

*This book is dedicated to the Pioneers
of Vermont Township*

August, 1977

Book No.

The body of this book has been set in 10 pt. Century Book type face and picture captions set in 9 pt. English type face. It is printed on 50 lb. Unisource Opaque paper. The cover is of Kroydonflex Spanish Overtone in Wedgewood color, printed with black ink and gold foil stamped. Wire-O binding was used.

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Introduction



Town of Vermont hopes to compile history

An organizational meeting of the Vermont Bicentennial Committee was held at the Bertil Johnson home near Blue Mounds last week. Plans were made to compile a history of the town of

Vermont. Anyone who has information of historical interest and would like to share it with the committee should contact either Mrs. Joe Dybdahl or Mrs. Dorothy Kelliher. Shown reviewing the

centennial edition of the Dane County News are, left to right, Mrs. Glenn Frame, Mrs. Joe Dybdahl, Mrs. Amon Brager, Bette Johnson, Joe Dybdahl and Arnold Forshaug.

AN IDEA BECOMES A REALITY

This book was an idea that sprang from the above meeting and the people who had assembled in September, 1976 to celebrate the history of Vermont Township during our Nation's Bicentennial year.

The reality is the result of many hours of dedicated work on the part of the Vermont Bicentennial Committee.

Viola and Joe Dybdahl
Lola and Arnold Forshaug
Fern Frame
Bette and Bertil Johnson
Dorothy Kelliher
Avis MacLean
Lola MacLean
Betty Rosenbaum

Special acknowledgement to Ethel Skalet who did the art work for the book. Ethel is a local artist.

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VERMONT HISTORY

and Biographical Sketches

Then

Now!

E. Skelton

HISTORY OF VERMONT TOWNSHIP

The following history is condensed, taken from the centennial edition of the "Dane County News", a history sent out from the State Historical Society, written in 1880, and from the History of Dane County, Wisconsin, Volume 11, edited by Judge Elisha W. Keyes, published in 1906.

TOWN OF VERMONT

The territory run off by the United States Surveyors into Townships 6 and 7 north, of Range 6 east, although at first included in the Town of Madison, was by an act of the Territorial Legislature approved March 11, 1848; erected into the Town of Blue Mounds; but in 1855 the north half of this territory was formed into a separate town called Vermont.

This township was called Vermont by one of the old settlers in honor of the Green Mountains of his home state.

The township, in the center of the western tier of the towns in the county is connected somewhat in its history to Blue Mounds. It was much later than the latter in being settled, yet the old road from the mining regions to the Wisconsin River used in the early thirties, traversed Vermont. Thus its peculiar features became known. The early travelers were much impressed with the mystery of three caves, two on section 16 and the other on section 30, about which many legends and traditions linger. There are few prehistoric remains here, but these were regarded as phenomenal. In the winter, the steam from these holes can be seen for a long distance.

The surface of most of the town is rather rugged in appearance and at first glance would not impress the traveler as having agricultural possibilities; yet the valley lands are extremely rich and there is no portion in the town that is not available for cultivation, pasturage or timber raising.

The soil is usually very productive, particularly in the valleys, where corn, hay and oats do very well. Wheat does better on the higher ground, which is usually a sandy loam or limestone marl, according to the height, the very highest ridges being composed of limestone, and the lower ridges of sandstone. The best soil in the town is on Section 36 and adjoining. That which the farmers most regret is the washing of the hills which has very materially damaged the arable land throughout this section.

The geological formation in the order of the building resembles somewhat that of the Baraboo Bluffs.

As might be expected, there are numerous

springs, and perpetual streams issuing from them. The largest of the streams is the East Blue Mounds Creek, which enters the town of Section 34 and flowing northwest passes out on Section 6. The land through which this creek flows is called the Saw Mill bottoms and is very fertile. The stream supplies excellent mill privileges, which have been partly improved. All the other streams, of which there are several, are tributary to the East Blue Mounds Creek, with the exception of one, which rising on Section 25 flows northerly, passing out of the town on Section 2 and empties into the Black Earth Creek.

Vermont Township offers an illustration of what can be done in line of forestry, with an intelligent self interest cultivated among the farmers. When the town was first settled, there was but little timber, and now it is well supplied especially in the cultivated portions with groves of maple, walnut, butternut, ash and poplar.

The first white settler was a Pennsylvania Dutchman by the name of Joseph Harmony, who settled here in 1846. He was an old man when he came here, and had neither money to help himself nor team to plow the land. So he had to erect a cabin as best he could with axe and auger, and plow his land with a spade and a hoe. The old man and his still older wife had a hard time of it, and we find that after they had been here about nine years, they had succeeded in getting only three acres under cultivation. About this time someone bought the claim from the Government, and the old gentleman had no home. At this juncture, his neighbors charitably joined together and raised \$50, and bought forty acres of land on Section 31, and presented it to the veteran pioneer. He died about the beginning of the great rebellion.

After Mr. Harmony there were no settlers until 1847, when Mathew Rasback, Samuel Batty, John Caldwell, and Samuel Lattimer settled in different parts of the township. These were followed by J. C. Steele, Barney Burrows, M. Perry, J. Stuhltrewers, E. K. Liverad, Paul Capley, — — — Barlow, Henry Brown, John Smith, Thomas Buffe, Nelson Daniels, John Olnier, A. B. Erbe, E. Odell, and Mahlen Hasbrook and a few others came in. Subsequently, the settlers poured in very rapidly until within a few years the town was thickly settled. In 1870 the population of the town was 1,244.

Those earliest comers mentioned were: M. Rasback, S. Batty, J. C. Steele, John Olnier, A. B. Erbe and Aaron Denny, all in comfortable circumstances and some of them forehanded.

The first death in the town occurred in 1852, when cholera swept through this section of the country and killed several in Vermont. The first was Mr. Rasback.

A touch of romance is added to the history of the early days by the story of the betrothal and marriage of two of the pioneers. E. B. Erbe and Anna Christiana were betrothed in Germany before starting for America. As they lived in different provinces, it would have cost them \$40 to be married there, so they postponed the happy occasion until they reached their destination in the Town of Vermont. They then repaired to Ebenezer Brigham's at Blue Mounds, and there at an expense of not exceeding one dollar, including the cost of the certificate, they were united in marriage by one Squire Dale.

A blacksmith shop was started on Section 25 in 1849 by C. K. Syverud, the first one in the town. Syverud was a Norwegian.

The first school district was organized in 1850, and the first school house was built on the east half of the southeast quarter of Section 17. The first teacher was A. Campbell. There are now six school districts in the town with six sections to a district. The school houses are frame, the best of which is the one in District No. 3.

The first pathmaster in the township was Mahlen Hasbrook. Then the road district included the entire town; now the town is divided into thirteen districts.

Mahlen Hasbrook brought in thirty head of cattle when he came, intending to start a dairy and stock farm, but neglecting to provide feed enough for them, they nearly all died the first winter. During this time, Mr. Hasbrook and a brother were hunting deer and killed 103 of them before winter was over.

Immediately after his arrival, Mr. Samuel Lattimer built a saw mill on Section 21. Mr. Lattimer operated the saw mill until 1865, when he sold the property to S. Goodell and J. B. Kehl. They repaired the building and converted it into a grist mill, putting in two run of stone. In 1876 the mill passed into the hands of Charles Elver who added another run of stone. He still runs the mill which does first class work. In 1851 Thomas Steele erected a saw mill on Section 28. After passing through several hands, it was abandoned.

A sorghum evaporator was brought into town by C. A. Antleman, who resides on Section 7.

A post office was established on Section 21 with John Lohrs as postmaster. It is an unpaid office, and received mail but once a week. Mr. Lohrs has a grocery and saloon at this point, the only one in the township.

The Town of Vermont was organized in 1855,

on the first Tuesday in April. Whalen Hasbrook was elected the first Chairman; J. C. Steele and John Caldwell, Supervisors; and Aaron Dana, Clerk.

The early settlers included English, Irish, Prussian and Austrian immigrants. There are still many Germans in the town, but the Norwegian element now predominates.

Religious services were first held in the town in 1849 by a Methodist minister, the Rev. H. Maynard.

The Catholic Church (St. Simon's): This church is situated in Section 29. It has a resident priest and a large congregation. The St. Simon's Total Abstinence Society was organized in 1877. The officers are Michael Deneen, President; E. Keating, Vice-President; George Blake, Secretary; D. Kelliher, Treasurer; William Frawley, Librarian. There are now forty members.

The Norwegian Lutheran Church: This church, situated in Section 11, was built in 1868. The congregation now numbers about ninety families. The first minister of the Lutheran faith to preach in the town was P. H. Rasmussen. After him, in 1860, John Field, the present pastor came. Each church has a cemetery in connection. Besides there is a Commonwealth cemetery in Section 6, near the school house of District No. 3.

The population of Vermont, according to the census of 1905, is 763.

This account of Vermont men who paid the supreme sacrifice in service of their country during the Civil War was found in the history by Judge Elisha Keys, written in 1880:

Christopher Erickson, May 16, 1864, Andersonville prison, Ga.

Torgrim Mikkelson, killed ?, Stone River, Tenn.

Ole Mikkelson, killed Aug. 10, 1862, Jacinto, Miss.

Ole M. Olson, July 11, 1864, died Andersonville prison, Ga.

Peter Urness, 15th Co. B, died Oct. 19, 1862, Bowling Green, Ky.

Audrey Everson, died Nov. 18, 1862, Ironton, Mo.

Thomas Everson, died Jan. 3, 1863, St. Louis, Mo.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

The biographical sketches following were written in the early 1880's and included in the history sent from the State Historical Society.

JOSEPH ARNBERGER, farmer and stock raiser, Sec. 33; P.O. West Blue Mounds; born in Austria in 1828; a son of Charles and Antonia Arnberger; came to Wisconsin in August 1855 and

settled where he now lives. He married Miss Antonia Regel, a native of Austria, by whom he has six living children—five in Wisconsin, and one in Dakota. A Democrat in politics and a Roman Catholic in religion. He has always taken an active part in school affairs but has never sought office. He has a beautiful farm on 160 acres, worth \$3,000, calculated for grain and stock; Mr. Arnberger is the best farmer in the county; he has taken first premiums at state and county fairs for best wheat and grains; keeps his farm up to grade, never letting it run down, has first-class improvements, and all the conveniences for feeding stock; he is a practical farmer and a good business man and richly deserves his elegant home.

SAMUEL BATTY, farmer and stock raiser, Sec. 6; P.O. Mazomanie; first came to Wisconsin in the summer of 1846, and located where he now lives; is a native of Yorkshire, England; born in 1820; a son of John and Ellen Batty. Was married to Miss Martha Copley a native of Yorkshire, by whom he has eight children, all living in Wisconsin; the two oldest children were born in England; Walter is married, and lives on the old homestead and runs the farm with his brother, John. He belongs to the Primitive Methodist Church. Republican in politics, Mr. Batty has always taken an active part in church and school matters; has a beautiful farm of 360 acres, adapted to stock and grain, worth \$20 per acre.

GEORGE BEATY, farmer and stock raiser, Sec. 36; P.O. Mt. Horeb; a native of Pennsylvania; born in 1808; a son of Samuel and Elizabeth Beaty; came to Wisconsin in the fall of 1854 and settled where he now lives; about the second American settler in the township; his wife's name was Mary Way, by whom he had three children: two daughters and one son, William and Mary are living in Iowa; Elizabeth married Mr. McNaull, and lives in Vermont Township; for his second wife, he married Miss Sarah E. M. Nace, a native of Virginia, where she was born in 1824, a daughter of Peter F. Nace and Mary Noftsinger. Mr. Beaty has always been an active business man; before he came to Wisconsin he was engaged heavily in the mercantile, lumber and foundry business, which he carried on very successfully; he is what you may truly call a self-made man. He has always taken an active part in all town affairs; has been Chairman of the board for several years, and held several other town offices. Republican in politics; and in religion, a member of the Baptist Church. He has a beautiful farm of 168 acres, worth \$7,000, with first class improvements, in the southeast corner of the town, two miles from Mt. Horeb and the new railroads; he also has 20 acres one-half mile from Black Earth, worth \$800. By hard labor

and economy he has gained a competency, and richly deserves his beautiful home; respected by all as an honest man in every sense of the word.

ROBERT G. BELL, farmer, stock raiser and nursery man, Sec. 10; P.O. Black Earth; was born in 1811 in Dunfishire, near Carlisle, Scotland; a son of William Bell and Ellen Graham; came to Wisconsin in 1857, and located where he now lives. Was married in London in 1847; has one son: Robert W. Bell, who was born in 1850. Mr. Bell has always been an active man; was about the first fruit grower in the state; has a beautiful farm and a forest of fruit trees, with first-class buildings and three living springs on the place, valued at \$4,000. Mr. Bell's health has failed of late, and he has given up the charge of the farm to his son, who was lately married to Miss Lena Greenwaldt of Middleton. The family belong to the Presbyterian Church; in politics, Republican.

GEORGE BOOTHE, farmer, Sec. 6, P.O. Mazomanie; born in Sheffield, Yorkshire, England, in 1828; came from England in 1849, and located in St. Louis, where he worked at his trade of molder for sixteen years; settled where he now lives in 1860. In 1850, he was married to Miss Eliza Coldwell, a native of England, by whom he has two children, living in Wisconsin: John E., 25 years of age, is married to Miss Corra E. Leach of Iowa County; they have one child, Frederick G., born April 26, 1879; Minnie M. Boothe is 11 years old, and lives at home. Mr. Boothe has always taken an active part in public affairs; is a first-class farmer, and enterprising; has a fine farm of 60 acres, with a good brick house and all first-class improvements, worth \$3,000. Conservative in politics, he believes in voting for the best man.

PETER BURNS, farmer, Sec. 33; P.O. Elvers; born in 1830 in County Longforth, Ireland, a son of Patrick and Bridget Burns. In 1857, he was married to Catherine O'Neal, a native of Ireland, by whom he has six children, all living in Wisconsin. Democrat, in politics. All the family belong to the Roman Catholic Church. He has 120 acres of land, nicely located, worth \$2,500, adapted to stock and grain. He runs his farm with the help of his children. A first-class farmer and a good manager.

S. J. CALDWELL, farmer, Sec. 6, P.O. Mazomanie; was born in Sheffield, Yorkshire, England in 1835, a son of John and Harriet Caldwell; came to Wisconsin in the winter of 1849, and located where he now lives, in the spring of 1850. In 1857, he was married to Miss Catharine Lloyd of Iowa County, a native of Wales, by whom he had two children, both living in Wisconsin. In 1873 he lost his wife and in January 1875 he married her sister, Miss Jane Lloyd, by whom he has two children; his second wife died in the spring of 1880. Mr.

Caldwell has always taken an active part in all town affairs, has been chairman of the board for eight years, besides holding other important offices. He enlisted in the fall of 1861, in Co. E, 11th W. V. I.; re-enlisted in the fall of 1862 and was rejected; enlisted again in the fall of 1864, and was received in Battery D, 1st W. H. A.; mustered out in the fall of 1865. He owns 60 acres of land; one of the best farms in the valley, valued at \$25 per acre; a fine stone quarry on the place, besides running water. In politics he is Democratic.

P. K. DENEEN, farmer, Sec. 29, P.O. Elvers; born the 29th of March, 1855, a son of P. M. and Hannah Deneen. In the fall of 1875, he was married to Miss Bridget Power by whom he has three children: Hannah, age 4 years; Michael, age 2 years; Patrick, age 6 months. Mr. Deneen has been a member of the Board of Supervisors, treasurer of the school board, etc.; Democrat in politics. All the family belong to the Roman Catholic Church. He has a beautiful farm of 228 acres, worth \$4,000. Mr. Deneen runs his own place, is a first-class farmer and a good business man.

P. U. DENEEN, farmer, Sections 20 and 29; P.O. Elvers; this old Irish pioneer came to Wisconsin in the Spring of 1854 and settled where he now lives; was born in County Cork, Ireland, the 17th of March, 1817. He married Miss Hannah Deneen, a native of the same place, by whom he has six children: Mary, age 28; Patrick K., 26; Michael, 22; Abby, 24; Hannah, 20; John, 18. Mr. Deneen has been district school clerk, and has always taken an active part in all town affairs; has a fine farm, nicely located, only half a mile from Elvers Mills. All the family belong to the Roman Catholic Church. In politics he is Democratic.

AARON DENNEY, farmer, Sec. 5; P.O. Black Earth. This old pioneer came to Wisconsin in the Spring of 1853, and settled where he now lives in the fall of 1854; a son of Edward Denney and Jane Donaldson; was born in County Down, Ireland, Nov. 1, 1811, and one of the oldest Irish settlers in Vermont. In 1850, he was married to Miss Jane Ann Mains, by whom he has two children: Thomas, born Aug. 1, 1855, and Eliza Jane, Dec. 7, 1858; Thomas is at home running the farm, a good business man; Eliza married Robert A. Steale and lives in Nebraska. Mr. Denney is a Democrat and a member of the Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Denney is a member of the M. E. Church. Mr. Denney has always been a prominent man in the township, being identified with almost all the improvements; he helped to build six of the district school houses; been town clerk for eleven years, Superintendent of Schools in 1857, been Assessor and is now Justice; he had a good education and retains his faculties remarkably for a man of his

age; he reads a great deal and sports with the poetic muse occasionally; has a fine farm of 120 acres, nicely located, worth \$3,000; he is about to erect new buildings, which will enhance the value of the farm considerably.

CHARLES ELVER, miller, farmer and fancy stock breeder, Sections 20 and 21; P.O. Elvers; born in Mecklenberg-Schwerin, Prussia, April 14, 1849, a son of John and Mary Elver, of Middleton, Dane Co.; came from Prussia with his parents in the summer of 1852. In 1869 he was married to Miss Minnie Lohff, by whom he has four children: Albertina, born in 1870; Otilia, 1873; Howard, 1875; Elmore, 1878. Mr. Elver is worthy of special mention, as he is really the life of Vermont Township; he has one of the finest mills in the whole country, and the flour is noted far and wide; formerly, he has shipped abroad; the last year it has kept him busy supplying home demands; he also owns a fine mill in Dodge Co., known as the "Rockwell Mill;" he owns 163 acres of land, and water power in the berg of Elvers, valued at \$14,000 he is a first class businessman, public spirited, thoroughly Americanized, and a gentleman; everything about the place runs like clock work. Sept. 14, 1878, he got the post office established and named "Elvers;" he has all the conveniences for feeding stock, and breeds Poland China hogs, Shorthorns and Cotswold sheep. The family belong to the Independent German Lutheran Church. In politics he is Democratic.

NEILS J. FIELD, farmer, Sec. 11; P.O. Black Earth; born in Norway in 1855; came to America in 1860; is a son of the Rev. J. N. and Gunhild Field; his father established the Norwegian Lutheran Church which is built on the farm. N. J. is a Republican; belongs to the Norwegian Lutheran Church; he runs the old homestead farm; it is a beautiful place, adapted to stock and grain; 160 acres, worth \$25 per acre.

JOHN FITTON, JR., farmer, Sec. 5, P.O. Black Earth, born 7th of March, 1830, in Yorkshire, England; is a son of James and Martha Fitton. On Christmas Eve, 1860, he was married to Miss Charlotte E. Philling, a native of England, by whom he has six children: James H., age 20; Martha H., 18; Julietta, 16; George E., 12; Amelia M., 9; Fanny Jane 6. He has a fine farm of 76 acres, worth \$1,500. Republican in politics and member of the Primitive Methodist Episcopal Church; for the past few years Mr. Fitton has been a great sufferer with rheumatism, not being able to walk; he bears it with Christian fortitude; having been always an active man in the town, he is greatly missed; he came to Wisconsin in March 1856.

THOMAS FRAWLEY, farmer and stock raiser, Sec. 16, P.O. Black Earth. This old pioneer came to Wisconsin 1850; located where he now lives in 1854; is a native of the County Limerick, Ireland; is a son of Thomas Frawley and Mary Fitzgerald. Was married to Miss Hogan, a daughter of Michael Hogan and Elizabeth Burke, by whom he has nine living children: M. S., born Sept. 13, 1848; Henry, born March 13, 1850; T. F., born Mar. 6, 1853; Mary E., born Aug. 29, 1858; John C., born Jan. 14, 1859; Hanora A., born Mar. 25, 1861; William, born July 30, 1863; James, born Feb. 26, 1866; Edward, born Jan. 23, 1870. M. S. Frawley, the oldest son, graduated at the State University in 1873, and has been School Superintendent in Second District for the past seven years, a place which he has filled with honor; he is about accepting a position in the high school at Eau Claire, Wis.; Henry graduated in 1874 at same school, and is now a successful lawyer at Deadwood; T. F. graduated at same school in 1875, and is also a successful lawyer at Eau Claire; the other six children are all preparing for a collegiate education; John C. is at present a freshman. It has been the ambition of Mr. Frawley to have his children all educated, and he may well be proud of them; he has always taken an active part in all public affairs in the township; he has a beautiful farm of 160 acres, worth \$3,000. The family all belong to the Roman Catholic Church. In politics he is Democratic.

J. GULSON, farmer, Sec. 9; P.O. Black Earth; is a native of Norway; came to Wisconsin directly from Norway and settled in Vermont Township in 1851. In 1852, he was married to Miss Tora Andersdatter Huset, by whom he has four children; oldest daughter married and lives in Minnesota; two sons and one daughter at home. Mr. Gulson has always taken an active part in all public affairs; has been a supervisor for fifteen years; the family all belong to the Norwegian Lutheran Church; he is a Republican in politics. In 1868, he met with a serious accident, in which he lost the use of his hand in a mower; he has a beautiful farm of 120 acres, worth \$2,500, adapted to stock and grain.

AUGUST LANGE, farmer, stock raiser and grain buyer, Sections 15 and 16, P.O. Mazomanie; came to Wisconsin in the Spring of 1852, and settled at Blue Mounds and followed blacksmithing, which trade he learned in the old country; came on the place he now lives in 1853. In 1850, he was married to Miss Dorothy Lerbople, by whom he has four children, one in Iowa and three in Wisconsin. Mr. Lange has one of the best farms in the township, with first-class improvements, adapted to stock and grain; he also owns a grain

warehouse and four dwellings at Mazomanie where he buys all kinds of produce during the year. The family belong to the Evangelical Church; in politics he is a Republican; he has often been sought after for office, but has always refused; was in the 49th W. V. I., Co. A; enlisted in the Spring of 1864, and mustered out in the same fall. He is a good business man and a thorough farmer; owns 140 acres in Sec. 16, is valued at \$3,000.

JOHN LOHRS, general merchant and postmaster at Elvers; was born at Mecklenberg-Schwerin, Prussia, in 1828; is a son of William and Catherine Lohrs; came to Wisconsin in the Spring of 1855, and located in Middleton; came to Elvers in 1877, and started in general mercantile business, building a two-story frame store, hotel and other improvements necessary for a first-class summer resort. In 1857, was married to Caroline Elver, a native of Prussia, by whom he has three children living, Viz., William, Rosetta and John F. The hotel and store property is valued at \$2,000, nicely located opposite Elver's Mill, with a mineral spring adjoining and is destined to be a summer resort. Mr. Lohrs carries a good stock of staple and fancy groceries, and his reputation is such that all know that a child will receive the same treatment as a grown person. The whole family belong to the Independent German Lutheran Church. In politics, he is a Democrat.

PETER LYNCH: farmer and stock raiser, Sec. 5; P.O. Mazomanie; a son of Patrick Lynch and Mary Lines; born at County Kerry, Ireland, June 29, 1843; came to America in the autumn of 1856; came to Wisconsin in 1861 and located in Iowa County; sold out and went to California in the Spring of 1863, where he remained three years, mining, farming and brick making; he bought the Charles Boothby place, where he now lives, in 1874. In 1874, he was married to Miss Minihan, a native of County Cork, Ireland, by whom he has three children: John F., born Sept. 18, 1876; Peter L., born May 5, 1878, and Mary born Sept. 6, 1879. The 40 acres where Mr. Lynch's house stands was an old Indian camp in 1848, and a great many relics are still on the place; Mr. Lynch is quite a naturalist, reads considerable, and keeps posted on general and scientific topics; he has 124 acres of land, about the finest farm in the Blue Mounds valley, a two-story frame house and all first class improvements, valued at \$3,000; he is a first class business man, a good citizen and neighbor; Democratic in politics; all are members of the Roman Catholic Church.

M. A. MICKELSON, farmer and thresher, Sec. 26; P.O. Elvers; Mr. Mickelson was born in the Town of Springdale in 1852; his parents came from Norway the same year. On the 17th of June,

1877, he was married to Miss Sarah Michaelson, a native of Iowa County, by whom he has one child: Alma, born April 25, 1880. He has always taken an active part in educational affairs; is supervisor of the town at present; Republican in politics; conservative in local affairs, always voting for the best man; family belong to the Norwegian Lutheran Church. He has 160 acres of land, worth \$2,000, adapted to stock and grain; Mr. Mickelson runs a threshing machine in the fall and his success is attributable to the way in which he does his business—always correct and straight.

A. P. MOEN, farmer, Sections 14 and 22; P.O. Black Earth; a son of Ole and Sarah Moen; a native of Norway; born in 1849. Was married in 1872 to Miss Anna Larson, by whom he has two children: Anna Louise and Sarah Maria. Has 120 acres of land, well adapted to stock and grain, worth \$1,500; Mr. Moen is a good farmer and business man; the family belong to the Norwegian Lutheran Church of Vermont Township; politics, Republican.

JOHN S. NACE, deceased; born in Virginia in January, 1834; moved with his father's family to Black Earth in 1854, he was married to Miss Elizabeth Beaty, a daughter of George Beaty, Esq., of Vermont, who came from Pennsylvania in 1862; he moved into Vermont Township near his wife's parents, where he resided until his death, which occurred Oct. 24, 1872; he had built up around him a considerable property, had gained and sustained the respect of his neighbors and acquaintances, was noted for his benevolence and kindness, and was not only a great loss to his family but to the community at large; for a number of years he has taken a great interest in religious affairs; was always active and enterprising, and had held many important positions in the town; the whole surrounding community followed the remains to their last resting place, making a procession of seventy teams; the pallbearers consisted of six young men who had been members of the deceased's Bible Class. Mrs. Elizabeth Nace was married again the 9th of December, 1875, to Mr. U. W. McNaul of Pennsylvania; she has three living children by the first husband: Mollie, born in 1861; Maggie, born in 1867; and Peter, born in 1869; Mrs. McNaul still lives on the old homestead, a beautiful farm of 140 acres, worth \$5,000; Mollie is married and lives in Iowa; the other two children are at home. In Politics, Mr. McNaul is Republican.

HANS O. OPSAL, farmer, Sec. 35; P.O. Mount Horeb; born in Norway April 9, 1834; a son of Ole H. and Kare Opsal; came to Wisconsin in the fall of 1854 and settled where he now lives. On the 22nd of March, he was married to Miss Thora

Bersvenson, a native of Norway, by whom he has fourteen children, all living, three in Iowa, one in Kansas and ten at home assisting in running the farm. Mr. Opsal is a Republican; the family all belong to the Norwegian Lutheran Church of Springdale. He has been assessor five years, school clerk, director and treasurer for years, and one of the directors of the Farmers' Insurance Co.; always taken an active part in all school affairs and public improvements; has a fine farm of 100 acres, adapted to stock and grain, three miles from the new railroad, worth \$2,000.

PETER C. PAULSON, farmer, stock raiser and thresher, Sec. 12; P.O. Black Earth; born in Norway in 1833; son of Christian and Caroline Paulson. In 1860, he was married to Miss Annie Anderson of Vermont, by whom he has seven living children: Andrew, born Aug. 28, 1861; Carl, Apr. 3, 1864; Albert, born Mar. 7, 1866; Carrie, born Nov. 5, 1869; Annie C., born Oct. 30, 1871; Ida, born May 11, 1876; Laura S., born Sept. 5, 1879; they came to Wisconsin in the Spring of 1853; and settled in Vermont Township; he purchased the place upon which he now lives in 1860; it is a beautiful stock farm of 280 acres, well watered, with first class improvements, worth \$5,000, three miles south of Black Earth. Mr. Paulson has always taken an active part in all church, school and public affairs; has been town treasurer for seven years, school director, treasurer and clerk, and trustee in the church; he is a Republican in politics; the family belong to the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church. He is about the oldest Norwegian settler in Vermont, a first class farmer and businessman, a man of his word, and respected by all; he has one of the best farms in the valley; has run a threshing machine regularly through the neighborhood for the last twenty-five years.

JAMES QUINN, farmer, Sec. 19; P.O. West Blue Mounds; is a native of County Limerick, Ireland, born in 1802, a son of David Quinn and Jane Blackwell. In 1836, he was married to Catherine Canary, a native of County Limerick, Ireland, by whom he has two sons: David, age 30, and James, 28; David is married and runs the old homestead. All the family belong to the Roman Catholic Church; in politics Mr. Quinn is Democratic. He is one of the oldest Irish settlers, coming to Wisconsin in the summer of 1855; he has a fine farm, adapted to both stock and grain.

T. REILLY, farmer, Sec. 32; P.O. West Blue Mounds; a native of County Meath, Ireland, born in 1833; a son of James Rielly and Margaret Tully; he came to Wisconsin from Pennsylvania in 1860 and located at Cross Plains; remained there five years; purchased the place he now lives on in

1865, containing 140 acres, well watered, and adapted to general farming, worth \$3,500, with first class improvements, about two miles from the new railroad. In 1867, he was married to Miss Elizabeth Ferry, daughter of Thomas Ferry and Ann Tracy, natives of Canada, by whom he has six children, viz.: Annie, born Sept. 28, 1868; Maggie, born Apr. 2, 1870; Mary E., born May 14, 1872; James, born June 27, 1874; Thomas, born Oct. 18, 1876; Josephine, born May 7, 1880. The family belong to the Roman Catholic Church; in politics, Mr. Reilly is a Democrat; he has always taken an active part in the town affairs, and school and church; enterprising, a first class farmer, and a man that can be relied upon.

ANDREW SCHINDLER, farmer, Sec. 24; P.O. Black Earth; born in Switzerland in 1847; a son of Casper and Sarah A. Schindler. Married Miss Minnie Stalkop of Green County, by whom he has two children: Andrew W., born Aug. 1, 1876; Sarah, born Mar. 3, 1878; the family are Lutherans. In politics, Mr. Schindler is conservative, believing in voting for the best man. Has always been a farmer.

C. SCHLOUGH, deceased. Mr. and Mrs. Schlough were both born in Hungary. Mr. Schlough died in June, 1880; Mrs. S. is now running the farm with the help of her children; they came to Vermont Township in 1857, and have raised a large family of children: eleven boys and two girls, all living. The family belong to the Congregational Church. Mr. Schlough was a Democrat; has 200 acres of land, worth \$4,000 to \$5,000, nicely situated in the Blue Mounds Valley.

JOHN SMITH, farmer and fruit grower, Sec. 32; P.O. West Blue Mounds; born in Lancashire, England, in 1814; a son of Joshua Smith and Phoebe Voss. Married Miss Hannah Fenner, a native of London, by whom he had seven children: three of whom are dead, the balance live in Wisconsin; the oldest English settler living in the township; came to Wisconsin in the fall of 1850, and located where he now lives; has been a member of the board of supervisors five years; has always been ready to help schools or any good enterprise; runs his own farm, adapted to grain and fruit, a fine place, worth \$3,500. Mr. Smith belongs to the Republican party; a good farmer, and a man who can be depended upon.

I. C. STEELE, farmer and stock raiser, Sec. 7; P.O. Black Earth; this old pioneer came to Wisconsin the 28th of May, 1848, from Delaware County, N. Y., where he was born in 1818; a son of Robert Steele and Nancy Dunshee. In 1842, he was married to Miss Ann M. Tyler of New York, by whom he has five children: one in Iowa, one in Nebraska, one in Colorado, and two at home. Mr.

Steele is the first American settler in the township; has always taken an active part in all public affairs; has been Justice fifteen years, and Chairman of the board two years. Has 200 acres of land, valued at \$4,500, one of the finest farms in the valley, first class improvements, adapted to stock and grain. The family belong to the M. E. church. In politics, Mr. Steele is Republican.

ARNE A. STEENSRUD, farmer, Sec. 14; P.O. Black Earth; is a son of Ole A. and Christie Arneson, natives of Norway; he was born June 18, 1852. Married Annie Knutson in 1877, by whom he has two children: Christena and Clara. All the family belong to the Norwegian Lutheran Church of Vermont Township. In politics, he is Republican. His farm is adapted to stock and grain; Mr. Steensrud is a good practical farmer.

OLE OLSON TORSRUD, farmer and stock raiser, Sections 2 and 3; P.O. Black Earth; born in the southern part of Norway in 1826; a son of Ole M. and Emma Torsrud; came to Wisconsin in 1852, and stayed at Springdale the first summer, and then went to Illinois, cutting wood; came back in the spring and worked at Mineral Point; then moved on the place where he now lives in 1857. He was married to Miss Anna A. Eid, by whom he has four children, all living in Wisconsin; Republican in politics, and a member of the Norwegian Lutheran Church; he has always taken active part in public affairs; has been school clerk and treasurer for eighteen years; been supervisor two years; town treasurer nine years, and has been town clerk for the last eight years. He has a beautiful farm of 120 acres, two miles south of Black Earth, adapted to stock and grain worth \$3,000.

JOHN VORRATH, farmer, Sec. 17; P.O. Elvers; a native of Bohemia, born in 1816; a son of Michael Vorrath and Walburga Sigle; came to Wisconsin in the spring of 1857, and located at Black Earth; located on the place where he now lives in 1873. The family belong to the Catholic Church. He is a Republican in politics. In 1837, he was married to Miss Mary Ann Beck, by whom he has one son, John, who is married and runs a large farm in the western part of the township. Mr. Vorrath has a fine farm one-half mile from Elver's Mills, adapted to stock and grain, worth from \$1,200 to \$1,500.

GOVERNMENT OF VERMONT TOWNSHIP

Early record books of Vermont Township date back to April 1, 1856. Down through the pages, much of it written in beautiful hand writing, there are short business-like records of the proceedings of board meetings and annual meetings. Board meetings were held in the home of the chairman and annual meetings were held in the District No. 3 school house until many years later in 1878,

when the township voted to find a more centrally located meeting place; and arrangements were made to meet in Elver's Hall at the settlement of Elvers. This continued to be the town hall for many years. It was known as Lohrs Hall, Haugner's Hall, and then Gallagher's Hall until 1957 when the township bought the District No. 7 school building and land known as Sandridge School and this is the Town Hall to the present day.

An early entry records a resolution by the voters to levy a tax of seven mills, and another later requiring anyone selling spiritous liquors to pay a ten dollar license. Another resolution licensing dogs was voted and the clerk's record shows that the treasurer collected a license fee for twenty-nine males and one slut.

An early record shows that Charles Boothby, clerk of the town did a canvas of the town to record voters. Victor Fairbanks signed the report as a board member. Another later entry records the treasurer, Isaac Steel, pledging to pay out any and such moneys as he is obliged to pay. This is a personal bond co-signed by Mahlon Hasbrook, chairman and John Coldwell, board member. Other names appearing as board members through early

years are: Ezekial Odell, John H. O'Neil and John E. Odell. These names show that many early settlers were English or Irish.

A later page tells that the town board met at the home of Mahlon Hasbrook, chairman, to divide the township into school districts and road districts. Seven school districts were named and road districts mapped out. The road districts were increased in number to thirteen later.

One page records discussion of rent for the use of the town hall. The sum of twenty dollars was suggested as a fair amount per year.

The town meetings were not always quiet business meetings. Some times the feelings on certain issues ran so strong that it was necessary to demand a stand up and be counted vote. This meant going outside and lining up for or against the issue.

The pages in the old record books record township annual meetings and board meetings from April 1, 1856, to November 1, 1916. Time or space doesn't permit telling any more than the few we have highlighted.

As the township became more populated the town's affairs and business increased and records later show the need of a Board of Review. This

REAL ESTATE for the Town or Village of..... Township....., Range.....

OWNER	Part of Section or Other Subdivision	Section	Township or (Lot)	Range or (Block)	Acres	Fm. thirds	VALUE AS FIXED BY BOARD OF REVIEW			No. of School District	No. of Road District	State, County, School and Town (City or Village) Taxes
							Exclusive of Buildings	Improvements (Building)	Land and Improvements			
Earnest Ward	NE 1/4	NE 1/4			160	50	3200	1200	4400	1	✓	4092
A. J. Dybedahl	NE 1/4	SW 1/4			41	75	1000	700	1700	1	✓	1581
U. B. Thorsrud	SW 1/4	"	"	"	41		2000		2000	5	✓	1866
John Sweggon	SE 1/4	"	"	"	40		2000		2000	5	✓	1860
Halsten Pederson	NE 1/4	SW 1/4			40		1800	500	2300	1	✓	2139
Herman Barnes	SW 1/4	"	"	"	28	50	1400	200	1600	5	✓	1188
Halsten Pederson	SW 1/4	"	"	"	5	50	275		275	5	✓	256
E. E. S. et al & Son	SW 1/4	"	"	"	6		300		300	5	✓	279
Herman Barnes	SW 1/4	"	"	"	39	70	2000	300	2300	5	✓	2139
Vermont Chey Co	SW 1/4	"	"	"		30	25	575	600	5	✓	558
E. E. S. et al & Son	SE 1/4	"	"	"	40		1000		1000	1	✓	930
Earnest Ward	SW 1/2	SE 1/4			57		1300	50	1350	1	✓	1254
Haral Korsten	SW 1/4	"	"	"	23		250		250	1	✓	233
E. E. S. et al & Son	SW 1/4	"	"	"	37		1200	1200	2400	1	✓	2732
Haral Korsten	SE 1/4	"	"	"	3		80	1000	1080		✓	1005
					40		700		700		✓	151
					64	26						24612
					3		20130	6225	26355			

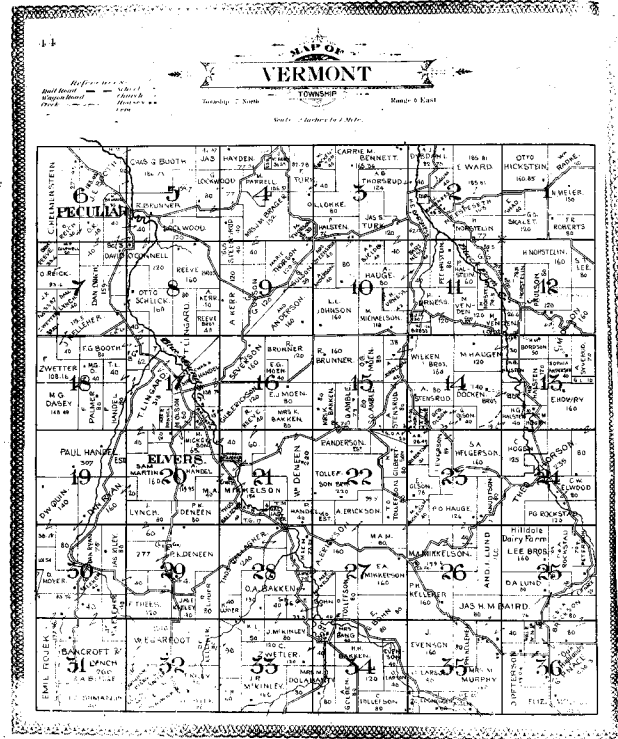
Real estate valuations and taxes in 1910 taken from assessor's book. Hans Gilbertson was the assessor.

board met several times a year some years.

In 1908 the township designated several town roads to be given to the County Board for county maintenance. In 1910 the voters voted to raise funds to build one iron bridge a year to replace wooden bridges needing repairs. The next year 1911, the township built its first Macadam road between Mt. Horeb and Black Earth. Specifications were for six inches of gravel nine feet wide to cost seven dollars and thirty cents (\$7.30) per rod. The township voted about this time to combine some of the road districts to correspond to the seven school districts. The going rate of pay for road work was twenty-seven and one-half cents (27½c) per hour for labor.

In 1917 ballot clerks were elected at the annual town meeting. Heretofore they were appointed by the town board.

In 1927 the town voted to pay three hundred dollars (\$300.00) as a share in organizing a Rural Fire Company with Black Earth, Mt. Horeb, Blue Mounds, Springdale, Cross Plains, and Vermont.



TAX ROLL

For the town of Vermont....., County of Dane....., for the year 1900.

WARRANT

Section 1081, Statutes of 1898, as amended by ch. 335 laws of 1899, ch. 374, laws of 1901, and ch. 101, laws of 1905.

The State of Wisconsin: To Herman Barsness..... Treasurer of the Town
of Vermont..... in the County of Dane.....

You are hereby commanded to collect from each of the persons and corporations named in the annexed tax roll, and from the owners or occupants named of the real estate described therein, the taxes set down in such roll opposite to their respective names and to the several parcels of land therein described; and in case any person or corporation upon whom any such sum or tax is imposed, shall refuse or neglect to pay the same, you are to levy and collect the same by distress and sale of the goods and chattels of the person or corporation so taxed, and out of the moneys so to be collected, after deducting your fees, you are first to pay to the Treasurer of said County, on

or before the second Monday in February next, the sum of One Thousand Six Hundred and Forty Five Dollars (\$1645.⁸⁹/₁₀₀) for State Taxes; you are to retain and pay out, as Town

Treasurer, according to law, the sum of Three Thousand Two Hundred and Eighty Five Dollars (\$3285.⁰⁰/₁₀₀); and the balance of said moneys you are required to pay to said Treasurer for County purposes on or before the fifteenth* day of March, by which day you are further required to make return to said Treasurer of this warrant, with said roll annexed.

Given under my hand this 21st..... day of December, 1900.

Geo. O. Grubbe....., Town Clerk.

Sec. 1081, Statutes of 1898, as amended by Chap. 335, laws of 1899, and Chap. 374, laws of 1901. * The Clerk shall deliver the tax roll with said warrant annexed, to the Treasurer, if he shall have duly qualified as such on or before the third Monday in December, and charge him with the town (city) and local taxes thereon. In counties having two hundred and fifty thousand or more population, payment and return must be made on or before the FIRST day of March. Ch. 101, laws of 1906.

Tax roll warrant to be used by town clerk with delivery
to town treasurer.

Ain't That Peculiar?

by Arvid Berge

"Land O'M'Bairns!" said the exasperated farmer. "You post office people are surely peculiar!"

Tom Denny didn't have his father's Irish brogue, but when he was upset he oft-times borrowed a few choice words from the old immigrant's vocabulary.

On this day in 1898, young Denny was definitely upset — at the postal service. He had just driven his team and wagon over five miles of dirt road to pick up his mail in Black Earth, Wisconsin. His "Irish" began to show when he discovered his mail had been shipped to Blue Mounds, seven miles in the other direction.

Cooling off a little on the way home, he was just crossing Blue Mounds Creek when the idea hit.

With a long look at his home and the "Denny Creamery" on the other side of the stream, and thoughts about his neighbors who shared his "mail problems", he determined to solicit "Washington" for permission to open his own post office.

Three years before it came to Dane County, Thomas A. Denny of Vermont township had his own Rural Free Delivery.

Once a week the mail was carried by horse down the seven mile dirt road north from Blue Mounds and delivered to Denny's front door.

The letters and packages were all addressed to:

PECULIAR POST OFFICE

There are as many stories behind Denny's peculiar place name as there are people from Peculiar. The account given here is just one of those stories.

In *Dane County Place Names*, by Frederick G. Cassidy, the author writes, "vigorous local opposition" was mounted against naming the post office after Denny. Cassidy goes on to suggest that the name "Peculiar" originated with the "post office department."

Denny (then in Rockford, Illinois) in a

letter to Betty Cass' column in the Wisconsin State Journal, (November 14, 1935) doesn't mention any local opposition. However, he graciously takes responsibility for the origin of "Peculiar."

He explains that he submitted three separate lists of names (about six to a list) to the Third Postmaster General. None of these being acceptable, he writes:

"I intimated that it was somewhat 'peculiar' none of these would do, why not call it 'Peculiar'.

Margaret Deneen, 80, a present day resident of Peculiar, heard this story:

"He (Denny) was quite a good writer, but he used the word peculiar so much that that's the name he ended up with."

Eighty-nine year old Melvin Huset, an area carpenter, cuts through the confusion by noting that the name Peculiar was, "just a mistake, just a slip of the pen".

Mistake or not, the name stuck. Even after the "real" Rural Free Delivery forced the closing of Denny's Peculiar Post Office, the name hung on. Denny sold his farm about 1904 and left what his neighbor's children and grandchildren call "Peculiar Corners."

The dirt road from Black Earth to Blue Mounds via Peculiar Corners has been paved and is known today as County Highway F. At the "Corners" it is met by Highway FF. Denny's post office, (his farmhouse) has been torn down and replaced. The old Denny Creamery is also gone. There's a new cement bridge across Blue Mounds Creek and telephone wires connect Peculiar with the rest of the world.

Thinking the rest of the world might want to visit someday, local Peculiarites have considered putting up a roadside marker. It could tell the "Peculiar Story."

Which story will the marker tell? Who knows?

As one local historian put it, "One's as good as the next. They're all fun." And she adds, "They're ALL Peculiar."

'Peculiar' Sign Provides Diversion

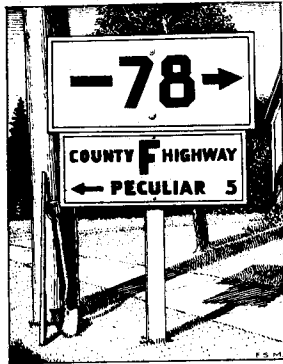
Motorists never should become bored with Dane county scenery, but if they seek a little diversion they can talk up a lot of fun for themselves by following a Peculiar sign at Black Earth.

The sign really points the way to Peculiar, and you can drive there and make all sorts of puns along the way. If you have strangers in the car they'll never believe there is such a highway sign and such a community. In fact, probably half the population of Madison, only 25 miles away, never heard of Peculiar.

The country around Peculiar is beautiful, but it is easy to imagine tourists telling friends about "that peculiar place" for years after they return home.

The Peculiar sign at Black Earth tells the motorist to go west and south on Highway F. He arrives at Peculiar at the junction with Highway FF. There's really nothing peculiar about Peculiar, which now is only a crossroads with a few farm buildings.

Once Peculiar had a postoffice, and that's how the community received its name. Dr. Frederic G. Cassidy of the University of Wisconsin, writing in his pamphlet "The



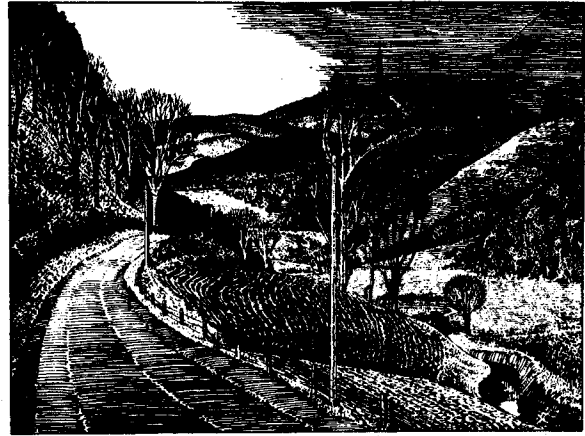
PECULIAR SIGN, BLACK EARTH



PECULIAR, ON HIGHWAY F AT JUNCTION WITH HIGHWAY FF

In 1928 a chemical engine was purchased. In 1930 the town bought its first snow plow. In 1933 the town voted to discontinue graveling roads because of the depression and tight money conditions. In 1936 the Unit System of Relief was voted and continued until recently. In 1944 the town voted to hire a full time road patrolman. Elmer Severson, who has worked part-time up to 1944, was hired full time. This man worked under difficult conditions. The equipment was old, there were no blacktop roads, some roads not gravelled, just dirt roads. He held this job for twenty-six years and did a good job with the tools he had. The town has had three full time road patrolmen. Roman Grob took over the job in 1966 and Philip Skalet took over in July 1967, and is the present road patrolman. The town has had good road care. In 1950 the town bought an Austin Western Grader and snow plow for \$15,000 and trade-in equipment.

In 1950 a special meeting was called to enable the town to provide more fire protection for the north part of the township. The township was divided into two parts following the school district division. The north part to be serviced by the Black



BLUE MOUND FROM COUNTY LINE ROAD WEST OF HIGHWAY F
Place-Names of Dane County, Wisconsin," explains it this way:

"The postoffice was awarded to Thomas A. Denney, who wished to name it Denney postoffice, but vigorous local opposition arose, and for some time a decision could not be reached. Then when some names were submitted, they turned out to be the same as, or too much like, others already in existence.

"At last, the postoffice department lost patience and wrote that it was peculiar, or that they were peculiar people, if they could not decide on a name; whereupon somebody suggested that they adopt the name 'Peculiar,' and so it was done."

Roughly, Peculiar is in the center of a triangle formed by lines which would connect Black Earth, Blue Mounds, and Mt. Horeb.

From Peculiar the motorist can continue south on Highway F to find some of Dane county's most beautiful scenery. It is a favorite highway and area for many residents of Norwegian descent, for they say it reminds them of Norway.

One of the finest views is that of Blue mound from the Iowa-Dane county line road just west of Highway F, looking directly south towards the mounds. Flat-topped Blue mound, its radio tower seeming to pierce the clouds, dominates the landscape. Highway F continues south to Blue Mounds.

Earth Fire Department and equipment housed there and the south half to be serviced by the Mt. Horeb Fire Department and equipment to be housed there.

In 1957 the township bought the School District No. 7 building and ground for a town hall.

In 1958 the town voted to build a garage. This would be the first time equipment could be protected under a roof. The vote to build the garage was 28 yes and 12 no; garage to cost no more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000). After more discussion the limit was fixed at twelve thousand (\$12,000). It cost about eleven thousand (\$11,000).

In 1959 the town raised the assessment on all real estate and buildings 20%. At the April 6th meeting in 1971 it was voted to hire a professional firm to do the reassessment of the township at a cost of \$4,500.00. The work was done by Mid-West Appraisals. The equalized valuation was raised from about 20% to 102%.

In 1971 the town adopted a building code and in 1973, at a special meeting, voted that all driveways were to be built wide enough to accommodate fire fighting equipment and an adequate turn around also be made.

In 1974 the town traded the old Austin-Western road equipment for new John Deere equipment for thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000). In 1975 the town bought a Ford Industrial Diesel Tractor and loader for six thousand eight hundred fifty-five dollars (\$6,855.00).

In 1976 an open meeting was called to discuss an ordinance requiring all parcels of land sold to be ten acres or more. The consensus of opinion was to leave it at ten acres as originally voted.

This takes the history of the town business up to the present time.

The oldest record book dating back to March 1856 shows the result of the annual election. Fifty-nine votes were tallied.

March 1, 1856 — Chairman, Mahlon Hasbrook; Supervisors, John Coldwell and Isaac Steele; Clerk, Aaron Denny; Supt. of Schools, George Beaty; Treasurer, Charles Boothby; Assessor, Abel S. Orcutt; Justice of the Peace, Ezekiel Odell; Constables, Benjamin Calkins and John Odell.

March 21, 1857: Chairman, Isaac Steele; Supervisors, Samuel Latimer and Ener Nelson; Justice of the Peace, Michael Blekkelian; Bondsman, Aaron Denny and John Gulson; Assessor, Charles Antelmann; Constable, John E. Odell; Justice of the Peace, A. B. Erbe.

April 16, 1858—Chairman, Isaac Steele; Supervisors, Ener Nelson and Jorgen Gulson; Clerk, Aaron Denny; Justice of the Peace, Henry Teeple, Edward O'Hare and Peter Haroldson; Bondsmen, John Peterson Dybdahl and Oleson Kliffgaard; Constables, John Peterson and Andrew Keating. Other names holding minor offices are: E. H. Gleason, J. M. Avry, Daniel Deneen and Paul Copley.

Chairmen of the Town of Vermont from 1859 to 1977: 1859, S. C. Stub; 1860, D. Quinn; 1866, A. B. Erbe; 1870, George Beaty; 1871, Samuel Coldwell; 1881, Charles Elver; 1890, Andrew Anderson; 1900, Martin Mickelson; 1904, Tom Gallagher; 1908, Martin Mickelson; 1913, Tom Gallagher; 1917, A. J. Dybdahl; 1921, George Gulson; 1925, Thomas Gallagher; 1932, George Gulson; 1938, G. Helmenstine; 1947, Joe Dybdahl to date, 1977.

Clerks of the Town of Vermont from 1856 to 1977: 1858, Aaron Denny; 1873, Ole Thorsrud; 1880, O. M. Helland; 1887, Ole Olson Thorsrud; 1895, Ole Docken; 1900, George Gulson; 1902, Amos Thorsrud; 1904, A. J. Dybdahl; 1907, Nels Haugner; 1909, Sever Amble; 1911, Andrew Amble; 1918, Andrew Brummer; 1920, Iver Hagen; 1934, Leonard Moe; 1965, Grant Skalet to date.

— Submitted by Avis McLean



Byron Jorns, a well known artist, lived for a time in Vermont Township. His love and respect for Vermont was expressed in much of his work. One of his paintings is reproduced here for all to enjoy. The painting is owned by Nancy and Lee Vogel. We thank them for their generosity.

**ENGLISH
IMMIGRATION
AND
TEMPERANCE
SOCIETY**



ENGLISH IMMIGRATION

At this time there was great suffering in Europe. They were looking for a frontier, but there was none. There were no opportunities. Many were hopeless.

A society was formed in England called the "British Temperance Immigration Society and Savings Fund." The word "temperance" seemed to have been chosen because of the general interest then taken in that subject. Men of means invested heavily in it hoping for a profit. The declared objective of the society was to raise a fund by weekly contributions to buy land in the State of Wisconsin and to secure to each settler a farm of 80 acres with improvements; the whole not to exceed the value of 40 pounds. When sufficient funds were raised to purchase the land and make improvements, the names of those wishing to emigrate were to be put in a bag and lots were drawn for the limited number of chances to acquire land in Wisconsin.

The society was to fence, cultivate and sow five acres of land and to erect a house on each farm of 80 acres.

In the spring of 1844, Charles Wilson, John Hudson, Clarence Ranyard and two others were breaking land and building houses for the newcomers. These houses, 14'x20' were a story and a half in height. Crops were put on the 80 acres under the direction of Charles Wilson. Fifty-six persons came that year and settled in Mazomanie. Another group, coming also in 1844, came from Milwaukee to Gorstville, a name given to the present township of Mazomanie, Berry and Black Earth. Reeseville was the name designated to the present township of Arena. All of the above came in two ships. After landing in Boston, they came through Albany to Buffalo and around the lakes to Milwaukee, then with ox teams to Gorstville.

The following article appeared in the Argus, a Madison paper:

"The British Temperance Emigration Society are desirous of receiving tenders for the building of thirty log houses on their settlement between this and the first day of April, 1845. Full particulars may be obtained by applying to the agent, Mr. Charles Reeves, after the 20th of October, at the English Settlement, Gorstville, near Cross Plains."

In 1845 a hundred people came and settled in Mazomanie and Black Earth.

It was not until 1846 that a group of settlers

from the society came to Vermont Township. Of the many names listed, the familiar ones are: Bell, Harrop, Gorst, Sutcliffe, Goodlad, Porter, Steele, White, Lockwood, Caldwell, Hayes, Hawley, Knight, Griffiths, Batty, Turk, Wilson, Fitton, Reeves, Booth and Gillette. There were, undoubtedly, many more than those whose names are listed, since we know others were here, Finleyson, Whitaker, Culard, Hazeltine and others. However, these may have come later. (Note the history of Clover Hill farm.)

This society in England had many problems. Complaints began in 1846. The commissioners were under plain and positive instructions to collect the rents and protect the interests of the investors. They were expected to purchase the land, erect houses and cultivate the five acres of land in each 80. To do this, prompt payment of rents was necessary.

In November 1846, Charles Wilson wrote to England "...no medicine, no provisions, no money and whole families lying sick, unable to help one another. The county commissioners have aided the ill and poor, but we have many deaths." Most of the settlers were tradespeople in England; knew little or nothing of farming.

Charges and counter charges were made by the society and the commissioners. In 1847 a lawyer in Madison gave Charles Reeves a written legal opinion. He held that the settlers could not be ejected from the society's estates by any proceeding on its part. He advised that the society be dissolved and the settlers should sign a bill of chancery to close up its affairs.

A meeting was held in Liverpool at the house of Samuel Roberts, 17 Button Street, on Monday, May 7, 1849. It was voted that all books and papers in Wisconsin belonging to the society should be kept by Robert Gorst. A George Cutler was to be sent to Wisconsin to cooperate with Gorst in closing the society. They were given full power by the following motion which was voted unanimously. "The meeting hereby invests them with unlimited powers to wind up the whole of the society's affairs."

Thus, another group of brave pilgrims was ultimately freed of the tentacles of the old homeland. In all fairness it must be acknowledged the company of investors meant to be generous. Not many settlers in this land had a house built for them, land plowed, and a well.

This is a letter written to England by a settler, Newhall, who lived seven miles southwest of Mazomanie. As we see it, this places him squarely in Vermont Township, of course, not a township at the time it was written.

Newhall wrote to Mr. Pinchin of Bradford, England.

"The next day was Sunday, and we arrived at Mr. Reeves in the afternoon. We found him a nice gentlemanly kind of man; he received us very kindly, and invited us to stay at his home the day out. We accepted the invitation, and he brought us in his own wagon the next morning to our farm, a distance of four miles.

"But I must endeavor to give you some description given of it in letters from Wisconsin. It is wonderful to see a country so beautifully formed, and planted by nature's God. The grass in many places is so high that it will take one up to the middle, and decorated with every description of flowers, such as roses and numbers of flowers such as grow in the gardens of England. There are quantities of wild strawberries which are very good, and other fruit not yet in season. The country is not so flat but on every hand you may see what are called bluffs here, some thickly, others partly covered with trees, while the other parts of the land, with the exception of here and there one, there is not woods to be an obstruction to cultivation.

"While I sit and write, with the door open, the tall grass waving before me, to the right, there is a beautiful grove of trees and before me a bluff, there are more which gives it a very beautiful and picturesque appearance....

"There is another thing in its favor, the water is exceedingly good, with a river running in a serpentine direction through Wisconsin."

He wrote that provisions were scarce and dear.

And so another group of settlers made a great impact upon Vermont Township. We learn that at its founding, the town government of New England was used as the pattern for the Township of Vermont. John Caldwell, one of the British Temperance Society immigrants, was elected one of the supervisors.

Robert Bell, a Scotchman, the first member named as coming to Vermont in this group, is mentioned in the biographies of 1880 as one of the first fruit growers in the state. His nursery was famous and most of his neighbors had large apple orchards. There were different varieties than those popular at the present time, snows, wealthies, Haas, Northwest greening, strawberry. Most of them were snows, a pure white meat, both crisp and tender. Memory brings back the walk through the orchard on the way from school, kicking into a drift of red apples and picking up the biggest,

perfect wonderful apples. Those were the days! Why were there so few apple worms? Is their natural enemy extinct and the balance of nature askew? The trees never knew spray.

Mr. Bell also brought in different varieties of raspberries and blackberries which the birds helped plant in the woods and pastures for miles from the nursery. These were the dewberry, a huge blackberry that grew on vines near the ground, and two varieties that grew on tall briars, a round, very flavorful berry and a long one. The blackcap raspberries were so plentiful they could be found by the pail full. The busy farm women filled their cellars with jars of these berries made into sauce. After the farmers stopped burning the woods in the spring, these berries no longer thrive. Now we have prickly ash, a nuisance bush, that grows long prickly spines and is so dense, it makes a jungle out of our woodlands.

Mr. Bell also brought a beautiful plant for making hedges, the barberry. This makes a story of its own and will be found later in the history.

The biography also mentions the home of Robert Bell, that it was beautiful. Mrs. Bell had fashioned an outdoor tea room under a stone ledge where she entertained her friends. The home was burned in the late 1940's. Three parties own the farm.

Another family mentioned of these English people, was the Kerr family, three members of which were a part of Vermont history. Bessie was a teacher in Steensrud School an exceptional teacher; and taught many of our people. We remember her brothers, Heck and Al, colorful fellows who had been cowboys on the western plains. At the time we knew them they owned two farms, the Kerr place in Black Earth Township, presently owned by Kenneth Laufenberg, and the Whitaker place in Vermont, where they brought a herd of beef cattle for summer feeding. It was a big day when they moved the herd, riding with them on beautiful horses. Not many people in Vermont rode horses with saddles in those days. Finally, these brothers made the Whitaker place their home where they lived until their deaths in the 1930's.

Joe Dybdahl bought the place from them, took out the fences and made it part of his farm, the former Gulson place. We still call it the Kerr place.

Mr. Whitaker, also an Englishman, built the first frame house in the township, a three-story house with two generous stairways. They could drive to the entrances of the first and second stories. There was a kitchen the length of the house with a cooling cellar and buttery back of it. Hence, the word, "baaterie." In fact, many English words grew to be part of the Norwegian

vocabulary. The word train became "trrine," the word pail became "pal," the word fence "fens." O. E. Rolvaag, writer of "Giants in the Earth," called the language they developed, "Godt Iowa Norsk."

Mr. Whitaker was a hog raiser. He kept his hogs until they weighed five to six hundred pounds. He valued the acorn as hog feed and let them run in the woods; rail fences undoubtedly held hogs. We hear that Kaiser Bill had hams shipped from Virginia because he wanted the delectable meat from hogs raised on acorns. So you can see when Kaiser Bill heard about it, it was old in Vermont Township.

Many Steensrud School pupils will remember with pleasure Verna and, especially, Inez Seston, granddaughters of William Seston, who taught them in the late 1930's and early 1940's.

The Eddy Brunner home is where John Fitton settled. Tom Denny married one of his daughters.

Jim Fitton, the son of John Fitton, threshed grain with a huge steam engine of which your writer was terrified when she was a child. The Fittons lived in Black Earth.

Jim Turk, a son of Charles Turk, one of these immigrants, lived in Vermont for a number of years on the farm presently owned by the Grant Skalets. Frank, Ream and Blanche were his children. Frank married Eliza Lockwood, Ream married Mable Halsten and Blanche, Ervin Heiney. Frank and Eliza lived on the farm presently owned by John Boatright. Pat Deneen lived there also for many years, selling it in the 1930's to the Virgil Clasons.

In passing, we need to mention the neatness of the Jim Turk home. It was always beautiful, and the ladies had time to sit in their glider lawn swing in their ruffly white dresses, on week days!

Another member, was Charles Lockwood, patriarch of the Lockwood clan, some of them are still with us in Vermont. Irene Lockwood Booth is the daughter of Jim Lockwood, and Lily Schlick Mickelson is the daughter of Annie Lockwood Schlick. Lilly's daughter, Ardis Mickelson Sullivan, and her husband, James, are present owners of the Gilman Mickelson farm in Saw Bottom Valley, "Saga Bottomen." The farm was formerly owned by Ralph Reeves, grandson of that first Charles Reeves, we heard so much about at the beginning of the English story. Irene married Vernon Booth and has two sons, Kenneth and Ronald. Her deceased brother Harold's daughter, Gertrude and Ronald Booth, reside with them in the beautiful old red brick home built by Vernon's grandfather, George Booth.

There were five girls and four boys in the Charles Lockwood family. George, the oldest son,

lived on the farm in Pleasant Valley presently owned by Joe Dybdahl. An incident tells the kind of man George Lockwood was. His farm was near the home where Mathia Brager raised a family of eight children. One day Mrs. Brager's cattle had strayed across the road into his land. Alvin Brager was a little lad at the time and was there to bring them back to their own pastures. Mr. Lockwood was very annoyed and let it be known in no uncertain terms that it wasn't to happen again. When Alvin came home, his mother asked, "What did he say?" Alvin answered, "Why he couldn't even swear decently!" (This conversation took place in the Norwegian language.)

George was married to Caroline Parkins. His children were Mary Lockwood Reich, Pearl, Mrs. Ed Watzke and Charlie, who married Nellie Walters. He remained on his father's farm until the early 1930's.

Elmer, the youngest son, was with the Capital Times newspaper for many years, beginning as a bookkeeper in 1921. He stepped up to become Business Manager. When the two Madison newspapers combined, he became General Manager of Madison Newspapers, Incorporated. He retired in 1964. Elmer had a keen sense of humor, and when he was a freshman in the high school in Black Earth, in a mischievous moment, very innocently called Puget Sound, "Puggett Sound." Of course, there was a roar of laughter and Elmer had a new name. The nickname "Puggett" stuck to him all through high school.

Jim, the second child of Charles Lockwood, lived in Pleasant Valley on the farm presently owned by Harland Samson. The George Lockwoods lived there until their youngest child, Elmer, was six years old. From that home they moved to the first place mentioned. Jim's children were Irene Booth and Harold.

Mary Lockwood Bestor's children were Ethel, Edith, Bessie, Elsie, Ida, Ruth, Ruby, Alice, Matie and Cecil.

Emma, married Orville Perkins, lived for a time on the place owned by the Otto Reichs. Their children were Grant, Dwight, Curtis, Chester, Charlotte and Leota.

John lived in Mazomanie, Alfred in Black Earth.

Annie Lockwood, previously mentioned, married Otto Schlick, lived on the farm across from the Steele School, now called the Booth School. This farm is presently owned by Vance Sutterholm. Her children, Amy (Mrs. Carl Mickelson), Lilly (Mrs. Gilman Mickelson), Louis, Cyrus, Leonard and Marian (Mrs. Glen Carter).

Eliza married Frank Turk. Their children were: Alice, Floyd, Russell and Harry.

The youngest of the Charles Lockwoods was Elizabeth, married Thomas Sharrett, who lived in Iowa County.

Marvin Huset, great-great-grandson of Charles Reeves, agent of the Temperance Society, has preserved among his family historical records a photostatic copy of a very interesting letter, post-marked "Dover Post Office, June 16, 1857." It is written to an agent of the Society in London. The letter is a scholarly treatise of about 800 words using legal language, with completely legible, beautiful script. In his letter he expresses great concern and disillusionment with the whole project. He enumerates reasons for resigning his position as agent; mentioning the impossible conditions in which the settlers found themselves; his own failing health, and others.

Marvin Huset is also great-great-grandson of Robert Gorst, and had two equally fine photostatic copies of letters written by him to a member of the British Parliament, John Thompson, Esqr. in London. These letters were even longer. In them he expresses the same disappointment and his wish to be finished with his work as agent for the Society. One very expressive paragraph is quoted:

"... had I known what I must suffer in body, mind, character, and spiritual pursuits, through the Society's affairs from the first to the present time, all the treasures of Great Britain could not have induced me to undertake the offices I have held in England and America."

Rev. Gorst, of the Wesleyan faith, tells that at the request of the people in August 1857, he had been appointed to travel, as one of two preachers, a circuit of the Society's lands which "embraced a circumference of 50 miles."

Since there are so many we wish to include in the history of Vermont, we feel we must select only those who have been born or raised or lived in this township. However, there are those whose influence has affected us all. Such a one is Robert Gorst.

Robert Gorst was born in Northwich, England, in 1796 and died in the United States on April 27, 1863.

As most boys in that day learned a trade, he became an expert testor of nautical instruments and was employed in a large establishment for the manufacture of same. In that position he came in contact with captains and sailors from various parts of the world, as well as reading the London and Edinburg papers. From reading those papers, he became interested in forming an immigration society to secure land and homes in the U. S. He interested Lawrence Hayworth and John Thompson, member of Parliament, and other influential men in the plan.

"The British Temperance Immigration Society" was organized December 26, 1842, in Liverpool, England, with Robert Gorst as secretary.

Being a minister of the gospel and possessing fluent speech, he traveled over England lecturing to interested people on emigration to the U. S.

John Gorst, son of Robert, was a professional painter and painted landscape scenes called "The Wilds of America" on canvas several feet long to be used by his father on his lecturing tours. Some were painted from pictures, others from description, and no doubt painter's imagination. They served the purpose and won the people.

The Society bought land between Lodi, Wisconsin, and Mineral Point, Wisconsin, from the United States, paying \$1.25 an acre.

The first town, Gorstville, was located three miles west of Mazomanie. When the St. Paul Railroad came through, it was more convenient to place the railroad station where Mazomanie now stands; so Gorstville lost to the new town. About 1000 persons decided to try their fortune in the new world. Many more came later.

And so we find that the whole idea of this British Immigration Society was conceived in the mind of this man, Robert Gorst.

In his biography, we find mention of a close relative, Lord Gorst. This man had two sons, Sir Guy and Sir Harold. Sir Guy had been the English Ambassador in Egypt when President Theodore Roosevelt visited there; and had been on the reception committee. Sir Harold, assistant to Lord Gorst as Commissioner of Education, was displeased because conservative England would not permit him to make some changes he favored; came to New York, to educate his daughter and see if he could introduce his ideas there. He said the U. S. ran their students through an educational process similar to Chicago sausage! He thought each student should be permitted to make the most and best of himself according to his natural talent; by that means creating experts.

And so we find the first settlers intensely interested in education; establishing public schools into the township, a must.

Robert Gorst's children were John, Thomas and Mary Harrop.

We are interested to find the name Appleby and Appleton in the family tree, although only one granddaughter lived in Vermont.

Thomas Gorst and Mary Ann Appleton were married in 1838 in Liverpool, England. Ellen, the eighth child in their family of ten children, was born in 1855. She married Harry Walters; and Nellie, who married Charlie Lockwood, was their first child. Charlie and Nellie have previously been mentioned, living on the George Lockwood farm

until moving to Black Earth in the 1930's.

John Gorst married Prudence Copley. Their son, George, lived in Mounds Creek Valley; he would not set a price on his stock on the Sabbath.

A Gorst family, in the early 1900's, lived on the farm presently owned by the William Aeschli-mann's.

The Reeve families have complete histories of their ancestors, including dates. We will use those of the ancestors of people of our township.

Charles Reeve (1803-1885) married Mary Hues (1807-1867), both born in England. Their children, Emma Reeve Leach, first woman married in Mazo-manie, to Robert Leach in 1844. Mary Ann Reeve, born in England, married to Harry Goodlad; Charles, born in England, a Civil War soldier, buried in Nashville, Tenn. Anne Reeve (1845-1895) married Banford Dodge in 1868 and William Reeve (1829-1889) born in England, came to the United States with his parents in 1844, married Fanny Gorst (1832-1873).

The children of William and Fanny Gorst Reeve were Charles (1865-1918); Emily; Maggie Reeve Dodge; Ralph, father of Vernon and Orville; Tom, father of Oscar; William and George (1858-1916); George married Elizabeth Stephens (1858-1940), born in Primrose in March 1885.

The children of George and Elizabeth (Libby) Reeve were Lottie (1890-1971) married Melvin Huset (1887) in 1911. Myrtle (1898) married

Herman Wolf of the Wolf, Kubly and Hirsig Co. in Madison; Belle (1902-1969) married her first husband, Raymond Tobin, in 1925, her second, Earl Lins, in 1942. Blanche Reeve (1905) married Joseph Loy in 1931. Neither Belle nor Blanche had children.

Emily Reeve Sheldon (1897) married Clarence Sheldon in 1914, had six children, Clinton, George Wendall, Ervin, Glen, Lyle Merle and Elizabeth Ann Coyle.

Lottie and Melvin Huset's children were Marvin and Della. Marvin was born in 1915, married Marcella Howard in 1922. They had one daughter, Marilyn Huset (1950); Della (1922-1957) married Charles Meigs in 1941. They had one son, Kenneth Meigs (1950).

Myrtle and Herman Wolf had two daughters, Lois Jean McManus and Janice Wolf.

Emily and Clarence Sheldon's children, Clin-ton married Ann Higgins in 1938; George Wendall married Minnie Griffith in 1938; Ervin married Arlene Powers in 1948; Lyle married Marion Wallace in 1945; Merle married Ann Richards in 1952; and Elizabeth Ann married Cletus Coyle in 1953.

Most of the history of the British Temper-ance Society was taken from "The History of the Township and Village of Mazomanie," written by William Kittle. The history of the Reeve and Gorst families was submitted by Marvin Huset.

I received your welcome letter - and
 was glad to find that Mr. Thompson had returned my
 letter of the 11th of Jan^y - last and that you had been
 well enough to hear the our that I was hoping
 all - I shall call these times - twice I see some
 in time to serve his party faithfully - with arguments
 and facts - but having neither justice - equity - nor
 law or society rules - on his side of the question
 stand firm -
 Our legal advisor informs me that we have
 done perfectly right in disposing of the farm
 in question under existing circumstances - if the
 farm was not paid for according to bill - having had
 paid \$28 - in and received \$28 - 5 - 11 - not five cents
 standing in debt in 1847 - paid nothing since -
 we hoped the deed in 1853 - and enter in a rat
 of deed together - 3rd Jan in 1857 when
 grain had got up about 2 years - John Colvane and I
 began to lay down this claim - to get the farm -
 then your letter we were afraid in payment for
 the farm - did that agree with the new title deed
 which helps to pay (No surcharges) but if the
 members will submit to it they can take the heritable
 title of the farm - but I am unwilling to say that
 both British and American Law will still justify
 the proceedings of the Officers in their proceedings in this

Dear Mother
 I have
 your letter
 1859 -
 id King Street Post Office -
 June 16th 1859 -

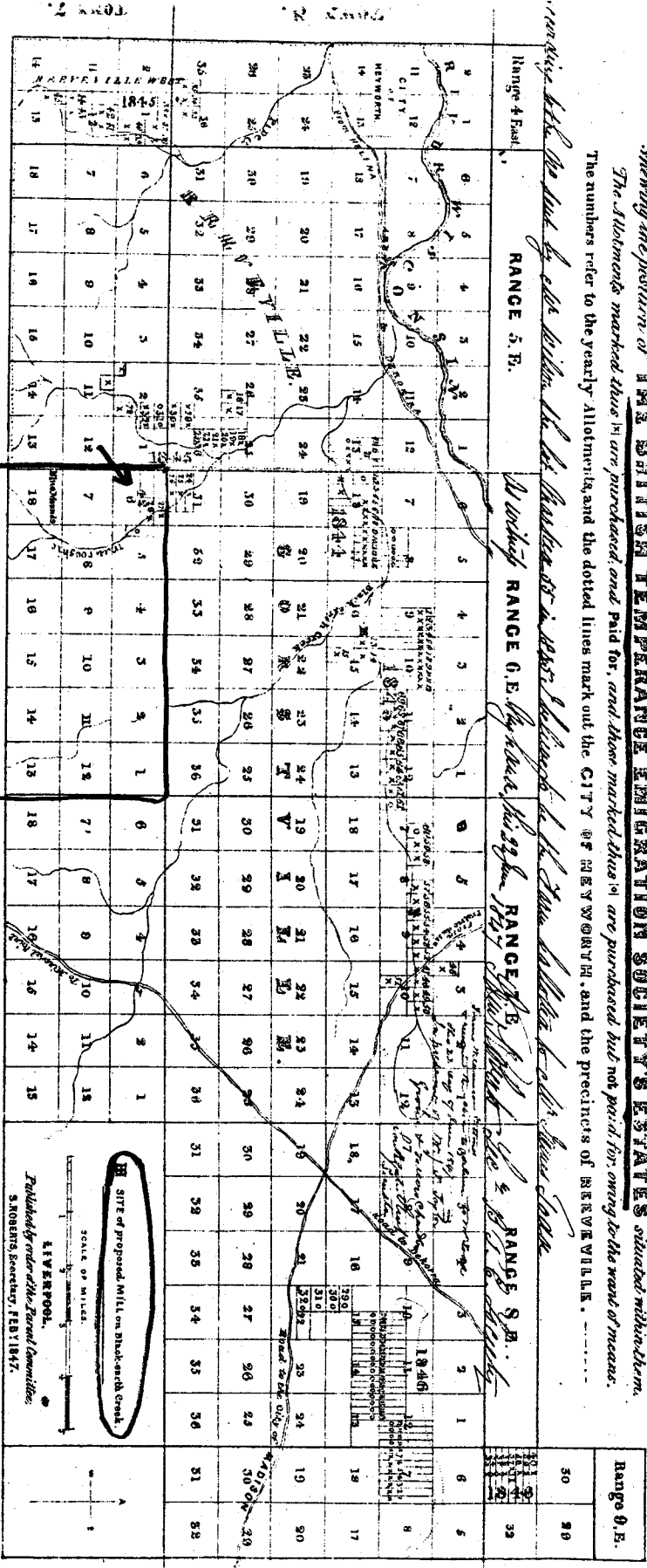
WISCONSIN.

6X9028
D17
1847

A. MAP containing the two EAST half of Sections in the NORTH Half of TOWN 7 and two half of Sections in the EAST Half, RANGE 4, East, — the North halves of TOWN 1, and the whole of TOWN 8, in RANGES 5, 6, 7, East, — the whole of TOWN 8, in RANGE 8, East, and the two WEST half of Sections in TOWN 8, with Sections 30, 29, 31 and 32, of TOWN 9 in RANGE 9 East, showing the position of THE BRITISH TEMPERANCE EMIGRATION SOCIETY'S ESTATES situated within them.

The allotments marked thus [M] are purchased and paid for, and those marked thus [O] are purchased but not paid for, owing to the want of means.

The numbers refer to the yearly Allotments, and the dotted lines mark out the CITY of NEWWORTH, and the precincts of REWEVILLE.





IRISH



IMMIGRATION

I'm proud to be an American and I'm proud that I'm Irish, too,
For I love the wearin' of the green and I love the red, white and blue.

And what could be more beautiful than a Shamrock, goodness knows,
Unless your heart is raptured by an American Beauty Rose?

No it isn't just the blarney
when I proudly say, "It's true
That my heart is pledged to America
And to dear old Erin,
too!"



THE IRISH EXODUS

For in 1846 to 1848 there was a great plague and blight in Ireland. It led to a mass migration of the Irish. It led to the peopling of the Vermont area mostly with sons and daughters of Erin.

Sullivan's "Story of Ireland" tells it this way.

"Then was witnessed a most monstrous proceeding. In 1847, the famine years, while the people lay perishing, the land lay wasted. Whatever seed was put in the ground, the hunger-maddened victims rooted it out and ate it raw.

"No crops were raised, and, of course, no rents were paid. In any other land on earth the government would remit or have remitted by the landlords the rental obligations of those famine years. But alas, in cruelties of oppression, endured, Ireland is like no other country. With the permission and concurrence of the government, the landlords now demanded the arrears of rent for the past three years. And the object for which this monstrous demand was made: failing payment, eviction from house and home by the thousands.

"Some with broken hearts saw the 'emergency men' with crow-bar, pick, and battering ram, demolish their homes, whilst they themselves were left by the roadside to wait for merciful death.

"Thousands of families, panic-stricken, did not wait to witness such heartless destruction. With breaking hearts they closed their doors, and bade eternal farewell to the scenes of home, flying in crowds to "the Land of Liberty" in the West.

"The streams of fugitives swelled to dimensions that startled Christendom. But the English press burst into peals of joy and triumph, for now at last the Irish question would be settled. Now at last the turbulent and untouchable race would be cleared out.

" 'In a short time' said the London Times, 'A Catholic Celt will be as rare in Ireland as a Red Indian on the shores of Manhattan.'" (1)

(1) Sullivan, Alexander M., M. P. "Story of Ireland" Murphy & McCarthy, Boston, 1885.

While this may be a rather slanted account of the situation, conservative estimates by students of the era indicate that almost one-half of Ireland's population of eight million emigrated to the western "land of the free and home of the brave" or perished of the famine and accompanying disease.

It is to be remembered that the people of Ireland are a soulful folk. They love their land, its hills and streams, its fields, and "lochs", its woods, and meads.

They love its castles,
its towns,
they love their shops,
their inns.

But above all they love their church
—that is to say their faith,
—that is to say **The Faith**.

To preserve the things they loved, many survivors moved.

The trials in the homeland produced a new fullness of time. This fullness brought Irish families to the new State of Wisconsin. After a stop-over on the east coast where they found jobs to aid them temporarily, they gathered their belongings again, to move westward once more. By 1850, there were 21,000 Irish in Wisconsin.

Here they cleared land, built shelters, planted crops, said their prayers, rooted their families. Here they sought to continue their old sod way of life, and, above all, the old faith.

(Written by Joseph V. Braig, Pastor of St. James Catholic Church for their centennial book, One Hundred Years of the Faith, Town of Vermont 1860-19-60.)

Norwegianian

IMMIGRATION



“Kan du glemme gamle Norge?”

THE NORWEGIANS

We will begin our story of the Norwegians with excerpts from a speech given by Hubert Humphrey in Norway on the Fourth of July, 1975. The Norwegians were celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the sailing of the ship "Restauration," the first ship bringing Norwegian immigrants to America.

"This initial group of 46 persons was the vanguard of what was to become a wave of Norwegian immigration to the United States. In fact, except for Ireland, Norway gave to America a larger portion of its population than any other nation.

"As the Norwegians arrived on American soil in the 19th Century and moved westward, they put their stamp on every aspect of American life. Their influence is found in the arts, in education, in music, in agriculture, in science, business and politics.

"These pioneers had no guarantees about life in the new land. They set sail, not with certainty but with hope, not with assurances but with challenge. They brought with them not gold nor silver, but skill, perseverance and confidence. And they were strengthened by a long tradition of respect for their fellow human beings.

"These early Norwegian pioneers believed in self government and helped to strengthen by their sense of political and social responsibility this young and expanding democracy in America."

Hubert Humphrey's mother was born in Norway. Her mother and father brought their family to America in the 1880's and settled in Minnesota.

Histories of individual families will follow. However, since we have few descriptions of the ordeal the first settlers in our township endured, we will quote a story written by "Don Oleson of Insight," published on January 6, 1975, in the Milwaukee Journal, probably typical of the experiences of many of them.

"Getting to the New World was an ordeal by water, particularly in the early days. Under sail the average time from Liverpool to New York was 44 days; by the 1880's, the early steamships had reduced the time to about 13. Food in a sailing ship tended to be bad in quality and short in quantity. Fresh water was limited and often foul.

"The Oleson's crossing took nine weeks under sail. Their baby died at sea. They had brought food of their own, butter, cheese, sausage while they lasted; lefsa (unleavened potato bread) and flat bread, when the perishables were gone, in fair weather the immigrants were permitted to build small cooking fires on deck, using rationed firewood. When the Atlantic roared, everyone was jammed below under

battered hatches amid misery. There was no hot food. One shipload had a particularly long grueling voyage under sail. The passengers ran out of food. When the ship reached the Grand Banks off Newfoundland, the captain allowed his passengers to fish over the side with anything at hand, hooks fashioned from metal scraps, odd pieces of line. The Norwegian immigrants, old hands at fishing caught enough fish to stave off hunger.

"The earliest immigrants landed at New York. After 1847, when the United States set stricter standards for passenger ships, they often docked in Canada, where standards were more lenient." (We find in the family histories some of the ancestors of Vermont people landed at Quebec and made their way by ship through the Great Lakes.)

"These inland oceans could be savage too, and many lives were lost in violent storms. In 1852, the passenger ship Atlantic was rammed and sunk on Lake Erie; 300 people drowned, almost one-fourth of them Norwegian immigrants who never reached the promised land."

We interrupt here. That tragedy occurred as a result of a feud between two ship captains—one of them used his ship as a weapon to destroy the other. Over 120 people on that ship were from Valdres, the province from which the ancestors of most of the Scandinavians in Vermont Township came.

"In the early days, a forty-acre farm was about all a man could handle. On 160 acre farms, depressions are found where several homes had at one time stood. But later arrivals might buy larger farms—perhaps 80 acres. By that time horses were available, replacing the slower oxen; manpower was more available and new farm machinery was coming on the market. (Many moved west to new frontiers.)"

(Hannah Field, a daughter of Rev. John N. Field, a beloved parochial school teacher, told of the sadness experienced as a child, when friends to who she had become attached left to join the wagon train west. She told of a procession of wagons moving out toward Dodgeville and Mineral Point.)

"During the Civil War, the 15th Wisconsin regiment was overwhelmingly Norwegian American. Out of nearly 900 soldiers, 128 answered to the name of 'Ole'.

"But the Norwegians tended at first to be clannish, to cling to their mother tongue, foods and customs; to have their own Norwegian language churches (a grandmother said the word of God had no power in the English language). The men were forced to learn the English language in order to carry on business with their Yankee neighbors, but many women never bothered.

"They also had their own newspapers. (Ved Arnen-Dekora Posten) These were comforting links with their homeland. But this aloofness did not always endear them to their Yankee neighbors. During the Wisconsin State Constitutional Convention in 1846, one delegate observed that Negroes were more entitled to vote than the Norwegians.

"But time, schooling and a burning desire to be part of the new land gradually erased this clannishness, and second generation Norwegian Americans began to blend into the new land.

"Quite a few Norwegian American women became cooks or maids in American homes. Johan Reinert Reinertsen, who explored America in 1843 and published a guide for immigrants reported that there was scarcely a home in Madison, Wisconsin, that did not employ Norwegian women. These women created an image of 'morality, sobriety and natural ability,' he said.

"It was a time of simple pleasure and staggering obstacles; a time of cooperation because people needed each other. Neighbors sweated shoulder to shoulder with neighbor for the good of both. Ole Rolvaag, novelist of frontier life, was one of these pioneers. This is how he described the times.

"And it was as if nothing affected people in those days. They threw themselves blindly into the impossible, and accomplished the 'unbelievable.' If anyone succumbed to the struggle—and that happened often—another would take his place. Youth was in the race; the unknown, the untried, the unheard of, was in the air; people caught it, were intoxicated by it, threw themselves away, and laughed at the cost. The human race had not known such faith and such self-confidence since history began."

INFORMATION REGARDING NAMES OF EARLY NORWEGIAN SETTLERS OF VERMONT

In order to identify some of the Norwegian settlers, it is necessary to understand the naming process used by the Norwegian immigrants.

In the mid-19th century, no standard system of family names existed in Norway. The surname, as we know it, was not used in the rural areas. People were identified by their given name with the patronymic (father's name plus "son" or "datter") added. By this method, Ole, the son of Hans, was known as Ole Hanson, and Anna, his daughter, as Anna Hansdatter. Often a third name was added which indicated the place of residence. Each farm had a permanent name. If Ole Hanson was living at Nes, he would be called Ole Hanson Nes. Should Ole move to a place called Bakke, his name would become Ole Hanson Bakke. If Ole had a son name Knut, this son would be called Knut Oleson.

When arriving in America, the Norwegian

immigrant had to adopt a new system of naming and decide on a surname. He might use the patronymic or the farm name. In cases where he settled among his countrymen, he was slow to change the naming tradition in church records. In legal transactions where he was dealing with non-Norwegians, he had to use a name which could be written and comprehended by the officials of this country. All Norwegians could read, but many could not write English or spell in such a way that they could be understood. The American officials would spell a name the way it sounded to them. An example of this is found on the discharge papers of John Hanson Urness, where he is shown as "John H. Ornis."

Names which did not conform easily to American pronunciation often became a completely new name. Among given names, Jens (pronounced "yens") might become "James", Karl became "Carl" or "Charles". One family who chose the farm name, "Horvei", changed it to "Harvey", and the Solfestsen family became "Sylvester".

It is not uncommon to find brothers using different surnames. If each brother was living at a different farm at the time they emigrated from Norway, and each chose to use the farm name as a surname, the surnames would not be the same. It is not unusual to find families in which some members used the patronymic and others the farm name.

The first generation immigrants most commonly used the patronymic, but encouraged the second generation to take back the old farm name. This perhaps explains why there are many surnames in Vermont Township which are Americanized forms of Norwegian farm names which have been in existence in Norway since prehistoric times.

— by Anna Mae Gesme

IN DISCUSSING NAMES

Vermont had its own problems with three. The name, Mikkell, must have been loved by mothers in Norway; so many families seemed to have one of them. When they came to America, the children of the Mikkels became Mickelsons. It was confusing in Vermont because there were four distinct families, entirely unrelated.

There were two Arne Mickelsons. One, Arne Glaghang Mickelson, came from Begnedalen in Valdres and was the father of Martin and Ever and their sisters. The other, Arne Vasfaret Mickelson, came from Hedalen Valdres and was the father of Andrew, Gabriel and Bertha.

Then there were Mikkell and Aagat Mickelson, from Sogn, Norway, parents of Mike Mickelson, who farmed the place where Jon Urness and Bob and Edith Urness Lickel presently live; bought the

tavern in Black Earth. His children were Harry, Adolph, Arthur and Viola.

The father of Elliot Mickelson (Connie Goderstad's father), was Mikkel Mickelson, son of Mikkel Sukki (stepson of one of our earliest settlers, Halvor Bakken).

It is not surprising there would be difficulty with the Huset name. "Huset" means house.

Anders Huset's history is written in detail. He came to Vermont from Hedalan, Norway, in 1852 with many children, including the father of the Anderson brothers and Mattie Anderson, Paul Anderson Huset.

Andrew Huset, father of Melvin Huset, came to Vermont from Perry in 1880; also had a large family.

Neither is it surprising the Haugen name could be used by many, since "Haugen" means hill. There are a few hills in Norway.

The Gladhaugen Mickelson family were often called Haugen.

The Jorgen Vestgrøvhaugen Gulson family were also called Haugen.

Martin and Halsten Haugen were born in Vestgrøvhaugen in Norway. Their descendants, Hjalmar, Norman and their children have kept the name.

The Bakken and Hauge families all have distant, if not close, relationships. There are several families of each name.

HILLS OF HOME

by Henry H. Bakken

THE EXODUS

It is not certain who was the first immigrant to America from Valdres, Norway, but grandfather Bakken was certainly among the earliest (1849) from that Valley. One account gives credit to a fellow by the name of Steffen Olsen (Kubakken) Helle for promoting migration. He had gone to America in 1846 and revisited Valdres in 1848. His enthusiasm and glowing reports of the wonders found in America spread like wildfire the length and breadth of the Valley. This messenger's tidings was the fuse that detonated action. Grandfather decided to pull stakes and risk whatever hazards may exist in becoming a pioneer on the Wisconsin frontier. He was 28 years old then, and Marit Oldsdatter, his betrothed, wished to accompany him on the journey. They were married some time prior to their departure from the homeland. Halvor notified his church (han fikk attest) as was the custom on May 8, 1849, declaring his intention to leave the country. In this period of ferment there were counter arguments relating to emigration and the disadvantages of such ventures. Soren Jaabaek attributed the potency of the American magnet during his time to two major forces: (1) Its

great civil liberties, and (2) its wonderfully fertile soil. These forces acted upon a country in which there was obviously much discontent. The Church of Norway was strongly opposed to emigration. Jaabaek argued that emigration was the only available relief. The doors at home, he said, are closed to poverty stricken people. They face dark night. Letters from emigrants will constitute an endless chain of evidence inducing people to migrate.

They obtained passage on a new ship named the Lynna and lifted anchor at Drammen on August 14, 1849. As the ship sailed out of the harbor, many passengers stood on the deck with tears in their eyes as they waved farewell to relatives and friends. Some were sad because they were leaving their homeland possibly never to return, and others were happy to be abandoning a country in which they had fared so badly.

Eventually, the ship joined other seagoing vessels all heading toward New York harbor. In good time a pilot from shore came aboard and took command for the docking of the ship. It was a happy occasion for all the emigrants because they were running low of both water and food. Water had been rationed to each family according to the number of individuals for some time before the voyage ended. On arrival, they got all the water needed for consumption and for washing their clothes.

After the passengers remained aboard ship the time required by law, they were transferred to a ferry and taken by a steamboat which wended its way up the Hudson River until they arrived at Troy, New York. From there they took a canal boat pulled by horses to Buffalo. This was a very slow trip taking many days at a snail's pace. At Buffalo the emigrants boarded a side-wheeler steamboat for passage through the Great Lakes, finally reaching the west shore of Lake Michigan where stops were made at Manitowoc, Port Washington, Milwaukee and Chicago. Most of the passengers from Nor Aurdal disembarked at Milwaukee. The voyage from Drammen to New York took 66 days, and from New York to Milwaukee no record is available of the time required. The entire trip, however, must have taken well over three months so the emigrants did not arrive at their destination until after the middle of November.

I have often wondered why grandfather chose Perry, a small settlement about 10 miles south and slightly east of Blue Mounds, as his destination in the new world. It is safe to conclude, however, that the Ole Bakken (Hill) family at Perry, perhaps a relative or acquaintance who had come earlier, gave them a royal welcome on arrival as was the custom among the early settlers of those times.

If Ole did not provide shelter for Halvor and Marit for the winter, he surely helped them find a place to stay, and most likely found work for grandfather. It amazes me that grandfather and Marit could manage to get through the winter without money and without a house of their own considering the very limited housing facilities available among the early settlers.

THE TRAGEDY

The Bakkens were not emigrants long before tragedy struck them. Marit died in childbirth. The little baby lived. Imagine if you will, grandfather's plight in the wilderness caring for a small infant, and at the same time attempting to carve out a farm in the forest, build a house, and find food enough to carry them over the next winter. The little girl was christened Anna Christi and she became his constant companion until she was 17 years of age.

Sometime during the first year—1850, grandfather learned that land was available in the Township of Vermont. He explored and found what he thought was a likely place, a niche in the side of a hill in the valley about a mile below what later became the Elver Mill community and now a part of the Martin Olson farm. He set his hand to building a log cabin immediately and presumably a rudimentary shelter for animals. He cleared some land, a small area, and settled down as a squatter because he had no money to buy the land from the government even at \$1.25 per acre. He had hardly gotten squatted in the new location, however, before a land speculator came along and told grandfather that he was occupying land that belonged to him. This, we presume, was a shock to Halvor since he could not speak English well and he was totally unfamiliar with the laws and customs of America at that time.

Apparently, the land speculator was a decent sort of fellow and he magnanimously recognized grandfather's plight. He offered to compensate grandfather for the work he had done in improving the property. His compensation was one in kind, a team of oxen, and one which grandfather really needed to carry on farming. After grandfather had settled down in the valley, he had been scouting around the area to learn about the nature of the land and timber around him in the township. He located a magnificent spring among the hills about a mile and one-half directly east of his house in the niche, and this land had excellent timber and a lighter soil. He was rather sorry he had not found this location when he first came to the township. He lost no time in moving to the new location and began again the arduous work of building another log house, this time with the aid of a team of oxen. One of the most urgent things to do was save

money until he could accumulate \$50 in cold cash in order to purchase the land he was settling on, but cash was scarce and it would take time to save a king's ransom like \$50. In the meantime, Halvor (Halvorson) continued his work of building, clearing, cultivating and gleaning whatever natural foods could be found on the hillside. I surmise grandfather finally succeeded in saving \$50 in the year 1852, and with this sum in his pocket, he walked overland to what is now Dubuque, Iowa, where the Federal Land Office was located. There he plunked down the \$50 to become a land owner in the Great State of Wisconsin. The patent he acquired on 40 acres was located in the Town of Vermont, Dane County, described as follows: The SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 15, Township 7 N, Range 6 E. This land is now owned by Henry Bakken, presently farmed by Knudtson. The papers to this property were eventually processed and sent to him dated April 1, 1854. The wheels of the Government even that early ground slowly, and grandfather probably worried many a night in his wilderness fastness before he had the patent to this precious acreage. As quickly as Halvor, the pioneer could accumulate more money, he proceeded to buy one 40 acre tract after another, until he acquired 200 acres to-wit: The NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 15; the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$; SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 16, and the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 21. With his last purchase, he attained the status of Landlord of Noraker and probably felt richer than the Feudal lord he had served in the old country. What a rapturous feeling this must have been. When his mother arrived with his two brothers, Erik and Nils, grandfather sold one 40 acre tract to Erik to get him started. This was the 40 acre tract hardby the Elvers Mills community described as the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 21 and which is now either part of the Gilman Mickelson or the Leo Brunner farm, or possibly part of each. Actually, his house used to stand by a big spring below County Trunk JJ in the pasture of the old Mackin farm now owned by Brunner.

In Norway, the landless classes were not permitted to assume the name of the estate they came from as their proper name. The landed class jealously guarded this privilege to protect their status and perpetuate class stratification. When young men from peasant homes were inducted into the armed services, they could not identify themselves by the use of place names indicating their origin geographically. Thus, grandfather Bakken arrived in America simply being the son of Halvor. He was identified as Halvor Halvorson and the first records of business transactions as well as registration were recorded as such. Somewhere along the way after his arrival, grandfather

decided to use the name Bakken; but since he was unable to write, being unlettered, he let the Yankee scribes goof up the spelling of his name. The benighted officials, keepers of the public records, did their best to baffle the public by misspelling our name four or five ways such as: Baken, Boke, Boko, Bakke, etc., rarely getting the name properly recorded.

It is a source of wonderment how grandfather managed to rear an infant daughter, Anna Christi, in the first years of pioneering on the Wisconsin frontier. Anna must have been a source of worry and care to Halvor serving in the dual roll of father and mother, but such a handicap was offset by the love and devotion each held for the other. It is difficult to imagine the depth of their companionship where human contacts must have been rare and the problems of establishing a new home so great. One characteristic of Norwegians that has been apparent to me is their penchant to be mirthless and foreboding in spirit. I attribute such dimness in outlook partly to the austerity of living as servants to an agrarian aristocracy and partly to an inborn trait derived through centuries of existence in a latitude where darkness dominates the long winter months. This idiosyncrasy probably will not plague third and fourth generations born in a land of sunshine and abundance buttressed by an economy replete with gadgetry to satisfy every whim.

Anna Christi was married to a man named Erik Vikka and they moved westward and north to the Brainerd area in Minnesota. How deep the grief grandfather must have felt a year later when a telegram was received that his dear Anna had died. She was only 17 years old and she suffered the same fate as her mother. She died having her first child. Grandfather tried to get to her funeral. He took the train at Black Earth to go to Brainard, but when they reached Prairie du Chien, one of the wheels fell off the locomotive engine and the trip was delayed so long for repairs that he would have arrived too late for the service and burial. Grandfather arrived home deeply depressed.

Sometime in the decade of the fifties Grandfather met a lady by the name of Ingeborg and they were married. This must have been a time of gladness and new hope in having a woman in charge of his household, but this interlude was destined to pass quickly. Ingeborg only lived a year after the marriage. The cause of death was reported to be "quick consumption." In the Town of Vermont, near Vermont Lutheran Church, there is an old cemetery with a single monument in the Urness pasture. On this marker is inscribed "Mrs. Halvor Bakken" among several others. We do not actually know whether this inscription designated

the grounds where our great-grandmother was buried or whether it is the burial place of the second wife, Ingeborg. Perhaps time will solve some of these mysteries, but church records are not available to help us.

Some tales of the frontier have been passed down from father to son to grandson as highlights in life on the border. Grandfather reported visits of small wandering bands of Indians. They came to the big spring near grandfather's cabin when he first located there. They would camp on a grassy knoll nearby, sometimes for two or three days and at other times only for the night. They always begged for food and for tobacco. Halvor was a nonuser of tobacco so he had none to give, but he never refused to give them food. They especially liked "Krubbb" also known as "potet klub" (potato blood dumplings); the word "krubb" is dialectic in Valdres and it was standard fare each time we butchered on the farm when fresh blood was available. The Indians never molested grandfather and no complaint was made that they took things not belonging to them.

After grandfather succeeded in clearing fields large enough to produce a cash crop beyond the needs of the household, he selected wheat, the favored grain crop in the 50's and 60's before the chinch bug forced the Wisconsin farmers to discontinue its production. The job of producing grain in those years entailed much hard labor. The sequence in the operations began with sowing the seed by hand, harvesting it with a cradle scythe, gathering the stalks into sheaves and binding them deftly with a cluster of straws, threshing the kernels from the heads with a flail and finally winnowing the grain from the straw and chaff. The reaper had been invented as early as 1833-34, but many of the emigrant farmers were not financially able to acquire the machine. The nearest commercial market for grain in those days was Milwaukee. Grandfather slipped yokes on his oxen, hitched them to a wagon, loaded it with wheat and supplies for the trip, and headed for the big city. Imagine, if you can, making such a trip of more than 100 miles behind a team of oxen, over dirt and corduroy roads, rain or shine. Such a trip probably spanned ten days if the oxen could travel 20-25 miles a day not counting the time spent in Milwaukee selling and delivering the wheat. It is quite likely that Halvor slept outdoors under his wagon in lieu of lodging at the inns along the way.

Our pioneers endured all kinds of adversity, but none was more grievous than the loss of loved ones. Recourse to doctors, hospitals and medical facilities in the case of illness was extremely rudimentary or non-existent. Consequently, the mortality rate for the early settlers was high, particularly

for children. The Bakken family had more than its share of grief with the grim reaper. Between the years 1850 and 1880, there were nine deaths in the family. These were: two wives, a mother, a step-child and five children not to mention great-grandfather in Norway. Hanna Matia, the eldest daughter from Halvor's third marriage died suddenly when she was 17 years of age. The cause was some mysterious fever. This "crossing of the bar" by Matia as father always affectionately called her was a traumatic shock to him. She had been his playmate and caretaker because as an infant, father contracted a disease called the St. Vitas Dance and as a consequence the burden of caring for him fell on Matia much of the time. Father was 13 years old at the time of her death so there was a great void and sadness that could not be easily assuaged.

In the first years of settlement there were no fences around pastures; so livestock was permitted to roam at will. This required considerable searching to round up the horses and cattle. Sheep were always locked in their shed at night as protection against wolves. One story handed down about the daily chore of hunting the livestock has a thrill in it. On a cold autumn night, grandfather's horses wandered away from the farmstead a considerable distance. Early the next morning, in fact before sunrise, he set out on foot to find them. In his search a mile or more from home he mounted a high outcropping rock ledge to get a better view over the landscape. The sun was just rising as he looked around from his high perch, and for all his scanning no horses came in sight. Before descending from this lookout point, on top of Sandridge, he intuitively took a closer look at what he thought were strange rocks in the grey light of the morn. Then, he suddenly realized that they were not rocks at all, but coils of large dark skinned snakes heaped in globs to ward off the cold of the night. After surveying his situation for a few moments, he gingerly treaded his way from the spot thanking his lucky stars that the night had been so frosty that the snakes were comatose.

Across Sandridge, otherwise known as the "Little Berkshires" from the Bakken farm, a man by the name of Bell established a nursery. He and grandfather became fast friends and they often visited back and forth. Whenever grandfather called on Mr. Bell, he returned home bearing a gift plant of one kind or another. Among these the common barberry and the rosa ragosa. Apparently, the soil and natural environment was ideal for these two shrubs and the subsequent owners of the Bakken farm lived to rue the day they were imported to our acres. The common barberry (*B. Valgaris*) is one of European origin. Its red berries

can be made into a preserve and they are relished by birds. The bark produces a fine yellow dye, so the plant is not without some excellent attributes. During the years 1922 and 1923, the Plant Disease Division of the United States Department of Agriculture put on a campaign to eradicate the common barberry plant because it was determined that this shrub was a host to the parasitic fungi which causes spots or discoloration of the tissues in higher plants. A rust called *puccinia grammis* is very destructive to wheat and other grain crops. When the scouting crews of the Department cruised the fence rows, pastures and woodlands of the Bakken farm, they reported that we possessed a higher barberry plant population than any other farm in Dane County. However dubious this honor may have been, it's sometimes reassuring to learn that you excel in something. The shrubs numbered in the thousands, and the Department workers were baffled with the problem of extermination. They tried to uproot the plants with spades and grub hoes, but this procedure was too laborious. They finally resorted to the use of salt, and it required tons of chloride of sodium before they succeeded in eliminating the noxious shrub. The campaign must have been a success because no plant of this species appears to have survived, or at least has not been detected during the past 50 years. We still have the rosa ragosa with us in super abundance.

When grandfather first moved to Section 15, T. 7, N.R. 6E, the first urgent requirement was a roof overhead for him and his little girl. He selected a site for the log cabin near the big spring on a rounded knoll over a huge outcrop of sandstone rock. This location provided a solid foundation with good drainage, but he had to forego an interior basement for obvious reason. Later, he dug a root cellar in the side of the hill to provide storage for vegetables and other food stuffs.

He acquired the 40-acre tract mentioned before in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 15 by occupation *ipso facto*, first. He retained this land by adverse possession for the first couple of years while he accumulated enough cash to buy it and he intensified his claim by prescription, that is to say cleared the fields for cultivation and built buildings for livestock and human habitation. He finally attained legal possession from the government or by deals with land speculators. Through these means he ultimately acquired possession of 200 acres. The last tract of 80 acres was deeded to him on November 9, 1865.

The Bakkens growing family somehow survived for 14 to 16 years in the original cabin measuring possibly 14'x16' before grandfather felt compelled to build a much larger edifice. The new two-

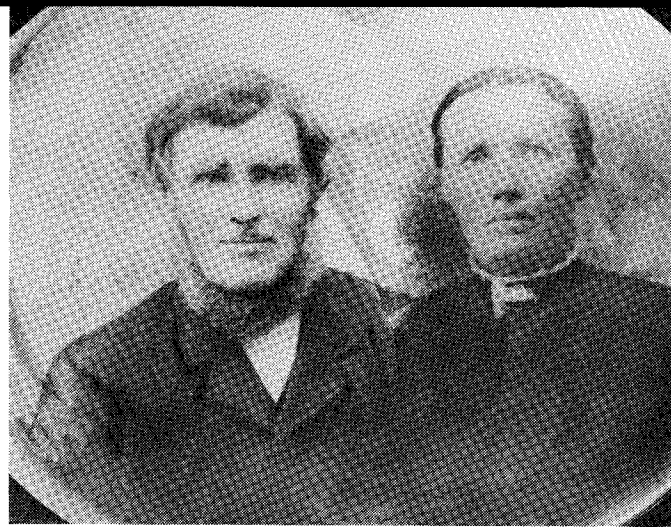


The second log house built by Halvor Bakken on the Vermont farm. The year this house was built was 1867-68.

story log house was a magnificent structure for those days. Its interior measured 28x20x16 and was based on a solid stone wall providing a full basement of the same dimensions in length and width, with 7 foot headroom. The new house had an ample attic, and a two-story front porch 7 feet wide, sheltered the entire length of the house on its south side. The house was completed in 1868 and the first day of occupancy was on August 20th, my father's first anniversary. This was a memorable day for the family, and father celebrated the occasion by proving he could walk its smooth floor unassisted. Presumably, the floor of the old cabin must have been either of dirt or flagstones, too rough and uneven for a child to circumambulate.

On August 20, 1972, members of the Bakken clan held a family reunion at the farm celebrating the 122nd anniversary of its occupation and acquisition of the Government and the 104th year since the second log house was first occupied.

Living without a helpmate on the frontier in the 1850's was not only lonely, but mighty in-commodious. An immigrant couple, Kari and Mikkil Mikkelson Sukki, arrived from Norway and settled on a farm just across the hill from grandfather's place in that decade. Not too long after their arrival, Mikkil was summoned across the River Styx. The Mikkelsons had three children, Mikkil, Anne, and Anton.* It was awkward for grandfather to struggle along single handed, but consider the predicament of a young widow with a family of small children left mateless; and an undeveloped farm in the backwoods. In one manner or another, grandfather found his way across the hill to the widow's dwelling; possibly to lend a hand in harvesting the crops or some other work; since it had always been the custom among Norwegian settlers to help one another in time of need. It is my opinion that grandfather took this custom quite seriously because in time he and Kari recognized their mutual need for one another, and the lady consented to move across the boundary line into



Grandmother Kari Sukki Bakken
Grandfather Halvor Bakken

the Bakken domain. They were married in 1862 when Kari was 24 years old. The event of Kari Kaltrud coming into the Bakken household was noteworthy because life on the range was never quite the same again. Grandmother Kari was a "swinger" in today's terminology. Jokes, mirth and laughter were her strong forte. The lovable Kari just had to mix with neighbors and friends, and to do so, she took the initiative in organizing events of a festive nature such as feasts, family get-to-gethers, "Yura Bok" raids, charivaries, dances, picnics and holiday celebrations. People came from far and near to visit. On Sundays, it was not uncommon for the Bakkens to entertain from three to a dozen relatives, friends, emigrants, and whoever desired to drop in for a social call. After the new house was built, the Bakken home became a kind of social center where the folks would meet to have a good time. The board flooring with its smooth surface provided a wonderful place to dance, and from all reports the folks freely utilized it for that purpose. There was no problem getting a crowd for such occasions. As a matter of fact, the clan living in the household was large enough counting the children and visitors to hold a festive affair all of their own most of the time. In counting heads, there were as many as 12 to 14 people staying at the residence most of the time during the 70's and 80's. This brings to mind another problem grandfather had to cope with while establishing a home on the frontier.

* Mikkil, father of Elliot and Martin Mickelson. Elliot married Martha Urness, Constance Goderstad, daughter; Jorgen and Paul Goderstad, great-grandchildren.

*Anne, mother of Melvin Huset, Albert, Henry, Anton, Clara and Mable Huset. Melvin married to Lottie Reeve. Children: Marvin and Della.

*Anton, married Nettie Hauge. No children.

*Kari Mickelson Sukki was a cousin of the Bra-ger family, Eilend, Kari Skinningsrud Anderson, that family. She and her husband, Mikkil, came from Norway on the same boat.

Even though he had obtained land relatively cheap, there were innumerable other expenses in maintaining a household. Kari was no penny pincher when she had her mind on having fun. Groceries cost money in those days, as they do now, even though much of the food used was home grown. Money was scarce and very dear if any could be found at all. The old folks had to go to the money lenders to get enough cash to meet taxes, buy a few machines, and discharge heterogeneous bills. In the period after the Civil War up to 1890, debts were a constant worry. Several times the old folks were forced to seek money lenders and the rates of interest were invariably usurious.

When my mother, Malla, was 15 years old, her uncle and aunt, the Magnus Christoffersons, decided to emigrate to America and mother came with them. They made a successful voyage by steamship to this side of the Atlantic, landing at Philadelphia in 1889. From port of disembarkation, the immigrants traveled by rail to Dodgeville, Wisconsin, where they were welcomed by Martha (Christofferson) Anderson and her husband, Anders. The Andersons lived on a farm ten miles north of Dodgeville. A short time after mother's arrival her Aunt Martha managed to find employment for her in homes of people distantly related to her. Many of these people were in their early years of settlement in this country and were fluent in her native language.

Some words have already been written about the origin of the name, Bakken, and its significance. In reviewing our family history, the answer becomes obvious. Bakken was the name of the birthplace of Halvor Nordager in 1786. As near as we can determine, the name has endured for at least seven generations. It signifies a place of unexcelled scenic beauty. Its topography, its climate and its soil, in some respects, are similar to the home grandfather knew before he came to America. The bounty of its resources exceeded his wildest expectation. Why not let the farm, hereafter, be simply known as "Bakken".

Other Interesting Excerpts

We have found much interesting material regarding the Norwegians in a book loaned to us by Forest Johnson, written by the son of an immigrant, and a cousin of Forest's father. He is George T. Flom, Ph. D., graduate of Columbia University.

"Wisconsin early became the objective point of immigrants from Norway. In 1850, fifty percent of all Norwegians in the United States were domiciled within the borders of the State of Wisconsin. It was in Wisconsin the Norwegian first



Family home of the Hardhaug family in Hedal Valdres, Norway.

made a place for himself in America and laid the foundation for all his later progress."

Writing of the intrepid pioneers who moved westward: "The Wisconsin River had to be crossed on a small ferry boat, the propelling power of which was furnished by a horse placed on a tread-power which worked the paddle wheels. Only one wagon at a time and a team could be taken aboard. The herd of loose cattle swam over the river, all of which was accomplished without any incident worthy of note. The ferry boat at Prairie du Chien was larger and propelled by 4 mule power, but the water being high and the Mississippi River nearly two miles wide it was no easy task. After crossing, the party divided, heading in different directions."

Also, a complete and detailed picture of threshing grain: "When we were to thresh, the sheaves of wheat or oats were placed on the ground in a large circle. Then three or four yoke of oxen were tied together with an iron chain; one man stood in the center of the circle on the sheaves of grain. The oxen then would stamp the kernels out of the straw little by little, and so we kept on, until we had the sheaves replaced by new ones, and carried the straw away. For cleaning the grain thus secured, we used short basins or bowls, such as were made in Norway formerly."

"Norway has a highly developed school system, crowned by the Royal Frederick University of Christiania (1909). It has compulsory education; its boards of inspection and its great department of public instruction. It has a people's high school, its working man's colleges and a system of secondary schools. Its university ranks with the foremost in Europe. The salaries of its teachers and instructors and professors, reckoned with the purchasing power of money, is approximately 30% greater than in our midwest schools."

"Some Norwegians gave their lives in the early history of our nation, the names of several Norwegian are recorded who served in the war of the Revolution. Thus, under John Paul Jones, served Thomas Johnson, born in 1758, the son of a pilot in Mandal, Norway. We learn that he was among those who served on board the Bon Homme Richard in her cruise in 1779. Later he

went with Paul Jones to the 'Serapis', the 'Alliance' and finally to the 'Ariel'. With the last ship he finally arrived in Pennsylvania in 1781. For a fuller account of Johnson's career, the interested reader is referred to.... 'The New England Historical Register Volume XXVIII, pp. 18-21'."

"Another Norwegian by the name of Lewis Brown (Lars Brunn) also served John Paul Jones. The name of at least one Norwegian who fell early in the wars against the Indians has come down to us. Frank Peterson, who had enlisted on the 10th of June 1808, was among those who fell at Ft. Dearborn in 1812, among the 'first martyrs of the west' in an attack by five hundred Potawatomie Indians. In this battle two-thirds of the whites were killed and the rest taken prisoner."

And some Scandinavians became great men. "As early as 1769 the 'Societas Scandinavienches' was founded in Philadelphia. The membership of this society was made up of Swedes, Norwegians and Danes. The first president of the society was a Norwegian, Abraham Markoe (Marko). One of the memorable events in the history of the society was a farewell reception given in 'City Tavern' on December 11, 1782, in honor of Baron Axel Ferson, a Norwegian; a hero of the Battle of Yorktown. Says the chronicler of the event, 'this event is one of the most glorious in the society's history'."

"The reception was held Wednesday evening, December 11, 1782. The president, Rev. William Smith D.D., lauded the bravery of the Baron and his men in the battle. Whereupon, General George Washington in thanking the members for their forethought in tendering the reception, for the noble officer (he subsequently decorated Ferson with the 'Order of the Cincinnati' for valor displayed), expressed his pleasure at being present among the people of his forefather's blood, as he claimed descent from the family of Wass, emigrated from Denmark in A.D. 970 and settled in the County of Durham, England, where they built a small town, calling it Wass-ing-a-tun (Town of Wass). Variet forms of the name are given in the prospectus: Wessington, Whessingtone, Was-engtone, Wassington, and finally Washington. The prospectus itself cites from Machold's 'History of the Scandinavians in Pennsylvania'."

The writer of this book has devoted three chapters to the causes of the emigration from Norway. Direct quotations from letters are as follows: "A pressing and general lack of money entering into every branch of industry, stops or at least hampers business and makes it difficult for many people to earn the necessaries of life." "The emigrants of the proceeding year (1844) wrote home and told of the fertility of the soil, the cheap

prices of land and good wages. The land yielded thirty-five bushels per acre of wheat; the grass was so thick one could easily cut enough hay in a day to winter a cow."

"Such reports fell to our liking and many looked forward with eager longing to the distant West which was pictured as the Eden the loving Providence had destined for the working man of Norway."

Rev. Abraham Jacobson of Decorah, Iowa, himself an immigrant writes:

"Reasons for emigrating were mostly economic, very few if any religious."—The wages here were at least double of those in Norway.

And another: "The causes were economic. In the case of my parents, they came here to create the homes they had no chance of creating in the Mother country."

"These immigrants, many the sons of men of means, disinherited through the law of primogeniture, were financially no better off than a Cotter's son. They were forced to seek their fortune beyond the native village or district. These considerations will make clear that the great majority of immigrants to the United States were often very poor indeed. Their wealth lay in their ability to carve their way in the land of greater promise. It lay also in their thrift and their ideals and the moral fibre of their race. The above considerations have indicated that the Norwegian immigrants of that early period were not necessarily of the poor classes, even though they came with little. They had been suddenly reduced to conditions which became to them, intolerable. I stress this fact because some who have formerly written about these people and their settlements in this country have never fully recognized the full significance of this. Many of those who later became most substantial members of these settlements were men whose transportation to America was paid by others that they might have a start in life. These men emigrated, prompted by the desire of material betterment and in that aim they have succeeded, honestly, often accumulating great wealth."

(The Alfred A. Knopp Company of New York has permitted us to use a few words from the book "America" written by an Englishman, Alistair Cooke, and published in 1914. It is the story of the ordeal of the immigrant.)

"They crowded to the rail to eye their first Americans in the persons of the immigration inspectors, two men and a woman in uniform clambering up a ladder from a cutter that had nosed along side. The captain was required to note

on the ship's manifest the more flagrant cases of contagious disease, for only seventy years ago they were still on the lookout for yellow fever and leprosy. The unlucky victims of such ailments were taken off in a quarantine boat to a special island to be deported as quickly as possible."

"The harbor was sometimes choked with ships at anchor, and the ship had to drop anchor and wait. But eventually they would move on and there, like a battleship on the horizon stood what the song calls, 'Manhattan, an isle of joy.' Closer it grew into a cluster of pinacles known as skyscrapers. And then the midtown skyscrapers topped the ones first seen. It was unlike any other city, and to the European it was always audacious, and magical, and threatening."

"Soon the newcomers would be on the docks sorting their bundles and packages in a babble of languages, and when that was done they were tagged with numbers. Until 1892, they were cleared for entry at Castle Garden, once a fort, then a theatre and amusement place down on the Battery. However, the volume of immigrants grew so great, and so many of them managed to disappear into Manhattan before being 'processed' that a larger and more isolated sorting point had to be found. So from 1892 on, once the immigrant had been tagged with a number, they were shipped on board a ferry to what was to be known in several languages as the 'isle of tears', the clearing station, Ellis Island."

"The newcomers crowded into the main building and the first thing they heard over the general bedlam were the clarion voices of the inspectors. According to assigned numbers they were herded into groups of thirty and led through long tiled corridors up a wide staircase into the biggest hall most of them had ever seen. Its dimensions, its pillars, its great soaring windows still suggest the grand ballroom of some abdicated monarch. Once assembled, the clearance proceeded. I recently pressed an aged immigrant to describe it, 'Procedure?' he squealed incredulously, 'Din, confusion, bewilderment, madness'.

"They moved in single file through a stock yard maze of passageways and under the eye of a doctor in blue uniform who had in his hand a piece of chalk. He was a tough, instant diagnostician. He would look at the hands, the hair, their faces and rap out a few questions. He might spot a panting old man with purple lips and chalk on his back a capital 'H' for suspected heart disease. Any facial blotches, a hint of gross eczema brought forth a chalked 'F' for facial rash. Children in arms were made to stand down to see if they rated an 'L' for the limp of rickets or some other deficiency diseases. There was a chalk mark that every family

dreaded for it guaranteed certain deportation. It was a circle with a cross in the middle and it indicated 'feeble-minded'.

"About eight in ten survived this scrutiny and passed to the final ordeal, the examination before an immigration inspector standing with an interpreter. Not noticeably gracious types for they worked ten hours a day, seven days a week; they droned out an unchanging catechism. 'Who paid your passage? How many dependents? Ever been in prison? Can you read and write? (There was a long time no legal obligation to do either). Is there a job waiting for you? (This was a famous catch, since a law called the Contract Labor Law forbade immigrants from signing up aboard ship for any work at all.) Finally his name was checked against the ships manifest. Many people were lucky to emerge into the new life with their name. An Irish inspector, glancing down at what was the gobblegook of 'Ouspenska', wrote on the landing card, 'Spensky'. A Norwegian with an unpronounceable name was asked for the name of the town he had left. It was 'Drøbak'. The inspector promptly wrote down what he thought he heard. Another Norwegian standing nearby philosophically realized his own name was just as unmanageable and decided that what was good enough for his friend was good enough for him. To this day the progeny of both families rejoice in the name of 'Robeck'.

"But a new identity was better than none and it gave you a landing card. With it you were now ready to pay a visit to the currency booth to change your lire or drachmas, or whatever, into dollars. This exchange could entail prolonged haggling and not a few fist fights with the cashiers, who for many years were short change artists. But at last you were handed over to the travel agent or the railroad men, if you were going far afield, or you sought the help of an aid society, or a beckoning politician, if New York was to be the end of the line. Most immigrants could speak hardly a word of English except the one they had memorized as the town of their destination. A man would unfold a scrap of paper and point to a block printed word—'Pringvilliamas'. Maybe he eventually arrived in Springfield, Massachusetts and maybe he didn't. But at this point the immigrants only concern was to get off Ellis Island. All of them looked in relief for the door 'Push to New York'. And they pushed.

"Now after another ferry ride, they set foot on earth of the land that was paved with gold. I once asked a successful, but unflinching, cynical immigrant, if the reality hadn't meant a shattering disillusion.

"But there was gold, he said to us. There were markets groaning with food and clothes. There were street cars all over town. There was no military on horse back, and no whips. The neighbors were out in the open trading and shouting and enjoying free fights. And to a boy like me it was a ball, a friendly club. The streets were an open road.

"Admittedly, here was a man who had always been able to cope."

The picture this historian drew of the immigrants ordeal at Ellis Island, and before 1892, at Castle Garden, happened to many of the people who came to Vermont. However, history tells us that the earliest ones, from the 1840's to the 1860's came to Quebec, Boston or New Orleans.

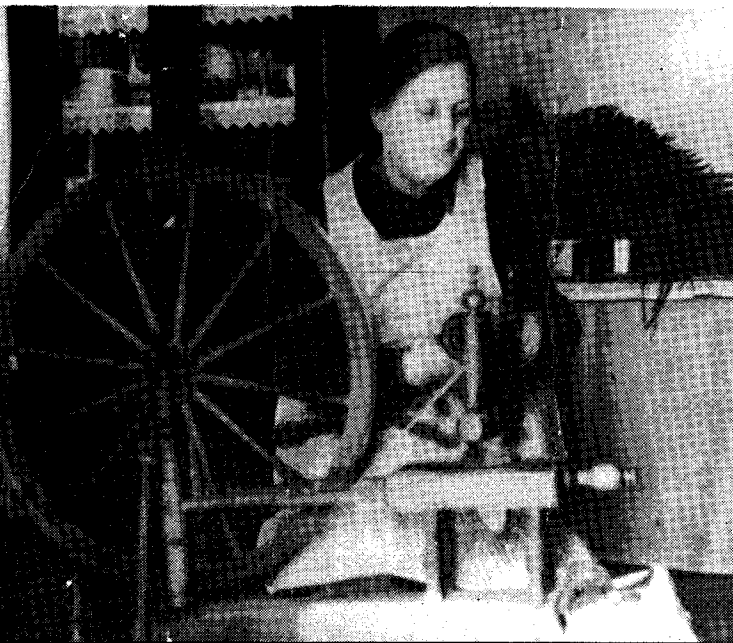
We will mention some of those who came later; at least those who stayed to make Vermont their home.

Norman Haugen tells us that his father, Martin Haugen, came to Vermont from Hedalen, Norway in 1891. His brother, Halsten Haugen, had come the previous year. John Greve also came about this time.

Then we have the Forshaugs, Magnus, and his sister, Gerharda. Gerharda taught the Vermont ladies to make "Tillorede bøndepiger", a beautiful Hardanger altar cloth for our new church in 1913. Also, we have the Forsmos, Stenlis and Punsvicks. All of these people came from the tip top of northern Norway.

In 1910 a group of young men (we called them 'newcomers') came to Black Earth. Their passage had been paid by a group of farmers who needed help on their expanding acreage. Their names were placed in a hat and by lot, the young men learned where they were to make their home in America.

Norwegian woman at the spinning wheel.



Four of these young men are especially remembered for the spark of new life they brought into the community; they were Chris Larson, Jens Shamo, Jake DeVries and Tolef Halvorson. The latter two had remained in New York for a time, long enough to learn the English language. When they came to Vermont they sounded like New Yorkers. The letter 'r' didn't bother them; they had left it "New Yaak."

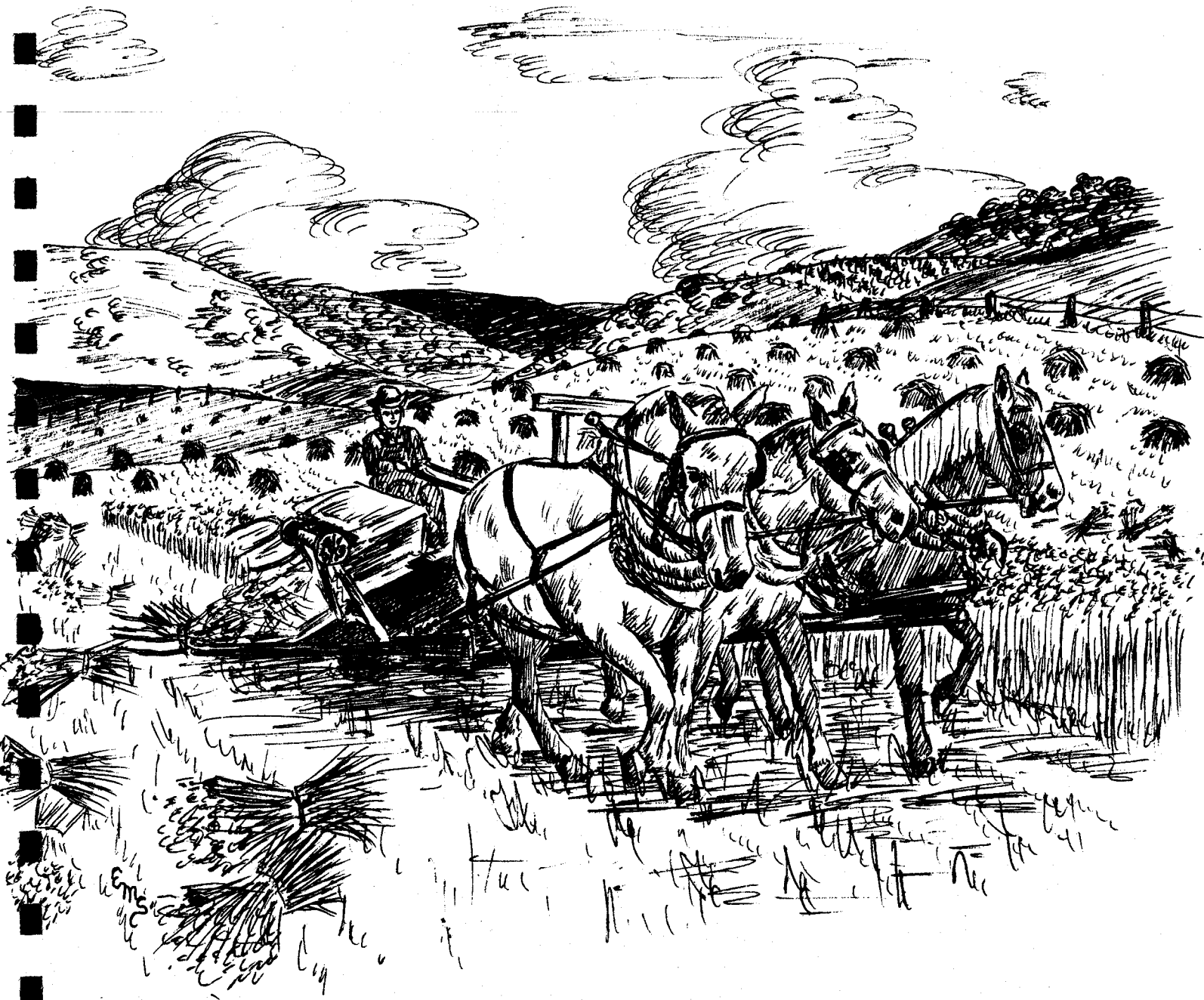
These young men were full of ideas and enthusiasm. By 1910 the Vermont young people were accustomed to a high stepping horse, a runabout, top buggy or cutter; these fellows were accustomed to walking. The young folks soon learned they could have a great time evenings when groups walked together. There were surprise parties for birthdays, or just parties. The gals carried something with them for refreshments; there was invariably a gift for the honored one. Naturally, the old "julebuk" custom was revitalized, and they found themselves walking from one home to another, invariably ending the evening with a party at one of the homes.

Some of these fellows did not marry early in life; consequently they continued their interest in the young people's activities for some time.

They were exceptional singers. Vermont Lutheran traditionally was known for its music and good choirs. Our parents who sang in the choir in the 1880's were fortunate in having Ole Gaarder for a choir master and were taught to read music by the do-re-me method. He was followed by Mr. Helland; also a good instructor. At the time these young men were members; Alvin Anderson was the director and Vermont Lutheran had a tremendous choir. When Chris Larson left us to live in Madison, he became a member of the Grieg Male Chorus.

Later "newcomers" were Toralf Simonson, Torge and Tollak Goderstad, and Toralf Osmundson.

FARMING



Harold Norslien farm.



THE GOLDEN ERA OF AGRICULTURE

In colonial times and throughout the 19th century, the U.S. was essentially a nation of farmers, and they played an important role collectively in shaping our form of government and the flow of raw materials in commerce. A marked shift in the the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Giant forces were awakened by drastic technological developments in exploiting our natural resources, advances in manufacturing, transportation, communication and education.

Mass population shifts to industrial centers began to take place both within the country and from Europe. These changes took place without an accompanying increase in output per man on the farm. This relationship in supply and demand for products of the farm resulted in the most favorable prices ever experienced by farmers in the history of this country. During the period 1860-1935 when agrarians had a clout in legislative affairs, they were instrumental in the framing and passage of the Morell Act of 1862 founding Land Grant Colleges of Agriculture in the states. Twenty-five years later, 1887, the Hatch Act was passed estab-

lishing Agricultural Experiment Stations in conjunction with the Land Grant Colleges. Then in 1914 the Smith-Lever Act was passed providing extension services emanating from the Agricultural Colleges. To cap this series of legislative acts, the Smith-Hughes law passed in 1919 projected agricultural education down to the high school level commonly known as Vocational Agricultural training. An interesting corollary to this network of legislative acts occurred in the post-war agricultural depression of the 1921-1923 period. This was the enactment of the Capper-Volstead Act in 1922 giving the green light to farmers in forming cooperatives for collective action in protecting their economic interests.

Finally when the great depression of the 1930's struck, the "new deal" Congress passed a series of acts designed to keep agricultural industries from going down the drain completely. The principle of these acts was the Agricultural Adjustment Administration statute. This law gave expression to the basic idea of parity for agriculture and can be briefly defined as follows:



Carl Paulson Farm.

Parity is a concept advanced to attain equality in purchasing power for agriculture compared with that of other major segments of the economy such as laborers, manufacturers, merchants and those persons specialized in rendering personal services. Since the quarter century preceding World War I was generally considered a period of equilibrium in prices, the statisticians selected the base period of 1910-1914 on which they determine support prices to be made by the Department of Agriculture when the purchasing power of farmers falls measurably below that of other group interests in society.

—Prof. Henry Bakken

FARMING AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

At the turn of the century, 1900, nearly every farm fed a herd of dairy cattle, and these herds were gradually growing larger until about the middle fifties. The pastures resembled parks, with very little underbush.

It was a busy time for the farmers and their families. Large fields of grain, corn and hay were raised on all the farms, carefully rotating the crops. The walking plow was standard equipment; progress brought the sulky and later the two bottom gang plow so they could ride! Corn was cultivated with one-row cultivators—there was no spray. Seeders and drills were used for planting oats, barley and some wheat (used mostly for bread). Hay was raked into windrows with a dump rake and the whole family would be out with pitch forks piling it into hay cocks to dry. With favorable weather it would be ready in a couple of days to pitch into hay racks to be hauled to the barns. Children all learned to help their parents with the work.

The farmers worked together. Each neighborhood formed a threshing crew and a corn shredding and silo filling crew. In midsummer the huge steam engines pulled in with the threshing machines and in the autumn the corn shredders and later, the silo fillers. Pete Nace and Albert Dybdahl built the first silos in Vermont.

Clarence Steensrud, Art Gulson and Viola Gulson Dybdahl husking corn.

these were big days for the family. It meant the farm wife was busy with the best meals she knew how to prepare for twelve to fifteen men. My father demanded the best cuts of meat for these dinners and went into the cutting room of Dave Heiney's Meat Market to choose the beef roast. Nothing ever tasted better than the gravy from those huge roasts.

A bench with a wash bowl, soap, towels and rain water was always placed under the trees for the cleanup.

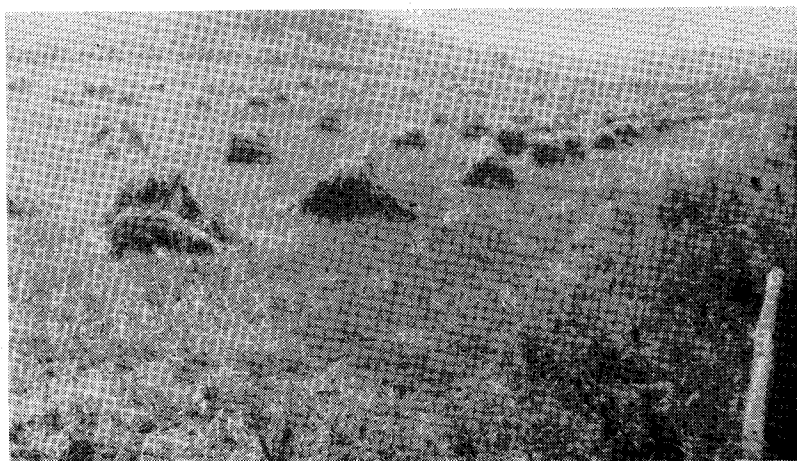
In the wintertime every farmer cut wood and hauled a long pile of poles together to be sawed into firewood. A smaller crew of neighbors worked together at the saw rig, often a whole day at each farm. The winter job was to split these sawed pieces into firewood—finely split for the cook stove and chunks left for the heaters. The time for doing all this work with the wood was after his herd of 25-30 cows were milked, by hand, cared for and the barns cleaned. They all had hogs and poultry besides, to care for.

The question arises. Why did all this change? Where are the herds of cows?

In the twenties, automation began. The work horse population dwindled drastically. The tractor equipment gradually became larger, requiring less time for field work. The milking machine and milk can washer emancipated the farm wife,

Grain field on Alfred Erickson farm

43



Underwood boys haying on the Alfred Erickson farm.



but except for the larger operators, were not common until the later thirties. The milk truckers carried the milk away from Vermont, closing our cheese factories.

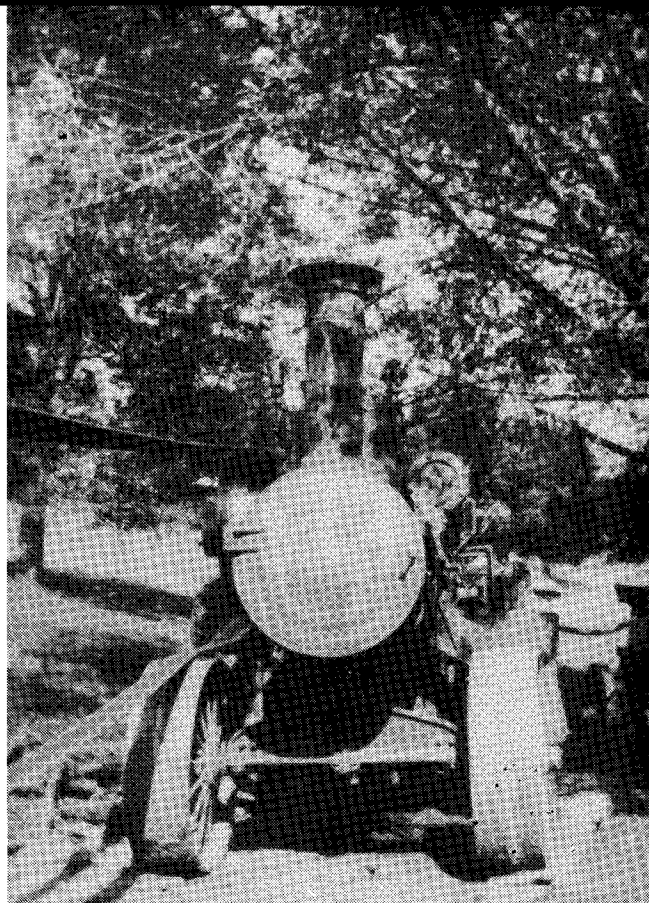
With the invention of the milking machine and the pipelines to carry the milk, the big dairy developed, where the rigid restrictions of the state inspectors could be complied with, squeezing out the small producer.

The labor situation was another factor causing the change. The younger generation found work in other fields where they could earn much more money more easily. Fifty years ago, 1925, there were at least 130 herds of cattle producing milk in Vermont; now there are 23.

The coming of the tractors and huge machines brought problems. In the early thirties, farmers on the western plains had been plowing seemingly endless furrows. Thousands of acres of land lay bare and black. A drought came to the whole land. The winds came and made a dust bowl out of them, carrying black clouds of dust over Vermont. Oil lamps burned at times during the day because it was as dark as night. It was a fearsome time. The plowed fields of Kansas and Nebraska were swept away as deeply as they were plowed and blew through our windows leaving drifts of black soil upon our window sills.

Every farmer became very conscious of the effects of soil erosion. School teachers took their pupils on field trips to show them how the top soil of a whole field, by sheet erosion could slide down into the ravine below it and be carried by floods into the Mississippi delta.

Melvin Huset and Sever Skalet with "Big Wheel" — 1920



Amon Rumley's steam engine.

Surveyors measured and designed contour strips where the rotated crops were grown. It was recommended that on steep fields no strip should exceed eighty feet in width. These long, curved contour strips of hay, corn and grain made beautiful pictures.

We have mentioned the pastures that resembled parks, clear of underbrush. Many farmers, anxious to haul as much milk as possible to the factories kept more stock than their farms could carry. One fellow, angry at his neighbor when his cows broke into his corn complained, "They've eaten up every hill, even the dirt!"

Needless to say, there were no deer in the Vermont woods or pastures in those days. Today they roam our land quite fearless, except during hunting season when it's alive here with red-coated hunters. With no more cattle and work horses, feed is going to waste upon our hills and the deer have found it.

The two decades from 1910 to 1929 were probably the most prosperous time our country ever

Andrew Amble and Albert Steensrud's steam engine, 1920.



experienced. Most of the families built new houses and barns. When a new barn was built, there was a great celebration. All the neighbors came to help in the barn raising; another occasion for a big dinner.

Most of the farmers were prospering until 1929 when the stock market crash caused the beginning of a great depression. The bottom fell out of the prices they received for everything they had to sell. Milk sold for 50 to 60 cents a hundred. Hogs for \$2 to \$2.50 a hundred, cattle for one to four cents a pound. The price of land went way down, 60 to 70%, and many who had indebtedness lost their farms.

However, the farmers weathered the depression with less suffering than the people in the cities. They raised most of the food they needed on their farms and never knew hunger. The few items they needed to buy were also very inexpensive.

In 1932 we had a new administration; President Franklin Roosevelt came on the scene and brought about great changes for us all. First, he gave the people new confidence with his statement, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself."

Bill and Beverly Parrell on their "Corn Gleaner"
(cuts, husks and shells corn) 1977.



Rolf Forshaug hauling hay from Iowa after drought of 1976.



Then we began to notice things happening. People who were out of work found employment with the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) for 50 cents an hour. In 1932 money from the Federal Government became available. It had to be spent within a short time for graveling roads.

The next was the Civil Conservation Corps (C.C.C.). Young men out of work were sent out into the country planting trees and building dams, cleverly built to stop erosion. These young men were paid by the Federal Government.

The first Rural Electrification was the Tennessee Valley Authority (T.V.A.). Its outgrowth, the R.E.A. (Rural Electrification) soon served the nation. Finally, Vermont was electrified. With it came running water, bathrooms, vacuum cleaners, milking machines; and life was very much better.

The quarter of century before World War I was the most favorable period in our history for agricultural producers. The total production was, during those years, increased by 30 to 35% and the demand for food products remained strong through the entire period.

Rolf Forshaug on corn picker-sheller — 1976.



Erik Forshaug combining grain, 1977





Shredding corn at Albert Steensrud's farm, 1923.

FARMING WITH HORSEPOWER

Arne Steensrud and his brother-in-law, Peter Hauge, owned a horse-powered threshing machine. It required some good horses and good drivers to keep everything operating. This horsedrawn sweep was soon replaced by a steam engine and Arne's machine was replaced by a new more modern machine. A new bold-yellow machine, sometimes known as the "Yeller-feller", was owned and operated by Arne's son, Albert Steensrud. Now the horses were no longer needed to supply the power for operating the threshing machine. A neighbor, Andrew Amble, owned a steam engine which could supply a steadier source of power. A good supply of wood had to be available for producing the steam. This was supplied by the farmer. A water boy, sometimes called a "water-monkey" was also a part of the threshing crew. His duty was to haul water to the steam engine. A team of horses pulled a water wagon, a big tank on wheels. Filling this tank with water was sometimes quite tedious by hand. It was also the duty of the water boy to care for the horses.

Albert and Andrew also owned and operated a corn shredder. They did custom work over a wide area. Often-times it became necessary to stay all night. Sometimes if the family didn't have sleeping place for them in the home, they slept in the barn.

Before the day of the refrigerator and the family car, it is a well-known fact that the farmer's wife was out "catching the chicken" when she heard the sound of the engine down the road.

The whole threshing operation was an exciting one for the whole family. The farmer's satisfaction for a good harvest, the cooperation of the neighbors, the comradeship of the housewives, and the inquisitiveness of the children, plus the cooperation of the weatherman made it a day long remembered.

THE MIGRATION FROM CITY TO FARM

We have been seeing a movement back to the farm from the cities and villages. The people see beauty in what the farm folk took for granted. A song accused them of "measuring the marigolds," and perhaps many of them often were too busy to

Clarence and Anton Steensrud working in hay field.



see "how beautiful they are." However, James Whitcomb Riley, in his poem, "When the Frost Is On The Pumpkin", had other ideas about the farmer.

One of the first city dwellers to come to Vermont was Earl Flatman, owner of Street Car Restaurant on East Washington Avenue in Madison. He had suffered a heart attack and his doctor had prescribed country air. Herbert Rindy, who lived across the street, informed him of a vacant house on his brother-in-law's farm. He soon had his family packed and on the way to Vermont. Earl Jr., Margaret, Mary Lou and Clarence stayed with him while his wife, Mary, son, George, and daughter, Martha, remained in Madison. With no welfare, all found work to feed the family.

About a year later, George Moyer's barn burned (overheated corn fodder). Being too late to rebuild, George and Earl simply traded houses. This gave George a barn in which to keep his cattle. The flatmans remained a few years while the Moyers moved the following spring.

The "Old Gempler Place," where they were living, was a cause for the Flatmans to try their hand at truck gardening, since there was no barn for raising stock. It was hard work, with none of the herbicides and insecticides now in use. Rent on the farm was so poor, the owner, Mr. Zeppelin, decided to sell it on the open market. It was bought by Tom and Frances Smith as a summer home. They lived there about five summers with their daughters, Helen, Claire and Jean. When the girls finished school they sold the farm to Glen Frame. He sold 40 acres to Andrew Berger, 40 acres to George MacLean and kept 40 acres for himself. So it has gone from farm to recreation and back to farming.

The farm on which Alva and Jim Moyer reared their sons, Wesley and Kenneth, was sold to the George MacLeans who have left the work land in agriculture; while they have employment elsewhere.



This story has been repeated in almost any given section, only the names are different.

In the days before this migration, farm people dreamed of the day when they could retire and move to the city or village. However, now with their modern conveniences, they appreciate country living as much as anyone.

Without rural electrification the dairy industry could never have become the big business it has, nor could it have survived with a small acreage. With the hills in Vermont a farm needs to be five times the size of a comparable farm on a more gentle terrain.

When milking was done by hand, everyone from eight to eighty was expected to help. They sat on three legged stools, one legged stools and boxes, even old buckets if necessary. Sometimes though, the milk stool got pretty fancy. It was necessary for the farmer to rise very early so the children could help milk the cows before going to school. Walking across open fields, with mud, snow, ice, dust; you name it, we had it. The only good thing was that school didn't start until 8:55 and if you were lucky, and if the cheese factory was in the same direction you might get a ride in a milk rig. This was in 1940. There was no electricity so the milk was hauled twice a day; otherwise it was cooled in the stock tank. The more fortunate had a spring where the ten gallon cans cooled all night. Many separated their milk and sold cream to the creameries in Black Earth and Mt. Horeb.

In the early forties a small farm in the township could be purchased for about twice the price of a city lot. Taxes were low. Our township roads were red clay and not good, especially in early spring. Getting stuck was a common occurrence. Barn yards were even worse. Old time farmers said "The bottom fell out." It took a long time in the spring for the deep ruts to fill.

Our patrolman had a motor patrol in 1940, but as late as 1930 the road work was done with horse-drawn grading machines. It took real talent to run one of them. He needed two hands to drive the horses while using both feet to turn the wheels that controlled the grader blade. The road (dirt) had to be sloped just so or the next rain would wash all the dirt or gravel away. When that happened it all needed to be graded back out of the ditches.

Would we enjoy a return to those days?

—Submitted by Fern Frame

Early Autumn scene at Bernard Brings farm, 1976.

"WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN"

By James Whitcomb Riley

When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock,
And you hear the kyouck and gobble of the stuttin' turkey-cock,
And the clackin' of the guineys, and the cluckin' of the hens,
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes on the fence;
O, its then's the time a feller is a-feelin' at his best,
With the risin' sun to greet him from a night of peaceful rest,
As he leaves the house bare-headed, and goes out to feed the stock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

They's something kindo' harty-like about the atmosphere
When the heat of summer's over and the coolin' fall is here—
Of course we miss the flowers, and the blossoms on the trees,
And the mumble of the hummin-birds and buzzin' of the bees;
But the air's so appetizin'; and the landscape through the haze
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the airly autumn days
Is a pictur' that no painter has the coloring to mock—
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

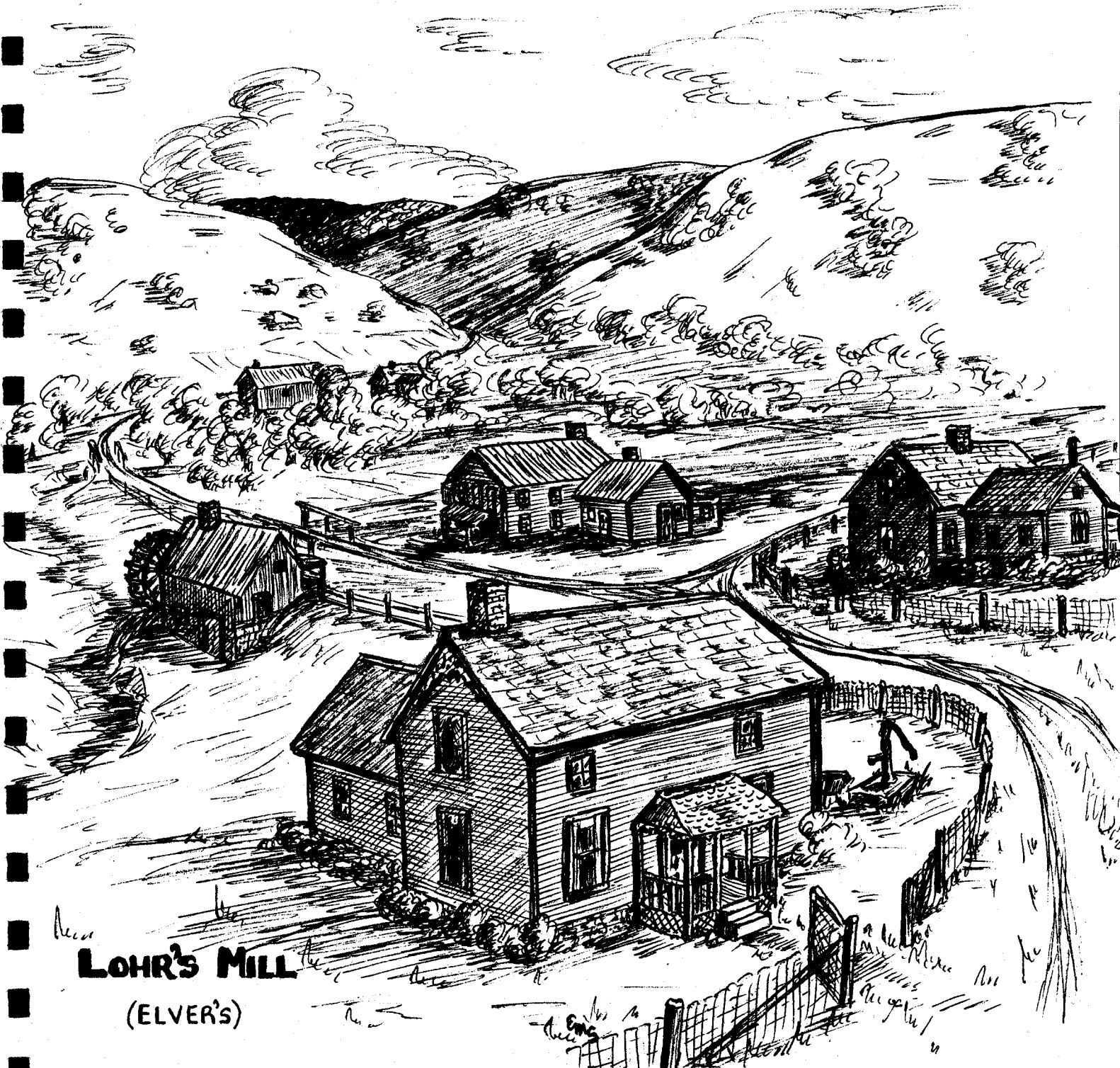
The husky, rusty russel of the tassels of the corn,
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as golden as the morn;
The stubble in the furries—kindo lonesome-like, but still
A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they grewed to fill;
The strawstack in the medder, and the reaper in the shed;
The hosses in theyr stalls below—the clover overhead—
O, it sets my heart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

Then your apples all is gethered, and the ones a feller keeps
Is poured around the cellar-floor in red and yeller heaps;
And your cider-makins' over, and your wimmern-folks is through
With their mince and apple-butter, and theyr souse and sausage too!
I don't know how to tell it—but ef sich a thing could be
As the Angels wantin' boardin', and they'd call around on me—
I'd want to 'commodate 'em—all the whole endurin' flock—
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock!

(What would the story of the farmer at the turn of the century be without this poem?)

Submitted by Clara Gulson Haugner

INDUSTRIES



LOHR'S MILL

(ELVER'S)

VERMONT'S CHEESE FACTORIES

By Nels B. Goderstad

Gone, but not forgotten, the Town of Vermont's fourteen cheese factories. Some were short lived, others continued operation for years. Here are some interesting items I have collected. There were two creameries in the township that made butter, Elver's and Tom Denny's. Later in years they switched to making cheese.

OAK HILL CHEESE FACTORY

The Oak Hill Cheese Factory, sometimes known as the Nace Factory, was located on the corner of County Highway J and State Highway 78 on top of the Beaty Hill. Elmer Severson lives there now.

The factory was built around 1918. Brick and Swiss cheese were made. It closed down in either 1945 or 1946.

Some of the cheesemakers were: Fred Scheidegger, John Wegmuller, Ernest --- and Fred Wanger.

ANDERSON BROTHERS' CHEESE FACTORY

I know very little about this factory. It was built on the Anderson Brothers' farm which is across the road from the old Sandridge School on County Highway JJ. The school building is now Vermont's Township Hall.

Speaking to Eddie Olson, Sever Amble was the first cheesemaker he remembers. While he attended school at Sandridge, children would sometimes go over to the factory at noon to eat curd if it was ready. The factory made American Cheese and would get extra milk in the wintertime from farmers that hauled to the Mickelson Factory when it would close for the winter.

The factory closed down after the Beath Valley Cheese Factory was built. The building is still standing. Notice the entrance to the cheese cellar as you drive by.

BEATH VALLEY CHEESE FACTORY

The Beath Valley Cheese Factory was located on the corner of the Moe Road and County Highway JJ.

The factory was built in the early 1920's. American cheese was made. The factory closed in 1952.

Some of the cheesemakers were: Ole Amble, Eddie Jorgenson, Adam Hefty Sr., Orval Barsness and Adam Hefty Jr. Adam Hefty Sr. purchased the factory in the 1940's and sold it to his son, Adam Jr. in 1945 when he returned from the service. These cheesemakers owned trucks and went to more distant farms to pick up milk.

In 1940 the factory received a State of

Wisconsin honor when Adam Hefty Sr. won first prize on an American cheese sent to the Wisconsin State Fair at Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Mrs. Ray Lee, as a little girl, remembers Andrew Jorgenson wheeling two little cans of milk to the factory in a wheelbarrow. At that time, Andrew lived where Norman Sale lives now.

GREENWALDT CHEESE FACTORY

This factory was built between 1880-1890 on the Greenwaldt Road just off of Highway 78. It was named after Henry Greenwaldt.

Mrs. Gene Trainor mentioned that each farmer had to bring a certain number of loads of wood to the factory in the wintertime for fuel. At a certain day they all got together and sawed the wood. Each farmer had to take his turn hauling the cheese to Mt. Horeb or Black Earth. The factory closed down in the early 1930's.

Some of the cheesemakers were Carl Ampor, John Ampor, Fred Hofer, Werner Scheidegger, John Wittwer, Fred Wittwer and Anton Kohler.

RYAN CHEESE FACTORY

The Ryan Cheese Factory was built around the year 1916 on the Ryan Road. Little is known about the factory as it only operated about 10 years. John Kraak and John Jerkavic were two of the cheesemakers.

MICKELSON CHEESE FACTORY

The Mickelson Cheese Factory, built about 1882, was located on County Highway J in Section 26.

Fred Feller was one of the first cheesemakers. The factory made Swiss, block Swiss, brick and limburger cheese. The factory would close down in the wintertime due to the shortage of milk and reopen in the spring.

Gilman Mickelson relates, in his youth, going to the factory for a visit and having a dipper of sweet whey. Whey from Swiss cheese is sweet compared to whey from American cheese and is good to drink.

In order to have fuel for the boiler, each farmer had to furnish one large load of pole wood for every two cows he had.

The factory closed in the middle 1930's. The building is still there and is now an attractive home.

SPRING VALLEY VERMONT CHEESE FACTORY

This cheese factory, sometimes called the Bohn Factory, was located on County Highway JG close to the Tyrol ski area in Section 34.

In the early years there were 19 farm patrons hauling milk to this factory. The factory building

was destroyed by fire in July 1915, with no insurance on the structure. The people of this area were victims of another tragedy in September of the same year, when the dam at the Mt. Horeb Park broke, sending a big flood down the valley, which broke fences, flooded out bridges, grain stacks, etc. Calves came in the flood waters; also a team of horses belonging to Eversons who lived on the farm now owned by Lloyd Staplemann.

The factory building was again destroyed by fire in the fall of 1917, and again with no insurance coverage. Jake Blaser was the cheesemaker at the time of both fires. A special meeting was called October 1, 1917, when it was voted to build again. The same as the old building.

The later cheesemakers were: Ernest Bahler, Karl Vils, Carl Foelski, Walter Zwahlen, Otto Schaller and Russell Greve. Brick Swiss, block Swiss, Muenster and American cheese were made at the factory.

The factory closed in February, 1953. In March, 1961, the shareholders: Teman Tollefson Estate, Christ Zwettler Estate, Gottlieb Warren, Mrs. Harry Anderson, Joseph Dolohanty and Harold Peterson agreed to sell the building. It is now an attractive home.

GULSON CHEESE FACTORY

In 1918 the farmers in the area decided they would like to have their own cheese factory. Melvin Huset and Anton Severson were appointed to go to Madison and get permission from either a state or county agency to build. The factory was built on the Pleasant Valley Road just a little way up the road from the George Gulson farm.

Earth was moved to level off the ground and by accident a cave was discovered in the hillside.

The cheese cellar at the factory was part of the cave so the temperature was ideal. Logs were cut from the woods nearby and sawed into lumber. Cement was poured on a huge rock and the factory was built. Melvin Huset helped build the factory.

Fred Zimmerman found a used Swiss Cheese kettle for sale and it was purchased. Block Swiss cheese was made. Fred Zimmerman was the first cheesemaker. Others to follow were: Jost Hoesli, Eddie Jorgenson and Oscar Roshardt. It was at this cheese factory that Jost Hoesli won a gold watch at an exposition held in Chicago years ago, on cheese that he had made.

The factory closed in the early 1930's. Joe Dybdahl purchased the building. The Ed Schroeders live there.

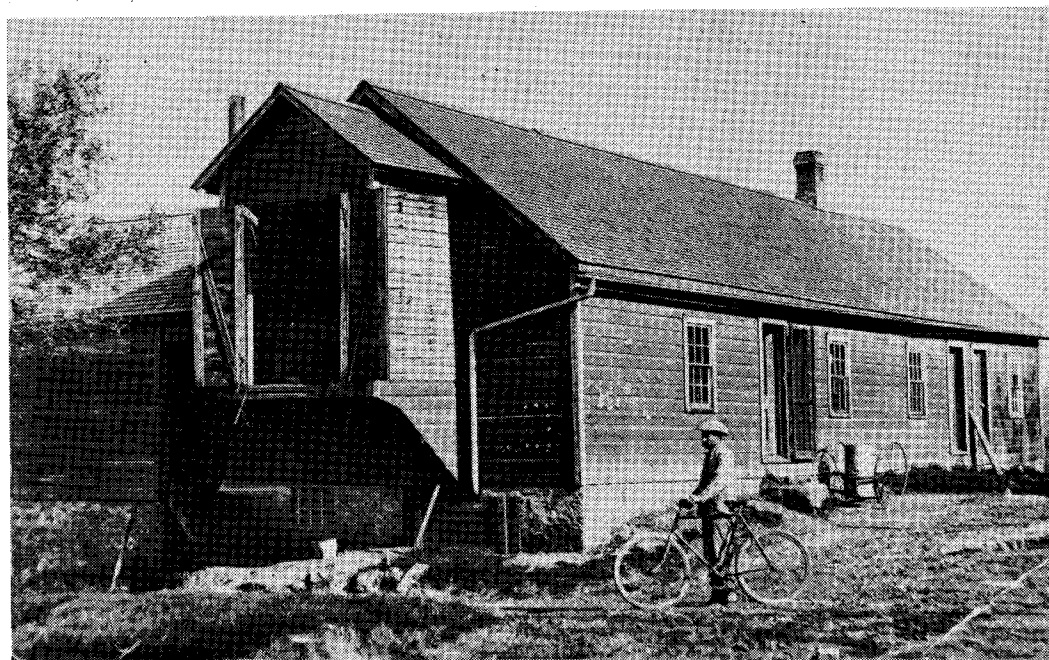
DIAMOND CHEESE FACTORY

This factory is located on the corner of State Highway 78 and the Vermont Church Road. It was built about the year 1888 by John Braun, better known as "old man Braun".

The first cheesemaker was Art Foye. Others were a cheesemaker by the name of Campbell, a cheesemaker by the name of Mason was also there. Halsten Haugen and Henry Norslein also made cheese at Diamond. My father, Torge Goderstad helped Henry Norslein on Sundays learning how to make cheese. Some Sundays, young fellows would ask Torge to go along with them, but Henry said, "If you want to learn how to make cheese you have to be here on Sundays, too".

Other cheesemakers to follow were: John Jerekovic, Chester Peterson, Emil Johnson, Art Nelson, Jorgen Skalet, Ilif Kanable and Paul Kidd.

Diamond Cheese Factory.



At one time, the factory had a milk truck that hauled milk for the farmers. Philip Skalet was the driver.

The factory closed in 1958. Mrs. Jack Bell lives there now.

ELVERS CHEESE FACTORY

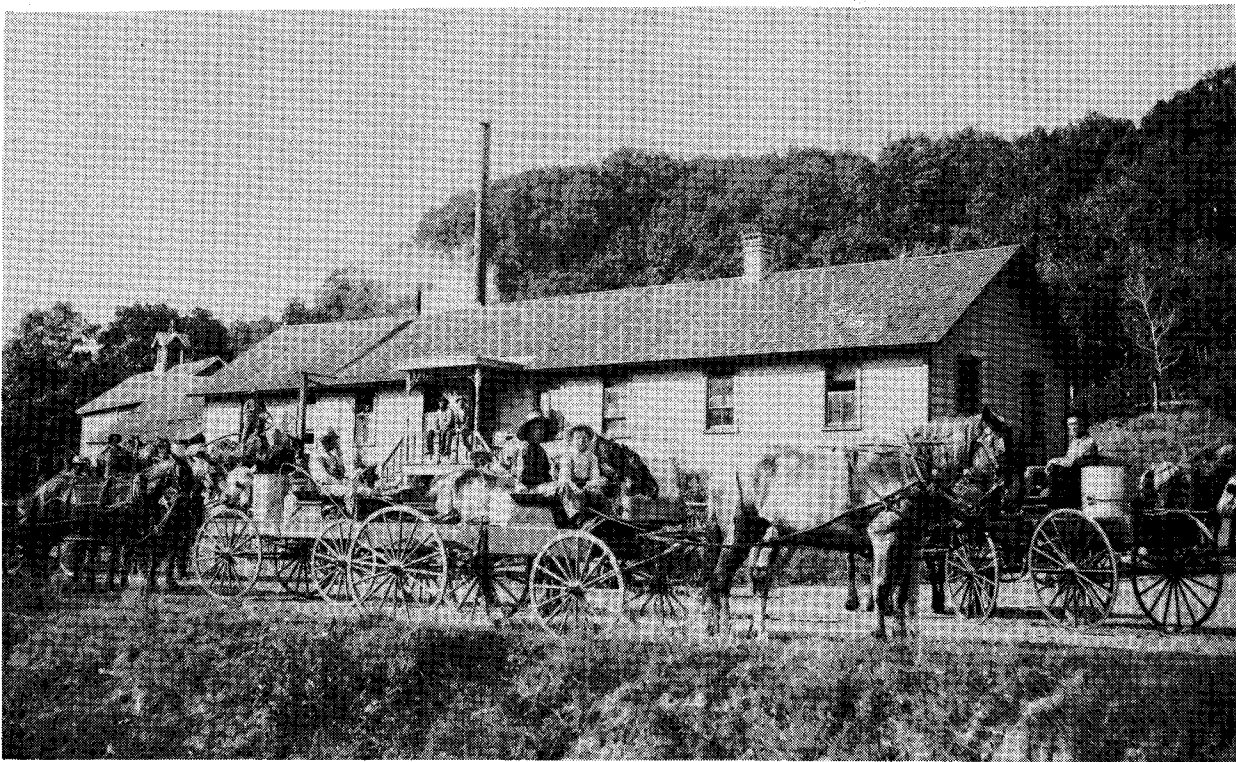
Before Elvers was a cheese factory it was a creamery and made butter. Gilman Mickelson mentioned an early buttermaker by the name of Jim Hoff. Jim told Gilman he was 17 years old when he made butter at Elvers. Fred and John Stukki also made butter there.

Between 1910 and 1913 it was decided to switch from making butter to American cheese. Early cheesemakers were Chris Fruitiger, --- Granger, Bill Torphy, Alvin Severson and John Greve. In later years it was Curtis Perkins and Delbert Rikli.

Delbert Rikli came to Elvers from Pleasant Valley Cheese Factory when Curtis Perkins went to Ryser Brothers in Mt. Horeb. Curtis Perkins' first day working in a cheese factory was at Midland for Torge Goderstad in the early 1930's. Delbert purchased the building and is living there now. At the present time Delbert is making butter for Zander's Creamery in Cross Plains.

One large load of pole wood for every two cows each farmer had was a requirement. This was used as fuel.

Elver's Cheese Factory.



An interesting item about Elvers Cheese Factory and the Vermont American Cheese Factory was featured in the magazine "Ford Times", which was distributed by the Ford Motor Co.

The factory closed in 1970.

TOM DENNY FACTORY

This factory was built between 1880 and 1890 at Peculiar on County Highway FF on the upper side of the road across from Eddie Brunner's. There is no sign of any building there now.

Early known buttermakers were: John Stukki, Ole Gunderson and Charlie Rush. Andrew Amble and Otto Schaller were known to have made cheese at the factory. Louis Schlick, Melvin Huset and Mrs. Vernon Booth all remember when the factory operated.

PLEASANT VALLEY CHEESE FACTORY

This factory was located in Section 7 on the corner of County Highway F and the Zwettler Road. It was built between 1880 and 1890 and named the Kelliher Cheese Factory. Around 1928 it was destroyed by fire. After it was rebuilt it was named the Pleasant Valley Cheese Factory.

Early cheesemakers were: Dan Kemp, --- Kempler, Emil Roter and Adam Hefty Sr. In later years Jost Hoesli and Delbert Rikli were the cheesemakers. Brick and limburger cheese were made at the factory. In later years it was American cheese.

The factory closed in the late 1960's and is now the residence of David Frame.

OAK HILL CHEESE FACTORY

This factory was built in either 1920 or 1921 on County Highway F in Section 29, a short distance up the road from the Deneen School.

When it first opened, American and Swiss cheese were made. In later years, brick cheese was made.

The first cheesemaker was a Russian and everyone called him "the old Russian". Other cheesemakers to follow were: Adolf Ryser, Robert Schaller, Ferdy Dietrich and Otto Schaller.

Donald Deneen mentioned that when he hauled the milk to the factory for his Uncle Joe, he was sure the horse knew the way to the factory and home again.

In September 1943 during an electrical storm lightning struck the factory building destroying everything. The cheesemaker lost all his belongings and all factory records were destroyed. All that was left was the well and pump and stone walls.

VERMONT AMERICAN CHEESE FACTORY

The factory was incorporated on November 24, 1888. It was located on the corner of Old Indian Trail Road and County Highway JJ.

Cheesemakers at Vermont were: Ole Amble, Fred Luder, John Wittwer, Henry Norslein, John Jerkovic, Torge Goderstad, Chester Peterson, Adam Hefty Sr. and Oscar Roshardt. At one time Jorgen and Grant Skalet helped in the factory when Torge was there.

Many interesting things happened at this factory. Years ago there was a rule that all farmers had to have their milk delivered by 9:00 a.m. When Adam Hefty was there and someone wasn't at the factory and it was getting close to 9:00 a.m., he would blow their telephone ring with the whistle on the boiler. Another interesting item: Vermont American Cheese Factory was featured along with Elvers Cheese Factory in the magazine, "Ford Times".

The idea of Patron's Mercantile Co-op originated at the factory. Amos Thorsrud used to order supplies, seeds, etc. from Madison and other places for the farmers. Someone suggested, "Why not have our own store in Black Earth?" so Patron's was born.

When Torge Goderstad was at Vermont making cheese, Charles Bennett suggested to Torge he should get a truck and haul milk for the farmers. Hjalmer Sveum was the first milk truck driver hired. Other milk haulers were: Les Kading, Grant Skalet, Harry Norslein, Rodger Johnson, Philip Skalet and William Aeschlimann.

When Torge Goderstad was making cheese there, boxes came by rail to Black Earth by the carload. Vermont and Diamond would divide the

boxes, with Grant and Jorgen Skalet hauling them from Black Earth to the two factories.

At a meeting held in February, 1933 at Elliot Mickelson's it was decided to hire Oscar Roshardt as cheesemaker. Oscar made cheese at Vermont until June, 1967 when the boiler broke down. It had already been decided to close in July, 1967.

When Oscar went to Switzerland to get married, Adam Hefty made cheese in his place until he returned.

In early days, brick and limburger chese were made. Later, American was made.

ELVERS CREAMERY & CHEESE CO.

Charles Elver and wife, Mina, to Elvers Mills Cheese Factory Associ- ation in the Town of Vermont	Warranty Deed, Cons. \$1.00 Conveys land described in Caption at No. 1 hereof. Dated and ackd. Apr. 23, 1888. Recorded Nov. 12, 1888.
---	--

E. R. Sylvester and wife, Mayme; S. Syl- vester and wife, Anna; John Stucky and wife, Mary, and Fred Stucky to Elvers Creamery Co.	Quit Claim Deed Cons. \$2,000.00 Dated and recorded on Feb. 1908
---	---

(taken from abstract)

A corporation was formed in 1907, the purpose to manufacture butter and cheese, purchase milk, and do such other acts as may be necessary and convenient for the successful operation of a creamery and cheese company. The name of the said corporation shall be the Elvers Creamery Company and its location shall be in the Town of Vermont, in the County of Dane, State of Wisconsin.

A special meeting of the Board of Directors held on Feb. 15, 1908, reported:

52 shares had been sold at \$25 each	\$1,300.00
Borrowed at State Bank at 6%	800.00
Paid to Fred Stucky for Creamery	2,000.00
Paid to O. A. Stolen, Atty. fees	31.87
Balance in treasury, Feb. 15, 1908	68.13

A special meeting of the Board of Directors held on Feb. 29, 1908, for the report of January milk as follows:

2,114 lbs. butter shipped at \$30.48	644.40
483½ lbs. butter to patrons at 30 cents	145.05

	\$789.45
For making butter .03 lb.	77.62

	\$711.83

Butter sold at Creamery	145.05

Balance due to patrons	\$566.78

Mr. Peter Olson was the first buttermaker and demanded a helper after May 15 when milk was over 70,000 lbs. per day.

In 1918 at the annual meeting the stockholders decided to change from butter making to cheese making. Twelve patrons paid by cash or note \$40 each to buy new machinery to make American cheese. Mr. Wm. Torphy of Ridgeway was hired as first cheesemaker for \$100 per month beginning May 13, 1918. In November he left and Christ Frutiger was hired. Because of debts to be paid in 1920, it was voted that each patron furnish one load of wood for every two cows. The wood to be at the factory the first of April.

A special meeting of the stockholders was held at the Town Hall of Vermont on May 15, 1925, following the fire which burned Elvers Creamery and Cheese Factory building to the ground. It was voted to begin immediately to rebuild the factory on the old site and replace the necessary tools and property. On October 30th of the same year a special meeting was held in the new creamery building. Alvin Severson was hired.

Later Elvers Creamery Co. was changed to Elvers Cheese Co. Some of the directors who served many years were Thos. Gallagher, Ole Bakken, Martin Olson, Ed and Waldie Bohn, Alfred Erickson, Robert Handel and Gilman Mickelson. Robert Handel served on the board from 1913 until his death in 1969. In 1970 the board decided to discontinue making cheese and dissolve the company because of the shortage of milk and strict state regulations for small cheese factories. Mr. Delbert Rickli, the last cheesemaker, bought the building.

Gone is another small cheese factory. Gone is the community center for the farmers—where the prices of milk, cheese, hogs, cattle, machinery and farms were argued and discussed. This had been the place where they learned who had a new baby or who was getting married. This was where they heard who was sick or had died. If help was needed, these farmers were there.

Where is there another place like it?

THE NORSLIN LUMBER MILL

About 1945 Harry Norslein purchased a "Bell" lumber saw. This saw was set up on the Clarence Norslein place. They bought the first chain saw about the same time, a two man Distin, which they still have. They went to Cedarburg, Iowa, to get it. They still make feed bunks even though the mill burned to the ground about 1970.

PUD'S RANCH (Recreation Farm)

Pud's Ranch got its beginning in the fall of 1964. In January of that year, Philip (Pud) Skalet

and his wife, Ethel, purchased the Elliot Mickelson farm, located ¼ mile from the junction of Hwy. 78 on CTH JJ, about 1½ miles south of Black Earth. That first summer they purchased a span of mules to begin their hayrides that fall. Since then Pud has acquired several teams of horses and uses up to three teams and wagons for hayride groups.

The hay rides and sleigh rides at Pud's Ranch soon became so popular (advertisement was mainly by word of mouth), plans to build a building had to be made to accommodate larger groups after hay rides, for refreshments, recreation and fellowship. With the help of the Black Earth Rifle Club members, Pud's Recreation Building and Club House and Indoor Rifle Range for the Rifle Club became a reality in the summer of 1967.

Groups that come to Pud's for rides consist mainly of church groups, young and old alike, from Madison and area churches. Groups come from the University of Wisconsin, 4-H clubs, Girl and Boy Scouts, homemaker clubs and neighborhood and family groups.

The hay ride trail takes one up through the woods to "bjork land" (birch land) along the edge of the ridge land fields, and down the road again on the other side of the hill, past the tree that holds a walking plow that Elliot Mickelson probably hung there on the young tree over 40 years ago. The tree has grown entirely around the iron beam.

Some groups also enjoy tobogganing.

Phil and Ethel dedicated their farm and building with a service conducted by their pastor, T. N. Borgen, Jr., pastor of the Vermont and Our Saviour's Lutheran Churches. They have one daughter, Ingerid Mall, born to them in December of 1970. Phil is presently employed, since July 1967, by Vermont Township as the road patrolman. Ethel works as a receptionist in Verona, Wisconsin.

THE SCHLICK SORGHUM MILL

About 1914 Otto Schlick, the father of Amy and Lillie Mickelson, opened a sorghum mill. He bought the equipment in Mazomanie from Charlie Lindstrom.

As Lillie remembers, it was very hard and demanding work. Getting the cane was no small deal either. It was hand planted, hoed by hand and when it was headed out you took the tops off to make it sweeter. Next you took laths and knocked the leaves off. That was called stripping. Using a corn knife the cane was cut by hand. It then was placed on a wagon and hauled to the mill. The mill consisted of 4 or 5 large pans, a roller and a lot of firewood. The juice was squeezed out of the stalk, then loaded and hauled away. Next they placed the sap in a pan and started cooking. When the sap

weighed a certain weight close to a gallon it was run into the next pan.

The women were as busy as the men. Huge meals were cooked on the range to feed the hungry crew. Even the children had their jobs, like carrying water and wood, gathering vegetables, digging potatoes and hauling away the cane stalks.

The mill ran from 1914-1919. There was another mill near the St. James Church which was run by Art Soper.

HIGH PINE, A RECREATIONAL AREA

David and Katherine Feddima Enerson bought the Ernest Marquette farm in 1964. David had for several years nurtured the dream of operating a year around recreational area for young people. His dream has been realized at High Pine.

The most impressive feature is a gigantic half-mile long toboggan slide—a strip of ice about two feet wide in a chute which yields a speedy but controlled slide.

The area also has five or six miles of hiking trails, a skating rink, and a beautiful reconditioned barn, which has been made into a warming house complete with heat, a fireplace, concession stand, pool table and pinball machine.

The Enerson's have five children. Scott, Andrew and Michelle were born before they moved to Vermont; Jill and Flint were born after they became "Vermonters".



High Pine toboggan slide.



Fireplace
in Enerson barn.

Capital stock \$1000.00 (One thousand shares @ \$10.00)
 This subscription to the Patrons Merc Co
 is made by the following:

We the undersigned do hereby agree to take
 such number of shares at the rate of \$10.00
 dollars each of the Capital stock of the
 Patrons Mercantile Company, Black
 Earth, Wis., as we have set to the right
 of our name said shares to be paid
 for on or before, viz. 15th 1944 or as
 soon thereafter as the Board of Directors
 of said Company shall determine
 provided that said Company shall
 issue to us certificate of stock for
 such number of shares on the
 payment of same.

Name	Number of Shares	Address
A. B. Thorsrud	5	Black Earth
S. Halverson	2	"
Chas. C. Borchgrevink	1	E. Cross
A. C. Anderson	1	"
Anton E. Johnson	1	"
H. A. Jensen	2	Black Earth
Ole E. Jensen	2	"
H. Bergant	2	"
E. C. Jensen	2	"
Wm. J. H. Berger	2	"
A. O. Bergant	1	"
	21	

Ole E. Jensen	2	
Frank Bergant	1	Black Earth
E. C. Jensen	5	
Anton E. Johnson	1	
Tom Cole	1	
A. Anderson	1	
Harold Jensen	2	
Arnold Jensen	1	
Wm. J. H. Berger	1	E. Cross
Gen. Holland	1	Black Earth
Ole Jensen	1	
Frank Bergant	2	
Edna Bergant	3	
E. C. Jensen	2	
A. C. Jensen	3	
A. O. Bergant	5	
Carl Bergant	1	
Ernest Bergant	2	
Ernest Bergant	1	
Peter Jensen	4	
Ernest Bergant	2	
Edward Jensen	1	
Wm. J. H. Berger	1	
Michael Bergant	1	
Wm. J. H. Berger	1	
	66	

Stock subscriptions to Patron's Merc. Co.

VERMONT MAN MOST INSTRUMENTAL IN ORGANIZING SUCCESSFUL COOPERATIVE

A. B. Thorsrud, farmer, businessman and pioneer in the area cooperative movement, was the prime promoter of the oldest cooperative of its kind in the nation, Patrons' Mercantile Cooperative of Black Earth, Wisconsin.

He, along with other farmers, held secret meetings of a group they called Patrons of Industry. One of the main concerns of the group was the high prices farmers were paying for supplies and the low prices they were getting for their produce. They made secret special deals for their members to get lower prices for supplies. They were still not satisfied and at one of their meetings, which was held in the Vermont Cheese Factory (a farmer-owned factory), they decided to organize their own store. Mr. Thorsrud, who ran the farm now owned by Philip Skalet, was delegated to check into it.

This Norwegian go-getter visited a co-op in Iowa and the Grange Store in Evansville, Wisconsin, and studied the "Rockdale principles". It wasn't long before he and a few other farmers hitched up their buggies and traveled around the area selling shares in their idea at \$10.00 per share—175 members to start. It is interesting to note that all the first people on the list were Norwegians from the Vermont area. The signers of the Articles of Incorporation in 1893 were six Norwegians from the Vermont area and two others.

The success of Patrons' Mercantile Cooperative owes much to the foresight, business management and hard work of A. B. Thorsrud.

— by Ray E. Rettenmund,
 Present General Manager

TYROL SKI BASIN

Before becoming a ski area in 1958, Tyrol was known as the Anderson farm, after the first owner.

Staffed Co-op Store 20 Years Ago



Patron's employees,
1930.

After a succession of ownership changes in the 1950's, the farm was left dormant in 1958.

At that time a golf course manager in the Chicago area, Sandy Stevenson, was touring the area around Mt. Horeb and Vermont Township. For the past year Sandy had been searching for a suitable location for a ski area. He had driven south on JG, past Little Norway and past Bohn Road. He was heading east toward Stewart Park when a chance glance in his rear view mirror framed a picture of a farm in the valley, surrounded by hills. Sandy immediately stopped his car and began inquiries into the farm. He had found his ski area.

For the winter of 1958-59, Sandy installed one long rope tow, capable of handling eight skiers at a time. The old dairy barn became the chalet. That winter a 30'x30' room was constructed in the east portion of the lower level. This room contained a small cafeteria, a place to rent skis and boots, and a place for skiers to change their shoes. For years before the hayloft was converted into a saloon (1970), beer was served informally by enterprising ski instructors. Art Sutter and his cohorts bought cases of beer in town and stashed them under hay bales in the unheated portion of the barn. An opener was provided and people contributed money in a tin can—much like today's office coffee pot club. As time went on, other buildings of the old farm were converted. The old machine shed

was remodeled to become the ski shop and rental shop; the old farm house became the office and washrooms. The present chalet-style washroom building stands on the original foundation of the old farmhouse, which burned down in a fire the fall of 1965.

At the top of one of Tyrol's runs, Big Cedar, are three genuine indian mounds. Most of the hills around Tyrol had been picked clean by years of grazing. Now they are heavily wooded. Trees planted in the 1930's by the CCC have now grown quite tall and Sandy himself planted over 15,000

Tyrol Ski Basin.



trees during his eighteen year ownership of the property.

The face of Tyrol is now changing. In 1976, the area was sold to Jim Bankson and Ross Reinhold. While retaining much of the charm of the old buildings and the beautiful scenery, Jim and Ross are engaged in an active multi-year program of modernization. For awhile back in 1958, there were a handful or two ski areas in the state, Wisconsin now contains approximately 50, and many have sprouted up in northern Illinois. So competition is keen, and Tyrol must make some changes to successfully compete. With all the changes that have been made, we are pleased to report that Tyrol regulars still find it the same friendly, down-home place it has always been. Jim and Ross plan to keep it that way.

RAINBOW FARM

Rainbow Farm is located in a valley of the Blue Mounds, twenty miles west of Madison. The Mounds, two blue hills, are the highest in the unglaciated southwest region of Wisconsin, an area of rock outcroppings, steep hills, valleys and limestone caverns.

Our studio, in the whitewashed, stonewalled lower portion of our 30x80 foot barn, is presently shared with barn swallows. The past six months have been devoted to building, organizing and acquiring a large working inventory of German antique and hand-rolled opalescent glass. We are ready to design and produce stained glass to any specifications.

Our concern is with the contemporary environment, the space man inhabits every day.

Robert J. Huebner served his apprenticeship at Conrad-Schmidt Studios (one of the largest stained glass studios) and studied all phases of the work.

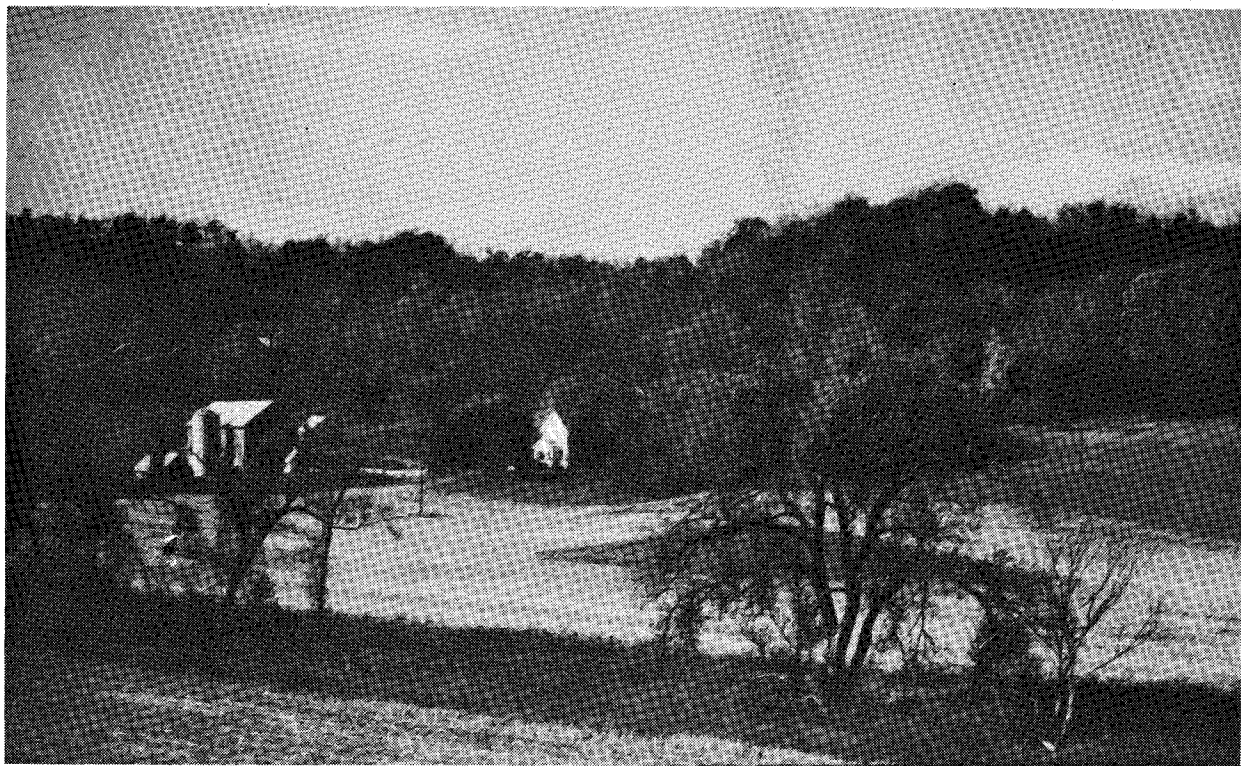
His partner, Mary Jane Hust, has an art background that includes an MFA and teaching experience through the college level.

Although both are from the Milwaukee area, Bob's origins include a grandfather from northern Germany. Bob's great-uncle, Charles Huebner, an artist/photographer in his own right, is buried at Mazomanie.

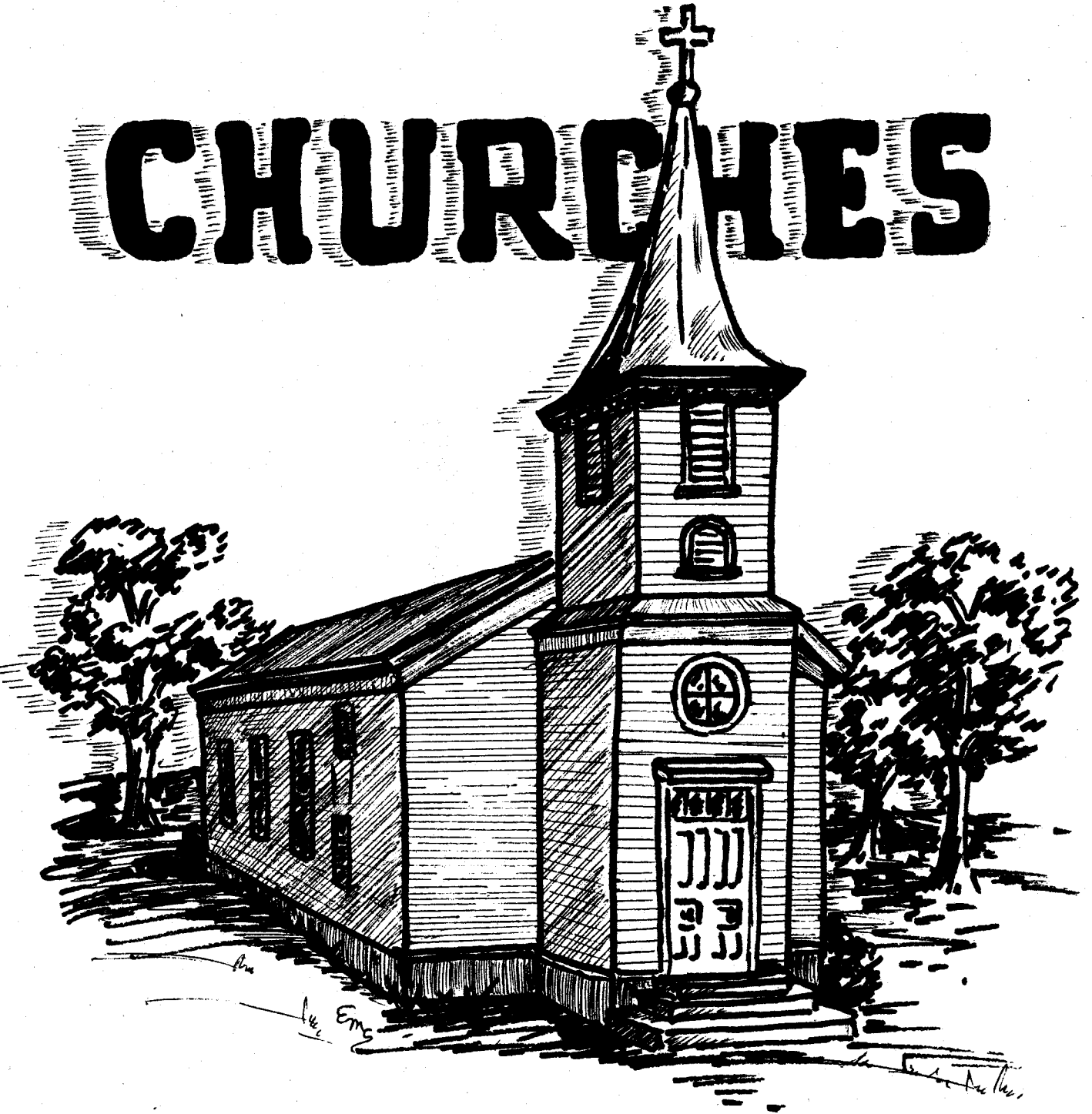
Mary's immediate family history include an artist/mother and photographer/father, and an ancestry, on great-grandmother Amelia's side, in the Lewis family of Missouri, that includes Meriwether Lewis.

We have been progressively moving westward. Needing a place to work and live closely with nature, the farm was a clear case of love at first sight. The peace and beauty of this township and warmth of its people have made us feel at home.

Rainbow Farm.



CHURCHES





Mounds Creek Methodist Church.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MOUNDS CREEK METHODIST CHURCH

The history of Methodism in the Mounds Creek community dates back to 1844 when members of the newly arrived British Temperance Society were served by a Methodist circuit rider.

The one and one-third acre tract on which the church stands was purchased for \$20.00 in 1864. By August of 1865, the church was completed and in operation. In 1869, its trustees reported that it was free of debt and estimated to be worth \$1,000. Improvements on the original sanctuary over the years and the addition of a kitchen, furnace room, electricity, and central heating have brought it to its present \$13,000 valuation.

The exact number of members in the congregation in the early years has not been determined, but long-time members recall that there was seldom space for another horse at the hitching rail during services. Such names as Boardmann, Finlayson, Steele, Raynor, Wilson, Ellsworth, Knight, Harrop, Gorst, and Orcutt appear among the trustees and stewards of the church during its first 25 years. The names, Roberts and Coldwell, appear only a few years later. Of the present 50 members, three have been a part of the congregation for more than half a century. They are: Mrs. Jennie Lucey, 59 years; Mrs. Kate Coldwell, 58 years; and Mrs. Irene Booth, 51 years.

From 1872, the Mazomanie Circuit embraced for varying periods of time such places as Arena, Drakes School House, Vermont Bluffs, Roxbury, Mill Creek, and Dover. The only one to remain a part of the circuit all during that time was the Brick Church. In 1872 the charge included only Mazomanie and Brick Church. Thirteen years later they voted unanimously to unite with Black Earth, a merger which lasted ten years. In 1895 there was a split and the Brick Church became a part of the two-point Black Earth Charge. The three churches

reunited in 1901 and have remained that way for all but one of the past 64 years.

The Sunday School first organized in 1863, sometimes numbered as many as 70 scholars. It met only during the summer for many years. In 1949, after several years of inactivity, it was reopened and has operated continuously since. There are now 32 students and five teachers.

The Ladies Aid, organized nearly 50 years ago, still serves its original purpose of contributing to the financial support of the church.

Forty-six ministers have regularly preached in Mounds Creek during the past 100 years, serving at salaries ranging from \$450 for a four-point charge in 1865 to over \$3,600, for a three-point charge in 1965.

Before 1865, the congregation was known as Blue Mounds Creek. During the 35 to 40 years following the construction of the present sanctuary, it was commonly known as the Brick Church. It was not until about 1900 that this church began to be called by its present name.

The Mounds Creek Methodist Church, having served the spiritual needs of the community for well over 100 years and having touched and influenced as many as four generations in some families, is ready to begin its second century. While the building may not survive another 100 years, the church and its work will surely go on. The recent increase in membership and attendance and the continuous questioning and guidance sought by young and old alike assure us of that.

Written for: Centennial Observance, June 13, 1965.

ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH

Frontier priests, traveling the circuit of Southwestern Wisconsin settlements no doubt were pleased to come upon devout homes in the newly cleared hills, where the faith lingered, even flourished. A dream often expressed among these settlers was to have a little church of their own. This, too, was the wish of the traveling priests who visited the high hills and winding vales of the Blue Mounds area. Priests in those mid-nineteenth century days came from the older established towns. They came from Madison, Milwaukee, Sauk City, Cross Plains, Pine Bluff and Mazomanie.

Surely, a permanent church must have been discussed. Confession in the kitchen, Mass in the parlor was fine, but a church would be finer.

On Christmas Day, 1857, Jeremiah Deneen lay dying. "And when I go," he was known to have said, "bury me on that hill above the road under that big gnarled tree."

"Surely, you can't be meaning what you say"



St. James Catholic Church.

said to him, Hannah, his wife, "that ground hasn't a hint of blessing on it."

"You let me be buried there and God and his people will take care of the rest," came back Jeremiah, and died.

He was buried on the hill above the road underneath the tree.

That same hill is St. James Cemetery today. It is a blessed hallowed spot. Many a temple of clay has been buried beside the clay of Jeremiah Deneen. With each burial came a new blessing.

On All Souls Day, the "Libera Nos" of the church's liturgy rings out. On Corpus Christi, the body of Christ is carried there to hallow the hill once more. God and his people have indeed taken care of the rest. The faith and the strength hereof had triumphed again—in this new fullness of time.

In such wise ways did the beginning of the present St. James parish come about.

In 1860 funds were gathered for goods and items that needed to be purchased, and a church was built. All nearby settlers helped in this community enterprise. Later when a second church would replace this structure, Vermonters would

refer to the first church as the "old brown church".

Some families who were boosters for the building of a church as early as 1857 were: Lynch-es, Sweeneys, O'Hares, Powers, Dolohantys, Cun-neens, Curtains, Brenners, Kelleys, Haskins, Blakes, Deneens, Frawleys and Keatings.

Much of the work was "do-it-yourself" type so common and also so necessary among frontier people. Wisconsin was still frontier land. It had become a state in 1848. German and Austrian fam-ilies also arrived with other pioneers. They came from near Vienna and established their families in the hills of Vermont. Florian Zwettler, made the pews for Vermont's "old brown church." Before the original church and cemetery of St. James were in use in 1860, the people of Vermont were baptized, married and buried from either St. Mary's Church, Pine Bluff, or St. Barnabas, Mazo-manie.

Now when the church was completed, it was called St. Simon's and remained St. Simon's even after the building of a second church to replace the first in 1883. In 1891, the Vermont Catholic Church was renamed St. James. No one really knows or remembers why, but the following whimsical ex-planation has been given and is as good as any.

During the Civil War years, play groups in the north were producing stage versions of "Uncle Tom's Cabin". Madison, Wisconsin, during its fairs, offered such theatrical productions. Vermont-ers taking their produce, stock and fine goods to Madison fairs and market, stopped to attend such offerings for a bit of entertainment. What indigna-tion they felt when the villain named Simon Legree beat, whipped and tormented his slave property! The actor made the name, Simon, so hateful that they resolved to demand a new name for their church. They'd rather have nothing to do with Simon any more. The name of Simon's brother and fellow apostle, James, was chosen and in 1891 St. Simon's became St. James.

The first church stood on the knoll which is now the cemetery. Twenty years later a decision was made to sell part of the "old brown" church to St. Barnabas, Mazomanie, which needed a school building and to raze the rest. The new church was ready in 1883. Pastors from Mazomanie and Pine Bluff served the parish until 1895 when St. James became a mission church of St. Ignatius parish, Mt. Horeb. A society for ladies was found-ed early in St. James' history, known as the "Altar Society." Dues in 1903 were 25 cents and twenty members paid up. Expense items show a copy of "Hunters' Interludes" purchased from Kaum Music Co., Milwaukee in 1907 for 50 cents less

15% discount, total 43 cents; add postage of 2 cents, total 45 cents. A set of cruets for 60 cents was an expense in 1905. The St. James Christian Total Abstinence Union was founded in 1893. Records show that 57 members were on the roster in 1895. Dues were 25 cents. Fifteen members were remiss in paying the dues. For a long time, a horse shed stood in the rear of the church where the pastors left their team during Mass or Confessions.

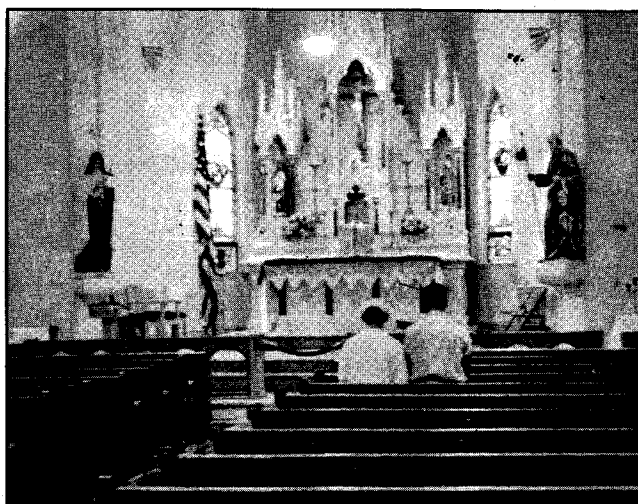
In 1934, St. James, Vermont, became a mission of St. Mary's Parish, Pine Bluff. At this time Mass was held every Sunday. Heretofore, the frequency of Mass had varied. Now the resident nuns of St. Mary's taught the Catechism Classes which had always been one of the many duties of the pastor. St. James' Church was wired for electricity in 1942 when much of Vermont got this convenience with the Rural Electrification Administration.

Many activities were held over the years; the annual picnic and dinner, card parties, bake sales, auction lunches, etc. Most of these were fund-raising but young and old worked together and enjoyed it.

The centennial of St. James' was observed in 1960. The interior of the church was redecorated and repainted. The sanctuary was renovated and new furnishings added for this occasion.

A few years later a Parish Council was elected because of a new ruling in the church. The parish was growing. The nearby, now closed rural school, the former Deneen School had been converted into

Memorial Altar built at St. James Catholic Church site.



St. James Catholic Church Sanctuary, 1959.

classrooms to be used for Catechism classes for St. James. This was the courtesy of the new owner of the building, Roman Sutter.

In the spring of 1969 the church was further beautified. New carpeting was installed. Tragedy occurred a couple of months later. On June 12, 1969, lightning struck in the early morning hours and St. James burned to the ground.

In the centennial book of 1960, Fr. Braig concluded with the following:

"Some future books will tell how long the Church of St. James will stand in the hills of Vermont. It may well stand

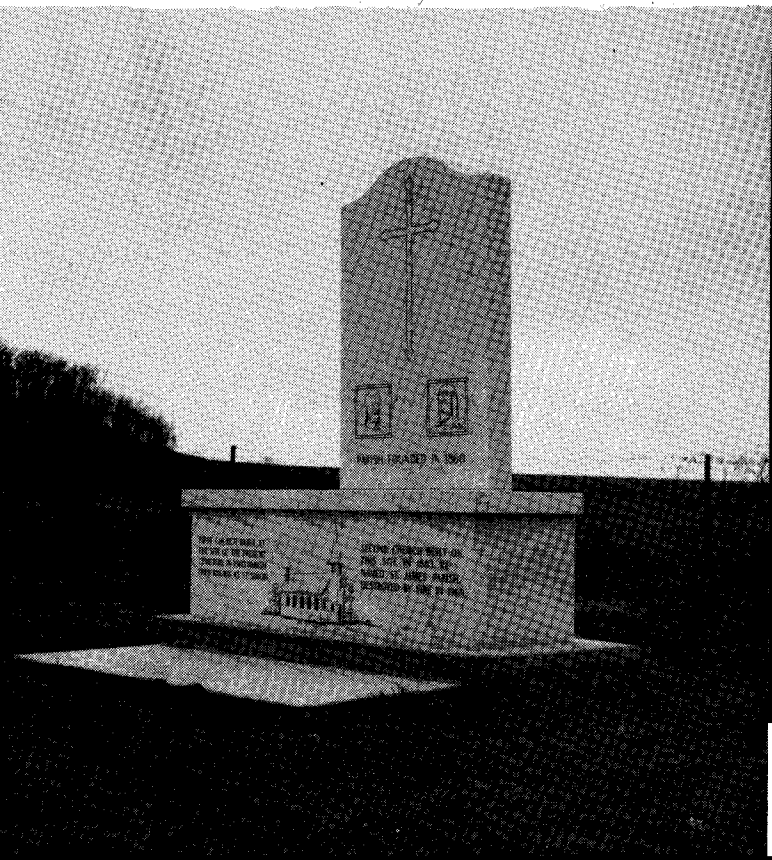
as long as oats and corn
as long as pork and beef,
as long as milk and cheese

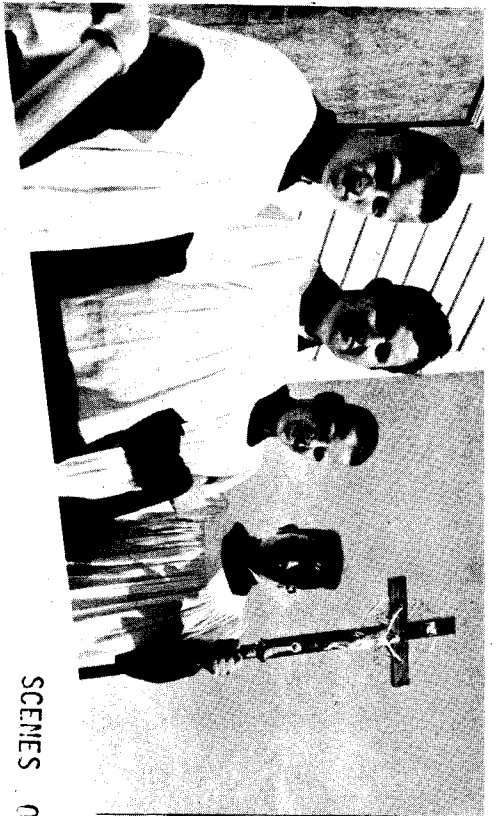
can be coaxed from the hillsides and lowlands of Vermont Township. This is sure: God and His people have done much. This, too, is secure, that whatever the building, whatever the address, the Church—that is to say The Faith Stands, and Will Stand, remains and will remain, the spectator of the world."

In the months that followed the tragic fire, another decision faced the St. James parishioners—their church could not be rebuilt. Some of the members joined St. Barnabas, Mazomanie; St. Ignatius, Mt. Horeb; St. Mary's, Barneveld and St. Mary's, Pine Bluff. What remains? The cemetery across the road, a memorial altar erected on St. James Church site and **The Faith**.

Credit: History and data copied from "A Hundred Years of The Faith" edited by Joseph U. Braig.

(An Annual Potluck Picnic and Service is held the first Sunday in August at noon. The public is cordially invited to attend this get-together at the former site of St. James Church on County Road F.)





SCENES OF 1960



St. James trustees
Frank Reilly, Sec'y
Gerald Reindl, Treas.

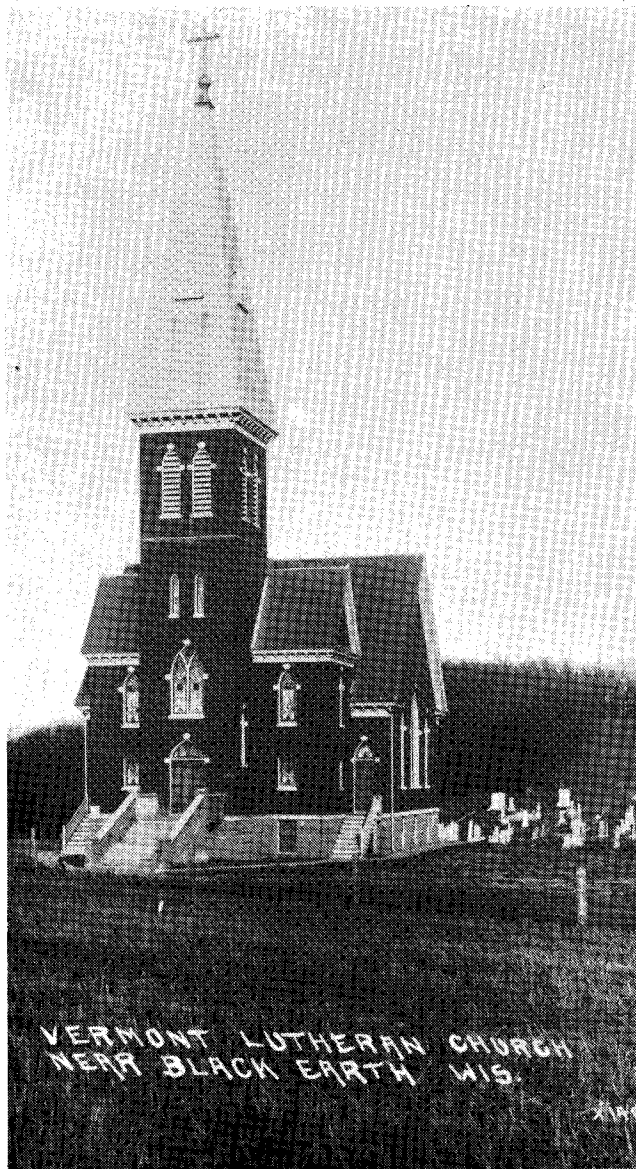
Gary Zwettler
Ronald Bohn
Paul Zwettler
Mike Merklein

Holy Name Society Officers
Gerald Reindl
Raphael O'Connell
James Zwettler
Ray Merklein
Robert Handel (back)

Altar Society Officers
Mmes Joseph Dolohanty
Frank Reilly
Donald Helmenstine
Joseph Kelliher



Scenes of 1960 — St. James Catholic Church.



Vermont Lutheran Church.

VERMONT LUTHERAN CHURCH

The first recorded meeting of the Vermont Lutheran Congregation was held September 27, 1855. An agreement was made with Jens Gjesme to arrange for at least three meetings per year at \$5.00 per meeting. He also agreed to lead the singing, provide bread and wine for communion, and record the names of the communicants. Four services were held in the village hall at Black Earth, Wisconsin, in 1856. Reverend P. N. Brodal signed the protocol for October 3, 1856.

On December 20, 1856, the congregation elected a committee of five, namely: Ole Flasset, Jon Peterson Dybdahl, Syver Syverson, Arne Vasfaret and Thom Anderson, with Rev. P. N. Brodal to act as chairman. Their duty was to determine a place for a church to be built. \$794.00 was subscribed by 60 members for the new church.

During the planning and construction of the new church, they needed a church building. To satisfy this need, they bought a log schoolhouse from the Village of Black Earth, and with 20 teams of oxen moved it into the Vermont Valley on what is now Highway 78. An entry in the records reads, "income from sold church (log building) \$150.00."

The erection of the new church was in progress during the years 1862-63. According to treasurer's records, the complete cost was \$804.00.

Vermont congregation called Rev. John N. Fjeld on Oct. 7, 1861. He served until 1883. He passed away March 12, 1888, and was laid to rest in the Vermont Lutheran Cemetery.

Pastor O. P. Syftestad was called to serve Vermont Congregation in 1883. He served until 1890.

Pastor Severin Gunderson was serving Black Earth Congregation and a call was presented to him to come and serve Vermont also. He accepted the call and served Vermont from 1890 to 1947.

In 1913 work was begun on the present Vermont Lutheran Church. Scripture reading for cornerstone laying was from Eph. 2:18-22. Dedication services were held on May 24, 1914. Committee in charge was Martin Mickelson, Sever T. Lee, and E. O. Anderson.

On June 22, 1930, two sons of Pastor and Mrs. S. Gunderson, Gerhardt and Hector, were ordained into the ministry. Rev. Hector Gunderson accepted the call to the Vermont Lutheran Congregation as an associate pastor. After more than fifty years of service in the parish, Pastor S. Gunderson believed his parish would be better served by a change. Rev. Hector Gunderson accepted the call and was installed as the full time pastor and his father, Rev. S. Gunderson, became the Pastor Emeritus. He continued to take an active interest in the work of the church until his death on July 14, 1947.

In April 1949, Rev. H. Gunderson was granted a year's leave of absence from his parish duties. His pastorate was cared for during his absence by a theological student, Maynard Midthun. After his recovery from two very serious operations, Rev. H. Gunderson resumed his duties in the parish and served until Jan., 1954, when he resigned to accept a call from the Mission Board to establish a new congregation at Lake Edge, Madison, Wisconsin.

Rev. Oliver Solberg accepted the call to the Vermont, Springdale, East Blue Mounds Lutheran Parish in June 1954. He served the parish until 1962. For several months we were without a pastor, but were served by visiting pastors and theological students.

In 1962 the three-point parish of East Blue Mounds, Springdale, and Vermont was dissolved.

In 1963 with Dr. Myron Austinson in charge, a motion was passed to instruct the trustees of Vermont to meet with the trustees of Black Earth to form a two-point parish. The two-point parish was established. A call was sent to Pastor Theodore Borgen, Jr., who was then serving the Black Earth congregation. Pastor T. N. Borgen, Jr., accepted the call, and is faithfully serving us at this writing.

Historian, Mrs. Grant (Grace) Skalet



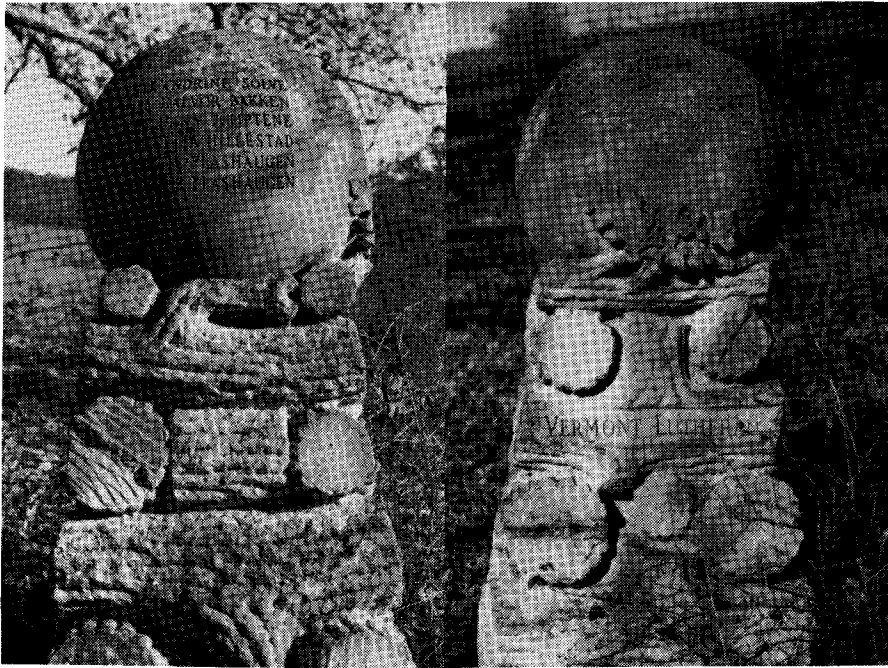
Vermont Pigeforening at Peter Paulson home, 1897.

Front row, seated on ground: Alma Mickelson, (girl visiting Fields), Emma Paulson (Mrs. Thompson), Sophia Gundersen (Mrs. Mason), Anna Helland, Chistina Field (Mrs. Fosshage), Hannah Norselien (Mrs. Martin-Haugen). Laura Paulson seated on chair back of front row.

Second row: Christina Moen, Alma Gilberts (Forshaug), Clara Norselien, Tonetta Anderson (Dybdahl), Clara Anderson (Field), Annie Anderson (Simley), Belle Rockstad, Hilda Peterson, (Mrs. Sever Lee), Nelsina Barsness.

Third row: Juliana Hauge (Wittwer), Christina Urness, Clara Espeseth (Mullen), Nellie Sylvester (Mrs. H. G. Halsten), Caroline Johnson Dybdahl (Parmer), Malla Venden (Mrs. Sever Skalet), Alma Skalet, Olive Halsten (Mrs. Lou Howery).

Fourth row: Mathilda Olson (Brager), Clara Brager, Carrie Urness, Tonetta Moen, Bertha Simley, Pastor Severin Gundersen, Tonetta Overvill, Clara Peterson (Thorsrud), Laura Field (Thorsrud), Martha Brager (Walstad).



Monument in old cemetery
located on Urness Farm.

Dorcas Society at the George Gulson home in 1917.
Three little girls in front: Marie Punswick, Cora Barsness
(died at age 12), Inger Sweum.
Middle row (seated): Thora Gulson, Martha Urness, Hazel
Norslien, Mattie Steensrud, Viola Dybdahl, Ruth Bjelde.
Standing: Carrie Urness, Laura Wilkins, Anne Amble, Olga
Espeseth, Gerty Severson, Alice Steensrud, Geneva Espe-
seth, Ella Norslein, Dora Espeseth, Clara Gulson.



Vermont Lutheran Sunday School about 1937.





Vermont Lutheran Church Junior Choir, 1948
 Bottom: Kenneth Meigs, Kristine Haugen, Connie Johnson,
 Center: Dennis Aeschlimann, Linda Johnson, Nor-
 slien, Donna Mickelson, Rebecca Aeschlimann. Back: Glen
 Haugen, Carol Mickelson, Norslien, Viola Dybdahl,
 Linda Norslien, Julie Skalet.

Vermont Lutheran Church Confirmation Class, 1946
 Front: Grant Sale, Beverly Barsness, Natalie Lee, Wilma
 Kading, Thelma Wilkins, Marilyn Jordan, Philip Lee. Back:
 Beverly Brager, Donald Severson, Norrel Mickelson, Joan
 Dybdahl, Rev. Hector Gunderson, Betty Barsness, David
 Dybdahl, Kermit Peterson, Aldro Johnson.





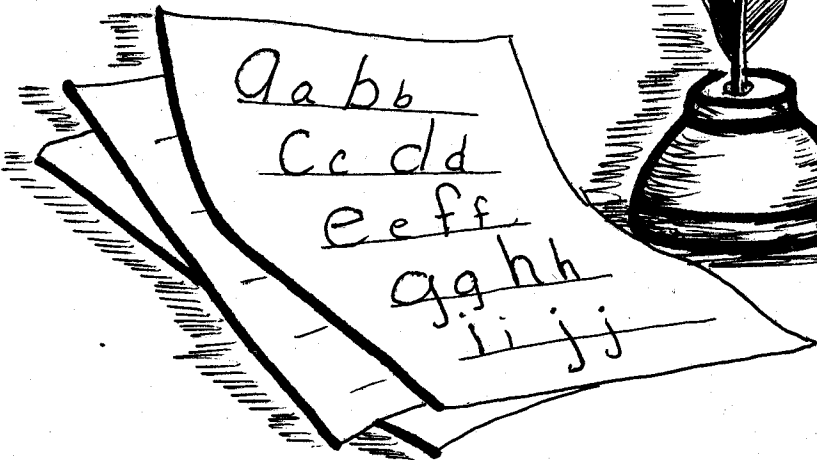
SCHOOLS



readin'



'ritin'



'rithmetic

$$2 \times 2 = 4$$

$$4 \times 4 = 16$$

$$8 \times 8 = 64$$

$$9 + 8 = 17$$

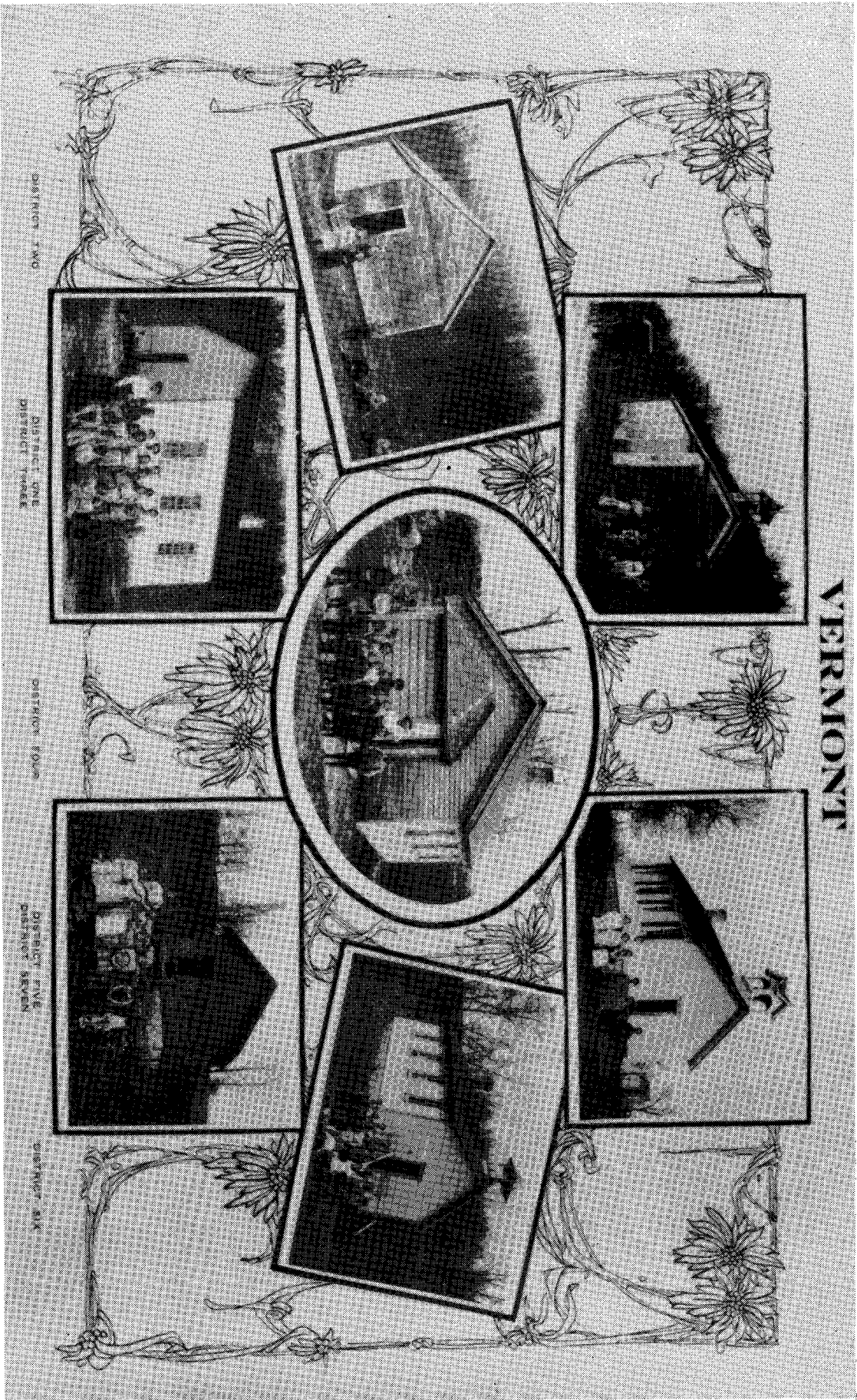
$$11 - 6 = 5$$

$$8 + 3 = 11$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 4 \\ -2 \\ \hline 2 \end{array}$$

math

VERMONT



Rural Schools - Vermont Township

SCHOOLS HISTORY OF BEATY SCHOOL

The first school located in what was later to become the Beaty District was a log building built in the early 1850's. Elizabeth Beaty taught school there for five years from 1854 until the time she was married to John Nace in 1859. Part of this time her only textbook was the Bible. This little log school was in operation through the years of the Civil War until about 1873 or 1874. Then it was decided to build a new schoolhouse.

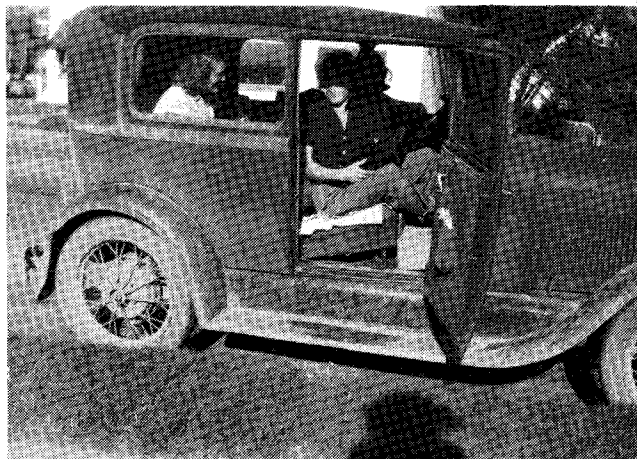
George Beaty, who then owned the land later known as Beaty Hill, donated an acre of land for the schoolhouse, hence the name "Beaty School."

They must have had some sort of ceremony when they started the building operations for when the loads of lumber were brought to the site of the new schoolhouse, Peter Nace, then a small child of four or five, was lifted onto the first wagon, given the reins of the horses and told to drive them into the school yard so he could say, in future years,



Three Rural School Teachers And
Their Car "Henry" — 1943-44

(Left to right) Ruth Underwood Taylor, Beaty School; Marion Arthur, Booth School; Harriet Richardson Coughrough, Bohn School.



that he had hauled the first load of lumber to the school. He was a grandson of George Beaty, and his father, John Nace, who had been instrumental in making plans for the new school, had died in 1872.

The first years the school had a very high enrollment, especially during the winter months. In those days many grown men and also some women went to school in the winter to learn to read and write. At one time during the 1880's there were sixty pupils in the school, most of them were Irish.

The school desks were of the kind that seated three pupils, and these served until the fall of 1913 when new single desks were installed. The school was closed in 1944.

During the early years, there was no well on the premises, and drinking water was obtained from a spring some distance south of the schoolhouse.

By the 1940's, it was apparent that the days of the one-room country schools throughout the county were drawing to a close, and it was decided to take the pupils by bus to Mt. Horeb.

Beaty School closed in 1944, and an auction was held in August. The building was bought to be used as a house and is now located near Stoughton.

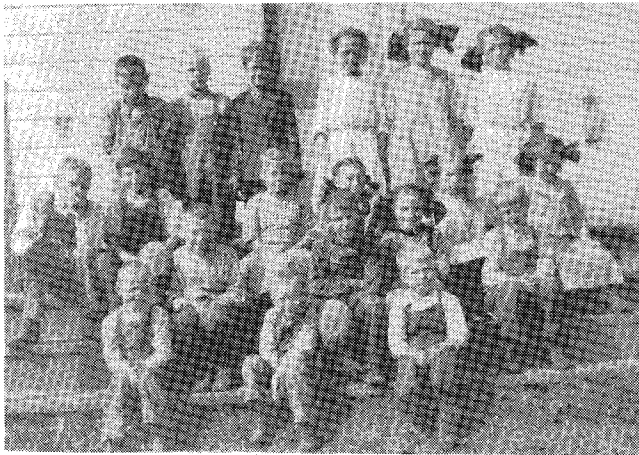
The Beaty School District No. 2 was formally attached to the School District of the Village of Mt. Horeb on the 12th of August 1954, changing its name to the Joint School District No. 1 of the Village of Mt. Horeb and Towns of Vermont and Blue Mounds.

— Myrtle Nace

BOHN SCHOOL DISTRICT JT. NO. 6 OF THE TOWNS OF VERMONT AND BLUE MOUNDS

Our oldest records begin with a school lease and to quote in part: "Know all men by these present that Ernest Bohn of the Town of Vermont does hereby lease unto School District No. Six of the Town of Vermont, County of Dane, the following parcel of land in Section 28, containing one-half acre more or less to hold during the term the said district wishes to maintain a school house for school purposes. Dated this twelfth day of September, A.D. 1865." Signed by Ernest Bohn and District Board—Ole Olson Sale and Edward O'Hare.

The oldest school record book begins on September 30, 1867, when the voters of this district met at the schoolhouse and elected Hans Opsal, clerk to fill a vacancy for two years; and Ole Evenson, treasurer for three years. Hans Opsal lived on the former Carl Tollefson farm, now owned by Art and Milo Bergum. It was voted to raise \$132.25 by tax on the district. O. M. Helland,



Bohn School Pupils

Top row (left to right): John McKinley, Hjalmer Sveum, Albert Anderson, Thea Sveum, Marion Fredrickson, Laura Tollefson. 2nd row: Earl Bohn, John Hines, Eleda Fredrickson, Sarah McKinley, Inger Sveum, Signe Fredrickson. 3rd row: Glen Bohn, Henry Hines, Mary McKinley, Clarence Sveum. 4th row: (unknown), Christopher McKinley, (unknown).

of the Town of Vermont, signed a contract November 15, 1867, to teach the school for the term of the four winter months, for the sum of \$40 per month. Kate Carroll, of the Town of Blue Mounds, signed a contract April 27, 1868, to teach the school for the two summer months at \$20 per month. Mr. Helland reported that 60 pupils were enrolled during the winter term, but the average daily attendance was only 20. He reported that 55 pupils pursued studies in reading and only 19 mental arithmetic. He reported that 45 pupils were enrolled the previous term.

At the September 24, 1868, district meeting Ole Anderson was elected director for a three-year term. Ole and Julia (Gunhild Moen) Anderson Eidsbakken lived on the farm later sold to their son, Ole A. Bakken, and now owned by Atty. Zerwick.

Following are some of the early teachers: Elling Opsal, Elizabeth Orcutt, Evar Evarson, Cassius Isham, Ada Grove, Nellie Keleny, Florence Orcutt, Mary Frawley and Kate Murphy.

Hannah Aylward of the Town of Black Earth taught the school from April, 1880 to 1884. She later became Mrs. Michael Dolohanty of our district.

Martin Holum of the Town of Blue Mounds taught the school in 1891. Some will remember him as a clerk in Hoff's Store.

Albert Thompson of the Town of Blue Mounds taught the school in 1897. Some will remember him as Doctor Thompson of Mt. Horeb.

Some more teachers who were from the Town of Vermont were: John Kelliher, Alma Gilberts, Maggie Lynch, Caroline Bohn Hoff, Mamie Deneen, Anna Conners Reilly and Alma Skalet.

A special meeting was held at the school house July 30, 1892. It was voted to build a new school house on the same site. Martin Mickelson, Albert Bohn and Thomas Gallagher were elected as a building committee. It was voted to build it 18x32x10 feet. Costs reports for the new building were \$66.80 for 20 seats; work, lumber, stone, painting, etc., totaled \$586.49 paid for over a period of three years.

Teachers from 1911 and on were: Mamie Ripahan Thompson, Winifred Sawle, Alice Murphy, Mayme Muldoon, Edna Becker Wiese, Edna Johnson, Leola Kahl Offerdahl, Bessie Barlow, Mary Statz Dolohanty, Leone Yapp, Inez Heggstad, Eleanore Topper, Lulu Johnson Tank, Esther Gunhus Bakken, Lillian Anderson Virgin, Rose Wittwer Fankhauser, Sylvia Melland Buzzeo, Pearl Thousand, Hazel Gerth, Harriet Richardson, Katherine Wainwright, Verna Houser, Lucille Thorson, Beulah U'Ren, Bernice Tschanz, Lillian Geisz, Sylvanus Aavang and Rose Einerson.

After one week of school in October 1918, the session was closed for four weeks on account of the flu epidemic. A "play day" had been planned with three other schools for October 11th, but on account of sickness they were unable to have it.

School board members through the years were: Hans Opsal, Ole Evanson, Ole Anderson, Archibald Lynn, Nels Goldben, Joseph Arnberger, William Deneen, Charles Elver, Albert Bohn, Peter Burns, Ernest Bohn, Patrick Gallagher, Thomas Gallagher, John Everson, Barney Burns, Ole A.

Bohn School — 1928 (Lulu Johnson, teacher)

Top row (left to right): Frances Hauge, Donald Mickelson, Clifford Tollefson, Ruth Tollefson, Parnell Hamilton, Bert Hauge. 2nd row: Lucille Zemp, Lavern Hamilton, Eugene Hamilton, Valeria Bohn, Arlene Mickelson, Dorothy Zemp.





Booth School Parents at Picnic

(Left to right) Front row: Libby Lucy, John Booth, Mary Dinneen, Cora Leach Booth, Rose Dinneen, Isaac Steele. Back row: Emma Perkins, Mathew Caldwell, James Lockwood, Minnie Booth Calkins, Mary Lockwood Bestor Dunnaway, Alfred Lockwood, Annie Sebert, Annie Lockwood Schlick, Dell Dinneen, Maggie Dinneen.

Booth School Pupils — 1890's

(Left to right) Front row: Celesta Dasey, Amy Schlick, Alma Sebert, Cecelia Dasey, Emma Handel, Howard Sebert, Everett Denney, John Dasey, Lillie Schlick, Eliza Sebert, Glen Booth, Emily Reeve. Back row: Alice Denney, Jennie Denney, Rena Helmenstine, Mary Antelman, Lottie Reeve, August Helmenstine, Albert Olson, Albert Reich, Frank Zwettler, Vernon Booth, Alvin Erbe, Lillie Brockenwagon (teacher).



Bakken, Andrew Erickson, Edward Bohn, Halvor Bakken, Christ Zwettler, Thomas Burns, John McKinley, Teman Tollefson, Martin Mickelson, Carl Arnold, Ben Fredrickson, Erling Punswick, John Dolohanty, Fred Austin, Olaf Anderson, Stanley Hamilton, Ed Zemp, Joseph Dolohanty, Elmer Tollefson, Harold Peterson, Mrs. Alvin Losenegger, Orlando Bakken, Clifford Tollefson and Donald Mickelson.

Teman Tollefson served as school treasurer for 20 years, Elmer Tollefson for 15 years and Mrs. Alvin Losenegger for 19 years. Carl Arnold was school clerk for 17 years and Harold Peterson for 23 years. Joseph Dolohanty was director for 14 years.

The same treasurer's book was used from August 31, 1867, to the closing of the school on May 26, 1959. The district joined the Mt. Horeb School District.

The school building, which had been located on the west side of Bohn Road in Section 28, was torn down in 1975.

BOOTH SCHOOL [DISTRICT NO. 3]

On August 31, 1865, a meeting was called for the purpose of levying a tax to build a school house—\$1,278.95.

A family by the name of Isaac Steele was living in the district when the school house was built, and the school was called the Steele School. In later years, the Steele family moved away, and the school was named Booth School as Mr. John Booth was the oldest resident in the district. Four generations of Booths went to this school: John Booth, his son, Vernon; grandson, Kenneth and great-grandson, Richard. Another four generation family attended Booth School: James Lockwood; his daughter, Irene Lockwood Booth; grandson, Kenneth Booth, and great-grandson, Richard Booth.

On July 25, 1951, a referendum vote resulted in the integration of Booth School with the Black Earth School District. Miss Lois Lucey from Mazomanie was the last teacher. In the fall of 1953, pupils were transported to Black Earth and the schoolhouse and land were sold.

The school house and land were sold and have been used as a site for private residence, and the school house is being used as a garage, still sturdy and over 100 years old.

The following poem was donated by Mrs. Gilman Mickelson, who found it in her mother's photograph album. It is about the old Steele School, District No. 3 (Booth School).

In The Town of Vermont

(by Margaret Dinneen)

In the town 'mong the hills and trees,
Stands an old school house that is kissed by the breeze.
In front slopes a meadow, in summer all green
And beyond that a crooked murmuring stream.

In the sixties and seventies of that cherished old school,
We received our learning with the help of a rule.
Here the seats were carved up, the plaster picked off,
And a Doctor ne'er thought of when we got a bad cough.

In winter we registered forty-five in our bunch.
But in summer we dwindled to seven for lunch.
From Steele's we carried water in an old tin pail,
And we had no umbrellas for snow, rain or hail.

Back of that school house we'd climb an old hill,
And look up the valley toward Elver's Grist Mill.
We'd wonder if Switzerland would dare to compare
To the grandeur of scenery we gazed upon there.

To this school never came a Corbert or Kelly,
A Sullivan, a Dempsey, A Gibbons, nor Skelley;
But we often had a rousing rattling good fight,
For young bloods always felt they're sure in the right.

Here lived the Antelman's, the Bergers and Steele's:
Ike with his fiddle could play lively good reels.
And the Caldwelles, the Lockwoods, the Smiths and the
Tinkers,
All live-wires and very quick thinkers.

Here lived the Battys, the Kensings, the Booths and the
Knights.

At our spelling contests we brought candles for lights.
Here lived the Orcutts, the Voraths and Pillings.
When we went to Black Earth, we spent mighty few shillings.

Here lived the Seberts, the Grubers and Wallace's too.
And the Schlicks moved in and numbered a few.
Then came Peter Lynch from away down East,
They were the only family that raised a priest.

In a hut like the tumbled down shack in Athlone
Tom Dinneen and family made their home.
Tom called it their castle, he was full of jokes
And often whistled at shin-digs for the young folks.

The Fittons and Groves lived close by the river,
When Elver opened the dam, you'd cross the bridge with a
shiver.
Around a bend in the road, Tom Farmer red and rough,
Lived with his dad at the foot of a bluff.

Old Michael Roach was never sad nor forlorn
Though his coat was old and his trousers worn.
His teeth were out and his eyes far in.
He was a picture to look at when he worked up a grin.

Neilans and Knights had children galore,
But Erbe's and Kelliher's could add up a score.
Aaron Denny's house was small, homelike and neat.
And Tom at writing and reading was hard to beat.

Annie Neilan was a dandy at cooking and sewing.
They had a big family: So they kept her a-going.
Nellie Caldwell was her father's right hand bower
In sickness, in death, in sunshine or shower.

Mary Dineen had a beau or two,
To see her with a different one was nothing new.
While Rose the red head to the convent went
And Maggie in single-blessedness her life she spent.

Jim Fitton most any horse could ride,
And Frank Knight, if a girl sat by him, cried,
Jerry Kelliher in arithmetic was mighty strong.
I believe his examples were never wrong.

John Booth would blow in with a gun on his shoulder.
Why a knight of old could not look bolder.
And John Neilan with his accordion under his arm:
The dance would form on, when he gave the alarm.

Jim Neilan could dance to the Queen's taste,
And Kate Dinneen always won in a spelling race.
Oswald Antelman was a prince in disguise
And in after years to fame did rise.

Mamie Kelliher could knit a stocking and seldom glance
at her work
Annie Sebert at her studies would never shirk
Martha Fitton and Etta as well
Had to work like beavers, for their father was ill.

Eliza Steele was considered the belle of the town.
While Joey Batty surely was the leading clown.
And Billy Neilan was always chock full of glee.
He was surely the joy of District number three.

DENEEN SCHOOL

The treasurer's record of James Blake in 1868 shows \$350 received from town treasurer for building a schoolhouse District No. 4, Section 23, Town of Vermont. Humphry Lynch, Aaron Denney and James Blake were each paid \$105 for building the school house. In March 1869, Aaron Denney received \$100 for teaching school four months. Jane Simpson received \$25 a month for the next three months. Other expenses were 25 cents for a broom, 35 cents for a fire shovel, 65 cents for pail and dipper and \$1.50 to Abbey Deneen for washing school house. In the early years there

Deneen School, 1948-49

(Left to right), Front: David Frame, Nancy Wirth, Kathie Kelliher, Donna Frame, Connie Kelliher. Back row, Jean Olson, Beverley Ryan, Larry Kelliher, Danny Wirth.



were fall, winter and spring terms, and often different teachers were hired for each term. In 1905 it was voted to have 8 months school; have a female teacher and pay \$28 a month for fall and spring terms and \$35 for winter term to commence November 15. L. S. Soper agreed to furnish 2½ cords of wood for \$11. This was an increase—in 1901 Leland Soper agreed to furnish 2 cords of wood and sawed it for \$6. By 1921 the teacher's salary increased to \$100 per month. In 1924 the old school house was torn down and a new school building erected. The total cost of building and furnishing the new building was \$5,517.05. This included labor, materials, digging, painting, furnace, two bowl toilets, etc.

The Deneen District was one of seven school districts in the Town of Vermont. In these years, there was a School Superintendent for the county (T. S. Thompson served Dane County many years) and a Supervising Teacher. They gave tests for the eighth graders and handed out the diplomas. Every Christmas there was a program of recitations, dialogs and songs before presents and candy were handed out—the school house always filled with parents, relatives and friends. In the spring there was Playday; each school in the township taking its turn having it. Students from all schools took part in the races, tug-of-war, games, etc. to win a blue, red or white ribbon.

In 1941 a Mothers' Club was organized. This Club became more active and earned money from bake sales, card parties, etc., and bought many things for the school such as slide projectors, dishes, chairs, desks and much more.

In 1964 the school was closed. It consolidated with the Mt. Horeb School District, the last rural school in the Town of Vermont to close.

The building and one acre of land was purchased by Roman Sutter. It was used by St. James Catholic Church for religious classes until St. James Church burned in 1969. Roman Sutter sold the building and land to Robert Read.

MOTHERS' CLUB OF DENEEN SCHOOL

A Mothers' Club was organized in 1941. It offered women in the community a chance to know each other and take part in community activities. It really was a fine thing for rural women. This organization, which often included the men, met the third Wednesday of every month in the homes. The hostess served a light lunch for 25 cents. This money was used to buy supplies for the school, which could not be purchased with tax dollars.

When the school closed, we auctioned off all the things the Mothers' Club had bought, even the desks. I (Fern Frame) was auctioneer for the day. This was done on the closing day of school (the



Deneen School, 1949-50
 (Left to right): Jean Olson, Beverly Ryan, Lawrence Kelliher, David Frame, Donna Frame, Kathie Kelliher, Nancy Wirth, Connie Kelliher. Standing: Rose Goebel (teacher).

school picnic). Only members of the district could buy.

Many people believed one of the reasons for the rural school closings was the hazards of children on the highway.

We told our children never to accept a ride from strangers. It wasn't too long after this, Vernon Hodgeson (who owned land in Vermont) offered our children a ride but they refused and walked the 1¼ mile home. Mr. Hodgeson was selling seed corn and came to our place. He was still there when the children came walking up the lane. At the sight of them he said "Those are the kids I offered a ride and they wouldn't!" At that, we simply said, "They had orders not to ride with strangers."

— Fern Frame

Deneen School, 1950-51

(Left to right): Kathie Kelliher, Donna Frame, David Frame, Connie Kelliher, Nancy Wirth. Teacher-Rose Goebel.



HELLAND SCHOOL

The Helland School began operation before 1867. The earliest record available for the Helland School, District No. 1, Town of Vermont, Dane County, is for the annual meeting of September 30, 1867.

This meeting voted to hold school for five months with the winter session of three months beginning in December, and a two-month summer session. At this meeting it was also voted to have a man teacher for the winter months and not to pay over \$40 per month.

On March 6, 1869, at a special meeting it was voted to purchase land in order to change the road by the school, build a board fence around the school ground, and to build one privy. All work was to be completed before the next annual meeting.

At the annual meeting of September 26, 1869, the district voted for six months of school, three months in the winter and three in the summer, with a male teacher for the winter months and a female for the summer months. At the next annual meeting the school year was changed to a winter session of four months beginning in November and a two month summer session starting in May.

Parents must have been interested in what their children studied, and in 1876 the annual meeting voted to "use the McGuffy's reader until further notice." However, the following year, at a special meeting, the book committee agreed that "McGuffy's Books are as good as any text book and it was only throwing money away for the district to bring in new textbooks."

The need for more education and a longer



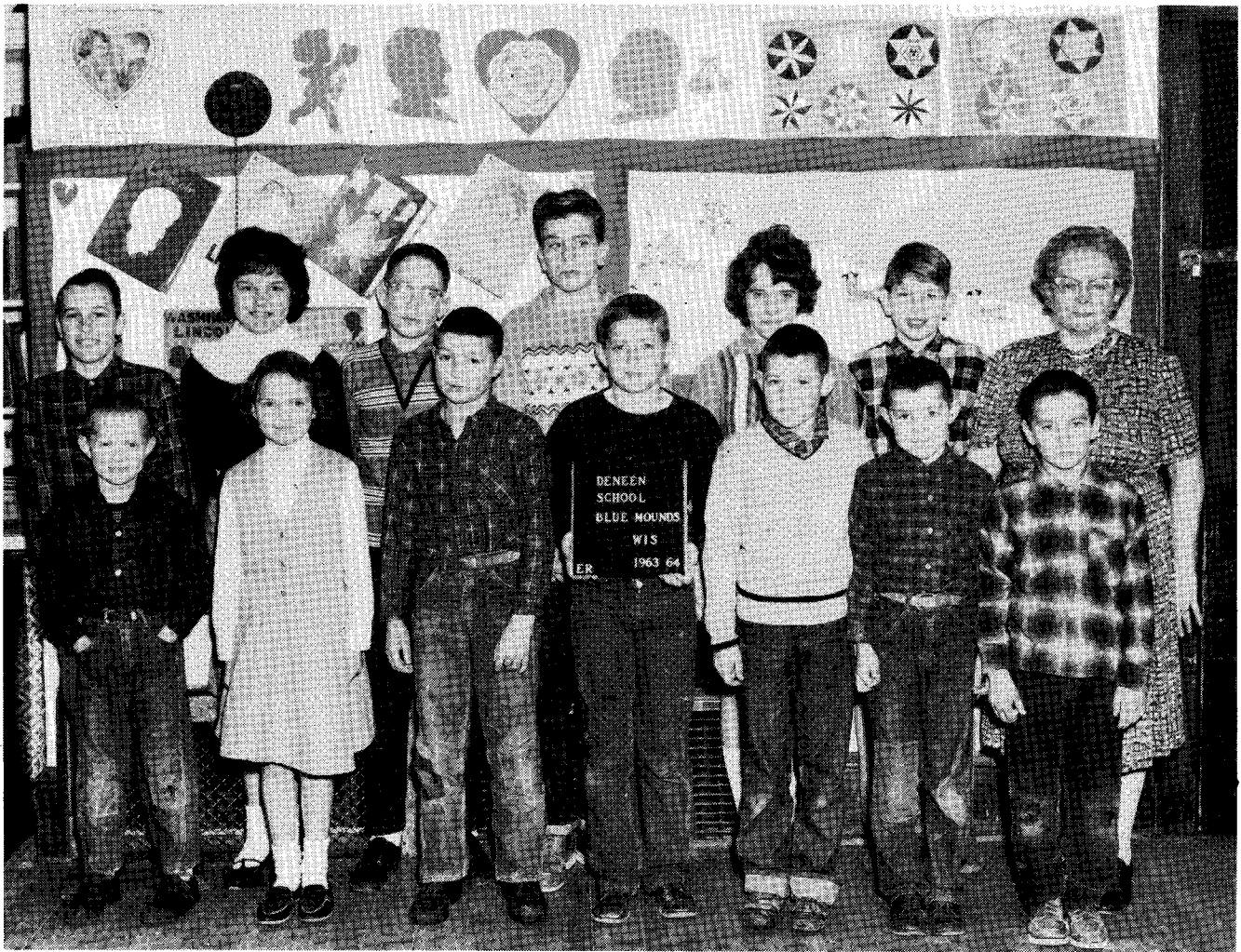
Deneen School, 1959-60

(Left to right): Front: Tod MacLean, Nancy Wirth, Allison Pfister, Dennis Kelliher. 2nd row: Steven Frame, Annette Pfister, Beth Ann Kelliher, Linda Brunner, Brad Brunner, Robert Brunner. Back row: Alexa Pfister, Stanley Brunner, Keven Kelliher, Andrea Pfister, Donald Disch, Steven Brunner, Scot MacLean. Teacher, Mabel Knudson.

Deneen School, 1962-63

(Left to right): Front: Kerry Brunner, Phillip Ditsch. 2nd row: Kenneth Brunner, Alex C. Pfister, Steven Frame, Annette Pfister, Robert Brunner, Bradley Brunner, Vicki Brunner. Back row: Miss Tourdot (teacher), Allison Pfister, Dennis Kelliher, Stanley Brunner, Keven Kelliher, Scot MacLean, Beth Ann Kelliher, Linda Brunner.





Deneen School, 1963-64

(The last rural students in Vermont.)

(Left to right) Back row: Larry Brunner, Linda Brunner, Dennis Kelliher, Scot MacLean, Beth Ann Kelliher, Tod

school year must have been felt, as in 1882 the school year was changed to seven months, four months in the winter session beginning in November and three months beginning in April. Changes do not always come easily, and at a special meeting they returned to a six-month school year. They continued with the six-month school year. This continued until 1899 when they again voted a seven-month school year divided a winter session of 4½ months and a summer session of 2½ months. The change from a seven-month to eight-month school year came in 1907, and no further mention is made regarding winter and summer session.

The old school that had served for so long and well both as a church (Vermont Lutheran Church) and a school fell to progress at a special meeting held August 12, 1912. At this meeting, 22 votes were cast and in all business conducted regarding building of the new school not one "no" vote is recorded. As for the old building, it was

MacLean, Mrs. Elmer Cullen (teacher). Front row: Kerry Brunner, Vicki Brunner, Robert Brunner, Steven Frame, Bradley Brunner, Kenneth Brunner, Philip Ditsch.

dismantled and used for fire wood. Cost of the new building—\$1,078.28.

Through all these years, the clerk of the district received a sum of \$5 per year, and not until 1923 did the other two members of the school board receive any pay for their duties.

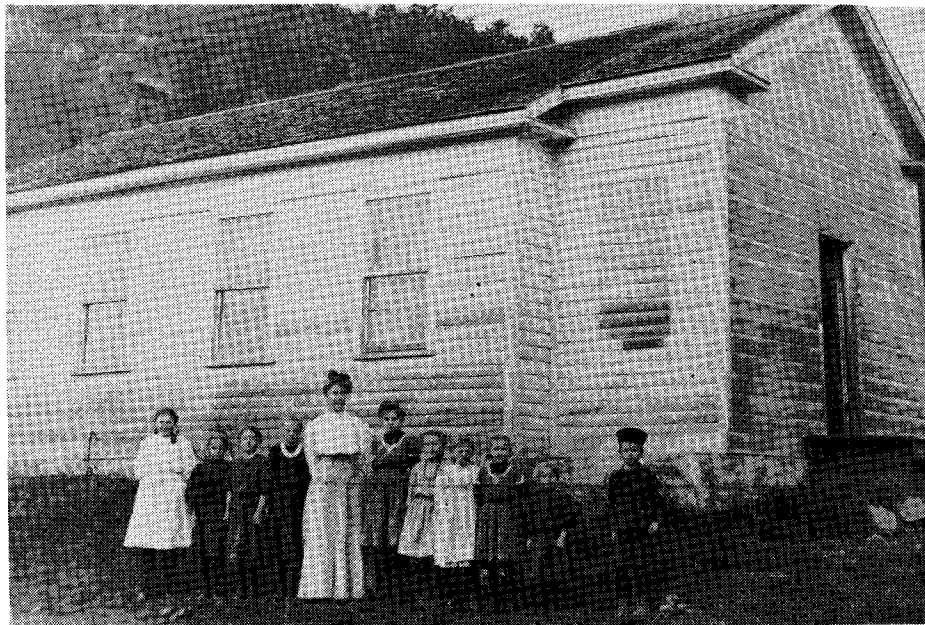
Because of declining enrollment, Helland School ceased operation in 1938, and the pupils were transported to Black Earth and Mt. Horeb. This continued until 1951 when the Helland District was joined with the Black Earth District. The building was then sold to Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Norslien and later was remodeled into a private home. It is located in Section 12 on Highway 78.

SANDRIDGE SCHOOL — DISTRICT NO. 7

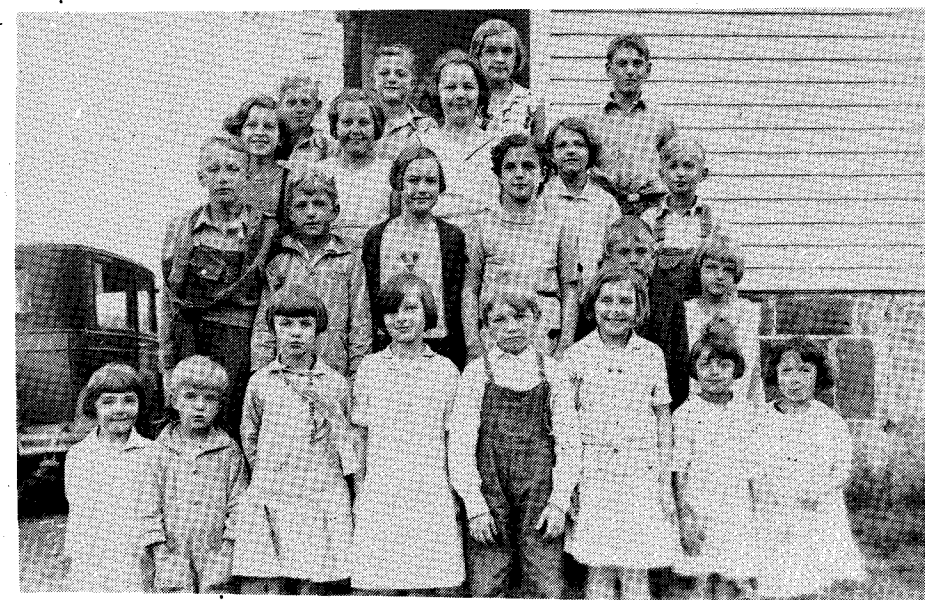
School District No. 7 was formed October 30, 1883. A notice was sent to the following legal voters: Guul Olsen, Jorgen Olsen, Thos. Wilkens, Ever Mikkelson, Syver Berthus, Paul Handel,



Helland Parochial School
 Bertha Simley, Teacher
 (Left to right): Earl Lee, Clarence Norslien, Palmer Paulson, Helmer Syvrude, (Unknown), Harry Norslien, Alice Syvrude, Hazel Norslien, George Syvrude, Olga Espeseth, Emma Paulson, Clara Venden, Ray Lee, Bertha Espeseth, Alfred Syvrude.



Old Helland School
 (Left to right): Tillie Venden, Minnie Lorenz, Geneva Bordson, Alma Skalet (teacher), Debra Espeseth, Alice Paulson, Clara Venden, Olga Espeseth, Tillie Lorenz, Palmer Paulson.



Helland School, 1932
 (Left to right) Front: Lorraine Halsten, Hector Dauck, Ruth Bordson, Oljanna Venden, Herman Mickelson, June Halsten, Nancy and Helen Donzelli. 2nd row: Norman Severson, Philip Skallet, Evelyn Dybdahl, Dorothy Dauck, Burnett Severson, Phyllis Skalet. 3rd row: Annie Venden, Lenice Kittleson, Maxine Kittleson, Dorothy Mae Skallet, Reuben Lorenz. Top row: Vernon Lorenz, Maurice Skalet, Hilda Mickelson, Norman Haugen.



Helland Parochial School, about 1910

(Left to right) Top row: Palmer Paulson, Earl Lee, Clarence Norslien, Helmer Syvrude, Bertha Simley (teacher). Middle row: Bertha Espeseth, Hazel Norslien, Olga Espeseth, Alice Syvrude, Clara Venden. Bottom row: Ray Lee, George Syvrude, Alfred Syvrude, Harry Norslein, Cora Lee, Emma Paulson.



Helland School, 1920's
(Pupils giving Pledge of Allegiance)

Frank Handel, Wm. Deneen, Michael Bakken, Paul Anderson, Hans Gilbertson, Gilbert Anderson, Ole P. Moen, Ole Tollefson, Joe Souitoulth, Ole Amble, Syver Amble, Halvor H. Bakken, Erick Bakken, John Lohrs, Arne Steensrud, Gilbert Erickson, Florian Zwettler, Andrew P. Moen. This notice told them of the first meeting to be held at Paul Anderson's house. The first officers elected were: Director, Ever Mikkelson; Treasurer, Guul Olsen; Clerk, Andrew P. Moen. Mr. Moen loaned \$200, and a motion was made to build a school-house, 16x24x10 feet, three thicknesses of board, the two outsides of flooring and the middle of common lumber covered with tar paper and to locate the school house on about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre in Section 15. A lease by and between John Wall and Ole S. Amble and School District No. 7 rented the land to the school for five cents a year as long as the premises were kept for public school purposes. School was to be six months—four in the winter and two in summer—winter term to begin the first Monday in November and spring term to commence second Monday in April. A female teacher was to be hired for both terms. Ole Amble agreed to furnish good dry oakwood, cut to fit the stove for both terms for \$10. Three hundred dollars was to be raised to finish and furnish the school house and pay the teacher's wages and all other incidental wages.

In the winter term from November 10, 1884, to March 13, 1885, 33 pupils were enrolled: 19 boys, 14 girls, with an average daily attendance of 22. For the summer term from April 13 to June 5, 1885, a total of 19 were enrolled: 9 boys and 10 girls with an average daily attendance of 11.

Following is the financial statement for 1885:

Receipts

Money on hand	\$200.00
Tax levied at town meeting	300.77
Tax levied by county supervisor	24.86
Income of state school fund	17.60
From other districts	122.00
	\$665.23

Expenditures

For building school house	\$391.39
For services, female teacher	140.00
For old indebtedness	64.00
For all other purposes	32.20
	\$627.59
Total amount paid out	\$627.59
Money on hand 5/31/1885	\$ 37.64

At the July 1885 meeting, the term was increased to seven months. By 1888 the term was back to six months and the wood was furnished for \$7.

The first record of an annual meeting is July 1, 1895. Fifty dollars was to be raised for teacher's



Sandridge School Picnic, June 1909

(Persons recognized)—Mrs. Ralph Reeves, Mr. and Mrs. Sever Amble, Carl Amble, Anna Amble, Ole Amble, Mrs. Hans Gilbertson, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Halstein, Nora Halstein, Clara Halstein, Mrs. Magnus Forshaug, Mr. and

Mrs. Henry Wilkins, Arthur Wilkins, Otto Wilkins, Ted Wilkins, Ida Wilkins, Mrs. Arnie Steensrud, Lena Steensrud, Mattie Steensrud, Alice Steensrud, Mrs. Henry Venden, Seymour Gilbertson, Mrs. Evin Olson, Martin Olson, Banford Olson, Edwin Olson.



Sandridge School Pupils, about 1916

(Left to right): Back row: Banford Olson, Otto Wilkins, Edwin Olson, Henry Pahlmire, Clarence Sveum. Next row: Arthur Pahlmire, Vernon Reeve, Leonard Moe. Below them: Harry Hauge. Front row: Art Wilkins, Edwin Sale, Bernice Lee, Martha Amble, Orville Reeve, Selma Jorgenson, Eddy Jorgenson, Carl Hauge, Alma Pahlmire, Hannah Wilkins, Inger Sveum, Myrtle Sveum, Bertha Sale.



Sandridge School Basketball Team, about 1915

(Left to right): Top: Leonard Moe, Edwin Olson, Eddy Jorgenson and Otto Wilkins. Bottom: Henry Pahlmire, Clifford Mickelson, Henry Sale, Carl Amble (two unknowns). (Basketball hoop constructed by Art Gulson, teacher.)



Sandridge School Pupils
(about 1915)

(Left to right) Front: Leonard Moe, Banford Olson, (unknown), Carl Amble, (unknown), Anna Amble, Otto Wilkins (with ball), Hannah Wilkins, Esther Olson, Alice Steensrud, Bertha Sale. Back row: (unknown), Lawrence Erickson, Harry Hauge, Gerhard Erickson, Laura Wilkins, Henry Sale, Art Gulson (teacher).



Sandridge School Pupils, 1932
Hannah Wilkins, teacher

(Left to right): Back row: Peter Hauge, Lyle Underwood, Bert Evenson, Glenn Hagen, John Greve, Wesley Bohn, Jergen Greve, Arnold Steensrud. 2nd row: Russell Greve, Donald Underwood, Dorothy Hanson, Mabel Hauge, Esther Greve, Valborg Forshaug, Ruth Hanson, Mabel Steensrud, Selma Stenli. 3rd row: Donald Hagen, Muriel Mickelson, Ruth Steensrud, Dorothy Bohn, Marie Forshaug, Ardis Mickelson, Ruth Underwood. Front row: Alfred Hauge, Marlin Mickelson, Lois Mickelson, Charlotte Steensrud.



Sandridge School, Old & New, 1917



George and Chester Underwood going to Sandridge School, 1942, with typical lunch pails.



Lois Mickelson (Lawrie) and Betty Underwood (Rosenbaum) on their way to clean Sandridge School, 1941.

wages, with six months of school; three in the winter commencing the first Monday in November and three in summer commencing the first Monday in April with a female teacher for both terms. Officers elected: Hans Gilbertson, clerk, and Mike Mickelson, director. Andrew Anderson agreed to furnish good dry wood for both terms for the sum of \$6.75. Twenty-two dollars and fifty cents was voted to pay for a grammar chart.

Librarians were appointed each year.

At the July 5, 1898, meeting, a flag 7 feet long and 4 feet wide was to be purchased. A pole was to be put up for \$8.25. John Amble agreed to dig a ditch from the school house cellar door for 45 cents.

Financial Statement

Receipts

Money on hand, July 6, 1896	\$ 16.97
From district tax levied at district meeting	71.00
From tax levied by county supervisors	49.96
From state school fund income	33.37
From all other sources	23.00

\$194.30

Disbursements

For services of female teacher	\$173.00
For all other purposes	20.49

\$193.49

Money on hand June 30, 1897 \$.81

Names of parents from 1897 to 1900: Robert Brunner, Joseph Loidolt, Arne Stensrud, Mike Mickelson, Lewis Johnson, Gilbert Erickson, Christ Dahl, Ole Tollefson, Mike E. Mickelson, Ever Mickelson, Andrew O. Hagner, Andrew Anderson, Hans Braateli, Halvor Bakken, Peter Moe, Teman Tollefson, John Siokey, Ralph Reeve, O. A. Locky, Hans Gilberts, Sam Lehman, Sever Amble, Henry Wilkens and Mrs. Johanna Olson.

A special meeting was held April 12, 1916, to vote on (a) building a new schoolhouse; (b) to designate a site; (c) to discuss building material; (d) to authorize building a basement and to authorize board to apply for a loan of \$2500 from the state trust funds payable in 10 years with interest at the rate of 4 percent per annum; (e) authorize installation of a furnace in the basement; (f) authorize sinking of a well; (g) authorize construction of proper outbuildings; (h) to authorize the proper furnishing of the new building.

Results of voting: (a) new school house to be built; (b) same site as was leased on April 5, 1884; (c) school house to be built of lumber; (d) school board authorized to apply for \$2500 loan; (e) installation of furnace authorized; (f) sinking of well not authorized at that time. Size of new school house to be 26x40 feet.

At a special meeting on May 22, 1917, it was voted to sell the old school at auction. Rocks for the basement and part of the furniture to be sold separately. Financial records show income from old school was \$88.30. This old school was moved to the Sever Amble farm, where sliding doors were added, and it was used for a granary and horse barn. It is still in use today by the present owner, Earl Krueger. On July 2, 1917, \$1991.77 was paid out on the new school building. The balance of \$508.23 was to be used for finishing.

At the 1935 meeting, first mention was made of the Mothers' Club.

At the annual meeting on July 14, 1937, a motion was made that if the electric line was built, the school board would decide on the lights for the school.

Women were hired to clean the school house, and during the late 1930's and early 1940's this was done for \$40 per year.

In the June 22, 1951, issue of "The Dane County News" the following notice was printed: "Integrated school district ordered in the Black Earth area by the Dane County School Committee subject to the outcome of a referendum on the order to be conducted by the Dane County Clerk in the near future."

At the July 9, 1951, annual meeting at Sandridge School, the following was recorded: "It was also suggested and agreed upon that the district hire an attorney and go to court if necessary to detach our district from Black Earth No. 1 if we should lose out at the referendum election." The vote was held on Wednesday, July 25, 1951, with the following results: 196 yes, 152 no. Townships of Black Earth, Vermont and Berry voted. On October 3, 1951, a meeting was called and the board authorized to hire a lawyer. In the fall of 1953, pupils from District No. 7 were transported to Black Earth.

At the April 2, 1957, town meeting, the town board was authorized to buy the school house for use as a town hall. The building and land were purchased from George Lukken for \$2500 and are presently used for the town hall and garage.

The following taught at Sandridge School from 1884 to 1953 at salaries ranging from \$25 to \$45 until 1918 when the monthly salary became \$75 and increased to over \$100 in the 1920's. In the 1930's salaries dropped to \$65 to \$85 per month. By the late 1940's and early 1950's salaries reached or exceeded \$200 per month.

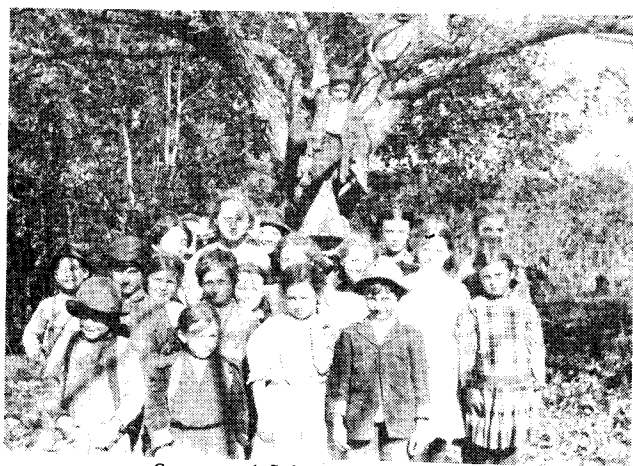
Celia Severson, Theresa S. Ward, Jennie Kerr, J. Kelliher, Mary A. Brunker, Peter Peterson, Katie Moran, Katy McCue, Anna Helland, Andrew Lokke, Louisa Lewis, Julia Lee, Bessie Kerry, Alma Gilbertson, Bessie Clist, Clara

Keating, Emma Paulson, Emma Teman, Albert Turk, Eva Sayles, B. C. Flint, Daisy Simpson, Nora Halsten, Alma Skalet, Arthur Gulson, Johanna Lingard, Clara Gulson, E. O. Anderson, Violet Shields, Alva Amble, Mae Harlow, Carrie Dybdahl, Hannah Wilkins, Erlan Kittelson, Dorothy Goninen, Orpha Shaller, Rachel Bergum, Margaret Lyons, Dorothy Flood, Rose Einerson, Addie Kinzler, Mrs. Glenn Thompson, Marilyn Hawley, Mrs. Evelyn Kahl and Miss Eunice Mick.

HISTORY OF STEENSRUD SCHOOL VERMONT TOWNSHIP DISTRICT NO. 5

Notes From Earliest Reports

In 1865, the following people were appointed: Thomas Frawley, clerk, for one year; Thomas Whitager, treasurer, term expires 1867; John Gulson, director, term expires 1868. They voted to raise a school tax of \$60.00. Mr. Frawley was to furnish the wood for \$6.38. A vote was taken to hire a woman teacher, whose name is recorded as Miss Hazeltine, for three months in winter and two months in summer.



Steensrud School Pupils, 1910

(Left to right): Front: Harry Steensrud, Blanche Reeve, Gladys Barsness, Bert Barsness. 2nd row: Melvin Severson, Louis Parrell, Grace Hegg, Ernest Parrell, Belle Reeve, Lillian Thorsrud, Viola Gulson, Mattie Urness. Back row: Myrtle Reeve, Floyd Turk, Cora Halsten, Elmer Severson, Joe Steensrud, Alice Turk, Mary Parrell, Clifford Thorsrud in tree.

In 1866, Thomas Frawley was re-elected clerk for three years, and Ole Stay (Steensrud) was to furnish fuel for \$7.75. The teacher's salary was listed as \$36.00 for the term.

In 1867, "Paid to Emma Cowling \$78.00 for teaching three months. Paid to Anne Hograv \$50.00 for teaching two months." So read the minutes of the school meetings with following people taking their turn as members of the school board: Andrew Anderson, Ole Stay (Steensrud), Amos P. Flaten, Marshall Finlayson, A. Brunner, E. O. Brager, Andrew Flaten, Arne Mickelson, Horace Bryant.



Girls' Tree, Steensrud School, 1912

(Left to right): Belle Reeve, Cora Halsten, Mattie Urness, Blanche Reeve, Lillian Thorsrud, Viola Gulson, Myrtle Reeve in top.

Special Meeting, February 7, 1885; to consider new location.

Horace Bryant was elected chairman. Discussion followed.

The district promised to pay the expenses and trade with Ole Stay (Steensrud), taking $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre for the present site and pay \$5.00 to boot. The board shall make out the papers, keeping one copy for the board and giving one to Ole Stay (Steensrud).

The building — "The school house is to be 20'x30' and 12 feet between the floors. There shall be a stone wall built all around the building, five feet high, one foot thick until it comes over the ground and then eighteen inches the rest of the way. The building is to be sheeted outside and then sheeted outside that, with building paper, and sided. Then plastered from the floor to the ceiling and wainscoted three feet high. There shall be four windows on each side . . . etc. So read their minutes of the special meeting.

March 21, 1885 —

At this meeting the deeds were made out. The old school house site was deeded to Davis and a site deeded by Davis to the district situated as follows: One-half acre in the southeast corner of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, T 7, NR 6 E.

Jobs let —

To George Bryant—job of digging out stumps and burning brush for \$6.00.

Steensrud School, Upper Grades, 1912

Lillian Thorsrud, Elmer Severson, Alice Turk, Nels Urness, Myrtle Reeve, Mary Parrell, Floyd Turk, Cora Halsten.





Sunday School, Steensrud School, 1912

(Left to right): Front: Mattie Urness, Lillian Thorsrud, Clifford Thorsrud. Back: Martha Urness, Ida Brager, Selma Urness, Alvin Anderson, Cora Halsten.

To John Temanson—job of digging rocks necessary for the wall under house for \$10.00.

To Andrew Huset and Ole A. Stay (Steensrud)—job of digging the basement for \$22.00.

To James Beardsley—job of laying cellar wall, lathing and plastering and laying the chimney for \$35.00.

To Andrew Haugner—job of carpenter work for \$80.00.

Early School Board Members —

The school board members during the year of construction were Ellend Brager, treasurer; Horace Bryant, director; Thomas Frawley, clerk. Mr. Frawley resigned and Andrew Anderson was appointed to fill the vacancy.

Others who served as school board members from 1887-1920, were John Barsness, Ole S. Gaarder, Ole Thorsrud, George Gulson, Nels Simley, George Cox, Gust Steensrud, John Peterson, Martin Steensrud, James Turk, Hans Urness, A. B. Thorsrud, Frank Turk, Martin Parrell, Herman Barsness, Carl Anderson, Anton Severson, Melvin Huset and Emanuel Walstad.

The names of two of these men are still in use today to name two hills on our Vermont roads, namely, Finlayson Hill on Highway F and Frawley Hill on Blue Mounds Trail.

Interesting Problems Solved

As these accounts of their meeting are read, you feel gratifying pride for, and a thankfulness to these early founders for their tireless efforts. They met their problems and solved them with zest and enthusiasm. It is interesting to note that "free textbooks" were the order of the day as early as 1904 and 1909, but were discontinued and then re-established later. In 1903, the board was directed to buy a suitable organ. In the minutes written by George Cox we read, "the board shall see about hiring a female teacher, and a good one!"

In 1904 a motion to buy a flag was voted down. The motion was put before the board the following year, and they voted to buy a 10 foot flag. We notice also that the care and maintenance

of the building and grounds was largely the responsibility of the people of the district. They were reimbursed for supplies, but seldom did it include labor costs.

Former Teachers

Records show that the following have served the community as teachers at the Steensrud School during the period 1865-1957:

Miss Haseltine, Emma Cowling, Anne Hograv, Miss Waldrom, Fannie Cox, A. M. Bennett, Mary Lawrence, Walter A. Johnson, C. A. Flaten, Sarah McKinney, A. M. Haseltine, Addie Moody, Nellie Clark, Grace Simmons, Eliza Steel, Mary Frawley, John McGuire, Agnes McKenzie, Frank McGuire, Nora Frawley, Mary Brennen, Clara Westbourne, Benjamin Miller, Miss Severson, Ellen Lasher, Bertie Wallace, Minnie Flemming, Fred Stublely, Anna Helland, Julia Cox, Velma Mills, Mathilda Taylor, Bessie Hanevold, Frances Parman, Bessie Kerr, Kate Stublely, Thora Gulson (Barsness), Julia Gulson, Mabel Schumann, Grace Haseltine, E. O. Anderson, Clare Gulson (Haugner), Ruth Bjelde (Hodgson), Hannah Wilkins (Dale), Grace Steensrud (Skalet), Viola Gulson (Dybdahl), Madelin Mahar (Steussey), Inez Brager (Skalet), Verna Seston, Inez Seston, Daisy Wilkinson, Lucille Sutcliff (Thorson), Charles Popp, Mrs. Sena Hauge, Mrs. Rose Einerson.

One by one the rural schools were closed and the pupils were bused to the villages. Now, twenty years later (1977), movement is underway to remove the elementary schools from the villages. Where will it lead?

This community has been blessed with good leadership and congenial people. A very active Mothers' Club existed for a great number of years and has provided many necessities and luxuries for the pupils.

The building has been remodeled and modernized and is at present the lovely home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Parrell.

— Written by Mrs. Grant Skalet

MEMORIES OF SANDRIDGE SCHOOL

By Hannah Wilkins Dale

When the three older members of our family attended school, the drinking water was raised by a bucket from an open well. There was a worn path through the high grass down the hill where the well was located. They used the open water pail with a dipper to get their drink. Later, as I remember, we finally got a pump on a platform over the well. This, of course, was a great improvement. We then had our own folding aluminum cup which we kept in our desks. Our dinner buckets were placed on the floor under our



Steensrud School Children, 1912

Front: Clifford Thorsrud, Belle Reeve, Lenore Sylvester, Blanche Reeve, Ruth Bjelde, Mildred Rasmussen, Irene Rasmussen, Lillian Thorsrud, Viola Gulson, Gladys Barsness. Back: Grace Parrell, Myrtle Reeve, Mary Parrell, Alice Turk.

desks. A later improvement over this was the bench in the hallway. Our coats were hung on the side walls on hooks and boots by our desks. You might wonder how we managed without much confusion, but we did. Each thing had to be in its own place. There was possibly one row of single seats, but all the rest were double. I remember the numbers didn't come out even, so I had to share a double seat with Vernon Reeve. I wondered why me? We didn't get along too peaceably. I know I did a lot of pinching.

Soon there was another improvement. We got a drinking fountain—a crockery jar—which kept the water cool. It had a push button faucet. A bubbler came next.

One of the activities we had during recess and noon hour was playing house. The younger girls were the babies and we older ones the mother. We would pair up and each build play houses with stones, laying them side by side and leaving openings for doors to the different rooms. We would eat our lunch in our house and go and visit

Picnic at Steensrud School, 1917

(Left to right): Hans Sveum, Governor Steensrud, Emanuel Walstad, Joe Steensrud, Julia Gulson, Clarence Steensrud (in Army uniform), Martha Walstad (Mrs. Emanuel), Anna Brager Larson, Tonetta Gulson (Mrs. George), Thora Gulson, Ida Brager (Mrs. Amon), Mrs. Andrew Bjelde, Hanna Steensrud (Mrs. Gus), Mrs. Fred Zimmerman, Emma Severson (Mrs. Anton).



Steensrud School, 1920

Julia Gulson, teacher

(Left to right): Back row: Annie Severson, Myrtle Sveum, Louis Parrell, Marie Punswick, Cora Barsness, Alma Baumgartner, Gilbert Severson, Esther Walstad, Ernest Parrell, Edna Parrell, Harry Steensrud, Grace Steensrud, Inger Sveum, Ruth Bjelde. Middle row: Bertha Parrell, Gladys Severson, Edna Punswick, Magnus Punswick, Marvin Sveum, Joe Tollefson. Bottom row: Norman Sveum, Ruby Barsness, Marvin Barsness, Maurine Walstad, Gerald Walstad, Erland Brager.

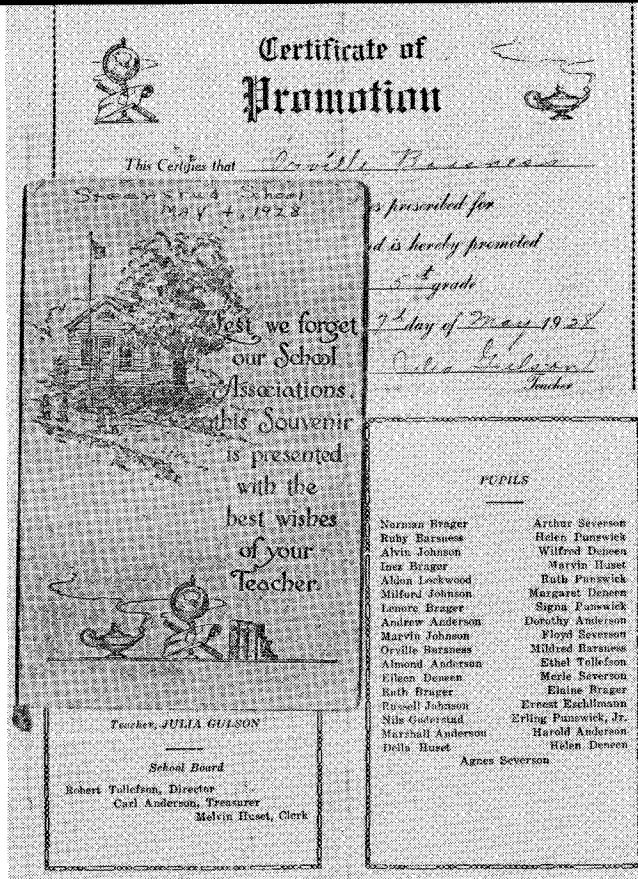
each other. We would use colored pieces of glass for dishes, bigger rocks for chairs. Our lunches were usually carried in an empty syrup pail. Some of the children had "boughten buckets." Our family of four had our lunch in a big syrup pail (1 gallon). Laura, being the oldest, would hand us our lunch.

In the fall of the year much free time was spent picking hickory nuts. Some of them we cracked and ate there. In the spring we'd hike on Sandridge to get the first crocuses and later pick the "Johnny-jump-ups" and "Dutchman's breeches" and violets and buttercups. Also, before school closed, we would have our Arbor Day. This was the day when all who could, would bring their rakes and baskets and clean the yard. We usually had our last day of school picnic when the parents would bring baskets of food and make lemonade. Sometimes there would be a program by the pupils, or a spell down. During my years of teaching we would have ice cream the last day instead of lemonade.

Steensrud School Girls at a Party About 1920

(Left to right): Alma Baumgartner, Maurine Walstad, Ruth Bjelde, Marie Punswick, Cora Barsness, Grace Steensrud, Annie Severson, Inger Sveum, Myrtle Sveum, Gladys Severson, Gladys Barsness, Esther Walstad.





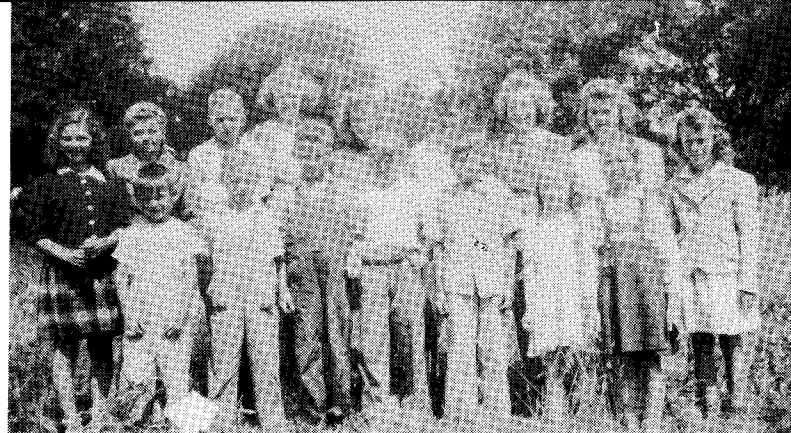
Certificate of Promotion, 1928

Our competition games were Anti-Over the school house. If we didn't make it, it was "Back Ball". The person with the ball hid it and tried to tag the opposite players and they would go to the other side. Pump-pump-pullaway, Crack The Whip, Prisoners' Goal and Fox and Geese (in winter) were also popular games. Of course, in winter there was sledding on the hillside and skiing. The boys built a jump over the fence and would jump over it.

During summer a number of us had to attend parochial school (Bible School). Then we would use the low branches of the old hickory tree for a swing. We did not have playground equipment. On our way to school we would pick enough black caps

Mothers' Club, Steensrud District, 1945

(Left to right): Back row: Ellen Punswick, Elaine Brager, Viola Brager, Lottie Huset, Emma Urness, Ruth Bjelde (Hodgson), Grace Skalet. Front row: Martha Mickelson, Grace Stoll, Inez Seston, Annie Tollefson, Elisa Aeschlimann, Martha Walstad.



Steensrud School Children, 1940 or 1941 (taken by Grace Skalet)

(Left to right): Front row: Erling Martinsen, Freddy Aeschlimann, Roger Martinson, Philip Dybdahl, Robert Martinsen, Mary Ellen Urness, Joyce Martinson. Back row: Marguerite Skalet, Marilyn Barsness, Donald Severson, Joan Dybdahl, Betty Barsness, David Dybdahl, Wilma Wilkinson, Beverly Barsness, Donna Barsness.

along the road to eat for lunch. My, those berries were delicious! I remember how I liked curds and would run down to the factory to Sever Amble, and ask for curd to eat. We tried not to have too many go and we always got curd from him.

Going back to the spring of 1899 when Ted (my brother) was in school, there was a sad event. During Christmas vacation the teacher, Emma Timan, took sick with pneumonia and passed away. My uncle, Luvin Johnson, took all the school children in his sleigh to Blue Mounds to the funeral.

I remember the long walk Clara Gulson had over the Sandridge and all the way to her home morning and night. I seem to remember walking with her one night. I think I stopped off at the Lindstroms, who lived on the Brunner farm along that route. Sometimes Clara stayed with Mattie Anderson near the school and I stayed there one night with her. The Anderson's were such good friends of the school children. Mattie taught us in Sunday School.

From 1929 to 1935, after finishing my rural course at Whitewater and having taught two years at Steensrud School, I came to Sandridge School to teach. The beginning years I did like Clara. I walked the two miles to school and back. This I had done all my school days so it was no problem.

I taught in the new modern school building. I remember the day we moved out of the little old school house and into this nice new roomy building. It was during the time when Clara was teaching. We all had to help carry the things into the new school. We had a boys' and girls' cloak room with plenty of hanging space and a nice basement and a furnace. We were so proud! We had a nice organ to play and sing with. Finally, a piano was added.

During my years of teaching, we had much fun preparing our Christmas programs and in spring getting ready for "Play Day". We took nice hikes up on the Sandridge to just scout around. We ran into many snakes that crawled between the rocks. There was one spot with many large rocks with a large crack through and we dropped stones through and could hear them touch bottom. We thought there must be a cave there. I'm sure my pupils will remember that. Rural schools were always like one big family and the children behaved so well.

TOWN OF VERMONT PLAY DAY A SUCCESS

Place — Beaty School, around 1925.

Schools present: Deneen, Bohn, Booth, Sandridge, Steensrud, Beaty, Helland.

Banner crowd of this year's play day, 300 people.

The events and winners were as follows:

Tug-o-war, Sandridge School; boys' race, over 100 pounds, Stanley Lee; boys' race, 75-100, Arthur Dybdahl; boys' race, under 75, Milo Froh; girls' race, over 100, Alice Trainor; girls' race, 75-100, Adeline Finke; three-legged race, Winifred Venden and Adeline Finke; wheelbarrow race, Hilberg Forshaug and Donald Hanson; girls' sack race, Leona Hanson; boys' sack race, Arthur Froh; girls' hobble race, Lillian Burkeland; boys' hobble race, Marvin Anderson; high jump, Victor Severson; broad jump, Victor Severson; potato race, Sandridge school; suit-case race, Sandridge School.

After dinner a snappy program consisting of health songs and club songs was held outdoors. After this, the men and women and the teachers had an opportunity to win points for their schools. A teachers' paper cutting contest was won by Miss Hannah Wilkins of the Steensrud School. A ladies' nail driving contest was won by Mrs. C. W. Ellwood of the Beaty School; and a men's clothes hanging contest was won by Mr. Finke and Mr. Lorenz, of the Helland School.

Two very interesting baseball games followed, a girls' game and a boys' game. The captains of the girls' teams were Winifred Venden and Iona Severson, Iona's side won by a score of 20 to 5. The captains of the boys' teams were Arthur Dybdahl and Arthur Hanson. Arthur Hanson's side won by a score of 15 to 5.

A splendid exhibit was arranged which drew much attention from the crowd. This was judged by Miss Myrtle Bang and Miss Viola Topper. The School, 41 points; Beaty School, 32 points; Sandridge School, 19 points and Booth School, 12 points.

The result of the field events, games and stunts were: Sandridge School, 69 points; Helland School, 61½; Booth School, 45; Beaty School, 20; Steensrud School, 8; Deneen School, 3.

Much credit is due Miss Mary Murphy for the local arrangements. The leaders for the day were Mr. Stetzler, Madison; Mr. T. S. Thompson, Elroy Heisig and Miss Ruth Hendrickson.