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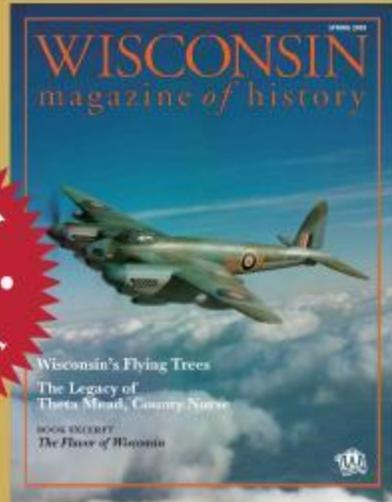
**A Vision of Grandeur:
The Restoration of the Library
Reading Room**

The Anna Ruedy Diary

BOOK EXCERPT

Wisconsin's Own





The American Association of State and Local History

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On the front cover: A modern interpretive paint scheme finally finishes the space as had been intended by its nineteenth-century architects.

PHOTO BY DAVID BENJAMIN



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(Inset) William Evans, head of the United Branches of Pottery Operatives. He launched a union newspaper in December 1843, the *Potters' Examiner and Workman's Advocate*, which he edited until 1850.

(Above) Members of the Potters' Emigration Society dreamed of leaving the smoking chimneys of the Staffordshire Potteries.

(Right) The potters had a vision for a new life living in a cozy log cabin in the pure air of the backwoods of Wisconsin.

THE ROAD TO “DESOLATION FERRY”

THE STORY OF THE POTTERS’ EMIGRATION SOCIETY

BY ROGER BENTLEY



COURTESY OF JAMES BENTLEY

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the population of the United States rose from 5.3 to 23.2 million.¹ In the same period fifteen new states were admitted to the union, including Wisconsin, which joined in May 1848. Faced with the effects of increasing property values and decreasing crop production from worn-out lands, large numbers of Americans chose to move west. Contributing

to this movement was a mass migration of settlers from Europe. These newcomers came to escape the miserable living conditions or political instability of their own countries. For them, America meant the chance for a better life and the opportunity to own their own land. Western land was available at the remarkably low price of \$1.25 per acre (set by the federal government’s Land Act of 1820).²

Among the many immigrants from England, a number came in organized groups, each with a mission to found some sort of utopian colony. In Wisconsin there were at least three of these. The first was the British Temperance Emigration Society, formed by a group of artisans from Liverpool who settled in Dane County in 1843.³ An Owenite socialist sect that called itself "Equality" also established a settlement in Waukesha County in 1843.⁴ Then, in 1846, the Potters' Emigration Society came to set up a colony in Columbia County.

The Potters' Emigration Society originated in the "Potteries" district of Staffordshire in the English Midlands. Famous for the names of pottery manufacturers such as Wedgwood, Spode, and Minton, among others, the district suffered from some of the worst urban living conditions in the whole country. The population lived and worked in Dickensian towns filled with smoking chimneys, grime, dirt, and dangerously overcrowded housing. The potters were affected by a variety of industrial diseases. Silicosis, for example (known as "potter's rot," a form of lung disease caused by inhalation of silica dust), was widespread. Life expectancy was short. In the 1840s, branded as the "hungry forties," a severe depression struck the country and brought particularly hard times to the potters. Unemployment was widespread, and money was tight.⁵

In 1843, against this background, the potters formed a union, naming it the "United Branches of Pottery Operatives."⁶ At the head of the union was William Evans, a Welshman who had arrived in the Potteries in his youth and had been apprenticed as a gilder. He was a brilliant, visionary leader but was also fatally authoritarian and self-righteous. Deeply affected by the miserable circumstances of his fellow potters, he endeavored, as leader of the union, to improve the working conditions of the pottery industry. To further his cause, he launched a union newspaper in December 1843, the *Potters' Examiner and Workman's Advocate*, which he edited until 1850.⁷ The *Examiner* concentrated on promoting the potters' interests and Evans's own opinions and observations on local events. For a working-class publication, it enjoyed a high standard of journalism as well as an enthusiastic readership among the potters.

In early 1844, the newspaper began publishing letters from emigrants to America. Typically, they described life in a comfortable log cabin, set in a beautiful country, rich and fertile, flowing with milk and honey and populated by an independent, industrious people. Impressed by this correspondence while, at the same time, searching for a way to reduce unemployment in the pottery industry, Evans conceived the idea of sending unemployed potters to America.⁸ He proposed a new law to be added to the union's constitution for the formation of a "United Stock Emigration Company" to place "our unfortunate-fellow operatives" on the western land the American government was making available to settlers.⁹ With increasing enthusiasm, Evans assailed the *Examiner's* readers with persuasive arguments in favor of his scheme.

First, he delivered a bleak commentary on the lives of the factory workers who "have to work 12, 14 or 16 hours per day in a heated and confined atmosphere, amid whirring dust and rattling engines;—so long as they feel themselves wasting away, from excessive toil and poisonous workshops . . ."¹⁰

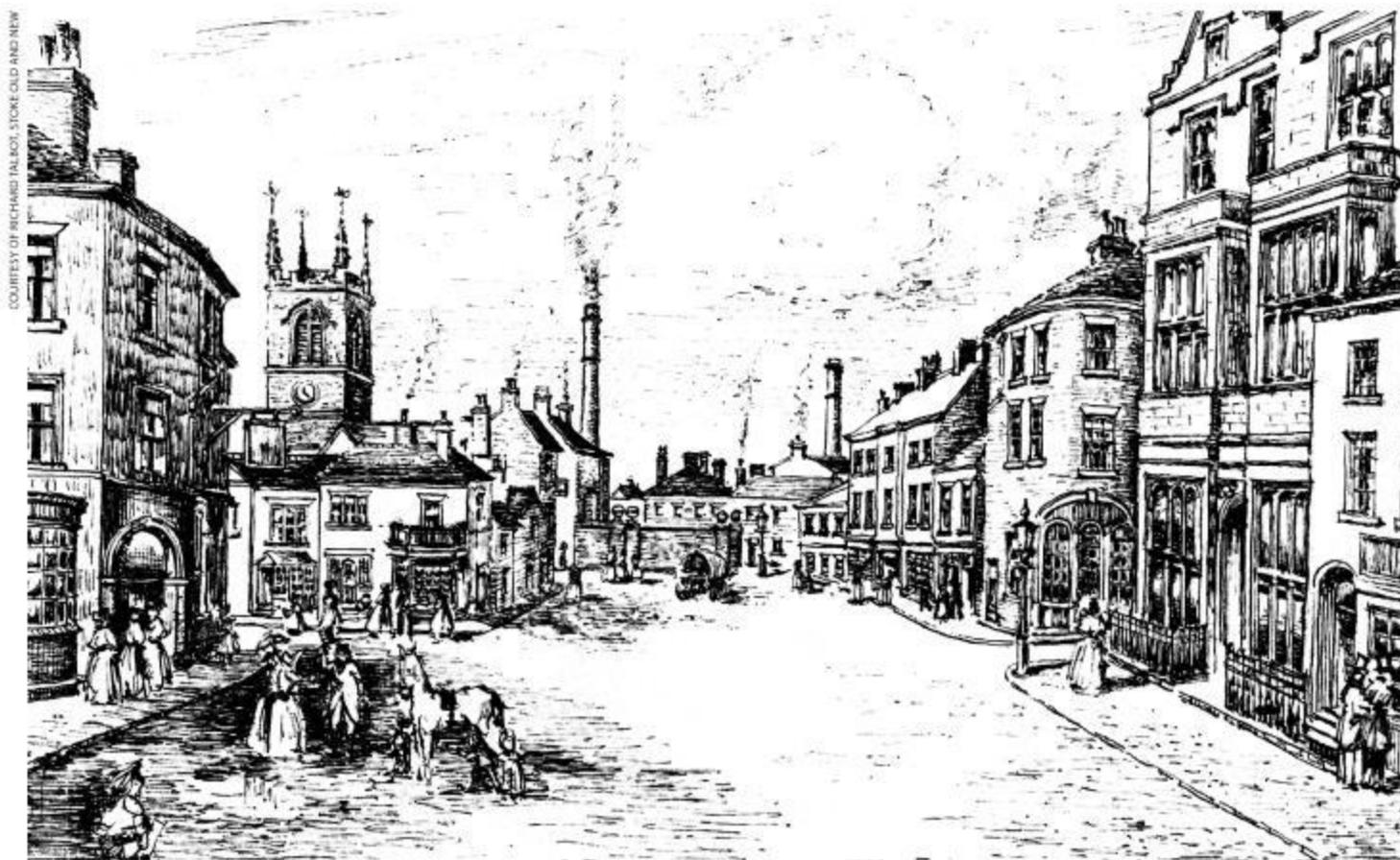
Then, he compared the future of England with that of America:

England . . . has had her day—her sun is setting. The . . . time will inevitably come . . . when England's commercial greatness, like the greatness of past empires, will be a mere fable of historical remembrance; a gilded dream of days long past . . . An empire is springing up in the West with facilities for commercial intercourse, and mineral powers for manufacturing operations,—unequaled by any other portion of the known globe . . . and whose free institutions offer an asylum to the oppressed classes of every other nation of the earth! The United States of America must and will become the most powerful nation of the globe.¹¹

One enthusiast, James Redfers, was so moved as to contribute heroic verse to the *Examiner*:

Thoughts on Going to America

1. Elated with hope, I contemplate a land,
Which oppression has never subdued;—
A People, who will not submit to the hand
Of a Ruler despotic and rude.
2. On whose mighty continent, liberty long
Her Ensign has widely unfurl'd;
Where Right has excluded injustice and wrong,
To the wonder and gaze of the world!
3. There, there I still hope, with the blessing of God
To find an assylum of Peace;—
A happy retreat from grim tyranny's rod,
And from bondage a lasting release.
4. But I know that regret will loud throb in my breast;
On leaving the land of my birth;
For sincerely I love her, most warmly and best
Of any the nations of earth.
5. Yet, why should I stay when my country no more
Can yield me employment or bread?
For this, I am seeking a far distant shore,
For all other prospects are fled.
6. And oft I shall I sigh, when I think of her fate,



Print of Hanley, England, depicting the commercial center of the Potteries in 1829. The Emigration Committee held regular monthly meetings in Hanley at the Talbot Inn.

When her Bulwarks no longer I view
 When I think of the knaves at the Helm of the state
 Who famish and butcher the Crew.¹²

Evans's ambitions were realized in May 1844 when the "Potters' Joint-Stock Emigration Society and Stock Savings Fund" was registered under an Act of Parliament.¹³ Evans was installed as agent and head of the Emigration Committee.¹⁴ The financing of the enterprise came from the purchasing of one pound shares (four U.S. dollars at that time) paid to the society in installments by employees in the pottery industry.¹⁵ In addition to individual potters, the union branches themselves, representing the separate trades within the industry, participated in buying shares. The strategy was to purchase twelve thousand acres of land in one of the western states of the North American Union and to settle the families of "British operative potters" there. Payment for the land was to be made in installments over a period of ten years.

As soon as the funds of the society were sufficient to pay for the first installment on the land, a lottery would take place among the shareholders to choose which of them should be

sent to America. All expenses would be paid.¹⁶ These included the sea passage for the settler and his family (wife and children under eighteen), twenty acres of land (five already cultivated), a log house, and access to the society store on credit. The recipient would be obliged to pay back these costs to the society in installments over ten years, which would amount to about thirty pounds altogether. Any union branch succeeding at the ballot would choose which one of its members should go. Any member with sufficient funds of his own would receive a land certificate and be entitled to leave England to claim his allotment across the Atlantic.

In the weeks immediately following the launch of the society, the *Examiner* reported a large number of individual shares being taken out while various union branches allotted funds for the purchase of collective shares.¹⁷ In November, a sudden threat of mechanization in the industry, which fortunately did not materialize, panicked many potters into boosting their contributions to the emigration scheme. However, a year after the founding of the society, the accumulation of funds was only sufficient to purchase four thousand acres in the United States.¹⁸ Although this fell short of the twelve thousand origi-



Present photo of the Etruria wharf on the Trent and Mersey Canal—the point of embarkation for the first group of Potters' Emigration Society settlers on April 6, 1847.

nally planned, the society decided to go ahead anyway and arrange to purchase land. Following a letter of invitation from Governor Dodge, the Emigration Committee decided to seek their land in Wisconsin.¹⁹

Three land officers were chosen to carry out this task: Hamlet Copeland, John Sawyer, and James Hammond.²⁰ The three were instructed to select suitable land, purchase it, and then divide it into allotments of twenty acres on which to build houses or log cabins in preparation for the arrival of the first settlers. The land officers departed from the Potteries in the first week of February 1846. Each was accompanied by his family since they were not to return. Arriving in New York on March 13, they set off for Milwaukee, where they deposited their wives and families before embarking on a four-hundred-mile journey of exploration. Travelling west as far as Columbia County, they found—several miles east of Fort Winnebago—what they decided was excellent government land for the settlement.²¹

Collecting their families in Milwaukee, they returned to the chosen site and built themselves a temporary shelter.²² Next they arranged to secure their property from a local government land office where each staked a claim for 160 acres of land. In July, they raised houses for themselves and then began the arduous task of transforming themselves from potters to farmers.²³ By the year's end, James Hammond was able to report that all three had sowed wheat on their land. John Sawyer's wife wrote home that they owned "a good log house, cow house, cow and calf, a fine sow pig which has brought us

seven young ones, a quantity of fowls . . . at the edge of a most beautiful Prairie."²⁴

The officers now turned their attention to the purchase of "Pottersville." This proved to be a frustrating experience. The Emigration Committee was agonizingly slow in sending out the necessary funds from England; in the meantime, other settlers were rapidly taking up the "good land."²⁵ And then, when the long-awaited draft for £600 was received, there was a further delay due to the problem of converting the draft into cash. Finally, the officers purchased 1,600 acres in Scott Township.²⁶ The Emigration Committee was now proposing to send out the first group of settlers.²⁷ The land officers promptly requested more funds in order to prepare for their arrival.²⁸

April 6, 1847, was a day of great excitement in the Potteries. The day of departure for the first group of emigrants leaving for Wisconsin had finally arrived. There were fourteen families, the heads of eight of them chosen to represent different union branches. The emigrants were loaded onto three boats at the Etruria canal wharf, flying flags emblazoned with the slogans "Away to Pottersville," "A Landed Home for All," and "A Twenty-acre Farm." An estimated crowd of twenty thousand people was assembled to see them off, together with emotional farewells and music from the Hanley Temperance Band. The band sailed on board with the emigrants for several miles and then disembarked, playing them a final "farewell tune" from a bridge over the canal. They continued on to Liverpool where they took ship for New York on April 13.²⁹

Arriving in New York on May 16, the party quickly traveled on to Milwaukee. There they were met by James Hammond, who conducted them to the settlement in Scott Township. On their arrival, they were greeted by an unpleasant surprise; only four houses had been erected; all of these were in unfinished condition with no land cleared.³⁰ The funds requested from the Emigration Committee had failed to arrive in time.³¹ The immigrants were obliged to set to work to build their own houses. Their main problem, however, was an acute shortage of basic food supplies. In his memoirs, Isaac Smith described the first winter: "for the space of nine days, we never saw bread of any description, and the only means of our subsistence was a few heads of wheat rubbed out with our hands, then boiled . . ."³² Meanwhile, the settlers looked for work. Benjamin Hopkins hoed corn for a neighboring farmer.³³ Henry Dooley and his wife lived with another farmer, both working for him during the winter months.³⁴

The following spring, the immigrants moved onto the twenty-acre lots assigned to them. The land "was in a wild state, in the midst of an unbroken forest." But they gradually cleared and cultivated it, sowed grain, and "learned to pick the wild berries and set their tables with meat from the abundant wild game."³⁵

The population of the tiny colony slowly increased, swelled by the winners of the society's lotteries, which were held in the

Potteries each month.³⁶ By the fall of 1848, the entire population was close to 150.³⁷ They were building more houses, and the society now had oxen, horses, cattle, wagons, ploughs, and even a school, but life was hard. The settlers were required to carry their grain twenty miles away to be ground, which took several weeks. They then had to haul it ninety miles to market in Milwaukee. Even so, conditions were improving. In 1849, a visitor who stayed overnight in Pottersville “was charmed with the comfortable appearance of [the] cottages, particularly the inside, which in each appeared to luxuriate in plenty and content.”³⁸

Less than a year after the departure of the first settlers, the Emigration Committee in England found itself in a financial crisis.³⁹ It had depleted the Potters’ Union funds to such an extent that the union could no longer sustain the enterprise. At this point, Evans demonstrated his powers of ingenuity. He realized there were other trades in other parts of the country that he might exploit in order to provide an opportunity to refinance the Emigration Society. A “special meeting” of the shareholders was held in May 1848 to “take into consideration of the propriety of opening up the society, hitherto confined to working potters, to the admission of other trades.”⁴⁰ With virtually no opposition, the proposition was discussed and accepted. So, for the time being at least, the viability of the society had been assured.

With the opening up of its membership to other trades, the society was transformed from a local, parochial project into a national enterprise. Evans himself now seemed to forsake his preoccupation with the welfare of the potters in favor of a newfound messianic belief that he was destined to lead an emigration movement for the whole country. He even went so far as to change the name of his newspaper to the *Potters’ Examiner and Emigrants’ Advocate*.⁴¹ Recruitment for new branches of the society was put into motion through meetings in the country’s major industrial

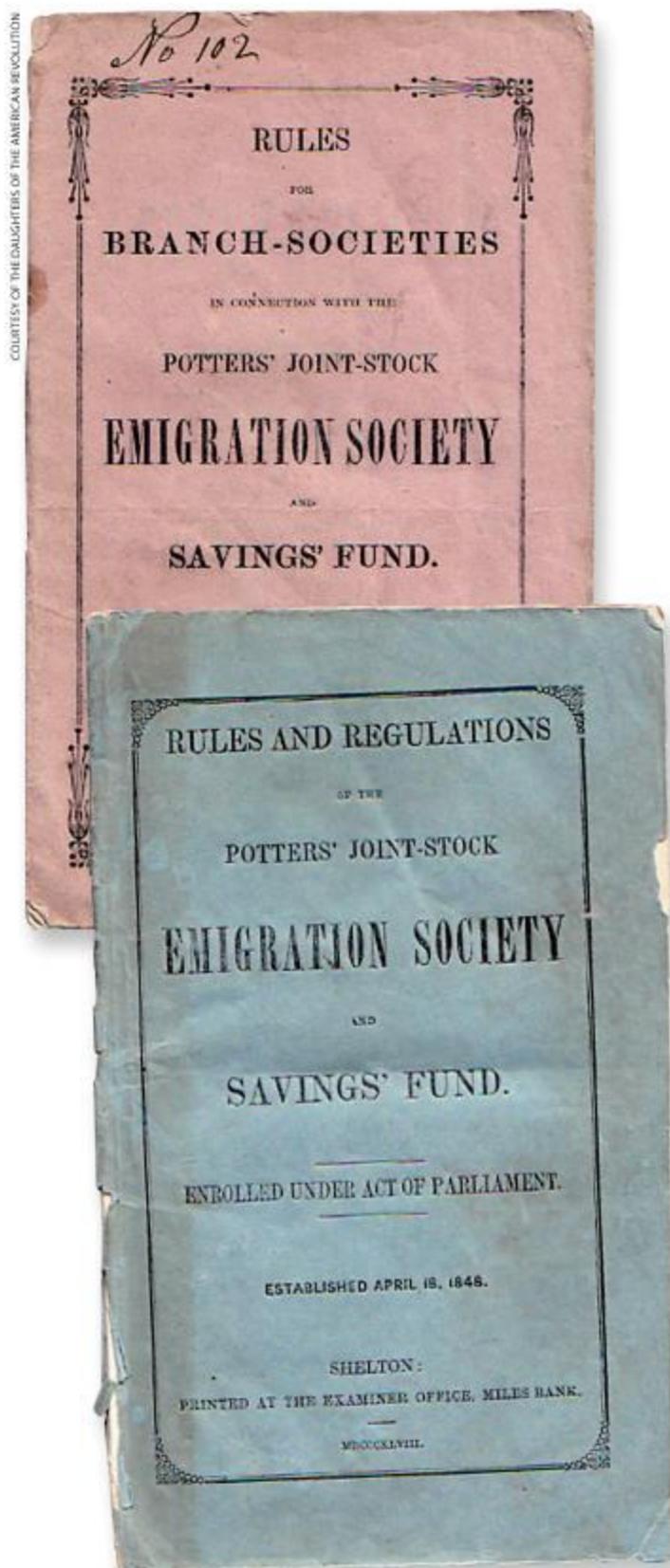


Market Day, Hanley, ca. 1908. The building in the background with awnings housed the indoor market hall where the Emigration Society conducted its lotteries to select emigrants to go to Wisconsin.

Fort Winnebago, 1831. Abandoned by the U.S. Army in 1845, it was used by some of the Emigration Society settlers as a temporary home before moving onto their farms. Apart from the surgeons’ quarters, the fort was completely destroyed by fire in 1856.



FORT WINNEBAGO IN 1831.
(PORTAGE CITY.)



Original copies of the Emigration Society's Rules and Regulations, left behind by an unknown settler at Fort Winnebago. They are currently located in the surgeons' quarters—all that remains of the building.

centers. By September, the Emigration Committee was claiming twenty-four agencies in different towns and cities; twelve months later there were no fewer than 105.⁴²

The extension of the society meant the lottery for a passage and land in Wisconsin was now no longer confined to the Potteries. On New Year's Day 1849, a ballot for six allotments was held at a meeting in the Manchester Free Trade Hall that attracted some two thousand people. One of the winners was William Scholes, a cotton mill worker from Oldham in Lancashire. He was "thankful that ever I heard" of the Potters' Emigration Society, and grateful for the chance it gave him to escape "the stinking factory."⁴³

In the spring of 1849, the Emigration Committee sent a new manager, Thomas Twigg, to administer the Wisconsin colony.⁴⁴ Arriving in April, he turned his attention to adding a second settlement.⁴⁵ The location he chose was in the wilderness north of Fort Winnebago, which Isaac Smith and William Mountford, another settler from the Potteries, had previously explored.⁴⁶ In a meeting with the new state governor, Nelson Dewey, Twigg was allocated a site of fifty thousand acres for his settlement, which he named "Emancipation Ferry."⁴⁷ Unlike Pottersville, however, the land was not purchased. It was so-called Indian land, owned by the native people and, as such, due to be transferred to federal government ownership in the fall of 1850.⁴⁸ It was then to be surveyed and sold to the settlers. Those who had already settled on the land would, by custom, be given preference.

Twigg established a base on the Fox River, on the borderline between Columbia and Marquette counties. Here, he opened a store to supply the settlers. Furnished with a smithy and a ferry to carry supplies across the river, the location became known as "Twigg's Landing."⁴⁹

Two of the earliest settlers at Emancipation Ferry were William Scholes and William Mountford. Scholes wrote home enthusiastically that he had thirty-five acres of "first-rate" ploughing land and six acres of marshland for cattle.⁵⁰ Mountford wrote of his land, "I still like this country so much, that I would not go back [to England] if anyone would pay my expenses . . ."⁵¹ Martin Ellison, a calico printer from Preston, wrote to his family two weeks after his arrival at the end of July. He reported "about 60 houses built, inhabited by nearly one hundred families; the society have twenty-eight oxen, three horses, wagons, ploughs, harrows etc. and a smithy; two stores, plenty of corn, etc; a draw bridge, a boat, and a canoe."⁵²

With Twigg barely settled into his mission in Wisconsin, Evans made a curious decision. From its very beginning, the emigration scheme had been attacked by boisterous opponents. To them, it was considered either a waste of union funds or unpatriotic, or simply doomed to fail.⁵³ To deal with these critics, Evans now decided to recall Twigg to provide them with firsthand evidence of the success of the Wisconsin colony.

Arriving in Liverpool in late November, Twigg embarked

on a nine week tour of England and Scotland.⁵⁴ Accompanied by Evans, he visited all of the country's industrial centers. There he delivered lectures describing the life and progress of the society's settlements to enthusiastic audiences.⁵⁵ However, the benefits of Evans' promotion came at a cost—not only the wasteful financial expense of the tour, but also the absence of Twigg's leadership in Wisconsin at a critical time.

While Twigg was away, the management of the colony was left in the hands of his deputy, Peter Watkin. In his first report, Watkin wrote to the society that "our general health is good, things are going on comfortably."⁵⁶ Shortly afterward, however, he admitted ominously that they had been "a little pinched" through the winter and he was obliged to spend "rather high" for some things but "for the necessaries, we have been alright."⁵⁷

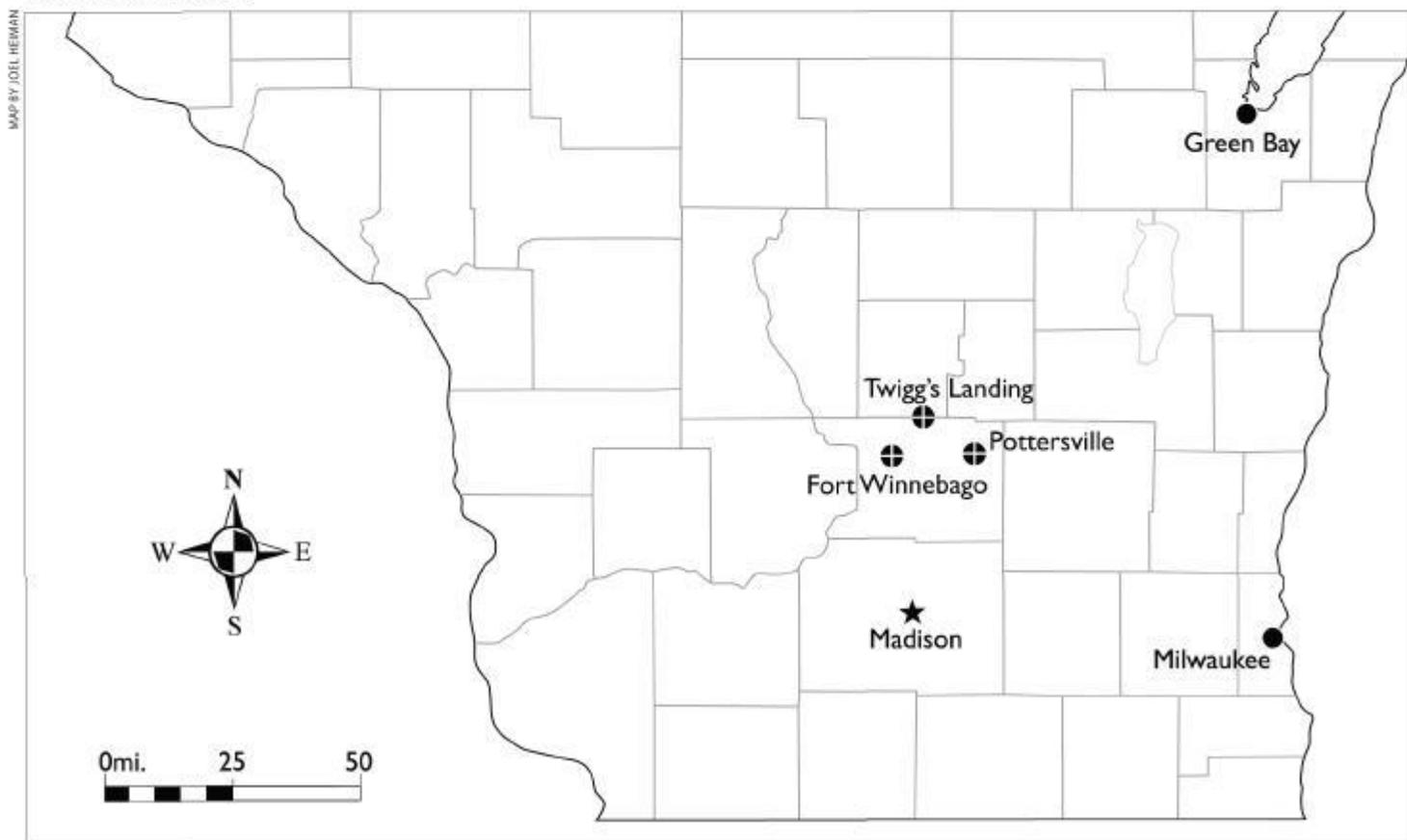
When Thomas Twigg boarded ship for his return journey to the United States, he was accompanied by George W. Robinson, who was engaged to act as secretary and bookkeeper for the colony in Wisconsin. They arrived at Emancipation Ferry at the end of April 1850. It was not a happy return. The well-ordered colony Twigg had left behind the previous October was in a troubled state. Settlers were arriving in large numbers and, having paid for their passage and land, were now demanding immediate possession. They were also seeking

credit at the stores, but the stores had been depleted and the funds needed to restock them were wanting.⁵⁸

Another passenger on the ship was Bold Hilton. Emigrating at his own expense, he gave a highly critical account of his experiences in a letter to the *Manchester Examiner*. On his arrival at Twigg's Landing, he found the store practically empty. He wrote that he was given "some bread, with a little pork, and some coffee without sugar." The land at Emancipation Ferry showed "no sign of cultivation," and for possession of his own allotment, he was advised vaguely "to go about twelve miles further back and there . . . should find good land." Describing the condition of some of the other settlers, he continued: "Brother members, - I saw women crying, men wandering about in a state of utter bewilderment, many with not one cent in their pockets, not knowing where to apply to for work, as there was nothing to do for the society except chopping firewood or splitting rails . . . There are hundreds seeking employment who can find none, and, taken altogether, it is one of the most miserable places that man ever existed in."⁵⁹

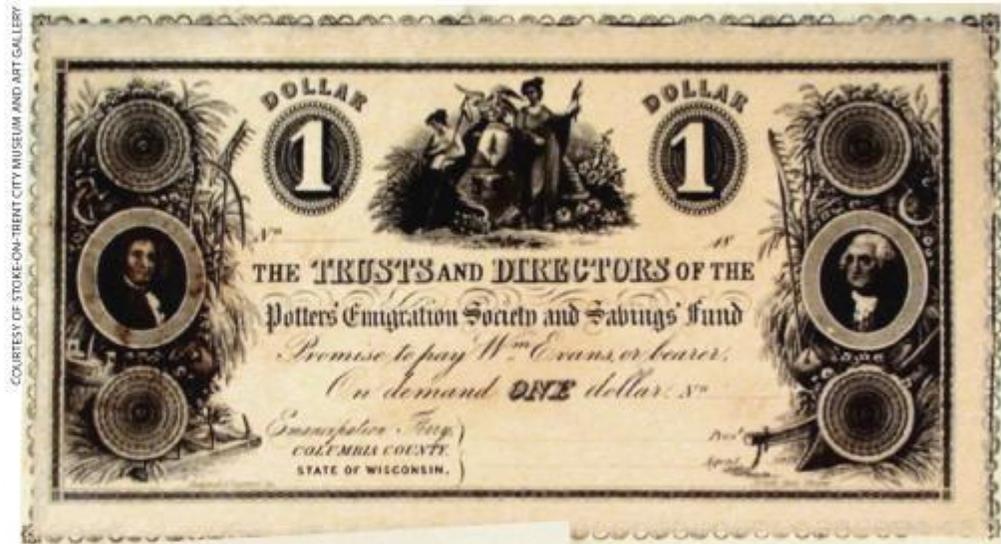
Hilton's letter was accompanied by a rush of complaints from other settlers. One likened the store to "an Indian wigwam" with trees piled on each other like a "rag and bone" shop, and that "on the shelves [were] a few cotton balls, a few bunches of matches, and a little thread, about two bags of flour,

Settlement sites in 1849



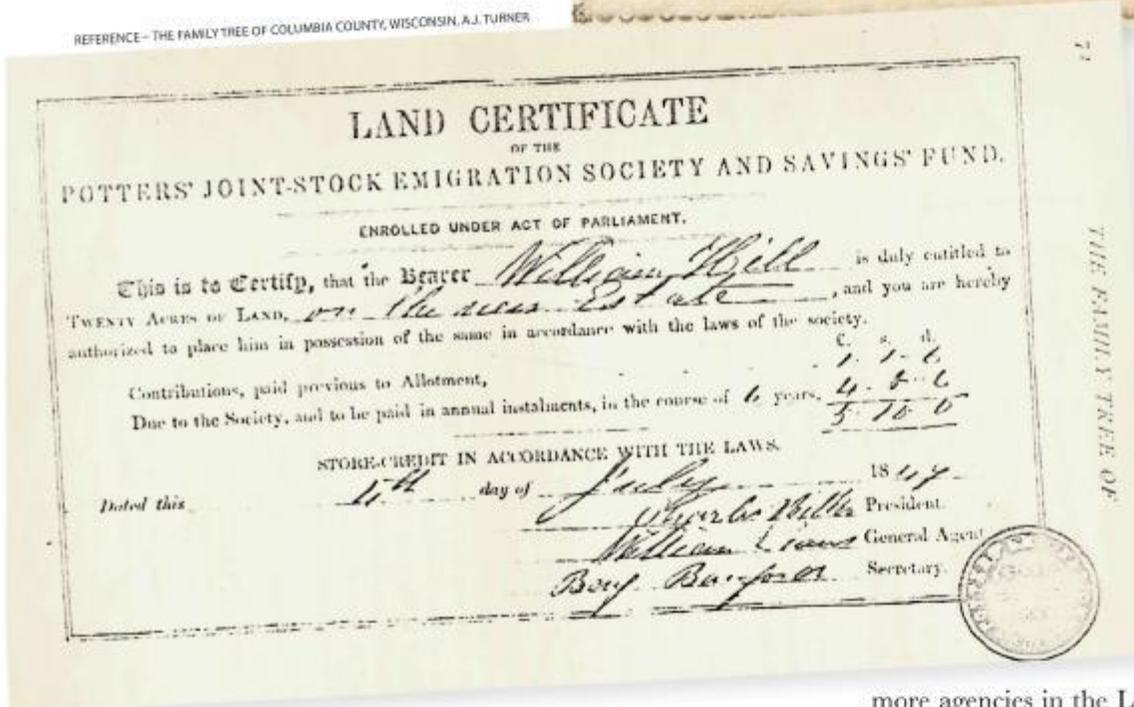
A "dollar" note printed by the Emigration Society. The currency was intended for payment to the settlers who worked on the Society estate and for their exclusive use at the Society store to pay for goods at a preferential rate.

Land Certificate issued by the Emigration Society to one of its settlers, William Hill, entitling him his allotment in Wisconsin. The document is signed by William Evans who began the Society.



COURTESY OF STOKES-ON-TRENT CITY MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

REFERENCE - THE FAMILY TREE OF COLUMBIA COUNTY, WISCONSIN, A.J. TURNER



THE FAMILY TREE OF

by placing the blame on the agencies. He reproached them for sending out too many settlers, many of whom had run up large amounts of credit from the society and then absconded with their debts elsewhere.⁶⁶ This argument probably did little to soothe the strained relationship that now developed between Evans and some of the agencies. In particular, he clashed with J. A. Hay, the secretary of the London district. Hay campaigned to have the Emigration Society offices moved from the Potteries to London.⁶⁷ Unfortunately for Evans, Hay represented ten or

more agencies in the London area and therefore carried significant weight.

As a result, Evans was forced to bow under pressure, and in early October 1850, he "respectfully" published a notice in the *Potters' Examiner* seeking the opinion of the agencies on the proposition that "the Executive be removed to London and there [be] governed by the shareholders."⁶⁸ In the end it was all for nothing since the Potters' Emigration Society was already doomed.

On June 5, 1850, a group of the society's settlers held a meeting at Fort Winnebago where they drew up a petition addressed "to the people of Great Britain." It included a long list of grievances dealing with conditions at Emancipation Ferry: "We find the land to be at present in the possession of the Indians, and . . . therefore that all settlers are considered as trespassers. The greater part of the land is sandy or wet marsh land, and in the opinion of many practical men very unsuit-

and a few potatoes, and some little pork at 10d. [pence] per lb., and very bad at that price."⁶⁰ The lack of work was also highlighted: "Owing to the great influx of poor emigrants, there cannot be work got in this part of America - there have been dozens who have had to sell their all . . . that they might not starve."⁶¹ There were complaints that the settlers were being overcharged at the store.⁶² There were stories of some settlers jumping claims by squatting on others' lands.⁶³ In addition, there were charges of favoritism and corruption among the colony's officials.⁶⁴

One settler from Kirkaldy in Scotland arrived at Emancipation Ferry to be told "that there was no land for him." His assessment: "it is a mistake to call it Emancipation Ferry . . . it should be called 'Desolation Ferry,' and all belonging to it."⁶⁵

Faced with these complaints, Evans tried to defend himself

able for farming. Employment cannot be got for many miles round . . . numbers [of settlers] have been obliged to leave and wander through the country homeless and penniless, and have in some cases died, leaving families without support. The stores (so called) seldom contain even the common necessities of life." The settlers called for the British public to thoroughly investigate the society.⁶⁹

The petition was printed in the local newspaper, the *Fort Winnebago River Times*. Two months later, it was reproduced in several English newspapers, though not in the *Potters' Examiner*. George W. Robinson attributed the society's now-failing revenues and decreasing supply of funds to the publication of the petition and the settlers' letters, which painted such a dismal portrait of the colony. In a discouraging report, he described how goods that had been purchased for the colony were sacrificed to repay "importunate" creditors. He complained of the constant daily influx of new immigrants when there were "already 300 on hand to feed for subsistence." The harvest had been a failure due to bad weather, and provisions were at a "famine price." "We have had no funds to buy sufficient food for those who are entitled to it . . . what many will do this winter . . . I do not know, but the consequences I deem fearful."⁷⁰ The auditors at Emancipation Ferry reported on September 1 that, "In placing before you the result of this month's audit you will readily perceive very little improvement in our finances . . . which is nearly exhausted."⁷¹

Plagued by mounting debts and the declining income, Twigg "contracted a debt" (presumably credit for goods he bought) of two thousand dollars with Michael Keegan, owner of a local provisions store. As security, Twigg gave a judgment note to Keegan. On October 3, one day before the note was due, Keegan filed against Twigg, as "agent of the Potters' Emigration Society," in Columbia County Court for a sum of \$2,025.⁷² On October 4, the county sheriff announced that he had seized the "goods and chattles" of the society in favor of Michael Keegan. In addition, seven hundred acres of the land belonging to the society had also been seized. All was to be sold by public auction.⁷³

Following the seizure of the Pottersville estate, the settlers turned to a local law firm for assistance.⁷⁴ They managed to hold off the sale of the property for several months, but eventually part of it was sold. How much is not clear. One of the buyers was none other than Michael Keegan.⁷⁵ Strangely, however, the deeds of ownership of Pottersville were retained by the Potters' Emigration Society in the vaults of a bank in Staffordshire, England.⁷⁶

This curious situation was resolved in November 1852. The deeds to the property were returned to Wisconsin by the society trustees in England, who advised that they were "minded and desirous of selling and disposing of said [Pottersville] lands . . . and of finally winding up the affairs of the said Potters' Emigration Society . . ."⁷⁷ They appointed Peter Watkin, James

Thomas, and Henry Dooley with the power of attorney to carry out the task. The newly appointed attorneys duly sold the estate allotments back to the settlers, many of whom had remained on their land throughout. At the same time, Michael Keegan sold back the properties he had acquired to other settlers.⁷⁸

The settlers at Emancipation Ferry found themselves in a very different situation to that of their counterparts in Pottersville when the colony failed. The land on which they had settled was part of the fifty thousand acres Twigg had originally been allocated by Governor Dewey. Since this was "Indian land," the settlers had to wait for it to be transferred to the federal government so that it could be surveyed before they could stake their claims for ownership. The settlers walked on foot some ninety miles to the government land office at Menasha to purchase their lots in 1852.⁷⁹ But not all of the settlers acquired their land in this way. At least two of them, William Mountford and Isaac Smith, bought land in Moundville from veterans of the War of 1812 to whom it had been awarded as bounty in reward for their military service.⁸⁰

Reverend Isaac Smith and his wife, Sarah, undated



COURTESY OF FRANK SPRUIN, PLACES AND FACES, VOLUME I

WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

Abstract

NAME OF INSTRUMENT	DATE OF INSTRUMENT			ACKNOWLEDGMENT			WHERE RECORD		
	Month	Day	Year	Month	Day	Year	Vol.	Pa.	
United States to John Pearson									
Entry.									
DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY:							Sec.	Town	R.
The E 1/2 of NW 1/4							28	14	
was entered from the U. S. Government by John Pearson, on Nov. 6, 1852, as appears by tract Index at page 176 Marquette County records.									
DATE OF FILING FOR RECORD:									
Month	Day	Year	Consideration						

Government land certificate issued at Menasha, in 1852, to John Pearson for the purchase of his allotment in Moundville. The land later came into the possession of the William Mountford family.

Twigg's Landing. Viewed from the opposite side of the Fox River.



The failure of the Potters' Emigration Society was a disaster for a great many people. Of the settlers in Wisconsin, some returned to the British Isles while others went to find work and settle elsewhere in the United States. But there were also those who remained to work and put down roots. Some achieved prosperity, eventually becoming prominent members of the community. John Sawyer and Henry Dooley, for example, went on to become successful farmers.⁸¹ But not so an unhappy Benjamin Hopkins. Unable to adapt to life as a farmer, he eventually found solace in his Baptist church and organized a Good Templars Lodge.⁸² Isaac Smith became a popular Sunday preacher in Moundville and served as justice of the peace, town chairman, coroner, and local magistrate.⁸³ George W. Robinson became prominent in local government. He served first as the public notary for Moundville and later was appointed clerk of the Marquette County Circuit Court.⁸⁴

William Scholes enlisted in the Union army in the Civil War and died at Vicksburg.⁸⁵ William Mountford lost two sons-in-law in the war.⁸⁶ Martin Ellison served with his two sons in the Union army and eventually became clerk for Marquette

County.⁸⁷ The unfortunate Thomas Twigg, condemned by his fellow settlers and stricken with silicosis he inherited from his days as a potter, barely outlived his colony. He died in early March 1851 and was buried at Twigg's Landing.⁸⁸

In England, Evans's newspaper folded along with the Emigration Society. Although the society had been a disaster for so many of the potters, Evans continued, defiant and unrepentant to the end, claiming that "this great, good, and benevolent movement was destroyed by selfish and designing men, bringing the founder and his family to absolute ruin."⁸⁹ He left the Potteries and died in obscurity in Lancashire in 1887.⁹⁰ Today he is an all-but-forgotten figure in history, except for the legacy he left in the thousands of descendants of the Potters' Emigration Society settlers who are today scattered all over the United States. ❧

Notes

1. Historical census data is available at www.census.gov. For 1800 census numbers, see http://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/fast_facts/1800_fast_facts.html; for 1850 census numbers, see http://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/fast_facts/1850_fast_facts.html.
2. Paul Johnson, *A History of the American People* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 242.
3. Alice E. Smith, *From Exploration to Statehood*, vol. 1 in *The History of Wisconsin*, ed. William Fletcher Thompson (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1973), 490.
4. J. F. C. Harrison, *Robert Owen and the Owenites in Britain and America: The Quest for the New Moral World* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1969), 174–75.
5. W. H. Warburton, *The History of Trade Union Organisation in the North Staffordshire Potteries* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1931), 104.
6. Frank Burchill and Richard Ross, *A History of the Potters' Union* (Stoke-on-Trent: Ceramic and Allied Trades Union, 1977), 83.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Potters' Examiner and Workman's Advocate* 1, no. 10 (February 3, 1844): 75.
9. *Ibid.*, 1, no. 13 (February 24, 1844): 102.
10. *Ibid.*, 1, no. 10 (February 3, 1844): 75.
11. *Ibid.*, 1, no. 14 (March 2, 1844): 105.
12. *Ibid.*, 1, no. 17 (March 23, 1844): 136.
13. Harold Owen, *The Staffordshire Potter* (London: Grant Richards, 1901), 72–73.
14. Burchill and Ross, *History of the Potters' Union*, 85.
15. *Ibid.*, 86.
16. *Manchester Examiner*, July 22, 1848, 2.
17. Burchill and Ross, *History of the Potters' Union*, 86.
18. Owen, *Staffordshire Potter*, 79.
19. *Potters' Examiner and Workman's Advocate* 3, no. 5 [December 28?] 1844): 136.
20. Burchill and Ross, *History of the Potters' Union*, 89.
21. *Potters' Examiner and Workman's Advocate* 6, no. 2 (July 11, 1846): 9.
22. *Ibid.*, 6, no. 8 (August 22, 1846): 58.
23. *Ibid.*, 6, no. 26 (December 26, 1846): 201–2.
24. *Ibid.*, 7, no. 3 (March 27, 1847): 99.
25. *Ibid.*, 6, no. 26 (December 26, 1846): 201–2.
26. *Ibid.*, 7, no. 3 (March 27, 1847): 98.
27. *Ibid.*, 6, no. 20 (November 14, 1846): 154.
28. *Ibid.*, 7, no. 27 (July 3, 1847): 212.
29. *Ibid.*, 7, no. 10 (April 17, 1847): 123–24.
30. James E. Jones, *History of Columbia County*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Lewis, 1914), 85.
31. Andrew Jackson Turner, *The Family Tree of Columbia County, Wisconsin* (Portage, WI: Press of the Wisconsin State Register, 1904), 71.
32. Isaac Smith, "Early Days in Columbia County—Potters' Emigration Society," *Portage Daily Register*, 1878.
33. Walter Sawyer Hopkins and Andrew Winkle Hopkins, *The Richard and Harriet Hopkins Family: Empire Prairie Pioneers: An Account of the Long Trek from Pottery to Farming* (Denver: Big Mountain Press, 1963), 22.
34. Carole Dooley Strong, *A Strong Family Tree* (Columbus, WI: Town and Country Printers, 1993), 101.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Staffordshire Advertiser*, May 29, 1847, 4.
37. Strong, *A Strong Family Tree*, 101.
38. *Staffordshire Advertiser*, August 18, 1849, 3.
39. Owen, *Staffordshire Potter*, 99–100.
40. *Staffordshire Advertiser*, May 20, 1848, 5.
41. Burchill and Ross, *History of the Potters' Union*, 83.
42. *Potters' Examiner and Emigrants' Advocate* 9, no. 67 (n.d.): 537.
43. *Ibid.*, 9, no. 74 (n.d.): 587–88.
44. Burchill and Ross, *History of the Potters' Union*, 91.
45. *Potters' Examiner and Emigrants' Advocate* 9, no. 63 (n.d.): 505.
46. *Montello (WI) Express*, May 27, 1876.
47. *Potters' Examiner and Emigrants' Advocate* 9, no. 78 (n.d.): 624.
48. *Ibid.*, 9, no. 95 (n.d.): 759.
49. Jones, *History of Columbia County*, 86.
50. *Potters' Examiner and Emigrants' Advocate* 9, no. 74 (n.d.): 587–88.
51. *Ibid.*, 10, no. 7 (n.d.): 49–50.
52. *Manchester Examiner*, November 10, 1849, 3.
53. Warburton, *Trade Union Organisation*, 135–36.
54. *Potters' Examiner and Emigrants' Advocate* 9, no. 76 (n.d.): 606.
55. *Ibid.*, 9, no. 78 (n.d.): 619.
56. *Ibid.*, 9, no. 90 (n.d.): 716.
57. *Ibid.*, 717.
58. *Ibid.*, 9, no. 95 (n.d.): 755; *Ibid.*, 10, no. 5 (n.d.): 33.
59. *Manchester Examiner*, July 30, 1850; reprinted in *Potters' Examiner and Emigrants' Advocate* 10, no. 5 (n.d.): 34–35.
60. *Ibid.*, 33.
61. *Staffordshire Advertiser*, September 14, 1850.
62. *Northern Star* (Leeds), April 13, 1850.
63. *Staffordshire Advertiser*, June 29, 1850.
64. *Manchester Examiner*, August 17, 1850, 4.
65. *Potters' Examiner and Emigrants' Advocate* 10, no. 6 (n.d.): 42.
66. *Ibid.*, 41; *Ibid.*, 10, no. 11 (n.d.): 81.
67. *Ibid.*, 10, no. 16 (n.d.): 128.
68. *Ibid.*
69. *Fort Winnebago River Times*, July 4, 1850, 3.
70. *Potters' Examiner and Emigrants' Advocate* 10, no. 14 (n.d.): 107.
71. *Ibid.*, 10, no. 16 (n.d.): 122.
72. *Fort Winnebago River Times*, November 4, 1850, 3.
73. *Ibid.*, 2.
74. *Ibid.*, 3.
75. *Ibid.*, 2; M. R. Keegan to John Hammond, Purchase of (Pottersville) land at Sheriff's sale, July 25, 1851. Reported August 1, 1853, Columbia County Court records, Portage, WI.
76. *Potters' Examiner and Emigrants' Advocate* 10, no. 16 (n.d.): 128.
77. Pottersville deeds from Johnson and Adams to Watkin, Thomas, and Dooley, Columbia County Court records.
78. M. R. Keegan to John Hammond, Purchase of (Pottersville) land at Sheriff's sale, July 25, 1851. Reported August 1, 1853, Columbia County Court records, Portage, WI; M. R. Keegan to John Hodgkinson, Sale of (Pottersville) land to John Hodgkinson by Michael R. Keegan, dated July 21, 1853, Columbia County Court records, Portage, WI.
79. "The Story of Mountville 1849–1922," contributed by Mrs. Mary Ann Miller, descendant of Benjamin Hopkins, from an original document by Mildred Jones Bennett, "Given to Harriet Hopkins from Mrs. Stanley, President Columbia County Historical Society."
80. Richard Fusik, Old Military and Civil Records, National Archives and Records Administration, personal communication with author, November 14, 2005.
81. *Pardeeville (WI) Crank*, February 24, 1899; Strong, *A Strong Family Tree*, 102.
82. Hopkins and Hopkins, *Hopkins Family*, 22.
83. Fran Sprain, *Places and Faces in Marquette County, Wis.*, vol.1 (Westfield, WI: Isabella Press, 1991), 81.
84. Jennifer Bumann, archives assistant, University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh, personal communication with author, December 4, 2003.
85. Scholes Family of Oldham, Lancs. and Marquette County, contributed by Harold Henderson; Wisconsin Office of the Adjutant General, *Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers, War of the Rebellion, 1861–1865*, vol. 1 (Madison: Democrat Printing, 1886), 67, <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/roster>.
86. Mountford's sons-in-law were Charles Townley and John Peake; Wisconsin Office of the Adjutant General, *Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers, War of the Rebellion, 1861–1865*, vol. 2 (Madison: Democrat Printing, 1886), 239, 607, <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/roster> (based on interview from Marianne Morrison).
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88. Pottersville deeds from Johnson and Adams to Watkin, Thomas, and Dooley, Columbia County Court records.
89. Evans's commentary accompanies a copy of a Potters' Joint-Stock Emigration Society "dollar" note, The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent.
90. Burchill and Ross, *History of the Potters' Union*, 95.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



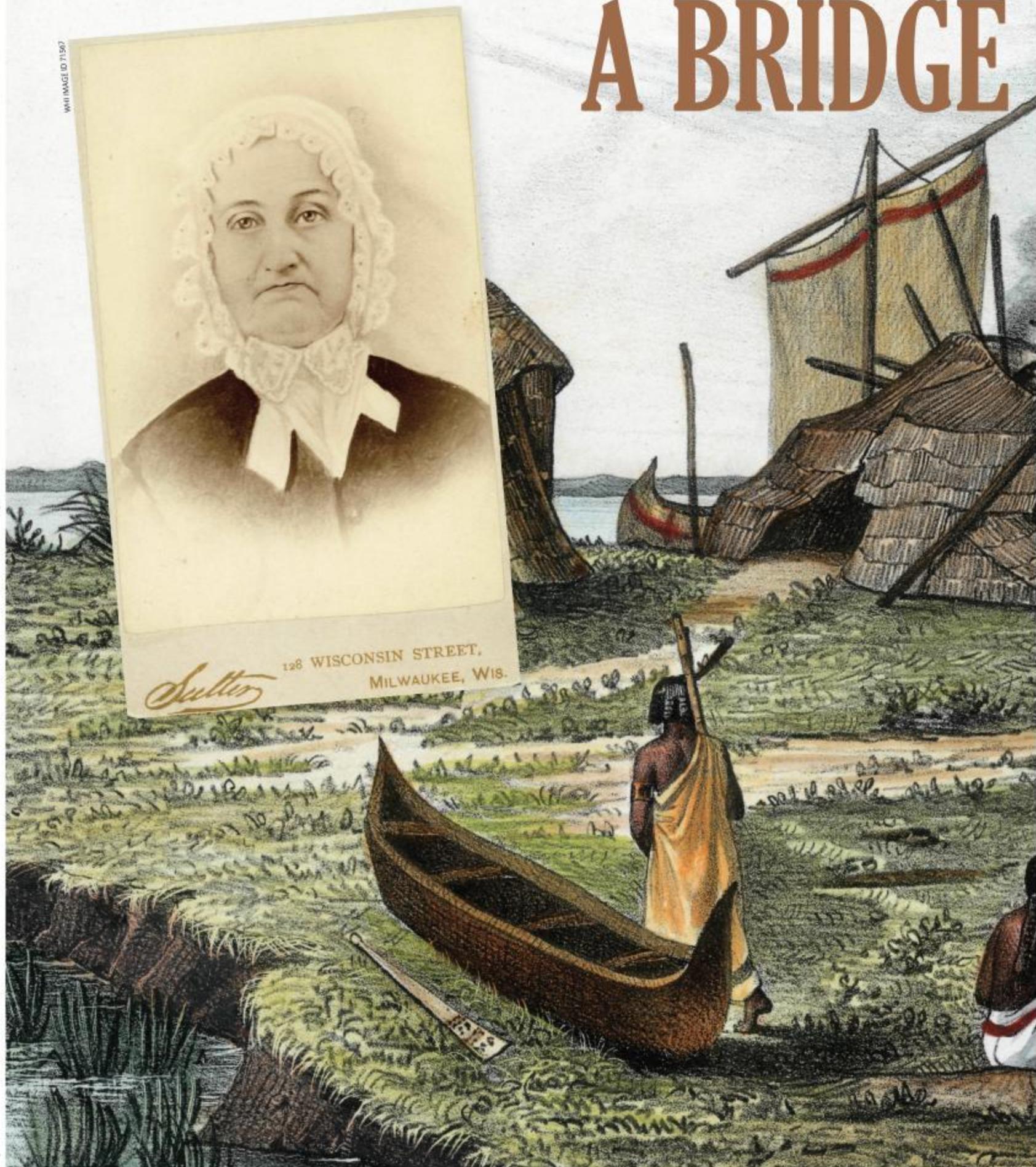
Roger Bentley is a retired scientist who lives in Montreal. He was born and raised in the "Potteries" district of North Staffordshire in England and emigrated to Canada in 1964. He first heard of the Potters' Emigration Society during a BBC broadcast in the early 1960s. Intrigued to learn of a mid-nineteenth century

scheme to send unemployed English potters to America to found their own colony, he began researching the virtually unknown history of this remarkable Society. His trail of investigation eventually took him to Wisconsin where he was able to locate and meet descendants of the Society's original emigrants.

Rosalie Dousman's mixed heritage allowed her to serve as a bridge between the Ojibwe tribe of her grandmother and the Euro-American culture of her French Canadian father.

A BRIDGE

WU IMAGE ID 71567



BETWEEN CULTURES

ROSALIE LABORDE DOUSMAN'S INDIAN SCHOOL

BY ANNE BEISER ALLEN



This work of art, ca. 1842, depicts the Menominee Villiage of Folle-Avoines near present-day Green Bay.

WHL IMAGE ID 6049

In 1869, seventy-three-year-old Rosalie Dousman tendered her resignation as head of a school for Menominee children to the young army officer who had been appointed Indian agent at Keshena. A French Canadian woman with an Ojibwe grandmother and a German American husband, she had spent much of her life straddling cultures. For the past twenty-six years, she had taught English language and American traditions on the reservation, working to enable her students to communicate with the new Euro-American society that had taken over their homeland. She acted as unofficial interpreter for the priests who ran the Catholic mission and for the agents who connected the tribe with the U.S. government in Washington. The Menominee called her "Mother."

Rosalie LaBorde was born on Mackinac Island, the great fur-trading emporium at the juncture of Lakes Michigan and Superior, on February 1, 1796, the oldest of six children. Her mother, Marguerite Chevalier, was the daughter of Luc Chevalier and an unnamed Ojibwe woman. Her father, Jean Baptiste LaBorde, piloted a schooner called the *Mink* for the Northwest Fur Company, sailing between Lake Huron and Green Bay with supplies of food, cattle, horses, hogs, cloth, gunpowder, and trade goods to sell to the forts and local communities along the shores of the lakes. Rosalie's paternal grandfather, who was nicknamed Machar, fought with Charles Langlade against General Braddock in Pennsylvania in 1755.¹

When she was about ten years old, Rosalie's family sent her to the convent school run by the Ursuline sisters in Trois-Rivières, an important center of the fur trade on the St. Lawrence halfway between Montreal and Quebec.² For over a hundred years, the Ursuline nuns had dedicated themselves to teaching literacy and Christianity to the children of the area's natives and the French-Canadian mixed-bloods, or *métis*. Rosalie appears to have been a diligent student.

Returning to Michilimackinac, she married John Dousman in March 1808. John had come from Pennsylvania to upper Michigan a few years earlier to join his older brother McKail, who was engaged in the fur trade. The civil marriage was performed by Samuel Abbott, the local justice of the peace.³ John was twenty-two; Rosalie only twelve.

In 1810, the young couple moved to Green Bay, where John had acquired a tract of land up the Fox River near the abandoned Jesuit mission at De Pere. John was the only American in the community of some 250 souls in the Green Bay area. He built a distillery, a grist mill, and a sawmill on his farm and did a little fur trading on the side in cooperation with his brother. On June 17, 1812, their daughter Jane was born.⁴

Several weeks later, word arrived that England and America were at war. A group of Menominee, on their way east to join the British army, were informed by local traders jealous of Dousman's success that an American was living in the area. Eager to show their allegiance to England by killing the enemy, the Indians attacked the Dousman house. John was warned of

his danger by a minor Menominee chief known as the Rubber who helped him escape to Mackinac by canoe.⁵

It was assumed that Rosalie, with her Ojibwe ancestry, would be safe. The Indians ransacked her home, burning the buildings and killing the cattle, but they did not harm her. However, some of them decided that they ought to kill the baby as a substitute for its father. Rosalie hid the child for several days with a servant girl in the cellar of the house where they had taken refuge. At one point, the Indians came into the house, searched it, and danced over the place where the child was hidden, but they never found her and finally went away. Rosalie left Green Bay soon afterward and joined John at Mackinac.⁶

John Dousman served with the American army during the war, being briefly captured by the British and released when the Americans retook Mackinac. Rosalie accompanied him to Detroit, where she tended the wounded.

When the war ended, the Dousmans returned to Mackinac, where John became a sutler at Fort Mackinac. Over the next decade, they had five additional children: Marie Anne (1815), John Pierre (1816), Harriet (1818), George (1820), and Catherine (1822). John enjoyed hobnobbing with the officers at the fort and served for a time as an associate justice of the peace. He joined the Catholic Church in 1821, and he and Rosalie had their marriage affirmed by Father Gabriel Richard soon afterward. But John's business acumen was not as extensive as his extravagance, and he was unable to set any money aside for the future. When his health began to fail, his estate rapidly dwindled.⁷

In 1824, the Dousmans returned to Green Bay. With the establishment of Fort Howard in 1816 and the organization of Brown County in October 1818 by the governor of the Michigan Territory, under whose jurisdiction the area fell, the Green Bay settlement had grown rapidly. By 1824, five hundred people lived in the area, including the soldiers at the fort, the original French Canadian settlers, who lived in small farms lining the banks of the Fox River, and a small but increasing English-speaking American settlement known as Shantytown. Some 4,800 Indians lived nearby. Most of them were Menominee, but in 1822 several small communities of Oneida, Stockbridge-Munsee, and Brothertons had moved to the area from New York, settling on land purchased from the Menominee.⁸

Rosalie was pregnant again when John Dousman died in June 1825 at the age of thirty-nine. Her daughter Elizabeth was born early in 1826. Although the thirty-year-old widow was left with seven young children to support, she was not without resources. In 1826, she purchased an eighty-acre tract of farmland in Bellevue. Her brothers Jean Baptiste, Alexander, and Luke LaBorde all lived in Green Bay, and her widowed mother, Marguerite, had come from Mackinac in 1824. The LaBordes were cousins of the Grignon family, prominent members of the Green Bay community, and Rosalie's brother-

WHI IMAGE ID 2787



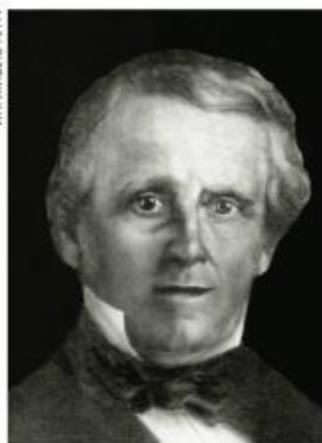
In the mid-1800s Father Samuel Mazzuchelli was put in charge of the Mackinac parish. He created an education fund that led to the formation of a school in Keshena run by Father Van den Broek.

in-law Michael Dousman was a wealthy trader with offices at Mackinac and Chicago.⁹

The French-speaking community at Green Bay was deeply religious, although they had no resident priest. In 1823, they built a simple log church on the east side of the Fox River, and Father Vincent Badin came twice a year from his Potawatomi mission at St. Joseph, Michigan, spending two weeks instructing the Green Bay children in their catechism. Father Badin appointed John Fauvel, a layman, as a teacher for the little Catholic community and authorized him to hold simple prayer services at the church. Fauvel's zeal soon got him into trouble; he accidentally burned down the church, then fell out with the church hierarchy by singing mass, which he was not authorized to do, and leading processions on holy days.¹⁰

In 1830, Father Samuel Mazzuchelli, newly appointed pastor of the Mackinac parish, which included Green Bay, arrived on a visit. Mazzuchelli ordered Fauvel to leave and began negotiations with the Catholic community to build a new church and school named for St. John the Evangelist. He returned the following year with his superior, Bishop Edward

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Wealthy Chicago trader Michael Dousman was also Rosalie Dousman's brother-in-law.

Fenwick of Cincinnati, who persuaded the congregation to organize a mission school for the Menominee. The trustees of the new Indian school recommended Rosalie Dousman as "well qualified to direct such a school & to instruct our Ind[jian] youth in the necessary branches of civilized & domestic life." She would receive a quarterly salary from the trustees. Louis Grignon's nineteen-year-old daughter Elizabeth, recently returned from school in Montreal, would be her assistant.¹¹

It is not clear what Rosalie's qualifications were for directing a school. Aside from one or two years at the convent school in Trois-Rivières, she had no formal education. But she was literate and devoted to her church. She seems to have taught her own children to read and write, as neither Mackinac nor Green Bay had schools before 1825. Her friends and relatives may have regarded this as an opportunity for the hard-pressed widow to earn some extra cash. She was paid less than seven dollars a month, a fairly common rate for female teachers at that time.¹²

Rosalie was also familiar with the Menominee. Their culture was similar to that of her maternal grandmother. Like the Ojibwe, they are an Algonquian-speaking people, and Rosalie, raised in the multilingual society of Michilimackinac, would have quickly gained fluency in their language.

In its first year, the school had fifty students: thirty-three Menominee, the rest métis. A report in the *Catholic Telegraph* of 1831 does not describe the school's curriculum, nor say whether the children were taught in English, French, or Menominee. It does, however, say that in addition to these fifty children, twenty-seven adults had also joined the Catholic Church.¹³

During the 1830s, an influx of people with names like Doty, Whitney, Arndt, Baird, and Martin was changing the nature of Green Bay society. English was becoming the predominant language. Although fur trading was still important, agriculture and logging were increasing. The French community began to adopt the language and cultural practices of their new compatriots.

Between 1831 and 1832, the Menominee signed treaties with the US government, ceding some 3.5 million acres of

A letter sent from Father Van den Broek to Secretary of War John Spencer in 1840

WVH IMAGE ID: 26632

Little Chute Mission Wis
April 30th 1840

To the Secretary of War
of the United States }

Sir

In accordance with the rights guaranteed to us all by the laws of our country of appealing from the abuses of subordinate officers to the source from whence they derive their authority, I take the liberty of addressing you respecting the conduct of the sub agent, Mr. Jones, in withholding the payment of the menominee school money, and of respectfully soliciting your interposition in my behalf in the premises, as soon as I ascertained that Mr. Jones had received this money, I called upon him for the amount due me and he had hitherto received it. He answered me that he could not pay it at that time, but he would pay it in the course of a few days. Since then he had put me off from time to time with various pretences giving me to understand that when it suited his convenience he would pay me. A few days since, finding I could get no satisfaction from him, I addressed him a note requesting that he should appoint a time for me to call with vouchers and receive my money, and asking a definite reply on the subject either in the affirmative or in the negative: he answered me that he would not pay a farthing of money until he should receive absolute and peremptory instructions directing to whom and in what manner

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land—five hundred thousand acres to the three New York tribes, and the balance to the federal government. The treaty established an education fund to be paid out of the tribe's annuities. Father Mazzuchelli applied to have a portion of these funds paid to the new Catholic Indian school, but his request was rejected. Eventually, however, an arrangement was made with the diocese in Detroit, which used government funds for its missions in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa.¹⁴

The school got off to a rocky start. Theodore J. Van den Broek, a Dominican priest from Holland, arrived in 1832 to take charge of St. John's parish, with its school and Indian mission. The following year, Father Mazzuchelli brought two nuns, Sisters Clare and Therese, to teach at the parish school. The nuns remained through the 1834 cholera epidemic but then apparently departed. In February 1836, Louis Grignon wrote to Michigan bishop Frederick Rese, saying that the school had been "obliged to close for weighty reasons," namely, lack of funds, in 1834. Grignon had been told by Judge James D. Doty that the government's money could only be paid semiannually, which was not often enough to keep the school running.¹⁵

Rosalie appears to have taught at the Indian school from 1831 to 1834. The Episcopal priest Jackson Kemper, who visited Green Bay in the latter year, describes her in his diary as "Mrs. Douceman [sic], of the R.C. Mission." Kemper also noted that there was some "influence of the traders . . . in preventing children from coming to [the school]."¹⁶

The Menominee moved away from Green Bay after ceding what remained of their land in the Green Bay area in the Treaty of the Cedars, signed in September 1836. In November 1835, Bishop Rese sent three Redemptorist missionaries,

Simon Sanderl, Francis Haetscher, and Prost, to Green Bay to take over St. John's parish, and Father Van den Broeck moved the Indian mission up the Fox River to Little Chute.¹⁷

From 1835 to 1846, Rosalie remained on her farm near Green Bay while her children grew up. John Pierre, Harriet, and Marie Anne all married around 1840. Jane was engaged to a man named Collinsworth (possibly Lt. John T. Collinsworth, a West Point graduate who served at Fort Howard between 1830 and 1832; he died in Texas in January 1837). Mary Mitchell, who knew Rosalie well, said that Rosalie resumed teaching "after her family made homes of their own, where they are respected and esteemed."¹⁸

Father Van den Broek's mission at Little Chute included a farm, a church, and a school, funded by diocesan funds and gifts from his mother in Holland. In 1842, the government began to pay him a regular stipend as an employee of the

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(Above) Catholic Priest, Theodore J. Van den Broek, was in charge of St. John's parish, which included a school that taught English. At the time, the U.S. government required Indian schools to teach students to speak, read, and write English.

government for teaching; as school superintendent, Father Bonduel was paid an additional \$120 a year.²⁴

On occasion, Rosalie spoke up for the Menominee in conflicts with white people. In 1850, Caspar Partridge, the eight-year-old son of a settler family, disappeared. Suspecting that he had been kidnapped by the Menominee, the family located a child who resembled Caspar and took him from his mother. Rosalie and Father Bonduel protested vigorously, and in February 1852 the case was brought before the county court. Rosalie testified that she had known the boy, the son of Nahkom, for many years and insisted that he could not possibly be the Partridges' child. The court ruled in favor of Nahkom, but the Partridges absconded with the child to Ohio, where he grew up, never returning to his Wisconsin home.²⁵

Father Bonduel and Rosalie made a good team. By 1847, several students could read and write in English. The following year, Bonduel spoke of "a tone and an appearance of happiness" among his students and a growing "taste for neatness . . . especially when they go to church." By 1849, the children were memorizing parts of Parley's *New Geography* and acquiring some skill at arithmetic. There were thirty boys and twenty-seven girls enrolled in the two schools.²⁶

These results were not accomplished easily. The Menominee farms at Lake Poygan were located on marshy land, with

(Right) A list of Father Van den Broek's students sent to the Secretary of War in 1841.

Annual report of the Catholic Mission School of the Little Chute on the Fox River Grand Cuckalen Wisconsin
Th. J. Van den Broek Principal & Staff
for the benefit of the Menominee Indians
from 1st September 1840 to the 1st Sept 1841.

No.	Name of Scholars	Age	Sex	Studies	
1	Pierre Queweni	12	male	Orthography	29
2	Josef Mandemund	17	male	Writing, arithmetic	30
3	Simon Mawerew	12	male	Orthography	31
4	Pierre Tapanwit	12	male	Writing, arithmetic	32
5	Louis Tapanwit	11	male	Orthography, arithmetic	33
6	John Gun	10	male	Orthography	34
7	Ursule Gun	16	female	Reading	35
8	Judanna Kapanewitje	16	female	Orthography, arithmetic	36
9	Charlotte Annamatwa	16	female	Reading, arithmetic	37
10	Lidet Nawonpe	16	female	Reading, arithmetic	38
11	Pierre Wapetene	12	male	Reading	39
12	Jaque Nason	12	male	Orthography, arithmetic	40
13	Charles Affetally	10	male	Reading	41
14	Angelique Totquinature	11	female	Orthography	42
15	Estela Manakitch	11	female	Orthography	43
16	Margarete Qujitchinist	10	female	Reading	44
17	Josef Queoton	10	male	Reading, writing, geography, arithmetic	45
18	Jerome Grignone	9	male	Orthography	46
19	John Natonway	8	male	Orthography	47
20	Charles Claplain	9	male	Orthography	48
21	John Blondeau	8	male	Orthography	49
22	Marc Wapjerroc	7	female	Orthography	50
23	Yon Wapjerroc	16	male	Orthography	51

no running water nearby. Many people became ill; in 1847 there were fifty-four deaths among the farmers. White settlement was rapidly encroaching on the reservation's boundaries. Disease, starvation (caused in part by the change in their way of acquiring food), and overuse of alcohol lowered the Menominee population from an estimated 4,000 in 1837 to 2,464 by 1842.²⁷

Conversion of the Menominee progressed rapidly. In 1842, the Indian Bureau reported three hundred Christians in the tribe. In 1848, Father Bonduel claimed there were five hundred. By midcentury the tribe had developed two semipolitical parties, one Christian and the other traditional. Oshkosh, who became the tribe's primary spokesman around 1836, was a traditionalist; his brother Osh Ke Renniew (the Young Man) was a Christian. The interaction between these two factions played a major role in relationships among the tribe, the agency, the mission, and the schools.²⁸

With the 1848 Treaty of Lake Poygan, the Menominee ceded the last remnants of their land. The government proposed moving them to a site on the Crow Wing River, adjacent to the Ojibwe reservation in Minnesota, but after a delegation of chiefs examined the site, they agreed it was not suitable. It was too far north, and—more to the point—too close to the Dakota of southern Minnesota, who were waging war on the Menominee's allies, the Ojibwe.²⁹

The unrest this issue caused affected relations with the school as well as the agency. At one point, a drunken Oshkosh barged into Father Bonduel's house and harangued him at length in Rosalie's presence.³⁰

In February 1851, President Fillmore agreed to allow the Menominee to remain in Wisconsin until a permanent location should be approved for them. At the agent's direction, the tribe began moving to their new home along the Wolf and Oconto rivers in Shawano County in November 1851. Ice had already formed on the river, and they had to stop en route. Cold, hunger, and illness stalked the camp. One of the head chiefs, Waukeechee-on, died. It was spring before they reached the site chosen for them, which they named Keshena after a prominent chief. Two years later, Congress voted the Menominee the right to remain there permanently. Because the new reservation was smaller than the land promised them in Minnesota, Congress also awarded the tribe \$242,686.³¹

While trying to help the Menominee plead their case, Father Bonduel became involved in a scheme cooked up by a Washington attorney and a group of traders to siphon off some of this money. When the plot was discovered, Bonduel's government stipend was discontinued, and he left the reservation. The agent appointed Rosalie's son-in-law Dr. John Wiley as temporary head of the boys' school, which from then on had secular teachers.³²

A story began to circulate that Rosalie had stirred up the Indians against Father Bonduel in an attempt to get her daugh-



"The Serpent" by Paul Kane, 1845, a painting of the Menominee woman, Iwa-toke, sister to Ke-wah-ten, "The North Wind."

ter Elizabeth's husband, John Wiley, appointed to his position. She was said to have turned the leading chiefs and the agent against the priest, causing his departure. Her friends denied it. John Warrington, a métis farmer living on the reservation, insisted that Rosalie and the priest had always acted in harmony. She had even preserved Father Bonduel's vestments in the hope of his return to Keshena.³³

Father Bonduel clearly felt no antagonism toward her. In 1854, he told the diocesan commission in Milwaukee of Rosalie's fine work at Keshena and asked them to send her money. He called her a lady of great merit, who deserved having a monument raised to her. When he visited Rome, he asked the pope to send her a Medal of the Immaculate Conception. The pope took his own rosary, blessed it, and gave it to Bonduel to give to Rosalie. At his death in 1861, Bonduel left Rosalie all his personal effects.³⁴

On Bonduel's departure, Rosalie and her daughter Jane became government teachers, rather than employees of the mission. In 1854, Rosalie reported that her students were divided into three classes by age and were taught reading, writing, spelling, geography, arithmetic, sewing, and knitting. They worked from books that were standard in schools throughout the country: McGuffey's *Reader*, Sanders's reading and spelling books, Farley's and Smith's geographies, Ray's arithmetic primer. Everything was taught in English, which Rosalie spoke with a strong French accent.³⁵

WHI IMAGE ID 75115



Before he became the subject of scandal and was forced to leave Keshena, Father Bonduel and Rosalie Dousman had been a successful team defending the rights of natives.

Jane and Kate assisted their mother in the one-story wood-frame school building at Keshena, with its high board seats. By 1856 Jane ran an industrial school, instructing Menominee women in the art of sewing, while Rosalie taught standard subjects to fifty or more younger girls. Sometimes, when there was no teacher for the boys' school, she taught both sexes in her primary class.

Between 1854, when Bonduel departed, and 1872, when Rosalie died, twelve priests served off and on at the little bark-covered chapel overlooking the lake. Most of them spoke no Menominee, and not all of them were of the highest caliber. Father Otto Skolla left in 1857, frustrated after four years by a "lack of support and malicious and superstitious Indians."³⁶ In 1864, agent M. M. Davis reported the departure the previous winter of a priest, possibly Father Arthur Mignault,

"who had outlived the days of his usefulness among those Indians (for he proved to be not only dissipated but licentious)." His successor insisted that the children attend his school rather than the government ones and left after six months when the agent refused to accept his behavior. Rosalie took the unusual step of complaining to the authorities that this priest had "injured the schools by unfavorable and unjust remarks he has made against them."³⁷

Still worse was Father A. M. Mazeaud, who during a smallpox epidemic in 1865 insisted on holding funerals at the church and burying the dead in the mission cemetery, which Agent Davis said spread the smallpox by bringing crowds together. Davis had him arrested by the Shawano County sheriff.³⁸

Father Anthony Maria Gachet, who served at Keshena from 1859 to 1862, described Rosalie as "a venerable sexagenarian widow" who interpreted for him during mass "phrase by phrase." It is a mark of how much the Menominee women trusted Rosalie that they allowed her to translate during their confessions.³⁹

In 1860, Rosalie became involved in a dispute between the Menominee and Davis's predecessor, Augustus D. Bonesteel. Persuaded that Bonesteel was skimming money from their annuities, the Menominee requested a special investigator from Washington to look into the situation. After interviewing a number of witnesses, Special Agent Kintzing Pritchette exonerated Bonesteel.⁴⁰

It's not clear what Rosalie's role in this dispute was. She had been living among the Menominee for fourteen years, longer than any other government employee, and was closely associated with the Catholic faction and the métis, like John Warrington, who worked on the reservation. According to Bonesteel, she was assaulted by a group of Menominee, "in the house, and in the very presence of their missionary priest, and her dwelling assailed with violence at midnight under the direction of his chief, by his brutal emissary."⁴¹

It's hard to tell, from this description, who the men involved were. They were probably members of the non-Catholic party, targeting Rosalie because she was acting as interpreter for the priest and the agent at the time. One can imagine the elderly woman lecturing the young men for their disrespectful behavior. Bonesteel went on to say that Rosalie was giving up her teaching post, which he considered a "serious loss." But Rosalie continued to send in annual reports regularly for eight more years.⁴²

Although Rosalie officially retired in 1869, she remained on the reservation, serving occasionally as interpreter. Kate had

(Right) In the mid-19th century, as Christianity rapidly became a popular faith among his people, Chief Oshkosh clung to his traditional ways.

OSHRDOSH PUBLIC MUSEUM





A group of Catholic Menominee celebrate the feast day of Corpus Christi in the early twentieth century.

WHI IMAGE ID 38125

No. 11.

KESHENA, September 1, 1855.

SIR: I present the following as my report of the female school under my charge. The whole number of scholars, regular and irregular, in attendance, is fifty-two; for the number in regular attendance I respectfully refer you to the monthly registers.

The branches taught have been spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, and geography. They are progressing as fast as can be expected, considering that we labored under some disadvantages; for it is much to be regretted that parents too often take their children from school to make them work in the field, and again, to make them weave mats, which is an article of comfort to them and trade. These, of course, have not made such advances as might be expected.

Two days of the week are devoted to sewing and knitting. They take a peculiar delight in all kinds of needle work, always manifesting a willingness to do any kind of work required of them.

I have in the school quite a number of small girls that promise well and who are both industrious and studious.

Since my last report, five of the girls have left school, and have married and are doing very well, I am happy to state—are good housekeepers, having been taught the more substantial branches of domestic work. The recollection of having conduced to their happiness, by so doing, will be to me a lasting reward.

Very respectfully,

ROSALIE DOUSMAN,
Teacher.

Hon. B. HUNKINS,
Indian Agent.

Presenting a report to the Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs was among Rosalie's many duties at the school. The 1855 version of that report provides details about the school's activities and the students who attended.

died not long before, but Jane continued to teach for another year or two. Rosalie died at Keshena on November 18, 1872, at the age of seventy-six. Her body was returned to Green Bay, where she was buried beside her husband in Allouez cemetery.⁴³

For nearly thirty years, Rosalie Dousman had lived among the Menominee, teaching the English language and American customs to their children, interpreting their words, and interceding on their behalf with the authorities. Government agents, male teachers, and priests came and went, but Rosalie was a constant presence.

Wisconsin was rapidly filling up with white settlers whose power, politically and militarily, was too great for the Menominee to resist. As a teacher, Rosalie strove to give her students the tools to deal with these challenges. Although this meant compromising their ancient way of life, she believed it was necessary if they were to survive in a white man's world. She herself had adapted to the Anglo-American culture when it engulfed her childhood home.

It was not easy, but Rosalie Dousman persevered through a combination of conviction and love for her students. As she told agent Benjamin Hunkins in 1855, "The recollection of having conduced to their happiness . . . will be to me a lasting reward."⁴⁴

Notes

1. See Chevalier and Grignon family records on Our Family Genealogy Pages, www.benavarras.com/genealogy; "The Mackinac Register," in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites et al. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1855–1915), 19:4, 83, 103, 123 (hereafter cited as *WHC*); "The French Regime in Wisconsin Part III, 1754; Langlade's Marriage Contract," in *WHC*, 18:136n80; Augustin Grignon, "Seventy-Two Years' Recollections of Wisconsin," in *WHC*, 3:213; Margaret H. LaBorde, "Rosalie LaBorde Dousman, 1796–1873 [Information presented at the Dousman family rendezvous, July 1989]" (unpublished, unpaginated paper dated July 25, 1990), available in the Wisconsin Historical Society Library Pamphlet Collection, Call Number 90-4490 (hereafter cited as LaBorde 1990).
2. LaBorde 1990.
3. *WHC*, 18:512.
4. *WHC*, 10:137–39, 482; 3:262; LaBorde 1990.
5. Joseph Ducharme to Lyman C. Draper, February 7, 1860, File 1860 February 7, Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Madison, WI.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *WHC*, 19:162; 18:512–13; 15:212.
8. *WHC*, 19:105n42; A. T. Andreas, *History of Northern Wisconsin* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881), 94–99.
9. Harriet Dousman de Neveu's memoir, *Fond du Lac Commonwealth*, June 12, 1905; *WHC*, 18:512; 15:211–12; LaBorde 1990; 1860 U.S. Federal Census, Wisconsin, Shawano County, Richmond, Series 653, Roll 1429, p. 938.
10. Andreas, *History*, 38; *WHC*, 14:170. John B. Fauvel is listed in the June 1830 census for Green Bay (*WHC*, 13:471).
11. *WHC*, 14:162–205 (quote found on pages 176–77).
12. *WHC*, 9:317; 10:482; Richard N. Current, *The Civil War Era, 1848–1873*, vol. 2 in *The History of Wisconsin*, ed. William Fletcher Thompson (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976), 163.
13. *Catholic Telegraph* 1, no. 39 (1831), quoted in *Salesianum* 20, no. 1 (n.d.): 8.
14. *WHC*, 14:167; Peter L. Johnson, *Crosier on the Frontier* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1959), 144; Patty Loew, *Indian Nations of Wisconsin* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2001), 29.
15. *WHC*, 14:162, 201.
16. "Journal of an Episcopalian Missionary's Tour to Green Bay, 1834," *WHC*, 14:413.
17. Peter Leo Johnson, "Milwaukee's First Mass," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 27, no. 1 (September 1943): 78–79; *WHC*, 14:196–204.
18. U.S. Federal Census, Brown County, Roll 500; 1850 U.S. Federal Census, Wisconsin, Brown County, Pittsville, Series 432, Roll 994, p. 12A; *WHC*, 13:472; 8:403; 14:170; *Fond du Lac Commonwealth*, June 12, 1905; *Milwaukee News*, December 15, 1872; Bella French, *History of Brown County* (Madison, 1912), quoted in James Mehan, "The Dousman Women: Catholic Teachers among the Menominee Indians, 1831–1870" (master's thesis, St. Francis Seminary, 1939), 68.
19. Interview with Mrs. Peter Filiatreau in the *Appleton Crescent*, July 15, 1911; U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1843 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1843), 360–61.
20. Alice Smith, *From Exploration to Statehood*, vol. 1 in *The History of Wisconsin*, ed. William Fletcher Thompson (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1973), 158–59; Samuel Charles Mazzuchelli, *Memoirs of Father Mazzuchelli*, trans. Mary Benedicta Kennedy, OSD (Chicago: W. F. Hall, 1915), 123–25.
21. U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1845 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1845), 567; *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1846–1847 (Washington, DC: Ritchie and Heiss, 1846), 112–13.
22. U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report*, 1843, 435; *Annual Report*, 1846–1847, 105, 107–8; Johnson, *Crosier on the Frontier*, 145.
23. LaBorde 1990; 1830 U.S. Federal Census, Wisconsin, Winnebago County, Winneconne, Series 432, Roll 1009, p. 579; 1860 U.S. Federal Census, Wisconsin, Shawano County, Keshena, Series M653, Roll 1429, p. 929; 1860 U.S. Federal Census, Wisconsin, Shawano County, Richmond, Series 653, Roll 1429, p. 938; "A Mission to the Menominee: Alfred Cope's Green Bay Diary," pt. 4, *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 50, no. 3 (Spring 1967): 216; U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1847–1848 (Washington, DC: Wendell and Van Benthuysen, 1848), 98–99.
24. Chrysostom Adrian Verwyst, "Reminiscences of a Pioneer Missionary," *Proceedings of the Society at Its Sixty-fourth Annual Meeting*, Held October 19, 1916 (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1916), 163; U.S. Congress, House Executive Documents, 34th Cong., 1st sess., 1855–56, vol. 1, pt. 1, 363; Johnson, *Crosier on the Frontier*, 145.
25. William Converse Haygood, "Red Child, White Child: The Strange Disappearance of Caspar Partridge," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 58, no. 4 (Summer 1975): 274–75.
26. U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report*, 1847–1848, 98–99; U.S. Congress, House Executive Documents, 30th Cong., 2nd sess., 1848–49, vol. 1, 568–69; U.S. Congress, Senate Executive Documents, 31st Cong., 1st sess., 1849–50, vol. 2, 1164–65.
27. U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report*, 1847–1848, 98–99; U.S. Congress, House Executive Documents, 27th Cong., 3rd sess., 1842–43, vol. 1, doc. 2, 370.
28. U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1842 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1843), 469–70; U.S. Congress, House Executive Documents, 30th Cong., 2nd sess., 565–70.
29. "A Mission to the Menominee: Alfred Cope's Green Bay Diary," pt. 2, *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 50, no. 1 (Autumn 1966): 38.
30. Johnson, *Crosier on the Frontier*, 147.
31. "The Ordeal of Father Bonduel," *Appleton Post-Crescent*, July 11, 1965; U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1854 (Washington, DC: A. O. P. Nicholson, 1855), 3.



A 1908 photo of Native American children in Keshena replicates the educational experience Rosalie helped to develop in the previous century.

32. U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report*, 1854, 19–21, 308–36; U.S. Congress, Senate Executive Documents, 34th Cong., 1st and 2nd sess., vol. 1, pt. 1, 364; Johnson, *Crosier on the Frontier*, 146–48.
33. Letter and documents written to Archbishop H. G. Messner by an unnamed priest in November 1924, cited in Mehan, "Dousman Women," 44–56.
34. LaBorde 1990. A notice in the *Janesville Daily Gazette*, December 24, 1861, quotes the *Green Bay Advocate* as saying that Bonduel "bequeathed his real estate" to the Catholic orphanage in Milwaukee.
35. U.S. Congress, Senate Executive Documents, 33rd Cong., 2nd sess., vol. 1, 250–52.
36. Among other things, the Menominee were distressed by his habit of playing chess by himself and talking with his cat. When a visiting Ojibwe told them the priest dug up dead bodies and kept human flesh in a box in his cabin, they were convinced he was a sorcerer. See Verwyst, "Reminiscences," 172.
37. U.S. Congress, House Executive Documents, 30th Cong., 2nd sess., vol. 5, 582–85.
38. U.S. Congress, Senate Executive Documents, 37th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 2, 621–23; the identification of the priest is from Verwyst, "Reminiscences," 173n1.
39. See Celestine N. Bittle, "Father Anthony Maria Gachet, O.M.Cap.," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 18, no. 1 (September 1934): 66–75; quotes from "Five Years in America," pt. 1, *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 18, no. 1 (September 1934): 75.
40. U.S. Congress, Senate Executive Documents, 36th Cong., 2nd sess., vol. 1, no. 1, 239, 259–60; U.S. Congress, House Executive Documents, 36th Cong., 2nd sess., vol. 3, doc. 3, 1–137.
41. U.S. Congress, Senate Executive Documents, 36th Cong., 2nd sess., vol. 1, no. 1, 259–60.
42. U.S. Congress, Senate Executive Documents, 37th Cong., 2nd sess., vol. 1, no. 1, 806–7. Rosalie's reports continue to appear in the annual reports of the commissioner of Indian Affairs until 1868.
43. Allouez Catholic Cemetery graves; *Milwaukee News*, December 15, 1872.
44. U.S. Congress, House Executive Documents, 34th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 1, pt. 1, 365.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anne Beiser Allen has been writing about historical personalities for many years. Her work has appeared in such magazines as *American History*, *Iowa History Illustrated*, *Minnesota History*, and *Nebraska History*. In 2003, she received the Throne-Aldrich Award from the Iowa State Historical Society for her article on the Iowa Association of Colored Women's Clubs. She has written seven books, including biographies of Lou Henry Hoover and Minnesota Bishop Henry Benjamin Whipple. As the daughter of an Army officer, she traveled widely in her childhood, which sparked her interest in history; she earned a degree in that subject from Middlebury College.

A Vision of Grandeur

The Restoration of the Library Reading Room

BY ANNE BIEBEL

When contractor Francis Grant stood in the newly finished Library Reading Room of the Wisconsin Historical Society, he would have recognized its completion as a potent symbol of Wisconsin's commitment to preserve its heritage. He may also have felt a tinge of regret that budget constraints left part of that dream unrealized. Although money was tight and corners cut to complete the building, the state board of commissioners charged with the project wrote in 1900 that it had accomplished its goal of erecting "a structure not only well adapted to its purposes, but, in the beauty and majesty of its design, an illustration of the public spirit of the people of Wisconsin and an object lesson in architecture to this and later generations."¹

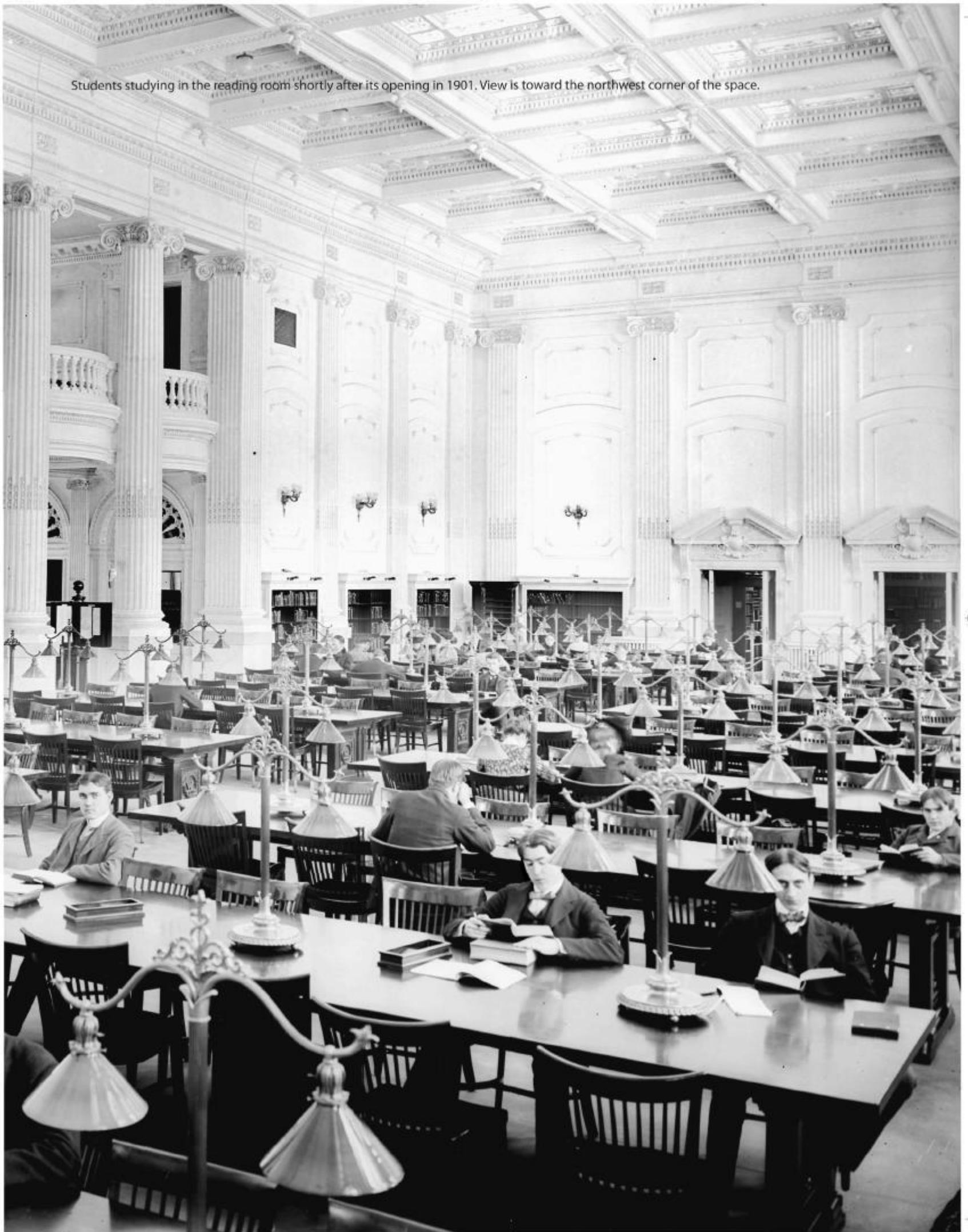
The building was constructed within the decade that followed the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, or Columbian Exposition, which provided a never-before-seen concentration of neoclassical public buildings, sparking a design revolution in public architecture that lasted for decades. Milwaukee architects Ferry & Clas based the Wisconsin Historical Society design on classical principles being practiced and taught at Paris's famed Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Beaux Arts style was rigidly formal, mathematically proportioned, and ornamented with a rich palette drawn from the study of Greek and Roman ruins. Now, several generations later, the Wisconsin Historical Society Headquarters is a recognized state landmark that demonstrates early twentieth-century American Beaux Arts sensibilities at their finest.

For the past 110 years, the Reading Room has been the public face of the Wisconsin Historical Society Library, a repository world renowned for its collections. By the early 1950s, the original use of the room as a large single space for quiet study had changed, and the Society sought to accommodate new and more flexible uses such as comfortable reading areas and access to the modern technology of microfilm readers. University of Wisconsin-Madison library books not dealing with history had been moved to the new Memorial Library, and areas directly connected to the Reading Room, which were originally conceived as extensions of the larger public space, were partitioned for offices and record storage.

The modifications that occurred were typical of those being introduced elsewhere in the building. New partition walls were inserted, and outdated and worn paint finishes, light fixtures, and furniture were replaced in attempts to modernize and subdivide interior spaces. Although fixtures, stained glass, and much of the original furniture were removed, the room retained the lavish and opulent plaster Corinthian columns, egg-and-dart moldings, dentils, and other neoclassical details that defined its grandeur. The space, although drastically altered, continued to assert its unequalled importance within the larger building, and although initial discussions in the early 1950s proposed more radical modifications, including the insertion of an additional floor, Society administrators were reluctant to authorize irreversible alterations to the Headquarters' premier interior space.²

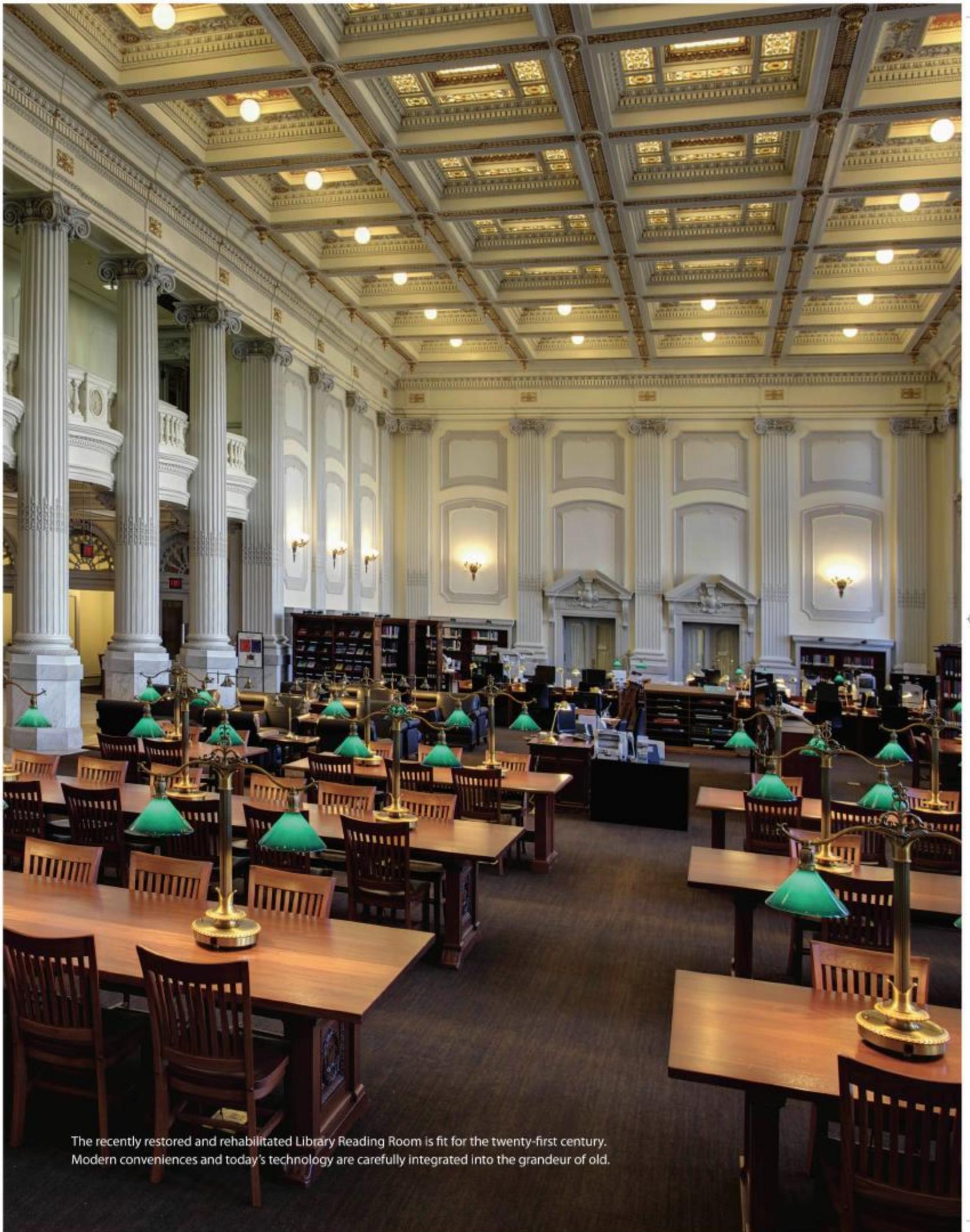


Students studying in the reading room shortly after its opening in 1901. View is toward the northwest corner of the space.



WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY





The recently restored and rehabilitated Library Reading Room is fit for the twenty-first century. Modern conveniences and today's technology are carefully integrated into the grandeur of old.

The Society faced a similar challenge nearly a decade ago when the Reading Room carpeting required replacement and the florescent tubes located above a dropped Plexiglas ceiling, installed in the 1950s remodeling, were failing. The room also desperately needed a coat of fresh paint. Its 1969 pale green speckled wall surfaces were scuffed, dated, and very dirty, especially around the windows. In addition, it had become increasingly clear that the space required technological upgrades to accommodate the use of computer-based finding aids and personal computers within the library setting.

In its role as an advocate for historic preservation, the Wisconsin Historical Society undertook the work to be done on the Library Reading Room in a manner consistent with the guidelines it requires others to meet. The secretary of the interior's guidelines provide the accepted canons for restorative work on buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, most prominently through the historic preservation tax credit program administered by the Society's State Historic Preservation Office. The restoration process often begins with a predesign effort aimed at balancing the preservation of the historical building with the contemporary needs of its users. Under the direction of Division of State Facilities project manager Daniel Stephans, the Society completed a programming study and a historic structure report before design work began.³ These efforts, completed in the summer of 2007, established a road map for the complex rehabilitation and technological upgrade of the Reading Room.

Historical construction drawings and photographs verified that the most critical character-defining features, such as original windows and doors and decorative plaster, remained in place and that missing elements could be replicated. Much of the elaborate coffered ceiling survived, hidden under dropped ceiling panels.⁴ Because alterations had not compromised the overall historical fabric of the Reading Room, it was an excellent candidate for restoration. The predesign effort involved both library and historic preservation staff.⁵

Stephans brought a conservator's sensibility to the design and construction phases that followed, leading a team of architects, engineers, contractors, and decorative arts professionals in a project that combined routine work, such as carpet replacement, mechanical and electrical upgrades, and new furniture purchases, with highly specialized work, including furniture restoration, decorative plaster repair, and replication of the long-vanished period light fixtures. Some of the more challenging aspects of the rehabilitation required day-to-day consultation with the Society's historic preservation staff, who lent their technical expertise to the process.⁶ This was especially true for the restoration of the stained-glass panels in the ceiling coffers, the re-creation of missing ceiling rosettes, and the application of decorative paint throughout the room.

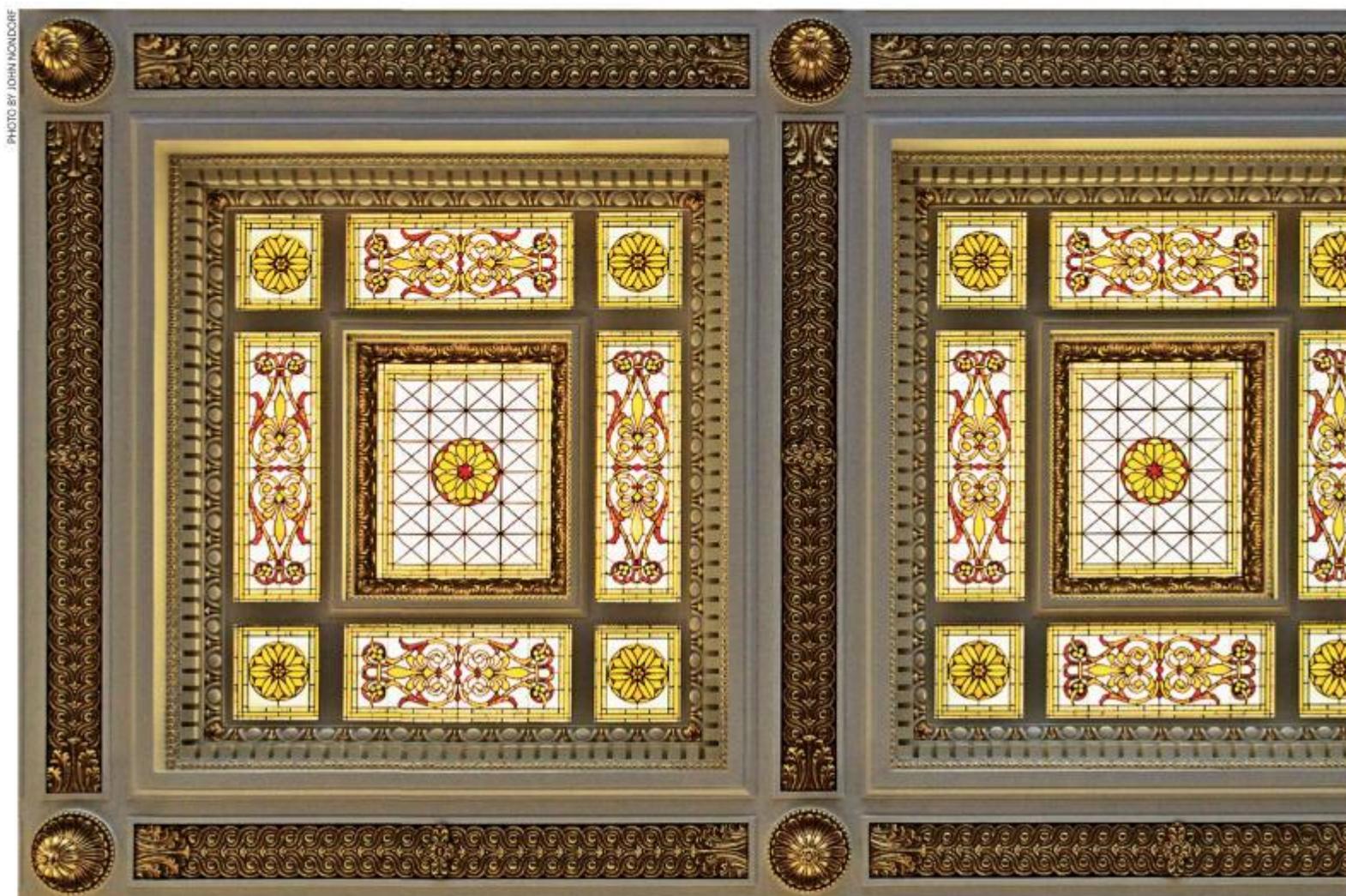
Determining the colors for the paint scheme and the stained-glass panels required a high degree of informed inter-



Students studying in the Historical Society Library Reading Room. The photo is undated but the presence of the microfilm viewing rooms along the west wall suggest it was taken before the remodeling of the mid-1960s.

pretation. While the original budget documents revealed that architects Ferry & Clas intended the Reading Room to have a detailed and elaborate decorative paint scheme, the paint was not applied immediately, so the plaster could cure properly, and severe budget shortfalls forestalled the application of decorative paint altogether. The room remained white for decades, without the colored accents or gold leaf typically used in neo-classical architecture to accentuate elaborate plaster work. During project planning, the Society decided that decorative paint would finally finish the space as had been intended by its nineteenth-century architects.

Sunlight from a rooftop skylight once flooded the room through the colorful stained-glass ceiling panels. They had been removed and destroyed in 1954 when the skylight was removed. An extensive search for evidence in archival records, publications, photos, and collections revealed no evidence to

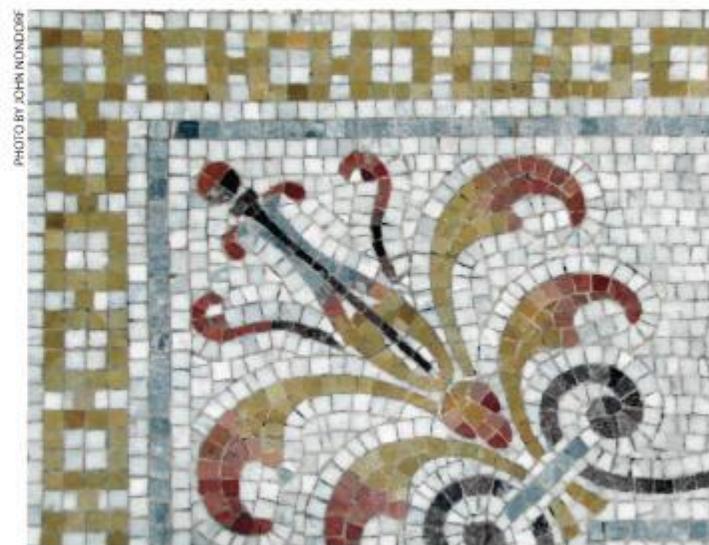


The new stained-glass skylights, based on the Beaux-Arts design of the Library Reading Room, were painstakingly replicated based on the rich deep red, ochre, and amber color palette of the floor tiles in the lobby of the Wisconsin Historical Society building.

suggest the original color palette for the paint or the stained glass. However, the floral motif used in the glass panels, which was documented in historical black-and-white photographs, pointed directly to the first floor of the building. A similar motif appeared in the marble mosaic tile work of what had been an equally prominent public space, the entrance lobby. Based on an architectural understanding of hierarchy and repetition typical of Beaux Arts design, the deep red and ochre tiles found on the floor of the lobby provided the necessary clue in developing a color palette for the Reading Room.

Since workers installed the floor tiles prior to other decora-

Floral motifs, similar to those in the stained glass, are found in the mosaic tile of the Historical Society lobby. The colors in the tiles provided the missing clues necessary to develop a color palette for the Library Reading Room.



WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY



WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Workers installed the replicated stained-glass ceiling during the restoration.



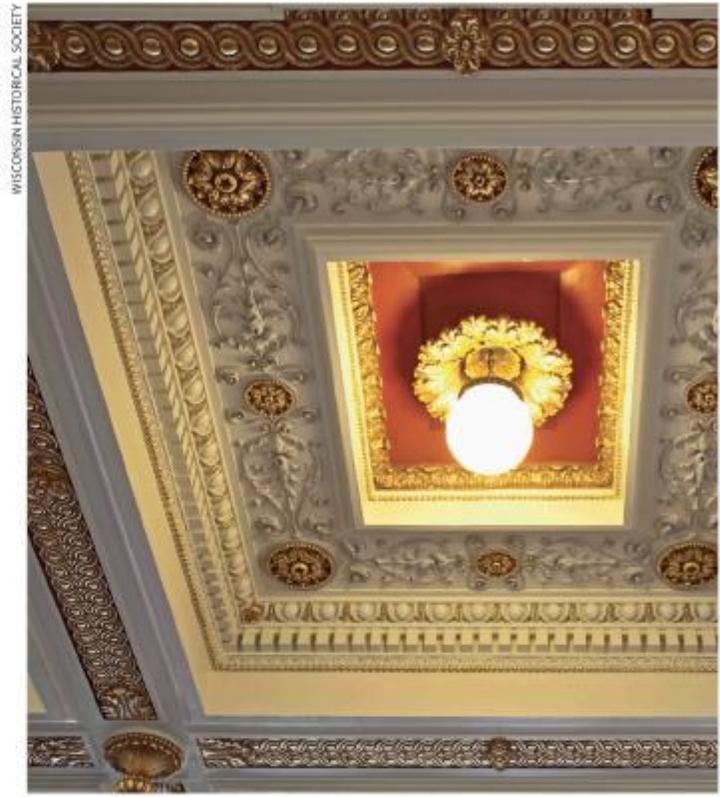
PHOTO BY BOB GRANVILLE

The newly-replicated rosettes were hung prior to the application of the decorative paint.



WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

An artist applied gold leaf paint to original decorative pendants suspended from the Library Reading Room ceiling.



WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A restored and painted ceiling coffer after completion of the 2010 project

PHOTO BY DAVID BENJAMIN



Individual bell flowers appear as a design motif repeated throughout the Library Reading Room.

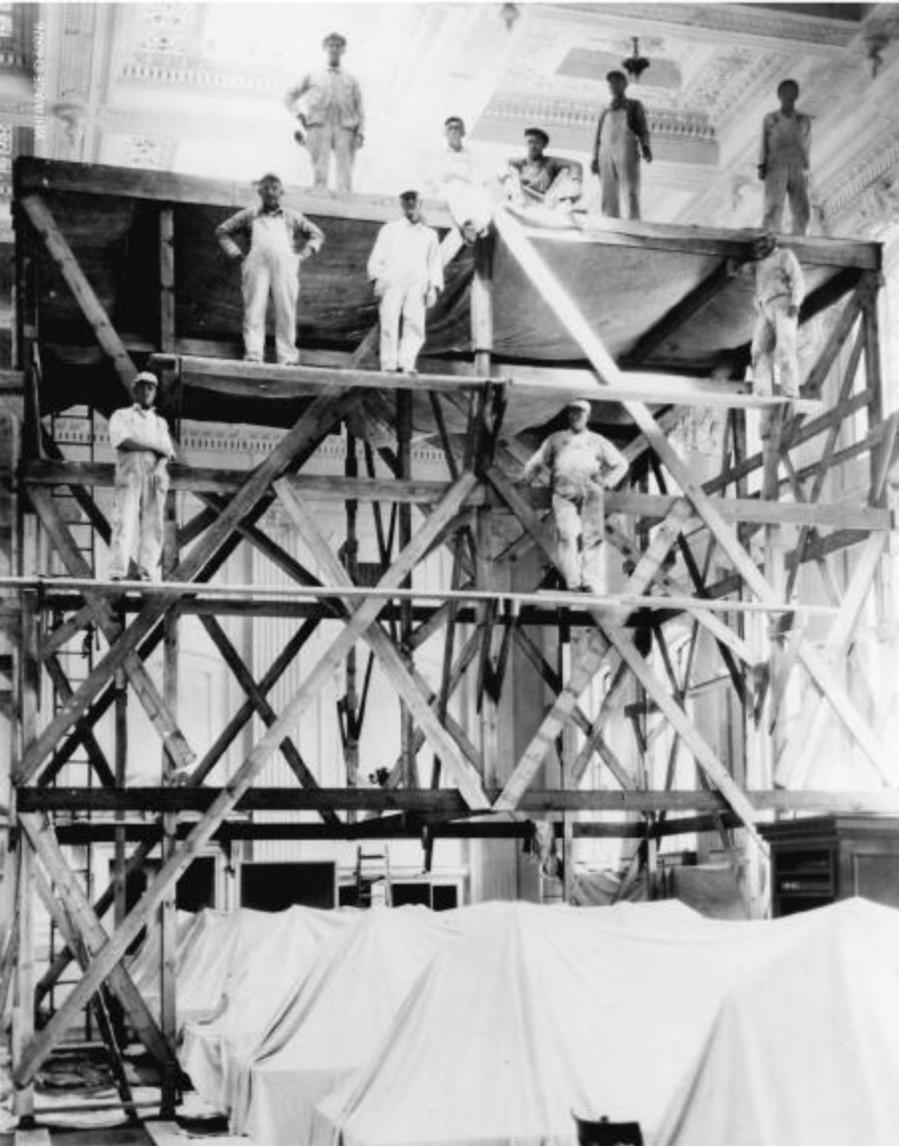


PHOTO BY JOHN MONDRIFF



During the restoration, the bell flowers on the Corinthian capitals were placed as originally intended.

Painters in the Library Reading Room, 1923. The original skylights are visible above the scaffolding.

WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY



Employees of the Historical Society working behind the circulation desk in 1912



The modern circulation desk after the Library Reading Room rehabilitation. This beautiful area, now open and spacious, has a unique color scheme. Its original mosaic tile floor did not include the deep reds, grays, and purples of the building's lobby tiles. This was an indication the paint scheme should accent the amber tones found in this space.

tive elements, the floor revealed Ferry & Clas's color scheme for the building and suggested a direction for the Reading Room colors. Additionally, fragments of decorative paint that remained in place in the Milwaukee Public Library, another Ferry & Clas building, illustrated how and where the architects used color and gilding. Following a series of mock-ups by decorative paint and art-glass specialists, during which multiple adjustments were made, the color scheme for the skylights and decorative paint was fine-tuned and implemented.

A similar, although less complex, process unfolded for other features during the Reading Room restoration. However, solid historical documentation served as a basis for decisions concerning furniture and furnishings, lighting fixtures, and shelving. The new circulation desk was based on an unrealized scheme for the space developed by Ferry & Clas. In the Reading Room, standard historic preservation principles were followed by installing nonpermanent furnishings that can be easily moved or changed without compromising the architectural integrity of the space.

Project architects and engineers met the challenge of integrating a new technological infrastructure. New electrical service was cleverly concealed in floor chases and electrical plugs carefully incorporated into replica table lamps. Unobtrusive ventilation was hidden below the bottom shelf of restored built-in bookcases. New state-of-the-art microfilm readers bring researchers out of a dark back room into the beautiful day-lit Reading Room.

When architect Daniel Stephans stood in the completed room at project's end, he undoubtedly felt a similar sense of personal satisfaction as the original contractor, Francis Grant. In addition, Stephans was able to carry through a decorative program as true as possible to the vision of the original architects. He recaptured the architectural magnificence of the space and updated it with a new technological infrastructure to support the needs of patrons and staff for years to come. Like the 1950s project, the current rehabilitation successfully met the changing programmatic needs of the Reading Room, but this time it also restored the space to a carefully calculated re-creation of what likely had been intended by Ferry & Clas had their vision been fully realized.⁷ ❧



Francis S. Grant, Supervisor of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Headquarters construction project in 1899. Grant is standing in the uncompleted library circulation desk area.

Notes

1. Board of the Library Building Commissioners, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, *Proceedings* (1895–1906), October 18, 1900, 621. The *Proceedings* of the commissioners of the Wisconsin Historical Society Library is a bound volume containing the handwritten minutes of the commission and its committees. It is located in the Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, series 941, box 10. Members of the board of commissioners included Lucius Fairchild (Madison), Reuben Gold Thwaites (Madison), and George B. Burrows (Madison), appointed by the Historical Society; Charles K. Adams (Madison), George H. Noyes (Milwaukee), and Frank Challoner (Oshkosh), appointed by the University Regents; and James H. Stout (Menomonie), Frank L. Fraser (Lake Beulah), and Lucien H. Hanks (Madison), appointed by the governor. Isaac S. Bradley of Madison served the board as its secretary.
2. In 1951, a plan to divide the Reading Room to create a floor in its upper portion was proposed and very seriously considered. For related documentation, see Clifford Lord to Roger Kirchoff, November 8, 1951, and Louis Siberz, "Report of Investigation by the Office of Lewis Siberz of the State of Wisconsin Historical Society Building Located at State, Park and Langdon Streets, Madison, Wisconsin, for Mr. Roger Kirchoff, State Architect," undated, both from Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, series 988, box 1, folders 4 and 5. This action would have compromised the architectural integrity of the space and made any restoration of the Reading Room very difficult, if not impossible.
3. Uihlein Wilson of Milwaukee completed a programming study for the Reading Room, and Cornerstone Preservation of Cross Plains assembled the historic structure report. Both projects were submitted to the Wisconsin Historical Society and the Division of State Facilities in July 2007.
4. While some historic preservation projects suffer from lack of pertinent historical documentation, this absolutely was not the case in planning and executing the Reading Room project. The Wisconsin Historical Society archive has maintained drawings, files, notes, and ledgers concerning the construction and later modifications of the space. Its professional staff, especially archivist Carolyn Mattern, provided excellent assistance in locating and assembling archival materials for the use of the project team.
5. Wisconsin Historical Society preservation architects Brian McCormick and Jim Sewell (both now retired) assisted in the pre-design evaluation of the Reading Room.
6. Wisconsin Historical Society architectural historians Jim Draeger and Daina Penkiunas were project team members during the design and construction phases.
7. The design team was led by Isthmus Architecture of Madison and consisted of Affiliated Engineers, Inc., of Madison (mechanical and electrical); Structural Integrity of Middleton (structural); The Garland Guild Decorative Paint Studio of Indianapolis (paint analysis); and Light Haus Glass Studio of Madison (decorative glass). Work was implemented by Findorff of Madison as general contractor.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Anne Biebel is an architectural historian and preservation planner whose firm, Cornerstone Preservation, has been involved in some of the state's most interesting and complex historical

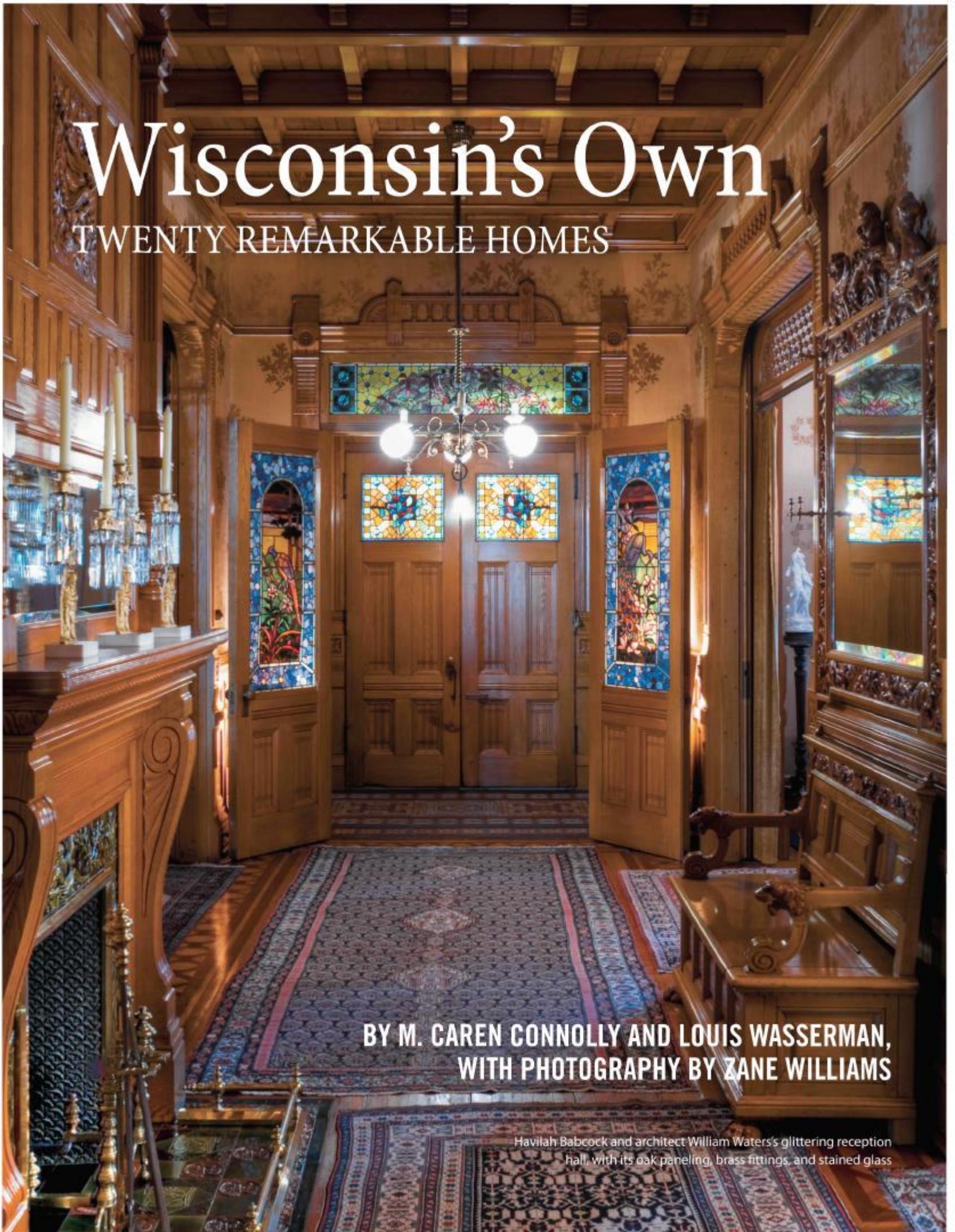
preservation projects. Cornerstone Preservation's clients have included the State of Wisconsin, Taliesin Preservation, Inc., the Fox River Navigational System Authority, and the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation. Before design and construction began in the Reading Room, Cornerstone Preservation prepared a Historic Structure Report that provided a roadmap for much of the work. Anne is a three-term member of the Historic Preservation Review Board; currently she is seated as chairperson of the Architecture Committee.

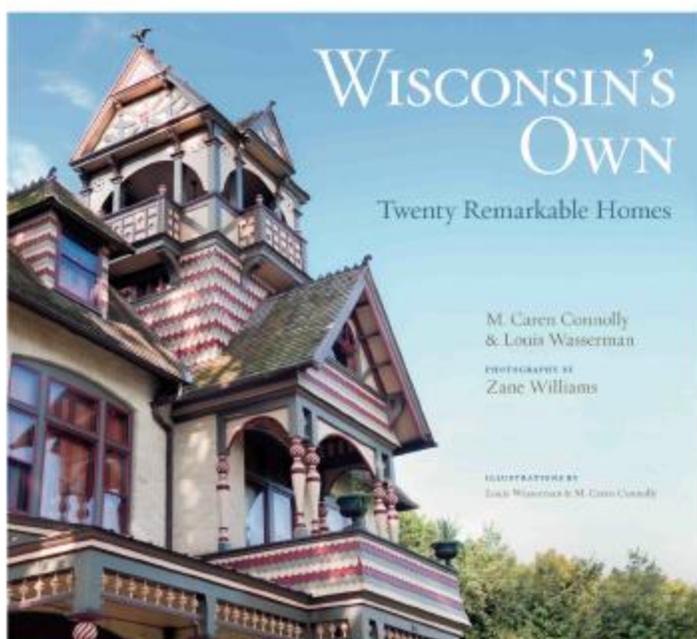
Wisconsin's Own

TWENTY REMARKABLE HOMES

**BY M. CAREN CONNOLLY AND LOUIS WASSERMAN,
WITH PHOTOGRAPHY BY ZANE WILLIAMS**

Havilah Babcock and architect William Waters's glittering reception hall, with its oak paneling, brass fittings, and stained glass





The following is excerpted from Wisconsin's Own: Twenty Remarkable Homes by M. Caren Connolly and Louis Wasserman, with photography by Zane Williams, recently published by the Wisconsin Historical Society Press. Wisconsin's Own features the stories of architecturally and historically significant homes throughout the state paired with contemporary and historical views.

William Waters was a civil engineering student at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York state when he decided to leave school and seek his fortune in the West. His destination was Oshkosh, Wisconsin, which was literally rising from the ashes: the first of four major fires struck the city in 1859, the second in 1866. Waters arrived in 1867.

The sobriquet "Sawdust City" referred to the status Oshkosh enjoyed as Wisconsin's largest concentration of sawmills—their output of sawdust contributing to the last and worst of the fires. After the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, the rebuilding of the city fueled the demand for lumber and contributed to the lumber boom in Oshkosh. By 1873 Oshkosh boasted twenty-four sawmills. The rapid economic growth also attracted lumber barons hoping to cash in on quick profits but who remained long enough to build mansions to show off their wealth and showcase their lumber. Their architect of choice was the enterprising William Waters.

Waters's architecture practice was not limited to residential projects; he also designed churches, schools, hospitals, opera houses, banks, hotels, and commercial buildings. His work attracted national attention when he was awarded the commission for the Wisconsin Building at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago. More than ten years

earlier the architect had captured the interest of Havilah Babcock, a founder of Kimberly, Clark and Co., one of Wisconsin's most prominent paper manufacturers.

Waters designed one of the finest houses in one of Neenah's most genteel neighborhoods for Havilah Babcock and his family. The Babcocks were part of a select social set composed of bankers, paper millers, and manufacturers. Havilah's wife, the former Frances Elizabeth Kimberly, was the first cousin of one of his business partners, John Alfred Kimberly.

Babcock, like most of his contemporaries, would have considered himself a "Westerner." His family had humble beginnings. His father, Marvin Kinney Babcock, was a Vermonter whose family had come from England. Marvin brought his family to Waukesha, Wisconsin, in 1846 and settled in Neenah shortly thereafter. Neenah had abundant natural resources: good soil for growing hay, grasses, and grain; hardwood forests to the south and softwood forests to the north; and the Fox River for transporting goods. The area was largely unsettled and promised diverse opportunities.

Marvin Babcock and his wife, the former Elmira Wheeler, lived in Neenah with their six children. After Elmira's death in 1851 and Marvin's quick remarriage, then-sixteen-year-old Havilah struck out on his own. Havilah had attended school and could read, write, and do figures. He was also handy, having learned carpentry skills from his father. This background helped him obtain a job as a clerk in a general store. Havilah was tall and good looking, and he had a great memory for each customer's likes and dislikes—positive attributes in the mercantile business.

John Alfred Kimberly, known as Alfred, was one of Havilah's boyhood friends. Kimberly had moved from Troy, New York, to Neenah with his parents in 1847, when he was nine years old. Kimberly's father, John R. Kimberly, was a successful building contractor who had brought a load of goods with him from the East to stock a dry goods store, along with \$15,000 to build a flour mill. Alfred may have had educational and economic advantages that Havilah did not, but both generations of Kimberlys recognized Havilah's intelligence and business acumen. In recognition of these qualities, John R. Kimberly offered both his son and Havilah equal partnerships in their own dry goods store. Within six years, Alfred and Havilah were well established as part of Neenah's merchant class.

By the Civil War, Neenah had become the state's second largest flour milling center. In 1868 Alfred and Havilah decided to harness the energy of the Fox River and build the four-story stone Reliance Mill alongside it in Neenah to process local wheat into flour. Alfred's father provided them with the financial backing as he had with the store, which had become one of the largest of its kind in the region.

The flour trade had appeared to be a growth industry in 1868, but by the 1870s the wheat trade was moving north and west. Mill buildings and mill workers could easily go from mak-

WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY



Elaborate use of patterns, materials, and window shapes and sizes creates an impressive front elevation for Havilah Babcock's Queen Anne residence in Neenah.

ing flour to making paper. The manufacturing process for paper required more labor than flour milling, so jobs were plentiful and, unlike wheat milling, provided steady, year-round employment. Even though Babcock and Kimberly had no papermaking experience, they saw the possibilities, they had some capital, they had a mill, and they had the river. They just needed a couple more partners with money and business experience.

Partnering with Franklyn C. Shattuck, a traveling salesman, and Charles Clark, a Civil War veteran and hardware store owner, the four put together \$30,000 to start the paper company in 1872. Kimberly, Clark and Co.'s presence was soon expanding throughout the Fox Valley, and by 1888 its capital investment was increased to \$1.5 million.



The library is virtually unchanged from Havilah Babcock's day. Generation after generation of his descendants have sat in his blue chair, read his books, admired his ornaments, and added photographs to the display.

The paper company made Babcock a wealthy man, but the day-to-day business did not satisfy his aesthetic nature in the way his involvement in retail had. In 1880, looking for an outlet for his appreciation of beauty and material objects, Babcock commissioned William Waters to draw up the plans and elevations for a residence to be built on East Wisconsin Avenue in Neenah. The three-story, pale yellow brick home overlooking the Fox River is a restrained version of the Queen Anne style. The half-timbering and wood trim, painted a somber, dark umber, have a calming effect on the overlapping shingle shapes and incised ornamentation of the wood fascia boards. The vertical orientation of the conically capped, half-timbered turret

topped by a whimsical wrought-iron finial is nicely balanced by six brick chimneys and a series of cascading gables. The massive gray limestone porch and string courses of tooled white stone give this Queen Anne a strong horizontal line—which is in contrast to the upward thrust of most Queen Anne designs. The home's stone foundation was built in 1881. Babcock, a cautious man, insisted the foundation settle for a year before the walls of the house were constructed. When the family

moved in, in 1883, the house was finished but basic. The walls were bare plaster and some furnishings were brought in, but the installed gas and electricity would not be hooked up until 1887. Babcock then set about to design the home's decor, working with a designer from Milwaukee. He had previously contracted with the respected Matthews Brothers of Milwaukee to build much of the first-floor cabinetry. The wainscoting, ceiling, and wall trim display a variety of woods: cherry, oak, and mahogany. Majolica tiles in rich golds, greens, and bronze tones are offset by fireplace surrounds elaborately carved with acanthus leaves, vines, and geometric patterns.

The interiors were finally complete by 1890, when the Babcocks hosted the "at home" reception for Mr. and Mrs. W. Z. Stuart; the new Mrs. Stuart was Alfred Kimberly's daughter. More than six hundred guests were welcomed into the Babcock home to present their well wishes to the newlyweds.

Havilah Babcock was an Anglophile when it came to literature, architecture, and interior decoration. He looked to Charles Locke Eastlake, an English Arts & Crafts architect, furniture designer, and author, for design inspiration. Eastlake's *Hints on Household Taste*, published in England in 1868, had become a bible of interior decoration for those who preferred a simplified, more geometric and coordinated design vocabulary over the more ornate High Victorian style. Eastlake was a strong proponent of truth in materials and rebelled against the faux painting and staining of wood, which was very much in vogue in Wisconsin at the time. Babcock slowly collected quality furnishings, much of it in the Eastlake style.

Narrative and didactic ornament was an important aspect of Victorian decoration. Much of the ornament in the Babcock home is allegorical. On the second-floor stair landing, stained-glass windows depict the Roman goddess Pomona, who was associated with tended gardens and vineyards. Perhaps Babcock chose the image of Pomona to encourage his children to blossom and grow.

The painted canvas wall covering in the reception hall bears the stenciling of oak leaves, a symbol of both patriotism and hospitality. While the home overall is very masculine—with warm woods laid in angular parquetry on the first floor; rich colors in the stained glass, carpets, and furnishings throughout; and bold geometries in the woodwork and fireplace ornamentation—quite a few floral motifs are employed. Thistles are painted on the library ceiling; simple wreaths, a symbol of pride, praise, and scholarship, grace the stenciled canvas wall covering of Mrs. Babcock's sitting room.

Babcock had a reputation of being a loving, concerned, and communicative father. He took his role as head of household very seriously—and this responsibility is represented in the organization of the second floor. The master bedroom is not located at the front of the house, where the best views and most spacious rooms are; instead it's in the middle, at the top of the main stair and the base of the servants' stair. From this central

location, Babcock could audibly keep track of the comings and goings of all of his children and the servants.

The home for the family of seven was built with only one bathroom—a nearly unknown luxury at that time. Each of the six bedrooms had a sink in the room, spacious closets, fireplaces with glazed tile surrounds and carved wood mantels with tall mirrors above, and canvas-covered walls with floral friezes.



Today the house is in such perfect condition that Havilah could walk up the front steps, open the oak doors with stained-glass panels, hang up his coat opposite the reception hall's oak mantel, pass into his library, light a fire in the fireplace, reach for a book, and settle into his couch, unaware that several generations of his descendants had lived in the house as their own.

The hand-painted ceilings throughout the first-floor rooms are still luminous; the woodwork gleams; and the portieres are intact. Many of the rugs and floor coverings are original as are the light fixtures. Most of the furnishings are original—well used and obviously well built since they have lasted for generations. The house, while not a public museum, is remarkable as a period piece. Babcock's quest for quality in everything he did is evidenced by the fact that his descendants have not altered the integrity of what was truly his life's work. ❧

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



M. Caren Connolly and **Louis Wasserman** have collaborated in their Milwaukee architectural practice for more than twenty years. *Wisconsin's Own* is their fourth joint book on residential architecture. Their three

previous books—*Updating Classic America: Bungalows*, *Updating Classic America: Ranches*, and *Cottage: America's Favorite Home Inside and Out*—were published by The Taunton Press.



Zane Williams has been a professional location photographer for four decades, with wide-ranging assignments both abroad and in his home state. His recent book projects include *Wisconsin; Double-take: A Rephotographic Survey of Madison*, *Wisconsin*; and *Madison*.

The Anna Ruedy Diary

A Young Girl's Life among the "Bangor Swiss," 1874-1884

COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

July 9th Saturday. 1881.
 This evening I will write a little again for I haven't touched this for about 3 weeks. Last ~~night~~^{week} Uncle Gottlieb, Bodmer and we arranged an ice cream party which we had last night in our old house; we invited the folks 4th of July evening at the dance. There were about forty present and I must say we had a very nice time. Albert made the ice cream and he had a pretty hard time getting it to freeze. While he was at work at it, Emilie and Ursula made the lemonade and Selina and I went on the bluff to make a few wreaths yet; we had made some the night before and trimmed up the rooms. At nine o'clock the guests arrived and we began to dance, pass the lemonade, played tin, tin and finally ate the ice cream; afterwards we played couple out. It being Friday night they mostly went home before twelve o'clock; some stayed till one, and Albert just staid till it was time to go to the depot, that was at half past three for the

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 Bodmer
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11th of May day 1881.
...a, Selina ^{and} Louisa were here this
...; we sang a few songs and now
...they have gone home I will write
...the fourth of July and what had
...happened before. Saturday night the
...of June Ursula and I went to town;
...ing home we stopped at Uncle
...hub, ^{and} had some ice cream. I staid
...over night; we didn't go to bed
...the twelve, Robert ^{staid} ~~staid~~ there too.
...next day Mago and Louisa & Larms
...t up to ~~our house~~ see our folks; Ursula
...ght them down in the afternoon where

BY GREGORY PAUL WEGNER

The recent discovery of Anna Ruedy's diary originating from a family of Swiss Germans near Bangor brings into sharp focus an agrarian culture and immigrant history almost forgotten in western Wisconsin. As the first member of her family to be born in the United States, Anna Ruedy's lifespan encompassed two historical milestones: she was born during the Civil War on a farm just outside the village of Bangor in west-central Wisconsin, and she died during World War II in Glendale, California (1862–1943). Anna initiated her diary entries in January of 1874 at age twelve and concluded her entries in mid-May of 1884, about three months before her marriage to George Thompson at age twenty-two. The diaries are by no means complete as several years are missing, including 1875, 1878, and 1882.

How the diary came to be geographically centered in western Wisconsin represents part of a larger story of what might be called

Anna Ruedy as a young woman, undated. Her diaries provide rare insight into the lives of the Bangor Swiss in the late nineteenth century.

Pages from Anna Ruedy's diary dated July 9, 1881.



A west-facing view of the Ruedy farm and woolen mills on Dutch Creek, ca. 1877

UW-LA CROSSE AREA RESEARCH CENTER

WHI IMAGE ID 4280



Marsh Harvester ca, 1876. Anna drove the machine on the Ruedy farm at age 14. The labor-saving reaping machine helped increase crop production.

“inner migration,” or the movements of immigrant peoples between different domiciles within their newly adopted country. In 1851, a group of six Swiss consisting of John Bosshard, Andrew Wolf, Florian and Christian Ruedy, Michael Darms, and Joseph Zimmerman migrated with a team of oxen from the Swiss colony of Honey Creek in Sauk County to Bangor.¹ Combined with the attraction of thick stands of oak and birch, deep and fertile soil, and the proximity of creeks, streams, and springs was the federal sale of farmland at \$1.25 an acre. Settlements of “Bangor Swiss” linked lower Dutch Creek south of the village with others in the group claiming land on the prairie and Fish Creek areas east of the village near their predominantly Welsh and German neighbors.

Anna’s writings are first and foremost a record of work and economic activities, but they are also a testament to the ordinary and routine elements of rural life. Preserved in the pages of Anna’s writings is a language long since outdated in regard to farm technology and certain social customs. The diaries record numerous deaths, funerals, illnesses, births, and weddings in Bangor as well as social rituals and agricultural practices deeply rooted in the culture of this relatively small Swiss German community. Reflected in these pages are the seasonal rhythms of planting and harvesting, the predictability and routine nature of household chores, the impact of the weather on agrarian activities, as well as the importance of village culture in the social life of Anna Ruedy, her friends, and her family.

Anna’s diary intertwined the culture of the farm with that of the village on both economic and social levels. Hers was a well-to-do family with a homestead of 170 acres of fertile farmland in lower Dutch Creek, another sixty acres of primarily oak timber, and an ongoing business dedicated to the production of flannel, woolen blankets, carpets, and stocking yarn. The business ledger kept by Anna’s father, John Ruedy, comes to us since Anna filled the remaining empty pages of the ledger with her diary entries for the last half of 1879. As a highly successful figure in animal husbandry, stock raising, crop production, and manufacturing in the wool industry, John Ruedy was often involved in a system of cash lending, bartering, and sales. A prominent member of the Bangor community, the enterprising farmer and businessman also served on the school board, acted as town treasurer, and played in a local brass band.

To more fully grasp the culture within which Anna’s diary was created, readers must understand that the girl who initiated her entries at age twelve, in the year 1874, was in the process of learning English. Anna grew up in a multilingual family that spoke and wrote the Swiss German dialect as well as English, while High German remained the language of instruction in Bangor schools during the late nineteenth century. Anna often switched between Swiss German and English throughout the diary. As she grew older, her diary entries in English became longer, more frequent, and more richly detailed as she gained fluency.



FROM THE COLLECTION OF NORMA SCHMIG

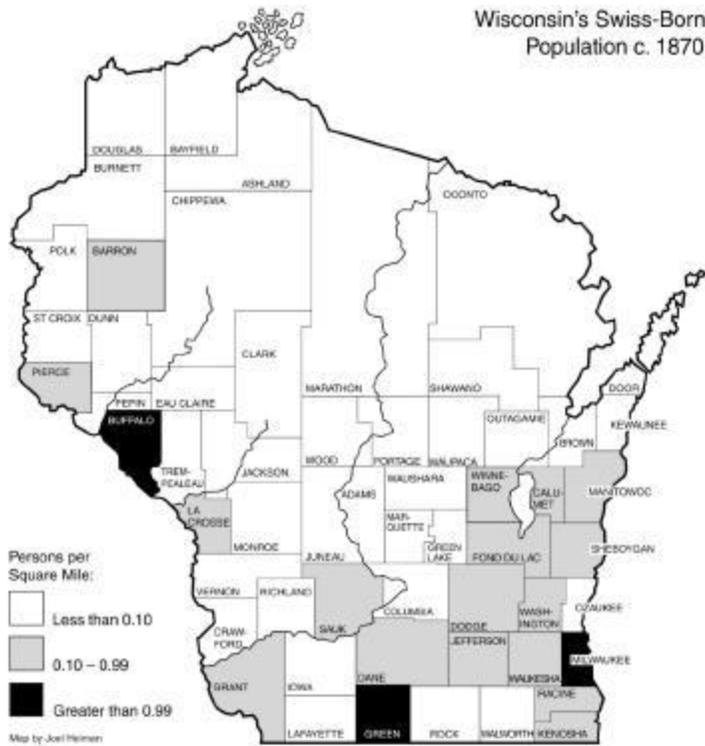
Ruedy farm home, undated



COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

Anna’s father, John Ruedy, with a helicon. A musician in a musical family, he played in a local brass band.

WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY



In 1871, the Bangor Swiss established an English- and German-language school at Concordia Hall and hired one of Anna's teachers, John Dieterly from Honey Creek, on a ten-month contract for the salary of fifty dollars per month.² Preservation of the German mother tongue maintained some level of importance to the adults in this immigrant community, but schooling their children in English to make their way in the economic and social life of their new world became even more significant. Anna's diary entries were written with greater depth the older she grew, but her love for German never wavered. The last ten months of her diary, from 1883-84, written when she was twenty-one years old, are in Swiss German. She also enjoyed reading theater pieces by Friedrich Schiller after her parents enlarged the family library with an eleven-volume collection of his works.³

Work and Economics

With the arrival of harvesttime, labor on the farm took on a larger community-based approach. Anna husked corn and participated in the threshing of oats, barley, and wheat as part of larger threshing crews, made up of neighboring farmers, that brought in the harvest. As a fourteen-year-old, Anna drove the Marsh harvester, a labor-saving reaping machine that

An exterior view of the Bangor Woolen Mills located on the Ruedy farm, undated



increased crop production after its initial appearance on the farm in 1876.⁴ At times, teams of temporary immigrant laborers from England, Norway, Denmark, Italy, and Germany joined these farm neighbors to supplement the crews to thresh, load hay into the barn, or work in the factory on various shifts. Indeed, one of the most prominent characteristics of Anna's writing is the care with which she recorded the nationalities of specific groups of immigrant laborers hired by her family to work in farm and factory. Preceding the threshing, Anna joined her mother and siblings in binding and shocking the crops in the open fields, an agricultural practice that has largely passed into history with the development of more advanced farm machinery.⁵ Yet another kind of harvest periodically occupied Anna and her family. The Ruedy family butchered their own pigs and steers, preserving the meat in barrels and "cutting up the grease" to make lard for cooking and baking.⁶

One economic activity that set the Ruedy homestead apart from almost all of the Swiss German settlements in Wisconsin was the founding of the woolen mills on Dutch Creek as part of the family's property. The institution quickly became one of the largest employers in the Bangor area.⁷ In 1872, the Scheidt family sold out their share of the business to Otto Bodmer. The earliest known photograph of woolen mills employees from 1875 shows thirteen workers—six males and seven females—with daily management in the hands of the Bodmer family. Although the account books for the business did not survive, Anna's diary entries nonetheless offer readers a sense of production challenges from the perspective of one of the workers. The earliest diary entry documenting Anna's labor in "the factory" appeared in February 1877 when she was fourteen years old. On that occasion, Anna and sister Ursula "twisted [yarn] in the factory today," and her father "worked for the company the whole day."⁸ A group portrait taken of seven woolen mills employees from 1895 shows Anna and her sisters Ursula and Christina dressed in factory aprons and holding brooms. Powered by water from a reconfigured Dutch Creek, the Bangor woolen mills enjoyed one of its most productive years in 1880



Employees of the Bangor Woolen Mills in 1895. Anna Ruedy is pictured holding a broom in the top row on the far right.

Concordia Hall, the heart and center of Bangor social life. Musical and theatrical performances, an English and German language school, a literary society, a gymnastics program in the tradition of the Turners, and public lectures were all held here.





Anna's younger sister, Christine (top row far left) was active in a children's Turner group with cousin Louisa Bosshard (top row, second from right).

with 25,000 yards of flannel, 150 pairs of blankets, 2,000 pounds of stocking yarn, and 10,000 yards of cashmere. Capital investment in the mills amounted to \$30,000 at the time.⁹

The struggle to run the factory in the midst of uncertainties about the weather remained an omnipresent challenge for the Ruedy homestead. Dutch Creek provided a vital source of power to run the woolen mills, but the water course also represented a real threat at times to factory production through heavy rains and flooding. In September of 1877, Anna recorded that "the water was awful high this morning at seven o'clock. They had to take the horses out of the company barn. They couldn't get anything out of the finishing room. It was full of water down there." In a later entry, Anna "stopped working in the factory at quarter to five. The speed [of the water wheel] was so low that we could not work on account of the high water, for it rained the whole day again." At other times, such as the summer of 1883, the consequences were even more serious: "Just this moment, the dam broke. Water runs around the entire factory. Now, however, the dam falls. It rained hard this afternoon." In the end, the great flood of 1899 destroyed a rare artifact of preelectrical industrial culture without leaving a trace of the building foundations or the water wheel.¹⁰

Anna's mother, Ursula Saxer Ruedy would carry on with grit and fortitude in running the family businesses after her husband's untimely death in 1878. John Ruedy died at age forty-one after being hit by a train at the Darling crossing in Bangor, not far from the rail depot. The La Crosse newspaper,

the *Republican and Leader*, reported that Mr. Ruedy had died of bullet wounds before his body was shoved under the path of the oncoming train. The newspaper observed that Mr. Ruedy was "a man of business and frequently carried with him quite large sums of money. On Monday, we are told that he had been collecting all day, and the belief prevails about West Salem and Bangor that he was murdered."¹¹ No further investigation by legal authorities tested this claim. Anna's diary for the year 1878 remains missing. What does survive are periodic memorial references to the death of her father in succeeding years.

Anna's diary did recount her mother's mixed success in hiring managers to run the farm. After suffering a year of serious difficulties in the administration of the farm at the hands of a certain farm manager named Mr. Christ, the widowed Mrs. Ruedy called an end to the practice of hiring outside managers to run the family farm. In Anna's words, "mother intends that in the future she will run the farm herself." Just what specific problems arose from the previous business arrangement is not clarified by Anna. What Anna does reveal was that neighboring farmer and friend Jacob Hatz agreed to the widow's request to "appraise our farm equipment."¹² The ensuing decision by the family to press forward with the financial reorganization of the farm in the midst of a slumping economy apparently succeeded since the farm remained with the family for at least another sixty years.

Anna's own work roles underwent a transformation as she grew older. At age twenty-one, she continued working longer hours on the looms in the factory, but she also prepared the six o'clock dinner for the work crews at the end of their shift.¹³ The pattern of her labor shifted again the following spring in 1884 when the three Ruedy daughters milked the cows day and night because of a foot injury suffered by the hired hand.¹⁴

Social Life and the Arts

The young girl who initially penned lines in her diary in January of 1874 stepped into a culture that valued hard and dedicated work but also cherished family life, the arts, social activities, and community. As sparse as the daily entries are for 1874, they nonetheless capture something of the spirit of Anna's daily activities. On the third day of the new year, Anna noted that "mother washed the floors. I knitted carpetbags and Ursula [Anna's sister] helped a little in the evening. Ursula cut carpet bags to size in the afternoon."¹⁵ The sewing of quilts and bodices as well as sawing wood, preparing meals, washing

FROM THE COLLECTION OF NORMA SCHMIG



Anna Ruedy with Carrie Bosshard in costume



Portrait of John Ruedy, Anna's father, undated

COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

COURTESY OF ANDREW BOSSHARD



John Bosshard Sr., one of the original six Swiss who migrated from the colony of Honey Creek in Sauk County to Bangor. One of the most well-known patriarchs of the Bangor community, he died in 1877.

and ironing the clothes, and mopping the floors remained a regular part of the work routines for the family. In addition to Anna's work life in the community, her formal education would be most influenced by her growing passion for the arts.¹⁶

The Bangor Swiss did not take long before establishing the Concordia Society of Freethinkers, an institution that occupied a prominent place in the social life of the community.¹⁷ Anna's father had assumed various leadership roles in the administration and planning of activities for Concordia Hall in Bangor. The hall remained a very active social center, with activities ranging from musical and theatrical performances to the English- and German-language school, a literary society, a gymnastics program in the tradition of the Turners, and public lectures.¹⁸ Concordia Hall, in representing the tradition of the Freethinkers, figured prominently in the social life of Anna

Ruedy and in her father's business ledger entries from several of the Civil War years. The early Bangor Swiss families arriving in the early 1850s brought with them ties to the Freethought tradition, which already enjoyed a strong presence in their previous community in Honey Creek and in Sauk City.¹⁹

Although Sunday school often remains associated by many to this day with the Protestant church tradition, this same institution held a prominent place in the Concordia Hall of Freethinkers in Bangor of which Anna was a part. Anna frequently recorded the fact that she attended Sunday school at the hall, but never provided any details about the nature of the program or instruction. The diary indicates that she participated in Sunday school as late as fifteen years of age.²⁰ Jacob Sternberger (1822–1889), another member of the Bangor Swiss commu-



Ursula Saxer, Anna's maternal grandmother who came to assist and run the household during times of need

nity, assumed responsibility as the instructor for Sunday school and also delivered public lectures in the hall, which Anna and her family often attended.

A letter penned by Anna's cousin Robert "Robbie" Bosshard (1867–1877) noted that Sunday school at Concordia Hall often preceded gymnastics lessons with the Turners, an athletic tradition with deep German roots. In hindsight, the letter remains especially poignant since the young author was dying at the time of an inflammation of the bowels with his life ending a year later on Christmas Day 1877.²¹ Although Anna was not directly involved with the Turners, her youngest sister, Christina, and cousin Louisa Bosshard remained active. A rare photograph from 1878 celebrating the hundred-year anniversary of the German tradition of Turners shows several Bangor girls standing next to their instructor.²² If Anna's diary was any

indication, the Bangor Turners remained especially active in athletic festivals and parades in the year 1877.²³

Anna's friendships and social activities often revolved around her passion for music. An entry from the fall of 1883 presents an inventory of no less than twenty musical instruments, which suggests that the family of the then late John Ruedy were certainly among the wealthier of the citizens of this small village. Anna left readers with a testimony to the value of instrumental music in the life of the family and the larger community:

Now we finally have a piano. Mother bought Legler's and last Monday brought it here where Mr. Ruhnhof tuned and cleaned it. Ursula now plays the organ and I sometimes play the piano at the same time. We sound good together. We surprised mother with a song the other night. She had the organ in my room and there we brought in the piano. Presently, we have twenty musical instruments in the house, but not all of them are our property. The organ belongs to the Women's Association, the double bass, the band; the hand organ and the two harmonicas, Catherine; but the other ones belong to us including the piano, three guitars, three violins, four flutes (one of those belongs to Adolph Bosshard), a drum, a bass horn, a child's zither, three harmonicas, and also a harp. I think that we already have enough. If only we had more time to practice.²⁴

The diary, when taken as a whole, represents a testimony to Anna's devotion to music as well as a marking stone for one unfulfilled dream. In the summer of 1881, she opined that cousin "Emily and I are always speaking of going out to Switzerland this fall with Henry Morf to take music lessons in some school. We would like to go ever so well."²⁵

Anna entered a family with a strong tradition in the arts. Father John played no less than seven instruments and mother Ursula was an accomplished guitarist with a strong interest in theater. Anna's mother sparked her daughter's lifelong passion for stringed instruments by giving her a guitar and violin at a young age. Early in Anna's childhood, the family hired music teachers to live on the farm and teach lessons to the children. The names of music teachers Mrs. Baxter and Hannah Sternberger assume a prominent place in the diaries. With her cousin Emily Bosshard and friend Selina Bodmer, Anna spent hours playing the guitar and violin while preparing for performances at Concordia Hall. A handbill from Concordia Hall advertised a "grand concert" for May of 1883 sponsored by the German Ladies' Society, a group that counted Anna Ruedy among its most active members and as its secretary in 1881. The concert announced a quintet of guitarists—Anna and Christina Ruedy, Emily Bosshard, and Selina Bodmer—playing Spanish waltzes. Sister Ursula Ruedy performed a violin

COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

SATURDAY, JAN. 14, 1899

— AT THE —

M. W. A. HALL

... FROM ...

PUNKIN - RIDGE

PRODUCED BY

Good Thunder Home Talent

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Jonathan Scroggins, Mr. Brown, August Simroy, Harry Clifton, Policeman, Belinda Jane Hopkins, Miss Elizabeth Brown, Annie Brown.	W. H. Thompson. L. W. Wells. G. W. Thompson. Ed. Swan. Harry Thompson. Mrs. Anna Thompson. Mrs. L. W. Wells. Miss Lottie Gainor.
---	---

*Between acts the audience will be entertained by Recitations,
Songs and Band Selections, rendered by a*

BERLINER GRA

*This wonderful talking machine can
hall with a seating capacity for
The selections rendered will be the best, ju*

*The characters introduced in this p
this community, and the aim will be to
tainment as well as to consist of novel
side of cities.*

COME EVERY

A broadside advertisement of a play at the M. W. A. Hall. Anna Ruedy was among the cast of characters.

solo, "Warblings at Eve," accompanied on the guitar by Anna, preceded by a duet of Anna Ruedy and Selina Bodmer called "Two Cousins."²⁶

Anna became a music teacher herself and taught violin and voice to children from the Bangor area, often conducting her classes at Concordia Hall or in her home. She organized a singing school at the hall as well. The words "practice" and "rehearsal" appear collectively over one hundred times in the entire diary. That Anna knew how to have fun as she pursued her passionate interests in the arts becomes evident in the numerous entries in which she described the many masked balls she attended with her sisters and friends. Traveling to La Crosse for masked balls, dramatic performances, or the opera was not beyond the means of the Ruedy family since the railroad line that connected Bangor to La Crosse had several trains that ran both day and night. The financial resources devoted to the purchase of fabric for dresses and, at times, the hiring of seamstresses for some of these occasions indicate a certain level of prosperity enjoyed by the Ruedy family.²⁷

These artistic events provided young people opportunities to meet each other and initiate courting. Apparently to preserve some kind of privacy, Anna recorded more than thirty entries

Anna Ruedy recorded more than 30 entries, like this one, in Morse Code in an effort to maintain privacy and obscure relationships with boyfriends.

COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

good time over it. It was twelve o'clock when we got home. Friday night we wanted to go to town to singing-practice but was hindered from doing so, by the rain, for we had a good share of it a gain last week. Sundays the weather is always pretty good but otherwise we have rain almost every day. Henry Mof started for Switzerland Thursday evening. Wednesday night I ordered some strings by him, which he will send on from New York.

The image shows a page from a diary with handwritten text in cursive. Below the text, there are several lines of musical notation. The notation consists of vertical strokes of varying lengths placed on a set of five horizontal lines, representing Morse code. The text above the notation describes a day's events, including a rainstorm, a trip to town for singing practice, and a departure for Switzerland.



Anna and her husband, George Thompson, with their daughters Juanita (standing) and Ursula (seated), ca. 1900.

about some of her most intimate thoughts about boyfriends in Morse code. Some of these boyfriends, including Henry Wettstein, failed to secure a favorable reception from the young woman. One spring evening, the bold Henry apparently struck up enough courage to serenade Anna with his violin. As Anna described the setting, the young railroad worker, in “an attempt at courtship, quickly unpacked his violin and began to play the strings. It was really very silly.” What immediately followed this encounter remains shrouded in mystery.²⁸ Morse code obscures her relationship with another young man in the person of the mysterious Zacharias, whose identity remains unknown, an outcome that Anna doubtless sought to preserve. While careful not to mention her boyfriend’s family name in the diary, Anna was very diligent in recording the names of the other female friends within the young man’s circle. Approaching her nineteenth birthday, the spirited Ms. Ruedy took special pains to sing the third verse of the song “Starry Night for a Ramble” so that “Zacharias would hear it” as he drove horse and buggy past the Ruedy farm with Mary Vaughn.²⁹

Anna lived in a cultural circle that prized the composition of verse and the exchange of presents as a form of communication between friends and lovers. Another Morse code section of the diary, one referring to the Christmas season of 1881, reveals a fun-loving side to Anna’s character. She wrote, “Emily, Selina, Ursula, and I fixed several little presents for some certain boys in town enclosing a verse with each which we composed ourselves. The next day, Selina and I mailed

them telling Steve [the postmaster] not to tell. We had lots of fun composing the verses in the factory. They received them the same evening and showed some of them to us.”³⁰

Unfortunately, Anna’s letters from the period of time covered by the diary did not survive. Deeply disturbed by the contents of several letters from friends whose writing she characteristically chose not to share, Anna reflected on her life in a stoic fashion: “It really is a curious world, so much is confused. My head is so full of thoughts that I dare not to write down. Not that there is always grief and frustration, but one must make merry where one can.” (Translated from the original German: “Es ist doch eine curiose Welt, so viel geht durcheinander. Mein Kopf is voll von Gedanken, die ich lieber nicht hinschreibe. Nichts als immer Kummer und Verdruß, aber man muß sich lustig wo man kann.”)³¹

Life and Death

The reality of death occasioned for Anna Ruedy some of her most emotionally laden writings. There exists a powerful cultural universal in Anna’s words that cuts across the generations. The brutal illness and untimely death in 1883 of a young and newly engaged Anna Bosshard haunted the energetic and creative artist, in part because the deceased’s ten-year-old relative Robbie died only three days before from a chronic inflammation of the bowels:

My God, what she must have suffered. She looked like

an old lady—she died in convulsions. The coffin was bedecked with flowers and wreaths. Mr. Doerflinger, to whom Anna was engaged, is in deep mourning. He had to see his bride there. She was dressed in white silk with a green wreath on her breast and shoulders. It rained hard on Robbie Bosshard's grave.³²

As was the custom in other nineteenth-century diaries, Anna rarely shared her feelings. For example, "John Paulson's baby died this afternoon" opens the entry for August 20, 1876, along with a brief report on father John Ruedy's birthday party, which was followed by a social visit to the Bosshard family. In another entry several years later, Anna recorded that Alex Peevy, a family acquaintance, "was killed in an accident on the road. He was brought back to Bangor today in a coffin."³³

Some three years after her father's death in 1878, Anna stepped back and reflected with rare candor on her father's passing. The pages of the diary resonate with unresolved grief and sorrow:

Night before last, it was just three years that father was killed and three years ago last night he was in the house for the last time in his coffin. At that time, I thought I would never have another happy hour on this world. It makes me feel awful bad now just to think of it. Oh how I do wish he was here yet! But of course a person must take everything as it comes along, bad times as well as good ones. How kind he always was to us and used to play "wolf and sheep" many a Sunday with all of us children around here just to please us and we also took walks into the woods with him. Those times are all gone.³⁴

The language used by Anna to describe funeral traditions from the time reflects a certain "archaeology" of social customs. The death of elder John Bosshard in September of 1877, one of the most well-known patriarchs of the Bangor community and a member of that circle of Swiss Germans to migrate from Honey Creek, remains instructive in this regard. She described a social network of family members, including her father, mother, and Aunt Menga Bosshard, who "waked" at the home of the deceased. The wake was a traditional funeral custom in which family and friends stood watch over the body the night preceding the burial as a way of paying respects. Her account also reminds readers about the funeral as an indicator of social status. Anna wrote that "Uncle John Bosshard was buried today. It was an awful big funeral. There were 119 teams of horses. He was buried in the forenoon."³⁵

Anna Ruedy did not hide the fact that people in Bangor died of alcoholism as she recorded the death of a certain Mr. Richter in 1881.³⁶ Neither did she keep readers from learning about a village school teacher named Rosa Trautmann from Sauk County who fell seriously ill about one year after she



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Last known photograph of Anna Ruedy Thompson taken in Glendale, California, undated

started her Bangor elementary school teaching position in October of 1876. After several days of speculation over her illness, Anna wrote that "they think Ms. Trautmann is crazy" and eventually "they took her home." The ubiquitous "they" remained unidentified.³⁷

An essential part of the social order within which Anna lived honored the age-old custom of families caring for ill and dying elders. Grandmother Anna Ruedy's illness and subsequent death in 1883 transpired within a tradition of caregiving similar to many immigrant groups that settled in Wisconsin. As her illness grew more serious over the winter and spring, a number of women from the immediate and extended family visited the Ruedy household and assisted in the domestic chores.

Anna's maternal grandmother, Ursula Saxer, who then lived with other family members, came over, as she often did in times like these, to take over the running of the household. Mrs. Meier, another woman from the community, came over to assist Anna's mother in dressing the body for the funeral. Anna helped her grandmother move about the house during her illness, assisted her mother in monitoring her grandmother's health during the night, and was present when she



In 1911, Anna (second from right) rekindled her thespian interests in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. She joined a theatre troupe and played a role in the one-act play, *Her Own Way*.

“gave her last breath.” At a time before the existence of funeral homes, an institution that took root in American society during the early twentieth century, the family assumed the role of preparing the body and providing a suitable space in the home for the wake and a public expression of mourning.³⁸ In the days following her grandmother’s death, Anna Ruedy contemplated her work duties in the household amid a sense of grief and mourning:

I am entirely alone in the house. The ladies will come in a few minutes from the factory for the evening meal. Mother went to Bangor. This morning, we had a great deal of washing, although I had washed all of grandmother’s things last Saturday. Henry Morf went to Bangor this morning and has not yet returned. I must now very quickly check on my cake in the oven, otherwise it will be burned. Well, it is not yet baked enough. Last Friday, grandmother was buried. Well, what a sad day.³⁹

Epilogue

Movement of peoples is a theme central to generational stories of immigration. The two Ruedy generations before Anna not only migrated to the United States; they also moved to different parts of their adopted country, compelled by the prospect of securing rich farmland. Anna’s Swiss-born parents and grandparents lived in several communities in the United States before committing themselves to a long-term homestead near Bangor. As a member of the first generation of her fam-

ily to be born in the United States, Anna changed residences four times during her adulthood.

On August 11, 1884, three months after concluding her diary, Anna married George W. Thompson from neighboring West Salem. Her initial attraction to George was not surprising to those who knew her love for the arts. The diary introduces readers to their budding romance, sparked somewhat by a mutual interest in singing and instrumental music. The young miller, who came from a family known for success in animal husbandry, also attracted Anna through his “excellent” dancing.⁴⁰ The couple would raise two daughters, Juanita (b. 1885) and Ursula (b. 1891). The photograph of the Bangor woolen mills employees from 1895 shows Anna continuing her work in the factory. Sometime later, before the next federal census, the Thompsons moved to St. Paul Park, Minnesota. Theatre, music, and singing remained important parts of Anna’s life as a married woman and mother. A tattered theatre handbill from the M. W. A. Hall in the Twin Cities from January of 1899 documents the performance by four members of the Thompson family as part of the traveling Good Thunder Home Talent theatre troupe and the production of “Punkin-Ridge.” George and his brothers William and Harry joined Anna on stage for this comedy billed with an innovative sound technology called the Berliner Gramophone.⁴¹

The 1900 census finds the family farming in Grace Township in Chippewa County near Montevideo, Minnesota.⁴² Anna’s sister Ursula had married George’s brother William. When she was widowed in 1900, Ursula joined her sister’s household. In

1911, the family moved to St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, to run a newly purchased local newspaper, the *Standard-Press*, until the close of 1913. Anna rekindled her thespian interests there by joining a local theatre troupe and played a role in a one-act play, *Her Own Way*, in the spring of 1911. During her years in St. Croix Falls, Anna also chaired the Entertainment Committee at the local Presbyterian Church.

Around 1920, Anna and George moved to Glendale, California, where they eventually opened a gas station and car repair shop. The couple lived long enough to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in 1934. ❧

Editorial note: Anna Ruedy's diary was jointly purchased five years ago in an eBay auction from an antique dealer in Oregon by the author, Dewey J. Bjorkman, and Donna Ables of Wichita. It is currently in the possession of the author. The Anna Ruedy diary crossed the country a year before via a sale by another antique dealer from Virginia. Additional information concerning the provenance of the diary beyond this point remains unclear.

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Notes

1. Anna Jenkins, "The Beginnings of Bangor," in *La Crosse County Historical Sketches* (La Crosse, WI: La Crosse County Historical Society and Liesenfeld Press, 1931), 13. For a broader understanding of Honey Creek and its importance as a focal point for Swiss German culture in Wisconsin, see Jane Eiseley and William Tischler, "The Honey Creek Settlement in Sauk County: An Expression of Cultural Norms in Rural Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 73 (August 1989), 3–20. The majority of the Swiss families migrating from Honey Creek to Bangor in 1851 were former residents of the Swiss settlement in Helvetia (later known as Highland, Illinois), their first community after migrating from Switzerland in 1840.
2. Letter from Gottlieb Bosshard to Alfred Gattiker, December 2, 1871, Folder "Bangor Bosshards," Emma Gattiker Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Madison, WI, WIHV94-A63.
3. Anna Ruedy Diary (hereafter cited as ARD), March 13 and 20, 1881.
4. ARD, July 24–August 11, 1876.
5. ARD, August 24–25, 1874; July 14 and August 2–4, 1876; August and September 1877; August and September 1879. The volume for the year 1874 is in the collection of the Bangor Historical Society. All other volumes are in the personal collection of the author.
6. ARD, August 12 and December 13–15, 1876; April 23, 1881; January 1, 1884.
7. Bangor Woolen Mills, Articles of Agreement Between John Ruedy, John Bosshard, and George Scheidt, February 22, 1868. Copy in possession of the author.
8. ARD, February 10, 1877.
9. Consul Willshire Butterfield, *History of La Crosse County, Wisconsin* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881), 720.
10. ARD, September 17–19, 1877; October 11, 1881; June 11, 1883.
11. *La Crosse (WI) Republican and Leader*, October 2, 1878.
12. ARD, November 22, 1883.
13. ARD, August 27 and November 1, 1883.
14. ARD, May 21, 1884.
15. ARD, January 3, 1874.
16. ARD, January–April 1874; December 1876.
17. Letter from Johannes Bosshard to Gattiker Family, May 22, 1860, Folder "Bangor Bosshards," Emma Gattiker Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, WIHV94-A63.
18. Anna Jenkins, "Social History of Bangor," in *Wisconsin Domesday Book: Town Studies* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1924), 1:25; ARD, December 9, 1883.
19. For one of the earliest mentions of the newly developed Concordia Hall in the Bangor

- community, see a letter by Johannes Bosshard to the Gattiker Family, May 22, 1860, Folder "Bangor Bosshards," Emma Gattiker Papers, WIHV94-A63. John Ruedy's business ledger revealed cash payments to Concordia Hall amounting to eleven dollars in 1863 and seven dollars in 1864; see ARD, 1879, pp. 8–16. See also Susan Jacoby, *Free Thinkers: A History of American Secularism* (New York: Metropolitan, 2004); Sidney Warren, *American Freethought, 1860–1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943); Robert Green Ingersoll, *The Complete Works of Robert Ingersoll*, 12 vols. (London: Watts, 1952). Also noteworthy is the detailed annotated bibliography by Sally Kozmak, "Free Congregation of Sauk City: Library, 2004–2005," available at http://mki.wisc.edu/Resources/Frei_Gemeinde/Sauk_City_Frei_Gemeinde.
20. ARD, December 23, 1877.
 21. Handwritten Letter from Robert Bosshard to Eddie Gattiker, December 5, 1876, Folder "Bangor Bosshards," Emma Gattiker Papers, WIHV94-A63.
 22. See photograph entitled "Zur Erinnerung die 100 jährige Geburtsfeier des Turnvereins Jahn in La Crosse den 11. August 1878" from the collection of the author.
 23. ARD, February 24, July 4 and 17, and November 10, 1877.
 24. ARD, September 13, 1883.
 25. ARD, July 28, 1881.
 26. ARD, January 11 and June 1874; May 19 and September 24, 1883. Handbill for the Grand Concert of the German Ladies' Society Orchestra of Bangor, Concordia Hall, May 18, 1883; original copy from the author's collection.
 27. ARD, March 21 and May 16, 1876; September 20 and October 2, 1877; July 22, 1881; July 6 and 18 and November 22, 1883; March 1, 1884.
 28. ARD, April 3, 1883.
 29. ARD, July 28, 1881.
 30. ARD, December 23, 1881.
 31. ARD, November 12, 1883. This essay is dedicated to the memory of Ruth Blank (1924–2009) of Wahlstedt and Wolfgang Blank of Munich (Federal Republic of Germany), whose dedicated work in translating the Swiss German sections of Anna Ruedy's entries into High German proved indispensable for this research. Entries in the original Swiss German constitute about half of the entire diary.
 32. ARD, October 23, 1883.
 33. ARD, June 2, 1883.
 34. ARD, October 2, 1881.
 35. ARD, September 21–23, 1877.
 36. ARD, February 13, 1881.
 37. ARD, February 13, 1881; October 15 and 22, 1877; letter from Susanna Bosshard to Elizabeth Gattiker, May 19, 1878, Folder "Bangor Bosshards," Emma Gattiker Papers, WIHV94-A63. One of the purposes of Michael Lesy's book *Wisconsin Death Trip* (New York: Pantheon, 1973) was to debunk deeply held myths about the countryside and rural life as a paragon of healthy environment and the good life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As Lesy observed through the study of period photographs and contemporary newspapers accounts, rural life at times reflected profound human suffering, mental illness, suicide, and economic devastation.
 38. ARD, April 9 and May 7 and 23, 1883.
 39. ARD, May 28, 1883.
 40. ARD, November 24, 1883.
 41. Theatre handbill, M. W. A. Meeting Hall, "Punkin-Ridge," Good Thunder Home Talent, Twin Cities, January 14, 1899. Original copy from the author's collection.
 42. U.S. Federal Census, Chippewa County, Grace Township, Minnesota.



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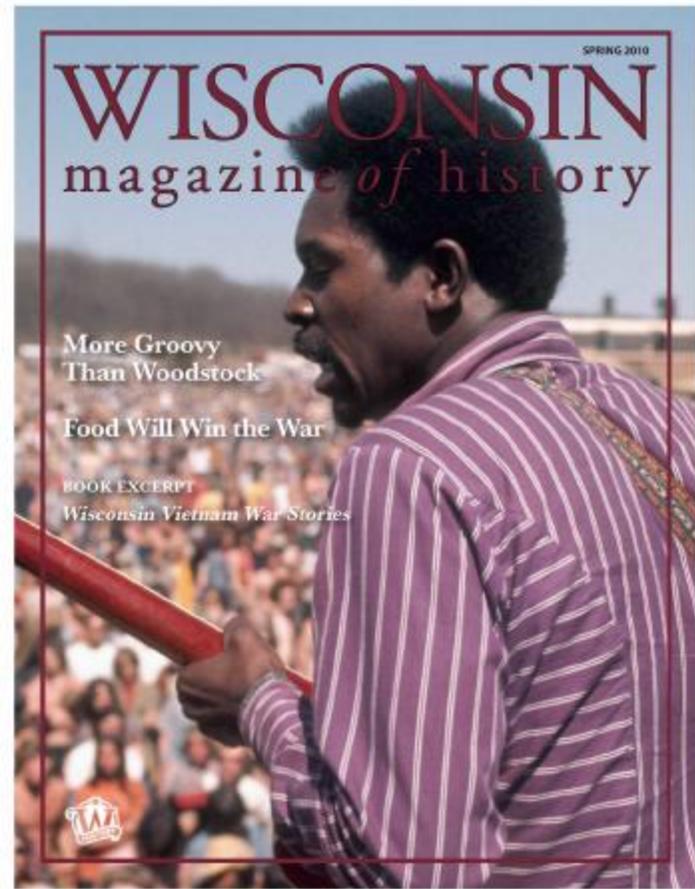
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Sound Storm

I couldn't believe your cover story about the rock festival! I was there, and had many memories that needed to be refreshed! Searched and searched through the pictures to find myself and my friends, and I think I found us. This was so cool, and being a member of Omro Historical Society it surely dated me, but made me remember details of one of my greatest memories! Maybe I'll rekindle some memories with old friends. Thanks from a hippie.

Sharon (Roberts) Schraufnagel
via the web

I first met Peter Obranovich while working as a law student for Jack and John. There are so many back stories to this event and the people involved that it is hard to encapsulate everything into a single story. You did an excellent job.

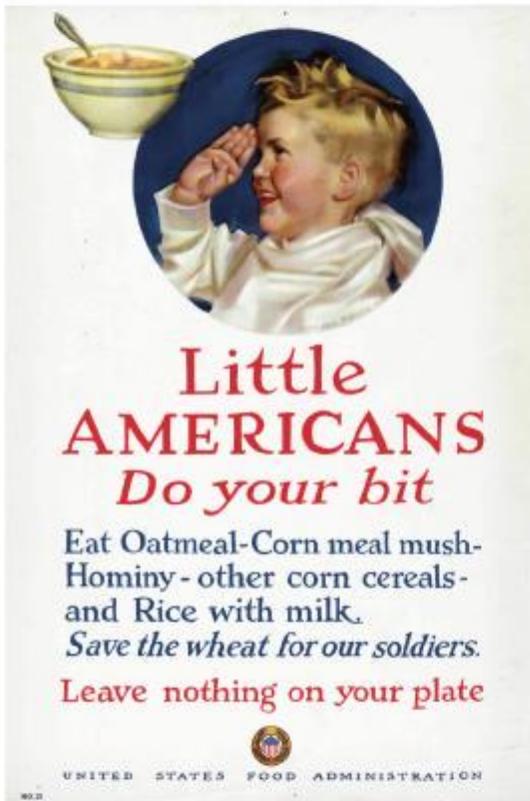
Stephen J. Meyer
Madison, Wisconsin

Food Will Win the War

I thought you might be interested in just another example of the WWI food effort. In nine larger cities the Post Office Department used a "Food will win the war" slogan cancel. Per my one reference book no post office in Wisconsin used the slogan.

I am active with the Wisconsin Postal History Society. We find it interesting how our hobby often helps to tell a small piece of the story.

Paul T. Schroeder
Oshkosh, Wisconsin



AASLH Award

Well deserved and long overdue! I'm proud to be a member of the Wisconsin Historical Society and a subscriber to the magazine. I find myself sharing articles from most issues with my work colleagues. Maybe they're just being polite, but most comment on the quality of the writing, the layout of the magazine and the overall production.

Once again, many congratulations!

John Staples
Kansas City, MO 64113

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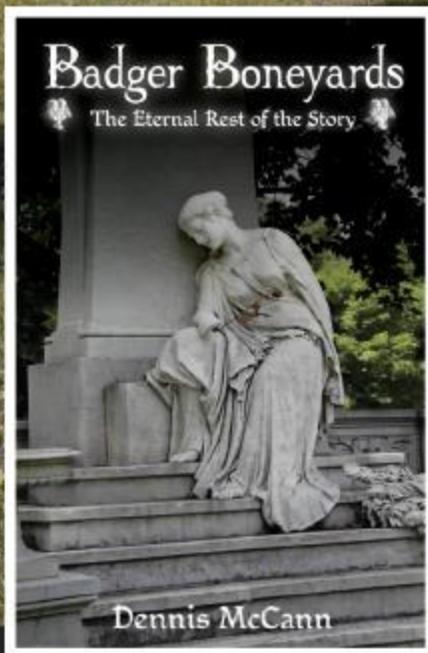
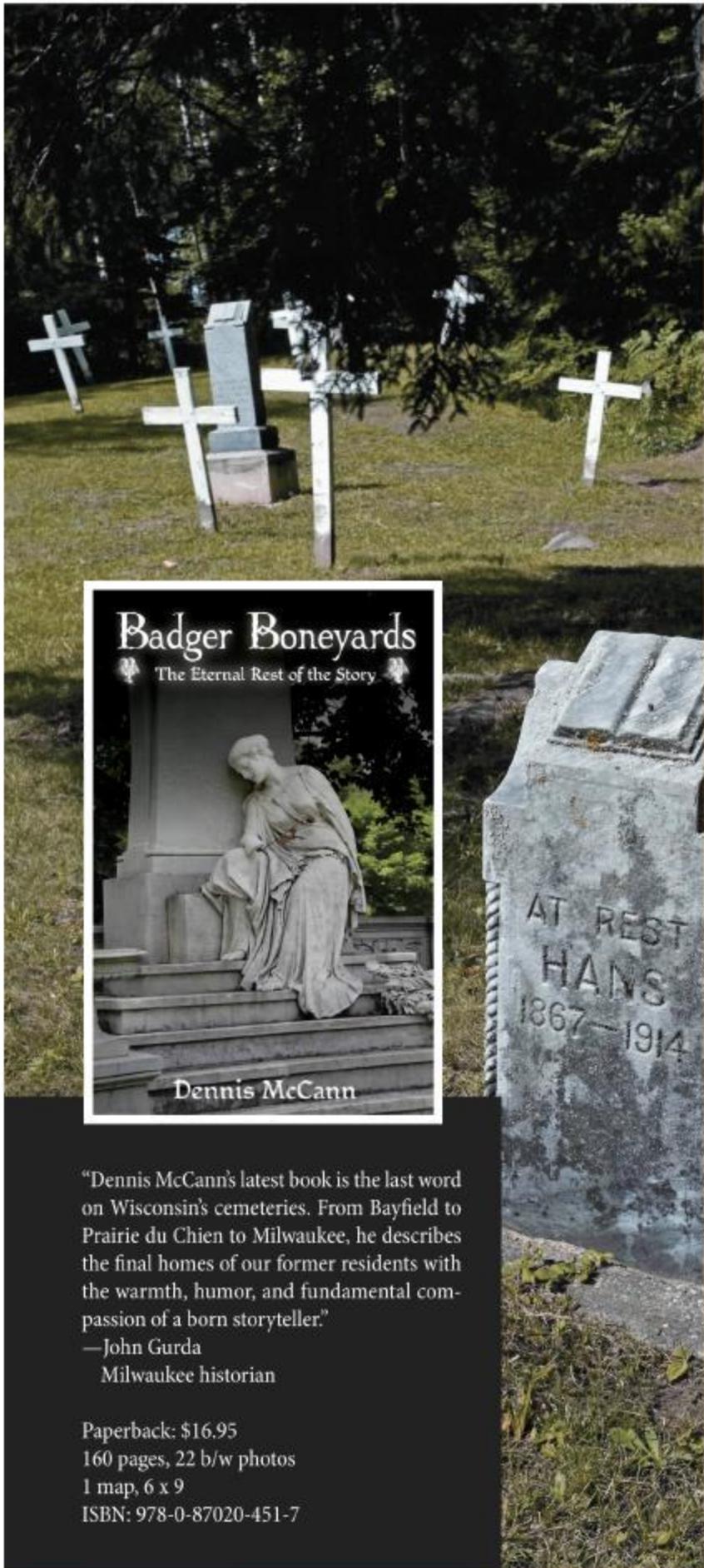
PHOTO BY JOEL HEIMAN



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In an age in which smoking is increasingly an outdoor activity and in which few people partake in smokeless tobacco, it can be hard to believe that chewing tobacco was, at one time, not only acceptable inside the state capitol building, but that special cuspidors were designed for the space. Supplied by Keifer, Haessler Hardware Co. of Milwaukee in 1912 at a cost of \$14.40 each, the containers originally rested in the private offices of legislators and constitutional officers. More were ordered over the years and dozens of the decorative devices dotted the capitol until smokeless tobacco use waned and they were relegated to storage areas. In 1955, clearly not anticipating high demand for them, the state sold its remaining 167 cuspidors at the surprisingly low price of \$10 each—the going rate for scrap brass. Weighing in at 39 pounds, capitol cuspidors are a weighty memento of Wisconsin's cultural and architectural heritage. Assemblyman Victor C. Wallin of Grand View, Wisconsin donated the item shown to the Wisconsin Historical Society Museum in 1955.

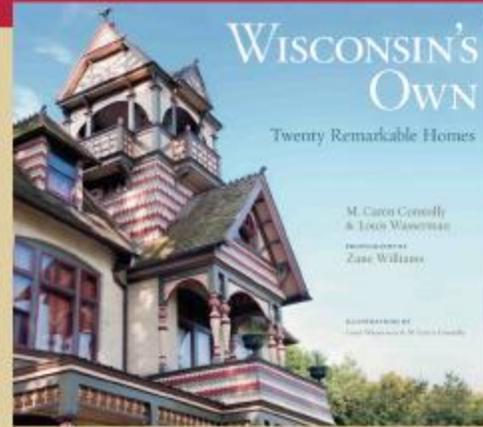


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—John Gurda
Milwaukee historian

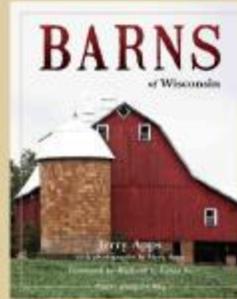
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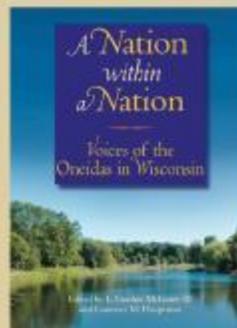
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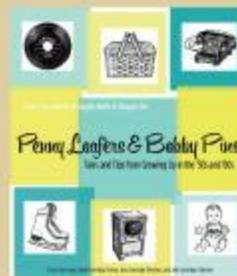
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The first member of her family to be born in the United States, Anna Ruedy's lifetime encompassed two historical milestones—the Civil War and World War II. She began her bilingual diary at the age of twelve, and explored the routines of daily life along with the joy she took from participating in the arts. Anna describes work on farm and in factory including all the routine elements of rural life. Born into a musical family—her father played seven instruments—Anna found a passion of her own for music. This undated photograph of the Ruedy Orchestra illustrates a key aspect of Anna's developmental years. Read more about Anna's story in Gregory Paul Wegner's article, "The Anna Ruedy Diary: A Young Girl's Life among the 'Bangor Swiss,' 1874–1884."

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