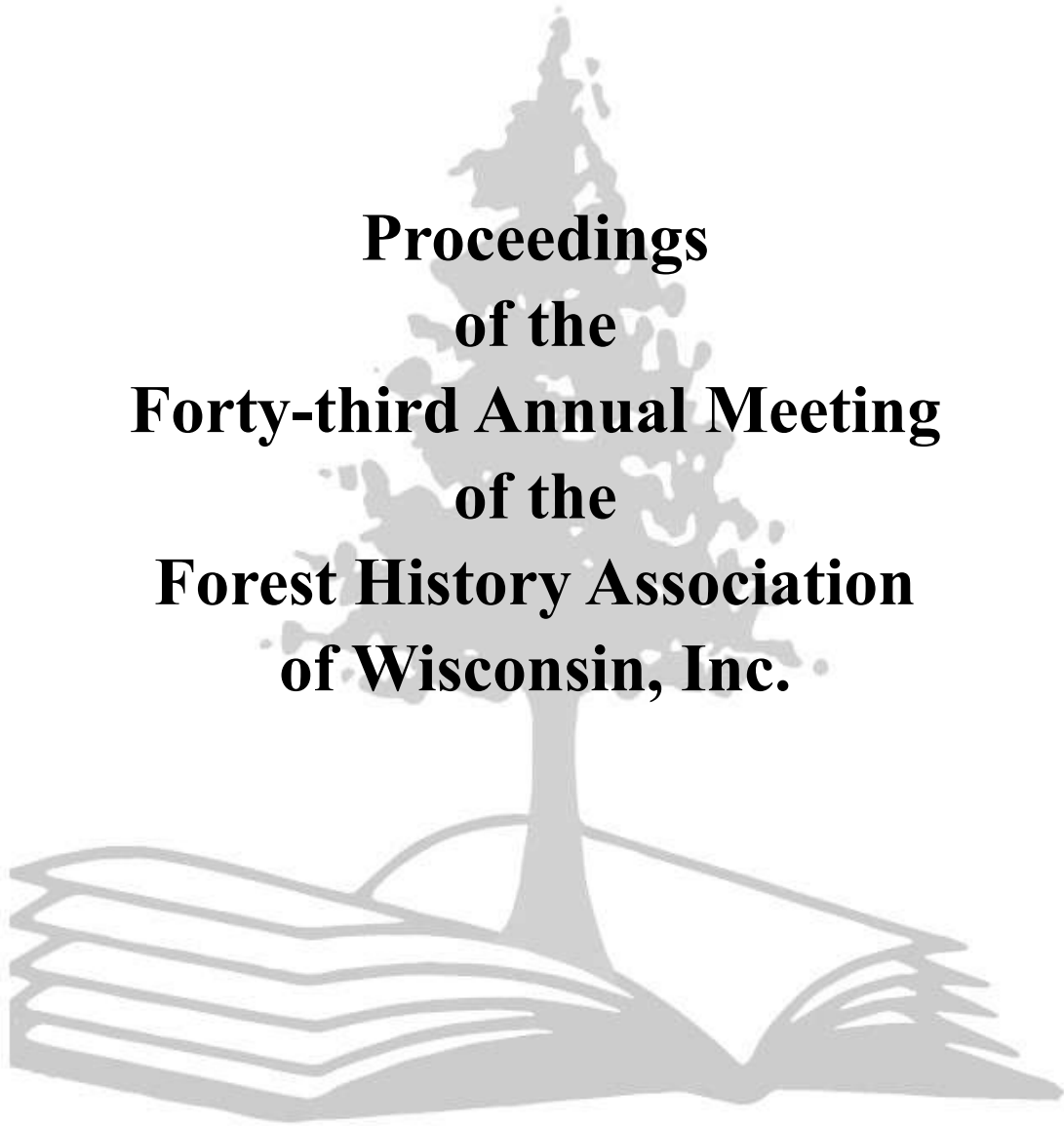


**“Logs to Paper to Cranberries  
Historic Transformations of the  
Wisconsin Rapids Area”**

**Proceedings  
of the  
Forty-third Annual Meeting  
of the  
Forest History Association  
of Wisconsin, Inc.**



**October 4 – 6, 2018  
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin**



**“Logs to Paper to Cranberries  
Historic Transformations of the Wisconsin Rapids Area”**

**Proceedings of the  
Forty-third Annual Meeting  
Of the  
Forest History Association  
Of Wisconsin, Inc.**

**October 4 – 6, 2018  
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin**



**Founded, 1975**

***“The past is but prologue to the future”***

## The Forest History Association of Wisconsin

The Forest History Association of Wisconsin had its beginnings early in 1975 when a group of representatives from the wood products industries, conservation agencies and the University of Wisconsin met to discuss a potential bicentennial project which would remind our citizens of the importance of forests in Wisconsin's past, present and future.

Their discussions led to the founding of the Association as a non-profit, tax-exempt endeavor whose principal objective would be to preserve Wisconsin's forest heritage. Membership is currently about 155 individuals, corporations and institutions.

A nine-member Board of Directors serves as the Association's governing body. Officers and directors for 2017 – 2018 are:

Don Schnitzler <sup>(2020)</sup> President .....	Marshfield
Mike Sohasky <sup>(2018)</sup> Vice President .....	Antigo
Bob Walkner <sup>(2020)</sup> Treasurer .....	Two Rivers
Bridget O'Brien <sup>(2018)</sup> Secretary .....	Marshfield
John Grosman <sup>(2020)</sup> .....	Woodruff
Ed Forrester <sup>(2018)</sup> .....	Cumberland
Robert Brisson <sup>(2018)</sup> .....	Menominee, MI
Arno Helm <sup>(2019)</sup> .....	Merrimac
Vacant <sup>(2019)</sup> .....	

The years indicate the year in which the director's term ends. Directors are elected by the members at the annual meeting for a term of three years with one-third (three) being elected each year on a rotational bases to maintain some continuity on the Board. Officers are elected by the Board members for a one-year term at the first Board of Directors meeting after the annual meeting.

The Association has published a number of booklets which will have some appeal to most forest history enthusiasts:

- *Proceedings of Annual Meetings – 1976 – 2008*
- *Bibliography of Wisconsin Forest History Literature*
- *"Chips and Sawdust" (Quarterly Newsletter)*
- *A Chronology of "Firsts" in Wisconsin Forest History*
- *Logging and Lumbering Museums in Wisconsin*
- *Ghosts of the Forest: Vanished Lumber Towns of Wisconsin, Volume 1*

Information regarding the Association can be found by visiting the website:

<https://www.foresthistoryassociationwi.com/>

Information on any aspect of the Association's program and policies may be obtained by writing to: Forest History Association of Wisconsin, P.O. Box 424, Two Rivers, WI 54241.

# Table of Contents

Foreword .....	6
Program of 2018 Annual Meeting.....	7
Wisconsin Rapids Hosts 43 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting .....	8 - 9
Our Speakers .....	10
Papers Presented ..	11 - 47
A Brief History of the Cranberry Industry in Wisconsin .....	11 - 15
From Fur Trade to Timber in “du Haut du l’Ouisconsin”: 1820-1860 .....	16 - 33
Paper, Welfare Capitalism, and the Landscape of Wood County .....	34 - 47
Citations for Distinguished Service Awards .....	48 - 52
Fixmer Distinguished Service Award .....	48 - 50
Connor Distinguished Service Award .....	51
President’s Award .....	52
Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting .....	53 - 54
Financial Report .....	55
Back Issues of Proceedings .....	56
Notes (Blank Pages) .....	57 - 59

## Foreword

*The following text comprises the official transactions conducted, and the written papers presented, at the Forty-third Annual Meeting of the Forest History Association of Wisconsin held October 4—6, 2018 at Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin.*

*FHAW members John Berg and Arno Helm made the necessary arrangements for the gathering on Thursday evening at the Alexander House; the tours on Friday at the South Wood County Historical Society Museum, Alexander House Art and History Center, Wisconsin River Papermaking Museum, Golden Eagle Log Homes, and the Point Basse Living History Village; Friday evening's banquet at the Mead Inn; and Saturday's presentations at McMillan Memorial Library. Their efforts provided for an informative and enjoyable meeting. The Association appreciates John and Arno's efforts, as well as the hospitality of host facilities and the willingness of hosts and presenters to share their time and expertise with our members.*

*We invite any reader of this 2018 Forest History Association of Wisconsin Proceedings who is not already a member to join us in our efforts to preserve the record of Wisconsin's forest history.*

*To learn more about the Association and to join us visit our website:*

*<http://www.foresthistoryassociationwi.com/>*

*Contact us by email: [thefhaw@gmail.com](mailto:thefhaw@gmail.com)*

*Follow us on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/chipsandsawdust>*

*Don Schnitzler  
2018 Proceedings Editor*

# **Logs to Paper to Cranberries**

## **Historic Transformations of the Wisconsin Rapids Area**

### **October 4-6, 2018**

*2018 Annual Meeting of the Forest History Association of Wisconsin (FHAW)*

**Thursday October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**FHAW Board Meeting at 1 p.m. and Dinner at 5 p.m. and  
Annual Membership Meeting**

*(Alexander House Center for Art and History, 1131 Wisconsin River Drive, Port Edwards)*

**Friday October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Includes Lunch**

**Bus tour featuring historic sites, museums, mills and living history**

*(Bus leaves at 8 am from back parking lot of Hotel Mead, 451 E. Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids)*

Visits and tour will include:

- Wisconsin River Papermaking Museum
- Point Basse Living History Village
- Golden Eagle Log Homes - Mill and Models
- Alexander House - Art and History Center
- South Wood County Historical Museum

**Friday October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**Awards Banquet and Artifacts Auction**

*(At Hotel Mead, 451 E. Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids)*

**Saturday October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

**Speakers Program and Annual Membership Meeting**

*(At McMillan Memorial Library, 490 E. Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids)*

Topics presented will include:

- Cranberry History of the Wisconsin Rapids Area
- What's Under the Waters of the Wisconsin River
- Transitions from Fur Trade to Lumber
- How the Paper Industry Shaped the Cultural Landscape of the Wisconsin River Valley

## Wisconsin Rapids Area Hosts FHAW 43rd Annual Meeting

Wisconsin Rapids, located along the beautiful Wisconsin River in the heart of cranberry country welcomed Forest History Association of Wisconsin members proving that this was the perfect place for our meeting.

The first local stop was the Alexander House, a Center for Art and History. Board members, joined by



*FHAW members dining at the Alexander House, Port Edwards.*



*The Alexander House, Port Edwards.*

Nancy Turyk, UW-Madison, Division on Extension-Wood County, Nicole Filizetti, UW-Stevens Point, LEAF program, and Scott Bowe, Kemp Natural Resources Station met here ahead of the scheduled activities to continue SWOT analysis discussions. When those closed, FHAW members and meeting attendees joined in to view the displayed artwork and historical artifacts, which emphasize local lumbering and papermaking exhibits. The House also served as the

setting for our general membership meeting and opening dinner.

On Friday morning, conference attendees visited the South Wood County Historical Museum, housed in the former home built for Isaac Witter in 1907. The 23 room house since 1972 has served as an area museum. A



*Philip Brown highlights early history of Wood County at the South Wood County Museum.*



*Spyros Heniadis, provides a guided tour of the Wisconsin River Valley Papermaking Museum.*

basement display room featuring the logging, sawmill, and rafting history on the Wisconsin River was of special interest to our members.

A short drive took the group to the 100-year old mansion that houses the Wisconsin River Valley Papermaking Museum as well as photos and history of the



development of the dam on the Wisconsin River at Grand Rapids/Centralia and the beginnings of Consolidated Water Power & Paper Company.

Then off to Golden Eagle Log and Timber Homes, Inc. to view their model home, the show room, and different manufacturing areas. A factory area provided our lunch venue too; and an opportunity for a presentation on the history and products of the Golden Eagle Log Homes.



*Chris Stitcher, Golden Eagle Log Homes highlights customized items in the company showroom.*

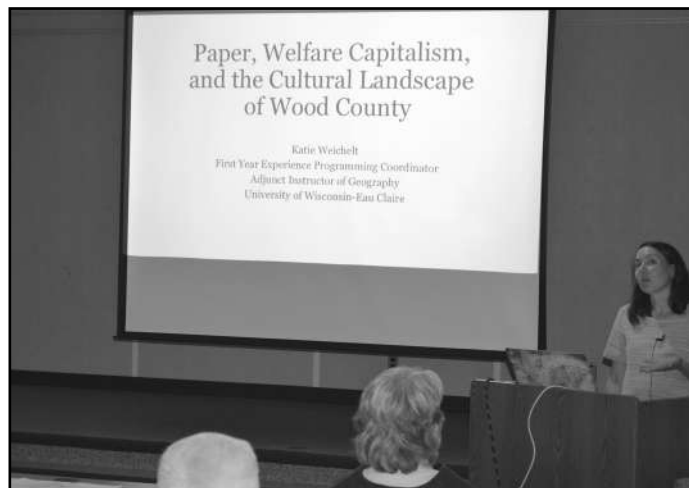
The afternoon was spent at Historic Point Basse where attendees experienced the only living history site on the Wisconsin River! Robert Wakely's settlement at Point Basse was at the beginning of the navigable Wisconsin River. Point Basse reenactors brought the preserved 1850s site back to life in the restored Wakely house, trading post, blacksmith shop and schoolhouse.



*John Berg provides an overview to members before forming small groups facilitating more intimate experiences while touring each Point Basse building.*

Friday evening's banquet and awards presentation was held at the Hotel Mead.

Saturday morning the conference continued with a line-up of four presentations at the McMillan Memorial Library. Phillip Brown, J Marshal Buehler, John Berg and Katie Weichelt each provided interesting stories about the historic transformation of the Wisconsin Rapids area.



*Katie Weichelt, giving the keynote presentation, Paper, Welfare Capitalism, and the Cultural Landscape of Wood County.*

The Association's visit to Wisconsin Rapids provided us a memorable 43rd annual meeting. Tours, presentations and socials provided for a fun, engaging and best of all, enjoyable experience for all.

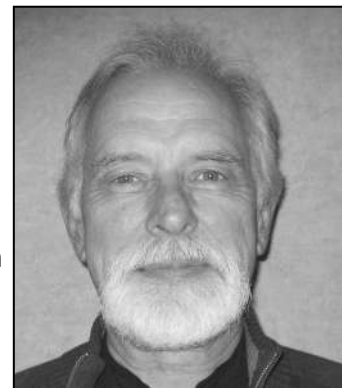
## Our Speakers

**Phillip Brown** is a Wisconsin Rapids historian and current president of the South Wood County Historical Corporation. He also is a co-owner of Glacial Lakes Cranberries in the Town of Cranmoor. An active promoter of both Wisconsin Rapids' past and future, he was named the Citizen of the year by the Wisconsin Rapids Chamber of Commerce in 2013.



**Marshall Buehler** is retired from Great Northern Nekoosa Corporation, where he was a member of the sales department. He has a life-long love of history. Marshall is the current vice-president of the South Wood County Historical Corporation and director of the Alexander House, the center of art and history in Port Edwards.

**John Berg**, a native of the Wisconsin Rapids area, received his Master of Science degree in history from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Majoring in United States and Canadian history with an emphasis on the colonial fur trade frontier. John's interests include Wisconsin lumber and railroad industries, and labor history.



**Katie L Weichelt, Ph.D.**, First Year Experience Programming Coordinator, and Adjunct Instructor of Geography at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. She completed her graduate degree program in Geography and Atmospheric Science in 2016. Her dissertation was titled, "*A Historical Geography of the Paper Industry in the Wisconsin River Valley.*"

## A Brief History of the Cranberry Industry in Wisconsin

By

Philip M. Brown

No presentation on the history of the Wisconsin cranberry industry would be complete without the discussion of our glacial history. During our last ice age period - over 10,000 years ago, most of our beautiful state was covered by a huge glacier. Various lobes of that glacier helped to shape the Wisconsin landscape as we know it today.

The melting of these glaciers created Glacial Lake Wisconsin, covering parts of what are now Portage, Wood, Jackson, Adams, Juneau, Monroe and Sauk counties - until an ice jam east of the Baraboo Range burst and Glacial Lake Wisconsin drained in a matter of days. It was one of the most cataclysmic geological events in the history of Wisconsin, one that created the Wisconsin Dells.

Once the lake drained, we were left with some of the richest wetlands in the state of Wisconsin. For countless ages, the wild cranberry, *Vaccinium macrocarpon*, flourished in the low marshy areas of what is now central Wisconsin.

Native Americans used cranberries for food, medicine, dyes and more. They also mixed the cranberry with wild game to form pemmican, which, together with wild rice and other grains was the mainstay of their winter food supply.

The bartering of wild cranberries, along with wild rice, for goods, became an established practice by the Native Americans of central Wisconsin each fall. The first recorded movement of wild cranberries from Wisconsin to a market outside the state was a consignment of several boat loads of berries from the mouth of the Yellow River near Necedah to Galena, Ill., where they were exchanged for goods by Daniel Whitney in 1828.

Early efforts to commercially cultivate this native fruit in Wisconsin is outlined in the following excerpt from *Rusty Memories and Ruby Red Wealth*, written by Roberta (Bobbie) A. Erdmann:

“About 1860, Edward Sacket, a Chicago businessman and native of Sacket Harbor, New York, invested in some farm land for speculation in central Wisconsin north of Berlin in Waushara County. At first, he was too busy to go up to Wisconsin and look over his new property. When he finally came north, what he found was acres of swamp that his “partners” had foisted on him as his share.

He was pretty disgusted with himself for being taken, but he noticed Native Americans picking berries on the land and recognized them as a fruit, cranberries, that were being cultivated in New England.

Using techniques he knew from the East, Sacket decided to try his hand at cultivating his marsh. This included ditching about four hundred acres, clearing off brush and building a dam and gate. His efforts produced a very fine, large and profitable crop of cranberries and he made the decision to turn this into a commercial operation.

By 1865, Mr. Sacket gathered about 938 barrels of cranberries and sold them in Chicago for \$14 to \$16 a barrel. This price allowed him to make a nice profit and others soon followed to try their hand in cultivating this native fruit.”

With good prices for their product in the Chicago market, a boom was created and once worthless land became so valuable that it forced some of the younger men to seek less expensive property. These early cranberry pioneers were able to find land for 25 to 50 cents an acre in Wood County.

Looking to enter the cranberry business, Sherman Newell Whittlesey was one of the first to explore the bed of the old Glacial Lake Wisconsin, followed by an assortment of farm boys, lumbermen and businessmen, mainly from Berlin. By 1900, approximately 1,200 acres were under cultivation in Wood County.

In the spring of 1871, Whittlesey bought 400 acres in southwest Wood County. He built a shanty, got a cook stove, a few kettles, pans and tin plates, iron knives, forks and spoons. Whittlesey worked with his men and set the pace for them working nine-and-one-half hours every day digging drainage and irrigation ditches by hand, building dams, flumes and roads. He required the half hour from eleven-thirty to twelve to get dinner on the table. Fried salt pork, flapjacks, potatoes or beans were frequently on the menu.

Whittlesey is quoted as saying, “The summer was hot. Gnats and mosquitoes were unbearable and inescapable. We smeared our exposed skin with axel grease, looked like caricatures and felt worse than we looked. We lived through it and wondered if some sinister motive or mistake could have marred a fair creation with such exquisite tortures.”

Marketing of cranberries has an interesting history all its own. In the early days, the cranberry growers had no uniform way of marketing their fruit. Each grower sold his own fruit the best he could to individuals, brokers, and on consignment to the wholesalers in various large market cities – the dreaded “commission merchants.”

The following excerpt comes from *The Cranberry: Hard Work and Holiday Sauce*, written in 2009 by Stephen Cole and Lindy Gifford:

“One cranberry grower in Massachusetts shipped cranberries to a fruit and produce wholesaler in New York City. A short time later, he received a check back for his fruit; a good sign, but unfortunately the check was much too small. He knew he wasn’t treated fairly.

So this cranberry grower hopped on a train and headed to New York, dressed up to give the impression he had a store about twenty miles outside of the city. He found the commission merchant that he sold his cranberries to. They had never met face-to-face before. He proceeded to buy a sack of potatoes and onions and then mentioned he wanted some cranberries. Before you know it, he was bargaining to buy some of his own cranberries. The grower couldn’t believe how much his own fruit cost and the commission merchant wouldn’t budge on his price.

The merchant said, “It’s a good market, take it or leave it.”

Finally, the grower said, "Oh all right, I'll take them." He then reached into his pocket and pulled out a letter and the check that he received from this merchant and said, "How come these cranberries can be worth so much this week and so little last week? Apparently, the commission merchant's face was as red as a cranberry."

That true story emphasizes the point that there had to be a better way for the cranberry grower to sell their fruit. In order to avoid unscrupulous merchants and the pitfalls of haphazard marketing, growers needed to control cranberry distribution themselves; they needed to cooperate.

It took several years of enormous cranberry crops, during which the cost of production exceeded the selling price, before growers finally conceded the need for real cranberry cooperative marketing. That cranberry cooperative marketing effort began in Grand Rapids, Wis. (now Wisconsin Rapids, WI) in 1906 when growers formed the "Wisconsin Cranberry Sales Company." This cooperative was open to all producers willing to pool their crop with that of others. Ninety percent of the growers in the state joined.

Arthur (A.U.) Chaney was chosen to manage the co-op. A wholesaler from Des Moines, Iowa, Chaney had handled Wisconsin cranberries in the past and was regarded as a capable, and most importantly, an honest man to do business with. Thanks to cooperative marketing and an orderly distribution of the fruit, Wisconsin cranberry growers made a profit in a year when a bumper crop had to be sold.

Encouraged by the cooperative's success in Wisconsin, growers in New Jersey and Massachusetts formed their own cooperatives and hired Chaney to market their crop. Due to the suspicious nature of the east coast cranberry producers, only 30 to 35 percent of the growers originally bought into this new cooperative marketing idea.

Chaney formed the National Fruit Exchange in 1907 by combining the cranberry marketing co-ops in Wisconsin, Massachusetts and New Jersey. By 1911, most of the cranberry growers in these three states joined the co-op and Chaney changed the name of the organization to the American Cranberry Exchange. It was the second cooperative marketing organization of its kind to be established in the United States with the California citrus fruit growers' organization being the first.

A string of good growing years from 1909 to 1914 produced larger and larger crops, while demand remained rather flat. In 1916, in order to circumvent this problem, Mr. Chaney and the American Cranberry Exchange did something that had never been done before; it began an advertising campaign for the cranberry. When asked by the advertising firm what his goal was, Chaney responded, "To get people to eat more cranberries."

Thus a new brand name for the cooperative's fruit was born. "Eatmor Cranberries" joined the dozens of other food brands that sought the consumer's attention at the grocery store. In November 1918, advertisement in eighty newspapers across the country encouraged the consumer to "eat more Eatmor Cranberries." The message was also spread through the holiday issues of Good Housekeeping and Ladies' Home Journal. These ads suggested new ways to serve the cranberry.

By the 1920s, a new cranberry product was being produced. Canned sauce was now being produced by two enterprising growers in Massachusetts and one in New Jersey. Chaney and most of the other cranberry growers did not think that canning cranberries was a good idea. After all, cranberries were a seasonal fruit consumed during the holidays. They had always been sold as fresh fruit and that was that. By 1930, these three growers merged their cranberry canning operations into one organization called Cranberry Cannery, Inc. and started marketing their canned cranberry sauce under the "Ocean Spray" brand.

Marcus Urann was the brains behind the new Ocean Spray brand. A forward-thinking individual, he looked to the day that most could not imagine; a day when women would leave the kitchen and do their work in offices. He also saw an age approaching when convenient, prepared foods would be the norm. Urann coined the term "Ready to Serve" and his cranberry sauce made believers out of some of the growers.

Over the years, competition escalated between the American Cranberry Exchange and Ocean Spray. During World War II, cranberry sauce, rich in vitamin C, was a big part of our G.I.s' meals during the war. After the end of the war in 1945, market conditions changed and the demand for canned cranberries decreased and fresh fruit sales were flat. Maybe Urann knew something others did not.

In 1957, after fifty years, the American Cranberry Exchange dissolved. Ocean Spray picked up most of the growers from the now defunct American Cranberry Exchange. By 1960, sales were so bad that something had to be done.

Over the years, Ocean Spray experimented with a cranberry juice product, but it was unsweetened and not very popular with the consumer. Finally in 1963, Ocean Spray added a little sweetener and apple juice to their cranberry juice and came up with the first Cran product. Cran Apple was born. Cran Grape, Cran Raspberry, Cran Strawberry and even Cran Prune followed.

During the 1970s, 80s and 90s, the industry flourished. By the mid-1990s, a Wisconsin company, Northland Cranberries, Inc., introduced 100 per cent juice products. Ocean Spray soon followed with its own brand of 100 per cent juice.

The cranberry industry also saw a tremendous expansion of new acreage in the 1980s and 90s, especially in Wisconsin. The increased acreage led to larger volumes of fruit being grown and in the mid-1990s, a new product was introduced by Ocean Spray – the "Craisin®." These sweetened and dried cranberries were just what the industry needed to utilize all of the cranberries being grown.

The introduction of a shelf stable juice product and the sweet and dried cranberry forever transformed the cranberry industry. Before these products were introduced, approximately ninety per cent of the cranberries grown were for the seasonal fresh fruit market. Now that the cranberry was being processed, over ninety per cent of the cranberries grown are being used for juice, sauce or sweet and dried products.

As the market changed, so did harvesting techniques. In order to harvest cranberries for the fresh fruit market, they have to be handled so they won't bruise. In the early days, cranberries

were picked by hand. By the turn of the twentieth century, hand raking became the preferred method of harvesting. After World War II, mechanical pickers were developed to harvest cranberries with minimal bruising.

By the 1960s and 70s, processed cranberries were being harvested with a new machine called a "beater." Basically, the cranberry beds were flooded and the cranberries that were knocked off the vine were slightly bruised and this fruit was not suitable for the fresh fruit market. These cranberries were kept in a freezer until being processed into juice or sauce.

The beater has recently been replaced by the "bent tine harrower" which is gentler on the cranberries and the cranberry vines. Most of this harrowed fruit is still not being used for the fresh fruit market, and is being kept in a freezer until being processed into juice, sauce or sweet and dried products.

Wisconsin has become the number one state in cranberry production since the mid-1990s, producing approximately sixty per cent of all the cranberries grown in the world.

As we entered the twenty-first century, international sales helped the cranberry industry. Almost thirty percent of all the cranberries grown are now sent overseas. Cranberry products have been widely accepted in Europe, Japan, China, Australia and other countries around the world.

Looking to the future, the cranberry industry faces many challenges and how the industry meets these challenges remains to be seen. The industry has faced tough times in the past, but cranberry growers are a resilient group. Many cranberry marshes are currently being run by growers that are fourth, fifth and sixth generations. I trust they will find a way to continue their way of life for many generations to come.

## From Fur Trade to Timber in *“du Haut du l’Ouisconsin”*: 1820-1860

By

John L Berg

### Introduction

The history of Wisconsin forests is complex and multifaceted. Human activity and climate-nature activity and cycles have impacted the Wisconsin forests significantly in the years since the first Europeans arrived on its shores in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Consider the changes that have been wrought just since 1854 in what Amable Grignon’s widow, Marie Bourassa, called *“du haut du Wisconsin,”*<sup>1</sup> and I call the Middle Wisconsin River Valley; that is the lands acquired from its owners, the Menominee Nation, in the Treaty of the Cedars on September 3, 1836. Sounds like a long time ago, doesn’t it? Especially in our 24-7 world, where a year passed can seem like an eternity. Ancient history to many, and, why 1854? Human history of Wisconsin’s forests must begin with the narrative of the indigenous people who the Europeans “discovered.” Consider that a mere 164 years have transpired since the final treaty was signed between the Menominee Nation and the United States government relegating the former to their present reservation boundaries. Think about that. A mere 164 years ago Wood County was two years away from being authorized into existence by the Wisconsin legislature. Port Edwards was a nascent colony huddled on the west bank of the Wisconsin River dependent upon the success of John Edwards’ dam and sawmill. Wisconsin Rapids was two small clusters of human activity struggling in much the same manner; Biron’s mill was supporting a similar settlement. Nekoosa was nearly four decades away from becoming the mill town it is now. Rather, across and about one-half mile down river on the east bank was Robert and Mary Wakely’s trading post and way-station, the first permanent European-American settlement in Wood County. Having arrived in 1837, Wakely’s became a focal point in the transition from the demise of the fur trade and the ascent of the logging and lumber production in the two decades preceding the Civil War. He followed in the footsteps of the youngest scion of Wisconsin’s preeminent family: Amable Grignon. The son of Pierre Grignon, Sr., and a grandson of the celebrated Charles Michael Mouet de Langlade, Amable settled in what is presently Juneau County in 1829. Prior to 1837, he relocated south of Wakely’s near the present Wood County-Adams County border. Working for his older brothers Augustin and Louis in the fur trade, he was involved in securing lands for a mill site during the transition to the lumber industry in Wood County. And then there is the uber-entrepreneur Daniel Whitney, a New York emigrant who had his hands in so many pies that one is exhausted merely reading to keep track of his exploits. His efforts to establish and operate the first saw mill on an island opposite the present city of Nekoosa in 1831 set the stage for the industrial development that eventually transformed the Wisconsin River into one of the hardest working rivers in the nation. And then there were the agriculturalists – traditional grain and cattle farmers followed by those audacious souls who thought it possible to wrest a living from the vast marshes west of the Wisconsin River and actually grow and sell cranberries! Imagine that! And all in 164 years!



Truly the history of the Middle Wisconsin River Valley is so rich and deep in characters, events, and transformations. Thus, this monograph will merely offer an introductory survey of one small but important aspect of the larger history of Wisconsin's forests. Certainly not exhaustive, the purpose of this monograph is to create interest *as a point of beginning and a reference* for those seeking to examine more about the complex and layered forest history of the Middle Wisconsin River Valley.

### A Narrow Appendix of Land

Discussion of the transition from the fur trade to lumber production necessarily depends upon land and the entities claiming and exercising dominion over it. In the Middle Wisconsin River Valley, the focus of origin is three miles either side of the Wisconsin River starting immediately south of the present Wood County border and proceeding parallel to the Wisconsin River up to present-day Wausau. This was dubbed the "Three Mile Survey."<sup>2</sup> Claimed in the establishment of the Old Northwest Territory of 1787 by the United States government, legal title was actually acquired by Amable Grignon through the Treaty of the Cedars on September 3, 1836 near present Kimberly, Wisconsin. This seemingly innocuous piece of real estate is fraught with a complex history of the interests of the indigenous Menominee and Ho-Chunk nations defending encroachment and pressure to surrender lands under their control; the fur-trade interests of old metis families such as the Grignons immersed in monumental changes to their century-old economic structure, and the schemes of the Yankee and eastern capitalists and entrepreneurs, typified by Daniel Whitney, seeking to exploit the forest for its next great resource: trees.

### The First Wave: Indigenous Nations Claims to the Land.

An understanding of the land and whose codes and laws controlled its use is in order. The Treaty of 1825 at Prairie du Chien set the boundaries of various indigenous nations in what is now known as Wisconsin. Using the Treaty of the Cedars on September 3, 1836 as a benchmark, the Menominee Nation claimed ownership of the lands along the Wisconsin River with whom the United States negotiated to purchase. This is not to ignore the other nations who received permission from the Menominee to use the land.

### The Menominee

From time immemorial the Kayaes Matchitiwuk, i.e., "original men" "original people," whom we know as the Menominee (Menomini) Nation dominated the territory from La Baye (Green Bay) west to the Wisconsin River (Weskohsaeh Sipiash), and along the Wisconsin River from the Portage between the Fox River (Meskwahki Sipiash) north through the Adawwagham (Big Two-Sided Rapids at present Wisconsin Rapids) up to the mouth of the Big Rib River (Supomakosaeh Sipiash). From that confluence their territory meandered northeastward to the Menominee River (Omininih Sipiash) that forms the present boundary between Michigan and Wisconsin. Throughout these and other lands in Wisconsin the Menominee hunted, fished, gathered wild rice and traded with neighboring tribal groups. A staple food was "*menomin*," the wild rice which grew in profuse beds along the rivers and lakes in this region, giving rise to their name by neighboring tribal nations.<sup>3</sup>

However, these boundaries were defined by the treaties of 1817 through 1848. Prior to that, the boundaries were general and defined by geographic features through inter-tribal negotiations to share use of the land. The Menominee culture is a sophisticated organization based upon a clan system through which the Menominee are *"...able to maintain their relationship to the land, the spiritual world, and each other because their society had established sophisticated codes of conduct or tribal customary laws that ensured a stable, functional environment."*<sup>4</sup> Within this structure is the Menominee concept of stewardship of their lands and resources for the coming generations. Such codes or laws governed the use as well as passage through the land, its forests and the waters that nourished them, inculcating values of sharing and reciprocity which built the sense of belonging to the community and the environment in which the Menominee dwelt. Thus, whether interacting with their own tribal clans and individuals or those from neighboring nations, these codes and laws applied. Particularly regarding interaction with neighboring nations, it is notable that in the use of mutual territory among the Menominee, Ho Chungra, and Ojibwe, these nations developed procedures and codes for negotiations that were mutually agreed upon. In so doing the nations also developed a cultural experience which cemented ties both within the Menominee nation and with neighboring tribes and avoided warfare. The basis of this was rooted in the indigenous concept the Menominee defined as *"... kaeqc onaenemaewak, - 'they are acting respectfully to each other' – for example, must be understood in all its complexities to fully comprehend this way of thinking. Respect in this case is broadly defined in its physical, spiritual, and mental senses."* To the Menominee, and indeed other indigenous neighbors, this was essential to achieve agreement.<sup>5</sup> The Treaty of the Cedars of September 3, 1836, indicates the Menominee claimed ownership of the lands of the Wisconsin River Valley strip from below Pointe Basse to Big Bull Falls (Wausau). However, the Menominee had a code of *apek on ahkihi* i.e., "to sit down upon," where *"Neighboring tribes, if they sought permission, might be granted the opportunity to 'sit down upon' or utilize the Menominee lands in times of need. Likewise, with permission, Menominee tribal members could not only pass through but hunt on neighboring tribes' lands."*<sup>6</sup>

Thus, in this context, the Menominee not only negotiated with the Ho Chungra and Ojibwe for use of hunting land, but later with the French who sought to establish trade and build outposts on Menominee lands. The same held true for the British and later the Americans, although the latter group proved significantly problematic.

### The Ho Chungra [Ho Chunk]

The Ho Chungra [Ho Chunk] enter European history of the French in the accounts of de Champlain as far past as 1616, and in the *Jesuit Relations* by 1635. Ho Chungra attribute their origin in the Red Banks area of La Baye (Green Bay). Named "Ouinepego," [i.e., Winnebago] by neighboring indigenous nations, the French also referred to them as the Puan [or Puant], both in reference to their dwelling on the Red Banks of the eastern shore of Green Bay, where repugnant odors from marshes and fish kills gave the region a negative reputation. Always referring to themselves as the Ho Chungra, the name is generally interpreted as Big Voice [i.e., People of the Big Voice], and their linguistic structure is from the Chiwere branch of Siouian stock, the same as the Ioway, Oto and Missouri nations. Although described as having a warlike reputation toward Algonquin neighbors, and having repudiated any offers of trade through Oda-

wa middlemen, the Ho Chungra maintained a friendship and alliance with the Menominee. By the mid-1600s the Ho Chungra were decimated by diseases and wars with neighboring nations and began to rebuild through intermarriage with neighboring tribes and former adversaries. They also began to participate in the fur trade, moving out from the Bay area to the Wisconsin and Mississippi River valleys. Upon the defeat of the French in the Seven Year's War, the Ho Chungra allied with British, particularly in the American Revolution and the War of 1812. The Treaty of Prairie du Chien in 1825 set the stage for the coming cession of the Ho Chungra lands; reacting to the invasion of Ho Chungra controlled lands led the warrior Red Bird to armed resistance in 1827. The Treaty of 1829 led to further cessions in the southwestern lead mining region; the Black Hawk War of 1832 further complicated Ho Chungra alliances, fragmenting the nation. A treaty in that year led to more cessions and lands in eastern Iowa on which to relocate. An 1837 treaty forced that portion of the nation in the central Wisconsin River valley and upper Black River Valley into land cession. Accusations of misrepresentation led to resistance to the cession and removal.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, during the next century, both the Menominee and the Ho Chungra faced relentless pressure from the United States government to cede lands and be forcibly removed to western lands not in their traditional place of occupation. While it is not the scope of this survey to give account of those activities, today the Ho Chungra and Menominee remain in their ancestral lands on reservations and parcels throughout the central and eastern area of Wisconsin.

#### The Second Wave: The Fur Trade

Initial indigenous and European contact in the Western Great Lakes occurred as early as 1621 to 1623, when Samuel de Champlain's hand-picked liaison to the Huron nation, the youthful Etienne Brule, journeyed along the eastern shores of Lake Superior. Some ten years later, another Champlain protégé, Jean Nicolet reached the Red Banks of La Baye, supposedly in dramatic fashion, announcing the arrival of the King of France. By the mid-seventeenth century French explorers, traders, and Catholic priests of various sects within the church, had made significant inroads in the present state of Wisconsin. With the increased trade and the conflicts of the Iroquois Wars of the late part of the century pushed certain tribal nations into present Wisconsin. The Meskwahki (Fox) nation moved into territory dominated by the Potawatomi and northward into the lands of the Menominee. Forming an alliance with Sauk, Mascoutin, and Kickapoo nations, this new coalition wreaked havoc on the rivers, lakes and trade routes of the Western Great Lakes from 1710 onward. A fortified settlement was constructed at south shore of the Straights of Mackinac in 1715. This was followed by a fort at the mouth of the Fox River at La Baye in 1717. During the next fourteen years the conflict raged in the Fox and Wisconsin River region; in 1733 through 1734 the French launched a series of strikes that basically broke the alliance but at significant cost to the French. The fort at La Baye became a major post for the military and the traders in their journeys west.<sup>8</sup> The following half-century established the post as a link in the water route from Michilimackinac to the Mississippi River and the outpost at Prairie du Chien. By the time Charles de Langlade moved his family from Michilimackinac to join his father at La Baye, (Green Bay) the British were struggling to establish authority of their recently acquired territory in the Great Lakes region. Having concentrated control of the licensing of the posts as well as restricting the number of licensed traders

was partially successful. Pontiac's Rebellion of 1763 further exposed and exacerbated the tenuous grip the British held over the trade and western nations. Metis families such as the de Langlades and Grignons held significant positions of influence with those entities, and as such the British were dependent upon maintaining their good grace in an attempt to retain a semblance of control. The colonial rebellion after Lord Dunmore's War in 1774 refocused the attention of both the British and the nations west of the Proclamation Line of 1763, because each realized that the colonists demanded access to Indian controlled lands and would use force of arms to attain those ends. Thus, upon the defeat of the British forces in 1783, the worst fears of indigenous peoples were realized. Although they technically lost political control over the *Pays d'en Haut*, Britain refused to remove traders from the Great Lakes region and the traders experienced an enhanced relationship with the indigenous peoples and the metis. It took three decades and another war with Great Britain before the American government was able to assert its system of governance in the Old Northwest. By then the Factory System established by the U.S. Government and its manipulation by monopolies such as John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company significantly altered the old order.<sup>9</sup>

Upon the final delivery of the few beaver and other pelts remaining from the winter's hunt, indigenous, metis, and European-American trappers and traders in Wisconsin of the 1840s had been facing a long-awaited but nonetheless stark and uncertain future. The decline in the quality, quantity, and demand for furs harvested in the middle Wisconsin (l'Ouisconsin) River Valley coincided with the rise of silk as the primary material for the hats of the fashionable, as well as a decline in the use of fur for coats and other clothing. Harvesting wild animals for food and clothing as the primary economic driver was no longer a viable economic pursuit. Opportunities for these men and women (their families were directly impacted) were limited by skill sets, racial and ethnic makeup, and location. Moving to a settlement such as Portage, Green Bay, or Prairie du Chien was a possibility, but presented significant challenges to newcomers. Established social and economic hierarchies and availability of lands in close proximity to the settlement, combined with a gradual increase in European and American entrepreneurs competing in the frontier economy limited opportunities for the hibernants.

#### The Third Wave:

#### Treaty of 1836 at Cedar Point and the Advent of the American Dominance in the Middle Wisconsin River Valley

In the Middle Wisconsin River Valley, the Treaty of September 3, 1836, at Cedar Point represents the single most important cession of lands controlled by the Menominee Nation. Without this transaction documented in writing, the Americans pressuring the Menominee for access to timber lands would be thwarted. In *the History of Wisconsin, Volume 1: From Exploration to Statehood*, the situation is summarized by Alice E. Smith: "In 1836 white inroads into territory north and west of the Wisconsin River began. Until that time, pressure for the Indian relinquishment had come from miners, town speculators, and farmers, but now lumbermen added their voices to the general demand. The Menominee were the first to be called to negotiate, at the Cedars on the lower Fox River, on August 29, 1836. Henry Dodge, newly installed as Wisconsin's first territorial governor and ex officio superintendent of Indian affairs for the territory, was the single commissioner. On September 3 the Menominee consented to sell all

*their lands as far west as the Wolf River – an estimated four million acres. Within the tract they retained, between the Wolf and the Wisconsin Rivers, they also relinquished a forty-eight-mile strip, three miles wide on each side, on the upper Wisconsin, in the heart of the pine country. For their territory, they were to be paid \$20, 000 annually for twenty years, plus \$80,000 for their half-breeds, and other considerations, which brought the total to more than \$700,000.00.”*<sup>10</sup>

Two central figures in the establishment of the new order in the Valley were Amable Grignon II, youngest son of Pierre Grignon, Jr. and a grandson of Charles de Langlade, and Yankee entrepreneur Daniel Whitney, who pressured the government to give him permits to begin logging operations on the Wisconsin River.

#### An Example of the Metis Experience: Amable Grignon II

Enigmatic in the sense of his historical record, the youngest son of Pierre Grignon, Jr. and Domitelle de Langlade played a major role in the fur trade and transition to lumber production in the Middle Wisconsin River Valley for 16 years.

Born in December 1795, Amable never knew his father Pierre, who died one month earlier in November of that year. Raised in La Baye [Green Bay] in the metis culture, Amable’s immediate and extended families were recognized by the officials of the French and British regimes during times of peace and conflict. The American officials and businessmen approached them initially in need of their services but with reservation given the metis long history of allegiance with former European and indigenous adversaries.

During the War of 1812, Amable was a corporal and served with his brothers in the British Army’s Green Bay detachment and served at Prairie du Chien during that conflict. From 1817, when he was an engagee for Duncan Gresham on the St. Peter’s River [in Minnesota] to his arrival back in Wisconsin after October 23, 1823, he served the Hudson’s Bay Company. Here are his known assignments: 1818 a Lac qui Parle, Minnesota; 1819 at Lake Athabasca; 1819 at the Great Slave Lake in the far northern reaches of Canada; 1820 at Fort Wedderburn; 1821 at Fort Chipewyan.<sup>11</sup> Louise Domitelle de Langlade Grignon, wife of Pierre Grignon, Sr., died on October 23, 1823 in Green Bay. Amable returned home shortly afterward, missing his mother’s passing. He had met and married Marie Judith Bourassa [of Mackinac] upon his return to Green Bay, and together the couple determined to settle in Wisconsin. Amable and his brother, Paul, joined together to compete in the trade against their older brothers, Augustin and Louis, but by October 1824 they abandoned that venture and joined them. *“The Grignon brothers, Jacques Porlier, and John Lawe continued to operate as a loosely organized partnership from 1823 to 1835.”*<sup>12</sup>

We gain insight to the early importance of Point Basse from Jacques son, Louis B. Porlier, who recalled the activities of this company: *“I [Louis] was born at Green Bay, in 1815, my father being Jacques Porlier of the old trading company of Jacques Porlier and Augustin Grignon. Three years after that, the firm built their principal trading post on Overton’s Creek, flowing into the upper end of Lake Butte des Morts, two miles below the present village of that name; they had branch posts at Grand Kackalin, on the lower Fox, and Point Boss [sic] on the Wisconsin. None of the company lived at either the Butte des Morts or Point Boss agency – Grignon*

resided at Grand Kackalin, and my father at Green Bay; the business being transacted by clerks, who were chiefly members of the two families; some of the firm visited the establishments each spring or fall." Porlier recalls "In the autumn of 1832, a month or two...I was, in company with Amable Grignon, near Fort Winnebago, on my way to Point Boss." Louis Porlier relates further that he had "...in 1833 been sent to Point Boss, with Augustin Grignon's youngest brother, Amable."<sup>13</sup>

By 1828, Amable had moved his family from Green Bay to Portage [of the Fox-Wisconsin Rivers] and in 1829 he built a trading post near the mouth of the Yellow River in present Juneau County, but was flooded out. In that year he relocated on the east shore of the Wisconsin River, near Iron Creek, where he built another trading post.<sup>14</sup> Captain J.L. Cotey, described "...in his day a well-known pioneer..." wrote his recollections of the settlements along the Wisconsin River in 1846. He describes the journey from the Fox-Wisconsin Portage and Fort Winnebago north to the Grand Rapids of the Wisconsin River. "All supplies were hauled by wagon from Galena, Ill., a distance of 235 miles. It took an ox team three weeks on average to make the trip, and a horse team from ten to twelve days; the heaviest load was twenty-five to thirty hundred. The road traveled from Galena was mostly the military road from Galena to Fort Winnebago...Now from Portage, we go north. The next station was Jerry Walworth, 16 miles...Next was Rocky Erie Station, 30 miles, kept by A. Grignon, a Frenchman...The next station was Robert Wakely's place at Pointe Basse, 30 miles..."<sup>15</sup>

Grignon worked to establish trading networks with his older brothers' support in the Middle Wisconsin River Valley from 1829 until his death in 1845. Recognizing the end of the fur trade was upon him, Grignon called upon an acquaintance in Green Bay, Morgan L. Martin to petition the Menominee Nation for permission to build a sawmill "... at or near the rapids of the upper Wisconsin River. It was approved February 13, 1832..."<sup>16</sup> By 1836, was able to use the influence of his family's reputation to obtain a considerable grant of land in prime white pine forests as a means of transitioning to harvesting lumber instead of furs. In the Articles of agreement between the Wisconsin Territory's governor who was appointed and United States Commissioner, Henry Dodge, and the leaders of the Menominee nation, the First Article concludes with the following paragraph: "And the said Menominie [sic] nation do further agree to cede and relinquish to the United States all that tract or district of country lying upon the Wisconsin river, in said territory; and included within the following boundaries; viz – Beginning at a point upon said Wisconsin river two miles above the grant or privilege heretofore granted by said nation and the United States, to Amable Grignon; thence running up and along said river forty-eight miles in a direct line: and being three miles in width on each side of said river; this tract to contain eight townships or one hundred and eighty-four thousand three hundred and twenty acres."<sup>17</sup> Flush with access to seemingly limitless prime white pine, Grignon, in 1836, proposed to build a saw mill.<sup>18</sup> Captain Cotey wrote of the improvements from the site of the present Verso Paper mill in Wisconsin Rapids south to the present Port Edwards dam in 1846: "Next about one and one half miles down the river [from the present paper mill site in Rapids] stood Eusebe LaVigne's logging shanty. From this place no kind of improvement could be seen until you reached the Merrill Mill, four miles away. This is now called Port Edwards. This mill was built in 1838 by Mr. Grignon, and afterward sold to Sam Merrill, who was running the same at the time referred to [1838]."<sup>19</sup> It is not agreed by historians as to precisely where Gri-

gnon built his mill, although given the terms of agreement it is highly likely it was built on the north and western shore of the island in the Wisconsin River directly east of the present village of Port Edwards, Wisconsin.<sup>20</sup> Amable Grignon continued to work in the lumber business, trading business (what was left of it), farming and raising stock. He maintained ties to the Menominee, although not always in their best interest. "In February 1844, David Jones, Indian Agent, inspected treaty-mandated blacksmith shops, one on the Upper Wisconsin. There he found Cormier, the blacksmith, absent, the coal exposed to the weather, and a new sleigh in the shop, 'which belonged to a Mr. Grignon, a resident of that county.'"<sup>21</sup> Jones enumerated not only this incident but also the complaints from the Menominee Nation about timber trespass and general trespass on their lands. Grignon continued on in his activities, until he passed away between August and November 15, 1845.<sup>22</sup>

### Daniel Whitney and Robert Wakely: Yankee Entrepreneurs of the New Order

Then came the Yankees...with a worldview and legal system that radically altered the land and the people living on it. Perhaps the vernacular of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century in an apt passage providing a searing insight of the demeanor and perception of the Americans towards the native-born inhabitants and their fur trade societal structure: "*The patriarchal condition of society in Wisconsin lasted until the coming of the Americans, who with their democracy and energy, broke down the class system founded on the fur trade hierarchy, and introduced the elements of modern life into the trading posts and settlements that grew up during the fur trade regime.*"<sup>23</sup>

Typifying the energy of the Americans was Daniel Whitney. Born in Gilsum, New Hampshire on September 3, 1795, he journeyed west to Green Bay in 1816 on a scouting mission for entrepreneurial opportunities ostensibly in the fur trade; with little regard for the dictatorship of the interior trade by John Jacob Astor and his American Fur Company, four years later he was setting up stock for one of the largest trading stores in the west. Whitney's strength and determination were legendarily sealed after he hiked from Fort Snelling through Prairie du Chien and then on to Detroit – a distance calculated over 1200 miles – in 42 days, to procure more supplies for his traders. Whitney was running trade goods to posts as far flung as Galena, Prairie du Chien, Fort Snelling, Milwaukee, and Sault Ste. Marie. He built large storehouses at each end of the Fox-Wisconsin River portage, and when necessary, he kept operations active in the winter by dispatching caravans of pony-pulled sleds. "One such independent trader characterized him as the man in the western department who dared oppose John Jacob Astor in the Indian trade."<sup>24</sup> As the decade of the 1820s came to a close, the fierce competition between the Indian nations and the traders of the American Fur Company pushed some of them to conduct limited business with Whitney. However even as he held his own against the mighty Astor juggernaut, Whitney had an eye out for opportunities beyond the exchange of furs and trade goods. In 1826 he married Emmaline Henshaw and was firmly entrenched in Green Bay. Whitney had used leverage to call in debts of the traders and invested in town lots which formed the basis of the village plots along the Fox River he named Navarino.<sup>25</sup> Ranging even further he purchased lands and claims from many traders and metis families as well as from the Indian Nations in places that we know today as Sheboygan, Portage, Cassville, as well as tracts in Iowa, Marquette, Rock, Winnebago, Manitowoc, and Portage Counties. At the time

of his death in 1862, he owned an estimated 10,000 acres and 500 city lots which with improvements, put his gross worth in the neighborhood of \$270,000.00.<sup>26</sup> The rising tide of settlers created demand for lumber, and there were millions of acres of the best framing timber – “*Pinus strobus*” i.e., prime white pine – but alas! access was thwarted for the pine forests grew on lands owned by the Indians. Having traveled much of this country in his trading exploits, Whitney found some of the choicest stands of the great “*Pinus strobus*” along the upper Wisconsin River Valley, particularly at the end of a long series of rapids where the Grignon brothers had a trading post established since 1818. Thus it was that the Indian Agent at Green Bay, Henry B. Brevort, wrote an application for authority from Territorial Governor Lewis Cass “...for authority to permit a resident of Green Bay – presumably Whitney – to erect a sawmill sixty to one hundred miles above the [Fox-Wisconsin River] portage, citing as an advantage the value of having lumber for the fort that was expected would soon be erected at the portage.”<sup>27</sup> Even though Cass rejected the application, Whitney nonetheless secured a license from Brevort on January 31, 1829 to trade with Indians of that region. He hired a crew consisting of white men and Stockbridge Indians to proceed to the confluence of the Yellow and Wisconsin Rivers, and there initiate the sawing of logs and making them into shingles. While the Menominee and the Ho Chungra shared claims to this land, it was the latter nation who made formal complaint to the Indian Agency’s agent at the Portage, Joseph M. Street. Street dispatched his sub-agent John Marsh with a detachment under commanding officer Major Twiggs to the campsite. The entire crew was arrested, part of the shingles were confiscated for building the fort, and the rest were burned. Although Whitney attempted to sue Twiggs, he had no legal standing to do so. The incident did serve to keep tensions high between Whitney’s men who lived near the fort at Portage, and Major Twiggs.<sup>28</sup>

While Whitney dabbled in such diverse pursuits as dealing in potash for soap manufacturing and building a lead shot manufacturing tower on the Lower Wisconsin River at Helena, it is his decision to play nice and seek legal documents to saw lumber on the upper Wisconsin that is of primary interest to this monograph. “On August 16, 1831, Oshkosh and other Menominee [sic] chiefs applied to the president to allow Daniel Whitney to erect a sawmill, grist mill, or any other mill on the upper rapids of the Wisconsin...”<sup>29</sup> Oshkosh was interested in having a nearby source of lumber, and, as such, a council was held at Green Bay on April 24, 1832 where the requests of the Menominee were formalized in a treaty. The contract between Daniel Whitney and the Menominee Nation through the Indian Agency at Green Bay is as follows: “Whereas it appears by a certain instrument of writing signed by the principal chiefs of the Menomonie [sic] tribe of Indians bearing the date the 16<sup>th</sup> day of August A.D. 1831 that permission has been granted by said tribe to Daniel Whitney of Green Bay to erect mills and occupy a quantity of land at or near the rapids of the upper Wisconsin River; the boundaries of said mill site and lands being fully described in the instrument of writing aforesaid: And whereas it also appears, by a letter from the war Department dated September 8<sup>th</sup> 1831. That the aforesaid grant or permission by the Menomonie Chiefs to Daniel Whitney has been approved by the Secretary of War; with this condition in addition to those prescribed by the Indians to be embraced in the bond to be required of said Whitney for the due observance of the same; viz that the lands to be occupied by said Whitney under the permission granted to him by the Menomonies are to be held by him subject to the will of the Government and that he is at any time to yield quiet



possession to the United States, whenever required by any authorized officer of the Government. And the Secretary of War further directs; that the acting agent of Indian affairs at Green Bay draw a bond in the usual form, conditioned for the observance of all the conditions above stated and after it has been executed by the said Whitney, and approved of by the said agent, the original shall be recorded in the Registers office of Brown County before it is forwarded to the Department. Now be it known that I the above named Daniel Whitney do hereby covenant and agree for myself my heirs and assigns to and with the Government of the United States, that I will perform all the duties, and comply with all the conditions and stipulations required by the grant of the Menomonie Chiefs aforesaid viz: - That I will after a sawmill shall have been erected on the premises I have been directed to occupy by said grant or permission, saw all the lumber required for the proper use of the Menomonie Nation, or the Government of the United States, by any person duly authorized at a reasonable expense, and that I my heirs or assigns, will deliver annually to the Menomonie chiefs at the Mill site aforesaid on the upper Wisconsin, in the Month of September for the space of ten years, the following articles, estimated at the traders prices at that place to wit. Fifty pounds powder \$20; one hundred pounds of shat [sic] \$20. Two hundred flints \$1. Fifty pounds of tobacco \$12.50, one hundred pipes \$2.00 and twelve bushel of corn \$13. Amounting in the whole to sixty seven dollars and fifty cents per annum; - and I the said Daniel Whitney do hereby further covenant, promise and agree, for myself, my heirs and assigns, - That I will at any time yield quiet possession of the land and premises aforesaid when required by an authorized officer of the Government.

In Testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this twenty fourth day of April A.D. one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two (1832).

Daniel Whitney (seal)

Witness CHARLES A. GRIGNON

The within and foregoing bond or acknowledgement was executed by Daniel Whitney in my presence and is hereby approved.

S.C. Stambaugh

Actg agt Ind Affairs

GREEN BAY AGENCY Apl 24, 1832

Know all men by these present that I Henry S. Baird, for myself my heirs executors, & administrators do hereby bind myself that I will be accountable & responsible for the performance of the conditions and covenants contained in the instrument.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal at Green Bay the 12<sup>th</sup> day of May, A.D. 1832

HENRY S. BAIRD Ls

In presence of

Indorsed: Recorded on Saturday the 12 May 1832 at 2 o'clock P.M.

ALEXANDER J. IRWIN Reg

[Brown Co. Deeds, B:342-346]<sup>30</sup>

And, with this treaty signed and sealed, the Wisconsin River Valley from the Pointe Basse to its source at Lac Vieaux Desert, began a transformation that, some 60 years later would see the majority of prime white trees cut from its watershed.

#### Robert and Mary Wakely at Pointe Basse: Location, Location, Location

Robert and Mary Wakely were New York state natives who traveled west in 1837, settling at what has become known as Pointe Basse, about one fourth mile below Whitney's Rapids on the Wisconsin River. The Wakely's origins are fragmented and attempts to fill in the gaps have been marginally successful. According to one account,<sup>31</sup> *"Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wakeley [sic] came to Pointe Basse in June 1837, from the state of New York. They came down the Susquehanna River on a raft of lumber. Wakeley sold his lumber at Cincinnati, Ohio, from which place they went by steam to Prairie du Chien and then to Portage, Wis., by boat. They poled up the Wisconsin from Portage to Pointe Basse in a keel boat owned by Daniel Whitney. Mr. Wakeley told me that the Whitney mill at Pointe Basse was built four or five years before he arrived. In the winter of 1839, he went to Wausau with George Kline and a Mr. Draper and he moved back to Pointe Basse in 1840 or '41 and had lived there ever since. Robert Wakeley was born April 15, 1808 and died Feb. 18, 1893. His wife Mary was born April 4, 1812, and died December 24, 1887. The Government plat by [Joshua] Hathaway, the surveyor, shows the Wakeley Tavern near the center of Section 15, just above where the lower ferry lands on the left bank on the east side. The plat also shows the town marked by Pointe Basse. The only means of crossing the river at Pointe Basse by team was on the ice or by fording the river at low water."*<sup>32</sup>

As a matter of genealogy, Robert Wakely was born near Lake George, New York on April 15, 1808. Mary O'Dell was born May 4, 1812, but it has not been determined if she was born in Canada or New York state. Robert Wakely and Mary O'Dell were married May 19, 1830 at Batavia, Genesee County, New York. The Wakelys were farming in Genesee County, New York, when their first son, Chauncey S. Wakely was born February 21, 1832. A second son, Robert, Jr., is born December 23, 1834, and on December 28, 1837, Martha Jane is born, although her place of birth is not certain. The Wakelys moved to Ohio for two years before deciding to take their chances in the Wisconsin Territory, arriving at Pointe Basse on June 2, 1837. Wakely was running lumber rafts for Daniel Whitney as evidenced by a chance meeting with George Stevens in 1838. An 1839 entry in Stevens' ledger indicates reimbursement to Robert Wakely for reimbursement for goods sent in August. Mary Jane Wakely was born on May 12, 1839. It appears that, from 1839 to 1860, Robert Wakely spent considerable time working at George Stevens' projects 60 miles to the north at Big Bull Falls at the present city of Wausau. A postal route from Fort Winnebago at the Fox-Wisconsin River Portage to Plover Portage was drawn up January 1, 1840 and submitted to Congress. In 1844 the Maid of Iowa from Galena, Illinois, was the first steamboat to successfully navigate the Dells and reach Pointe Basse. From then through the 1860s, steamboats such as Science, Enterprise, and Onyotho, made trips to the Pointe, with the Enterprise, a 100-ton vessel being the most consistent steamer making calls. On April 3, 1843, Robert Wakely was named a Judge of Elections in his precinct; by January 1, 1844 he is named in a suit brought against his bond by the Portage County Commissioners. In the same year Wakely purchased a lot in present Wisconsin Rapids. In 1845 Wakely was

named postmaster for the Pointe Basse post office. This lasted until the Grand Rapids post office took its office over. William Stueben Wakely is born on August 8, 1845, followed by Newbold Leroy [Lewey] Wakely on July 30, 1847, and Alice Wakely on January 5, 1849. The 1850 Census listed Robert Wakely as a lumberman with \$3,000.00 capital in personal and real estate, five employees and producing 300,000 feet of lumber. On April 13, 1851 Ella Wakely was born at Wakely's Tavern. That same year Erskine Stansbury completes his survey of subdivisions through Portage County, which included Wakely's Pointe Basse claims. On March 2, 1852 the State of Wisconsin legislature grants Wakely permission to operate a ferry across the Wisconsin River. In November 1883, Wakely's house burned down; uncertain housing possible relegates him to living in the hotel tavern. On December 24, 1887 Robert's wife, Mary O'Dell Wakely dies. Robert died at Wakely's Tavern on February 18, 1893.<sup>33</sup>

Robert and Mary Wakely chose their location to settle very wisely. Critically located at the foot of the sixty-mile-long series of rapids from Big Bull Falls, Pointe Basse was a site long involved in hunting expeditions of indigenous people, the fur trade exchange, supply depot, tavern and lodging for travelers who arrived and departed by canoe, steamboat, foot and horseback. It was a post office and gathering place for celebrations and parties. Pointe Basse was a site whose witness to history was a result of location, location, location.

#### The Fourth Wave: American Dominance and Industrialization

The fourth wave of the history of the Middle Wisconsin River Valley is defined by the establishment of sawmills and the settlements that flourished with them along the Amable Grignon Lands from near Whitney's Rapids north of Wakely's Station and continuing north to Big Bull Falls [Wausau]. Industrialization of "*du Haut du l'Ouisconsin*," the Middle Wisconsin River Valley, was well under way by the close of the decade of the 1830s. Daniel Whitney built the first sawmill of the Wisconsin River, probably in 1832, and operated prior to 1846 according to one account.<sup>34</sup> Whitney followed, in 1835, in association with a Mr. Harris of Louisville, with the construction of another sawmill on the site of the present paper mill in Wisconsin Rapids. George Kline was hired in 1838 to run the mill; it was later sold to Garrison and Bensley. In 1836 Amable Grignon received a permit to build the sawmill at the north end of the island in what is now Port Edwards. He associated with Samuel Merrill to complete the project. In 1839 Fay and Draper built a sawmill at the rapids in the present village of Biron north of the Grand Rapids. In 1840 this mill was sold to Weston, Heldon and Kingston, who then sold it to Francis X. Biron. Biron was the first to raft lumber through the rapids down to the markets in Illinois and Iowa.<sup>35</sup>

#### John Edwards, Senior and Junior

Returning to Captain Cotey's narrative in the Metis experience of Amable Grignon, he wrote of the improvements from the site of the present Verso Paper mill in Wisconsin Rapids south to the present Port Edwards dam in 1846: "*Next about one and one half miles down the river [from the present paper mill site in Rapids] stood Eusebe LaVigne's logging shanty. From this place no kind of improvement could be seen until you reached the Merrill Mill, four miles away. This is now called Port Edwards. This mill was built in 1838 by Mr. Grignon, and afterward sold to Sam Merrill, who was running the same at the time referred to [1838].*"<sup>36</sup> By 1840

or 1841, Grignon and Merrill were ready to sell out, and Henry Clinton, a millwright, seriously pursued the purchase of the dam and mill site. According to research by J. Marshall Buehler of Port Edwards, Henry Clinton *"...was a man that we might truly label as a far-sighted north woods pioneer. He saw the potential for a successful business in the Port Edwards area."*<sup>37</sup> Clinton was a man of considerable mechanical skill and acumen, however he had no money with which to make the purchase. Buehler explains, *"Clinton was a promoter of sawmill ventures. He was connected with lumbering operations in Centralia (Wisconsin Rapids), as well as other points further up the river. Historical sources indicate that he started and managed these mills but always had financial backing from other sources."*<sup>38</sup>

Enter John Edwards, Sr.

Born January 25, 1804 in Redruth Parish county of Cornwall, England, Edwards grew up in the parish and in 1830 married Eliza Jones; a son, John, arrived on September 15, 1831. Four years later the Edwards family immigrated to the United States and settled in Hazel Green in southern Wisconsin. Again, Marshall Buehler: *"The record of no Cornish immigrant more clearly indicates the important role these people played in the economic development and growth of Wisconsin than that of John Edwards Sr. He exercised his energy and efforts in several fields of development, namely retail merchandising, real estate, farming, mining, and lumbering."*<sup>39</sup> Edwards built extensive businesses in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois, and in so doing, he built considerable wealth with which he financed the construction of a dam and sawmill at the Grignon-Merrill mill site with gold English sovereigns.

Operating with permission from the Menominee Nation under a government permit (the Menominee Nation had not yet surrendered control of logging rights to anyone except Amable Grignon, and would not do so until the Treaty of 1848), Henry Clinton was the partnership's "feet on the ground" with the mechanical acumen to rebuild the mill at a settlement known as French Town. When the Menominee did cede their lands to the United States, the government then set up land offices throughout the new state and promoted public sale. Edwards, Sr. purchased 20 sections of land in the what is now Wood County, Wisconsin. Throughout the 1850s the fledgling operations trudged along with Clinton running into financial straits with the sawmill business. The year 1859 was pivotal for the future of the mill at French Town. Clinton's lack of financial acumen landed him in debt to the partnership leaving him no other option than to transfer his equity in the partnership along with his land holdings in Adams, Marathon, and Wood Counties to John Edwards Sr. in order to pay off his debts. In this situation, Edwards and Clinton agreed that Edwards would manage the business operations and Clinton would manage the farm and lumber camp up in northern Wood County on Mill Creek. Clinton never made progress in those responsibilities; he was killed in a bar fight that year. Left without a mill manager, Edwards, in 1859, turned to his son John Edwards, Jr. to convince him to return to Wisconsin and take over operations at the mill in French Town. John Edwards, Jr. had come down with a serious infection of gold fever as a 17-year old and the only remedy was to abandoned the farming life for the lure of California. From that time until he received his father's call, he mined with a considerable measure of success. In 1859, Edwards, Jr. took command of the sawmill and dam at French Town and, with his involvement, the fortunes of the mill, named John Edwards and Company, and French Town stabilized. In January

1861, things really stabilized when John Edwards, Jr. married Frances J. Morrill, a school teacher from Centralia. Some years later Frances Edwards, described French Town in the year of her marriage: *“Our town was small, having one dry goods and mercantile store, a larger boarding house, sleeping house, blacksmith shop, school house, and a sufficient number of homes for its inhabitants. Edwards and Clinton’s sawmill was the principal engine that moved the place, and it was a marvelous thing, one with its saws whose teeth of iron with wonderful power converted logs into boards; I can see the everlasting fires burning day and night to remove the refuse, which was transported over a relay track by car. With the passing of the logging and lumber business and the opening up of the farm and new industries, the migratory lumberjack either followed the call of the camp to other parts of the country, or took unto himself a wife and settled down to adapt himself to the new industries. The Indians, who then were numerous, and who, among various ways of getting a living, used to pick and sell blueberries to the settlers, belonged to the real nomadic tribes, moving from place to place and existing mostly by hunting and fishing.”*<sup>40</sup>

John Edwards, Sr., retired to Dubuque, Iowa and died there on October 6, 1868. Edwards, Jr. sought complete control of the French Town operations, but had not enough capital to buy out his siblings. It would not be until 1873, when, in partnership with Thomas B. Scott, he accomplished his goal, and the business became Edwards and Scott Company. In 1885, Edwards enlisted W.E. Southwell of Milwaukee for financial assistance to buy out Scott’s interests, and was once again John Edwards and Company. It was in that year that the Edwards family traveled to the California gold fields where John toiled some thirty years earlier. There he met a young banker, Lewis M. Alexander, and talked him into joining the company. In time Alexander married the Edwards’ daughter Lida. John Edwards, Jr., was active in local government and civic affairs and served as Wisconsin State Assemblyman. Elected to the office in the fall of 1890, he died in Madison on March 11, 1891. Frances Morrill Edwards survived him until 1923. Both are buried in Port Edwards’ cemetery.

Prior to Edwards’ passing, an 1890 restructuring of John Edwards and Company resulted in the John Edwards Manufacturing Company, with one of its purposes to build a newsprint paper mill. In 1895 the lumber mill was torn down and a modern brick pulp and paper mill was erected on its site. The new mill was managed by L.M. Alexander. Merging with the Nekoosa Paper Company in 1908 to form the Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Company the papermakers experienced steady growth throughout the next 75 years, surviving economic peaks and valleys. The post-World War Two era witnessed the Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Company ascension to national prominence manufacturing fine business papers. Forced into several mergers and buyouts by changing markets from 1970 on, nearly four decades later the mill’s last owner decided the beautiful offices, research departments and the mill at Port Edwards no longer fit their business model. In June 2008, the owners shuttered the entire complex, except the water powered hydro plant, and laid off 500 employees. The entire complex was sold to an investment firm a few years later. Today, the mill sits, a decade after its closure, partially dismantled, with the office building and research centers empty and unused. On the site of the 1872 office buildings of John Edwards and Company a tall granite statue of John Edwards, Jr. stands juxtaposed with the towering brick smoke stack with the acronym NEPCO embossed on its side, mute testimony to the rise and decline of industry and settlement he helped build.<sup>41</sup>

### Conclusion: A Complex Transition

What is the significance of the transition from the fur trade to the lumber industry in the Middle Wisconsin River Valley?

Economics rapidly shifted the expanding influence of the United States government.

There can be little doubt for the indigenous owners of the lands that the transition from fur trade to lumber was the culmination of a long slow loss of land and influence held since time immemorial. By mid-century incessant demands by the United States government representatives through negotiations and treaties to remove the Menominee and Ho Chunk nations from their ancestral lands had fragmented the once strong and powerful people. Proving themselves resilient and resourceful over time, the Menominee and Ho Chungra nations resisted, often at great personal peril, to remain in their ancestral home land and preserve their cultures for future generations.

Writing in the vernacular of the early twentieth century, historian Louise P. Kellogg offered this summary: *"The Treaty of 1836 with the Menominee was remarkable for several reasons. In the first place it was noted for dispatch – the Indians gathered, their ceremonial speeches were made, propositions were discussed and agreed to in less than a week. This was, perhaps, because there was but a single commissioner and he was well-versed in his duties, acquainted with the Indians, their traders, their relatives and friends as well as with the nature of the ceded territory. Secondly, this treaty was noted for its fairness, practically all parties were satisfied with its provisions and its results. Lastly, it was remarkable for its effect on the growth of the Wisconsin Territory. Today great cities stand on this Indian cession- most of Oshkosh, all of Neenah, Menasha, Appleton, North Kaukauna, Oconto, and Marinette in Wisconsin, Menominee and Escanaba in Michigan owe their origins to the Treaty of the Cedars. On the Wisconsin River, Wisconsin Rapids, Stevens Point, Mosinee, and Wausau stand on the strip ceded to the government in 1836."*<sup>42</sup>

Herein are some topics for consideration to further explore the history of the forest of the Middle Wisconsin River Valley.

The social, economic, demographic, and political history of the transformation of the forests are an integral part of forest history. Possible topics include, but are by no means limited to:

- Was the Treaty of the Cedars, in Kellogg's words, "...noted for its fairness, practically all parties were satisfied with its provisions and its results..."?
- Did the Americans really "... with their democracy and energy, broke down the class system founded on the fur trade hierarchy..."<sup>43</sup> And if so, did they replace it with a democracy that was open to all the citizens regardless of racial, cultural, or religious affiliation and composition?
- *"The Grignon brothers, Jacques Porlier, and John Lawe continued to operate as a loosely organized partnership from 1823 to 1835."*<sup>44</sup> To what extent, if any, were the metis of Green Bay really forced to submit to the brutal monopoly of Astor's American Fur Company? What was the relationship of Augustin and Louis Grignon, Jacques Porlier, and John Lawe to Robert Stuart, the Astor's agent at the Bay?

- A study of the technical aspects of early, water-powered sawmills are also of interest.
- What types of dams were constructed at Whitney's Rapids?
- What might Whitney's sawmill have looked like? What was the machinery used to move the saws, and indeed, what style of saws were incorporated?
- What training and skill sets did men like Clinton and Whitney's millwright need to operate these types of mills?
- Biographic and genealogical history of the people who played diverse roles in the transformation of the forest present an almost limitless opportunity.

---

<sup>1</sup> Engel, Dave. *The Fat Memoirs*. (Wisconsin Rapids. River City Memoirs, South Wood County Historical Corporation. 1988. Copyright retained by Dave Engel. Cited hereafter as Engel *The Fat Memoirs*.) p.11. Designated the Wisconsin Rapids Historian, Dave Engel has written extensively of the events and personalities of the Middle Wisconsin River Valley from Whitney's Rapids to the Village of Biron and parts east and west of the river. These works have been published in the multi-volume series *River City Memoirs*.

<sup>2</sup> Jones, George O, McVean, Norman S., et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. (Minneapolis, H.C. Cooper, Jr. & Co. 1923. Cited hereafter as Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*.) p.57

<sup>3</sup> Beck, David R.M. *Siege and Survival: History of the Menominee Indians, 1634-1856*. (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2002. Hereafter cited as Beck. *Siege and Survival*.) pp. 1-2. Geographic identifications are taken from Wisconsin Cartographer's Guild. *Wisconsin's Past and Present: A Historical Atlas*. (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press. 1998. Cited hereafter as Cartographer's Guild. *Wisconsin's Past and Present*.) pp. 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> Beck. *Siege and Survival*. p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 18-20. Chapter 1 explains in detail the structure and spiritual basis upon which Menominee world view is practiced and its impact on all facets of personal and communal behavior. As a comparison in this discussion, the recently published *The Relentless Business of Treaties: How Indigenous Land Became U.S. Property*, by Martin Cases (St. Paul. University of Minnesota Press. 2018) offers insight into the worldview of the society and its representatives and the resulting official policies of the United States in their acquisition and dominion of native lands in neighboring Minnesota during the same period.

<sup>6</sup> Beck. *Siege and Survival*. p. 17

<sup>7</sup> [www.mpm.edu/content/wirp/ICW-150.html](http://www.mpm.edu/content/wirp/ICW-150.html) Ho Chunk History on the Indian Country Website. Radin, Paul. *The Winnebago Tribe* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1973. Originally published as part of the Thirty-seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, 1923.) pp. 17-27ff.

<sup>8</sup> Smith, Alice E. *The History of Wisconsin, Volume 1: From Exploration to Statehood*. (Madison. State Historical Society of Wisconsin. 1973. Cited hereafter as Smith. *The History of Wisconsin, Volume 1*.) pp.36-46. For an in-depth examination of the complexities of the indigenous people and the relationships with the European Americans, of interest is *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, by Richard White. (Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, Anniversary Edition. November 1, 2010.) Exploring the relationships from the perspective of a search for accommodation and common meaning, White takes a different tack to explore the world of the fur trade and resulting conflicts in the period leading to the time of this monograph.

<sup>9</sup> Smith. *The History of Wisconsin, Volume 1*: Chapter 2: "The French Regime;" Chapter 3: "British Domination, 1763-1815;" Chapter 4: "Fur Trade Frontier," and Chapter 5: "Indian Affairs," are the definitive starting point and general account of these topics in the context of Wisconsin history.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p.145. Kellogg, Louise Phelps. "The Menominee Treaty at the Cedars, 1836." (Transactions of the *Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters*, 26. May, 1931) pp.127-135.

<sup>11</sup> Engel. *The Fat Memoirs*. pp.8-9.

<sup>12</sup> Berg, John L. "The French-Canadian Influence in the Western Great Lakes: The Charles de Langlade Family, 1760-1840." (A thesis submitted to the Department of History of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Teaching History. December, 1986, under the instruction of Dr. Russell S. Nelson, Professor of History. p. 108. Pages 82-107 document the activities of the Grignons in Wisconsin.

<sup>13</sup> Thwaites, Reuben Gold, editor. *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Volume XV*, (Madison, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1900) pp. 439-442.

<sup>14</sup> Just where was Amable Grignon's Iron Creek trading post located? Iron Creek is today named Ten Mile Creek. In *Wood County Deeds Book 4*, "Surveyor's Notes by Erskine Stansbury" pages 36-37, Deputy Surveyor Erskine Stansbury and his crew, chainmen W.D. Harsha and H.H. Herrick, axe man Charles Stiles, and flagman Noah Dunham, commenced surveying subdivisions of Township 21 North, Range 5 East of the 4<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian on September 28, 1851. Beginning in the corner of Sections 25 and 36, they retraced the east side of Section 36, running north, till 24 links east of the quarter post. They then intersected 79 links east of the Section corner, and retraced the south side of Section 36. From there Stansbury and his crew intersected 8 links north of the quarter post and then intersected 11 links north of the corner to Sections 35 and 36. By the time the crew reached Sections 26 and 35, starting at 79.90, they intersected north and south line 32 links north of the corner and surveyed west corrected between Sections 26 and 35, varying 7.37. From there they encountered, at 18.00, Iron Creek 50 links wide running northwest, "rapid current." At 37.50, the road from Point Bass to Portage entered a "wet marsh." At 39.95 the crew set a quarter-section post, and bearing burr oak 2 feet in diameter, N 47 E, 2.77 chains, another burr oak 10 inches in diameter at S 56 E 3.91 chains, and they came upon "Grignon's house 8 chs. north of ¼ post." At 71.10 the crew again encountered Iron Creek 50 links wide running south. Stansbury summed up 79.90 Section Corner thus: "Land first half pine barrens, rolling. Soil sand. Undergrowth Blk. Oak. Last half wet marsh. Subject to overflow & unfit for cultivation. Claimed by ----- Grignon as hay marsh."

<sup>15</sup> Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. p.128

<sup>6</sup> Engel. *The Fat Memoirs*. p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> *September 3, 1836 Treaty*. Menomoni Nation website.

<sup>8</sup> Engel, Dave. "First Firsts," in *River City Memoirs #5*. (Wisconsin Rapids and Rudolph, Wisconsin, South Wood County Historical Corporation and Dave Engel, 1991) p. 30.

<sup>9</sup> Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. pp.130-131

<sup>20</sup> Just where was Amable Grignon and Samuel Merrill's saw mill located? In *Wood County Deeds Book 9*, "Surveyor's Notes by Erskine Stansbury:" page 77: Hathaway Survey of 1840; page 92-93: Stansbury notes Merrill sawmill and dam and "cluster of houses" in Section 36; page 98: Section 21E, 7.25 - Merrill's saw mill and dam; page 100: survey noted on page 92 completed July 15, 1851 by Erskine Stansbury, Deputy Surveyor.

<sup>2</sup> Engel. *The Fat Memoirs*. p. 11. Jones' report was documented in the Wisconsin Territorial Papers.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* p.11.

<sup>23</sup> Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. P. 39.

<sup>24</sup> Smith, Alice E. "Daniel Whitney, Pioneer Wisconsin Businessman." (*Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Volume 24, Number 3 March, 1941) pp.

<sup>25</sup> Smith. "Daniel Whitney." In June of that year Whitney "... secured mortgages and powers of attorney from four of the heirs of Pierre Grignon and his widow Domitelle Langlade Grignon Langevin to their share of the undivided lots 1 and 2 on the east side of the Fox river as partial liquidation of their indebtedness to him." p. 289.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 296.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 296-297.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 297-298.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 298

<sup>30</sup> Thwaites, Reuben Gold, editor. *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Volume XV*, (Madison, The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1900) pp. 9-11.

<sup>31</sup> Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. page 247. The Wakely account was written by George N. Wood, a resident of Grand Rapids [present Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin], who was described in 1923: "Probably no one knows the history of Nekoosa better than George N. Wood, who for many years has made careful and extensive researches into the general history of the county, and has preserved the history thus obtained in note book, manuscript or printed form. Some six years ago he was requested by J.E. Brazeau of Nekoosa to furnish the



data for a history of Nekoosa that the students of Nekoosa High School were about to prepare, and in response thereto he supplied the following information, which, to enhance the interest of the account, is given substantially in his own words, omitting only a few preliminary remarks relating to the county generally as they are elsewhere given in this [ *History of Wood County*] The letter is dated at Grand Rapids, March 13, 1916..."

<sup>32</sup> Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. p. 248. Remembering the *History of Wood County* is a serial, paid for entry anthology, this account is the start of research on the Wakelys and should be read with a critical eye.

<sup>33</sup> Mary Wakely's grandson Newey Lesley Wakely offered this arrival date in an interview in 1951, reportedly told to him by Mary O'Dell Wakely before her death. The genealogy is from [www.historicpointbasse.com](http://www.historicpointbasse.com) and the Portage County Historical Society pchswi.org

<sup>34</sup> Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. p. 247. George N. Wood writes in his manuscript for J.E. Brazeau: "Mr. Ira Purdy, the millwright of this city, who will be 97 years of age on May 6, 1916, came to Grand Rapids on April 1, 1846, informs me that when he first came here he stopped at the Wakeley [sic] Tavern at Pointe Basse. Mr. Wakely informed him that the Whitney mill had been abandoned for many years and that the mill looked to him (Purdy) as if it was at least 15 years old..."

<sup>35</sup> Engel, Dave. "First Firsts," in *River City Memoirs #5*. (Wisconsin Rapids and Rudolph, Wisconsin, South Wood County Historical Corporation and Dave Engel, 1991) p. 30.

<sup>36</sup> Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. pp.130-131

<sup>37</sup> Buehler, J. Marshall. "The Edwards: Father and Son." *Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of the Forest History Association of Wisconsin, Inc.* (Wausau, Wisconsin, Forest History Association of Wisconsin, Inc. September 30 – October 1, 1994.) p.10. Engel, Dave. "The Port of Edwards," in *River City Memoirs #5*. (Wisconsin Rapids and Rudolph, Wisconsin, South Wood County Historical Corporation and Dave Engel, 1991) p. 12.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* p. 11.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10.

<sup>40</sup> Buehler, "The Edwards: Father and Son." pp.10-17. Engel, Dave. "The Port of Edwards," pp. 12-19. Mrs. Edwards' recollections are found in Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. p. 245.

<sup>41</sup> Buehler, "The Edwards: Father and Son." pp.10-17. Engel, Dave. "The Port of Edwards," pp. 12-19. For details and anecdotes on the corporate and village histories to the mid-1980s and early 21<sup>st</sup> Century, see also Buehler, J. Marshall. *A Commemorative History of Nekoosa Papers, Inc.: The Nekoosa Story*. (Wisconsin Rapids, Fey Publishing Company, 1987), and by the same author, *Looking Back: A History of Port Edwards*. (Wisconsin Rapids, Fey Publishing Company, 2002.)

<sup>42</sup> Kellogg, Louise Phelps. "The Menominee Treaty at the Cedars, 1836." (*Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters*, 26. May, 1931) pp.127-135. Quote is on page 134.

<sup>43</sup> Jones, et. al. *History of Wood County, Wisconsin*. p. 39.

<sup>44</sup> Berg, John L. "The French-Canadian Influence in the Western Great Lakes: The Charles de Langlade Family, 1760-1840." (A thesis submitted to the Department of History of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Teaching History. December, 1986, under the instruction of Dr. Russell S. Nelson, Professor of History. p. 108. Pages 82-107 document the activities of the Grignons in Wisconsin.

# Paper, Welfare Capitalism, and the Landscape of Wood County

By

Katie Weichelt

## PAPER AND THE BUILT LANDSCAPE

Paper production has economically and physically transformed the Wisconsin River Valley in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The industry rescued sawmilling communities on the verge of failure when the logging industry declined in the region and provided stable employment opportunities to generations of residents. After the first paper mill was established in the late 1800s, many mills began to dot the riverfront of the Wisconsin. The mill structures became a central feature of many Wisconsin River Valley communities with the geography and spatial arrangement of these paper towns significantly tied to the needs of the mills. Geographer Richard Walker writes, "The heart of every economy is industrial production, and the heart of economic geography lies in the spatial patterns and physical landscapes industry creates."<sup>1</sup> If true, we can examine the built landscape to better understand the economy.

In looking at the geography of many Wisconsin River Valley towns, we see the impact of business decisions from paper firms. However, it should also be noted that industry does not have strict control over this place-making process. According to Andrew Herod, another geographer, argues "it is important to recognize that workers, too, are active geographical agents whose activities can shape economic landscapes in ways that differ significantly from those of capital."<sup>2</sup> In the case of many paper communities in the Wisconsin River Valley, the relationship between business owners and community members and employees have also driven the development of the built landscape. In this paper, I will reference how the paper industry has made an impact on the built landscape of three communities: Nekoosa, Port Edwards, and Wisconsin Rapids. To clarify, the "built landscape" I refer to includes all man-made structures and does not include natural features.

## PAPER AND THE SPATIAL FIX

Geographer David Harvey in his theory of the "Spatial Fix", argues that capitalism, "has to build a fixed space (or "landscape") necessary for its own functioning."<sup>3</sup> Industries and businesses locate to certain regions based on natural resources, labor, and other factors, but they also create and reconfigure places and landscapes. Harvey argues that capitalism must expand

---

<sup>1</sup> Richard A. Walker, "The Geography of Production," in *A Companion to Economic Geography*, eds. Eric Shepard and Trevor J. Barnes (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 113.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Herod, "From A Geography of Labor\* to Labor Geography: Labor's Spatial Fix and the Geography of Capitalism," *Antipode* 29, no. 1 (1997): 1-31, 3.

<sup>3</sup> David Harvey, "Globalization and the Spatial Fix," *Geographische Revue* 2 (2001): 23-30.

geographically, but to do so it must build semi-permanent or 'fixed' infrastructures to function. The factory or plant is often the most visible structure, but transportation infrastructure, supportive industries, employee and community living spaces all interact and overlap in complicated and ever evolving ways. We can see this play out with the development of the lumber and paper industry in the Wisconsin River Valley. As capitalism moved westward through the nineteenth century, Wisconsin became an important site of lumber production. Lumber was crucial in aiding the expansion of capitalism into the Mid-West. As towns began to grow across the prairies of the Midwest and Great Plains, demand for lumber increased. It was essential for houses, of course, and for barns, fences, corncribs, and other basic agricultural structures. Town builders required it as well, and it was still an important source of fuel for heating and cooking.<sup>4</sup> The entire culture and economy of the new farming belt was tied directly to the lumber regions of the upper Midwest.<sup>5</sup>

The decline of lumbering meant changes to the economic geography of the region. Huge acreages once owned by logging companies were forfeited to the government for non-payment of taxes, for example, and much of this land was then sold cheaply to speculators to be turned into farms. Sometimes the timber companies also sold land directly to settlers when faced with declining profits.<sup>6</sup> Lumber companies simply would leave places of declining timber resources and find new forested areas to exploit. Rather than selling out, some lumbermen in the Wisconsin River Valley sought out other local industries in which to invest their capital. The circumstances that led to lumber's decline in central Wisconsin happened to coincide with the rise of industrial manufacturing in the region.<sup>7</sup>

The decline of lumber opened new investment opportunities for paper production. The first paper mill in the Wisconsin River Valley was established in 1888. The initial company, Centralia Pulp and Paper, was formed and the first mill erected in south Centralia. Another mill was constructed south of this location at Nekoosa a few years later by Thomas Nash. The village of Port Edwards, which sits in between Nekoosa and Wisconsin Rapids, moved into the paper industry in 1896 when Lewis Alexander, president of the John Edwards Manufacturing Company, start producing newsprint and built their paper mill on the site of their former saw mill. Overall, the mills in Wood county served as the hearth of the Wisconsin River paper industry and diffused northward. Twelve years later, the company would merge with surrounding paper mills in Nekoosa and Centralia, to form the Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Company, also known as NEPCO. The corporate headquarters were in Port Edwards.

---

<sup>4</sup> William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991), 153; William Rector, *Log Transportation in the Lake States Lumber Industry, 1840-1918* (Glendale, CA: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1953), 58.

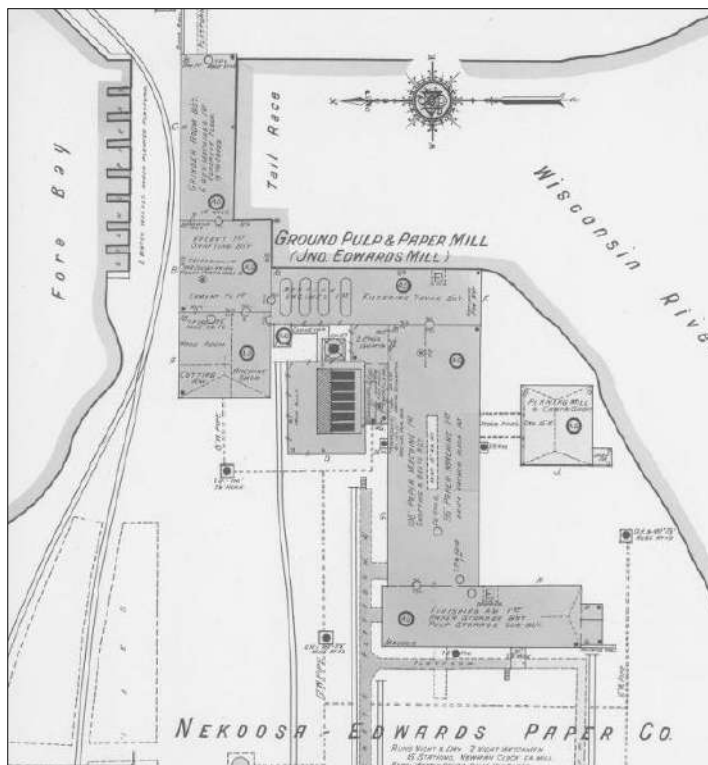
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> Ingolf Volgeler, with Harold Mayer, Brady Foust, and Richard Palm, *Wisconsin: A Geography* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1986), 105.

<sup>7</sup> John D. Buenker, *The History of Wisconsin: The Progressive Era 1893-1914*, Vol. 4. (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1998), 82.

## THE CHANGING INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE

When Port Edwards was a sawmill town, the mill served as the center of the village. The Sanborn Map of 1891 depicted the sawmill as a series of buildings located on the site of the future paper mill. The main structure, straddling the river and its bank, housed the saws themselves. A water wheel occupied the northeast corner and shingle and lath mills occupied outbuildings near the main building. Long log piles some twenty feet tall stretched nearly four hundred feet to the east and iron tramways connected them to the mills. At this time while the area was becoming known as Port Edwards, officials at the Sanborn Company regarded it as merely an extension of the town of Centralia and they deemed, unfortunately, nothing else in the area worthy of documentation.<sup>8</sup> The Sanborn map of 1895, one year before the founding of the paper mill, shows just the sawmill and notes that it is no longer running.<sup>9</sup> Seven years later, however, another Sanborn edition reveals progress. The town had been officially surveyed just five years before and the sawmill had been replaced by the paper mill, complete with grinder room and two paper machines. Gone are the huge piles of logs. Instead, smaller stacks of logs for pulp rest to the northwest of the paper mill.<sup>10</sup>



The 1909 Sanborn map, however, reveals how much the landscape changed over a fourteen-year period. The new mill is much more complex, for example. It included a grinder room above the tailrace and eight water wheels (Figure 1). The paper machines were in the largest section of the building and attached to this, on the west side, was a finishing room. A sulphite mill, a recent addition currently, was in a separate building to the west of the main mill. Huge log piles north of the buildings supplied the basic raw material.

*Figure 1. Sanborn Map of the Pulp and Paper Mill at Port Edwards, 1909. Used with Permission from Wisconsin State Historical Society, WHS-Nekoosa1909-3.*

<sup>8</sup> Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Grand Rapids and Centralia, 1891. 1:600. Wisconsin State Historical Society. Viewed online at <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/maps/id/5239/rec/4> Sept. 3, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Grand Rapids, Centralia and Nekoosa, 1895. 1:600. Wisconsin State Historical Society. Viewed online at <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/maps/id/5214/rec/2> Sept 3, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Grand Rapids and Nekoosa, 1902. 1:600. Wisconsin State Historical Society. Viewed online at <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/maps/id/5525/rec/5> Sept. 3, 2015.

Just like Port Edwards, we can also turn to the Sanborn maps and other historical maps to examine the growth of the industrial landscape in historic Wisconsin Rapids. The landscape of Grand Rapids and Centralia (present-day Wisconsin Rapids), for example, in the late 1870s was restricted largely to the river banks. In general, plats only extended inland seven to ten blocks. Railroads intersected this riverine scene, mainly west of the stream, and flour/lumber mills lined the shore.<sup>11</sup> The Sanborn maps of 1884 depict Centralia and Grand Rapids on the cusp of change. Both were small at that time with an industry revolving around forest products. A handful of pulp mills occupied the riverbank with a hub and spoke factory a few blocks to the west. Downtown businesses were primarily wooden structures located on Front Street (First Avenue), with their backs to the river.<sup>12</sup> The businesses shown on Front Street include a liquor store, tailor and barber shops, a laundry, and cigar dealer. There were also two hotels, including the Witter, where single residents lived.<sup>13</sup> Over the years these businesses would change, of course, and development would expand away from the river banks. The Sanborn maps also suggest that, to some extent, industrial development was driving this spatial expansion. Industry on the Centralia side pushed west in a line perpendicular from the river. Most businesses here were lumber-related on sites with direct access to rail lines.<sup>14</sup> Residential development filled the gaps. In addition, the maps reveal development springing up around the Centralia Pulp and Paper mill, even though it is spatially separated from the rest of the city.<sup>15</sup>

The Consolidated mill was located along the river in a central location in the area, on the west side of the river. By 1919, industry had pushed even further west. The landscape still included several wood-related businesses, including Ellis Lumber, which had started only recently. That company's log yard stood at the western side of the city but with access to transportation routes. Industrial development was concentrated along the river. At times this included a foundry and a pulp mill, but most businesses were smaller retail establishments. It is here, along Front Street in the original Grand Rapids, where the main downtown developed. While maps clearly depict industrial forces in shaping a city, there were also other political and social forces at work that contributed to the development of these communities.

#### WELFARE CAPITALISM AND THE SHAPING OF NEKOOSA, PORT EDWARDS, AND WISCONSIN RAPIDS

In the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, firms began to foster strategies for bolstering loyalty among their workforces. This movement, known as "welfare capitalism," consisted of new policies designed to add comfort and security to the lives of their employees. Such benevolence was largely a response to labor and management clashes in the early twentieth century

---

11 Snyder, Van Vechten & Co., *Cities of Centralia & Grand Rapids*. 1878. 1:144. Wisconsin Rapids: McMillan Memorial Library, <<http://content.mpl.org/cdm/ref/collection/mcml/id/2193>> Accessed October 31, 2015.

12 Sanborn-Perris Map Co. *Grand Rapids and Centralia*, 1884. 1:600. Wisconsin State Historical Society. Viewed online at <<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/maps/id/5231/rec/3>> Accessed October 26, 2015.

13 Ibid.

14 Snyder, Van Vechten & Co., *Cities of Centralia & Grand Rapids*, 1878.

15 Geo A. Ogle and Co., *South Part of Wisconsin Rapids*, 1928.

over better wages, working conditions, and control. The programs also sought to stem labor turnover, which was highly costly for some firms.<sup>16</sup> The plans varied, but often included health insurance for employees, pensions, recreational opportunities, and financial help toward home ownership. At times officials even encouraged workers to form committees that would give them a voice (or at least the appearance of a voice) in company matters.<sup>17</sup> It also took on a physical dimension. Companies would provide parks and schools for the community and enlist the help of architects to create beautifully planned communities. Some industrial firms chose to provide housing or incentives to encourage home ownership.

Port Edwards and Nekoosa are two company towns with strong histories of welfare capitalism. The term “company town” commonly refers to communities constructed by a mining, lumbering, or manufacturing enterprise to house workers. In such centers, the company was not only an employer, but also the provider of housing and other goods and services.<sup>18</sup> Often scholars have characterized a company town as one that is isolated and where residents are beholden to the company for all aspects of their livelihood. In other words, they are perceived as difficult places to live. Such characterizations, while accurate for many communities, ignore the diversity of these settlements and often apply more to company towns in the nineteenth century than to newer creations. Before 1900, many company towns were almost entirely industrial landscapes. Residences were utilitarian structures built to house multiple workers and were erected by the company owner simply because other housing was nonexistent. Reduced isolation and heightened social expectations after 1900 gradually led to changes. Owners began to implement community amenities, consistent with the principles of “welfare capitalism,” to attract and keep workers. Some even employed architecture firms to redesign and beautify their communities.<sup>19</sup>

However, after 1900, some company towns started to adopt characteristics of “the new company town” The new company town designs were highly influenced by ideals associated with English garden cities. These, in turn, were inspired by rural English villages with treelined streets, quaint housing, and open spaces incorporated into their plans.<sup>20</sup> This movement towards picturesque community planning emerged from tensions between labor and management. Throughout the latter decades of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, an increase in unionization occurred. Workers became much bolder in its demands, strikes were more frequent, and labor organizations grew in national importance. By creating pleasant communities, management hoped to engender fidelity and attract a stable, skilled

---

<sup>16</sup> Gerald Zahavi, “Negotiated Loyalty: Welfare Capitalism and the Shoeworkers of Endicott Johnson, 1920-1940,” *The Journal of American History*, 70, 3 (December 1983): 602.

<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, “Industrial Recreation, the Second World War, and the Revival of Welfare Capitalism, 1934-1960,” *The Business History Review*, 60, 2 (Summer 1986), 232-257.

<sup>18</sup> Marcelo J. Borges and Susana B. Torres, “Company Towns: Concepts, Historiography, and Approaches,” in *Company Towns: Labor, Space, and Power Relations Across Time and Continents*, eds. Marcelo J. Borges and Susana B. Torres (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 2.

<sup>19</sup> Christopher Post, “Modifying Sense of Place in a Federal Company Town: Sunflower Village, Kansas, 1942-1959,” *Journal of Cultural Geography* 25, no. 2 (2008): 137-159; Margaret Crawford, “The ‘New’ Company Town,” *Perspecta* 30 (1999): 48-57.

<sup>20</sup> 4 Crawford, “The ‘New’ Company Town,” 54.

workforce. Management also realized that too much control in their workers lives could be detrimental and sought a solution that would at least give the impression of a reduced company role in building the town. Hiring an architectural firm to plan such communities was one such strategy. By encouraging workers to select home styles of their preference, management hoped they would feel a greater sense of ownership of their community.<sup>21</sup>

The predecessor companies of Nekoosa-Edwards were no different and constructed bunkhouses at their winter camps in the woods. Generally, a practical need for similar housing existed even beyond these isolated conditions. The towns where sawmills and paper mills were located were at times new creations, lacking affordable spaces for workers to rent or buy. Rather than waiting for other entrepreneurs to provide the needed facilities, companies often found it more convenient to set up their own employee housing. Living spaces for laborers and managers evolved throughout the decades from barracks to more individualized single-family residences. In the early days of one of the mills, workers were housed in a company-owned structure called the Port Edwards Hotel. It contained 125 beds and was a definite upgrade from the rougher lodgings of the logging camps. To accommodate more workers, NEPCO eventually added a second building to the hotel known as the “annex”. Then, as more years went on and workers became less transitory, the company began to construct and rent out small single-family houses to its workers.<sup>22</sup>

Beyond housing, NEPCO provided basic utility service to these homes. The company’s electric company was called Nekoosa-Edwards Power and Light. Created in 1913, it supplied not only Port Edwards and Nekoosa, but also their surrounding townships plus the city of Wisconsin Rapids. This company purchased its power from the parent paper mill. Likewise, the mill also created a water distribution system for Nekoosa and Port Edwards.<sup>23</sup> Overall, NEPCO, by the late 1910s, had established a strong presence in the day-to-day life of everybody in the Nekoosa-Port Edwards area.

In the summer of 1919, employees of the Nekoosa-Edwards paper company, in Port Edwards, WI struck on Monday June 21. Local newspapers had been noting the discord between labor and management in the weeks leading up to the strike. The Department of Labor had even sent out an attorney to mediate between the two sides. Workers were demanding that the company recognize the union as a bargaining agent for wages. They also sought an eight-hour work day and the ability to form a committee of employees that would approve new hires. It was decided amongst the workers that if the company had failed to meet their demands that they would walk off the job and that is just what happened, despite attempts at mediation. The strike would turn out to be long and bitter but would also give birth to a new relationship between the paper company and Port Edwards.

---

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 51-52.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with J. Marshall Beuhler, November 15, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> Beuhler, *Looking Back: A History of Port Edwards (Port Edwards, WI: The Village of Port Edwards, 2002)*, 38-42.

*Live Where You Work*

The strike lingered throughout the winter of 1919-1920 but lost its summer intensity. Workers returned to the job in the spring, but labor failed to win the right to unionize. While acrimonious, the strike did serve as an important step in the remaking of Port Edwards and Nekoosa. Soon after it ended the company ramped up efforts to create a more stable workforce. Instead of serving as a landlord for its employees, for example NEPCO now encouraged home ownership either through selling employees houses that the company previously had owned or, by encouraging them to build on their own. Officials likely were motivated by the success of similar strategies by other companies. Community-building efforts were proving effective at reducing turnover and mitigating strikes. The first campaign, in 1924, produced ten new homes for the community of Port Edwards. Its success lead to an even larger building program in 1927 (Fig. 2).

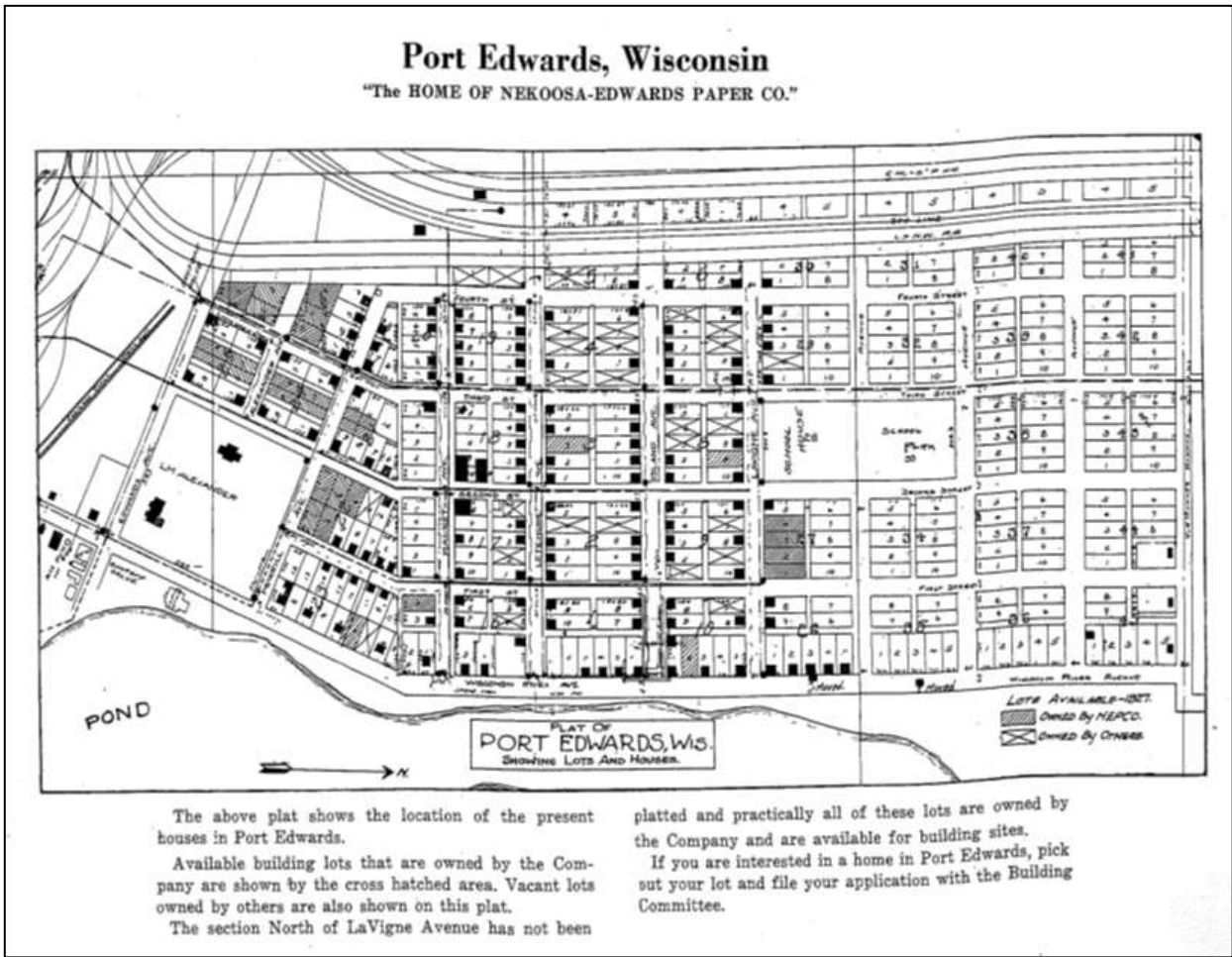


Figure 2. Map of available plots for purchase in Port Edwards, 1927. Document from the Archives at The Alexander House, Port Edwards Wisconsin.

The new campaign, called "Live Where You Work," offered generous incentives for workers to purchase homes they were renting or lots to construct their own structures. The



prices were generous for the rental units and the lots were free. In addition, the company would also provide building materials at wholesale prices. Fifteen families took advantage of the program that first year, most of them building in Port Edwards.<sup>24</sup> In 1928 and 1929, the company expanded its homeowner program to provide not only lots, but also a “sidewalk in front of the lot, top dressing fertilizer, grass seed and trees – approximately \$200 in value.”<sup>25</sup> Also, people who wanted to build now could choose from several design options offered from an approved builder. Generally, these houses were single-story bungalows, but two-story homes were available as well. The company also handled the construction work and the ordering of materials for the new homes so that the owner could purchase them at wholesale prices.<sup>26</sup>

While the grants and the reduced rates certainly encouraged employees to live in Nekoosa or Port Edwards, the purchase of new homes there also earned them another big benefit. In a letter to NEPCO employees in 1929, General Manager John A. Alexander wrote that: “such employees will receive careful consideration in permanent employment and promotion.”<sup>27</sup> The incentives were generous, but these efforts were not as successful as NEPCO management had hoped. An investigation in 1929 revealed that only 24.6% of married men who worked at Port Edwards owned a home there. Another 34.7% of this group lived in Wisconsin Rapids with the remainder scattered. The company’s campaign at Nekoosa was more successful. Nearly 40 percent of married males who worked for the Nekoosa mill owned their own home in that community.<sup>28</sup> During the economic depression of the 1930s, the company sold many of the remaining homes it owned to raise capital. In the late 1940s, officials again experimented with building new homes and made one last push in the 1950s. This latter program offered credits to encourage employees to build in the town where they worked.<sup>29</sup>

### *Leisure, Services, and Community Building*

NEPCO and the Alexander family went beyond housing benefits to create a more harmonious relationship with employees and their communities. Schools in Port Edwards and Nekoosa had long been supported by NEPCO, for example. Officials also made a series of gifts. Sometimes these were small gestures such as purchasing uniforms for the marching band, sponsoring annual company picnics and supporting various sporting events.<sup>30</sup> The company

---

<sup>24</sup> Letter from Lewis M. Alexander to Nepco Employees, May 14, 1927, Archives of the Alexander House, Port Edwards, WI; “Home Building Campaign for Port, Nekoosa,” Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune, July 13, 1928. Vol. 15, No. 4601.

<sup>25</sup> Letter from John E. Alexander to NEPCO Employees, May 1, 1929, Archives of the Alexander House, Port Edwards, WI.

<sup>26</sup> “Home Building Campaign for Port, Nekoosa,” Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune. Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin. July 13, 1928. Vol. 15, No. 4601.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from John E. Alexander to NEPCO Employees, May 1, 1929, Archives of the Alexander House, Port Edwards, WI.

<sup>28</sup> Letter from Ray W. Herzog to E.P. Gleason, March 22, 1929, Archives of the Alexander House, Port Edwards, WI.

<sup>29</sup> Buehler, *The Nekoosa Story*, 94; Interview with J. Marshall Buehler, November 15, 2014.

<sup>30</sup> Buehler, *Looking Back*, 64; Buehler, *The Nekoosa Story*, 111.

also provided entertainment opportunities and, to this end, underwrote a new auditorium where outside artists came to perform.<sup>31</sup>

At a larger scale, the company and a foundation set up by the Alexander family paid for several local parks. Lewis Alexander was particularly interested in developing recreational outlets such as tennis courts, basketball courts, and even a natatorium. To plan his vision for Port Edwards, he contracted with a planning firm in Milwaukee. Unfortunately, Alexander died before his dream came to fruition, but the plan reveals his intentions. Incorporating many aspects of the “garden city” design movement popular at the time, it focused on a large park to be constructed on an island in the river. Curved roads would mimic the natural shape of the river and tree-lined streets would include hundreds of new lots.<sup>32</sup>

No park ever materialized on the island because of Lewis Alexander’s death and the arrival of economic depression in the 1930s. John Alexander, who assumed control of the company in 1934, scaled back his father’s goals but still provided new amenities. In the 1950s, he added a recreation area to the shore of Nepco Lake. Later, he donated part of the L.M. Alexander estate for the building of a YMCA that still stands in the village.<sup>33</sup> In sum, Port Edwards and, to a lesser degree, Nekoosa saw not only an increase in population and home ownership as a result of company activities, but also an increase in overall community amenities.

### *Beautifying Wisconsin Rapids*

Similar efforts toward making these communities pleasant places to live can be seen in Wisconsin Rapids. This process was more of a group effort, yet George Mead, president of Consolidated and the paper industry, were at the forefront of many initiatives. The local newspaper, in a glowing report of his contributions to the city, wrote that: “Beauty is a prerequisite with any development undertaken by Mr. Mead. He employs methods that cannot result in anything but the creation of handsome buildings, ideally situated, practical in every phase, but nevertheless unique for their simplicity and beauty.”<sup>34</sup>

In many ways, Mead’s beautifications were typical of his contemporaries in other industrial cities during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>35</sup> He and Consolidated began by creating park space around their business offices. He then spearheaded several architectural projects, one being the Mead-Witter Block, owned by himself and his brother-in-law (Figure 3). Located downtown on the west side of the river, the plan was to replace a series of decaying wooden structures with a tasteful new building used for offices and retail space. Construction began in 1924, and as it neared completion the following year, the local newspaper

---

<sup>31</sup> Buehler, *Looking Back*, 64-66.

<sup>32</sup> Buehler, *Looking Back*, 54; Preliminary Town Plan: Village of Port Edwards, WI. 1931. 1:2400. Wisconsin State Historical Society. Viewed online at <<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Content.aspx?dsNav=Ny:True,N:4294963828-4294955414&dsNavOnly=N:1166&dsRecordDetails=R:IM111902>>, August 31, 2015.

<sup>33</sup> Buehler, *Looking Back*, 54.

<sup>34</sup> “George W. Mead Is Civic Leader,” *Wisconsin Rapids Tribune*, Vol. 12, No. 3746, September 30, 1925.

<sup>35</sup> Patrick M. Malone and Charles A. Parrott, “Greenways and the Industrial City: Parks and Promenades along the Lowell Canals,” *The Journal for the Society of Industrial Archeology* 24, no. 1 (1998): 19-40.

stated that it marked a new stage of progress for Wisconsin Rapids. "From a struggling frontier town," a reporter wrote, "this city has developed into a progressive commercial, industrial, and residential center, and nowhere has the contrast been as sharply defined as in the block now occupied by the Mead-Witter building."<sup>36</sup>

The city's riverfront was another place in need of renovation. In the early years of the twentieth century, women's groups led this effort, first to remove unsightly, old buildings and then convert the sites into park land. Their efforts were part of a larger "city beautiful

movement" that flourished across the country at this time. The initiative took inspiration from the redesign of Paris in the mid-nineteenth century that had introduced wide boulevards, street lighting, and green spaces.<sup>37</sup> Its ideas became popular in small cities in the Midwest to advance communities beyond the frontier stage, increase civic pride, and overcome a sense of inferiority. At times, cities applied the aesthetic principles on a large scale and created grand designs such as Daniel Burnham's plan for Chicago. More often, promoters favored incremental improvement through a series of practical but fragmented efforts.<sup>38</sup> Often, as was the case for Wisconsin Rapids, the leaders of these efforts were women's organizations. They took the initial steps to purchase land by organizing local businessmen, including George Mead, to assist with the process. And so, in 1909, the group acquired buildings on the west bank of the river and slated them for demolition.<sup>39</sup> Mead had his own ideas as well and proposed a plan for park areas along the river bank plan did not come to fruition.<sup>40</sup>

Beyond beautification, Mead and the Consolidated Company changed the city in more practical ways. The company had the means to produce electricity and so contracted with the



Figure 3. The Mead-Witter Block, 1934. Photograph from the Collection of T.A. Taylor Source: McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin.

<sup>36</sup> "New Block is Symbolic of City's Growth," Wisconsin Rapids Tribune, Vol. 12, No. 3746, September 30, 1925.

<sup>37</sup> Peter Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 189.

<sup>38</sup> Jon A. Peterson, "The City Beautiful Movement: Forgotten Origins and Lost Meanings" in *Introduction to Planning History*, ed. Donald A. Krueckeberg (New Brunswick, NJ: The Center for Urban Policy Research, 1983), 51.

<sup>39</sup> "Summarized Report of the Civics Committee of the City Federation of Womens' Club, Grand Rapids. April 2, 1909," Grand Rapids Tribune, April 07, 1909, Vol. 35, No. 49.

<sup>40</sup> "George W. Mead Is Civic Leader."

city to provide power for residents.<sup>41</sup> In the 1920s, the company offered land to the city for a garbage dump, solving a problem that had existed for several years.<sup>42</sup> Schools and the library also were underwritten by businessmen in the area. T.B. Scott funded the original library building and donations from J.D. Witter, another local businessman and early paper investor, allowed it to expand. Then, to better prepare the local children for work in one of the growing factories, Witter donated \$50,000 dollars to construct a manual training and domestic science school. Finally, J.D.'s wife, Emily, donated \$10,000 for a new hospital.<sup>43</sup> John Arpin, a local businessman who made his fortune in lumber, spearheaded a movement to bring a swimming pool to the city in 1913. This pool, located east of the river and slightly north of downtown, was both beautiful and practical. Drowning deaths (from swimming in the river) decreased once the pool was installed.<sup>44</sup> Another early recreation site was Lyon Park, on the river's southwestern bank. A prosperous family donated this land in 1909 and by the 1920s it was being used as a campground.<sup>45</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The development of these communities in Wood County were a result of the processes of capitalism, but they were also the result of the, at times, complex relationship between labor and businesses. With the growth and success of the local companies, paper became an increasingly important and powerful driver of urban development. Laborers, managers, and capitalists of the paper industry had both assisted in the creation of small urban developments in Wisconsin. Labor, through their willingness to unionize and fight for better wages and working conditions, most likely encouraged companies to enact measures that encouraged a loyal workforce. These policies ushered in an era of welfare capitalism that not only shaped working conditions for employees, but also had an impact on the build landscape.

---

<sup>41</sup> "Raise Salaries of City's Employees," Grand Rapids Tribune, February 5, 1920, Vol. 66, No. 36.

<sup>42</sup> "Consolidated Offer Solves Garbage Disposal Problem," Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune, June 06, 1923, Twelfth Year, No. 3033.

<sup>43</sup> Jones and McVean, History of Wood County, Wisconsin, 149.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., Wisconsin, 147.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Borges, Marcelo J. and Susana B. Torres, "Company Towns: Concepts, Historiography, and Approaches" in *Company Towns: Labor, Space, and Power Relations Across Time and Continents*, eds. Marcelo J. Borges and Susana B. Torres. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.
- Bowman, Francis F. *Why Wisconsin*. Madison, Wisconsin: Democrat Printing Company, 1948.
- Buehler, J. Marshall, Interview by Katie Weichert. November 15, 2014.
- Buehler, J. Marshall. *Looking Back: A History of Port Edwards*. Port Edwards: The Village of Port Edwards, 2002.
- , J. Marshall. *The Nekoosa Story*. Port Edwards, WI: Nekoosa Papers Inc, 1987.
- Buenker, John D. *History of Wisconsin: The Progressive Era, 1893-1914*, Vol. 4. Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1998.
- "Company Tenants are Ordered to Vacate in Thirty Days by Paper Mill" *Grand Rapids Daily Leader*, June 26, 1919, Vol. 5, No. 1585.
- Crawford, Margaret. "The 'New' Company Town," *Perspecta*, Vol. 30 (1999): 48-57.
- Cronon, William. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1991.
- Decker, A. *Grand Rapids: Descriptive of Grand Rapids, Wood County and the Wisconsin River*. Grand Rapids, 1907.
- Fones-Wolf, Elizabeth. "Industrial Recreation, the Second World War, and the Revival of Welfare Capitalism, 1934-1960," *The Business History Review*, 60, 2 (1986): 232-257.
- "George W. Mead Is Civic Leader" *Wisconsin Rapids Tribune*, Vol. 12, No. 3746, September 30, 1925.
- Hall, Peter. *Cities of Tomorrow*, 3rd ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.
- Harvey, David. "Globalization and the Spatial Fix," *Geographische Revue*, Vol. 2 (2001): 23-30.
- Herod, Andrew. "From a Geography of Labor to a Labor Geography: Labor's Spatial Fix and the Geography of Capitalism" *Antipode* 29, no.1 (1997): 1-31.
- "Home Building Campaign for Port, Nekoosa" *Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*. Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin. July 13, 1928. Vol. 15, No. 4601.
- "Labor Situation at Nekoosa-Edwards is Nearing Danger Line," *Grand Rapids Daily Leader*, June 20, 1919. Vol. 5, No. 1580.
- Malone, Patrick M. and Charles A. Parrott, "Greenways and the Industrial City: Parks and Promenades along the Lowell Canals," *The Journal for the Society of Industrial Archeology*, Vol. 24, No. 1, (1998): 19-
- Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Company Records, The Archives of the Alexander House, Port Edwards, Wisconsin

- "New Block is Symbolic of City's Growth" *Wisconsin Rapids Tribune*, Vol. 12, No. 3746, September 30, 1925.
- Ozanne, Robert W. *The Labor Movement in Wisconsin: A History*. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2011.
- Peterson, Jon A. "They City Beautiful Movement: Forgotten Origins and Lost Meanings" in *Introduction to Planning History*, ed. Donald A. Krueckeberg. New Brunswick, NJ: The Center for Urban Policy Research, 1983.
- Post, Christopher "Modifying Sense of Place in a Federal Company Town: Sunflower Village, Kansas, 1942-1959," *Journal of Cultural Geography* 25, no. 2: 137-159.
- "Raise Salaries of City's Employes" *Grand Rapids Tribune*, February 5, 1920, Vol. 66, No. 36.
- "Rapidly Progressing: Greater Grand Rapids One of the Most Prosperous Cities in the State," *Grand Rapids Tribune*, May 19, 1900. Vol. 28, No.2.
- Rector, William. *Log Transportation in the Lake States Lumber Industry, 1840-1918*. Glendale, CA: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1953.
- Snyder, Van Vechten & Co. *Cities of Centralia & Grand Rapids*. 1878. Scale 1:144. McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids. <http://content.mpl.org/cdm/ref/collection/mcml/id/2193>. Accessed October 31, 2015.
- Sanborn-Perris Map Co. *Grand Rapids and Centralia, 1884*. Scale 1:44. Wisconsin State Historical Society. <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/maps/id/5231/rec/3>. Accessed October 26, 2015.
- Sanborn-Perris Map Co., *Grand Rapids and Centralia, 1891*. Scale 1:600. Wisconsin State Historical Society. <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/maps/id/5239/rec/4>. Accessed September 3, 2015.
- Sanborn-Perris Map Co., *Grand Rapids and Centralia, 1895*. Scale 1:600. Wisconsin State Historical Society. <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/maps/id/5214/rec/2>. Accessed September 3, 2015.
- Sanborn-Perris Map Co., *Grand Rapids and Nekoosa, 1902*. Scale 1:600. Wisconsin State Historical Society. <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/maps/id/5525/rec/5>. Accessed September 3, 2015.
- Sanborn-Perris Map Co., *Nekoosa, 1909*. Scale 1:600. *Wisconsin State Historical Society*. <http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/maps/id/8661/rec/3>. Accessed September 3, 2015.
- Standard Atlas of Wood County, Wisconsin*. Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle and Co., 1909.
- Standard Atlas of Wood County, Wisconsin*. Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle and Co., 1928.
- Summarized Report of the Civics Committee of the City Federation of Womens' Club, Grand Rapids. April 2, 1909," *Grand Rapids Tribune*, April 07, 1909, Vol. 35, No. 49.

Summers, Gregory. *Consuming Nature: Environmentalism in the Fox River Valley, 1850-1950*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006.

"Trouble Here May Tie up Other Mills," *Grand Rapids Daily Leader*, Grand Rapids, Wisconsin, April 7, 1919, Vol. 4, No. 1518.

Vogeler, Ingolf. *Wisconsin: A Geography*. With Harold Mayer, Brady Foust, and Richard Palm. Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1986.

Walker, Richard A. "The Geography of Production," in *A Companion to Economic Geography*, edited by Eric Sheppard and Trevor J. Barnes. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2000.

"What the City Offers," *Grand Rapids Tribune*, Vol. 41, No. 1, June 10, 1914.

Zahavi, Gerald. "Negotiated Loyalty: Welfare Capitalism and the Shoeworkers of Endicott Johnson, 1920-1940," *The Journal of American History* 70, no. 3 (1983): 602-620.

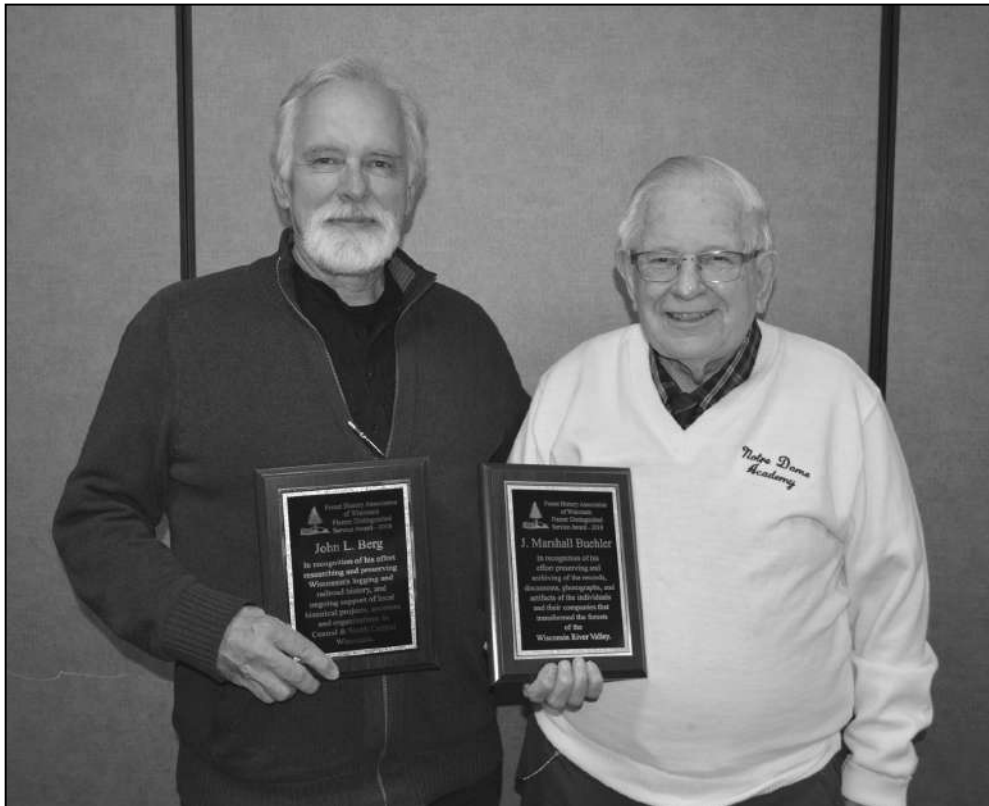
## 2018 Fixmer Award The Forest History Association of Wisconsin Distinguished Service Award

*The Fixmer Award is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to an organization, agency or corporation, within the forest products and resource community.*

### Two Recognized with Fixmer Distinguished Service Award During 43rd FHAW Annual Meeting

J. Marshall Buehler received the first Fixmer award in recognition of his effort preserving and archiving of the records, documents, photographs, and artifacts of the individuals and their companies that transformed the forests of the Wisconsin River Valley.

John L. Berg received the second Fixmer award recognizing his effort researching and preserving Wisconsin's logging and railroad history, and ongoing support of local historical projects, societies and organizations in Central and North Central Wisconsin.



2018 Fixmer Award Recipients, John Berg (left) and J. Marshall Buehler (right).



## **Citation for Distinguished Service Award—2018**

### **J. Marshall Buehler**

Mr. J. Marshall Buehler of Port Edwards, Wisconsin, is a 91-year-old native of Port Edwards and was the official historian of the Nekoosa Paper Company as well as the village of Port Edwards. In that capacity he has researched and written two books on those institutions. The Nekoosa Story is a history of the Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Company from its founding as a lumber mill through its evolution to a leader in the paper industry. The settlement that grew with the company is incorporated as the Village of Port Edwards, which Marshall documented in the illustrated history Looking Back.

Having nurtured a life-long love of history, Marshall is a charter member and board director of the South Wood County Historical Corporation, having served as its past president and its current vice-president. He is a member of the Mid-Continent Railroad Historical Museum, having served as a past member of the board of directors of the Restoration Trust Fund. Marshall holds certification as a steam locomotive engineer. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Alexander House Center for Art and History in Port Edwards. Serving as its director, the Alexander House is the archive for the extensive historical collection of the Former Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Company. It serves as both an art gallery with frequently changing displays and a historical museum. Marshall also serves as a docent and consultant at the Wisconsin River Papermaking Museum in Wisconsin Rapids.

Marshall's research has been presented in talks to various interested organizations in the Wood County area. In 1994 he presented his paper, "The Edwards: Father and Son," at the 19th Annual Meeting of the Forest History Association of Wisconsin. Always ready to share his deep and broad knowledge of the history of the area and railroads (his other passion) over the past 60 years, Marshall has contributed significant effort to the preservation and archiving of the records, documents, photographs, and artifacts of the individuals and their companies that transformed the forests of the Wisconsin River Valley.

Exemplifying the historians seeking to preserve the history of Wisconsin's forests, Mr. J. Marshall Buehler is truly deserving of the Fixmer Award.

## Citation for Distinguished Service Award—2018

### John L Berg

John Berg, a native of the Wisconsin Rapids area, received a M.A. degree in history from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Majoring in United States and Canadian history with an emphasis on the colonial fur trade frontier, John's accomplishments during the past 40 years, demonstrate his interests in the history of Wisconsin's lumber and railroad industries. Those efforts ultimately have played an important role in the preservation of Wisconsin's forest history.

Over the past twenty years John has contributed to the success of multiple FHW Annual Meetings. In 1994 John served with Larry Easton as the local arrangements committee planning the 19th Annual Meeting held in Marshfield. In addition to the preliminary legwork for that meeting, when members gathered, John presented the paper, Henry Sherry and the Wood County Railroad. When the Association met again in Marshfield in 2011, John presented another paper, "Pioneer Blacksmiths Who Worked in Towns and Lumber Camps at the Turn of the Century." Then for the 41st Annual Meeting at Burlington, John stepped to the podium for a third presentation, "The Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad." This year at the 43rd Annual Meeting, John again was a part of the local arrangements planning committee, and presented the paper "Transitions from Fur Trade to Lumber."

An avid researcher since his youth, John authored the book, "The Lake Shore & Eastern Railroad: A Logging Railroad in North Central Wisconsin" in 2016. Based on more than 30 years research and collaboration with Price County residents, John described this 327-page book as "Historical preservation through publication." It is not his only publication. Earlier (2002), John co-authored the book, "The Pike Lake Chain: A Collection of Historical Documents and Photographs." Still earlier, he authored a series of articles about The Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad published from 1981 – 1983 in the "Soo," the journal of the Soo Line Historical and Technical Society." He also wrote "From Trois Rivers to La Baye: The Mouet and De Langlade Families in New France," published in the Voyageur, a nonprofit magazine about the history of a 26-county area of greater Northeast Wisconsin.

Throughout Central and Northern Wisconsin John has a long history of sharing time and talent supporting the endeavors of local community organizations. At Historic Point Basse, and even the McMillan Memorial Library, John has been found busy at the forge sharing his blacksmith skills as a historical reenactor. He is a frequent presenter for historical and genealogical societies addressing topics related to early Wisconsin history, logging railroads and communities, blacksmithing or muzzleloaders. Noteworthy too is his generous support of the Price County Historical Society by his donation of all proceeds from the sale of his recent book, "The Lake Shore and Eastern."

John Berg's record of service to the Forest History Association of Wisconsin, research and preservation of Wisconsin's logging and railroad history, and ongoing support of local historical projects, societies and organizations merit recognition with the Fixmer Award.

## 2018 Connor Award Forest History Association of Wisconsin Distinguished Service Award

*The Connor Award is given to an organization which has made a significant contribution to forest history.*

### Historic Point Basse Recognized with Connor Award

Historic Point Basse, 1837-1860, at Nekoosa, Wisconsin, recognized with the 2018 Connor Award. This living history site has been preserved and serves as an important interpretive center documenting the transition from the dominance of the native Americans and the fur trade through birth of the logging and lumber industry in the Wisconsin River Valley.

Organized in the early 1980s as the Wakely Inn Preservation, Inc., the local historians were focused on preserving the old house. As early as 1846, the Wakely family is reputed to have owned

a dozen or so buildings but today only one still exists. All others have burned, been moved, or suffered some other ill fate. Soon after the acquisition of the "Wakely House," a one-room schoolhouse and a log cabin were donated and brought to Point Basse. The Columbia School now doubles as the visitor center complete with restrooms and a kitchen. The log cabin is very rustic and well suited as a setting for Fur Trade interpretation. It is too bad that it could not have remained down at Historic Point Basse as the crown jewel of the village, but at least the storied inn went out in a blaze of glory. The lives of eleven Wakely family members and their contemporaries are interpreted on the grounds at various events. The Citizens of Point Basse host open-house affairs, with the focus on historic and nature education. They are available for other public appearances any time provided advanced arrangements are made.

Exemplifying the efforts of local and state historians to preserve the history of Wisconsin's forests, Historic Point Basse is truly deserving of the Connor Award.



*Ron Harris accepted the Connor Award on behalf of the Historic Point Basse, Board of Directors.*

## 2018 President's Award Forest History Association of Wisconsin

### President's Award Presented to Bob Walkner

FHAW president, Don Schnitzler, recognized Bob Walkner with a new award this year. As an expression of the Association's appreciation, the first President's Award was given to Bob Walkner for his many contributions to the FHAW as Treasurer, Membership Chair, Speaker, and as a positive example of FHAW member dedication.



Thanks for all you do Bob!

*Don Schnitzler presenting the President's Award to Bob Walkner during the 43rd Annual Meeting.*

### Miles Benson President's Award

Following the Wisconsin Rapids Annual Meeting the board of directors formally named the award as the Miles Benson President's Award. Benson had served as president and an active member of The Forest History Association of Wisconsin throughout his lifetime. In 2017 Benson was recognized as an inductee to the Wisconsin Forestry Hall of Fame.

The FHAW Board established the following criteria for nomination consideration:

Member of the FHAW in good standing for 5 plus years; and,  
Significant contributions to the FHAW organization; or,  
Significant research, publishing, presentations for FHAW; and,  
Patterns of Service plus/or Support to FHAW

The Board further established the following methodology for Selection and Awarding:

Any FHAW member may bring nomination suggestions  
Selection is at the sole discretion of the president

## **Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting of Members**

October 4, 2018

**Members Present:** Don Schnitzler, Bob Walkner, Dan Giese, John and Kate Grosman, Ray and Alice Nofke, Frank Hitz, Ann Krueger, Jim and Kathy Simon, Jerry Poprawski, John Berg, Ed Forrester, Arno Helm, Sam Karam, Jerry and Kay Thiede, Bridget O'Brien, Mark Nelson, and Al Barden.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by President Don Schnitzler during the evening gathering at the Alexander House, Port Edwards, Wisconsin.

**Minutes of the Last Meeting:** Minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting of Members at Menomonie, Wisconsin were not available.

**President's Report:** President Schnitzler formally welcomed everyone to the 43rd FHAW Annual Meeting and complimented the 2018 local events committee members, Arno Helm and John Berg, for their efforts developing what promises to be an enjoyable and informative gathering here in the Wisconsin Rapids area. He also acknowledged the FHAW board members for their efforts on behalf of the Association during the past year.

In his annual report he highlighted activities related to the Association's ongoing Strategic Planning efforts, planned Website renewal and the difficulties encountered as we tried to publish proceedings for the 2009—2017 annual meetings. Discussing the missing Proceedings, members agreed to forego those missing Proceedings, but asked we resume publishing the Annual FHAW Proceedings for this and future meetings.

**Membership Committee Report:** Chairman Bob Walkner reported the current membership total as 155. This includes 99 Individual, 23 Life, 2 Corporate, 12 Family, 5 Non-profit, 14 Exchange and 0 Student memberships.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Bob Walkner distributed copies of the financial report for the period of July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. The June 30, 2018 total asset balance was \$104,338. A full report is included in these proceedings.

**Audit Report:** An audit, completed by Jerry and Kay Thiede, found all financial records in order.

**Awards:** Awards will be presented during the Banquet Friday evening at the Mead Inn.

**Nominations Committee:** Committee chairman, Don Schnitzler, reported that the terms of three board members, Bridget O'Brien, Ed Forrester, and Bob Brisson, will be completed with this meeting. Each indicated their willingness to continue to serve. A motion to cast a unanimous ballot for this slate carried. Their new three-year term will end at the 2021 annual meeting. A vacancy created by the resignation of director Dan Giese remained unfilled after a call for nominations from the floor. Dan continues as the Association's webmaster.

**Scholarship Committee:** Bridget O'Brien, Mark Nelson and John Grosman briefly described an effort to revamp the FHAW Scholarship Program. Al Bardin indicated his willingness to assist with this endeavor.

**Exhibits:** The Association's travelling exhibits were displayed eight times so far in 2018— Madison Area Woodland Owners Association (February), North Eastern Wisconsin Woodworkers Guild (March), Chippewa County, the Past Passed Here (May), Neillsville Heritage Days, Wisconsin Farm Technology Days, Price County German Settlement History event and Wisconsin DNR Forestry retirees gathering (July), and FHAW Annual Meeting at Wisconsin Rapids (October).

The traveling exhibits are available by contacting Don Schnitzler to make arrangement for pick-up or delivery.

**2019 Annual Meeting:** The 44th Annual Meeting will be held in Black River Falls, Jackson County, October 10 - 12, 2019.

**Adjourned:** Having reached the end of the agenda, the meeting adjourned to allow members to visit with one another during dinner.

## Financial Report

### FOREST HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF WISCONSIN JULY 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

<b>OPERATING RECEIPTS</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>
Dues	\$ 2,635	\$ 2,480
Donations-Unrestricted	000	100
Donations-Restricted (Scholarship**)	275	150
Annual Meeting	1,102	1,641
Auction	194	242
Sales	000	000
<b>Total Operating Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 4,206</b>	<b>\$ 4,613</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
Printing	\$ 394	\$ 472
Postage	369	297
Operations	1,478	1,866
Investments	17,000	000
Annual Meeting	1,003	1,204
Auction	000	000
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 20,244</b>	<b>\$ 3,839</b>
<b>CASH ASSETS 6-30-2018</b>		
<b>Checking and Money Market</b>		
Associated Bank checking		\$ 5,593
Money Market (0.10%) (Monthly) (\$5.00 int.)		7,904
T.Rowe Price cap gains, & div. in MM 6-30-18 \$4,650		
Restricted Donations (Scholarship fund) \$1,870		
<b>Total Checking and MM</b>		<b>\$ 13,497</b>
<b>INVESTMENTS 6-30-2018</b>		
T. Rowe Price Mutual Fund Accounts (multiple investments)		\$ 90,841
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>\$ 104,338</b>

## **Available Annual Proceedings Back Issues**

*Back Issues are available for \$3.50 plus \$2.00 shipping for the first issue,  
and \$1.00 for each additional issue*

*Make checks payable to the Forest History Association of Wisconsin and send to  
Robert Walkner, Treasurer, FHAW, PO Box 424, Two Rivers, WI 54241.*

16th Annual Proceedings, Medford—1991  
“Forest Products Transportation by River, Rail and Road”

18th Annual Proceedings, Antigo—1993  
“Archeology and Forest History”

19th Annual Proceedings, Marshfield—1994  
“Prominent Lumbermen of Central Wisconsin

20th Annual Proceedings, Plover—1995  
“Non-Traditional Products of the Forest, Their History and Commercial Development”

21st Annual Proceedings, Ladysmith—1996  
“The Flambeau River Area’s Forest Heritage”

25th Annual Proceedings, Rhinelander—2000  
“Historic Rhinelander Area: Land of the Hodag”

26th Annual Proceedings, Stanley—2001  
“The Historic Stanley Area”

27th Annual Proceedings, Oconto—2002  
“The Historic Oconto Area”

28th Annual Proceedings, Two Rivers—2003  
“The Historic Two Rivers Area”

30th Annual Proceedings, Sheboygan —2005  
“The Historic Sheboygan Area”

31st Annual Proceedings, Laona —2006  
“Camp 5 Museum”



## Notes

## Notes



