours, but we have three such noted eating places: The Steakhouse, The Terrace, The River's Edge. These high class dining rooms give eclat and chicness to a small village that is unusual. The cuisine and personnel give each place distinction sans pareil. Add to these three restaurants two smaller family style places, Maurice's and Lynn's, with a homey personal air and you have sparkle and interest in eating at Somerset. Class, distinction, homey atmosphere and beautiful decor both in building and in the natural surroundings add up to "an adventure in taste".

### FROG LEGS AND TURTLES

It started with a young man coming to Somerset with leather jacket and boots in 1926. The natives were suspicious about this man who roamed the fields near their moonshine stills. But they soon found out he had a most peculiar vocation — he was catching frogs! Gus Beyl came from Villard, Minnesota to catch frogs and ship them to Eastern hotels and restaurants. In 1938 he built The Palms Restaurant. With the artistry of his wife, Pearl, he served frog legs and turtle meat. The first three days after opening they served 3000 people. The first plate of frog legs was served to Elmer Parnell. Like a frog — word jumped fast throughout the Northwest and people began coming to Somerset to eat frog leg dinners. Mr. Donald Hough, journalist and author, wrote in the St. Paul Pioneer Press on August 22, 1954 as follows: "When I think of frog legs I of course think of Somerset, Wisconsin, which so far as I have been able to find out is the frog leg capital of the civilized world. I have known the frog leg industry in Somerset since it was a tadpole. It began in a tiny restaurant on the main street. They now have the largest frog farm I ever heard of and some restaurants, taken with their settings along the banks of the beautiful Apple River, are considered by people much more traveled than I am to be among the most attractive, even dramatic, anywhere. The New York and New Orleans frog legs lack one ingredient that I wouldn't exchange for all the others. That ingredient is the Apple River."



Frog legs ready for the deep fry.

Before we go any further let us jump back to the beginning of our wonderful eating places. The oldest restaurant is the Palms-Steakhouse. It was built in 1909 by Joseph Plourde Sr. from lumber that he tore down from the old St. Anne's School on the north side of the old church. He bought the old school for \$220.00. He built apartments. Amable Lemire bought the big house and made a restaurant out of it along with living quarters. He ran this restaurant from 1917 to 1938 when he sold it to Gus Beyl. Gus renovated it and frog history began in Somerset. In 1941 Gus built his frog farm and sheds. A spring runs through the sheds to keep the pens refreshed. He bought frogs from local men and boys and shipped them to all parts of the States. He had as many as 30 tons of frogs at one time in his sheds. His family would dress 900 dozen a day at times. The "green grasser" made quite an industry. He dealt in turtles too.

In 1946 Beyl sold out to Ben Breault and Fred LeGrandeur. The tradition of good eating has been continued. Marcel Breault is now manager.



Turtles for a "Snappy" Meal

These turtles weigh hundreds of pounds. Gus Beyl holds one out of reach while Cliff Dybdahl looks on from a distance.



Gus Beyl's Frog Shed  
Earl Hecht is now manager of the business.



## THE TERRACE

The Terrace began as a dance hall in 1930. It was built by Elmer Steinhilber and Bruno Severson with Ben Breault, Dave Breault and Archie Montpetit as stockholders. In 1933 there took place the famous "Walkathon". For three months contestants walked around the clock with only fifteen minute rest periods spaced at intervals. People came out from the cities in droves to see the couples stagger around the circle. They would carry each other at times and also slap each other to keep awake. It is alleged, however, that the 24 hour stint was not on the "up and up", and that the contestants from out of town did a lot of good acting to fool the spectators, also a lot of sleeping when no one was watching. It was a good show, however.

Dave Breault took over the management and converted the hall into a restaurant and bar. One of the unique features was an outdoor bar around an old pine tree. After the renovation in 1937 Dave began a feature that finally got Somerset into Life Magazine. It was "riding down the Apple River in innertubes". The water is swift but not deep or dangerous as it flows past the Terrace. For about a mile one can sit in an innertube and get a smooth ride down the river. In the July 21, 1941 issue of Life pictures were taken of this practice. Beside this there was the interesting if at times flattening experience of gambling. Open gambling went out with the State Law about 1944. In the last few years large picture windows were put in, and now you eat amidst the pines in a beautiful setting.



Floating Down the Apple River  
Life featured this novel practice in 1941.

## THE RIVERS EDGE

The Rivers Edge began as The Riverdale Nite Club. It was built in 1931 by Nig Johnson. He chose a beautiful spot near the river. Nig conducted his fine eating place until 1943 when he sold it to Mrs. Monahan who in turn sold it to Earl and Noah Mondor. The Mondors rebuilt the place more spaciouly in 1945. In 1946 Jack and Alice Raleigh bought the restaurant and changed the name to Rivers Edge. Raleigh started a regime of excellent cuisine, fine service and distinguished atmosphere. The last few years he has enlarged the dining room. The view from the entire glass front is magnificent. The Apple River murmurs its way through the wooded glen in full view of the relaxed dinner guests. The Raleighs maintain a refined climate of friendliness. It is one of the most unique dining rooms plus an atmosphere that refreshes.

## LYNN'S

Lynn's Cafe is a land mark of many years. In 1870 Isaac Burton, a Jew, opened a saloon. It was run as a saloon until Prohibition in 1918. After Burton, the following were proprietors: Joseph Brochu, Edmund Parent, and Lactance Belisle, Joseph Belisle, Amable Veilleux, Eugene Roy, Damase Germain, Severe Cloutier, and A. H. Montpetit. In 1922 George Belisle made it into a first class bakery. He operated the bakery until 1932 when he decided to go into the restaurant business. After his death in 1937 his wife, Josie, conducted it with her son, Lynn. After his return from service Lynn and Margaret renovated the dining room. Their genial good humor has made their cafe a delightful visiting place for the hungry and the "just-dropped-in-for-a-cup-of-coffee" gang.

## MAURICE'S

Maurice's Cafe is open 24 hours. This eating place is known for its quick and excellent service at all times. "Just what you want and quick" is the theme. The building was a house for Luther Royal. It was a hotel for Damase Collin and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bergeron. It was a house and drug store for Dr. S. J. Phaneuf. Today it is a cafe for Maurice Lemire, a barber shop for Edward Lemire and a tavern for Jerry Demulling. Like the building, Maurice is everything to everybody. His interest in people and desire to please makes his little cafe a gathering place for the weary and the friendly. At any hour you will find a group "just chatting" and eating some of Maurice's good food, cooked with a French-Canadian flavor. "I'll meet you at Maurice's" is a familiar remark in Somerset.

Maurice began in the restaurant business in 1940 in a small place in the center of the building now occupied by Tiny and Lucille Martinson. Previously A. H. Montpetit, Paul Belisle Jr., Art Morrisette, Steve Martell, Val Belisle and Kenny Wirt had the little one-room restaurant. Maurice moved to his present site in February 1947.



Our Bank Officials

Mrs. Lottie Montbriand, Art Quinn, President, and Shirley Johnson. The Bank of Somerset was organized in 1910. The present building was built in 1918. Our bank is the life-blood of the community. We are fortunate in having such excellent and genial officials.



## **GASPER'S TAVERN**

Onesime Germain built a little store where Gasper's place is now in 1904. Henry Breault and Louis Beauvais then had it. George Germain made a tavern out of the home. This was taken over by Clem Parent. Gasper Campeau now conducts the tavern since 1953 with his wife Doris.

## **BEAUVAIS' BAR**

Louis J. Beauvais built the present tavern in 1924. He conducted the business until his retirement in 1946. His son, Lyle, has run the tavern since 1946. Lyle added a dining room in 1955.

## **EARL'S BAR**

Lyle Liberty built the present building occupied by Earl Parent's Bar in 1941. Dave Breault took over in 1942 and sold it to Earl Parent in 1944. Earl is helped in his business by his wife, Myrna.

## **PLOURDE BROTHERS HARDWARE STORE**

Plourde's building, which houses Plourde Brothers Hardware store is a comparatively new business, built in 1914, just forty years ago.

Eugene Rivard and Fred Parnell, both deceased, were the builders of the brick building. At the start Gene Rivard ran a farm implement and machine business in the southwest side of the building, and the northeast side had been leased to W. Snoeyenbos of Baldwin for a hardware store. Later Snoeyenbos sold his stock to Fred Holle and Steve Cave, also of Baldwin, who managed the store until a disastrous fire completely gutted the southwest side of the building.

That fire was in January 1924, and besides the burning of the implement store, the Somerset Drug store, owned by Dr. S. J. Phaneuf, was completely destroyed that night. Also burned was the home of Dr. Phaneuf which was next door to the drug store. On the second floor of the drug store was the Somerset telephone office with living quarters for the operator.

In March 1925 Joseph Plourde, Sr. bought the building which had been lying in ruins for a year and immediately began to rebuild it. When it was completed his sons, Joseph S. and Edward J. bought the Holle hardware stock and opened up for business as the Plourde Brothers Hardware.

Before moving the hardware stock to the southwest side of the newly built store, dances were held, both upstairs and downstairs, in celebration of the 4th of July, 1926.

Al Fremland of St. Paul moved here with his family and opened a men's clothing store, but after a few years he sold out and the northeast side of the building was taken up by Ben Breault.

In 1929 an overall factory occupied the upstairs of the building, but after three years' stay here in Somerset the factory moved to River Falls.

## **OUR DOCTORS**

Dr. Gasper Henault came here about 1875 and practiced here a few years until his death.

Dr. Joseph Octave L'Allier came to Somerset from the Province of Quebec, Canada, about 70 years ago, having his office and home up on the "church hill", and practiced here until his death. Only one of his children remain in Somerset, Joseph L'Allier.

Dr. S. S. Phaneuf and his career in Somerset is related on his family page.

# **The Home Place Club**

Those who are living on the same place or farming some of the same land as their ancestors for 90 years or more are:

Lester Liberty  
Sam Rivard  
Paul Rivard  
Wm. E. Baillargeon  
Adolph Sicard  
Gasper Lemire

There may be more, but we have not been able to ascertain this information at this time.

We have searched the records and find that some homesteads have remained in the same family for many years.

Those who are now living on the same place, or farming some of the same land as their ancestors for 100 years or more are the following:

Charles Traiser — 1855  
Lester Martell — 1855  
Maurice Simon, Sr. — 1855  
Glenn Belisle — 1856



# The Days of John Till

## JOHN TILL THE PLASTER DR.

During a period of four years from 1905 to 1908 Somerset and the name "John Till" were bandied about by people from all parts of the United States. Even thirty years after he left Somerset persons were known to inquire about the "Plaster Doctor, John Till". Even to this day it is heard: "Oh, yes, John Till used to be there. Quite a guy. What ever happened to him?" Toward the last as high as two hundred patients were taken in a day, some on stretchers, some in wheel chairs, all very, very sick people. Twenty to thirty rigs daily transported people from the Landing Depot and from Stillwater, Hudson and New Richmond. Every home, almost, in Somerset was a boarding house for travelers from afar. The hotels in surrounding towns were filled to capacity. Excitement ran high. Speculation as to future development of this extraordinary influx of people to this small village ran the gamut of boom to bust. No one quite knew what to do.

It all started with an abscess on the cheek of Melina Cloutier, the wife of Octave Cloutier. In the fall of 1905 she suffered a great deal. Jonas Lemire of Range, Wisconsin visiting at the Cloutier home said: "Why don't you try our 'charlatan' from Turtle Lake, he has performed some great cures." Octave decided to go and get the peculiar "doctor" from the other side of Turtle Lake. Treating Melina with a secret salve he procured the cure of the cheek in a few days. Word spread quickly and others demanded treatment for other ailments. John Till came to Somerset at intervals for a few months, then he moved in with Octave Cloutier as a non-paying office guest. The turmoil began at the Cloutier farm, a half-mile south of the village.

Till was born on August 11, 1870 in a poor mountain village of Einsiedel, Austria (now in Russian-held Czechoslovakia).

## TILL COMES TO WISCONSIN

At the age of twenty-eight he became ambitious and struck out for better things in America. In 1898 he entered the States through Canada. His sister, Bertha Stoeberl, who lived between Turtle Lake and Almena, took him in. He cured a few people around there, his fame did not begin until he came to Somerset with Octave Cloutier in 1905.

Till used a salve and plaster which he mysteriously guarded. The salve had a great drawing power and would pull out all the infection, thus permitting the wound to heal.

The plaster concoction was more powerful. It was composed largely of croton oil and kerosene. Croton oil comes from a certain East Indian tree. It is a counterirritant which produces boils or blisters. It was Till's contention that the plaster 'drew out the poison in the body and organs', thus permitting nature to heal the affected parts in its normal way. A body filled with poison causes malfunction which results in ulcers, cancer, appendicitis, rheumatism, varicose veins and all other ailments. His plaster would draw out through the skin of the back the poisons in the blood and tissues. This process of "drawing out" was extremely painful.

## SOME CURES

Mrs. Simon Vanasse was bothered for years with migraine headaches. It was so terrible at times that the veins at her temple stood out a quarter of an inch from throbbing so much. She took a plaster treatment from Till and was cured in short time never to be bothered again.

Many cases came in wheelchairs. They were cured and were able to walk in a few weeks.

Octave Cloutier also cured many people after Till left. Philip Germain's hand was run through by a bullhead. In a few days his arm was blue and swelled to twice its normal size. The doctor at New Richmond said that he must cut off his arm to save his life. Octave was called in. He applied some of his salve and in a few days the arm was normal as ever.

The plaster and salve were external medicines. Till also treated well with internal medicines. Mrs. A. J. Vanasse had the dreaded dropsy. She got so bad that she had filled with water to almost twice her size. The medical doctors said she must be tapped. Tapping was usually the beginning of the end. Doctor Till was called. He gave her some medicine to take three times a day. In three weeks Mrs. Vanasse had passed off all excess water and lived to the ripe age of 69.

## THE PLASTER

Beginning at six in the morning and working until ten at night, Till would receive three or four patients into one of the front rooms of Cloutier's house. He would feel of their jugular vein and oftentimes would tell them their trouble without them saying a word. The sufferer's back was laid bare. Till would take a sponge and smear his croton oil concoction from neck to base of spine. Octave in the meantime would sew in the person's garment some cotton batting. This would soak up the running matter from the inflamed skin. In time the back would be almost like raw beef. Then a festering would take place. The suffering often drew screams and moaning. The longing to be through with the treatment and have the back rid of the pain was intense. The festering also set up a stench which was unbearable to others. The batting would remain two weeks and then a second treatment might be in store.



John Till About 1905





**The Octave Cloutier Home**

It was in this house that thousands came for treatment from John Till, as many as 200 a day. The people here are mostly patients waiting their turn.

As they left the "office" they would drop in whatever their fancy or appreciation would dictate, some five or ten but rarely, others a dollar and many others nothing. There was no system of charge, nor any set demand. Till's income has often been exaggerated. The New Richmond bank states that at times he deposited \$3,000.00 every two weeks.

He was called "the barefoot doctor" because he seldom wore shoes. Although Mrs. Cloutier says he took to shoes after a few years at Somerset. He wore a plain woollen shirt open at the neck. His trousers were baggy and not too clean. Two small gold rings adorned his pierced ears. He went long periods without shaving and he snuffed. He was loud in his talk and gruff in manner. However, he was not arrogant. He had a sincere wish to help and was kind to the sick. The doctor was supposed to be a Catholic but never practiced his religion while in Somerset. He was very shrewd especially in regard to money. He did a lot of good to the sick. Otherwise why the numerous people from Chicago and all points? What doctor of your knowledge has a song composed about him? Till had one. Samuel Tufts of Knapp, Wis. published a song with words by D. Adams and music by W. Broughton.

The rigs transporting the hundreds every day charged one dollar. The homes charged fifty cents a day with meals extra. The saloons did well. Now in all this coming and going and turmoil Octave Cloutier got the least for the time and energy consumed. When Till first came Octave was taking part in a "crusade". He did not charge Till for the use of his house. He helped in the "office" every day. The doctor took all the proceeds. There was no "cut" for Octave, as some think. He was sincere in his wish to alleviate the suffering of the poor wretches who came for help, some who had been given up by the medics. As a result Octave and his wife, Melina, did not discuss monetary matters. The doctor, of course, did not wish

to talk about it either, he knew when he was well off. The only revenue the first years were the breakfasts and meals Melina served to the waiting. She charged a small fee. She had to have hired girls to help her daughters: Bessie (Mrs. Dan Shirley), Bernice and Annie (Sister Octavia).

The work for Mrs. Cloutier was immense. She ran the house, cooked, cleaned and managed besides helping to run their farm. Her husband spent all his time as helper for the doctor. She was a little bit of a woman but mighty in her capacity to work and plan. It was she who finally demanded some kind of accounting for all this turmoil and trouble in her own home. The last two years a system was worked out by which tickets were sold to all who entered the house for treatment. With a twinkle and chuckle she now claims many took tickets and never paid. Far from making a lot of money the Cloutiers were glad when John Till did not come back. Mrs. Cloutier now enjoying ninety years with good health is staying with her sister-in-law, Mrs. Louis Germain in the Art Raymond home. When asked why they kept Till so long without getting anything in return she said with complete candor: "We were too simple, we were not smart enough."

It was not long before the State Medical Board was "out to get John Till" for practicing without a license. The Board was sure that he was doing more harm than good, and no control over him was possible. They had to pin something on him that could be proved in court. Mrs. Cloutier relates that one day a rig brought a man from the depot. When she saw the man in the rig she knew he was dead and forbid them to bring him in the house. He was brought in anyhow. The authorities were called and refused to listen to Mrs. Cloutier and thus charged the death to Dr. Till. Many patients were practically dead when they came for help.



# Dr. Till of Somerset.

Words by  
D. ADAMS.

Music by  
W. BROUGHTON.

We took a trip to  
Some say he is Aus -

Som - er - set not ver - y long a - go On the borders of Wis -  
trian and from for - eign lands he came He land - ed in A -

con - sin Where the ap - ple riv - er flow, Our health it was so poor - ly We  
mer - i - ca To work for wealth and fame He's known now thro'out the land For

thought that we would try That Doc - tor there at Som - er - set For he was all the cry.  
his ac - complished skill And of all the oth - er doctors there is none like Doctor Till.

Copyright MCMVII by D. Adams.

3  
So off we start for Somerset, our hearts began to cheer,  
We all are bound to reach the goal, for life it is so dear;  
We know he's cured thousands, more feeble yet than we,  
So all hurrah for Somerset, that Dr. there to see.

4  
Some had lagrippe, some rheumatis, we felt so awful sore,  
We all determined to start out, although we felt so poor,  
We were bound to see that Dr. or tear our shirts to try.  
For to harbor such diseases, we're all liable to die.

5  
He can straighten deformed cripples, or will heal a fever sore,  
He'll knock rheumatics from your bones, so they will hurt no more,  
He will take off warts and bunions, if you'll only give him time,  
And when he's finished treating you, its then you will feel fine.

6  
He'll cure a cancer thoroughly, without the use of knife,  
And that awful 'pendicitis, that's cost so many a life,  
He pronounces it but nothing, if it's treated right with skill,  
To use the knife there's danger, and is liable to kill.

7  
He'll use but little medicine, to smart the tender throat,  
He'll invite you to be seated, but first to draw your coat,  
He'll loosen your suspenders, hoist your garments from the rear,  
And then place a roll of cotton, from the hip joint to your ear.

8  
He puts the cotton on the back, that your garments will not soil,  
But before he puts the cotton there, he'll rub your back with oil,  
You must leave it there a fortnight, you'll think it was a score,  
For your back will look like measles, and all covered o'er with sores.

9  
You now may take the cotton off, you'll think your doing fine,  
But now must have the second one, I'm sure 'twill make you whine,  
It will take the skin all off your back, and be all a running sore,  
You'll say the Doc at Somerset, is nothing but a bore.

10  
And now the worst is over, and I tell you I feel fine,  
I think the Drs. treatment's worth a California mine.  
I can run and jump so nimble now, like twenty years ago,  
So I thank the Doc at Somerset, and to him you all should go.

Song Written In Honor of Till In 1907



## TILL IN TROUBLE

As was to be expected, Till was arrested many times and brought to trial at Hudson. The State Medical Board could not persuade a jury to convict him. He would return triumphantly to Somerset greeted by hundreds awaiting consultation.

In 1908 Till took the Cloutier family with him to his native Austria. In September a reception was planned for his return, the town's people were to have a special reception complete with parade. It never happened. When they arrived at Ellis Island the Cloutiers were passed without incident. The Doctor was detained for some technicality not known. The Cloutiers came on home with the good intention of contacting a lawyer to help. During the meantime he got in with the help of his sister. He was convinced that Octave had abandoned him. Despite the pleas of some citizens of Somerset he never returned. Instead of being grateful to the people of Somerset and especially the Cloutiers, he was going to "show them" by depriving them of his presence. To tell the truth the Cloutiers were glad to be finished with the turmoil and the work without fair compensation. Octave continued to put on the plasters and his wife made the salve, but the mysterious drawing power of the eccentric Austrian doctor was not here. Peace and quiet returned to the homes and normal life continued. The "days of John Till" are recalled to this day with legend growing upon legend about this fabulous "barefooted man with teeth of tan".



**Loading the Rigs**

As many as 30 rigs were carrying patients from the depot at Harri-man's Landing and from New Richmond and Stillwater.



**Rigs Entering the Cloutier Farm**



The rig drivers, the stores, and restaurants of Somerset all made good money during Till's stay.

John Till settled in New Richmond, then in Turtle Lake where he built a large "clinic". That village experienced the same influx of people, "Till Johns" they called the patients. In 1917 he married Hedwig Steiner in Austria. They had one son who now lives in South St. Paul, Minn. Anticipating trouble he bought an estate in Dittersdorf, Austria. In Turtle Lake another death was attributed to his treatments. He was

# John Till of Somerset

WORDS BY  
**D. ADAMS**

MUSIC BY  
**W. BROUGHTON**

PUBLISHED BY  
**SAMUEL TUFTS**  
KNAPP, WIS.

5

### Gratitude Wrote a Song

Despite persecution, Till did much good and procured many cures

tried at Barron and found guilty, not of the death, but of practicing without a license. He appealed the case. During the meantime it was a daily affair for him to be sued for blindness or ill health which patients claimed resulted from maltreatment. He fought them all with success. During the meantime in 1919 he bought the Penfield School for Boys at Hudson and moved there with a bonafide M.D.

When Till was sentenced in Barron, Wis., to six months of jail for practicing without a license, in 1919, A. J. Vanasse heard of the affair. Remaining grateful for the life of his wife some years before, A. J., as we call him, took his little car and began to get signers to a petition to release the doctor. A. J. traveled over four counties. He obtained 6,500 signers including five medical doctors. Fortified with these names of people who testified to the good that the doctor had done, A. J. betook himself to Madison and held audience with Governor Blaine himself. He pleaded for the doctor's release because of the immense amount of good health he had procured for thousands even though he had no legal permission to practice medicine. The Governor was impressed not only with the people who loved Till but also with the zeal of Vanasse who had nothing to gain for his trouble. After his return to Somerset, A. J. received a call from Hudson. Till greeted him and said: "Come down and have a chicken dinner with me, I just got out of jail on a special release." And that chicken dinner was all that Vanasse got out of his pains! But he was happy in the fact that he had relieved at least a little of the troubles besetting the harrassed doctor.





**Till and Octave Cloutier Family**  
 Left to Right, Seated: John Till, Octave Cloutier, Nere, Delphis, Melina. Standing: Louis, Josie (Sr. Angelique), Anna (Sr. Octavia), Elizabeth.  
 Octave and his family worked hard to help Till. They permitted their house to be used as office and boarding house.

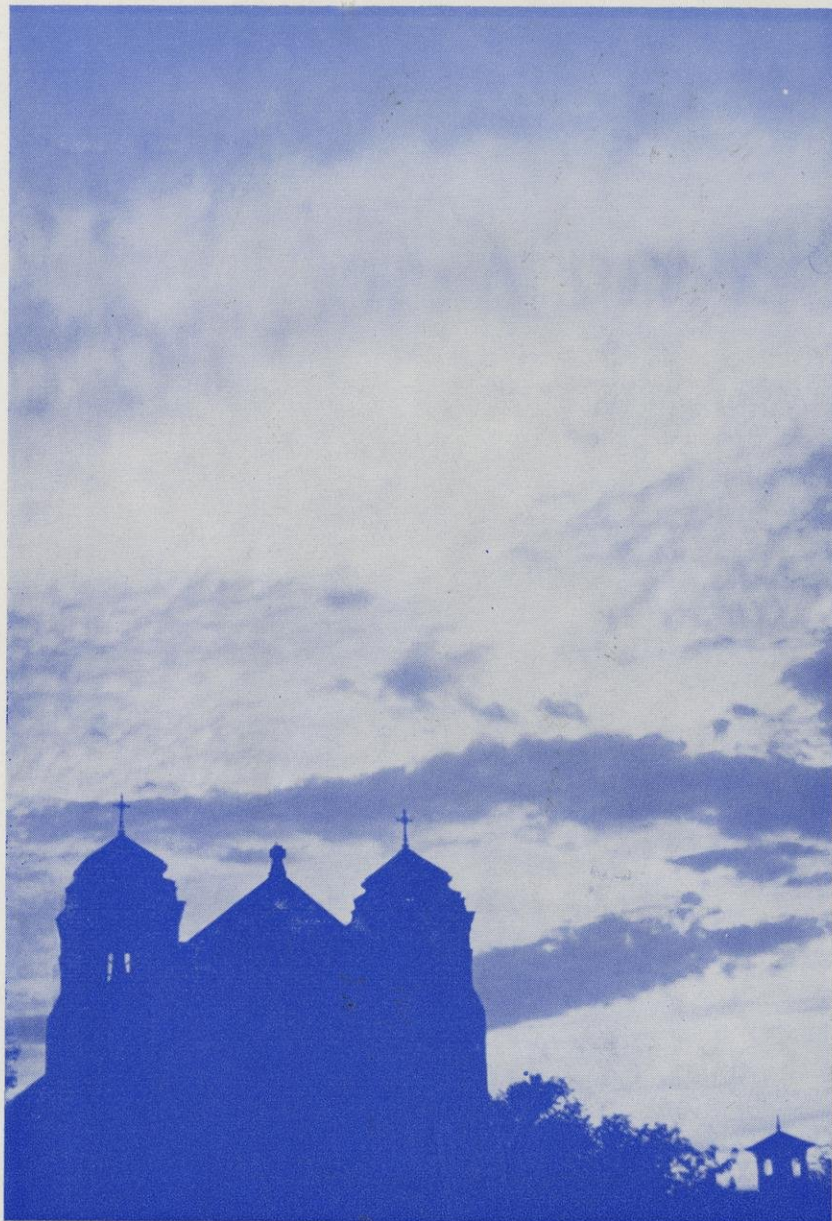
The Court withheld further sentencing if he would leave the country. On March 12, 1922 he sailed for Austria. In 1946 after World War II he used his citizenship to return to the United States. He had lost all of his lands and possessions to the Nazis and the Communists. One night in May 1946 he appeared at the Plourde Brothers Hardware. He asked for A. J. Vanasse and with Joseph Plourde he asked that they find a farm for him somewhere around Hudson. After settling there he visited friends at Kiel, Wis. and on July 14, 1947 he died there of a heart attack. His widow lives with her son in South St. Paul.

James Taylor Dunn, of the Minnesota Historical Society, from whom much of this history is taken, states in his account

the words of F. M. Welch of the Stillwater Messenger: "He benefited the health of thousands . . . whether there was anything supernatural in this or not, we do not presume to say. Whether the people simply imagine Till has cured them, it is still a fact that a great many people claim Till cured them . . . The independent American invalid will have his way in spite of all arbitrary and futile prosecution."

The memory of John Till, his work, and the crowds, the hectic days and the excitement still remains in the minds of the people of the St. Croix Valley. His curing power still lives on. His salve to this day, brewed by Melina Cloutier, still brings cures to the afflicted. The "Plaster Doctor of Somerset" will never be forgotten.



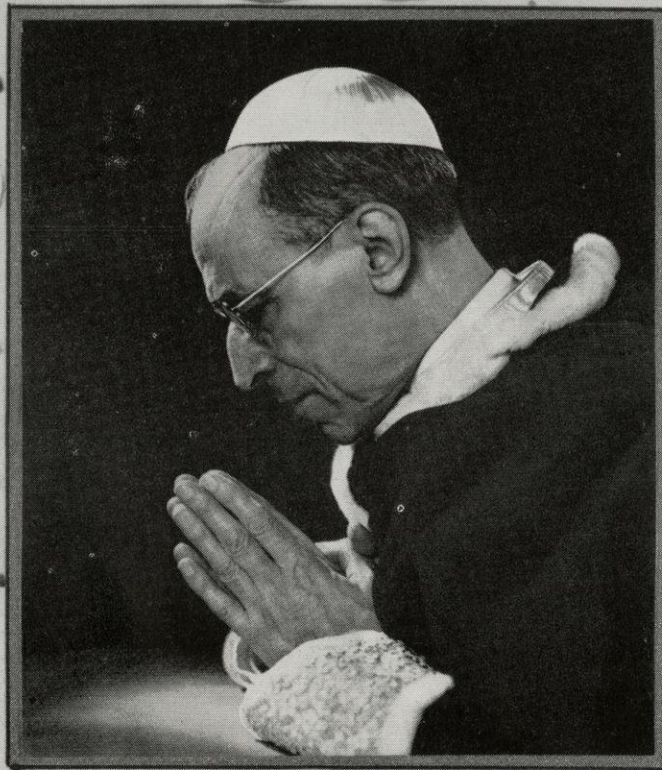


# A CENTURY OF FAITH

History of the Parish of St. Anne  
Somerset, Wisconsin  
1856 - 1956

By Father John T. Rivard, Pastor





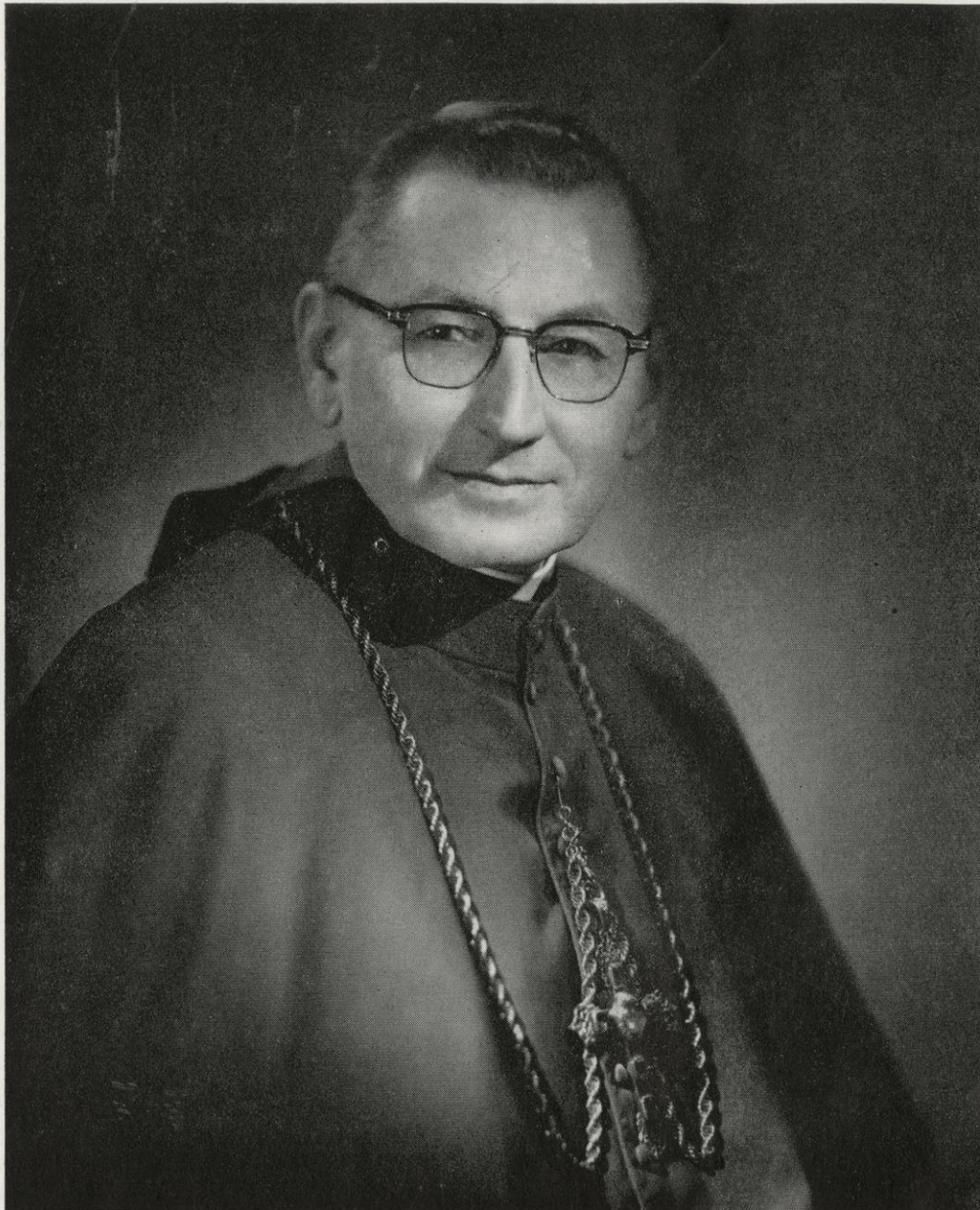
Most Holy Father

Rev. John Rivard, Pastor,  
Sisters of St. Joseph and  
Parishioners of St. Ann's Parish,

on the occasion of the Centenary of the Parish,  
Somerset, Wisconsin, humbly prostrate before Your Holiness, beg  
the Apostolic Blessing.

*Annis Domini benignè annuit precibus  
Datum ex Aedibus Vaticanis die 5 Junii 1956  
+ D. Verini  
Archiep. Adm.*





**HIS EXCELLENCY, JOSEPH J. ANNABRING, D.D.  
BISHOP OF SUPERIOR**

**DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR**

*Bishop's House*

1108 East Second St.  
SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN

June 11, 1956

To the Parishioners of St. Anne's:

On the occasion of the Centennial of St. Anne's Parish, Somerset, Wisconsin, I should like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the pastor and to all the parishioners. On this memorable occasion it is also my prayer and my hope that the good people of St. Anne's Parish will continue to foster that parish spirit which has been bequeathed to them by the founders of the parish and which has made St. Anne's Parish one of the outstanding parishes of our Diocese.

With cordial good wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
**JOSEPH J. ANNABRING**  
Bishop of Superior



# A Century of Faith

A History of the Parish of St. Anne, Somerset, Wisconsin

## FAITH BUILDS A CHURCH

"Avec une hache a la main, un petit sac au dos et un chapelet dans la poche les braves Canayens sont venus pour faire un 'chez-eux'."

(With axe in hand, a sack on the back and a rosary in the pocket these brave French-Canadians came to build a home.)

The Parish of St. Anne comprises a territory surrounding the Apple River as it empties itself into the broad waters of the beautiful St. Croix. The Indians scouted through the hills and near the rivers before Daniel Greysolon Sieur DuLhut stroked past the mouth of the Apple River in 1680. Religious ceremonies were performed by the Indians at the mouth of the Apple River where we find an island which was their burial grounds.

The Parent brothers, Joseph and Louis, their brothers and brothers-in-law were all well educated in their Catholic religion. After they had established a homestead they sought out the nearest priest and church to have their children baptized, their marriages performed and to go to Mass. They traveled to Hudson and Stillwater to beg the priest to come and give their families an opportunity to hear Mass from time to time. All our first pioneers were men of great faith. They would call on "le Bon Dieu", because without His blessing nothing would flourish. Their one thought was that as soon as they were numerous enough they would build their own little church and have their own priest in their midst. When the first ones came in 1850 they never thought that they would have their own church by 1856! Why, other settlements waited for years! The building of that little church on the banks of the St. Croix and Apple Rivers in 1856 must not be minimized in its tremendous significance. Their Faith was strong and their determination was irresistible.

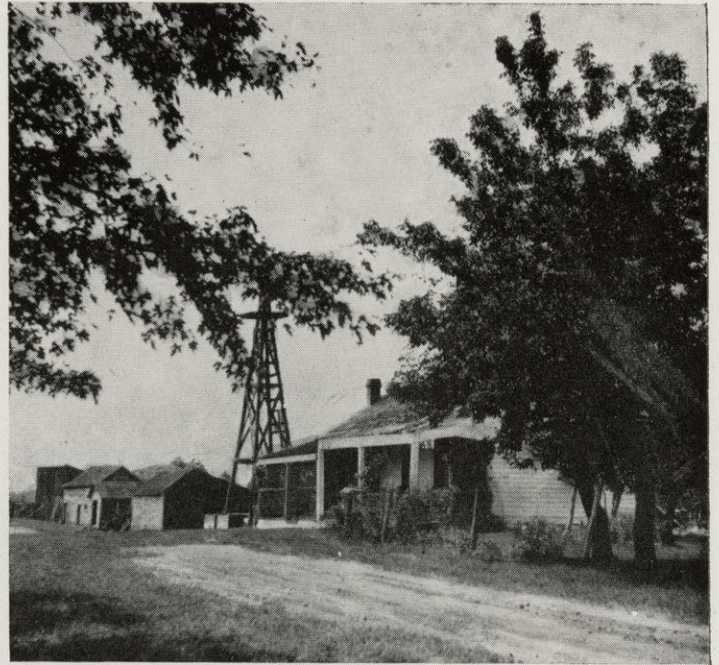
The names of the pioneers appear in the History of Somerset. We will repeat only the names of those who are connected with some event. Most of the pioneers came from La Baie du Febrve, Lanoraie and Deshambeault on the St. Lawrence in the Province of Quebec.

## FIRST MISSIONARIES

In 1851 Father A. Ravoux of St. Paul, Minn., the lone priest north of Prairie du Chien, relates that he visited a French settlement on the Wisconsin side of the St. Croix. He was the first priest to administer to the little Catholic settlement, saying Mass, hearing confessions and baptizing the children. In 1852 to 1856 Father Daniel Fisher of Stillwater visited his far-flung flock in both states. When these early priests came to the Apple River they stayed in the homes of Joseph Parent, Thomas Parnell and others. Most of the time these staunch Catholics brought their babies to Stillwater or Hudson to be baptized.

## FIRST CHURCH BUILT IN 1856

By 1856 there was not a home big enough to accommodate the people who wished to assist at the Mass. It was then that Father A. McGee coming from Hudson suggested that the men build a little church. Francois Parent donated 5 acres of his land high on the bank of the two rivers a few hundred feet north of the present Fred Parnell buildings. The settlers all pitched in and although it took several years before it was finished



The Thomas Parnell Home  
Where Mass Was First Said In 1853

ished it served as the main center of their spiritual life. This little church was 48 x 24 with a steeple and bell. The cemetery was located back of the church. This cemetery was finally moved to the present cemetery by 1883. The first record of a burial was that of Arthemise, daughter of Charles Audette, in the fall of 1857. The first recorded baptism was that of Edward Montbriand, son of F. X. Montbriand and Marianne Parent at Stillwater in March 1854. The first marriage was a double wedding on Christmas Day in 1855 when Father McManus married Francois Parent and Margaret Do and also Francois Hamel and Sara Lemire. This took place at Stillwater.

## NAMES AND WEDDINGS

Although the settlers continued to take their children to Stillwater to be baptized, because it was much closer, the new parish was attended by the priests from Hudson until 1866. The parish first had the name of St. Joseph. In 1864, Father N. Stehle of Hudson changed it to St. Vincent de Paul, perhaps to avoid confusion with the Township of St. Joseph. The records from Somerset at Hudson begin in 1857 with the baptism of Rosalie, the daughter of Francois Lemire. The first marriage recorded at Hudson was that of Augustin Belisle and Leonore Germain in July 1859. A great event in the young parish took place June 22, 1863 when three marriages were performed by Father Stehle. The grooms took their brides to the little church on the hill in their wagons pulled by oxen. Married that day were: Octave Baillargeon and Elizabeth Martell, David Sicard and Emilie Parent, Jacques Roy and Adele Laventure.



## TRIPLE CENTENNIAL

While the settlers were breaking their land a little village was started by General Sam Harriman who came from Maine to build a saw mill and a store. This village called Somerset was situated about four miles further inland from the mouth of the river. At the same time the township of Somerset was organized. Thus it is that in 1856 the church was built, the town organized and the village was founded. Much, indeed, had been done since the first brave settlers staked their claims on La Pomme de Terre. Wheat was the principal source of the necessities of life for the pioneers. The breaking plow, *la poche a semente* (*broadcasting sack*), *le javelier* (*cradle-scythe*) et *le fleau* (*flail*) were the instruments of their daily labor. The dairy industry did not become widespread until later. When they needed food or shoes they threw a few sacks of grain on the wagon and slowly, if by oxen, they picked their way through the logging roads to the nearest grist mill. And woe to them if it came in winter! Their pleasures were on the simple side: contemplating from the log threshold the small field of grain that was only yesterday timber and brush, visiting neighbors for an evening of cards or sometimes a dance in the kitchen if a "violonneux" was present, or a visit for several days at Stillwater with relatives. Sunday Mass was not only their visit with "le bon Dieu" but the only occasion to visit neighbors and perchance to transact some deal and always to hear "les nouvelles".

## THE PEG LEG MISSIONARY

The priests visiting Somerset came at infrequent intervals. There was Father Daniel Fisher in 1852 to 1855 from Stillwater, Father Thomas McManus in 1856 and Father Thomas Murray in 1857 from Stillwater. Father A. McGee from Hudson started the first church in 1856. From 1857 to 1866 there came from Hudson Fathers A. Godfert, Napoleon Mignault, Nicholas Stehle and Sebastian Seif. In 1866 came the great missionary Joseph Goiffon stationed at Little Canada, Minn. He visited Somerset regularly from 1866 to 1868. Father Goiffon had a wooden peg for a leg. While on a trip in the fall of 1860 between St. Paul and Pembina, N. D. he got caught in a terrible blizzard. His horse froze to death and Goiffon froze one foot so badly it had to be amputated. Old timers relate that he gutted the horse and slept inside, one foot remaining outside. His love of these somewhat neglected French-Canadians at Somerset has never been forgotten by the parish to this day. He prepared the way for a resident pastor who came in 1873. He was a great preacher. He came a distance of thirty miles using horse, boat and peg leg!

## FROM A DIARY

At this point we insert the wonderful writings of Father Chrysostom Verwyst, a missionary of Northwest Wisconsin. This great missionary was born in North Brabant, Holland on November 23, 1848. The same year his parents came to this country. After becoming a priest he began his work in the Diocese of Milwaukee, which meant the whole state of Wisconsin. He traveled around the whole northwest of Wisconsin among the first settlements and among the Indians. He became a Franciscan in 1882. In his old age his superiors ordered him to write his experiences among the early settlements. The next few paragraphs will be taken from his "Reminiscences of a Missionary" written for the Franciscan Herald in 1925. Father Verwyst died in Superior, Wis. on Nov. 23, 1925. He is buried in Bayfield, Wis.

## "A PIONEER MISSIONARY"

"Shortly before Ascension Day, 1868, I left Manitowoc to betake myself to my new mission, Hudson, on the lower St. Croix Lake, about twenty miles east of St. Paul, Minn. I went by steamer to Milwaukee, from there by rail to LaCrosse, and from there on a Mississippi boat to Prescott, where I had to take a smaller boat to Hudson. When I arrived in Hudson I stopped with Mr. McGuire for a few weeks, until I should find a house to live in. A few days after my arrival I visited my reverend neighbor in Erin Prairie, Father Conroy. He was then well advanced in years and had a large, well settled parish under his care, composed mostly of Irish people residing in Erin Prairie, Hammond, Stanton and Cylon.

My missionary field extended from Long Lake, eight miles from St. Croix Falls on the north, to Diamond Bluff, a small village on the Mississippi, about twenty miles south of Prescott, where the St. Croix empties into the Mississippi — about eighty miles in extent. I had the following missions to attend on Sunday: Hudson, Somerset, Oak Grove and Prescott. On weekdays I visited Ellsworth, Diamond Bluff, Farmington, Osceola Mills, St. Croix Falls and Long Lake (near Balsam Lake). I was seldom at home for a whole week at a time, always on the road to somewhere, or returning.

A few days after my arrival at Hudson, a man by the name of Parnell came to see me and told me about the French mission of Somerset. I promised to visit the place. I went aboard a small steamer plying between St. Paul and Taylor Falls on the St. Croix River. I paid my fare to Somerset. In the middle of the night the boat stopped, a gang plank was run out, and I was told this was my place to land. The boat continued up-stream, and I was left to take the road to Somerset, which, I was told, was some miles inland. It was a warm moonless night. On one side was the river, on the other a steep bluff. In vain I attempted to find a road or path. Willy nilly I had to stay close to the riverside, for diversion looking up to the stars above or listening to the fish as they occasionally jumped out of the water.

Finally, at dawn I discovered a path, and following it, I came to a small clearing with a house. I knocked at the door, and inquired for the road to Somerset and the church. I was told to follow the crest of the bluff up the river for two or three miles, and I would come to the church. I had a heavy satchel to carry and was fasting, and it was a wearisome task to make my way to the church, which was situated near Parnell's place, overlooking the river. I said Mass there regularly for about four years, on weekdays. The people were very devout, frequenting well the holy sacraments. The mission had been attended by my predecessors, occasionally also by Father Joseph Goiffon of Little Canada, of whom I heard the following account:

## FATHER GOIFFON

Father Goiffon, a native of France, used to attend various missions in the northern part of Minnesota, towards Manitoba. One time, late in the fall, he was traveling with some traders and intending to have holy Mass at some trading post. He rode ahead, telling them he would join them after he had said Mass in that place. Unluckily it began to snow and soon all trace of the trail became obliterated. He was traveling in an open prairie, without trees or shelter. It was not long before he was lost. In this open prairie Father Goiffon, it is said, passed three days and nights. His horse perished of cold and hunger, and Father Goiffon cut flesh from the carcass to prolong his life. His feet were badly frozen. Finally the traders found him and took him to Winnipeg, I believe, where he was taken care of. One day, when they were making candles, the house caught fire and he had to be taken from the room through a window. His one leg had to be amputated and ever after he wore a wooden leg. But he says Mass — I saw him in 1872 — and attends to all his missionary duties, being full of life and zeal and highly ven-



erated by all his parishioners and fellow priests. He is a model priest and missionary, such as France has given thousands to China, the Indies and other missionary lands. At this writing (1905) he is stationed at White Bear, Minn.

The first resident priest of Somerset was, I believe, Father Florent. His income being very small, he taught school for a living, as a district school teacher. His English was not very good but sufficient for the school he was teaching; he was not long there.

## SITE OF CHURCH CHANGED

The church at Parent's place being too far towards one end of the settlement, I thought it would be good to build a church in South Farmington, near Mr. Patrick Barry's place. It was intended to be the center of the whole Somerset mission, and it was there the priest was to reside. Land was donated for church purposes and the frame of a church put up. After standing about a year, it was blown down, which was providential. Acceding to the wishes of the greater part of the Somerset congregation, I chose a site for a church across Apple River, a short distance from the village of Somerset. It was there Father Wirz built the new church, and now the Parnell church is seldom, if ever, used. The people are mostly French Canadians and practical Catholics.

For four years I said Holy Mass at the house of Patrick Barry at South Farmington. The congregation consisted principally of Irish, with some German and French families. I had divine service here once a month. When the church was blown down near Barry's place, the materials were taken about four miles north to the "Fighting Corners," as the place was sometimes called, and the church was finished there on what is now (1905) the site of the house of a resident priest, who attends also Long Lake. Whether Holy Mass is said at Osceola Mills, I know not. I used to say Mass in Mr. Bresnahan's house, about two miles from town. There were only a couple of families there.

## AN APPARITION

When I first visited Long Lake, I used to have Holy Mass in a very poor chapel, stopping at Mr. Lillis' home, where I was always treated with great kindness. There was one exception, however. One time a countryman of his came along with me to Long Lake. Mr. Lillis was rather rough to my traveling companion, whose looks he did not seem to like. Finally, when things got too bad, I went over to Mr. Murphy's or Williams's and stayed there over night. My traveling companion was drowned shortly after, while trying to cross the St. Croix River, his boat capsizing. Strange to say, on my return trip to Hudson, about the same time that he was declared to have drowned, I met him on the road, riding in a wagon with another man. I have often since thought to myself how it was that I should see him alive and elsewhere almost at the very time he met with his sad, unexpected death. Was it himself or was it an apparition? I have never been able to answer that question satisfactorily.

## TWO HARD TRIPS

I had many hard trips while stationed in Hudson, but two of them I shall never forget. I will relate them here briefly.

One time in winter I had Mass at Long Lake, and then started homeward. It was a really cold winter day. When I passed the brickyard, about two miles from St. Croix Falls, I met a half-breed Indian by the name of Gus Cadotte, who told me there were two Indian children to be baptized at the brickyard. I returned with him there, and baptized the children. It was then about dark, as the days were very short. The man told me of another Indian child near some lake (I forget the name). So he climbed into my cutter, and we drove to the lake. When we arrived, I gave the horse a little hay while I

went in to baptize the child. The poor Indians did not offer me anything to eat, perhaps through poverty and bashfulness. I started to drive to Mr. Bresnahan's house. It was dreadfully cold, and my horse was so played out he could hardly pull the cutter. Dreadfully hungry, weak and frozen, I finally arrived, shortly before midnight, at Mr. Bresnahan's, where a warm room, a warm supper and a warm bed helped me recuperate from the hardships of that day.

One time in early Spring, on Holy Thursday, when the snow had scarcely melted and the frost was coming out of the ground, I received a letter from Long Lake, telling me that old Mrs. Hurley was very sick. As my horse was sick, I hired another horse, and started on Good Friday morning for Long Lake, a distance of about forty miles. Traveling was bad; nothing but water and mud. Finally, after dark, I arrived at St. Croix Falls and inquired at the post-office whether there was any letter for me, or news of Mrs. Hurley. Nothing, absolutely nothing! So I continued my weary journey. From the brickyard to Long Lake, a distance of six miles, there was one long mud puddle; my horse began to give out, and so I walked the six miles at my horse's head, through the deep mud.

At last, about midnight, I arrived at Long Lake, and went to see Mrs. Hurley. She was past all danger. How I wished they might have left word for me at St. Croix Falls, and saved me that awful walk of six miles through the mud! But I gave her the holy sacraments, and next day, Holy Saturday, started for home. I had to pass the same distance through the mud, and drove as far as Mr. Barry's place. I slept there a few hours, and long before dawn on Easter morning I started for Hudson, where I arrived half frozen and tired, and had to say Mass and preach just as on other Sundays. Many a hardship have I gone through before and since, but that was one of the very greatest.



Like a medieval fortress the church of St. Anne stands high on the river bank protecting the countryside. Her cherished dead lie in peace in her shadows.

Mrs. Hurley was a typical Irish woman. One day she came to Mass without shoes. The priest said something to her about the unfitness of going to Mass barefooted. "St. Peter", said she, "wore no shoes, and he was a better man than you." I hope she is in heaven these many years."

Thus ends the accounts written about Somerset by Father Crysoston Verwyst. Coming to the Somerset Mission he remained four years. He left for Seneca, Wisconsin in 1872.





First Village Church Built in 1875

To the left is the first rectory. To the extreme right you can see the first school built in 1889. Father Couture is seen on the porch dressed in cassock. In the 90's the church was too small so a "jube", a balcony, was built along the sides. This picture was taken about 1900.

### FIRST PASTOR

In September, 1873, Somerset received her first resident priest. Father Henry J. Wirtz was born July 4, 1839, at Birresdorf, Prussia. He entered the Petit Seminaire de Basse Warre, Province de Brabant, Belgium in 1865. While there he acquired the use of many languages. He was ordained in Milwaukee by Bishop Henni on December 22, 1872. In September, 1873, he was appointed to Somerset as resident pastor.

Father Wirtz immediately perceived the great need for a larger church. The little church on the St. Croix could no longer suffice for the growing population. Plans were laid and a building program began. By 1874 the village had expanded both in size and population. The land had been settled in the whole territory. Not only was the little church on the St. Croix too small, but it was not centrally located.

### FIRST CHURCH IN VILLAGE

Despite severe and vociferous disapproval from the old settlers near the little church the decision was made to build near the village. A site was chosen on the East side of the Apple River overlooking the village. Like a mighty fortress strategically placed to protect the people from every form of attack the new church of brick raised its tall spire to the heavens. From any direction the weary traveler is greeted by the friendly steeple. He feels at home, he is among friends. This new church begun in 1874 was finished in 1875 and stood there

on the banks of the river until 1916 when it was torn down to make place for the present church. And the little church on the St. Croix? The old settlers were not bitter but sorrowful, for they had built it with their own hands. They were reluctant to the removal of the little iron bell that rang words of comfort to them in the hard days of getting started. It was the East against the West in the parish. One night some commandos from the East "captured" the bell and took it triumphantly to the new church. Years later the church obtained a much larger bell and the little iron bell was used on the school. And to this day it calls the children from the East and the West, by foot and by bus, into the classrooms where all are taught to revere the Truth both new and old. Finally the little church followed the bell. In 1887 Father George Keller had it dismantled and he used the stout timbers and the still solid planks and boards to start the parochial school alongside the new church. The pioneers were content, "their" church was the beginning of something wonderful: the Catholic education of their grandchildren. Their dreams had come true. Where there had once been the forest primeval there were now homes and productive farms, roads and a village, a beautiful church and their own school! All this and more in just 37 years! Even the dear dead were now content to rest in the shadows of the church and school, they were willing to forget the seeming "desecration" of their removal from the cemetery on the brow of the hill to the new cemetery near the church in the village. What they had planned had come true.



Besides the house and church at Somerset, Father Wirtz built the first church at Farmington in 1874 and a church at Long Lake in 1875.

## FATHER WIRTZ, GREAT MISSIONARY

Father H. J. Wirtz was a zealous priest with great foresight. The parish of Somerset during his eleven years of stewardship embraced a wide area. The missions attached to St. Vincent de Paul of Somerset included: Farmington, St. Croix Falls, Long Lake, Balsam Lake, Bear Trap, Wagon Landing, Clayton, Clear Lake, Turtle Lake, Amery, Range, Georgetown, Oak Grove and Monomonie. By 1884 these places had been developed to the point where they could maintain their own resident pastors, or, at least, they were attended by priests who were closer and had less territory to cover. Father Wirtz was a commanding figure with his long jet-black beard. He was tireless in his labors to care for the spiritual needs of his far-flung flock. Distance and tedious journeys of several days did not lessen the fire of his love for souls. He was one of the many sturdy pioneers in the church in Wisconsin. Realizing that the parish needed a priest who could speak better French than he was able to do, Father Wirtz left in 1884. From the date of his departure until 1886 the parish was attended at brief intervals by Fathers Stephen Duren, Brenner, D. N. Brunel, B. De Goey, D. O. S. de Carufel and J. D. S. de Carufel. These last two were brothers of Charles Carufel, one of the pioneers. They had come from Canada to visit. The faithful persuaded them to stay awhile.

## FIRST PARISH SCHOOL — 1890

The school was built under the direction of Father George Keller who came from St. Paul, Minnesota in 1886. However, it was his successor Father L. A. Riviere who opened the school in the fall of 1890. He called in the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas. About forty students occupied the two school rooms. The sisters had their living quarters in the same frame building which stood in the fore-part of the present cemetery. These good sisters sowed the seeds of love and faith for future generations. Already the next year one of the flowers of womanhood in the parish began the trek to God's vineyard in the convent. In 1891 Sister Marcelline (Eliza L'Allier) entered the convent at Concordia. She was the first among a total of 54 from 1891 to 1956.

## VOCATIONS AND JUBILEES

Had the pioneers dared dream of this? Within a hundred years fifty four young women would leave family, home and the world to consecrate their life to God's holy work everywhere in the world. One girl every two years would leave the parish to spread the Faith of Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven. The offspring of strength will beget strength. The spirit of sacrifice which inspires great deeds was not carried in vain into the wilds around La Pomme de Terre.

The sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia remained in the parish until 1903. Fourteen girls from the parish joined their ranks. In 1950 four golden jubilarians returned to the parish to celebrate 50 years in the sisterhood. They were: Sisters Elizabeth and Pauline, daughters of Isidore Belisle, Sister Zita (Oliver Martell) and Sister Philomene (Joseph Belisle). Sister Rita (Theophile Rivard) came to celebrate her golden jubilee in 1953. In 1956 Sister Adelaide (John Parnell), Sister Andrew (A. Parent) and Sister Clarence (Isidore Belisle) are celebrating their Golden Jubilee.



Inside View of 1875 Church

There is no picture of the first church on the St. Croix. These altars in the old church were placed in our present church. Notice that the pews are the same ones we now have in the School Chapel. This picture should bring back pleasant memories to those who made their First Communion and were married here.

## FATHER COUTURE - 1892-1902

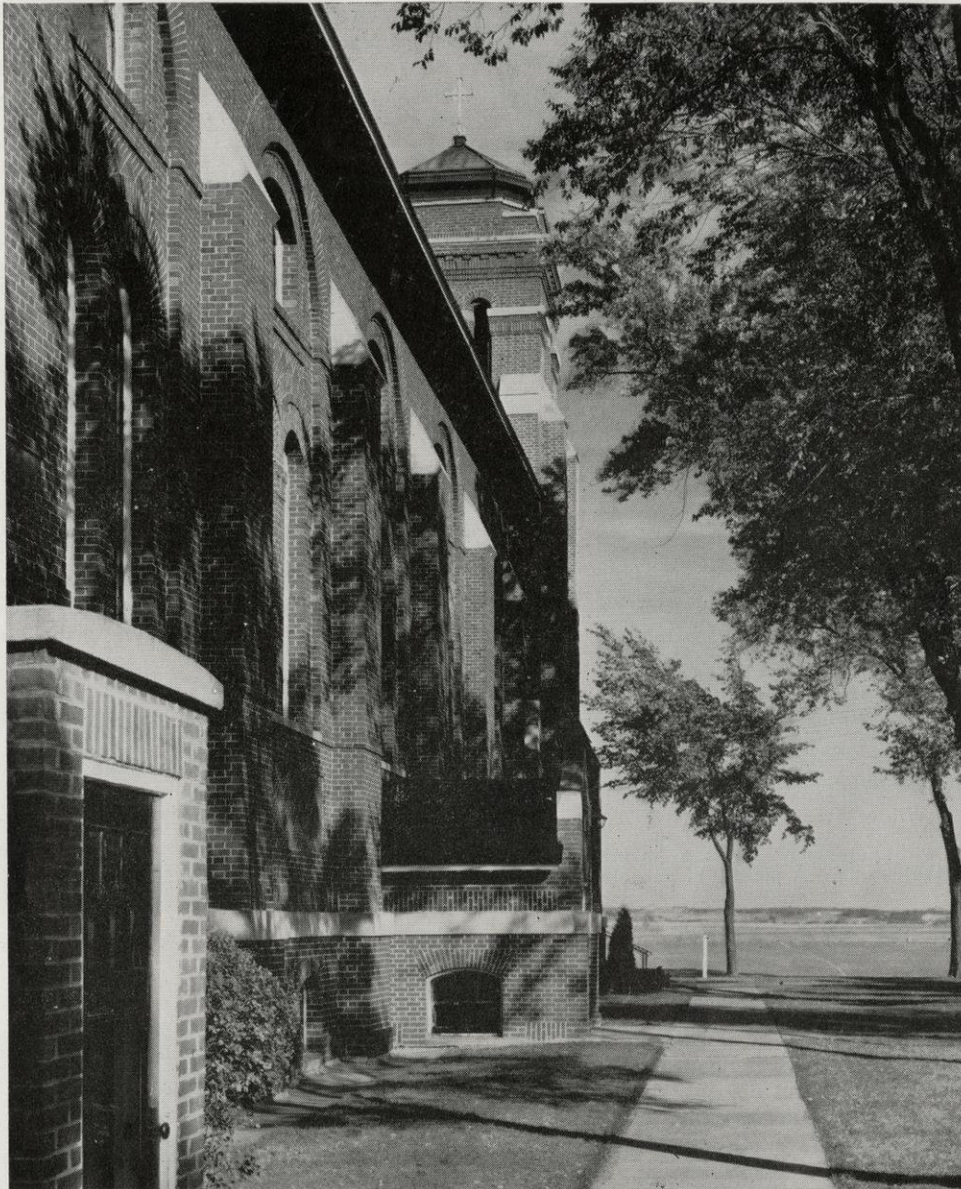
From the Seminary of Rimouski in Canada there came, in 1892, as the successor of Father Riviere, a scholar, a musician and a saintly lover of souls. Father F. E. Couture arrived in Somerset on February 9, 1892. With his fatherly guidance the parish grew in spiritual stature. He taught the young men to sing and love the music of the church. Music always formed a great part in the lives of the French-Canadians. On many occasions the French hymns sung by the pioneers are still sung. Gregorian chant has formed the greater part of the music in the parish since the beginning. The first record we have in this regard indicates that Mrs. Pierre Francois and her daughter, Mrs. Sam Francois played and sang in the little church. Mrs. Theodore Marquis also played. Theophile Rivard was for years choir-master from 1864 to 1900. Miss Anna Plourde played for over thirty years. H. J. LaGrandeur sang for forty years. His true and stentorian voice filled the church. A. J. Vanasse, choir-master for many years, began singing in 1893. His voice after 63 years still rings clear and loud.



Our Choir

Donalda LaGrandeur, organist. 1st row: Vic Martinsen, Wendel Belisle, Mickey Raboin. 2nd row: A. J. Vanasse, Ernest Belisle, Wilford Parnell, choirmaster, Billy Shay. Ernest Belisle has sung for over 35 years. "A. J." is our faithful chanteur for 63 years. He can sing any piece of liturgical music, some by heart. Our choir excels in Gregorian Chant. Absent: Dennis Germain, Noel Breault and Ralph Germain.





## MON EGLISE NATALE

Eglise de chez-nous, ta modeste beauté

N'appelle pas de loin le regard des profanes  
Tes murs n'humilient point les maisons d'à côté,

Rien ne les pèse, et c'est aux granges paysannes  
Que ton style incertain paraît être emprunté!

Eglise, je voudrais te ressembler un peu,

Je voudrais qu'en restant voisine de la terre  
Et fraternelle avec les choses dont s'émue

Le village où s'étend ton ombre salutaire,  
Mon œuvre, son sommet, se rapproche de Dieu!

## THE CHURCH AT HOME

O Church at Home, your modest beauty

Does not attract the attention of the worldly,  
Your walls do not overshadow the neighboring houses,  
Nothing outshines them, for it is from peasant barns  
That you seem to have borrowed your style.

O Church, I would like to resemble you a little,

I would—that remaining close to earth  
And friendly with the things that affect

The village over which spreads your beneficial shadow,  
That my work, at its peak, gets closer to God.



## WONDERFUL PASTOR

In 1896 Father Couture obtained three new altars for the church from Hackner's in LaCrosse. These altars are still in the new church. Father Couture was a fine preacher who not only spoke with doctrine and authority but also at length. The servers were well instructed to put out the candles during the announcements and sermon to save on wax. The patient congregation was enthralled by his eloquence, but in winter the waiting horses in the long stables built for their protection did not fully appreciate the long trek and wait on Sundays. Perhaps they would have been consoled if only their masters would tell them what had been said so well in church! But the wait was quickly forgotten as they pulled the sleigh filled with happy children towards the warm barns of home. If the family was happier after Mass then their day's work was worthwhile.



Winter Scene

The blue spruce covered with pure snow forms a beautiful scene near the massive walls of the church. A picture of peace and quiet.

## DAMES DE STE. ANNE

In 1896 the congregation boasted of a total of 185 families and 78 scholars in the school. In 1898 Father Couture formed Les Dames de St. Anne (Ladies of St. Anne). This fine spiritual organization, composed of married and widowed women, has functioned well in the parish to this day in 1956. It now has a membership of 248. Devotion to St. Anne is deep in the hearts of the French-Canadians. Love for the Mother of the Mother of God is a great aid to mothers of families, a lady of St. Anne takes her as an example of Catholic motherhood. It was this same year of 1898 that the parish decided to change the Patron of the church from St. Vincent de Paul to St. Anne. Her statue dominates the main altar of the church.

## FR. COUTURE DIES

On April 16, 1902, St. Anne's Parish lost her beloved pastor. He was laid to rest in the presence of the Bishop of LaCrosse, James Schwebach, to whose diocese St. Anne's belonged. The Diocese of Superior was created in 1905 with Bishop Schinner as its first bishop. Father Couture is the only priest buried in our cemetery in the lot reserved for priests. It is around his grave that the faithful gather each All Souls Day to pray for all of the faithful in the cemetery with the rite of Absolution prescribed by the Ritual.

## NEW RECTORY

The little frame house built by Father Wirtz in 1873 proved to be inadequate for a rectory. Father J. F. Brouillard who came in August 1902 laid plans for a new rectory and it was completed in 1903. On Sunday, April 5, 1903, we read the following in the Sunday announcements: "Tomorrow we will begin digging the foundation of the new rectory. We need about 15 men and four teams. Wednesday a like number.

Please remain after the Mass for a meeting with the trustees and the contractor. Let us all work together." With the help of the people another edifice was added to the growing parish. This rectory built by Father Brouillard still serves today. The old rectory was moved a few feet to the south and is occupied and owned by Omer Peltier.

## NEW SCHOOL BUILT IN 1907

Now it was turn for the school to be too small for the parish. Father A. R. Berube had taken the place of Father Brouillard in September of 1905. A big school was needed and soon. Two little rooms could not possibly handle over 100 children. In 1907 the parishioners decided to build a school and convent. It was to be a combination day-school, boarding school and motherhouse for the Sisters of St. Joseph who wished to establish their headquarters in the diocese. These sisters were coming from Cincinnati, Ohio. There was some dissension at first as to the site of the new school. Some parishioners wanted the fore-part of the present cemetery. The pastor and bishop wanted the school in the north-west corner among the pines. Some parishioners feared the school would be found in the river some morning if it was built there. The fears were resolved by engineers and the parish raised a three-story school, complete with its own chapel, six classrooms, living quarters for the sisters. The cost was \$18,000. The debt was quickly paid. The school was opened with a big celebration on January 6, 1908. During the meantime Father Berube had been transferred to Bruce, Wisconsin in August, 1907. Father Eugene Caron finished the school. It was difficult for this young priest to step into the parish at the time he did, but he not only acquitted himself very well in the beginning but went on to even greater endeavors and accomplishments.



The Children in the New School — 1909

This three story building also housed the sisters. The chapel is used through the school year. It was built in 1907 by Otto Neitge, contractor, and Fathers Berube and Caron.

## SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH FROM CROOKSTON

The sisters from Cincinnati found the facilities at Somerset too remote and difficult for their work. Thus it was that they left in 1909. Mother Evangelina was the superior. At that time the railway station was still at Harriman's Landing at the bottom of the present Landing Hill. Father Caron succeeded in persuading the young community of Sisters of St. Joseph at Crookston, Minnesota to take over the teaching duties. On August 2, 1909, seven sisters came to teach. They were: Mother Martina, Sisters Marie du St. Sacrament, Louise Stephanie, Marguerite, Ignace de Loyola, Rose de Lima and Marie de l'Enfant Jesus. Only the last two are living. That first year they taught 185 children in four rooms.





**The Church on the Hill**

High over the river stands the rugged walls of St. Anne's church. On the left are the school and convent. At one time the hill was covered with tall northern pines. From this commanding position the church towers over the countryside. In the foreground is the athletic field.

## **PRESENT CHURCH BUILT BY CARON, 1916**

Now was the time for the greatest effort of all in the history of the Parish of St. Anne. A new church was planned and begun in 1916. It was badly needed. The church built in 1875 was much too small. In 1900 galleries had been built along the sides of the walls. Still it was crowded and even dangerous. Father Caron called in one of the finest architects in the northwest, E. L. Masqueray of St. Paul. Mr. Masqueray had designed the Cathedral of St. Paul, the Basilica in Minneapolis and many other famous churches. Father Caron had the master plan from which Masqueray supplied the engineering details.

On July 27, 1916, the day after the patronal feast of the parish, the wrecking crew began to tear down the old church. Mass was said after that on the back porch of the school. The people would gather under the pines and assist at Mass. In inclement weather and in winter Mass was said in the chapel with the faithful crowding the hallways and classrooms. On almost the exact spot of the old church the new edifice began to take shape. Otto Neitge of Mankato, Minnesota was the contractor. On October 15, 1916, Father Caron blessed the corner stone. Tragedy struck during the building of the church. While lifting up one of the large cornice stones weighing several hundred pounds the scaffolding gave way and Louis Beauvais and Bill Payette were catapulted to the basement from the very top of the church. No one was hurt badly. But soon after another scaffold gave way under weight and Wm. Shay and "Little Nick" fell. Little Nick was killed instantly.

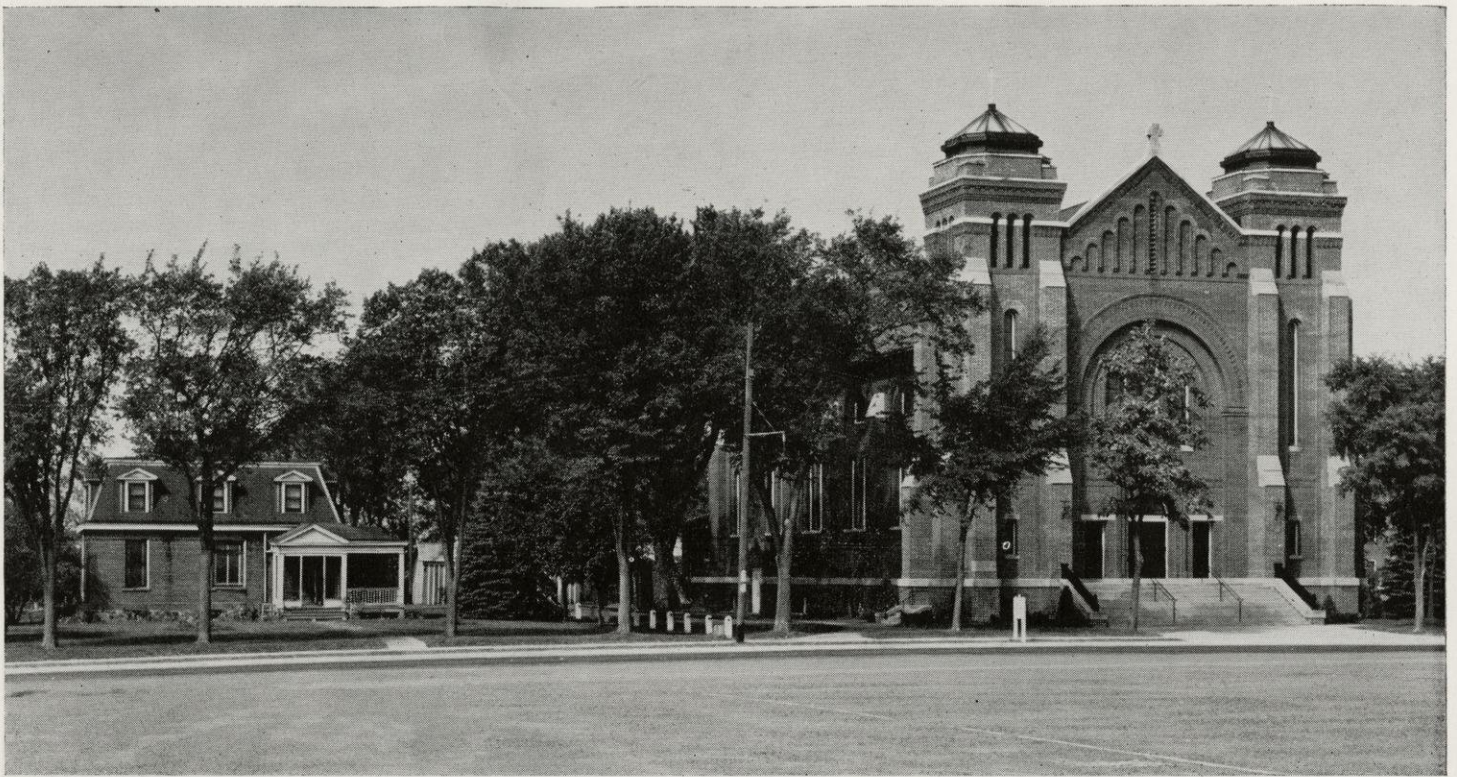
## **CHURCH DEDICATED IN 1917**

On July 22, 1917 divine services were held for the first time in the new church. That was exactly one year less four days since the old church was used the last time.

Under the dateline of August 29, 1917 The New Richmond News ran the following item: "The new St. Anne's Catholic Church, a stately pile, surely the largest and most beautiful edifice devoted to the worship of Almighty God in St. Croix County or in the diocese of Superior for that matter, was dedicated Sunday, August 26 by the Right Rev. Bishop Joseph Maria Koudelka of Superior, with the solemn, stately and impressive rites of the Church. The biggest event in Somerset history it was, the people made the most of it. People who had relatives and friends in Somerset flocked there by the hundreds, and everybody kept open house. Everybody entertained that day. It was a veritable home-coming that will long be remembered. The dedication began at 10:00. The Rev. Elias Lemire of Cloquet, Minnesota, a former Somerset boy, was the celebrant. Father E. Vinas was deacon and Brother Dennis Parnell, O.S.B., also a parish boy, was subdeacon. Father W. A. Beaudette of Rhinelander preached the sermon.

Bishop Koudelka also spoke. The music was magnificent, the choir never sang better than they did Sunday under the leadership of A. J. Vanasse. Members of the choir are: Mr. and Mrs. H. J. LaGrande, Sisters Anne and Stephanie, Edith Carufel, Geraldine Leveque, Dr. S. J. Phaneuf, Arthur and Joe Carufel, Oliver and Octave Baillargeon, A. J. Germain, and J. O. Belisle. Miss Anna Plourde was at the organ."





#### Shaded Walls and Massive Towers

The lines of this masterpiece of Masqueray and Father Caron convey strength and solidity. It is the House of God that we see at first glance. It calls us to enter and visit. The cost was \$52,500. Otto Neitge, contractor. The rectory was built by Father Brouillard in 1903.

The New Richmond News continues: "The new St. Anne's church is of the modernized Italian Romanesque style of architecture. It has no transept. The feature of the design is the massive appearance obtained by heavy buttresses and large, well proportioned arched openings and deep reveals. All material is honest. Nothing is make-believe. Nothing is there for show. The church was built for strength and permanence. It has been placed there to stay, and that is the impression one gets approaching from any direction, that of stability."

#### "HIT THE BELL"

The bell in the tower of the church had been blessed the year before on October 29, 1916. After the blessing on Sunday the parishioners were given the "privilege" of sounding the bell with a hammer as it resided on a platform on the ground. For this honor they paid one dollar a hit. Over \$500 was taken in to pay for the 1800 pound bell. A "holy rivalry" took place as each man wanted to hit more often than his neighbor. The total cost of the building of the church was \$52,500. Only a small debt of \$15,000 remained after the dedication.

#### FR. CARON RETIRES

Father Caron had worn himself out by taking such a vigilant supervision of the construction of the church. He left a sick man in November 1918. He became a Holy Ghost religious and resided at Bay City, Michigan until his death some years ago. The parish was administered at intervals by Fathers J. A. Belisle, J. M. Bazin, E. Vinas and D. Guillet.



#### Inside View of Church

The church was beautifully decorated in 1938 by LaLonde. Note the clear lines and clean look. The stain-glassed windows are especially outstanding.



#### Our Parking Lot

Sleek cars have replaced the buggies and horses tied in the sheds north of the cemetery.





**The Convent**  
This beautiful home for our sisters was built in 1920 by Father Beaudette at a cost of \$30,000. The English colonial style makes it a distinctive addition to the St. Anne Skyline.

## CAPTAIN BEAUDETTE

The World War of 1917 was over. The armistice had been signed. On a bright sunny day in May, 1919 a nattily dressed young officer of the United States Army was seen walking briskly down the streets of Somerset. He carried the insignia of a captain. One of the young men of the town gave him a smart salute by force of habit and noticed in passing he also carried a chaplain's cross. "Sir", he said, "excuse me, Father, I mean. Aren't you kind of off your reservation here?" The captain replied with dulcet tones: "I don't think I am exactly out of bounds, I am your new pastor and I haven't even had time to buy a new suit." It was Father Walter A. Beaudette recently returned from the wars. He had joined the Chaplains Corps in 1917 and had seen extensive service abroad.

This energetic young priest with an aptitude to exercise a sweet authority was destined to remain the loving pastor at Somerset for 27 years until 1946. His energy and aptitudes were quickly given the test. The sisters of the school lived very miserably on the third floor and eating in the basement of the school building. They needed better accommodations and a house all their own to facilitate their community living. With an almost unanimous consent and cooperation from the parishioners he built a well equipped house for the nine sisters of St. Joseph from Crookston, Minnesota. The house was completed in 1920 at a cost of \$30,000. This left the parish with a total debt of \$25,000 for church and convent. The recession took effect the same year. The depression of 1929 quickly followed. But by "hacking away" little by little the good people finally paid all debts by 1944 when the last mortgage was burned.

## FATHER AND LEADER

Father Beaudette was not only a captain but also a fine trombone player. He gathered about him those first years a group of young men and formed a band. St. Anne's Band played for several years at fairs, bazaars and picnics throughout the territory. His tremendous work over the years resulted in a beautifully kept cemetery and grounds around the church and school which are beyond compare. This kind, loving father was deeply loved by all. The spirit of love for God and Church was more intensively ingrained in the hearts of the faithful. Due to ill health he was forced to resign and left the parish on June 1, 1946. He is now chaplain at St. Mary's Hospital, Rhinelander, Wisconsin. He was elevated to the dignity of a Monsignor by his Holiness, Pope Pius XII in January, 1950.



**La Creche**  
The softly lighted Crib surrounded by evergreens is a tradition and beauty spot in our church every Christmas Season.



# Our Pastors

Since 1851 missionaries and pastors have dedicated their lives or at least a portion of it, to the spiritual welfare of all the inhabitants of Somerset. Their zeal, their devotion their total dedication to the work of saving souls and educating our children has been a source of inspiration through the years. We should never forget in our memory or in our prayers these fatherly men who have administered to us "the Way, the Life and the Truth." The parish of St. Anne has been blessed with priests of the highest spiritual caliber. The heritage of Faith and Parish works and buildings will always be our pride and joy.

Here is the list of priests who came to Somerset from time to time:

Rev. Augustin Ravoux, 1851-1852.

Rev. Daniel Fisher, 1852-1855

Rev. Thomas McManus, 1855

Rev. Thomas Murray, 1856

Rev. J. J. McGee, 1856-1857

Rev. A. Godbout, 1857-1858

Rev. Napoleon Ignault, 1858-1861

Rev. Nicholas Stehle, 1861-1863

Rev. Sebastian Seif, 1863-1866

Rev. Joseph Goiffon, 1866-1868

Rev. Chrysostom Verwyst, 1868-1872

Rev. F. Florent, 1869-1870

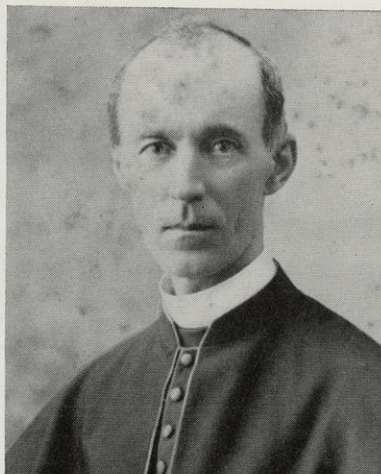
The following pastors were here for a time, but of whom we have no pictures:

Rev. Stephen Duren, 1884

Rev. Thomas Couet, O. P., 1902

Rev. A. R. Berube, 1905-1907

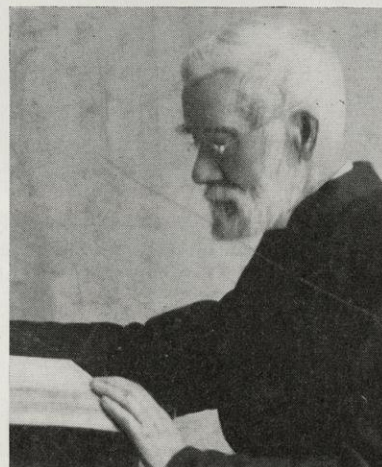
Rev. J. Albert Belisle, 1918-1919



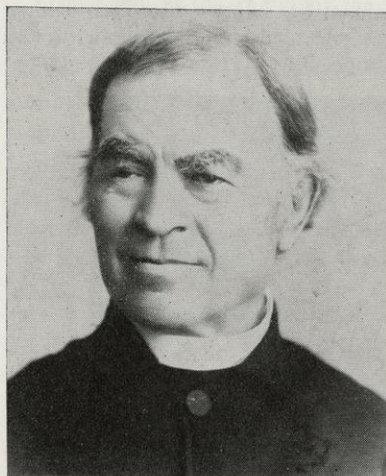
Msgr. D. O. S de Carufel  
1884



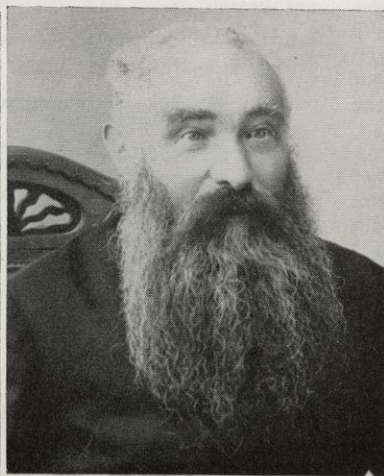
Rev. B. De Goey, O.S.F.C.  
1885 - 1886



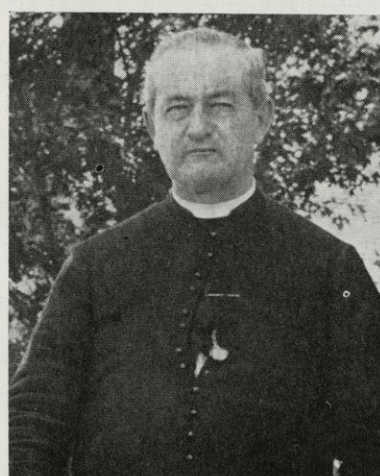
Rev. George Keller  
1886 - 1890



Rev. Joseph Goiffon  
1866 - 1868



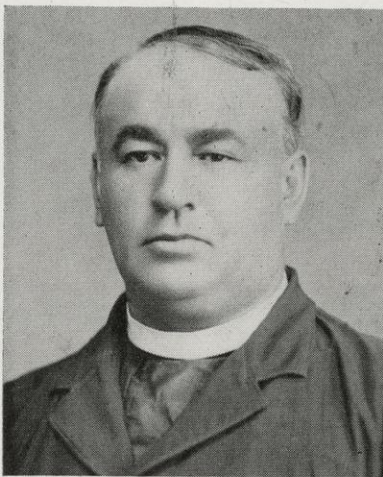
Rev. Henry J. Wirtz  
1873 - 1884



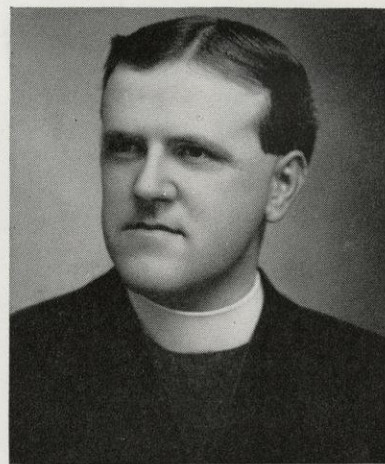
Rev. J. D. S de Carufel  
1888 - 1889



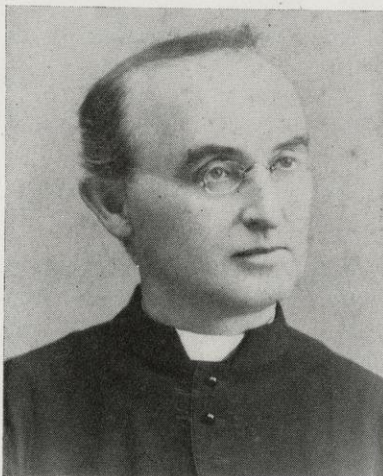
# Our Pastors



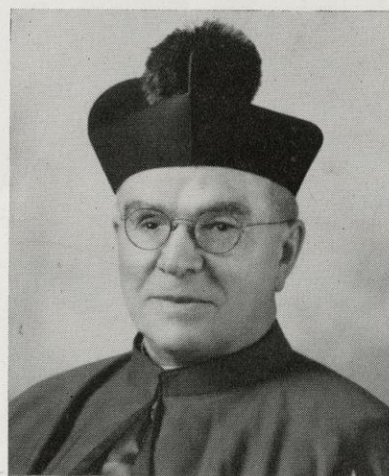
Rev. L. Riviere  
1890 - 1892



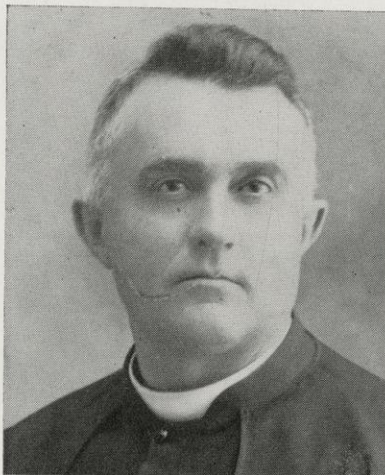
Rev. Eugene Caron  
1907 - 1918



Rev. F. E. Couture  
1892 - 1902



Msgr. Walter A. Beaudette  
1919 - 1946



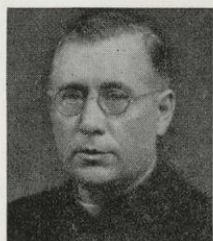
Rev. J. F. Brouillard  
1902 - 1905



Rev. John T. Rivard  
Pastor since 1946



# Our Parish Sons and Daughters



Msgr. Eli Lemire  
(Ben Lemire)  
Ordained June 13, 1908



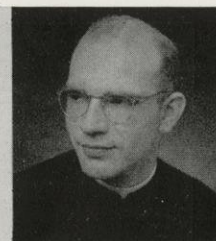
Fr. Eugene Lemire  
(Ben Lemire)  
Ordained May, 1912



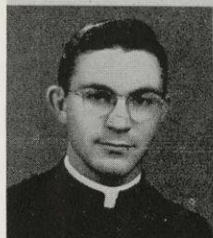
Fr. Dennis Parnell O.S.B.  
(John Parnell)  
Ordained May 7, 1922



Fr. Julian Marquis S.M.  
(Theodore Marquis)  
Ordained June 9, 1942



Frater Jerry Plourde O.S.C.  
(Edward Plourde)  
Reception Aug. 28, 1952



Br. Raymond C.S.C.  
(Edward Dufrenoy)  
Reception Aug. 16, 1945



Br. Leonard Champeau O.S.C.  
(Frank Champeau)  
Reception March, 1937



Sr. Marcelline C.S.J.  
(Joseph L'Allier)  
Reception Sept. 3, 1891



Sr. M. Justine C.S.J.  
(Isidore Belisle)  
Reception Sept. 4, 1892



Sr. M. Philomene C.S.J.  
(Joseph Belisle)  
Reception Jan. 6, 1900



Sr. M. Pauline C.S.J.  
(Isidore Belisle)  
Reception Jan. 6, 1900



Sr. M. Elizabeth C.S.J.  
(Isidore Belisle)  
Reception Jan. 6, 1900



Sr. M. Zita C.S.J.  
(Oliver Martell)  
Reception Jan. 6, 1900



Sr. M. Rita C.S.J.  
(Theophile Rivard)  
Reception Aug. 15, 1903



Sr. M. Clarence C.S.J.  
(Isidore Belisle)  
Reception Aug. 15, 1906



Sr. M. Adelaide C.S.J.  
(John Parnell)  
Reception Aug. 15, 1906



Sr. M. Andrew C.S.J.  
(Aime Parent)  
Reception Aug. 15, 1906



Sr. M. Eugenie C.S.J.  
(Elzeor Cote)  
Reception Sept. 12, 1910



Sr. M. Angelique C.S.J.  
(Isidore Belisle)  
Reception Sept. 12, 1910



Sr. M. Octavia C.S.J.  
(Octave Cloutier)  
Reception Sept. 12, 1910



Sr. Adelaide C.S.J.  
(Nels Cloutier)  
Reception Sept. 12, 1910



Sr. M. Mortence C.S.J.  
(Neree Belisle)  
Reception Sept. 4, 1912



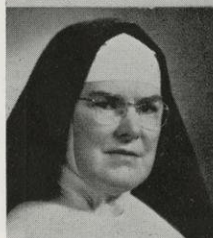
Sr. M. Joseph C.S.J.  
(Louis Belisle)  
Reception April 27, 1914



Sr. Jeanne Constance C.S.J.  
(August Bonneprise)  
Reception April 27, 1914



Sr. M. Alphonse C.S.J.  
(Francois Rodrigue)  
Reception April 21, 1920



Sr. Anne Marie C.S.J.  
(Joseph E. Paquin)  
Reception April 13, 1921



Sr. M. Justine C.S.J.  
(Frank Lemire)  
Reception April 13, 1921



Sr. Aimee C.S.J.  
(Frank Lemire)  
Reception April 13, 1921



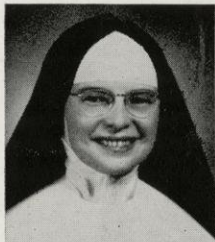
Sr. M. St. John C.S.J.  
(Fleury Belisle)  
Reception April 13, 1921



Sr. Louise Angele C.S.J.  
(Theodore Marquis)  
Reception July 2, 1923



# 61 Vocations in 65 Years Since 1891



Sr. Francis de Sales C.S.J.  
(Theodore Marquis)  
Reception April 25, 1928



Sr. Agnes Marie C.S.J.  
(Henry L'Allier)  
Reception Mar. 19, 1929



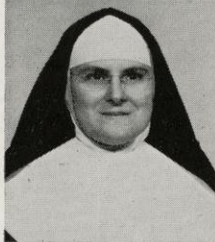
Sr. M. Angelique C.S.J.  
(Alphonse Cloutier)  
Reception Mar. 19, 1929



Sr. Rita Marie C.S.J.  
(John D. Germain)  
Reception May 3, 1933



Sr. M. Bernard C.S.J.  
(Joseph Carufel)  
Reception May 3, 1933



Sr. M. Marcella C.S.J.  
(John D. Germain)  
Reception April 25, 1934



Sr. M. Helene C.S.J.  
(Edmund Cloutier)  
Reception Mar. 25, 1935



Sr. Annette S.D.S.  
(Arthur Caron)  
Reception Aug. 12, 1937



Sr. Mildred S.D.S.  
(Arthur Caron)  
Reception Aug. 13, 1938



Sr. Rose Marie C.S.J.  
(Gasper Lemire)  
Reception April 26, 1939



Sr. M. Laurent O.S.B.  
(George Trembley)  
Reception July 2, 1940



Sr. Seraphine S.D.S.  
(Delmo Mondor)  
Reception Aug. 12, 1942



Sr. Francetta O.S.F.  
(Joseph Plourde)  
Reception June 13, 1947



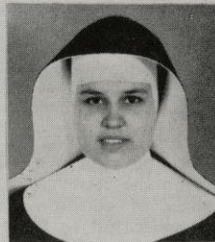
Sr. Bernard Anne C.S.J.  
(Ben Brinkman)  
Reception Aug. 15, 1948



Sr. Elaine C.S.J.  
(Herbert Decosse)  
Reception Aug. 16, 1948



Sr. M. Edward C.S.J.  
(Edward Dufrense)  
Reception Mar. 21, 1949



Sr. M. Arthur C.S.A.  
(Arthur Morissette)  
Reception Aug. 15, 1949



Sr. Jerome Marie C.S.J.  
(Jerome Schwan)  
Reception Mar. 18, 1950



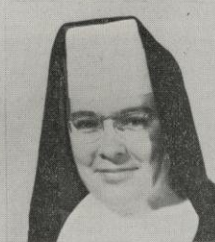
Sr. Jeanne Marie C.S.J.  
(Arthur Campeau)  
Reception Mar. 18, 1950



Sr. M. Celeste C.S.J.  
(C. J. Montpetit)  
Reception Mar. 18, 1950



Sr. Michelle M. C.S.J.  
(Ben Braault)  
Reception Mar. 18, 1950



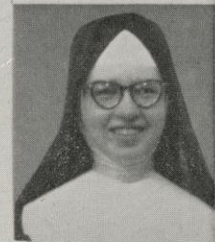
Sr. M. Agnes O.S.B.  
(George Trembley)  
Reception June 12, 1950



Sr. Louis Marie C.S.J.  
(Ernest Champeau)  
Reception Aug. 13, 1951



Sr. M. de Lourdes O.S.M.  
(Joseph S. Plourde)  
Reception Aug. 15, 1951



Sr. M. Goretti C.S.J.  
(Edmund Germain)  
Reception Mar. 19, 1952



Sr. M. Lorraine C.S.J.  
(Adolph Wulf)  
Reception Mar. 19, 1953



Sr. M. James C.S.J.  
(Edward Dufrense)  
Reception Mar. 20, 1954



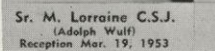
Sr. Anita C.S.J.  
(Ernest J. Germain)  
Reception Mar. 12, 1955



Sr. Edwardene S.S.N.D.  
(Edward Plourde)  
Reception July 16, 1955



Sr. M. Raymond C.S.J.  
(Raymond Houle)  
Reception Mar. 14, 1956



Sr. Karen Rivard  
(Wilfred Rivard)  
Reception June 13, 1956





Our School

Good old St. Anne's School! How many near and far can say that with great feeling! Built in 1907 it has housed and taught thousands of our children the four "R's", readin, ritin, rithmetic and religion. Her halls have rung with the laughter of children and her chapel has heard the sweet babble of their prayers. The chapel is dedicated to St. Joseph, Patron of our sisters. For several years the Mothers Club has sponsored the lunch program. In charge are: Grace Beseau, Mary Montpetit, and Bertha Parent.



Our Sisters, 1956

Since 1909 the Sisters of St. Joseph of Bourg from Crookston, Minn. have taught in St. Anne's Parish. 28 girls have left the parish to become sisters with this order since 1910. 14 girls became sisters with the Sisters of St. Joseph from Concordia, Kansas who taught from 1890 to 1903. Many of the Crookston sisters made their novitiate in France. Sr. Eugenie Cote and Angelique Belisle were the first to leave for Crookston. Our sisters above are: 1st. row: Mother Margaret Mary, Sisters Vianney, Bernard and Joan. 2nd row: Sisters Assumpta, Mary de Montfort and Flora.





Aerial View of St. Anne's Parish

Atop the bank of the Apple River the parish plant is a complete unit. All is together, the living, the children, and our ancestors who have passed to their eternal reward. The proximity of the cemetery does not give us morbid thoughts of death, rather it gives a wholesome love for the Souls Departed that lacks completely a fear of death. The beautiful lawn and ever-green trees signify hope and eternal life.

### "FATHER JOHN"

The present pastor, Father John T. Rivard, came to St. Anne's on June 14, 1946. Father John was born in Turtle Lake, Wisconsin on May 16, 1911. His father, Louis H. Rivard, was born and raised in Somerset. His mother, Alma Dubois Laurin, was born and raised in Turtle Lake. After attending two years each at Croisier College, Onamia, Minnesota and St. Francis Seminary, Milwaukee, he entered the University of Laval in September, 1936 at Quebec. Cardinal Jean Marie Villeneuve ordained him on May 18, 1940 in the Cathedral of Quebec. Father John sang his first solemn Mass in his home parish of Turtle Lake on May 28, 1940. His first appointment was as assistant at Merrill, Wisconsin for one year. After three months in Rhinelander he was appointed assistant at the Cathedral in Superior. His pastor was Father Joseph Annabring, now Bishop of Superior. He was in Superior from 1941 to 1946 when he was appointed pastor of Somerset. Father John's grandfather, Theophile O. Rivard, was one of the pioneers of Somerset. Theophile built the steeple on the church built in 1875. The pews now used in the chapel of the school were built by him for the old church. Father John's great-grandfather on his grandmother's side, Francois Lemire, was also one of the early settlers in Somerset. Francois had twenty five children. As a boy Father John visited Somerset often. The Apple River begins north of Turtle Lake and ends at Somerset. The parishes of these two places are both dedicated to Good St. Anne. The father went from Somerset to Turtle Lake, the son came from Turtle Lake to Somerset! From St. Anne to St. Anne on the Apple River!

### PARISH STATISTICS

	1955	1954	1935	1915	1895	1875	1855
Baptisms: Infants .....	51	52	31	52	57	51	6
Adults .....	5	5	4	2	0	3	0
First Communion .....	42	36	31	45	24	17	4
Marriages .....	15	18	11	10	6	7	2
Deaths: Adults .....	11	10	7	8	6	6	2
Children .....	5	3	5	8	7	6	3

### PARISH CENSUS 1955

Number of all-Catholic families .....	240
Number of mixed marriages .....	34
Total number of families .....	274
Total number of souls .....	1360
Number of parochial school children .....	231
Number of public grade children .....	48
Number of high school students .....	90
Holy Name Society .....	225
Ladies of St. Anne .....	248
Men and Women Foresters .....	120
Sodality .....	55
Mothers Club .....	110
Confraternity .....	70
Ushers' Club .....	25
Knights and Maidens of the Altar .....	60
Choir .....	12





**Coming Out of Church**

Sunday masses are well-attended. The church seats over 700 comfortably. Note how the architectural lines of the church sweep one's glance upward. This is true throughout the building. Many parishioners come early in order to visit awhile with neighbors. The men sit on the railing between the church and house. "Going to mass" is a phrase which comes easily to the lips of our parishioners. Very few miss Sunday Mass. Frequent communion is another sign of a Living Parish. The Ladies of St. Anne, the Junior and Senior Holy Name Society and the Girls Sodality receive in a body regularly once a month. The First Fridays and Saturdays are well attended.



**Breakfast in the Hall**

Every Sunday since January, 1956, three families are hosts to the Parish Breakfast. A free-will offering is made in the Building Fund Pot. It is averaging over \$100 a Sunday. The basement was completely remodeled in 1952 with knotty pine paneling and a modern kitchen with steel cabinets and new utensils and china. The stage was moved to the other end and rest rooms were installed under the vestibule. In 1947 a boiler was installed replacing the steam line from the boiler in the school. New vestment cases and tile floors were installed in the sacristies in 1955 donated by the Ladies of St. Anne.



**The Men Foresters as Cooks**

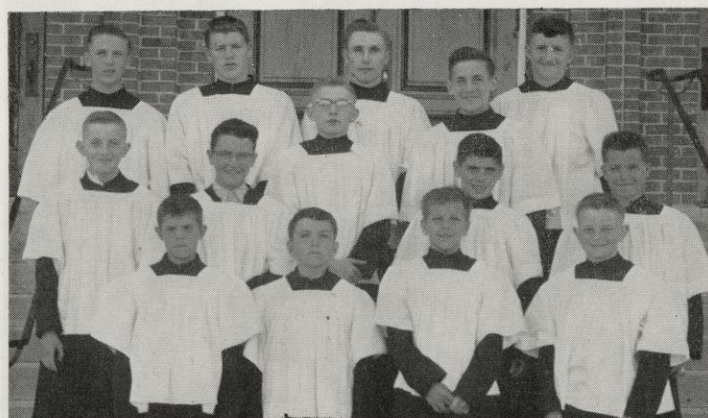
Taking their turn at serving breakfast for the Building Fund. The men enjoy working for the church as much as the women in our parish. The Annual Bazaar held in September has netted over \$5,000 the last two years. All parish organizations and parishioners take part. In 1955 there were 1780 dinners served.





St. Anne's Band — Fr. Beaudette, Bandleader

Left to Right, Front Row: Joe Cloutier, Willie Cloutier, Alley Parnell, Henry Cloutier, Louis Payette, C. J. Montpetit, Ray Montbriand, Geo. Paquin, Ernest Trombley. Second Row: Tony Plourde, Hector Campbell, Leonard Germain, Edmund L'Allier, Jerome Schwan, Paul Rivard, Oliver Dufresne, Felix Rivard, Andrew Vanasse, Edmund Belisle, Renie Campbell, Clarence Parnell, Clarence Beauvais. Third Row: N. E. Parnell, Elmer Parnell, Lawrence Martell, Felix Cloutier, Elmer Beauvais, Francis Plourde, Geo. Cook, Arthur Rivard, A. J. La Grandeur, Vic Levesque, W. H. Shay, Richard Parnell. Fourth Row: Fr. W. A. Beaudette, Joe Carufel, Alzy Mondor, Art Landry, Alex Germain, Eldrick Petit, Amable Liberty, Mark Germain, Lester Liberty. Fifth Row: Wilfred Lemire, Joe Roy, Joe Lamirande, Amable Paquin, Phil Parnell, Louis Cloutier, Charley L'Allier.



The Knights of the Altar

Through the years our parish boys have faithfully served at the altar. The Knights now number 39. Here are a few: Left to Right, First Row: Jimmy Liberty, Mickey Moe, Fritzje Parnell, Gary Martell. Second Row: Paul Jahnke, Dale Liberty, Robert Roy, James Merkt, Lynn Rivard. Third Row: Earl Dieltz, Tommy Harvieux, Thomas Roy, Roland Jahnke, Geoffrey Stoner. The Maidens of the Altar are the girls who help the sisters in the church and sacristy.



Our Trustees

"Les Syndiques" we call them in French. Many men have served as trustees through the years. Present trustees: Earl Cloutier and Arthur Cloutier. Their aid and encouragement have been much appreciated.





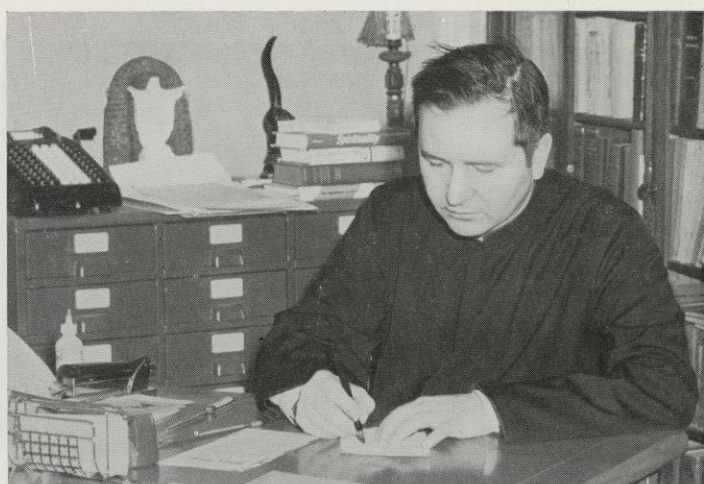
#### "At Mass"

This picture was taken Sunday, May 20, 1956. It was graduation day for our eighth graders. Note how all the people can see the altar. The floor of the nave is pitched so that the rear pew is one foot higher than the front pew. A pipe organ was donated by Elize Desautels in 1934. A new organ, a Conn Electric, was purchased in 1956 at a cost of \$3,000. All the woodwork in the church is hard oak. It gives richness and solidity that is restful and peaceful. The confessionals are hand carved.



Nos Bedeaux

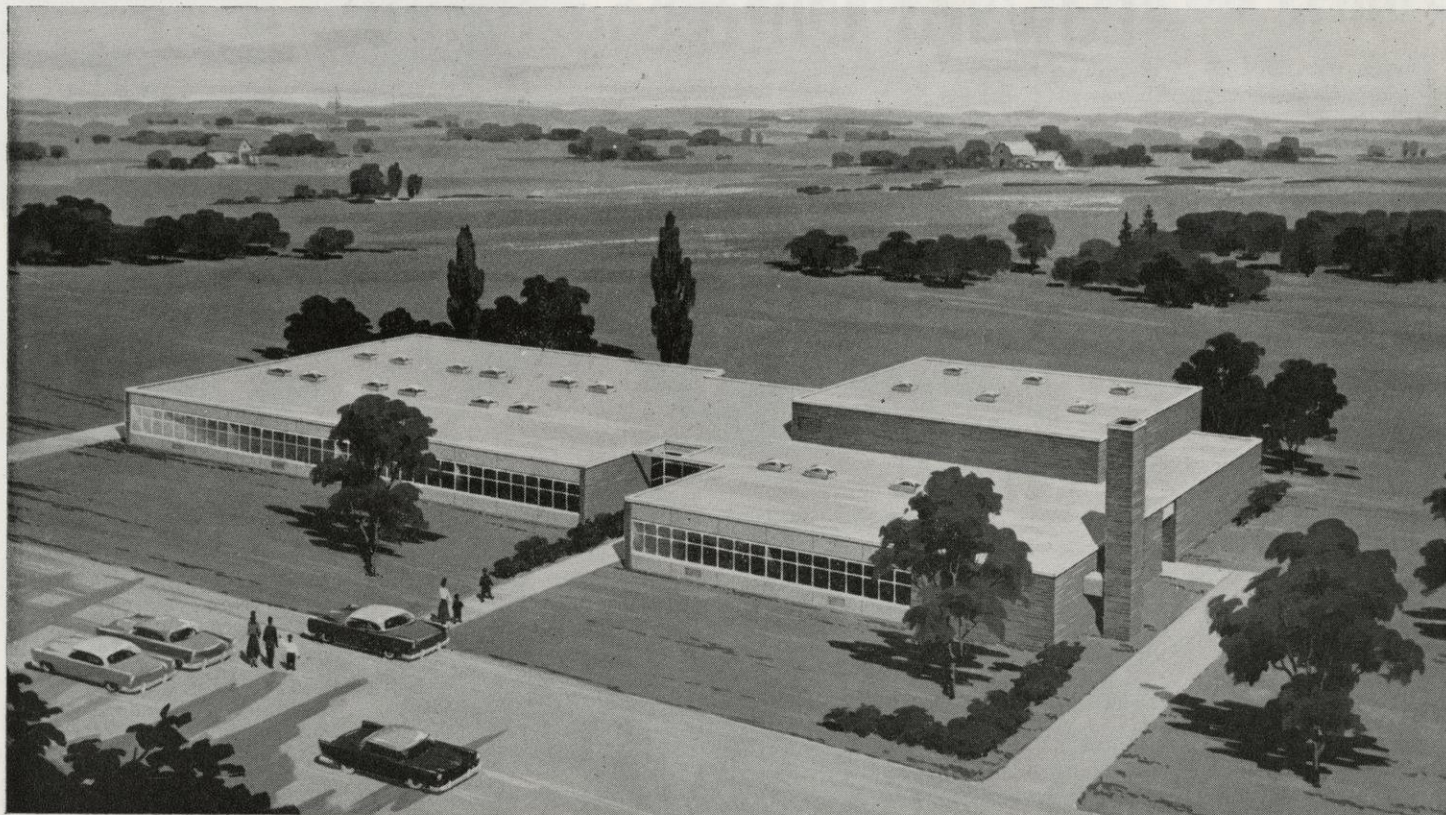
"Bedeau" is French for caretaker and custodian of the church. Omer Peltier, on the left, has been our loyal "bedeau" for several years. He retired last year. He is also the author's good neighbor. Our present custodian is Frank Langer, on the right; Past "bedeaux" who have served several years are: Pierre Beauvais, Eli Charland, August Belisle, Louis J. Belisle, John Laventure, and John Penard. May God bless all those who work for the church, in season and out of season.



The Author In His Study

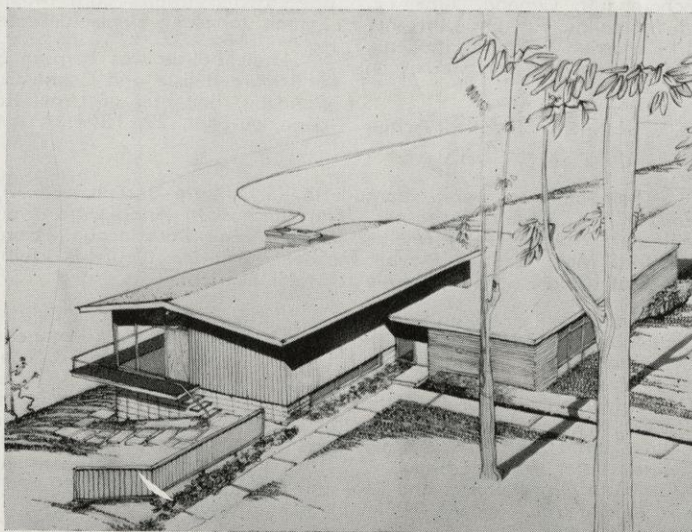
The priest-house, or rectory if you prefer, has an open door where all may come and chat or seek fatherly advice and help. Pastor means "shepherd of souls." The author tried real hard to look like he was working when this photo was taken!





**The New School**

This is the architect's drawing of the new school which the Parish of St. Anne will begin during this Centennial Year of 1956. It will consist of eight rooms, gymnasium and cafeteria, kitchen and offices. Since January, 1956, a campaign for the Building Fund has been carried through. Most of the parishioners have pledged to contribute ten per cent of their income to the church. Parochial Architects of St. Paul, Minn., are the architects: Jim Voigt and Dan Fourre.



**The New Rectory**

Architect's drawing of proposed new rectory to be built back of the present house. It will contain offices for administration besides the regular living quarters.



# Edward Dufresne Family



Left to Right, Back Row: Vernon, Leonelle, Br. Raymond, C.S.C., Sr. Mary Edward, C.S.J., Norman, Sr. Mary James, C.S.J. Front: Mr. Dufresne, Theresa, Mrs. Dufresne.

Luger Dufresne was born in Dechambault, Canada, June 12, 1863, son of Hilaire Dufresne and Marceline Paquin Dufresne. He came to Somerset in 1878 where he married Rosanna Harvieux, daughter of Oliver Harvieux and Mary Payette Harvieux, on Aug. 27, 1895.

Their children were: Mary (Mrs. Celestine Montpetit), Arthur

(deceased), Edward, Sara (Mrs. Louis L'Allier), Oliver, Cora (Mrs. Lyman Johnson), Denis (deceased).

Louis Belisle was born in Somerset March 21, 1872, the son of Isidore Belisle and Celina Gauthier Belisle. He married Arminie Rondeau, daughter of Urgel Rondeau and Louise Lamirande Rondeau, on Sept. 29, 1896.

Their children were: Bernadette (Sr. Marie Joseph, C.S.J.), Emma (Mrs. Edward Dufresne), John (deceased), Anna (Mrs. Emil Balfanz), Agathe (John Mielke), Olive (Frank Passalacqua), Cora (Clifford Moe), Lester (Mayne McShea), Beatrice (Louis Martell), Benedict (Goldie Schaar), Bernie (Bert Heidenrich).

Edward Dufresne born December 21, 1899, married Emma Belisle, September 7, 1921. They had 7 children who are: Leonelle (Marjorie Belisle), children, Gail Lyn, Patricia Ann, Robert Lee, and Douglas Allen; Vernon (Betty Elkin), children, David John, Daniel Vernon, and Craig Arthur; Robert Gerald (Brother Raymond, C.S.C.); Theresa (Roland Martell), children, Jean Therese, Judy Elaine, Janet Marie, Joan Mary, Jerry Roland, and James Edward; Elaine (Sister Mary Edward, C.S.J.); Norman James (Student at Marquette University); Nona Mae (Sister Mary James, C.S.J.).

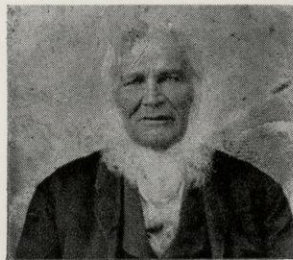


Mr. and Mrs. Louis Belisle, Emma and Bernadette.



Oliver, Mr. Luger Dufresne, Arthur, Mary, Edward, Mrs. Luger Dufresne, Sara.





Francois Lemire



Marie Paquette

# Descendants of Francois Lemire

Francois was born in St. Francois du Lac, P. Q., in 1800. He married twice having a total of 25 children. His descendants now number in the thousands. He came to Somerset in 1855. Some children stayed in Canada and contact has been lost. There are 34 known vocations with 29 here pictured. Francois died in Somerset in 1877. Most of this numerous family no longer live in Somerset.



Sister St. Julien, A.S.V.  
Sisters of the Assumption, V.  
Nicolet, Quebec, CAN.



Sister M. Rita, C.S.J.  
Nazareth Motherhouse  
Concordia, Kansas



Rt. Rev. Magr. Elias Lemire  
Duluth, Minnesota



Rev. J. I. Courteau  
Christ of King Hospital  
Nicolet, Quebec, Can.



Sister M. Adelaide, C.S.J.  
Nazareth Motherhouse  
Concordia, Kansas



Sister Jean Baptiste, R.G.S.  
Good Shepherd Convent  
Quebec, Canada



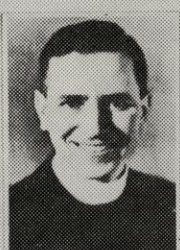
Sister M. Justine, C.S.J.  
St. Joseph Convent  
Crookston, Minnesota



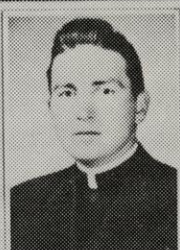
Rev. Eugene Lemire  
Crookston, Minnesota



Rev. Denis Parnell, O.S.B.  
St. John Abbey  
Collegeville, Minnesota



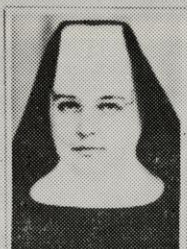
Rev. John Rivard  
Superior, Wisconsin



Rev. Arthur Lemire  
Crookston, Minnesota



Mother M. Aimee, C.S.J.  
St. Joseph Convent  
Crookston, Minnesota



Sister M. Genevieve, O.S.B.  
Mount St. Benedict  
Crookston, Minnesota



Sister M. Demetria, S.S.M.  
St. Mary of the Angels  
St. Louis, Missouri



Rev. Cletus Lemire, S.D.S.  
St. Nazianz, Wisconsin



Rev. John Crowley, S.J.  
St. Louis, Missouri



Sister M. Denise, S.A.  
St. Francis Convent  
Graymoor, New York



Sister M. Adrian, O.S.B.  
Villa Sancta Scholastica  
Duluth, Minnesota



Sister M. Fabiola, O.P.  
St. Clara Convent  
Sinsinawa, Wisconsin



Sister M. Rosewitha, E.S.P.A.  
Saint Rose Convent  
La Crosse, Wisconsin



Rev. Michael Gagnon, O.F.M.  
St. Luis Rey Mission  
St. Luis Rey, Calif.



Brother Clarence Lemire, C.S.C.  
Community House  
Notre Dame, Indiana



Sister St. Julien, A.S.V.  
Sisters of the Assumption, V.  
Nicolet, Quebec, Canada



Sister Jeanne St. Vincent  
Daughter of the Cross  
Sacred Heart Convent  
St. Adolphe, Manitoba, Can.



Sister Jane Frances, O.S.B.  
Villa Sancta Scholastica  
Duluth, Minnesota



Sister Rose Marie, C.S.J.  
St. Joseph Convent  
Crookston, Minnesota



Sister Joseph Marie, C.S.J.  
St. Joseph Convent  
Crookston, Minnesota



Sister Marie Flora, C.S.J.  
St. Joseph Convent  
Crookston, Minnesota



Sister M. Arthur, C.S.A.  
St. Agnes Convent  
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

That they may  
know Thee, the  
only true God,  
and him whom  
thou hast sent,  
Jesus Christ.

ST. JOHN 17



# Gaspar Lemire Family



**Left to Right, Front Row: Mrs. Gasper Lemire, Sr. Rose Marie, Gasper Lemire. Back: Edward, Elizabeth, Benjamin, Doris, Maurice, Ella, Duane, and Andrew.**

Gasper Lemire, son of Edward and Rosalie Parent Lemire, was born in Somerset March 7, 1892. He is one of four children born to this union. The others are: Edward, Amable Joseph who was born Feb. 8, 1884, and Isaac John born April 10, 1887. Isaac married Rose Paquin and Amable married Elizabeth Belisle.

Gasper's father was born in Canada, coming to Somerset as a farmer. He was married at Hudson, Wis. He was, also, a Civil War veteran. He lived here until his death May 13, 1929.

Gasper married Rosa Louise Campeau at Somerset Oct. 10, 1910. They were blessed with nine children who are as follows: Edward Joseph, born Jan. 20, 1913, married Myrtle Cloutier Nov. 29, 1939; Andrew Joseph, born June 16, 1914; Maurice Kenneth, born Jan. 2, 1918; Ella Rose Mary, born Aug. 16, 1919, married Glen Franson Feb. 14, 1942; Benjamin Joseph, born July 3, 1921, married Anable Baillargeon June 3, 1946; Irene Marie, born Jan. 16, 1923, Sr. Rose Marie; Doris Mary, born May 23, 1924, married Gasper Campeau Dec. 13, 1943; Duane Dale, born April 21, 1929, married Marilyn Green, Oct. 9, 1954; Elizabeth Ann, born Feb. 1, 1933, married Earl Neuman June 16, 1951.



**Left to Right: Mrs. Edward Lemire, Isaac John, Amable, Edward Lemire.**



# Frank Lemire Family



Frank Lemire was the son of Francois Lemire and Marie Paquette. He was born in Somerset on Sept. 2, 1866. He married Amanda Belisle on Jan. 9, 1887. They lived in Georgetown, but moved back to Somerset where they lived on the place now owned by Marie Strobeen and later he built the house now owned by Jos. Plourde by the Riverdale Powerhouse. He was sheriff in Somerset for some time and helped with a lot of the building. He farmed most of his life at Riverdale farm. Thirteen children were born in this family, one died in childhood: Lucy (Mrs. Delore Barriault), Joe (married Mary Berube), Delphine (Mrs. Albert Proulx), Rose (Mrs. George Kelly), Daniel (married Emily Chevalier), Elizabeth (Mrs. Tom Berube), Mathilda (Mrs. Randy Monson), Alice (Mrs. Maurice Dauville), Pauline (Sister Justine), Bertha (Mrs. Evon Johnson), Louise (Mother Aimee), Wilfred (married Katherine Walsh), Elsie (Mrs. Eric Villevoek).

Left to Right, Back Row: Daniel, Lucy (Mrs. Delore Barriault), Betty (Mrs. Tom Berube), Rose (Mrs. George Kelly), Mathilda (Mrs. Randy Monson), Delphine (Mrs. Albert Proulx), Alice (Mrs. Maurice Dauville), Joe. Front: Mrs. Lemire, Bertha (Mrs. Evon Johnson), Pauline (Sister Justine), Louise (Mother Aimee), Wilfred, Frank Lemire.

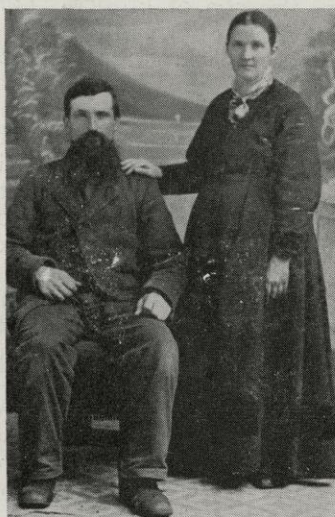
# Theodore Cook Family



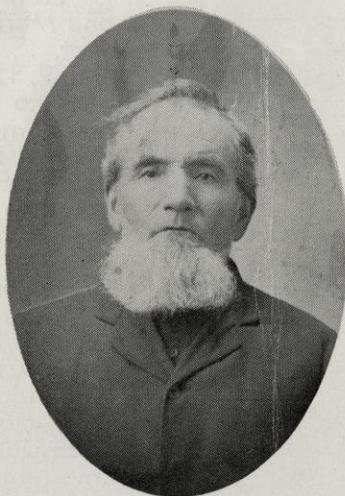
Left to Right, Back Row: Joseph, Loretta, Charles, Martha, Emil, Delphie, Annie, Eli, Henry.  
Front: Monica, Veronica, Urban, Leo, Mr. and Mrs. Theo. Cook, Elmer, Roy, Aaron.



# Descendants of Alexandre Belisle Sr.



Mr. and Mrs. Isidore Belisle



Augustin Belisle



Mrs. Augustin Belisle

Alexandre Belisle, Sr., married Elizabeth Gosselin at Deschambault, P. Q., on June 14, 1831. From that union there were eight children. Alexandre died at Somerset in 1885. Among his descendants we find a remarkable number of vocations. Listed below are 32 sisters, priests and brothers. Most of his children and grandchildren lived in Somerset.

## 1. Isidore Belisle:

### Children:

Sister Justina  
Sister Elizabeth  
Sister Pauline  
Sister Clarence  
Sister Angelique

### Grandchildren:

Sister Hortense  
Sister Joseph  
Sister Octavia Cloutier  
Sister Adelaide Cloutier  
Sister Angelique Cloutier  
Sister Justine Lemire  
Sister Aimee Lemire

### Great-grandchildren:

Sister M. Edward Dufresne  
Sister M. James Dufresne  
Brother Raymond Dufresne, C.S.C.  
Sister Helene Cloutier

## 2. Augustin Belisle:

### Great-grandchildren:

Sister Seraphine Mondor  
Sister Michelle Breault

### Great-great-grandchildren:

Sister Sylvester Trembley  
Sister Karen Rivard

## 3. Joseph Belisle:

### Child:

Sister Philomene

## 4. Fleury Belisle:

### Child:

Sister St. John

### Grandchild:

Brother Gregory Robertson

## 5. Alfred Belisle:

### Grandchildren:

Sister Catherine Cote  
Sister Dorothy Cote  
Sister Mary Duane  
Father Clement Cloutier

### Great-grandchild:

Brother Paul Bibeau, O.F.M.

## 6. Elizabeth Belisle:

### Grandchildren:

Father George Proulx  
Sister Rita Morin  
Sister Gertrude Schinler

## 7. Olivier Belisle:

### Great-grandchild:

Sister Agnes O'Keefe



# Lynn Belisle Family



Mr. and Mrs. Fleury Belisle

Fleury Belisle, son of Alexandre Belisle, whose ancestry dates back to Robert Belisle of St. Sauver Burg De L'Abbe, France, year 1639, was born Oct. 3, 1857, in Canada and came to Somerset in 1877. He married Edece La Bonne of Anoka, Minn., and with his brother Alfred went to farm on claims at Argyle, Minn. Meanwhile Lucy, William, Lena, and John were born. Then the two families moved to Ishpeming, Mich., for two years working in the lumber business. George was born there May 26, 1890. They came



Mr. and Mrs. Lynn Belisle, John and George



Mr. and Mrs. George Belisle

to Somerset in 1890 to the home where Marcel Belisle now lives. Then shortly after bought the Frank Champeau farm north of Somerset where they lived for 20 years. Thirteen children were born of them. They moved to Minneapolis for three or four years and came back to live in Somerset in the house which was moved from the corner where Lynn's Cafe is presently located to the place near the bridge where John Jackelen lived for many years and now Bernard Peterson.

Edece was a sweet, loveable lady whose father was a hotel operator in Anoka, Minn. He was over seven feet tall, a very strong and good-natured man. Many stories are told of his strength. The Indians would cross the boardwalk rather than meet him for they respected his strength and thought him a mighty man.

Edece passed away at her daughter's home, Mrs. Ray Robertson, in St. Paul in 1940. Fleury passed away at the Williams Sanitarium in Hudson, Wis., in 1934.

Their son, George, married Josephine Parent at Somerset on June 17, 1913. In 1914 they went to Minot, N. D., where he worked in a sash and door company. Returning to Somerset he worked on the Soo Line section until 1918 when they moved to Washburn, Wis., where he worked in the ammunition factory. While there Lynn Robert was born Sept. 11, 1918. In 1920 they moved to Joe Bergeron's hotel (now Maurice Lemire's building) and started a bakery. A daughter, Hazel, was born June 6, 1920. George bought the place that is now Lynn's Cafe (formerly a saloon owned by Lenard Wolfe of Stillwater) in late 1920 and had a bakery there until 1934, then had a tavern and cafe. He died Sept. 23, 1937. Josephine operated the business until her son, Lynn, bought it in July, 1946.

Lynn married Marguerite Tobin in Burbank, Calif., Oct. 25, 1940. He was employed by Cannon Electric Co. for 3½ years, then went in the Navy, serving in the Pacific area. Discharged April 6, 1946, he returned to Wisconsin and now owns Lynn's Cafe. They have two sons: John and George.



# C. J. Montpetit Family



**Left to Right, Back Row: Joseph, Rose, Adele, Celestine, Arthur. Front: Mrs. Jelas Montpetit, Eleanor, Alice, Edward, Odelie, Mr. Jelas Montpetit.**

C. J. Montpetit, son of Jelas Montpetit and Marie Podvin, was born in Somerset April 22, 1891. He married Mary Dufresne at St. Anne's in Somerset on Oct. 14, 1919.

Sister Mary Celeste is their only daughter. She was born Oct. 23, 1928.

C. J. is a day laborer now. He started to work at the early age of 12 in a lunch counter for Mr. Desire Paquin. Later he delivered groceries and meat (with a covered wagon and a team of white horses) for A. J. Vanasse.

In 1918, during World War I, C. J. joined the U. S. Army. He was overseas one year, coming back in May, 1919.

C. J. was married to Mary Dufresne on Oct. 14, 1919, and in the spring of 1920 came back to work for A. J. Vanasse. Two years later he bought a grocery store from Wm. Belisle and managed that for several years, after which he sold it. Shortly after he bought the store again and converted it into his present residence.

April 11, 1929, was a red letter day for C. J. and Mary Montpetit for on that day they adopted a little girl. Rose Marie brought sunshine and happiness to both of them. Life took on a new meaning.

After graduating from high school in 1946, Rose Marie joined the Sisters of St. Joseph of Crookston, Minn. She made her final vows on Aug. 8, 1955. Rose Marie, now Sister M. Celeste, is nursing in the Community Hospital at Baudette, Minn.



**Rose Marie (now Sister M. Celeste), C. J., Mary**



**C. J. in his store**



# Arthur Montpetit Family



Left to Right, Seated: Mr. and Mrs. Art Montpetit, Arthur, Jr., Dorothy, Walter. Standing: Warren, Marcella, Clayton, Earl.

Arthur Montpetit was born at Somerset June 1, 1889. He was the son of Jelas Montpetit, who had come to Somerset from Canada, and Josephine Germain, who was a native of Somerset.

After Archie had completed the grammar school in Somerset he took a business course in the Twin Cities. Getting the "adventuring fever," he decided to go to Montana with Fred Belisle where they operated a skating rink for two years. He then returned to Somerset, bought the old Jerry Paquin building on Spring Street in 1911, established a small confectionery store and a lunch counter, including

one pool table. Later on he moved into what is called "Archie's" on Mill Street which he built himself. Here he had a bowling alley, pool tables, along with a lunch counter.

In 1914 he married Angeline Proulx from Argyle, Minn., making their home in Somerset. Seven children were born of this union: Dorothy, Walter, Marcella, Clayton, Warren, Earl, and Arthur, Jr. Arthur, better known as "Archie" throughout the county, died September 15, 1947.



Mr. Proulx and Sons  
Left to Right, Back Row: Albert, Alphonse, George. Front Row: Vital, Oliver, Mr. Proulx, Noel, Edward.



Mrs. Proulx and Daughters  
Left to Right, Back Row: Eva, Angeline, Eliza. Front Row: Mrs. Proulx, Genevieve (baby), Josephine, Loccise.



Archie's (at time of having bowling alley)



# A. J. Vanasse Family



Left to Right, Back Row: Andre, Thomas, Martina, Leon, Olivine, Armand. Front Row: Lena, Blanche, Mr. Vanasse, Mrs. Vanasse, Anne, Yvonne.



Left to Right: Simon Vanasse, Elayne Shay (Mrs. Ken Hecht), Mrs. Simon Vanasse.

Simon Vanasse (Vertefeuille), son of Joseph Vanasse (Vertefeuille), came to Somerset in 1841, married Matilda Precour of Superior. Two children were born of this union. Four years after their marriage the first born died in infancy, the second child was born and a month later his wife passed away. He took the child to Canada and returned to Superior to live until 1871. He came to Somerset in 1871 and purchased a farm east of Sand Hill which he still owned at the time of his death. He married Alvina Germain in 1872. At that time there was no priest in Somerset so a priest came from Hudson, Wis., to marry them. They lived on a farm, remained there until 1903 when he purchased the Pioneer Hotel at Somerset and lived there until his death June 9, 1930. Children of this marriage were: Josephine (1874), Adelard (1877), Edward (1880), Mary Louise (1888), Rose (1891), Agnes (1893), Anna (1896).

Adelard J. Vanasse, son of Simon Vanasse and Alvina Germain, born in 1877, married Anne Germain on Aug. 30, 1898. He was born and raised on a farm. At the age of 21 he married, bought a residence in the Village of Somerset and moved there in the spring of 1899. He built and operated a general merchandise store 41 years from 1900 to 1941. He also built and operated two cheese factories, at Sand Hill and Bass Lake. He served as Town Clerk before the Village was incorporated, then was Village Assessor for eight years, President of the Village for two terms, was a member of Water and Sewer System for 10 years, also served as Coroner of St. Croix County for two terms, from 1937 to 1941. Children of this marriage are Armand, Andre, Lena (Mrs. Edgar Johnson), Blanche, Simon, Martina (Mrs. Thomas Ross), Leon, Thomas, Olivine (Mrs. Earl Johnson), Adelard, Jr., Anne (Mrs. Michael Dardine), Yvonne (Mrs. John Covy).

Andre Z. Vanasse, son of Adelard Vanasse and Anne Germain, married Eleanor Montpetit on Aug. 17, 1921. He clerked in Vanasse's grocery store for nine years and then built and operated a service station for 18 years. He served as Village Councilman and Chairman of High School Board for two years. Children of this marriage were: James, Dolores, Milton, Noel, Ella Mae, Jo Anne, Andre, Jr.

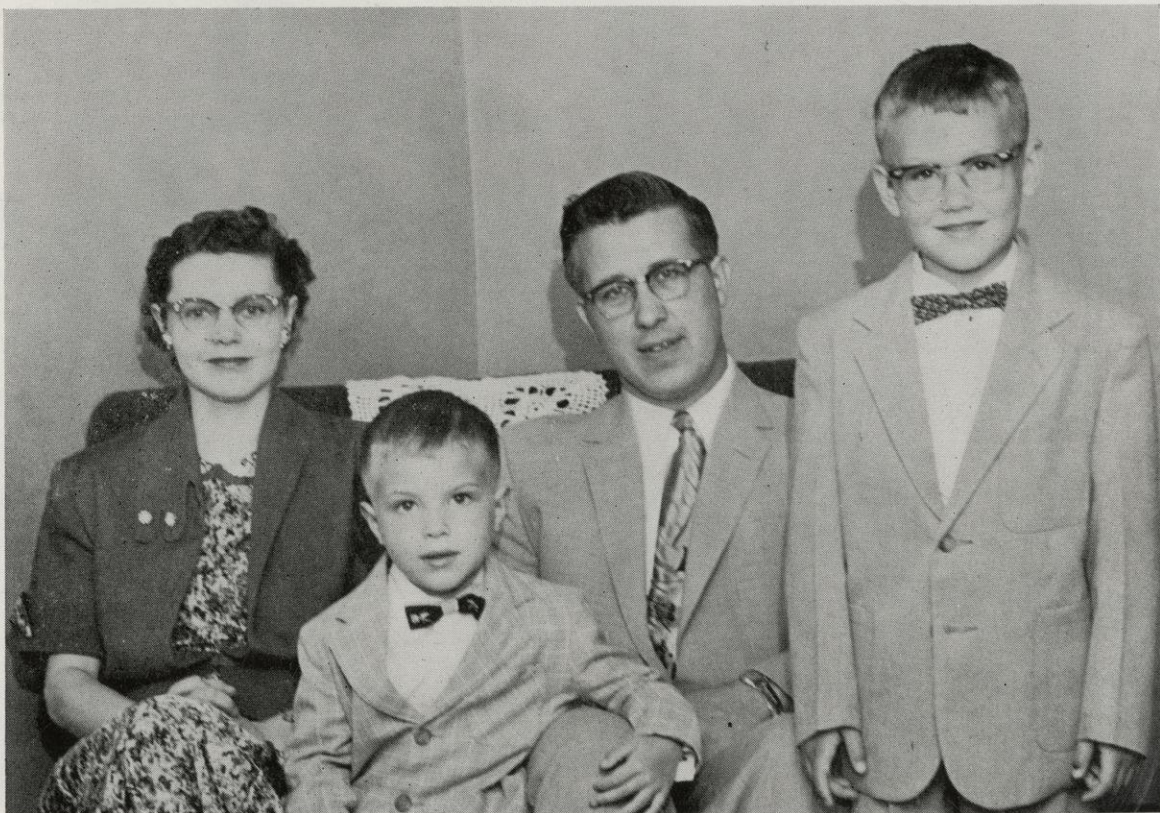
Milton R. Vanasse, son of Andre Vanasse and Eleanor Montpetit, born in 1926, married Margaret Kellaher on April 20, 1949. He served in the armed forces during World War II. He was in Germany on VE Day and was in Japan on VJ Day. He bought his father's service station and now operates under the firm name of Riverview Oil Co. Children of this marriage are James and Mark.



# Andre and Milton Vanasse Families



Left to Right, Back Row: Ella Mae, Milton, James, Noel. Front: Andre, Jr., Andre, Sr., Mrs. Vanasse, Jo Anne.



Left to Right: Mrs. Vanasse, Mark, Milton, James.



# Edmund Cloutier Family



**Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Cloutier**

Damas Cloutier, son of Joachim and Angelie Tougin Cloutier, was born at Quebec, Canada in 1833, and came to Somerset in 1851. He married Eudie Vielleux in 1855 at Stillwater.

Damas Cloutier worked as a lumberman and later as a farmer on the place now known as the Moulton farm, near Riverdale. He died Dec. 11, 1902.

The children of this union: Severe (married Marie Laveau), Octave (married Melina Belisle), Anna (Mrs. Noah Rivard), Narcisse (Marie Belisle), Alphonse (married Emerance Belisle), Melina (Mrs. Severe Campeau), Sophie, Reya, Agnes (Mrs. Felix Parent), Henrietta (Mrs. Louis Germain), Fred (married Belle), William

(married Adele Paquin), Amable (married Rose Landry), Edward (married Libbie Rice), Josephine and Agatha, twins.

Edmund Cloutier, son of Nels (Narcisse) and Marie Belisle Cloutier, and grandson of Damas Cloutier, was born Sept. 25, 1894, in Somerset. He married Anna Parent Nov. 24, 1914, at Somerset. He died June 6, 1937.

The children of this union: Gladys, born Sept. 6, 1915, now Sr. Marie Helen; Mae Catherine born June 24, 1917, died August 10, 1940; Marie Violette, born March 29, 1919, married Edward Kaeder June 3, 1950; Daryl, born June 7, 1921; Gerald H., born June 24, 1923, married Lorayne McCarty May 1, 1948; Earl W., born Aug. 22, 1925, married Kathleen McNamara June 26, 1948.



**Left to Right, Front Row: Earl, Sr. Marie Helen, Gerald. Back: Mrs. Cloutier, Daryl, Violette.**



**Left to Right, Front Row: Debbie, Mary Clare, Colleen, Earl, Jr. Second Row: Simone and Anne. Back: Mr. and Mrs. Earl Cloutier, and Mrs. and Mr. Gerald Cloutier.**



# George Cloutier Family



Left to Right, Back Row: Gertrude, Clarence, Myrtle, Percy, Pauline. Front: Everette, Mr. and Mrs. George Cloutier, and Laurence.

Narcisse Cloutier, son of Damas and Eudie Vielleux Cloutier, was born at Star Prairie Oct. 12, 1864. He married Marie Belisle June 24, 1889, coming to Somerset in November, 1920. Died March 22, 1955. The children of this marriage: George (married Mary Marquis), Helen (Sr. Adelaide), Edmund (married Anna Parent).

George Cloutier, son of Narcisse and Marie Belisle Cloutier, was born July 5, 1890, at Star Prairie. He married Mary Angela Marquis at St. Anne's Church, Somerset, Aug. 22, 1911. George lived on the farm now occupied by his son, Everette. He moved to Somerset in December, 1953. The children of this marriage were: Myrtle (Mrs. Edward La Mire), Gertrude (Mrs. Wesley Burns), Percy (married Irene Zahradka), Clarence (married Ruella Neidermier, Everette (married Adelin McNamara), Pauline (Mrs. Urban Germain), Laurence married Delores Berube), James (deceased), Russell (deceased).



Theo. Marquis Family  
Left to Right: Mary, Leon, Sr. Louise Angle, C.S.J., Genivieve, Mr. Marquis, Fr. Julian (Marist), Helen, Mrs. Marquis, Sr. Frances de Sales, Betty, Rose.



Left to Right, Back Row: George, Sr. Adelaide, Edmond. Front: Mr. and Mrs. Narcisse Cloutier.



Mr. and Mrs. Damas Cloutier



# Henry Cloutier Family



Left to Right, Front Row: Henry, Alice, Joseph, Philip, Mr. Severe Cloutier, Arsene. Back: Mary, Cecilia, Josephine, Felix, Emma.

Severe, son of Damas Cloutier and Eulalie Viellieux, was born in Somerset Oct. 26, 1858, married Marie Laveau at Somerset. He worked at farming and lived longest at the farm now owned by Andy Benson. Severe died Sept. 9, 1941, and was buried in Somerset. His wife preceded him in death and he was left with 10 children to raise: Joe, Emma, Josephine, Mary, Henry, Phillip, Arsene, Felix, Cecilia, Alice.

Henry, son of Severe, was born at Somerset on Dec. 23, 1896. He married Lilly Rivard at St. Anne's Church on May 6, 1919. He farms the place he now owns and occupies. Children of this marriage: Arthur, Elaine, Marilyn (Mrs. Kenneth Lynch), James, and Joan.

Arthur Cloutier was born at Somerset on Aug. 5, 1922. Married Edna Eckstrom at Somerset May 29, 1950. Children are: Newton, Michael, and Jonathan.



Art Cloutier Family  
Left to Right: Newton, Mr. Cloutier, Jonathan, Mrs. Cloutier, Michael.



Henry Cloutier Family  
Seated: Mr. and Mrs. Cloutier. Left to Right, Standing: James, Elaine, Arthur, Marilyn (Mrs. Kenneth Lynch), Joan.



# Dr. S. J. Phaneuf Family



Left to Right: Mrs. Phaneuf, Stance, Gaston, Gerald, Victor, Anne, Dr. S. J. Phaneuf.

The Phaneuf family has an interesting background dating back to Lancashire, England, when in 1628 Joseph Farnsworth Phaneuf came to America with the Dorchester Co. His brother Mattias was recorded living at Lynn, Mass., in 1657, probably moved to Groton, Vt., in 1704. His grandson, Mattias, was taken prisoner by the Indians in 1704 and taken to Canada where he was baptised a Catholic and naturalized. He married Catherine Charpentier in 1713. They had 12 children. Her ancestors came from Normandy, France, in 1673 to Montreal. In 1913 a reunion was held at Montreal to celebrate the 200th anniversary of their marriage and 250 members of the family were present. Dr. and family were present.

Dr. was born April 29, 1869, in St. Damase, P. Q., Canada. His father died when Dr. was five. His mother (Marie Gigault), brother Horace, and sister Anna were left to manage a village (near Montreal) composed of their tenants, post office, general store, and large horse trading barn. Hence Dr.'s love for horses developed.

He graduated from the university at Burlington, Vt., in June, 1891, and did graduate work in Baltimore, Md. At the age of 24 he came to West Superior, Wis., for his health and started his practice, and sang in the Sacred Heart Church. It was in church that he met Miss Anna Trank, of Troy, N. Y., who was visiting her cousin. They both had lovely voices and became interested in each other, and six weeks later they were married in 1892. While in Superior Stanislaus was born Nov. 13, 1893. He served in World War I and contacted mustard gas which caused his death in 1922. He married Suzanne Tessier of Le Chans, France, in 1921. Mrs. Phaneuf and son, Bernard, live in California.

In June, 1894, Dr. came to Somerset to visit Father Couture and look over the possibility to practice here, also to trade a few horses. Within the day Dr. delivered two babies who are now Mrs. Gasper

Lemire and Mrs. Eli Cook. He decided to cast his lot and stay in the french village. Dr. had as many as 40 horses in his backyard which dealers from all parts came to trade and buy.

1896, Victorian was born. He married Florence Halvorson in 1920. They had five children: Yvonne (deceased), Robert, LaVonne, Joanne, and John. Florence passed away in 1932. Vic married Alice Cote Rivard in 1936. They have two daughters: Suzanne and Linda. Vic has been with the railroad for 34 years.

Dr. decided to go to Fall River, Mass, in 1898, but returned to Somerset a year later. Gaston was born at Fall River. He married Emma Paquin in 1922. Their children are: Dorine, Curtis, Rena, and Maxine; all residing in Michigan. Gaston was employed by the Flint Chev. Motors until his death in 1945.

Gerald was born Jan. 30, 1899. He married Louise Anderson in 1925. They have a daughter, Patricia. He was a mail carrier many years in Milwaukee and Shell Lake, Wis.

Anna was born Jan. 30, 1902. Married Ed Tobin in 1921. They had five children: Marguerite, William (deceased), Milford, Thomas, and Stans.

In 1905-1909 Dr. went to Weyerhaeuser, Wis., to practice, but returned to Somerset and bought the Alex Germain Drug Store. Later, in 1910, he built a new one on Mill St. which burned down. Then he opened an office and store in the building now owned by Maurice Lemire. In 1948 he moved to the Raleigh building, the same spot where the other store burned. He retired Oct. 1, 1952. Mrs. Phaneuf passed away Oct. 21, 1940. Dr. followed her in death March 13, 1956, at the age of 86. We will always remember him as a generous, kind-hearted man smoking a strong cigar, with a hardy handshake for everyone.



# John Liberty Family



Front Row: Walter, Mr. and Mrs. Liberty, Darlene. Second Row: Lester, Mary Louise, Lyle, Jeanette, Amable.

Jean Baptist, son of Paul La Liberte and Anastasia Parent, born in Somerset May 3, 1870. He married Angela Germain August 14, 1904. Children of this marriage are the following:  
 Lyle (Elsie Breault) Oct. 14, 1930  
 Amable (single)  
 William (deceased)  
 Lester (Alma Rivard)

Agnes (deceased)  
 Ernest (deceased)  
 Mary Louise (Arnold Demulling)  
 Jeanette (Al Simmons)  
 Darlene (John Jamison)  
 Walter



Mr. Lester, Mrs. Lester, Brenda, Jackie, Dale, Judy, Mr. Lyle, Margaret, Mrs. Lyle, Patricia, James, Michael, and Robert.



Mr. and Mrs. Paul La Liberte



# Herman Meinke Family



**Conrad Koehler**

Charles Koehler, son of Conrad Koehler and Elizabeth Simon, was born in Germany April 23, 1859, coming to Somerset when he was 14 years old. He settled on a farm adjoining the village limits and for 67 years he took part in the community life of the town and village. He served on the town board, school board, and church council for many years.

Frieda Koehler, daughter of Charles Koehler, was born in Somerset, Wis., March 10, 1896. She married Herman Meinke at Somerset, Wis., Oct. 4, 1916.



**Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Koehler and Family**  
Left to Right: Chas. Kohler, Mrs. Koehler, Selda (Mrs. Herman Krause), Frieda (Mrs. Herman Meinke).



**Elizabeth Simon (Koehler)**



**Mr. and Mrs. Herman Meinke and Family**  
Left to Right: Herman Meinke, Milton, Mrs. Meinke, Audrey, Irene, Hermina, Ethel.



**Mr. Koehler's Two Sisters**  
Left to Right: Anna (Mrs. Kiesow), Mary (Mrs. Frank Holden)



# Fredrick Parnell Family



**Frederick Parnell and sons. Left to Right: Phillip, Alex, Frederick, Amable, Fred, Jr.**

Fred Parnell, Sr., was born at Drummondville, Canada, on Jan. 16, 1853. He came to Somerset from Canada in April, 1853, where he married Josephine Belisle on Sept. 30, 1879. Children of this marriage: Fred, Jr. (deceased) was born Jan. 30, 1881, and married Louise Rondeau Oct. 3, 1905; Amable (deceased), born March 22, 1883; Louise, born April 21, 1885, and married Henry Harvieux on May 23, 1905; Eleanor, born June 30, 1887, and married George Harvieux Nov. 29, 1918; Alex, born Oct. 15, 1891; and Philip, born July 4, 1899, and married Clara Sack in May, 1944.

Fred Parnell, Sr., purchased from Joseph Parent, one of the first settlers in Somerset, the farm now occupied by Mrs. Louise Parnell, widow of Fred, Jr. It is one of the oldest farms in Somerset. The first church in Somerset was built near his home.

Besides farming he worked at logging for several large companies for over 40 years. He worked in the lumber camps for 32 winters around Gordon, Grantsburg, Park Falls, and at other logging areas in Wisconsin and also in Minnesota. A large part of this time he was camp foreman and had from 50 to 75 men under his supervision. During all this time, and also several years besides that, he worked on the St. Croix river and also on the Apple river driving the logs down the river to the St. Croix Boom Co., about two miles above Stillwater, Minn., where the logs of each lumber company were sorted and rafted and then floated down to the sawmills at Bayport, Minn., and also down the Mississippi river. He was also foreman on those log drives for a large number of years. He was an expert at riding logs and once, on a dare, rode a log down the dangerous and treacherous rapids at St. Croix Falls before the present large Northern States power plant was built there.

In 1911 he retired from farming, sold his farm to his son, Fred, Jr. (who died in April, 1932), moved to the Village of Somerset and built the house now owned and occupied by his son, Alex.

In July, 1915, when the Village of Somerset was incorporated, he was elected the first Village President of Somerset and held that office for about 10 years. In those days the Village President was also the Village Supervisor and so he represented the Village on the County Board while he was Village President. Later he also served as Village Trustee on the Village Board.

Fred Parnell, Sr., died Dec. 25, 1932, and was buried at Somerset. His wife passed away Nov. 1, 1938, and is also buried at Somerset.



**Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Parnell**



**Mrs. Frederick Parnell and daughters. Left to Right: Louise (Mrs. Henry Harvieux), Mrs. Parnell, Eleanor (Mrs. George Harvieux).**



# Lawrence Parnell Family



**Left to Right, Front Row: Elmer, Lawrence, Elieze, Edwidge. Second Row: Angela, Rose, Laura. Back: Clarence, Raymond, Andrew, Albert, Narc, Edmond, Louis.**

Thomas Parnell, son of William E. and Mary Ross Parnell, was born at Drumonville, P. Q., Canada, on March 1, 1819. He grew to manhood on his father's farm. He married Angeline Parent at Stratford, P. Q., Canada, in 1840. He came to Somerset with his wife and three sons, William, Oliver, and Frederick. They settled on the bank of the St. Croix River near the Apple River point. Elizabeth, Lawrence, John, and Mary were born at Somerset. He acquired farmland through farm grants, received title by U. S. patents signed by the then President of the United States. He built the first log cabin in that settlement. He labored tirelessly to clear his land to provide for his family. He got help from his five sons who helped with the farm work and grew to manhood at home. He gave his family a fine example of a happy home, religion, and education. The first Holy Mass was offered up by a missionary priest in the Parnell home. He took an active part in the development of this area. He was one of the first members of the Town Board. Thomas Parnell died on Nov. 27, 1905, is buried in St. Anne's cemetery. His wife preceded him in death by about 10 years.

Lawrence was born at Somerset, Wis., on July 13, 1856, and grew to manhood on his parents' farm. He attended the country school, the first school built in Somerset. He married Elieze Belisle on July 6, 1880. He acquired a farm nearby and engaged in farming to provide for his family. There were nine boys and four girls born to this union, namely: Edward, Angela, Louis, Edmond, Rose, Narcisse, Albert, Laura, Edwidge, Andrew, Raymond, Clarence, and Elmer. Besides farming, he and his brothers, Frederick and John, operated lumber camps on contracts a number of winters. He was an oxen teamster in the earlier years, then drove horses later. He spent 17 winters in the lumber camps. His farming operations were successful as were his other business undertakings. He was the first bank president, served as trustee of St. Anne's Parish, held many school, town, and village offices, and served on the St. Croix County Board for over 25 years.

The sons and daughters all had the opportunity of receiving their elementary education in their home school. Later some of them pursued their educations in higher institutions of learning with the encouragement of their parents. All the sons and daughters have married except the oldest and youngest sons: Edward, who died at the age of 24 years; and Elmer, who died, while in military service, at the age of 35 years.

Lawrence died at his home in the Village of Somerset on Feb. 26, 1937, at the age of 81 years, and was buried in the family lot in St. Anne's cemetery. Elieze, his wife, died at her home on April 20, 1948, at the age of 85 years, and also was buried in the family lot in St. Anne's cemetery.

The descendants of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Parnell include 13 children, 60 grandchildren, 149, great-grandchildren, and 12 great-great-grandchildren, as of the present time.



**Thomas Parnell and Angeline Parent Parnell**



# George Harvieux Family



Left to Right, Back Row: Alice, Mabel, Willis, Esther, Kenneth. Front: Juneal, Mrs. George Harvieux, Mr. George Harvieux, Le Roy.



Left to Right, Back Row: Anthme, Teles, Oliver, Delor, Henry, George, Zeno, Arthur, Joseph. Front: Eulide, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Harvieux, Rosanne (Mrs. Ludger Dufresne).



# Ferdinand Breault Family



Left to Right, Front Row: Daughter Doris, Louise and Ferdinand Breault. Back Row: Melvin, Lucille, Tom, and Mae.



**Hormidas Breault Family**

Left to Right, Back Row: Lisa (Mrs. Prudent Gadeout), Ferdinand, Mary (Mrs. Tom Proier), Joe, Rose (Mrs. Ed Montbriand), Henry. Front Row: Donald, Mrs. Breault, Dillema (Mrs. Ray Murphy), Annie (Mrs. Jack Flynn), Hormidus Breault, Francis.

Hormidas Breault came to Somerset from Prairie du Chien, Canada, about 1870. He married Armine Germain in 1873. Eleven children were born in this family. They settled on the farm now occupied by Melvin Breault. He built one of the first barns at a cost of \$400, which was a big debt and a big risk in those days.

Ferdinand Breault, son of Hormidas and Armine Germain Breault, was born in Somerset on June 3, 1879, and had a twin sister, Mary. He married Louise Vanasse on May 17, 1904. He farmed both the Breault and Vanasse farms. Nine children were born in this family: Simon, Marcel, Arsene and Julius died in early childhood. Lucille (Mrs. Wilbur Martinsen, Melvin, Mae (Mrs. Leonard Murphy), Doris (Mrs. Vic Snowden), Thomas Breault. There are eleven grandchildren: Lucille, daughters Colleen and Ann Mary; Melvin (married Frances Kelly): sons Gary, Wayne, Stephen; Mae: sons Michael and Leonard, daughters Patricia, Jane, Kathleen; Thomas (married Phyllis Graff): daughter Mary Jo.



# Ernest J. Germain Family



Left to Right: Ernest, Sara, Delia, Anna. Second Row: Raymond, Edward T. Germain, Stella, Priscilla, Mrs. Edward T. Germain holding Helen, Marcel. Arsene seated in front. Edward T. Germain passed away Jan. 23, 1924, at the age of 44 years.

Zephyrin Germain was first ancestor in Somerset. He married Josephine Morian at Dechambault, P. Q., in 1835, coming to Somerset in 1855. They lived on the place occupied by Adelard Barriault and Gaspard Campeau.

Zephire, son of Zephyrin Germain, was born at Dechambault; married Elizabeth Parnell. The children of this union: Alec, Mary (Mrs. Joe Lallier), Louie (married Henrietta Cloutier), Edward (married Edece Paquin), Anne (Mrs. Adolore Vanasse), Joseph, John, Angella (Mrs. John Liberty), Oliver, Agnes (Mrs. George Trombley), and Amable. He came to the United States at the age of six.

Edward, Sr., son of Zephire Germain married Edece Paquin. He bought the farm from his dad in 1901. To this union ten children were born: Delia (Mrs. Perle Maitrejean), Ernest (married Esther Krenz), Sara (Mrs. Paul Krenz), Anna (Mrs. Clem Demulling), Ray-

mond (married Hazel Gustavson), Marcel (married Lillian Gustafson), Stella (Mrs. Harry Anderson), Priscilla (Mrs. Lester Harvieux), Arsene (married Sally Hanson), Helen (Mrs. Robert Gorman). He lived all his life on a farm, passed away at the age of 44 years on Jan. 23, 1924.

Ernest, son of Edward Germain, Sr., married Esther Krenz at Farmington Oct. 20, 1925. Children of this marriage: Edward E. (married Ann Marie Trombley), Joseph, Marilyn (Mrs. Stans Tobin), Dorothy (Sr. Mary Anita, C.S.J.), Donald, Richard, and Kathleen Ann.

Edward E., son of Ernest Germain, bought the farm known as the Old Damas Germain. Children of this marriage: Darryl, Ronald, Walter, and Dale. Edward E. Germain, 5th generation living in Somerset.



The family of Mrs. Edece Germain meet every New Year's Day. This picture taken Jan. 1, 1955. The baby, Joyce Annette Demulling, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Demulling, being the youngest one there.



Ernest J. Germain Family

Left to Right, Front Row: Ernest Germain, Kathleen, Mrs. Esther Germain. Back: Richard, Donald, Sr. Mary Anita, Marilyn (Mrs. Stans Tobin), Edward.



Edward E. Germain Family

Left to Right, Front Row: Darryl, Ronald, Walter. Back: Mrs. Ann Marie Germain, Dale, Edward E. Germain.



# John D. Germain Family



Left to Right, Back Row: Rita, Urban, Andrew, May, Delor. Front: Ralph, Sr. Marcella, Mr. Germain, Leo, Mrs. Germain, Sr. Rita Marie, Denis.

John, son of Damose Germain, was born in Somerset township Aug. 13, 1887. He married Berengere Laventure Sept. 20, 1910. John moved on the place he now occupies in 1913, and has farmed ever since.

The following are their children: Delor A., married Elsie Knutson May 14, 1935; Ella, now Sr. Rita Marie, C.S.J.; Andrew, married Venita India June, 1943; Claire, now Sr. Marie Marcella, C.S.J.; Doris, died in April, 1920; May, married Thomas Mitchell in Oct., 1942; Urban, married Pauline Cloutier in Sept., 1943; Rita, married Theo. Kipka June 24, 1950; Donald, died 1927; Dennis, married Velma Hendricks May 26, 1956; Leo, married Marian Garske June 23, 1951; Ralph, now serving in the U. S. Army. Urban's children are: Roselind, John, Daniel.



Damase Germain Family

Left to Right, Back Row: Josephine, John, Albert, Louise. Front: Joseph, Mr. Germain, Rose, Mrs. Germain, Fred.



Joseph E. Laventure Family

Left to Right, Back Row: Delor, Victoria, Berengere. Front: Mrs. Laventure, Theodore, Rose, Edward, Mr. Laventure, Albert.



# Edouard and Marie D'Anjou Plourde



**Edouard Plourde and Marie D'Anjou Plourde**  
(1840-1910) (1840-1929)

Edouard Plourde was born at Riviere Ouelle, Canada. He was married to Marie D'Anjou Aug. 5, 1861. They were blessed with nine children. These surviving six came to Somerset with them: Marie (1863-1938), married Marcel Levesque; Edith (1867-1947), married Joseph Campbell; John (1869-1910), married Louise Landry; Joseph (1871-1953), married Eugenia Francois; Edward, born in 1873, married Amanda Couture; Anna (1877-1947), married Charles Parent.

Coming to Somerset, with his family, in 1883 as a miller, he purchased the flour mill from Samuel Harriman. This he operated until he sold it to the Apple River Power Co.



**John and Louise Landry Plourde**  
(1869-1910) (1876-1941)

John Plourde was born at St. Pacome, Canada. He purchased the mill in Somerset with his father and worked with him until it was sold; then settled on the farm at Apple River Falls now owned by his son, Remie.

He married Louise Landry in 1894. To this union were born the following six children: John, 1897; Adelard, 1899; Cecilia, 1900, married John Durning; Louise, 1902, married Frank Gonnella; Charles, 1904, married Ethel Clayton and Marian Glynn; Remie, 1907, married Vernice Schell and Cecilia Hinz.



**Joseph and Eugenia Francois Plourde**  
(1871-1953) (1871-1937)

Joseph Plourde was born at St. Pacome, Canada. He came to Somerset at eleven years of age and worked in the grist mill and lumber camps. After his marriage to Eugenia Francois they purchased and operated the present Plourde farm east of Somerset where their family of nine children were born and raised. They are as follows: Joseph, 1893, married Dorothy Peloquin and Florence Peloquin; Marie, 1895, married Gregory Hartmann; Edward, 1899, married Helen Adam; Esther, 1901, married Milton Berlin; Celina, 1903; Viola, 1905, married Henry Cartier; Francis, 1908, married Jennie Longar; Anthony, 1910-1954, married Mary Coggins; Bernadette, 1913, married Flavian Gagnon.



# Joseph S. Plourde Family



Inset: Mrs. Joe Plourde (Dorothy Peloquin), died 1933. Left to Right, Front Row: Mrs. Joseph Plourde, Wayne, Florence, Mr. Joseph Plourde. Second Row: Donna Mae (Mrs. Harold Berube), Joyce (Mrs. Fred Donati), Marilyn (Sr. Francetta, O.S.F.), Jeanne (Sr. De Lourdes, O.S.M.), Anita (Mrs. George Krekan). Back: Marcel, Gerald, Wilfred, Kenneth.

Dorothy Peloquin (1894-1933) married Joseph S. Plourde in 1919.

Children of Joseph S. and Dorothy Peloquin Plourde: Marcel, 1922, married Ruth DeCosse, 1942; Gerald, 1923, married Betty Petersen, 1953, Children: David, Deborah; Wilfred, 1920, married Frances Hingsberger, 1941, Children: Ralph, Susan, William, Lawrence, Norman, Rachel, Thomas, Michael, John, Joseph, Jeanne; Kenneth, 1927, married Aryliss Rivard, 1950, Children: Steven,

Mary Ellen, Maureen, Lola Kay; Donna Mae, 1927, married Harold Berube, 1946, Children: Joseph, James; Joyce, 1931, married Fred Donati, 1954; Marilyn, 1928, received name of Sr. Francetta, O.S.F., 1947; Jeanne, 1931, Received name of Sr. de Lourdes, O.S.M., 1951; Anita, 1930, married George Krekan, 1954.

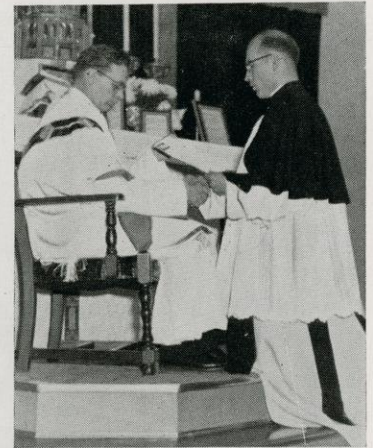
Florence Peloquin (1907) married Joseph S. Plourde in 1934. Their children: Wayne, 1937; Florence Mary, 1939.



# Edward Plourde Family



Left to Right: Mary Therese, Edward J. Jr., Edward J., Sr., Sr. M. Edwardine, Mrs. Plourde, Frater Jerome.



Reception in the Crosier Order of Frater Jerome.

Edward John Plourde, son of Joseph and Eugenia Francois Plourde, was born in 1899 at Somerset, Wis. He married Helen Adams on Sept. 5, 1927, in St. Paul, Minn.

He started a plumbing business in 1920. In 1926 he and his brother, Joseph, went into the hardware, plumbing, and implement business. He is still active in that business.

Children of this marriage are: Mary Therese, married James Liberko; Edward J., Jr., in business with his father; Jerome V., Seminarian (will be ordained in 1957 with Crosier Fathers at Onamia, Minn.); Helen Marie, is now Sr. M. Edwardine of The School Sisters of Notre Dame of Mankato, Minn.

# Joseph G. Paquin Family



Joseph G. Paquin



Caroline Dufresne Paquin

Joseph G. Paquin, son of Exavier Paquin and Rose Grenier Paquin, was born at Deschambeault, Canada. He married Caraline Dufresne, coming to Somerset July 9, 1880.

The children of this union: Edece (Mrs. Edward Germain), Mary, Clara, Adelle (Mrs. Wm. Cloutier), George, Rose (Mrs. John Lemire), Edward, Verlie (Mrs. Pat Nolan), Matilda (Mrs. J. Winkler), Marie Ann, Anna (Mrs. G. Larson), Ferdinand and Alice, Sister Ann Marie.

Adele Paquin married William Cloutier Aug. 9, 1905. Their children: Bernadette (Mrs. Don Martin), Albert, Ella, Anna (Mrs.

W. N. Coppersmith), Lucille (Mrs. E. Harrington), Alice (Mrs. James Watters).

Alice Cloutier married James P. Watters March 20, 1940. Their children: Thomas, Mary Alice (deceased), Marjorie, John, Marcia, James, Charles.

James Watters has been Village President since 1952. He is Past St. Croix County Commander of The American Legion, is now Sous Grande Cheminot, La Societe des 40 Hommes et 8 Chevaux, 10th Wisconsin District. He is also 1956 Vice Commander of Phaneuf-Vanasse Post No. 111.



# Joseph Paquin Family



Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Paquin

Joseph Paquin was born in Dechambault, P. Q., Canada, on March 4, 1854. He married Anna Paquin at Dechambault on Feb. 15, 1873, and came to Somerset with his bride and his brother in April of 1873. Joseph went farming in the summer time and up to the woods logging in the winter time. The farm is now owned by Walter Constant. His brother, Desire, built and established a general store where the village hall now stands, in the year 1912, and also two or more other businesses or buildings of which there are no records to be found. Joseph and Anna had eight children: Alfred, born June 30, 1887, never married, died Feb. 2, 1920; Arthur, born Dec. 23, 1888, married Mary Jane Raboin April 23, 1912; Francois, born Sept. 4, 1890, married Edna Baribeau on Oct. 22, 1914 (she died Jan. 11, 1919, and he married Hermine Roundeau May 4, 1930); Desire, born Oct. 24, 1894, married Angelina Mondor Oct. 26, 1920; Amable, born Oct. 26, 1896, never married, died Aug. 11, 1935; and Emma, born June 6, 1898, married Gaston Phaneuf Oct. 4, 1921 (he died Jan. 28, 1945). Two other children died in infancy. Joseph died at Somerset Nov. 15, 1920, and his wife died Feb. 14, 1936, at Somerset. Desire died in December of 1933, and Joseph's son, Amable, took over the business. When Amable died in 1935 the building was sold to the Village of Somerset for use as the Village Hall.



Mr. and Mrs.  
Desire (Jerry) Paquin

Desire (Jerry) Paquin and Angelina Mondor Paquin lived on the home farm until 1946 when they bought an apartment house in St. Paul. They had five children: Harold, born June 30, 1921, married Birdine Miller June 2, 1943; Clifford, born on Sept. 22, 1922, married Eileen Forby Aug. 21, 1944 (they have four children: Jerry, Mary, Lucy, and Susan, and are now living in Sioux Falls, S. D.); Yvonne, born May 23, 1924, married Lester Martell Nov. 18, 1944 (they have six children: Sandra, Tom, Dean, Loren, Bruce, and Renee, and live in Somerset); Muriel, born April 22, 1921, married Glenn Belisle Aug. 10, 1946 (they have three children: Patricia, Donald, and Joy, they also live in Somerset); Darlene, born Feb. 23, 1931, married Richard Keller June 20, 1953 (they have one daughter: Kathy, and live in Rosemont, Minn.).

Harold lived on the home place until he was 21. When he married he bought the old L'Allier place, better known as the Doc L'Allier Farm. He has three children: Dianna, James, and Gary.



Mr. and Mrs. Harold Paquin



# David Sicard Family



Left to Right, Standing: Louis, Joe, Victor, Adolph, Amable, William. Seated: David Sicard.

Family of upper Languedoc in Albigeois, France, lived in the environs of Castres, owned the Fief of Carufel, in 1530, the time of Raymond Sicard, the head, recognized noble and of noble origin. In 1556 he made his will in favor of his wife, Catherine de Salhayret, and their young son, Jean.

Jean married, in 1589, Anne de Saint-Maurice. Twice, in 1615 and in 1621, "religious fanatics" put fire to his property and devastated the Fief of Carufel, proof that, in the county Albigeois, rampant with heretics, the Sicards were Catholic.

Jean, son of Jean and Anne de Saint-Maurice, married, on Jan. 16, 1630, Marthe de Saint-Paul. In March of 1639, he was made captain of the regiment of Cognac by the "Marechal de Chambré."

On Dec. 5, 1663, Pierre, son of Jean and Martha de Saint-Paul, married Marie de Forgues. Of this union was born, in 1666, Jean who came to Canada as a military officer in August of 1685.

On Nov. 27, 1694, at Saint-Pierre de l'île d'Orleans, the marriage of Jean Sicard de Carufel and Genevieve Rattee took place. On April 21, 1705, the authorities of the colony granted to Jean and

his family an Estate in the environs of Maskinonge, along the banks of the St. Lawrence River.

David Sicard was born in Maskinonge on Feb. 11, 1837. He left home in his early twenties and traveled by boat across Lake Ontario, down the Ohio River, and up the Mississippi River to La Crosse, Wis. He walked the rest of the way to Marine-on-the-St. Croix. On June 22, 1863, he married Exire Parent and of this union seven sons and three daughters were born. In 1864 he purchased land for a farm two and one-half miles north of Somerset on which Adolph Sicard, the youngest son, resides.

On June 22 1907, Adolph was married to Louise Derosier (deceased) and on Oct. 15, 1918, to Mary Martell. Those of the family are: Celia (Mrs. Ben Brinkman), Delia (Mrs. Ray Simon), Walter, Zita (Mrs. Warren Wollitz), Isabelle (Mrs. George Nyman), and Clarence. There are nineteen grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.



Mr. and Mrs. David Sicard



Top: Mary (Adolph Parent), Mrs. David Sicard, Delphine (Isreal Rivard), Denese (Mrs. Chas. Parent).



# John O. Martell Family



**John O. Martell family taken in 1937. Left to Right, Front Row: Clarence, John O., Robert, Mrs. Martell. Second Row: Cora, Dorothy, Amanda, Genevieve. Back: Louis, Victor, Earl, Lester.**

John O. Martell, son of Oliver and Exilda Cote Martell, was born at Somerset March 17, 1882. He was grandson of Ambrose Martell and Marie Parent who came to Somerset in 1855. He homesteaded land along the Apple River. The 94-year-old house still stands in fair condition. The farm is now owned by a great-grandson, Lester Martell (son of John O.). Ambrose and his wife came from Canada when Oliver was six months old. Seven children were born of this marriage: Ambrose, Alfred, Oliver, Elizabeth, Marie, Tallin, Philomene.

Oliver Martell married Exilda Cote in 1879 and of this marriage fifteen children were born: Rosanna (deceased); John Oliver (Margaret Parent); Amanda (Sr. Zita); Georgiana (Mrs. Victor Sicard); Marie Agnes (Mrs. Adolph Sicard); Wilbur (single); Jeannette (Mrs. Wm. Morrisette); Peter Edward (single); Louis N. (Agnes Parent); Edmond (deceased); Delma (deceased); Ovide (deceased); twins Laurence (Angeline Raboin), and Flavien (Florence Gartland); Alcide (single).

John O. married Margaret Parent June 9, 1908 at Somerset, Wis. Of this marriage fourteen children were born (three died in infancy); Louis J. (Beatrice Belisle); Amanda (Mrs. Jerome Schwan); Victor J. (Edith Adams); Cora (Mrs. Joseph Mielke); Leona (Mrs. George Neuman); Genevieve (Mrs. Willis Schwan); Earl J. (Mary

McDonnell); Dorothy (Mrs. Al Markham); Lester (Yvonne Paquin); Clarence (Rita Skinner); Robert E. (Lois Stoner).

All were prominent dairy farmers, lumbermen and hunters, and parishioners of St. Anne's Church.

Five of the John O. Martell children still live in Somerset and are members of St. Anne's Parish: Louis, married Beatrice Belisle have eight children: Donald, Nancy, Allen, Gary, Karen, Vickie, Doreen, and LuAnne. Amanda married Jerome Schwan, have two children: Sister M. Jerome, and John; Victor, married Edith Adams have six children: Bernard, Margaret, Michael, Craig, Kurt, and Randy; Lester, married Yvonne Paquin have six children: Sandra Kay, Thomas, Dean, Loren, Bruce, and Renee Marie; Robert, married Lois Stoner have three children: Gail Marie, Daniel, and Mark. In all there are 43 grandchildren.



**Mr. and Mrs. Ambrose Martell**



# William H. Shay Family



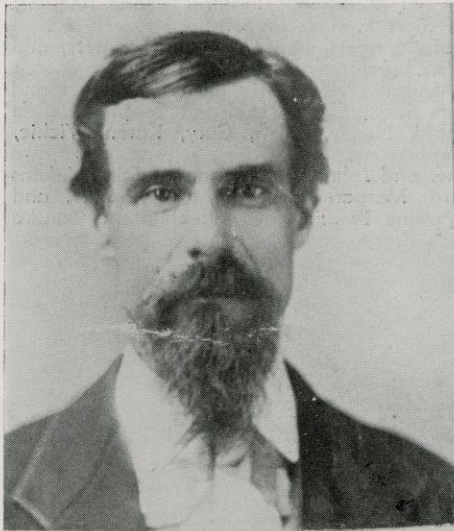
Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Shay



Left to Right, Front Row: Donald, William L., Dianne, Harold. Back: Elayne, Vernon, William H., Anna, Marvon, Gladys.

William, son of John W. Shay and Emma Anderson, was born in Georgetown, Wis. He married Anna M. Vanasse on Jan. 12, 1915. Children of this marriage are: Donald (married Annabelle Lemire), Elayne (Mrs. Kenneth Hecht), Marvon (married Mable Johnson), Gladys (Mrs. Vernon Parnell), Harold (married Donna Beebe), Vernon (married Marville Carlquist), Marcel (deceased, Oct., 1929), William L. (married Rachel McNamara), Dianne.

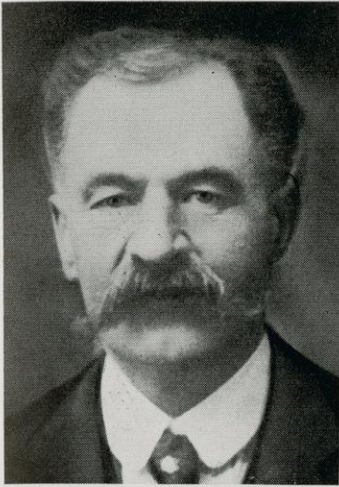
William H. came to Somerset in June, 1913. Serving in World War I, he spent fourteen months in France. He was appointed Postmaster on July 1, 1936, making the third generation of Postmasters in his family. He still holds the position.



Upper Left Corner: John W. Shay. Above: Old Homestead.



# Philias Carufel Family



**Mr. Octave Carufel**



**Mrs. Mary Dufresne Carufel**

Charles S. de Carufel, son of Agapit and Elise de Caufel, was born at Maskinonge, Canada in 1831. He married Julia Sicard at Parish of St. Joseph on Nov. 26, 1855. The children of this marriage were: Marie Stephanie, Marie Louise, Joseph David, Octave, Charles, Julia Elsie, Henrietta Emilia, Henry Theophile, Edward, Marie Elvina, Ferdinand Ovid, and Mary Mathilda. Charles came to Somerset in 1851 at the age of 19 and took a job as millwright at Marine-on-the-St. Croix. In 1859 he homesteaded a farm near Somerset. He died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Art Harvieux, on Sept. 22, 1921. He held positions on the town and school boards and was active in the community.

Octave (married Mary Dufresne) born at Somerset in 1861 and died at Somerset. Among his children were Charles, born May 13, 1894, and Philias, born March 20, 1896. Charles married Rosalie Cook at Somerset in 1915 and their children are: Harold, John, Dorothy, Lucille, Lorraine, Harold, Marcella, Marie, Rita Mae, Theresa Annette, Shirley Ann. Harold married Gudelia Demulling at Farmington in 1945 and they have five children: Harold James, Charles, Evelyn, and David. Rita married Gene Cook in 1947 and their four children are: Terrence, Josephine, Lynn, and Anthony John.

Philias married Rose Germain at Somerset in 1926 and their eleven children are: Philias Severe, Marie Antoinette, Eileen Carol, J. O. Edmund, John Anthony, Ivah Isabelle, Collette Elizabeth, Rose Marie, Blanche Ruth, Donald Gene, and Margaret Mary. Severe married Beverly Thompson at New Richmond in 1949 and they have two children: Paula Joy, and Robert Severe. Collette Elizabeth married Duane Stahnke in 1955 and has one child: Shelly Elizabeth.

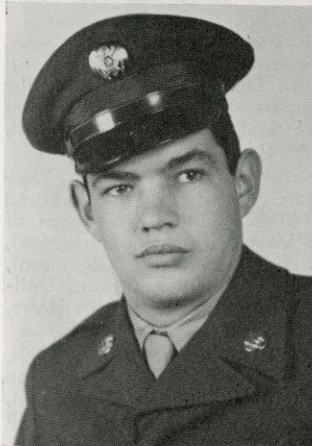
Henry married Agnes Sundall at Somerset in 1932. The children of this marriage are six: Joanne, Joseph, Mary, Ruth Ann, Marlene, and Catherine. Joanne married Robert Holland at Somerset in 1953 and has three children: Deborah Jean, Norma Jean, and Vernon Lee.



**Rose Germain Carufel**



**Philias Carufel**



**Edmond Carufel**



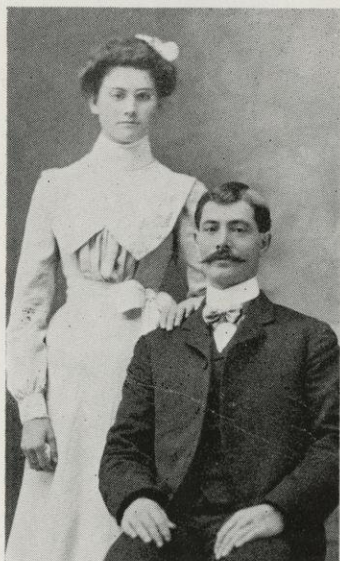
**Charles S. de Carufel and Julia Sicard de Carufel.**



# John Laventure Family



Left to Right, Back Row: Velma, Veladore, Lloyd, Mary Bernice. Front: Mr. Laventure, Pearl, Edward, Gladys, Mrs. Laventure.



Wedding Picture of  
Mr. and Mrs. John Laventure

John Laventure was born at Somerset May 13, 1874, the son of Didace Laventure and Eloise Pepin Laventure. His grandfather, Louis Laventure, came to Somerset in 1866, where he lived at the place now occupied by Delma Mondor. He had nine children, among them Didace. They came from L'Anorie, Canada, where they had worked as ship builders. They knew much hardship. Maxime, son of Louis, was lost at sea when shipwrecked along with 500 immigrants.

Didace and wife farmed on place now occupied by Delma Mondor. Ten children were born of this marriage: Joseph (Elize Caru-fel), Ernest, Clara (Mrs. Jos. Campeau), Daniel (first wife, Millie Champeau: second wife, Roseanne Moreney), Plocid, Georgeanna (Mrs. Ed Baribeau), Liger (Olive Levesque), John (Eva Menard), Donald (Mrs. Serophine Morrisette), Arselda.

John married Eva Menard at Somerset June 17, 1902. They lived on the farm now occupied by son Edward until they retired and moved into their present house. Nine children were born of this union: Wilfred (died in infancy), Velma (Mrs. Magnus Moe), Marie (Mrs. Charles Provost), Pearl (Mrs. Henning Gabrelson), Gladys (Mrs. Clyde Kiddy), Lloyd (Margaret Liscomb), Edward (Mildred Demulling), Valadore (Mrs. Percy Johnson), Bernice (Mrs. Herman Wichelman).

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Provost and seven children: Violet, John, Darrell, Edward, Mary Ann, Richard, and Robert; and Mr. and Mrs. Eduard Laventure and nine children: Regina, Donna, Allen, Marlene, Lucille, Kenneth, Elaine, Jeanette, and Dennis are still living in Somerset and are parishioners of St. Anne's church.





#### Triple Golden Wedding

These three couples who were married in St. Anne's on June 17, 1902, returned to cut another cake fifty years later on June 17, 1952. Left to Right: Mr. and Mrs. Victor Belisle, Mr. and Mrs. John Laventure, Mr. and Mrs. Nels Belisle. Nels Belisle passed away in 1956.

#### STRANGE AS IT SEEMS By Elsie Hix



#### A TRIPLE GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY--

THREE COUPLES, MR. AND MRS. VICTOR BELISLE, MR. AND MRS. JOHN LAVENTURE AND MR. AND MRS. NELSON BELISLE WERE MARRIED JUNE 17, 1902, IN SOMERSET, WIS., AND GATHERED TO REPEAT THEIR VOWS / -- JUNE 17, 1952 --

Tim. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.—All rights reserved. Copy, 1952 by United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

CLEAR GLASSWARE WILL TURN PERMANENTLY AMBER IN 30 MINUTES WHEN PLACED IN HOT MINERAL WELLS AT MARLIN, TEXAS!

"WHILE ABOARD THE ATLANTIS, research vessel of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, FRANK J. MATHER III, CAUGHT A RARE SNAKE MACKEREL, THE FIRST KNOWN TO BE CAUGHT ON HOOK AND LINE!"



At 8:30 a. m. Tuesday, June 17, 1952, the bells of St. Anne's Catholic church here heralded the golden wedding day.

At 9 a. m., 50 years to the day and hour when they were married on June 17, 1902, Mr. and Mrs. John Laventure and Mr. and Mrs. Victor Belisle repeated their wedding vows.

At the same hour in St. Anne's Catholic church in Turtle Lake, Wis., Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Belisle also were celebrating their golden wedding.

The three couples were married in the old St. Anne's church here in a triple wedding ceremony. They planned to repeat their vows together here yesterday, but the Nelson Belisles attended mass in their own parish before coming to Somerset.

"You've had your full share of happiness," the Rev. John T. Rivard, pastor of St. Anne's here, told the two couples.

"You've tasted sorrow and have had dark days, as well as bright."

Then in French, mother-tongue of the early settlers and residents here, he gave a blessing for Mr. and Mrs. John Laventure.

The Rev. Joseph Paquin, Montreal, Canada, a cousin of the Belisle family, gave a blessing in French for Mr. and Mrs. Victor Belisle. He also conducted the nuptial mass.

The two Belisle brothers and Laventure, as well as their wives, grew up in Somerset. All of them are descendants of French-Canadian settlers.

This unusual Triple Golden Wedding picture and story appeared in all the newspapers of the U. S. A. Its appearance in "Strange As It Seems" indicates its appeal and rare distinction.



# Louis H. Rivard Family



**Mr. and Mrs. Theophile O. Rivard**

Theophile Onesime, son of Benjamin and Adelaide Lupien Rivard, was born in St. Leon, P. Q., on April 13, 1835. He came to Menomonie, Wis., in 1855. He was a millwright for Knapp, Stout & Co. He married Marie Anne Lemire, daughter of Francois, at Menomonie on July 28, 1861. He bought a farm one mile east of Somerset and moved there in 1863. He contracted for construction work throughout the territory. Many houses, barns, and churches were built by him. He helped build the first church in the village. He died at Somerset May 12, 1913. His wife died on June 25, 1924. Theophile was choirmaster of St. Anne's for many years.

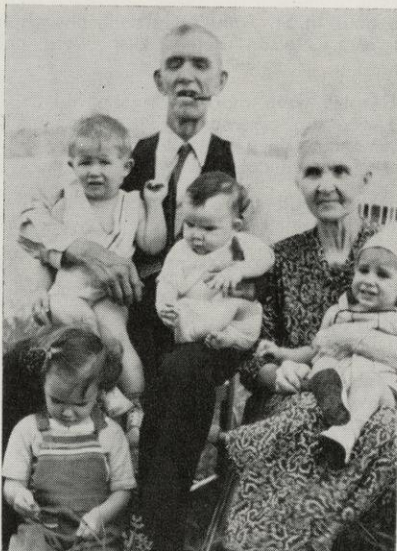
From this union there were 13 children, nine of whom lived to maturity: Adelaide (Mrs. John Parnell), Frank, Louis H. (Alma Dubois Laurin), Ferdinand (Mary Jane Carpentier), Eugene (Anna Miller), Simeon "Sam" (Pauline Mathis), Mary Anne (Mrs. A. Campeau, later Mrs. L. Hottinger), Marguerite (now Sr. Rita, C.S.J.), John L., of St. Cloud, Minn.

Louis Honore was born at Somerset on Jan. 28, 1868. As a young man he worked in the woods and on the boom. At the age of

23 he ran his own logging camp with his brother, Frank, at Amery, Prairie Farm, and Rice Lake. In 1902 he entered the real estate business at Turtle Lake. He continued to log around Turtle Lake and Georgetown for several years. In 1934 he was appointed postmaster of Turtle Lake, remaining as faithful postmaster until he retired in 1950. At 87 he was still active building cottages on Lake Wapagasset near Amery. He held several offices in the Village of Turtle Lake and in the County of Barron. He was a man of affable nature and a friend to all. He died on April 23, 1955, at Turtle Lake.

On June 22, 1910, in Minneapolis, he married a widow, Alma Dubois Laurin, who had two children: Louis and Louise. Of this union there were born three children: John T., Raymond, and Richard. Alma is the daughter of Delphis and Emilie LaHaye Dubois of Turtle Lake.

John was born on May 16, 1911, in Turtle Lake. He was ordained at Quebec, P. Q., on May 18, 1940. He is now pastor of Somerset, Wis. Raymond (Annabelle Berg) has five children: Rosemary, John, William, Collette, and David. Ray farms at Turtle Lake. Richard (Mary Severence), a lawyer at Glenwood City, has six children: Andre, Roland, Michelle, Francis, Louis, and Georgia. Louis Laurin (Virginia Wissehr), a major in the U. S. A.F. in Texas, has an adopted daughter. Louise (Mrs. Ervin Smith) of Eau Claire, whose husband is a sheet metal contractor, has four children: Jeanne, Mark, Noel, and Michael.



**Mr. and Mrs. Delphis Dubois with great-grandchildren, 1938.**



**Louis H. Rivard Family**

**Left to Right, Seated: Alma Rivard, Louis H. Rivard. Standing: Father John T., Richard, Louise, Raymond, Louis.**



# Theophile O. Rivard Family



**Family Gathering, 1931**

In front of old homestead we see, Left to Right, Front Row: Pauline Rivard, Mary Hottinger, Alma Rivard, Mrs. Gene Rivard. Second Row: Louis H. Rivard, Fred Rivard, Gene Rivard, John Parnell, Sam Rivard. Back: Mrs. Fred Rivard, Mrs. John Parnell.

Theophile Onesime Rivard was one of eighteen children of Benjamin Rivard of Becancour, P.Q. He married Marie Anne Lemire of Somerset, who was one of twenty-five children. Family history shows that the first Rivard came to Canada in 1645 as a soldier in the colonial army. The full name was Nicholas Rivard dit LaGlanderie from Toulouse, France.

Among his children were the following: Adelaide (Mrs. John Parnell), children: Mamie (Mrs. Joe Zahradka), Sr. Adelaide, C.S.J., Rosalie, Father Dennis, O.S.B., Joseph, Richard (Evangeline Murphy), Ben (Alice Walsh).

Ferdinand (Mary Jane Carpentier), children: Flevius (Catherine McQueen), Elsie (Mrs. Guy Hagerty), Joseph (Hattie Ogdahl), Rita (Wm. O'Donnel), Elizabeth (Mrs. John Lubach), Wilfred (June Minnick), Marjorie (Mrs. V. Stackhouse).

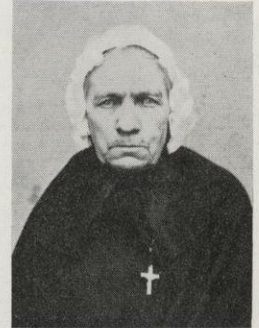
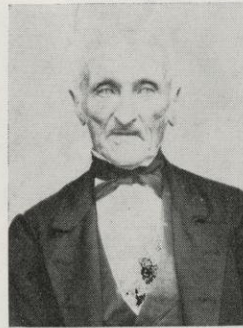
Eugene (Anna Miller), children: Felix (Edwidge Parnell) who has two children: Phylis (Mrs. Earl Farqueson) and Lois (Mrs. Ed Leiter); Marguerite, and Josephine (Mrs. Wm. Farrell).

Simeon "Sam" married Pauline Mathis on Feb. 16, 1926, at Akron, Colo. Sam was born and lives on the old home place. He has five children: Mary Ann (Mrs. Al Mitchell who has two children: Craig and Thomas), Sam, Jr., Edward, Robert, and Francis.

The other children of Theophile are Louis H., Mary (Mrs. Adrian Campeau, later Mrs. Louis Hottinger), John L., and Marguerite, now Sr. Rita, C.S.J., of Harrington, Kansas, who has been a sister for fifty-three years.



**Mr. and Mrs. Sam Rivard**



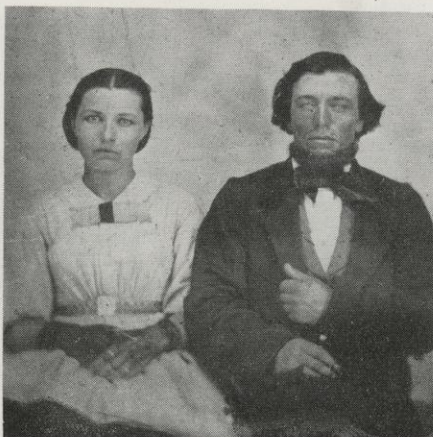
**Benjamin Rivard, Adelaide Lupien, Becancour, P. Q.**



**Left to Right, Front Row: Mary Ann, Francis. Back: Sammy, Edward, Robert.**



# Eli Baillargeon Family



Mr. and Mrs. Octave Baillargeon

Octave, son of Pierre and Elizabeth Baillargeon, was born in St. Bartholmew, Canada, coming to Somerset in 1856. He married Elizabeth Martell at Somerset June 22, 1863. He was a farmer, but he spent 18 winters in logging camps. He died Oct. 20, 1923.

The children of this union: Octave, Amelia, Agnes, Elize, Alex, Patrick (Rose Parent), Eli (Angela Parnell), Olivier (Lucy Parent), Louis (Emma Rousette), Aldage (Elizabeth Campeau), Octave, Olivene (Mrs. Emil Parent).

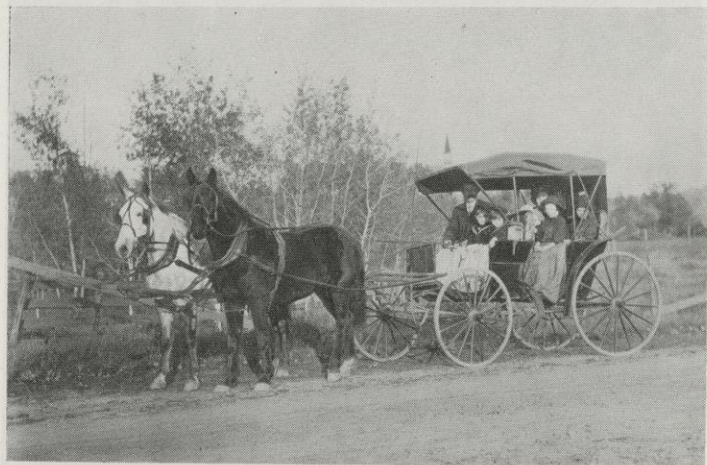


Mr. and Mrs. Eli Baillargeon

Eli married Angela Parnell at St. Anne's Church Sept. 3, 1901. He farmed 444 acres for 36 years. In 1937 they moved to Somerset and in 1942 he built the home where he now lives.

The children of this union: Rosabelle (Mrs. George Arndt), Edwidge (Mrs. Oliver Dufresne), Harry (Monica Cullen), Richard (Doreen Kennedy), Maurice (deceased), Hansel (Oveila Mullen), Bessie (Mrs. Marcel Breault), Francis, Marie, Ann, Angelia, and Margaret the last five died in infancy).

His son, Hansel, is now living on the home place. They have five children: Janice, Gary, Joy, Cheri and Beth



Eli Baillargeon Family

Left to Right: Mr. Baillargeon, Harry, Richard, Hansel, Mrs. Baillargeon, Edwidge, and Rosabelle.



# Olivier Baillargeon Family



Left to Right, Back Row: A. Maurice, Oliver, William, Abraham, Benedict. Front: Virginia Olivene, Mr. Oliver Baillargeon, Annabelle, Mrs. Lucy Baillargeon, Rosella, Florence.

Olivier married Lucy Parent at Farmington on Nov. 14, 1905. He worked on the St. Croix boom and up the river in the winter and also did carpenter work. In 1905 he started farming and raised a family of 10 children. He left the farm in October, 1945, when his son, A. Maurice, moved onto the home place. The children are: Rosella (Mrs. Albert Demulling, Olivene (Mrs. Leo

Berg), Virginia (Mrs. Robert Ortt), Flossie (Mrs. Leander Demulling), Abraham (Donalda Measner), William (Agnes St. Ledger), Benedict (Bernice Walfort), Oliver (Lena Neuman), A. Maurice (Lorraine Cullen), Annabelle (Mrs. Ben Le Mire).

A. Maurice has seven children: Gerald, Judith, Maureen, Joseph, Raymond, Anthony, and Mary.



# Albert Proulx Family



Left to Right, Front Row: Donald, Mrs. Proulx, Mr. Proulx, Edgar. Second Row: Lillian (Mrs. John Parsons), Jayne. Back: Bernell, Theresa (died May 21, 1953), Albert, Jr., Pauline (Mrs. John Junker), Vital, Genevieve (Mrs. Le Roy Judkins), Paul.

Albert Proulx I, son of Onesim Proulx, was born April 24, 1856, at Des Chambeau, Canada. He married Lydia Perault at Somerset in January of 1877. After their marriage they moved to Argyle, Minn. The children of this union are: Louise (Mrs. Henry Belisle), Albert II (Delphine La Mere), Josephine (Mrs. Ovid Moreau), Alphonse (Lillian La Barge), Rev. George (Priest, deceased), Angeline (Mrs. Arthur Montpetit), Eva (Mrs. Edward Marcous), Eliza (Mrs. Phillip La Bine), Edward (Lulla P.), Vital (Seminary, deceased), Noel (Ceresa Hamel), Oliver (Ann Pinnseneau), Genevieve (Mrs. Melvin Larson), Albert Proulx I died and was buried at Argyle, Minn.

Albert Proulx II, son of Albert Proulx I, was born May 21, 1882 at Argyle, Minn. He married Delphine La Mere at Somerset Jan. 9, 1912. He came to Somerset to live in 1914. They rented many different farms until October, 1935, when they bought the Alex Liberty farm. During their marriage they had many hardships and worked very hard, making many sacrifices to raise their family and pay for the farm.

Of this union there were 13 children. They are: Edgar (Genevieve Peloquin) who lived in Rochester, Mich., until 1954 when he sold his home and business there and moved to Somerset where he purchased the Somerset Garage. He now lives in Somerset. Their children are: Blance (Mrs. Robert Johnson), Evelyn, Melvin, Allen, Arlene.

Leonard, died 1914.

Donald (Emily Peterson) is in the real estate and service station business for himself in Minneapolis. Their children are: Carolyn, Larry.

May, died in infancy.

Pauline (Mrs. John Junker) lives in Stillwater, Minn. Their children are: Joan, Jane, John, Joy, Jonas.

Albert II (Marjorie Leverty) lives in Somerset, drives a truck for Maple Island. Their children are: Carol, Linda, Joseph Barbara.

Genevieve (Mrs. Le Roy Judkins) lives in Bayport, Minn. Their children are: Ann, John, Meichael.

Theresa, died 1953.

Paul (Ann McGivney) lives in Minneapolis where he operates a service station. Their children are: John, Monica.

Jayne is employed in St. Paul.

Lillian (Mrs. John Parsons) lives at West Concord where her husband is a teacher and coach at the high school. They have a baby boy.

Bernell (Mrs. Pat Flanagan) is employed in Minneapolis. They have a baby boy, David.

Vital Proulx, son of Albert Proulx II and Delphine La Mere Proulx, was born June 11, 1919, at Somerset. On Nov. 16, 1946, he married Irene Maier of Georgetown. After his marriage they lived on his father's farm and operated it on shares with his father and brother, Albert III. In 1952 he bought his brother's share and he and his father formed a corporation. In May, 1955, the corporation was dissolved and he purchased the farm from his father.

Because of illness he had to leave the farm and purchased the Clayton Montpetit house in the Village of Somerset. He still owns and manages the farm with hired help.

He is a member of the school board in Somerset, also is a member of Holy Name Society of which he was secretary and treasurer for two years. The children are: Duane, Nov. 30, 1947; Michael, Oct. 12, 1948; Janice, March 25, 1951; baby girl, died in infancy, 1953; Mary Lou, March 21, 1955). He and his family now live at their home in Somerset.



# Morris Maitrejean Family



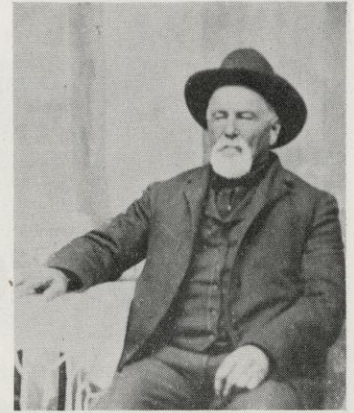
Left to Right, Back Row: Joe Proulx, Theophile Rivard. Front: Mrs. Joe Proulx, Mrs. Theophile Rivard.

Joseph Maitrejean was born at Dijon, France. He married Hortense Dutroit at E. Farmington in 1862. They came to Somerset in 1873. The children of this marriage were: Frank, Eugene, Ernest, Ellen, and William

He was a successful farmer. Farming in those days meant hard-ship. His success was due to his great courage.

Frank was born at Somerset in 1863 and married Amelia Parent at Farmington in 1897. Pearl, Morris, and Francis were of this marriage. Farming was his occupation. His farm is now occupied by John Korbel.

Morris, son of Frank, was born at Somerset in 1900. He married



Severe Rivard

Sarah Rivard at Somerset in 1925. They were blessed with two children: Vernon and Marvin. He followed his father's footsteps. He moved in 1929 to the Robert Rudeen farm near Johannesburg, now owned by Urban Germain. In 1932 he moved back to the home farm now owned by John Korbel; then in 1939 bought the Joe Breault farm and has been living there since.

Pearl Maitrejean, son of Frank, was also born at Somerset in 1898. He was united in marriage to Delia Germain in 1920. Of this marriage six children were born: Edward, Wilfred, Ione, Marianne, Robert, and Corinne. He is farming on the Paulson farm in Star Prairie township. Needless to say, like his early ancestors, he is also the successful farmer.

## CENTENNIAL DINNERS Served by Ladies of St. Anne and Mothers Club

### "Diner Canayen"

(French-Canadian Dinner)

Menu: Ragout de boulettes, tourtieres, salade au chou, legumes a la canadienne, patates, pain et beignes francais, cafe noir.

### CENTENNIAL DINNER

SOMERSET, WISCONSIN

St. Anne's Hall - Sat., June 23

Serving 12 Noon to 2:30 P.M.

Adults \$1.50

Grades 75c

### "Diner Canayen Au Buffet"

Menu: Toutieres, viandes au choix, feves, legumes diverses, pomme de terre au fourneau, salades assorties, friandises, beignes, biscuits et cafe.

### CENTENNIAL DINNER

SOMERSET, WISCONSIN

St. Anne's Hall - Sun., June 24

Serving 11:00 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.

Adults \$1.50

Grades 75c



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**Somerset**

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## HISTORY OF CHRIST CONGREGATION

In June 1899, two and a half miles southwest of Somerset, Wisconsin, a group of sturdy men had gathered to build a church on some land donated by Fred Roettger, a farmer. These men with their families made up the early history of Christ Lutheran congregation. The last days of the summer of 1896, three years before, saw them working to organize, adopt a constitution and secure pastors. Even in the eighties, pastors from the Lutheran seminary at Afton, Minnesota had journeyed over into Wisconsin to serve some of the German settlers here. And since Stillwater had a Lutheran church, various pastors from St. Paul's Lutheran, there, had brought their buggies and horses over to teach and preach to these people. J. Siegrist was one of these.

Actually though, it was the Rev. F. Ebert, also from Stillwater, who helped the people to make a permanent organization in this area of Wisconsin outlined by the Apple River. He was first aided substantially by August Wegge, Frederick Roettger and Konrad Koehler. At first, with no sanctuary erected, worship services were held in the schoolhouses. Education classes for the children were usually conducted in the members' homes.

### FIRST CHURCH IS BUILT

The faithful people were willing to donate amazingly large sums of money to support their pastor and the pay for miscellaneous expenses. One gave two hundred dollars in a single year; others contributed fifty dollars; others, twenty-five — all startingly generous gifts considering the value of such a sum of money in that day! The church was put up. Near it was a small shed where the traveling preachers kept their steeds. Activity continued at a high pitch such as seems limited often to early ventures and seems less true of such ventures once they have grown into years. Names appeared on the constitution pages, names such as Ernest Rehder, Paul Kluedtke, Christian Simon, Ludwig Schrank, Lutzke, Kiekhoefer, Nagel, Rosenow, Sontag and others. Fervently and steadily they kept the spiritual fires glowing. Students came in summer to instruct the youngsters in the principles of Lutheran faith. Often they boarded at the Fred Roettger place.

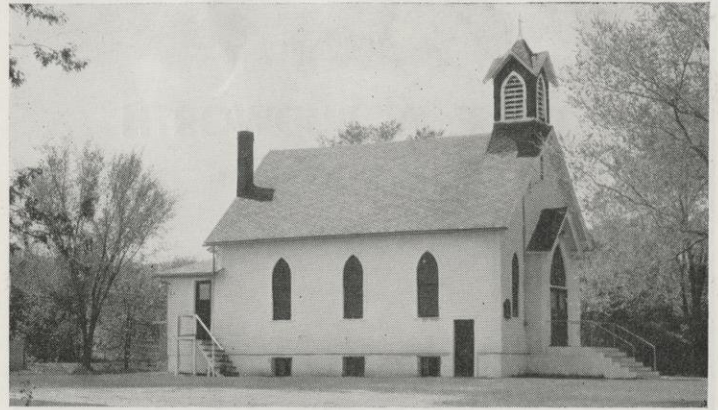
Their church had been built well. It was solid in structure. Furnishings consisted of eighteen benches, a beautiful altar (which is still beautifying the church in town) and a fine reed organ.

### CHURCH BURNS DOWN

Most of these furnishings had been removed before a fire in the spring of 1917 destroyed the building. Two neighbors ran to the scene of the blaze and carried out most of the benches, the altar and the organ, exhibiting, we are told, almost superhuman strength in so doing. But the congregation was without a frame home and services again were held in homes until a new structure could be raised.

Rev. A. C. Ernst was now their pastor, having come to them from Chicago in 1904. He was to serve them almost up to the time of his death in 1955. In addition to Christ congregation, he took care of Redeemer congregation at Burkhardt. His home was in Stillwater where he was pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran congregation.

One thousand dollars was the estimate placed upon the value of the old church edifice. After a few months fire insurance payments were received in amount of \$1025.00. Now the congregation prepared to build again. A plot of land on the southern fringe of Somerset village in the vicinity of the Soo



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Somerset, Wisconsin

Line Depot was secured from Charlie Koehler for a sum of \$300.00. Friends in the village went to bat for the group and raised over \$200.00. Membership and other contributions neared \$1000.00. The local Lutheran Ladies Aid donated \$400.00 and \$800.00 was borrowed from the Bank of Somerset. In autumn, 1917, work was begun. The beautiful new worship house was finished in 1918. The workmanship demonstrated but particularly the interior even at present is a tribute to the thoroughness of the builders and of Emil Wegge who was business manager of the whole project.

What makes a Lutheran congregation tick? What takes place? How is business transacted? These questions, if answered only briefly could provide a background upon which the picture of our church might be drawn.

The movement of any congregation is furnished by the people themselves who compose it. They come from all the walks of life, although largely in this case they are farm people. Ideally a church should have a fair proportion of farmers with doctors, lawyers, teachers, day laborers, tradesmen and others. There should be a liberal sprinkling of bachelors, family groups, men, women and children. Now, when all of these are given an opportunity to use their talents in the activities of the church, immediately a good deal of progress and gain is executed. Then she really ticks, because Christ gave us all to each other to complement each other and make His church.

### SOCIETIES

Christ congregation has always had worship services where men and women and children could gather to prayer, praise and thanksgiving. Those services, however, have not been constant, at the same time every week. For some time Rev. Ernst was unable to come except in the afternoons on Sunday. Moreover, he couldn't make it every Sunday. It is the hope of the present congregation to have more regularity in its program. A step in that direction was taken in 1950 when the Rev. Marvin Grunke, formerly an instructor in the Christianity department of Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa, was asked to become assistant pastor, helping Pastor Ernst. Beginning with his tenure of office and continuing until the present day, the congregation has had morning worship every week. Pastor Grunke helped organize a Sunday School which was self-supporting. Among the first women to teach classes of this school were Mrs. Ray Ostendorf, Mrs. Clarence Kiekhoefer, Donna and Joyce Strohbeen, and Joyce Flandrick, with many others.



**DR. F. A. BUDWORTH**

---

**DR. H. C. MAYER**

and

**DR. A. L. LINDELL**

New Richmond, Wisconsin

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**NEW RICHMOND CLINIC**

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**DR. W. W. IRLE**

New Richmond, Wis.

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**HUGHES & HUGHES**

New Richmond, Wisconsin

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*from a*

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## SUNDAY SCHOOL

Recently, Christ Lutheran's Sunday school has undergone another change. Better organization and more teachers, are causing growth in enrollment so that about forty children now attend regularly. Mrs. August Kiekhoefer heads the school as superintendent and Mesdames, Raymond Frederickson, Harold Flandrick and Joseph Lamirande Jr. are regular teachers, together with Raymond Frederickson. Substituting for these when they are unable to come are the following: Mesdames, Norman Meinke, Gillard Canopy, Clarence Kiekhoefer and Norman Mante. Mrs. Ray Ostendorf is treasurer, and Mrs. Glen Rachuy works closely with the teachers.

A Ladies Aid society has functioned for years within the congregation. This society has always done much to decorate, furnish, and endow the congregation with gifts when it needed them the most. An annual Bazaar has become popular with the people of the surrounding territory and in the village. President is Mrs. Clarence Kiekhoefer; treasurer, Mrs. Elmer Secard; secretary, Mrs. Norman Meinke.

Teenage group inside this congregation is the Luther League which was organized in 1949 while Rev. Leonard Ziemer, assistant pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Stillwater, was serving the church here. Occasional meetings, parties, roller-skating and more serious study of Scripture and other events are sponsored by this League. Roberta Lawson is current president.

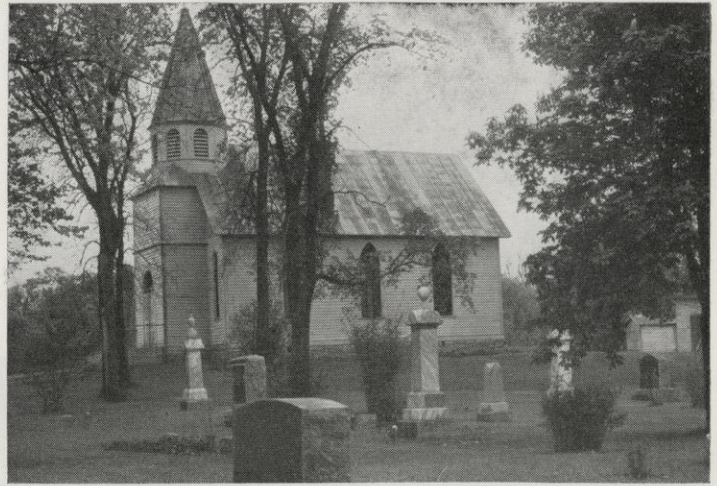
## PASTOR AND COUNCIL

The business of the church is discussed at length at one annual and other special congregational meetings. Only the congregation has the right to call a pastor and it only can handle any and all matters which effect the whole unit. To carry on interim affairs a Church Council composed of three Trustees and a Secretary-Treasurer is selected. In 1955 the office of president of the congregation was created. Trustees to date are William Rosenow, Norman Meinke and Phillpi Stohbeen. Treasurer is Ray Bishop who has served in that capacity for over twenty-seven years. The president is Harold Flandrick.

Rev. Grunke was succeeded by the present pastor, Rev. Glen R. A. Rachuy, in the autumn of 1953. Pastor Rachuy came from a mission parish located in Chelan, Washington, and was graduated from Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, in June, 1952. Since 1954, Mr. Rachuy has worked and sung with the church choir. The choir sings at the worship services, dressed in black gowns with white collars.

As a parting remark we might mention the record of outstanding service to this congregation exemplified in the personal care which our custodian, Mr. Ray Bishop, assisted by his wife Mina, have tendered the church for many years.

— By Rev. Glen Rachuy



EMMANUAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Somerset, Wisconsin

## ORGANIZING OF THE EMMANUAL LUTHERAN

The first meeting was held at the Louis Winkel home on May 14, 1894. Present at that meeting were Albert Kriesel, Fred Biedeman, Carl Krause, August Nehring, Martin Kriesel, Wm. Bursch, Fred Ludke, Louis Winkel, Carl Kriesel, Carles Koehler, Carl Gartzke and Herman Meinke, Sr.

Officers elected at the first meeting were: August Nehring — President; Carl Gartzke — Treasurer; Herman Meinke, Sr. — Secretary.

The church was built in the fall of 1894 and the first pastor was W. S. Winter.

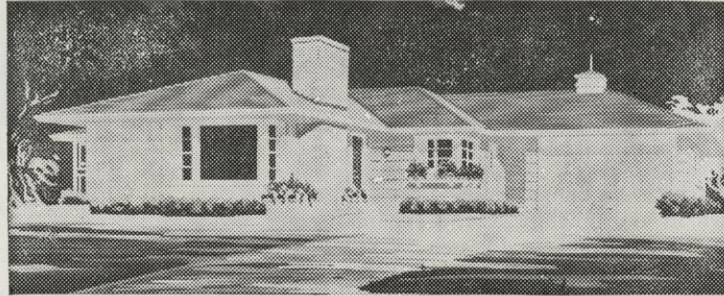
The Church Board at the present time is:  
Henry Radke — President; Marvin Radke — Secretary and Treasurer; Ernest Kluetke, Leonard Kluetke, Henry Bursch.



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## FRENCH HOLY DAYS AND CUSTOMS

Somerset, where I was born, was founded by General Sam Harriman before the Civil War, but early in its history the French Canadians came down from Quebec, Montreal, Trois Rivières and environs to work in the lumber mills on the Apple River as lumberjacks.

When I was a little girl — and that's quite a while ago — nothing but French was heard on the streets. At school we learned arithmetic, geography, history and so forth, in French. We had each day a lesson in English, about a half hour a day.

### LE JOUR DE L'AN

New Year's Day is really the most important feast day in the French Canadian calendar and tops the list of family social events . . . The family always gathered at the patriarchal home. In the morning all the children knelt at their father's feet, as soon as they saw him, for his blessing. He placed a hand on each bowed head, making the sign of the cross while making a short prayer . . . No matter how old, or how long away from home, whether single or married the visiting children or visiting grandchildren knelt for the patriarchal blessing as soon as they entered the house.

Everyone kissed each other on New Year's Day. The young men when calling on their sweetheart started by kissing the grandmother, the mother, and all the other girls in the family so that no one could object when he finally kissed his sweetheart.

There was always much visiting on New Year's Day with neighbors and friends calling on each other. I also remember the custom of "Courrir la Vigne Alle". One man began by calling on his neighbor and enjoying a glass — or more — of wine, after which the two of them called at the home of a third friend for another glass of wine, and so on until there were 20 or more stopping for the glass of wine. The last visit was made to the richest man in the neighborhood, as he alone would have enough glasses and wine to exercise the hospitality.

### CADEAUX ET TOURTIERES

Gifts were always exchanged between adults on New Year's Day — and the children looked also for gifts, which were supposed to be brought during the night by "Croque-Mitaine" . . .

And of course there was always a big dinner to end off the day . . . the table for the family dinner was festive with the best dishes, glassware and silver . . . French Canadians were very fond of goose, stuffed and beautifully roasted, with the traditional "tourtière à la viande" as a close second. The tourtières, or meat pies, made of ground pork with onions and spices with a rich crust, were baked just before the start of "les fêtes". Starting with Christmas Day on to New Year's Day and "Le Jour des Rois" (Epiphany, January 6) — a holy day in Canada — with the Sundays in between, made a lot of holidays for feasting, visiting and celebrating.

Housewives would prepare for the round of entertaining by baking as many as 30 to 40 tourtières, 25 dozen doughnuts, as well as many fruit pies of all kinds, which were frozen and then warmed up in the oven when needed. Every household had a special cupboard built on the porch just off the kitchen where the frozen food was kept.

### MARDI GRAS

"Les Fêtes" was the start of "Le Carnaval", each family receiving their relatives, friends and neighbors in their homes, the round of festivities ending with Mardi Gras, which is the day before Lent begins. On the evening of Mardi Gras people would dress in masquerade and go calling on neighbors before gathering at some home to celebrate until midnight.



Five Generations

Many such pictures could have been taken in our history. Pictured above, in order of age: Mrs. Zephirin Germain, Mrs. Augustin Belisle, Mrs. Lawrence Parnell, Mrs. Eli Baillargeon, and Rosabelle Baillargeon.



Les Gars de Somerset

These young blades were arrested for crashing a party at the Payette home in 1913. They were not invited so they charivariated the place. A. J. Vanasse took them to Hudson.

Left to Right, First Row: Louis Cloutier, Fred Belisle, Israel Rondeau. Second Row: Amable Morrisette, Henry Belisle, Ferd. Belisle, Henry Bergeron. Third Row: A. J. Vanasse, Bill Meinke, Zephire Belisle, Archie Montpetit, Willie Cloutier, Louis Roy.



Oldest Couples In Somerset

Mr. and Mrs. Eli Baillargeon, 55 years, and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bergeron, 57 years. Others over fifty years married: Mr. and Mrs. John Laventure, Mr. and Mrs. Ferd. Breault, and Albert Germain.



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**Oldest Established Cafe**

**In Somerset**

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CANDY CO.**

**Newport, Minnesota**



In the Province of Quebec, the average farm is 2 acres wide and 40 acres long, so one's neighbors are close to each other, as all build on the short side of their ribbon-like farm with the houses facing the road.

### SIROP D'ERABLE

During Lent the visiting is practically stopped, but as spring rolls around another type of gayety begins, when the maple sap starts to run and the maple sugar and syrup harvest starts. Practically all of the farmers have several acres of maple trees on their land, called "the sugar bush" . . . Cabins are built near the sugar bush where practically the whole family stays during those few weeks. It takes 30 gallons of sap to make a gallon of syrup, so they have to work almost continuously at the boiling and filtering. Every member of the family helps and they are really kept very busy.

Maple sugar time, the city people made up sleighride parties to go to the maple woods for celebrations . . . When the boiled sap reaches a certain stage, spoons full of it are ladeled out and spread on the clean snow to harden, making a sort of maple taffy . . . Another delicacy was the poaching of a whole egg in the boiling syrup . . . Really delicious, the egg served floating in the syrup . . . Another tid-bit that was really enjoyed was the "beignets" — a rich egg dough was made and cooked by dropping by spoonful in the boiling maple sap — a sort of maple fritter.

### CAREME ET PAQUES

Fast and abstaining of meat during Lent and Holy Week was really very strictly kept. My mother (who came from Trois Rivières, Quebec) often told me that when she was young no meat was eaten from Palm Sunday until Easter Sunday. Holy Saturday was a very busy day indeed — polishing all meat cooking utensils, many of them copper, in preparation for the feast on Easter Sunday.

For the Easter feast a tiny new spring lamb, called "Agneau de Paques" was the piece de resistance. It was roasted uncov-ered, with thick slices of onions giving it special flavor. The lamb was used because it is symbolical of The Lamb of God, Risen Savior.

In the latter part of May are the Rogation Days — 3 days set aside for special prayers for a successful harvest. Farmers brought their seeds to church to be blessed with special prayers by the parish priest . . . Because 95 percent of the French Canadians are Catholics, many customs observed are religious customs.

### "JEAN BAPTISTE"

The national feast of the French Canadians is celebrated on Midsummer Day, June 24, St. John the Baptist Day, patron of Canada . . . It was a holiday in Canada, and was so observed in Somerset when I was a child. There was a special High Mass in the morning attended by almost all the parishioners. In the afternoon several families would get together, driving with horse and buggies, to a nearby lake or river for a big picnic. And when a family could not get away, there was a picnic planned for their own yard. It was a day to be spent out-of-doors. Other days on which family picnics were held were Pentecost Sunday, and the feast of St. Anne.

The feast of "La Toussaint" (*All Saints Day*), November 1, a holy day, was the day set aside by the French Canadians to pay their debts . . . When one would say, "I'll pay you on All Saints Day", it was as good as a note . . . The harvest had all been gathered and their hay and grain sold, so they were ready to pay their debts. The next day, November 2, is All Souls Day, a day set aside for special prayers for the departed ones.

On November 25 was celebrated the Feast of St. Catherine, the patron saint of all unmarried girls. On that day a French girl who has reached 25 officially becomes an old maid, and wears a special little white cap to show that she is unmarried and over 25 . . . That evening taffy pulls were

usually the form of entertainment. If fresh snow had fallen recently big pans of it were brought into the house and the warm taffy syrup was poured on it to cool before it was pulled. A girl always picked her special boy friend to help her pull her strand of taffy.

The French are noted as good cooks — and are proud of their table service. The French feel that some mysterious relationship exists between a spotless tablecloth, nice silver and dishes, and good food on one hand — and a happy home with a proud contented father and smiling happy children on the other.

And French foods . . . "La Soupe au Pois" Pea Soup is almost known as the national dish of the French. Because it is often served on Fridays, the French cook makes it without any ham or meat stock, using butter for richness, and rice, celery and onions with seasonings. The green peas are usually preferred by the French. Pea Soup is good.

Pork roast is also a favorite . . . The fat drippings from the roast are put into a bowl, and when cooled and set is spread on bread instead of butter. It was called "Grece de Routis".

The most luxurious dessert served is "Crepes Suzette". They are very thin pancakes, luscious with sugar, grated lemon and orange peel and liqueurs, and fried on hot buttered pans. The cakes are then rolled and a hot sauce, made of butter, sugar, orange and lemon peel and curacao. The rolled pancakes are placed in this sauce, sprinkled with powdered sugar, and brandy poured over and ignited. This sauce is usually made in a chafing dish right at the table and served from it.

"Charlotte Russe" was another favorite dessert. A mold is lined with lady fingers and then filled with whipped cream, stiffened with gelatine, and tinted a delicate pink and flavored with peppermint. When brought to the table on a pretty crystal dish it looked as good as it later tasted when rich chocolate sauce was poured over each serving.

And maple syrup . . . It has been said that most French cooking would lose its appetizing flavor without maple syrup. It is used with cream on puddings, apple dumplings, and even poured over apple pie . . . delicious . . . And maple syrup pie is really delectable. The filling is made with 1 cup maple syrup, ½ cup water, yolks of two eggs, 2 tablespoons of flour in a small amount of water. Cook in a double boiler until thick. Pour into a baked shell and either make a meringue from the 2 egg whites, or cover the pie with whipped cream.

Christmas, the last feast day in the year . . . Every house would put up a "creche", sometimes a very humble one, simulating the manger in which the Christ Child lay. At dusk my mother always made quite a ceremony of lighting the candle in the window — to light Him on His way.

The house was always decorated with boughs, garlands and wreaths of greens, but the Christmas tree was never trimmed until the small children were fast asleep on Christmas Eve. We used to pin up our stockings and in the morning find them filled with fruit, candy and nuts, but if one had been naughty he would find only a small potato in the foot of his stocking . . .

Everyone went to Midnight Mass, and afterwards there was a "Reveillons" at home, everyone bringing along a friend. There would be hot, rich oyster stew to open the supper, then fresh "tete fromagee" (*head cheese*) with bread and butter, and for dessert, fritters cooked in maple syrup served with hot black coffee. Not until the wee hours of the morning did the celebrants go to bed, but the children, who had slept all night, were up early to see what "le bon Nicolas" had brought them. Mornings were spent in delivering gifts to neighbors and friends nearby . . . In the late afternoon the festive dinner was served with either a goose or turkey, and for dessert a flaming plum pudding . . . The singing of Christmas carols, with all members of the family joining in, closed the day.

And here we are, ready for another New Year's Day, filled with blessings, kissings, and visiting . . .

—By Donald LaGrandeur



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## SOMERSET PUBLIC SCHOOL HISTORY

The first school in the Village of Somerset was held in the Chapel House about 1862 or more than 94 years ago. This house was located in the vicinity of the present C. J. Montpetit home. Two terms of school were taught in the Chapel home by Mrs. Chapel.

Another term of school followed in the adjoining home with Mrs. Young as the teacher. When this house burned a year later, a school was built on Spring St. in the lot between Edgar Johnson's apartments and A. J. Vanasse's residence. This building was in use for about thirty years after which it was used by Mr. Vanasse as a warehouse. It was eventually purchased by Ernest Germain of New Richmond and was moved to the old Nels Asp farm where it was converted into a farm home, and it is still in use.

The second Village School was built about 1890. This building which consisted of two rooms, is still in use at the same location upon which it was built.

Some of the school board members who served up to this time included Ed Grant, and Alex Gordon. Teachers included Lizzy Little, Eliza Bryant, G. B. Elliot, J. C. Louis, John McMahan, Luthera Chadwick, Ella McDonald, G. E. Wilcox, Della Briggs, Mary Harrington, Bridget Shays, Polina McDonald, Lilla Hayes, and Eliza Shaw.

Grades one through eight were taught until 1917 when the ninth and tenth grades were added. In the school year of 1922-23, the eleventh grade was added to the school program.

On August 10, 1925, the voters of the school district approved the organizing and establishing of a district free high school and received the Certificate of Establishment on Sept. 1, 1925. This added the twelfth grade to the school program.

Due to the ever increasing enrollment, a two room addition was started in September of 1926 and was ready for occupancy for the 1927-28 school year. These two rooms are still in use at the present time.

School Board members during this period consisted of Louise Montbriand, Chas. Koehler, J. O. Belisle, Eugene Rivard, C. J. Meinke, E. A. Parnell, Zephire Belisle, and W. F. Kress.



**THE SECOND VILLAGE SCHOOL, 1890**

First village public school was built near the Vanasse store, 1864.

Actual construction of the classroom-gymnasium addition began in 1939. Board members at this time consisted of Ray Bishop, Henry LaGrandeur, and E. A. Parnell.



**Mrs. Francois Roy**  
First teacher in Township of Somerset in the 1850's.



**Our Teachers**

Left to Right, Seated: Mrs. Donald Landry, Mrs. Art Wegge, Mrs. Myron Myers, Mrs. Art Landry, Mrs. Marion Hogan. Standing: Carl L. Wickman, Principal; Dean Tveten, Robert Seibel, Wallace Mehlberg, Ed Shern.

## DISTRICTS JOIN

Several attachments of other school districts have taken place within the past few years to make up the area now served by the Somerset Public Schools. Some of these school district records are no longer available. A brief description of the attachments follow:

Jt. Dist. No. 4 and 7 of the Townships of Somerset and St. Joseph, better known as the North Bass Lake School attached to the present district on July 1, 1952. Jt. Dist. No. 2 and 4, better known as the Sand Hill School, of the same township also attached on this date. Early board members consisted of Amable Champau, Octave Baillargeon, Charles Carufel, Sam Veillieux, and Daniel Little.

School Dist. No. 4, Township of St. Joseph, better known as the Four Corner School District attached on July 6, 1953. In 1902 school board members consisted of Warren D. Chapman, Charles Audett, and Frank A. London. Annual meetings at that time were conducted in the homes of board members. A school house site was voted for and approved in 1902.

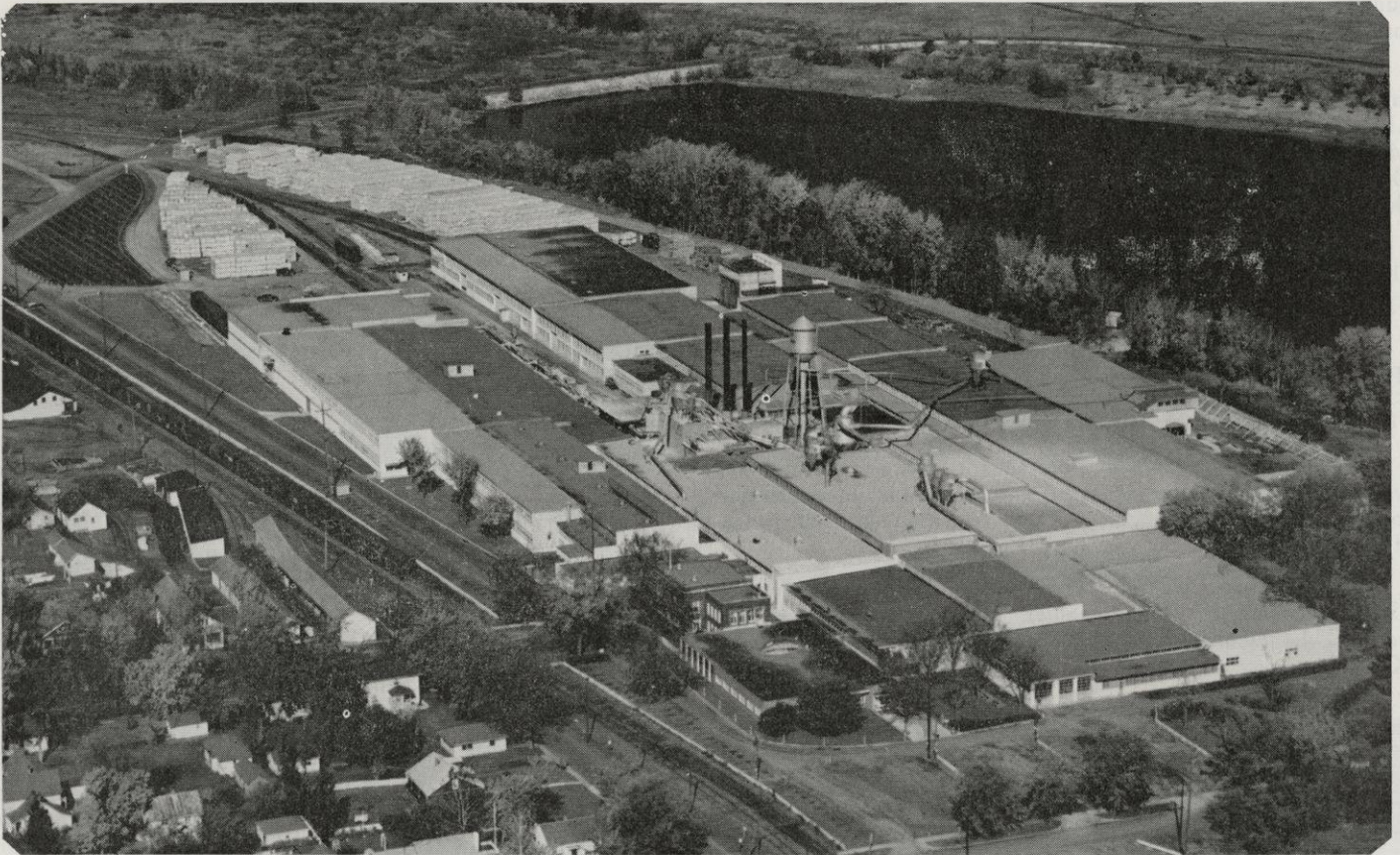
School Dist. No. 1, township of Somerset, sometimes known as the "Horse Collar District" due to its geographical description was organized in 1938 and was in existence only fifteen years. The first officers in this school district were: Herbert DeCosse, Director, Art Wegge, Clerk, and Fred Meinke, Treasurer. This district attached on Oct. 6, 1953.

Due to a fire which destroyed the school building and records of Dist. No. 6, better known as the Landing Hill School, records are not available for years prior to 1901. School officers at that time were Herman Meinke, Lawrence Parnell, and Henry Ostendorf. This district attached on July 1, 1954.



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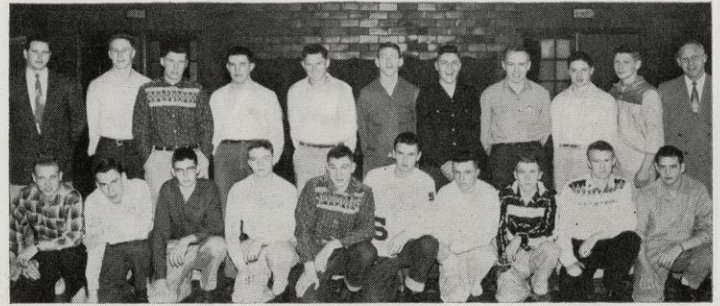
District No. 3, Township of Star Prairie, better known as the Riverdale School and Dist. No. 3, Township of Somerset, better known as the Apple River Falls School also attached on July 1, 1954. In the Riverdale School, records dating back to 1868 show that early school board members were Charles Parent, John McClure, and John King. The records also show that a present resident of Somerset, N. E. Parnell taught at Riverdale in 1914-1915.

According to the History of St. Croix County written by Wm. Fletcher in 1881 we read that Mrs. Francois Roi (Julia Dufore) was the first teacher in the township. She taught school in the home of Charles Audette near Apple River Falls about 1858. A few years later a small frame school was built across the road from the Desire Rivard farm. Many years later the present school building was erected nearer the falls.

Construction on the third addition to the Somerset Public Schools began in Sept. 1954 and was ready for use at the opening of the 1955-56 school year. This addition consists of a stage and locker rooms addition to the gymnasium, and new offices, lavatories, four classrooms, a shop, and home economics room.



**The High School Band**  
Under the direction of Ed Shern, the band has been a great asset to the school and the whole community.



**The Lettermen's Club**  
Sports have always been a pleasing feature of our school. Football, basketball, baseball, track, and boxing have been conditioning our youngsters over the years.



**High School Basketball Team, 1956**  
Space does not permit us to identify all the students.

School Board Members at the present time consist of Ray Bishop, John Jackelen, Amable Parent, Vital Proulx, and Art Wegge.



**Our New School Addition**  
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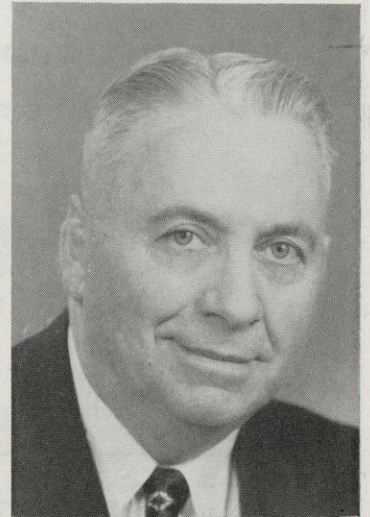
Our "Infamous Injustice" of the Peace ready to render sentence against all who refuse to grow a beard during the Centennial. Behind the brush pile is Alley Parnell.



#### Beards Grow Well In Somerset

Prizes will be given to "the beards" which are the bushiest, the dandiest, and the most characteristic. Here are a few who are vying for honors:

Left to Right, First Row: Maurice Baillargeon, Louis J. Beauvais, Duane Lemire, John B. Plourde, Lyle Beauvais, Amable Liberty. Second Row: Wendal Belisle, Bernard Beauvais, Henry Roy, Ronald Flicker, Earl Cloutier, Everett Cloutier, Remie Plourde.



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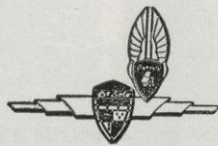
#### Mesdames et Messieurs

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Episode VII .....	Oh Give Me a Home
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## The Triple Centennial Committee

Under the leadership of General Chairman Bernard Peterson, this committee has done stalwart work in organizing and bringing to a successful conclusion the celebration of the Triple Centennial. Every detail was discussed and worked out in complete harmony and enthusiasm.

**Left to Right: Eddie Plourde, Secretary; Dean Tveten, Commander, American Legion Post #111, In Charge of Parade; James**

**Watters, Village President and Publicity Director; N. E. Parnell, St. Anne Representative; Bernard Peterson, General Chairman; Father John Rivard, Honorary Chairman; Ray Bishop, Village Board; Donald Landry, Town Board; John Leske, Assistant to Chairman; Gerald Belisle, American Legion Representative. Standing: Milton Meinke, Town Chairman; Lyle Liberty, Museum; Joseph S. Plourde, President of Historical Society.**



## Officers of Historical Society

This Society was formed to help gather material to publish this book and keep all historical data. The Society also is sponsoring the Pageant of the Centennial. The Society has been a great aid to the author in getting family histories. The membership is short on quantity, but big in quality.

**Left to Right: Billy Shay, Pageant Director; N. E. Parnell, Vice**

**President and Pageant Chairman; Louis J. Beauvais, Membership; Joseph S. Plourde, President; Father John Rivard, Advisor; Lottie Montbriand, Secretary; Mrs. N. E. Parnell, Treasurer; Mrs. Ed Dufresne and Mrs. J. S. Plourde, Family Chairman. Absent: A. J. Vanasse, Membership; Lyle Liberty, Museum; Mrs. Louis Martell, Family Histories; Milton Vanasse, Ad Manager.**



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## THE OLIVER TOWNE COLUMN

ST. PAUL DISPATCH, JUNE 29, 1955

(With Permission of the Author)

There was, in the Sunday Pioneer Press of June 5, a brief story in the vacation section which declared:

"In Wisconsin's lumberjack days, it was said that the four toughest places in the world were Cumberland, Hayward, Hurley and Hell."

Which statement has pricked a sore spot in the tough skins of many a Somerset, Wis., resident because, as one of them put it the other day:

"Anyone knows that the four toughest places in the world in the lumberjack years were SOMERSET, Hayward, Hurley and Hell."

Cumberland seemingly does not fit into the scheme at all. As a matter of fact, I have this quote from a man whose ancestors wore bruises on their knuckles as pridefully as Heidelberg dueling scars.

"Cumberland tough? Why, you had to insult a man to make him fight when I was there in '98. But in Somerset, just say 'bonjour, mon vieux' (*hello, old pal*) and you were in the most beautiful scrap this side of the Revolutionary war."

The same gentleman admits that the present generation is not sure it is entirely happy about this distinction, but "will fight for the truth to the last tooth."

The roaring days of which I am now speaking occurred between 1860 and 1900 when 15 lumber mills ran in Stillwater and 3,000 beefy lumberjacks worked the Apple and St. Croix rivers.

And, in spring, when they rolled—logs and men—down the rivers, Somerset was the rendezvous point of these French-Canadians, an oasis of good whisky and lots of it.

Of the dozens of hitching-post pipes on Somerset streets, there wasn't a straight one in the lot 24 hours after the lumberjacks reached town.

And it was economic suicide to put a bay window into a store or house front. The biggest sport of the day among the lumberjacks was heaving each other through plate glass windows. And the bigger the window the better.

The quality and quantity of Somerset whisky set lumberjacks to drooling long before they made their annual invasion of the town.

One of the LeMire boys, for instance, was walking down to Somerset from St. Croix Falls and was thinking about the liquor he was going to drink when he got there.

And the more he thought, the more his mouth watered. And they say that by the time he was two miles out of Somerset, he was dead drunk, just thinking about it.

Although fights were two dozen for a dime, there is no report of murder being committed.

One reason why the brawling always stopped short of

serious bloodshed was the fact that the priests in the area were tougher than the toughest lumberjack.

Rev. John Rivard, present pastor of St. Anne's Catholic church at Somerset, recalls the missionary who sought in vain to entice some of the loggers into religious environs on Sunday.

At last he said to them:

"You fellows think you're so smart. Bring out the toughest man you have. And if he beats me cutting a log with an ax, you don't have to go to church. But if I beat him, you go to church."

So it was agreed. And the missionary, who had come down from Hudson, Wis., said a prayer, rubbed his hands and the contest was on. He won, but the Lord must have been with him. Because his log had a hollow in it which gave him a head start on his rival.

Of all the legendary figures in Somerset history, the physical prowess of none has been more oft recounted than that of Tuphil Rivard.

And in a community which has seen some physical giants in the names of Montpetit, Germain, Montbriand, Bergeron and Barriault, that is saying quite something.

Tuphil Rivard was a logger, carpenter and millwright. And it was he who, after placing the cross on the top of St. Anne's steeple 75 feet above the ground, climbed onto the cross and stood, one leg on either arm, balancing himself without effort.

Tuphil sang in the church choir. But not even then was he without his quid of tobacco. And he was, within memory, the only chorister who sat in a rocking chair with a spittoon by his side while he sang.

Even after he passed 60 summers, Tuphil was always the top man on a barn-raising detail. It was he who nailed down the uppermost rafters.

The Somerset of 1955, noted for good eating places—there are seven cafes and taverns within the village limits and five just without—is calm, belying one other spectacular era in its nearly 100 years.

That was the "Roaring 20s," when some Somerset purveyors sold moonshine to the eastern half of Minnesota.

There is the story of the man from St. Paul who stopped a native on a Somerset street and asked where he could buy a gallon of hooch.

"I'll show you," said the native and got into the car, directing the driver across the Apple river and up the hill to St. Anne's where he pointed at the priest's house and said:

"That is the only place in Somerset where you CAN'T buy a gallon of moonshine."

When, in those days, the "feds" swooped down, the forewarned farmers dumped the mash out on the yard and not, infrequently, the cows and pigs ate their way into the merriest binge you ever saw.

Such are some of the Somerset tales, now gathering moss, which are told and retold on cold, winter's nights about men of yore who played, worked and fought hard. And Cumberland? "Where's that at?" they'll ask.



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ERNA M. SETTE, Cashier  
H. R. HERTZENBERG, Asst. Cashier

# Bank of New Richmond

Established 1878

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**''64'' CLUB, INC.**

2 Miles West of New Richmond

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JUNE 22,23,24**



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# Ben's Bar



Darcy, Ricky, Berry, Vernie, Vernon, Kim



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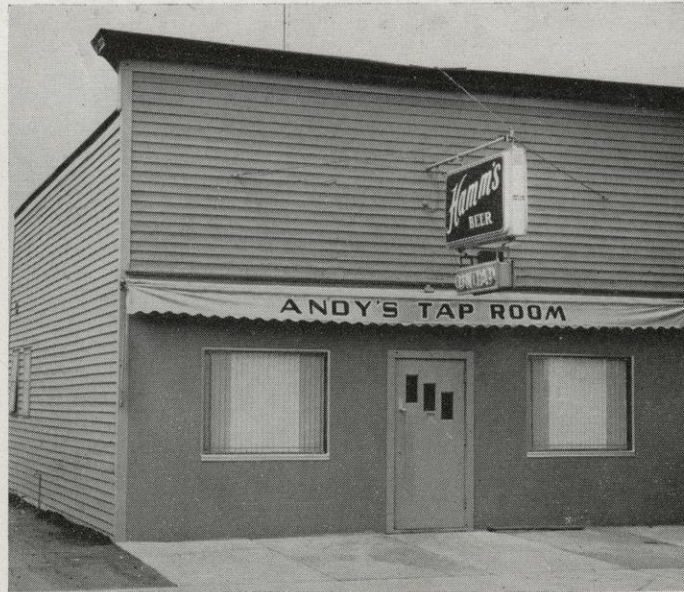
**St. Paul, Minnesota**

**Standard Oil  
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**New Richmond, Wisconsin**





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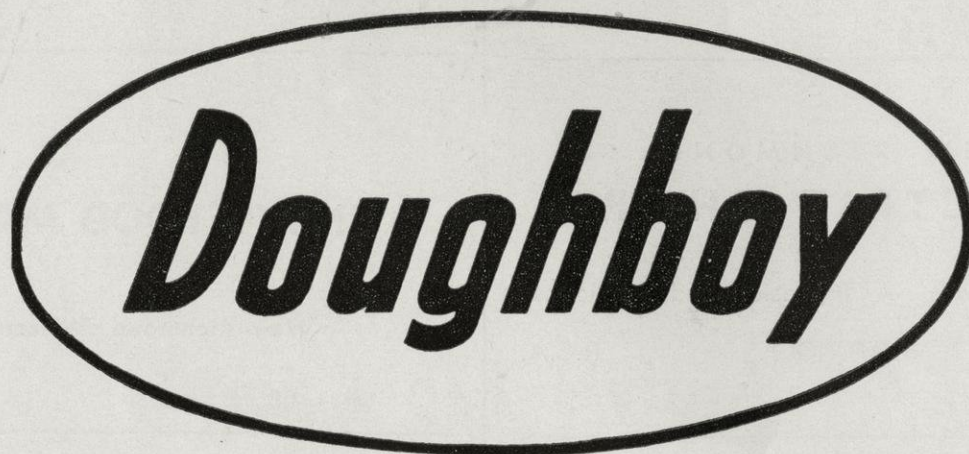


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## **Farmington Store**

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New Richmond, Wisconsin





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LIQUORS AND DANCING  
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