

HISTORY OF THE FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY, ILLINOIS

BY

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**Cover drawing of the Whitman Trading Post,
Macktown Forest Preserve, by Mary Sovereign Hass**

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The people of Winnebago County

dedicate this book to the memory of

SETH BURTON ATWOOD

1886 - 1980

in recognition of the many efforts and contributions

that he made on their behalf.

INTRODUCTION

The twenty-three forest preserves which presently comprise the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District are the heritage and possession of all the citizens of this county. It is hoped that this book will provide an accurate record of the history of this land.

The material which is presented here was adapted from a series of reports written for the District in 1978. It includes information drawn from other sources as well as the results of a considerable amount of original research. Our sole intent is to make this information more readily available to the general public.

Some of the information printed here may seem only remotely related to the history of the forest preserves. However, we feel that it is essential that each preserve be viewed as an integral part of its community. For similar reasons we have included information about the culture and history of the Native Americans who once inhabited this county and whose history is intimately connected with that of many of the preserves.

Footnotes are included where we thought such information would be of interest. The complete notes that accompanied the original reports are available but have not been reproduced here because of the general purpose of this book. No attempt has been made to alter the grammar or spellings of direct quotations.

The research for the various chapters was collective. While we have made every attempt to be complete and accurate, additional information and constructive criticism is welcome.

The following chapters were written by Craig G. Campbell: Natural History of Winnebago County; The Sauk and Fox Indians; Atwood Homestead; Trask Bridge; Hartley Memorial; History of the Dells Area; Colored Sands; Harry and Fanny B. Severson Dells Forest Preserve; and Roland Olson Forest Preserve.

The chapters written by David Bishop were: Origin of Forest Preserves in Illinois; Origin of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District; Life of Stephen Mack and Hononegah; Native American Tribes of Winnebago County, Macktown, Hononegah; Laona; Kilbuck and Trailside; Kishwaukee; Hinchliff; Kieselburg; McKiski; Fuller; Blackhawk Springs; Sugar River; Pecatonica River; Ledges; Four Lakes; Rockford Rotary Forest Preserve; and Seward Bluffs.

David Bishop
Craig G. Campbell
May 29, 1979

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The numerous individuals who supplied us with information for this publication are listed at the conclusion of the chapters for which they made contributions.

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We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of past and present Forest Preserve Commissioners and employees. We would also like to extend a special note of thanks to Mr. Frank G. St. Angel, former President of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission, whose interest and cooperation made this project possible.

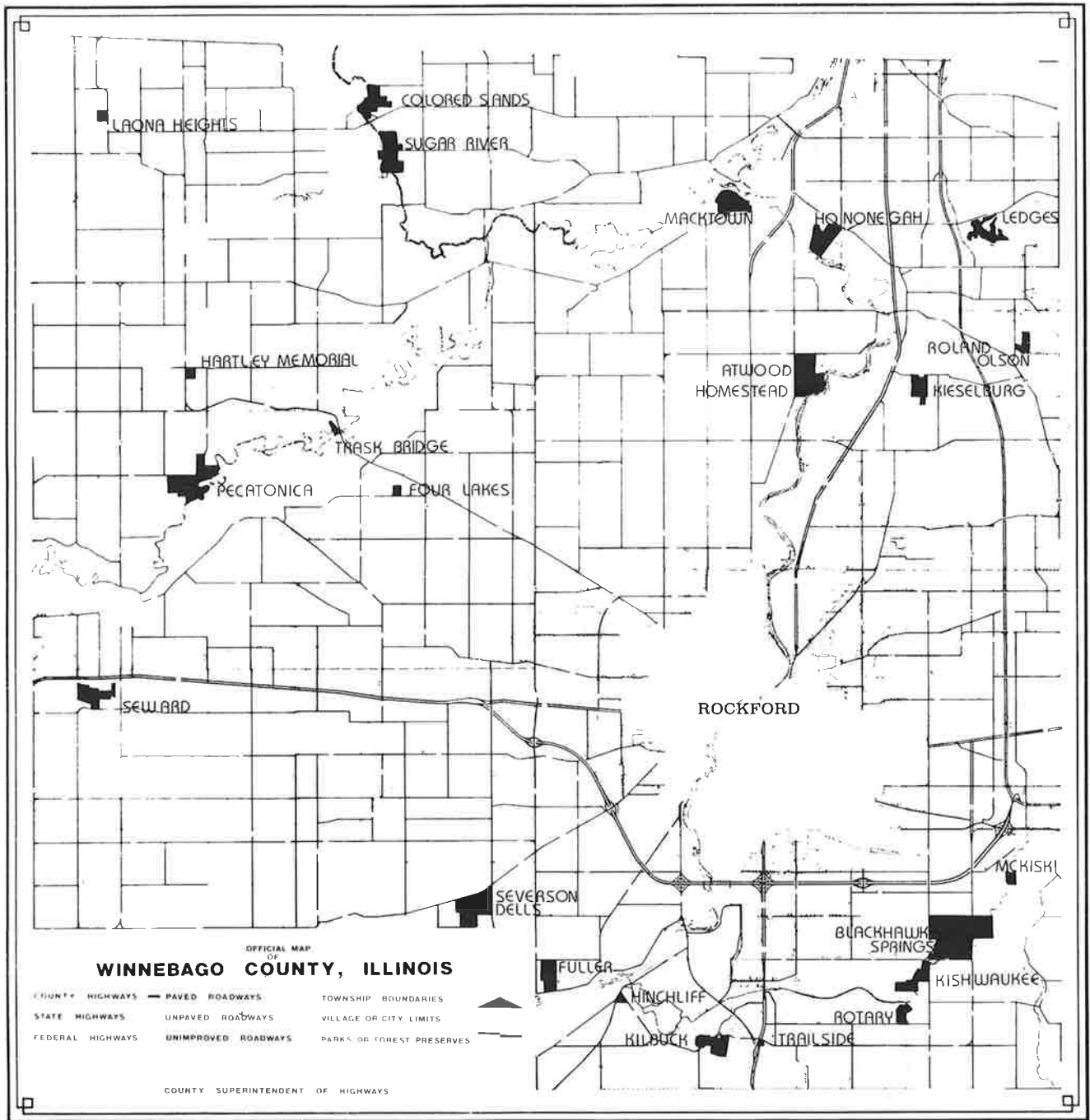
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SECTION I

THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

The creation of forest preserve districts in Illinois owes its initial impetus to the efforts to provide adequate recreation facilities for the people of Cook County at the end of the nineteenth century. The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District was first organized in 1922. It has the responsibility of maintaining and developing all of the land described in this book.

ORIGINS OF FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICTS IN ILLINOIS

By 1901 a small group of citizens known as the Special Park Commission began to submit annual reports which considered the recreational needs of Cook County. Two members of this committee, Dwight H. Perkins, an architect, and Jens Jensen, a landscape architect, prepared extensive reports on the potential value of the outlying areas. In its recommendations the Commission stated that the outlying areas were not only of value for public recreation but they should be preserved "for their own sake and scientific value, which, if ever lost, cannot be restored for generations".

In response to the recommendation of Henry Foreman, President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners, the Outer Belt Park Commission was created in 1903 for the purpose of "the creation and establishment of an outer belt line of parks and boulevards, encircling the city of Chicago".

The Outer Belt Commission consisted of citizens, civic leaders, representatives from various park commissions, and members of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County. Studies were made of metropolitan park systems in the East and, due to skyrocketing land values, immediate acquisition of outlying areas was felt to be necessary. The Commission urged the state legislature to pass a makeshift and possibly unconstitutional measure that would allow prompt land purchasing. The Act of 1905, which the Outer Belt Commission supported, provided that:

Whenever any area of contiguous territory contains within its boundaries one or more incorporated cities, towns or villages and lies wholly within the same or adjoining counties, such territory may be incorporated into a forest preserve district.

In regard to this legislation it is

interesting to note that the term "forest preserve district" was substituted for the term "park" or "outer park" in order to avoid the impression that a double taxing body was being created for park purposes.

The act provided that upon the petition of one thousand voters of any county in Illinois the question of the creation of a forest preserve district could be submitted to the electorate. Despite the fact that the citizens of Cook County voted overwhelmingly in favor of organizing a forest preserve district, the legal basis of such a district was nullified when the Act of 1905 was declared unconstitutional by the Illinois Supreme Court because of the ballot form used. A subsequent act in 1909 was also declared unconstitutional.

The Forest Preserve District Association under the leadership of Frank L. Moulton, Dwight H. Perkins and Josiah Cratty felt that a new law had to be drafted quickly to take advantage of whatever public interest remained from the previous attempts. The Association enlisted the support of the Chicago Plan Commission and City Council of Chicago.

A new Forest Preserve Act was submitted to the legislature in January of 1913 and, with the energetic lobbying of Perkins, Moulton and others, passed into law June 27, 1913.

The Act of 1913 provided for the organization of a forest preserve district wherever any area of contiguous territory lying wholly within one county contained one or more natural forests of parts thereof, and one or more cities, towns or villages, upon the petition of five hundred voters residing within the limits of the proposed district. The form of ballot to be used in any election was prescribed. A majority of the votes cast in any district was sufficient to declare a forest preserve district organized under the Act.

The Act authorized a four member board of commissioners and a president, all of whom were chosen by the president of the county board. The members of the forest preserve boards were to be voters in the district in which they served and no more than three members were to be from the same political party. In case the boundaries of the district were coextensive with those of a county, city, incorporated town, or sanitary district, then the corporate authorities of such a municipality would have the same powers as commissioners and no separate commission would be necessary.

A forest preserve district was empowered to acquire by gift, grant, devise, purchase, or condemnation any land within the district containing one or more natural forests or parts thereof to be preserved as nearly as possible in their

natural state. Title to such land would be absolute. The land was to be used only for the purpose for which it was obtained and it could not be sold without approval of all the members of the board. The commissioners were to appoint such officers and employees as would be necessary and these in turn were to be subject to the civil service rules of the particular county in which the district was located.

The Act also required the board of commissioners to record all ordinances and proceedings and to make annual reports to the county supervisors or commissioners. "These reports were to record the revenues received, expenditures made, land acquired, the progress of construction work, the condition of the property, and other matters as may have been acted upon during the previous year".

The commissioners of any district were permitted to raise money by general taxation, and to borrow money upon the credit of the district by issuing bonds; however, an annual tax was to be provided sufficient to cover the interest of such bonds. The aggregate debt of the district was not to exceed one percent of its assessed taxable property. General taxes were not to exceed one percent of one mill on the dollar.

The Forest Preserve Association's petition was accepted and easily won the approval of Cook County voters in the election of November 1914. The margin was 271,873 for to 146,895 against. The Circuit Court denied the Sanitary District's petition to take control of the new district, and the County Commissioners of Cook County were declared to be the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserve Commission.

With the assistance of interested attorneys, Dwight H. Perkins took measures to insure the constitutionality of the Act of 1913 soon after its passage. Considerable financial support was required for the legal battle and on February 16, 1916, the Illinois Supreme Court declared the Forest Preserve District Act of 1913 constitutional. After a long struggle the concept of forest preserves had become a reality.

Note: A complete description of the early history of the struggle to enact forest preserve legislation in Illinois is contained in a M. A. dissertation written by William P. Hayes at DePaul University in June 1949. This paper is entitled "Development of the Forest Preserve of Cook County, Illinois". We would like to thank the Cook County Forest Preserve District for making a copy of this paper available to us.

The Forest Preserve District

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

At an address before the Rockford Kiwanis Club on October 3, 1922, the superintendent of the Cook County Forest Preserve District, Ransom Kennicott, urged the formation of a forest preserve district for Winnebago County. He stated that the citizens of this county owed it to their children and grandchildren to create such a district.

As an example, he related the story of the development of the Cook County District. "Before we created a forest preserve in Cook County it became so that if you wanted to go on a picnic you had to know some farmer personally". At the time that Kennicott addressed the Kiwanis the Cook County District already owned 2,500 acres of land.

In its account of this meeting, the *Rockford Register-Gazette* reported that "a majority of the club appeared favorable to such a plan being carried out in Winnebago County". Considering the fact that a petition signed by 500 Winnebago County voters urging the creation of such a forest preserve district was submitted to Judge Robert K. Welsh on the 24th of October, it is likely that this petition originated shortly after the Kiwanis meeting. It is, of course, possible that the petition originated prior to Kennicott's visit and that his visit was designed to win support for the concept.

An account of the presentation of the petition to Judge Welsh cites the desirability of obtaining the old Camp Grant rifle range as the reason for the interest in creating a preserve in the fall of 1922.

Formal order by Judge R. K. Welsh in circuit court Tuesday afternoon overuled objections to the proposition of establishing a forest preserve in Winnebago County and decreed that the question be submitted to the voters of the county at the next regular election Tuesday Nov. 7.

In the event that the proposition receives a majority of the votes cast, the preserve will include the entire county. The plan is to appoint a commission which will acquire desirable tracts of timber in the name of the county.

Among the acres in view by those behind the movement for a preserve is the strip of land on the south bank of the Kishwaukee river, east of New Milford and formerly used by Camp Grant as a rifle range.

This tract has been turned over to



C.W.A. workers constructing a shelter house at Kilbuck Forest Preserve in 1934. (Courtesy W.C.F.P.D.)

the state by the government and an effort will be made to convert it into a preserve of the county. Those interested in the preserve project are boosting the proposition with energy and hope for approval of the voters Nov. 7.

A petition signed by "five hundred or more" legal voters was submitted to Circuit Court Judge Robert K. Welsh in October of 1922. The judge then ordered that the following question be submitted to the electorate at the election of November 7, 1922.

Shall there be organized a forest preserve district in accordance with the order of the Judge of the Circuit Court of Winnebago County, under the date of the 24th of October A. D. 1922 to be known as the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, and described as follows: All of that territory embraced within the boundaries of said Winnebago County Illinois?

An editorial in the *Register-Gazette* for October 25 urged support of the Forest Preserve concept:

Winnebago County voters are invited to ballot on November 7 on the question of creating a forest preserve. The intent of the public spirited citizens behind this project is to acquire by purchase in the name

of the county various tracts of woodland in different sections of the county which shall be opened to all the people for recreation. Cook County has forest preserves and they are immensely popular. The idea is spreading.

In these days of the automobile city people flock to the country more and more each spring, summer, and fall. Formerly they were welcomed by the farmers. But the lawless and careless override the rights of the farm owners. They despoil big woodlots of wild flowers, pilfer his fruit, set dangerous fires and commit other depredations. As a result the careful folk are finding that desirable picnic spots are being closed to them. More and more farmers are posting the sign "admission 50 cents". As a means simply of obtaining the more responsible class of picnickers. An increasing number are closing their farm.

The forest preserve will give people recreation spots of their own. The county will own the property which will be under a careful commissioner system like township parks. These rural parks will be preserved in all their natural beauty. The city dweller may take his family there for a day's outing or camp there for a week or longer if he desires.

The forest preserve question should be carefully considered by the voters. It has many things to commend it. The tax is not large and the preserves can be operated economically. The plan doubtless will appeal to many farmers as a means of relieving them to a considerable extent of the unpleasant and endless job of chasing trespassers.

All of the legal technicalities necessary to get the project before the voters have been complied with. Judge Welsh has ordered the proposition placed on the ballot at the regular election November 7.

The issue was approved by a vote of 13, 901 to 5, 681 and Judge Welsh ordered the District duly organized on November 15, 1922. It was apparently not until the spring of 1924 that the Board of Supervisors took action to make the District a reality. It first tried to place the District under the control of a single Committee of the County Board. When it realized that the Act of 1913 required all members of the Board of Supervisors to be ex-officio members of the Forest Preserve Commission, the single committee plan was abandoned. The idea of electing a special president for the District was also shelved in order to comply with the statute's requirement that the president of the County Board be the president of the Forest Preserve District. The other three officers were elected from the members of the Commission.

This account is verified by an article which appeared in the *Register-Gazette* for April 30, 1924:

Funds for the purchase of woodland tracts in Winnebago County for the Forest Preserve project are now available, the levy for this having been collected, and some of the options on desirable tracts will shortly be taken up by the board of supervisors acting through the committee named last year of which R. A. Shepherd is chairman, Howard W. Short, secretary, and Thomas E. Shimmin, treasurer.

The work of getting this project under way has been delayed as a result of unfamiliarity with the various angles of procedures. Several starts were made but the committee had to back up at intervals as technicalities were encountered but the project is now in a seemingly smooth road leading to the acquirement of properties sought.

The Forest Preserve is entirely in the hands of the County Board.

At the session of June 12, 1924, the first rules and regulations ordinance was adopted, and the tax levy apportioned. \$48,000 was allocated for land purchase and \$7,000 for maintenance.

On July 9, 1924, the president appointed several committees of five members each to oversee the various areas of district activity, such as Real Estate, Purchasing, etc. This form of organization would remain in use until the establishment of an Executive Committee in 1960.

Mr. Tauge G. Lindquist, a graduate of the Michigan Agriculture College, now Michigan State University, was hired as the first county forester. Mr. Lindquist declined a position as head librarian at the college in order to accept the position offered by the District.

According to the annual report submitted by T. G. Lindquist the actual amount spent for land acquisition during the first year was \$38,757.87. A total of 325.8 acres was purchased for an average of \$119 per acre. These purchases consisted of five separate tracts, all of which are listed in the chart below.

Hononegah Park	94.6 acres
Laona Heights	20.0 acres
Kilbuck Bluffs	66.94 acres
Meridian Highway	8.94 acres
Sugar River	135.32 acres

CWA PROJECTS

The Forest Preserve District began its first major construction and improvement program in 1933. In that year the Roosevelt Administration created the Civil Works Administration (CWA) for the purpose of providing employment for workers left jobless by the Great Depression. During the winter of 1933-34 over four million people were employed nationwide under this program.

In February 1934 County Forester Lindquist reported to the Forest Preserve Commission that a number of CWA construction programs were underway in the forest preserves. The total cost to the Forest Preserve District was estimated at less than \$1,000. The projects included the construction of 5 large and 3 small stone shelter houses, the building of the custodian's house at Hononegah, the "restoration" of the Stephen Mack Home and Whitman Trading Post, 4 stone vehicle bridges, 5 foot bridges, 3 dams, several stone entrances, the excavation of lakes at the Kilbuck and Rock Cut preserves, 5 miles of road grading, improvement of 250 acres of timber, and a complete topographical survey of all the preserves. Mr. Herman Eklund was designated as the architect for all CWA projects.

The CWA program for the Forest Preserve District was well underway at the time that Tauge Lindquist was succeeded by Harlan O. Lundgren as county forester.

WPA PROJECTS AND PREWAR DEVELOPMENT

The authors were fortunate in being able to interview Harlan O. Lundgren prior to the publication of this book. Mr. Lundgren began his service with the District in May 1931 after leaving his position as production expeditor with the Rockford Drilling Machine Company.

Mr. Lundgren worked initially at Rock Cut and was also involved in the tree transplanting at the Hononegah nursery. He participated in the construction of the Macktown Golf Course and recalls that Commissioner Arvid Anderson was of great assistance to Tauge Lindquist in the design and construction of the course. Lundgren took several courses in park design, park maintenance, and golf course operation from the University of Illinois and the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He was later assigned to the main office. He succeeded Lindquist as county forester in May 1934 and served in that position until May 1945.

Lundgren's first day as superintendent was somewhat inauspicious. A bootlegger rammed his vehicle head on into Lundgren's car, demolishing the car and temporarily hospitalizing the new county forester. The County Clerk, Howard Short, managed the Forest Preserve's affairs for the month Lundgren was hospitalized.

The District's small office was located on the first floor of the courthouse during this period. Lundgren and his secretary were later given the former county auditor's office on the second floor. Lundgren spent 95% of his time in the field and, in addition to normal duties, he and his crews were called upon to do a variety of tasks including landscaping the courthouse grounds and preparing the seating for the visit of a Swedish prince. The District had one supervisor at each of the preserves. Their names are undoubtedly familiar to many area residents: Lawrence McGonigal at Macktown; Floyd Swenson at Kishwaukee; Lew Canfield at Rock Cut; Lief Burch at Hononegah; Art Miller at Sugar River; Lew Dietrich at Seward Bluffs; and Chuck Keurish at Kilbuck.

In 1935 Congress created the Works Progress Administration (later known as the Works Projects Administration) as part of a policy of replacing direct payments to victims of the Depression with federally sponsored work relief programs. The WPA had many similarities to the

The Forest Preserve District

CWA except for the fact that it was more permanent and larger in scale. The WPA was in existence from 1935 to 1941 and employed an average of over two million workers during that time span. Individuals were paid from \$15-\$90 per month and worked at a wide variety of jobs. WPA workers for the Forest Preserve District usually worked 24 hours per week and were paid 30 to 65¢ per hour depending upon their skills.

Harlan Lundgren was responsible for submitting the various forest preserve projects to the WPA office which approved his projects and allocated a quota of men and materials. The projects included shelter house construction, road building, tree planting, woods improvement and the construction of well shelter houses and toilets. The WPA paid for the labor force and furnished most of the materials. The District made its contribution in the form of stone quarried in the preserves, and also provided trucks and drivers.

At its peak, over 600 men were engaged in various projects with the Forest Preserve District. Mr. Lundgren played another vital role in that he was able to communicate with the Swedish workers, many of whom could not speak English. Lundgren estimates that Swedes comprised 75% of the work force and recalls that, on the whole, the job performance of the WPA workers was excellent. Frank Carpenter was the architect assigned by the WPA and was responsible for the final design of the shelter houses while stone mason John Peterson took care of the actual construction. John Hoaglund was the WPA foreman who was directly responsible for over 27 miles of roadwork which was accomplished in the preserves. Meandering roads were constructed as a means of reducing speeding by motorists. Much of the roadwork was blacktopped as part of another WPA project in 1940.

As part of one WPA project, the original sprinkling system on the Macktown Golf Course was dug up and replaced. (For details on the construction of the Macktown Golf Course see the Macktown chapter). Another WPA project resulted from the erosion of the east bank of the Sugar River in the Sugar River Forest Preserve. The river was claiming 12 to 14' of the bank annually and was getting dangerously close to the road. Willow branches were cut and placed at the edge of the river in layers extending three feet up the embankment. By the following year there was an embankment of willow brush sufficient to counter the erosion.

Three girls were hired under the WPA writer's program to prepare a booklet describing each of the forest preserves. Reduced photos of the topographical

maps which had been drawn by the CWA engineers were included. This booklet provides an excellent source for the facilities and early development of the individual preserves. The District also employed a crew of 12 boys under the National Youth Corps digging up European Barberry plants to prevent white pine blister rust from spreading through the preserves. Fortunately this problem was identified in its early stages by Dr. Tehone and Dr. Carter of the University of Illinois and no more than a dozen trees were lost in the preserves. When the WPA was disbanded, a regional inspector spent two days reviewing the work completed in the forest preserves and stated that the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District was ranked among the top ten sponsoring agencies in the nation in terms of cost effectiveness in accomplishing its projects.

The preserves were popular outing places for factory, lodge, and church picnics. Macktown was for many years the site of the annual picnics for the employees of Greenlee Brothers, Ingersoll Machine, and the Atwood Vacuum Co. In 1939 over 5,000 school children and adults attended a county wide music festival which was held at the Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve. Special areas were set aside for large groups in the western portion of Rock Cut, the southwest of Kishwaukee, as well as areas at Hononegah, Sugar River, and Kilbuck. A deposit of \$10 was required for groups of 50 or more persons and was refunded if the area was found to be clear of debris after the picnic. The picnickers were usually careful to leave the preserves in the condition that they found them.

In view of the present day problems with littering and alcoholic beverages in the preserves, it is interesting to note that a liquor ban existed at the time that Lundgren was county forester. Many clubs and churches preferred this rule and enforcement was not difficult. Preserve hours were from 8 AM - 9 PM in the summer and 8 AM - 4 PM in the winter.

On several occasions, Winnebago Indians from Wisconsin asked permission to camp for a month or more in the Macktown Forest Preserve on the river bank in the north part of the preserve. Their chief stated that the area was an ancestral camping and hunting ground. This encampment provided an interesting attraction for area residents and Lundgren recalls that the Indians were very careful with their camp fires, kept the area clean, and were always welcome.

One of the more unusual projects which Mr. Lundgren recalls involved the raising of pheasants in heated brooder houses in the north part of the Rock Cut preserve. This project was undertaken in coopera-

tion with the Winnebago County Sportsman's Club. Four brooder houses were fenced in and 1,500 pheasant chicks were brought from the State Hatchery in Yorkville. Lundgren and Lew Canfield spent many hours checking the temperatures and trying to prevent overcrowding. Children had a tendency to rush up to the fence and scare the chicks, but the project was quite successful during the three years of its operation. Each fall hundreds of pheasants were released in the various preserves.

During the Second World War, the Forest Preserve District kept its staff at a minimum. Wood was brought from the preserves to heat the courthouse during the wartime coal shortage. Both the Kilbuck Bluffs and Kishwaukee Preserves were used for maneuvers by troops that were training at Camp Grant. Lundgren was given an unrestricted pass to the camp for the purpose of arranging for the use of the preserves by the Army.

During Lundgren's tenure as county forester, the total acreage of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District exceeded the amount specified by the existing formula for determining the amount of recreation and open space land an area needed. Therefore the only land purchase made was the addition of the 98 acre Alpine Forest Preserve in 1939. This parcel was purchased for flood control purposes in cooperation with the WPA, the Department of Waterways, and the City of Rockford. An earthen core dam was constructed on this site. The tract was renamed the Memorial Forest Preserve in 1961 and sold to the Rockford Park District in December 1965. It is now known as Reuben Aldeen Park.

Harlan Lundgren was one of seven charter members of the Midwest Institute of Park Executives and was elected to the American Institute of Park Executives in 1939. The Macktown preserve was the site of several meetings of the Midwest Institute during the years that Mr. Lundgren was in charge of the Forest Preserve District.

Harlan Lundgren resigned to operate a farm business and to do various product designing. He later accepted a position with the State of Illinois. He was succeeded by Acting County Forester A. R. Carter in May 1945. Al Hougan took over later in that same year.

POSTWAR DEVELOPMENT

The dates of service for the remaining county foresters (superintendents) who are referred to in this book are: Granville Coburn (1948-58); Ronald Pennock (1958-65); James Fennessy (1967-73); and Robert Mahnke (1973-Present). The first superintendent, T. G. Lindquist, briefly returned

to the District as acting county forester following the resignation of Superintendent Pennock in 1965.

The Forest Preserve District office was located at the courthouse until 1963. From 1963-1972 it was located at Memorial Hall, 215 North Main Street. In 1972 it was moved to the new courthouse building. In the spring of 1979 the office was moved to its present location in the renovated old sheriff's headquarters, 403 Elm Street.

Land acquisition by the District prior to 1930 was financed solely from the corporate tax levy. As the chart on page 7 indicates, land acquisition from 1930 to 1970 was the result of donations and the sale of property by the District. Four Lakes preserve was obtained from a trade with the State of Illinois which received most of the former Rock Cut Forest Preserve (now Rock Cut State Park). That portion of Rock Cut Forest Preserve which was not sold to the state was renamed Willow Creek Forest Preserve. In 1966 the Sugar River addition was purchased after the sale of Memorial Forest Preserve to the Rockford Park District. In 1968 Willow Creek Forest Preserve was sold to the state as an addition to Rock Cut State Park. Proceeds from the sale of Willow Creek preserve were used to purchase the 1969 Seward Bluffs addition and the Pecatonica River Forest Preserve. Remaining funds from the sale of Willow Creek were also applied toward the purchase of the Kieselburg Preserve in 1972.

As the land acquisition chart indicates, the Forest Preserve District has been the recipient of many generous donations of land. Forest preserve districts are authorized by statute to accept gifts of money or property. The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District is recognized by the internal revenue services as a non-profit organization so that any gift can be credited as a donation for tax purposes. All gifts or bequests will be used as specified. Land may be donated for an undisturbed natural sanctuary, as a living memorial to an individual, or designated for specific recreational or educational development. Approximately 27% (1,183 acres) of the District's total acreage has been donated. The value of such donations continues to grow with the passage of time.

By the beginning of the present decade Forest Preserve acreage was unable to keep pace with the rapid expansion of population within its boundaries despite large donations of land by interested citizens. *The Park and Open Space Policy Plan*, which was adopted by the City-County Planning Commission in 1972, recommends that the long range supply of forest preserves be established at a ratio of 15 acres for every 1,000 persons residing in

the District. This means that the county will need 5,321 acres of forest preserve lands by 1985 and 6,280 acres by 1995.

In February 1976 the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission adopted a comprehensive Land Acquisition Plan. Forest Preserves have the legal authority without referendum, to go into bonded indebtedness for the purpose of land acquisition for an amount up to 2 per cent of the assessed value of the District. In 1976, the District approved, for the first time, a \$2 million Land Acquisition Bond Issue and has used the proceeds to acquire property in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the Land Acquisition Plan.

THE FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT TODAY

The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District is a regional open space agency with primary responsibilities of promoting conservation, recreation, and environmental education within Winnebago County.

The Forest Preserve is governed by the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission. Each of the twenty-eight members of the Winnebago County Board is considered by statute to be a member of this Commission. Since April 1960 the Forest Preserve District has been directly governed by an Executive Committee which presently consists of seven members appointed by and from the Forest Preserve Commission. A Land Advisory Council was first appointed in October 1961. The six members of this council provide expertise in the areas of real estate and finance to the members of the Forest Preserve Commission and evaluate land for prospective acquisition.

The Forest Preserve District presently derives its working capital from two sources. The District's tax levy is distributed into the corporate and development funds. The 1978 tax rate was .0744 cents per one hundred dollars of assessed real estate valuation, which means that the Forest Preserve District has the lowest tax rate of any taxing body within Winnebago County. Applied to an average home value of \$40,000 this would result in an annual cost of approximately \$8.00 per home owner. The District's annual tax income amounts to approximately \$1,000,000. Approximately one-third of this money is used for maintenance and law enforcement. An additional third is used for the development of new facilities and the remaining third is used to retire bonds which were issued for additional acquisition of open space lands. The second source of income is the user's fees generated by camping fees, shelter house fees, golf course fees etc. The District has

also used federal and state funding programs to supplement its funds for land acquisition and development.

The Forest Preserve District presently comprises 4,117 acres which are divided between twenty-three locations throughout the county. The District maintains approximately 65% of its acreage in its natural condition and allows 30% to be developed for recreational and educational purposes. The District's total acreage represents about 1.5% of the county's land surface. Its 2,140 acres of forest represent about 1% of the forested land which existed in Winnebago County prior to 1850. The 85 acres of native prairies represent .00037% of the original prairie-land that existed prior to 1850.

The land which the District utilizes for recreational use currently provides the following facilities:

- 19 shelterhouses for large picnics
- 28 miles of interior roads
- Wells and restrooms on 19 of the 23 sites
- 3 18-hole golf courses
- 3 nature study centers
- 5 campground areas with over 250 individual campsites
- 5 scout camping areas
- 4 free concrete boat launching areas
- 1 arena for horse shows
- 1 model airplane flying field
- 1 National Historic Site (including museum)
- 12 softball fields
- 25 acres of fish lakes
- 1 dairy farm
- 14½ miles of river shore line for public fishing and canoe access
- 1 polo field
- 3 preserves for snowmobiling
- 10 miles of hiking trails

Approximately 5% of the District's land is currently leased for farming until reforestation plans can be implemented. The 2,704 acres of land which are set aside as natural areas include flood plain preservation areas, ground water recharge areas, wildlife sanctuaries, activity buffer areas, nature study areas, and forestry management plots.

The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District is currently operated by 28 fulltime employees comprising 4 administrative and planning employees, 12 preserve maintenance employees, 8 golf course employees, 3 clerical employees, and one naturalist. There are 56 additional seasonal positions. The District also contracts with the Winnebago County Sheriff for 3 full-time officers and the use of 52 auxiliary deputies during the summer season.

The Forest Preserve District works with many community interest groups includ-

WINNEBAGO COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT
 VALUE ON DISTRICT PROPERTY - AS OF SEPTEMBER 1979

Date Acquired	Preserve Name	Acreage	Value	Cost per Acre
1924	Hononegah	98.22	22,000.00	223.98
1929	Hononegah	50.00	5,060.00	101.20
1924	Laona Heights	20.00	4,000.00	200.00
1926	Laona Heights	20.00	2,500.00	125.00
1924	Kilbuck Bluffs	67.00	7,697.87	114.89
1926	Kilbuck Bluffs	13.00	1,001.52	77.04
1930	Kilbuck Bluffs	85.00	7,574.22	89.11
1924	Trailside	9.00	1,035.00	115.00
1925	Sugar River	135.32	4,000.00	29.56
1926	Macktown	214.00	19,454.74	90.91
1927	Kishwaukee	145.00	16,008.00	110.40
1930	Seward Bluffs	71.00	10,195.46	143.60
1939	Hartley Memorial	40.00	DONATION	
1949	Fuller Memorial	135.00	DONATION	
1949	Hinchliff	2.00	DONATION	
1961	Four Lakes	30.00	Traded 57 Acres to the State valued at (25,000.00)	
1963	Atwood Homestead	338.00	DONATION	
1966	Sugar River	190.00	47,500.00	250.00
1969	Seward Bluffs	60.00	65,000.00	812.50
1970	Pecatonica	411.00	180,000.00	450.00
1972	Kieselburg	211.00	126,000.00	597.15
1972	Trask Bridge	15.00	DONATION	
1975	Severson Dells	369.00	DONATION	
1976	Roland Olson	107.00	DONATION	
1976	Roland Olson	20.00	40,000.00	2,000.00
1976	Colored Sands	102.00	92,797.00	909.77
1976	McKiski	32.68	DONATION	
1977	Ledges	164.00	436,000.00	2,658.53
1978	Blackhawk Springs	793.00	1,850,000.00	2,358.00
1978	Hononegah Addition	75.00	150,000.00	2,000.00
1979	Ledges #11 Green	1.13	5,500.00	4,867.26
1979	Rotary Club Camp	85.00	DONATION	
1979	Blackhawk Springs #II	2.00	4,000.00	2,000.00
1979	Blackhawk Springs #III	.69	10,250.00	14,855.00
1979	Guilford Road-Tract "A"	69.62	539,555.00	7,750.00
1979	Ledges Outlot	3.60	75,000.00	20,833.00
1979	Ledges Outlot	2.20		
1979	Espenscheid	60.00	DONATION	
1979	Seward Addition	10.00	60,000.00	6,000.00
1979	Seward Addition	21.00	126,000.00	6,000.00
		4,277.46	\$3,908,128.81	

ing the YMCA, Boy and Girl Scouts, historic preservation groups, sportsmen's clubs, and local service clubs. Developmental and operational costs have been supplemented by the work of volunteer groups such as the Rockton Township Historical Society, the Severson Dells Education Foundation, the Volunteer Naturalists at Severson Dells, the Sheriff's Auxiliary, and the Sinnissippi Audubon Society.

Note: Data for this chapter was provided by the Forest Preserve District.

SECTION II

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY

The natural history of Winnebago County, Illinois, records the development of the natural environment in which we live. The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District was established in 1924 to preserve this natural heritage for the benefit and education of future generations. The very concept of a "forest preserve system" suggests that we have altered our environment dramatically. It also implies that we have the responsibility to preserve this heritage. The "principle of reciprocity" which is the basis of all interaction in our environment states that for every action there is an opposite and equal reaction. To misuse or destroy our natural heritage is to diminish ourselves, because we are indivisible from our surroundings. Nothing in nature exists in isolation.

The following chapter briefly outlines the natural history of Winnebago County and some of the changes that have occurred here over time. This chapter includes sections on geology, glaciation, climate, soils, natural habitats, and the distribution of presettlement and current forests and prairie in Winnebago County. Most of the information presented here summarizes existing books, reports, and papers on Winnebago County. This chapter is not meant to be definitive.

GEOLOGY

In the *Comprehensive Plan For The Illinois Nature Preserves System* published by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, Illinois is divided into fourteen natural divisions and thirty-three sections based on factors such as topography, soils, bedrock, glacial history, and the distribution of flora and fauna. Winnebago County lies between two divisions in Illinois: the Rock River Hill County Natural Division and the North-eastern Morainal Natural Division.

The general physical features of Winnebago County are characterized by broad, rolling glaciated uplands 100-200 feet above alluviated valleys.¹ The broad uplands west of the Rock River are covered with thin glacial deposits from the Illinoian and early Wisconsinian stages of glaciation.

BEDROCK

The bedrock that underlies Winnebago County is primarily Ordovician and Silurian dolomite, limestone, and sand-

Illustration 1: Underlying Bedrock in Winnebago County. (Taken from Salisbury and Barrows, 1918)

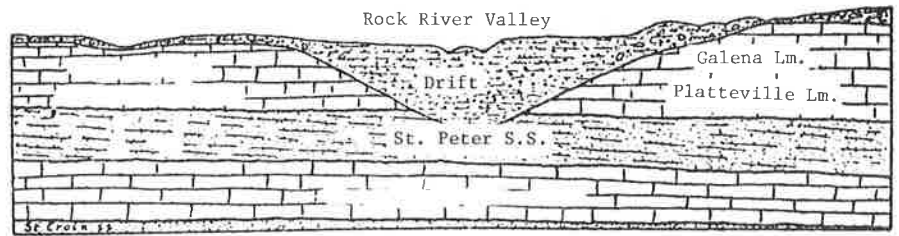


Fig. 5 Cross-section of Rock River Valley near the north edge of Camp Grant, showing beside the cross profile, the sub-structure. The bottom of the valley is in St. Peter sandstone. The bottom of the figure corresponds to sea-level. Length of section about 7½ miles. Vertical scale exaggerated about 8½ times.

Illustration 2: Quarries In Winnebago and Boone Counties In 1925 (Taken From Krey and Lamar, 1925.)

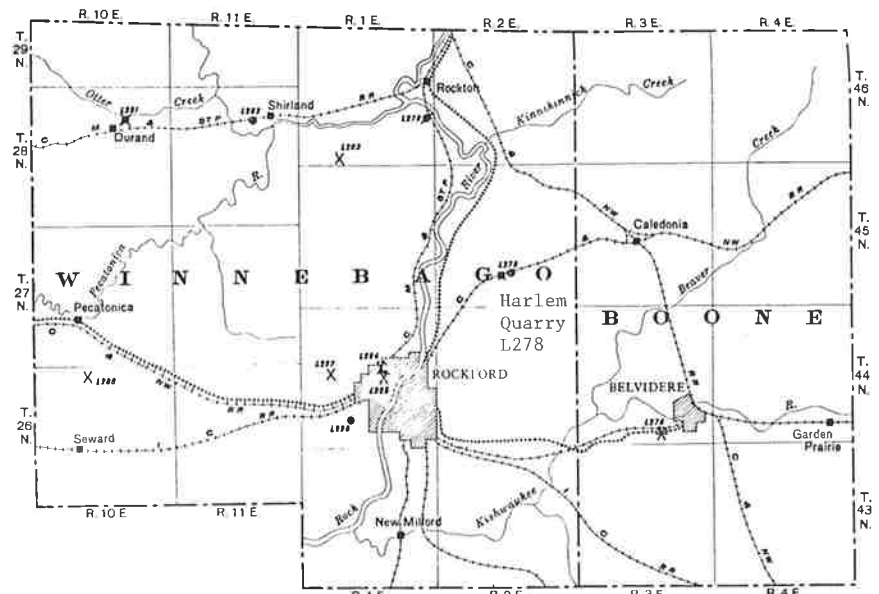


Fig. 38 Map of Boone and Winnebago Counties showing location of quarries and quarry sites. Harlem Quarry is #L278 located northeast of Rockford.

stone. These formations developed from shallow continental seas that covered this part of the North American Continent during the Paleozoic Era. For millions of years sediment slowly accumulated to create these layers of sedimentary rock. Illustration 1 indicates the bedrock underlying Winnebago County. These sedimentary rocks in turn rest on igneous rocks that are Precambrian in age.

Most of the exposed bedrock in the county is Galena or Platteville Dolomite and limestone, except for a few outcroppings of St. Peter Sandstone. These outcroppings of St. Peter Sandstone are found on the east bank of the Sugar River Forest

Preserve; on the Kinnickinnick Creeks northeast of Roscoe, Illinois, known locally as "North and South Ledges"; in Colored Sands Forest Preserve and Rock Cut State Park; and on Grove Creek in Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve.² The commercial uses of the bedrock quarries in this county have been for building stone, masonry work, and general crushed stone and gravel purposes.

In the 1880's limestone was quarried in Winnebago County for heavy railroad masonry and building stone. One prominent quarry was located on the former Chicago and Northwestern Railroad that went from Rockford to Caledonia, Illinois.

Illustration 3: Glacial Advances Into Illinois (Taken from Horberg, 1950)

BEDROCK TOPOGRAPHY OF ILLINOIS

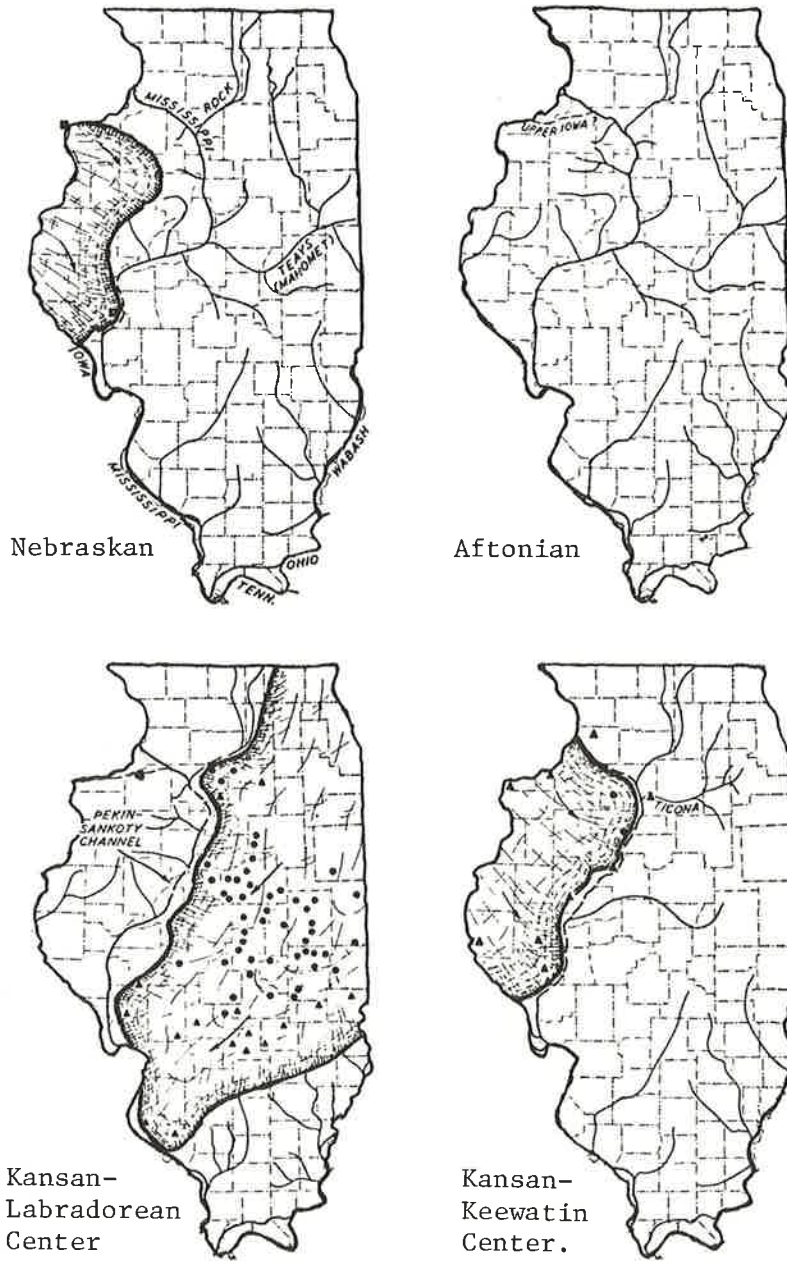


Fig. 21 Drainage stages in Illinois during the glacial period. Based on studies Paul McClintock, F. T. Thwaites.

Illustration 4: Glacial Advances Into Illinois (Taken from Horberg, 1950.)

EROSIONAL HISTORY



By A. H. Bell, G. E. Ekblaw, Leland Horberg, M. M. Leighton, Frank Leverett, H. B. Willman, and others.

Natural History

The Harlem Quarry was located west of the present Rock Cut State Park (See Illustration 2). Derricks were constructed on either side of the line to lift the massive limestone blocks onto railroad cars. In volume three of A. H. Worthen's 1882 *Economical Geology of Illinois*, James Shaw writes rather grandiloquently on page 89 of the uses of this building stone in Rockford in the 1880's:

....We have heard much said of the beauty and aristocratic appearance of brownstone fronts in other wealthy cities; but no stone ever quarried, unless it be the marbles or the flesh-colored granites, present a more striking, solid, home-like appearance than these same cream-colored limestones of the Forest City...Let wealthy builders hereafter, instead of sending for Milwaukee brick to put into their palatial residences, go to the rich outcrops of the Galena limestone, and dig from thence a building material every way more durable, more beautiful, and more simply grand.

GLACIAL HISTORY

During the Pleistocene period (1 million B. C. - 25,000 B. C.) four continental ice sheets or glaciers advanced across North America. In chronological order, these four ice sheets are known as the Nebraskan, Kansan, Illinoian, and Wisconsinian glacial periods. Most of these glaciers originated in Canada around central Quebec. Illustrations 3 and 4 show the four glacial advances into Illinois and their intervening substages.

As the glaciers advanced into the upper Mississippi Valley they changed the contour of the land, transporting or depositing sediments called drift over the old land surface. Winnebago County was primarily effected by the Illinois and Wisconsin ice-sheets.

During Illinoian glaciation, the entire State of Illinois was covered with ice from Canada except for a few "driftless" (an area not effected by glaciation) areas. These areas were located in the northwestern corner of Illinois, the far southern tip of the state, and a narrow strip in western Illinois.³ During the intervening substage, when the glaciers receded and the climate was mild, much of the drift received from the Illinois ice-sheet was removed by stream erosion and weathering. The last stage of glaciation, the Wisconsinian, came from the east and moved down the basin of Lake Michigan. Prior to this last glacial advance, Winnebago County was characterized by a well-developed network of stream-carved valleys and intervening uplands. The local

relief, 200 feet, was much greater than it is now and the topography was somewhat similar to that found presently in northwestern Illinois and southwestern Wisconsin. Along the Rock River this landscape now lies buried beneath glacial deposits that range 300 -500 feet in thickness.⁴ These unconsolidated drift deposits are the primary sources for ground-water and sand gravel quarries in the Rock River Valley.

FORMATION OF EXISTING RIVER VALLEYS

Rock River Valley

Prior to the Wisconsin ice-sheet mentioned above, the original Rock River Valley followed the present stream from the Wisconsin state line to a point just south of Rockford, the old Camp Grant, where it continued south and a little east.⁵ Illustration 5 indicates the preglaciation Rock River Valley. After the glacier retreated, melt-water from the receding glacier deposited large amounts of sand and gravel in the Rock River Valley, blocking or burying the old valley that went to the south and east. The Rock River then left its old course for the present one because it provided the lowest point of escape for the stream.

In the ancient Rock River Valley these glacial deposits range from 150 -500 feet in thickness, averaging 200 feet. In the Pecatonica River Valley, the drift averages 125 feet and attains a maximum of 200 feet. The gravel hill prairies along the east bluffs of the Rock River Valley, and the sand areas found in Shirland Township, were derived from Wisconsin drift material. The river terraces along the Rock River, which stand as much as 60 feet above the present river level, were formed as the river eroded these glacial deposits called "valley trains". Illustration 1 shows the amount of drift deposited in the ancient Rock River Valley, and the present Rock River Valley superimposed on that drift material.

Pecatonica River Valley

One effect of the filling in of the Rock River Valley was to block every tributary leading into it. Prior to the Wisconsin ice-sheet, the Pecatonica River Valley had not filled up with drift, and when obstructed, the lower part of the Pecatonica Valley became a lake.⁶ When the Rock River deepened its channel below the level of its old flood plain, this drew off the glacial lake water which once covered the Pecatonica flats, producing the present wide plain.

Kishwaukee River Valley

The Kishwaukee River Valley and its two tributaries have a history similar to the Rock River. Both the Kishwaukee and its tributaries flowed in valleys much deeper than before glacial drift was deposited and probably followed the old pre-drift filled valley of the Rock to the southeast. When the Illinois ice-sheet receded, the waters from the two tributaries were without a well defined valley below the point where they join. They took the lowest course open to them which is the present stream. During Wisconsinian glaciation the north and south branches of the Kishwaukee carried melt-waters from the Wisconsin ice-sheet, but were little effected.

LOCATION AND CLIMATE

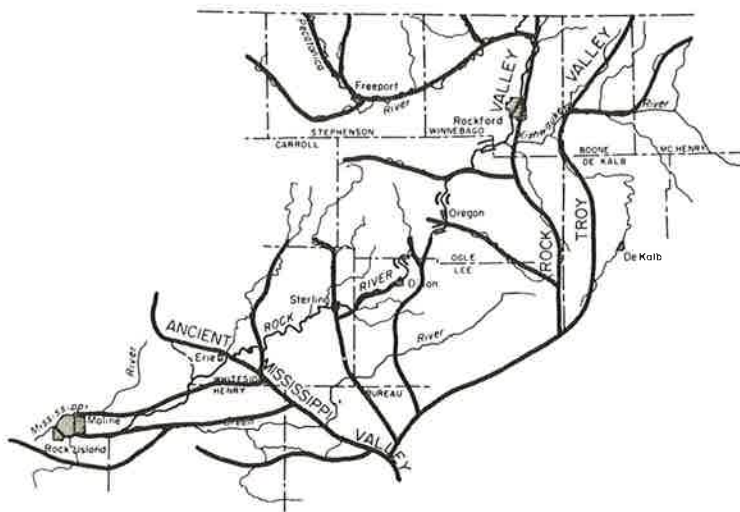
Winnebago County is located at the center of the northern boundary of the state of Illinois. The northern edge of the county is 42° 30' North Latitude; the center of the county is the Third Principal Meridian, 89° 10' West Longitude; and the eastern boundary is about 75 miles west of Lake Michigan. Winnebago County contains 325,881.6 acres and is twenty-four miles square; the average size of the 102 counties in the state.⁷ Seventy-two percent of the land is now farmed and about 7.2% of the county is taken up by urban areas or industries. About 7.5% of the county remains as forest and less than 1% remains as original prairie.

Located in the center of the United States, Winnebago County has a predominately continental climate. The Great Lakes and the Gulf of Mexico have little influence on our climate. Our mean annual temperature is 48.1° and our yearly range is 136° from a low of -26°. Annual precipitation is 36.72 inches and occurs primarily between May and September. Yearly snowfall is 34.1 inches. First frost is not later than October 9th, and the last is not earlier than May 6th.⁸ The prevailing winds are westerly; primarily northwest in winter and southwest in summer. Winnebago County is located in the transition zone between prairie and forest vegetation.

DRAINAGE, STREAMS, PONDS, AND LAKES

Winnebago County is dissected by thirty permanent streams which have a total length of 281.3 miles and cover 3,116.5 acres. The entire drainage for the county is into the Rock River which traverses the county from north to south. The main tributary entering the Rock River in the north is the Pecatonica River, which receives the Sugar River and Coon Creek. In the south the Kishwaukee River enters

Illustration 5: Preglacial Rock River Valley (Taken from Anderson, R. C. 1967.)



Preglacial bedrock valley, glacial spillways, and present streams in northern Illinois.

the Rock with its tributaries and Kilbuck Creek. West of the Rock River the following creeks empty into the Rock River: Mud Creek in the north, the two branches of Kent Creek in the south, Grove Creek in the west, and Bebb, Middle, Hall, Wray, and Fuller Creek in the southwest. The Kinnikinnick, Dry Run, McDonald, Willow, Spring, and Keith Creeks flow into the Rock from the east. These drainage systems greatly influence the type and location of the prevalent vegetation patterns.

Winnebago County has very few natural water areas because of its well-developed drainage system and because the county lies in an area which is of older glacial origin. Twenty-six lake-size impoundments and 160 ponds are found in the county covering 1,018.5 acres or about 1.2% of the land area. Most of the natural water areas occur along the Sugar and Pecatonica Rivers where oxbow lakes are quite extensive. About 2,591 acres of wetlands are scattered throughout the county. Winnebago County has 30.5 miles of lake and stream shoreline.

The general water quality of Winnebago County is good with certain exceptions. Most of the water areas can be classified as fertile, hard, and the surface water usage is moderate to heavy. Free public access is abundant along the Rock River and limited on the Kishwaukee, Sugar, and Pecatonica Rivers. The county's lakes and streams support primarily warm water fish.

CURRENT SOILS

The soils in Winnebago County are derived from moderately thick and thin loess, which are wind deposits of clay, silt,

and sand on bedrock, and from glacial deposits of drift or till. In the major river valleys the soils have developed from the large deposits of glacial outwash reaching as much as 500 feet in thickness. The soil survey of Winnebago and Boone Counties prepared by the U. S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service in 1975 separates the soils into prairie origin, leached forest soils, and mixed prairie and woodland soils. Prairie and forest soils probably represent the vegetation as it has been for thousands of years.¹⁰

NATURAL HABITATS

The natural habitats found in Winnebago County are: prairie soils, which cover most of the county; wooded areas or forest found in the river bottoms and upland areas; the sand areas in Shirland and Rockton Townships; and the wet areas or bogs or "sloughs" found in the bottomlands of the Pecatonica and Sugar Rivers, and Coon Creek. Wet areas can also be found on the bottoms in Grove Creek, the north and south branches of Kent Creek, and to some extent in Kilbuck Creek. For a complete study see: *Flora of Winnebago County, Illinois*, by Egbert W. Fell (Nature Conservancy, Washington, D. C. 1955).

THE PRAIRIES

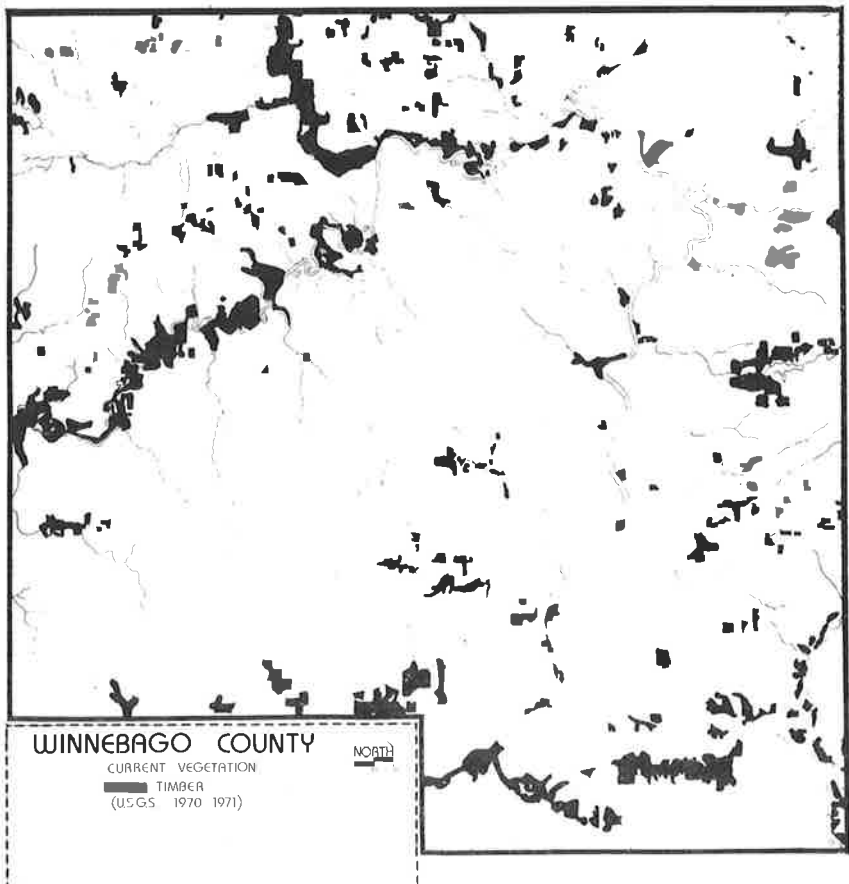
Before the arrival of the white man in the United States, true prairie lands extended from western Ohio, through Indiana, Illinois, the Dakotas and halfway across Kansas. As the settlers advanced across the United States with plows and domestic animals, the prairie communities began to disappear.

Prior to the settlement of Winnebago County in the mid-1830's, the vegetation in Winnebago County was 70-75% prairie with the remaining areas woodlands. Cultivation and urbanization has changed this percentage to such an extent, that less than 1% of Winnebago County is now covered with "original" prairie. The true "prairie" tracts remaining in Winnebago County are: the 53 acres in Eastern Prairie, the 40 acres in Searles Prairie, 10 acres located at the Greater Rockford Airport, and 10 acres found in the Sugar River Forest Preserve. Patches of original prairie may also be found along railroad right-of-ways, certain roadside areas and cemeteries.

The prairie grasses that are found in this county are classified by their height. The tall mesic, moderately moist, prairie grasses were found primarily in Winnebago, Seward, Harrison, Burritt, and Owen Townships. The principal tall prairie grasses were "Big Bluestem" or "Turkey Foot", "Indian Grass" and, on the ridges, "Porcupine Grass". In the sand areas in Shirland and Rockton Townships, the mid-height or "true-prairie" grasses can still be found. The dominant species in these areas are the "Little Bluestem", the "Side-Oats Grama", and the "Dropseeds". The low prairie grasses can be found in the head waters of the two branches of Kent Creek and Grove Creek. Beside the tall grasses mentioned above, one can find "Cord Grass", "Common Reed", "Canary Grass", and "Blue-Joint Grass". Lowland "sandy" prairie areas are found in the Coon Creek bottoms in Rockton Township and in similar areas of Shirland and Laona Townships. Our most abundant flower producers occur in the sand prairie areas in the spring. The first species to flower here is the "Early Sweet" or "Holy Grass", which was used by the Indians in basketmaking.¹¹

SAND AREAS

The main sand area in Winnebago County is located in Shirland and Rockton Townships. It measures approximately six miles east and west of Coon Creek, which bisects the sand area from the north to south, and extends from the Wisconsin line four miles south to the Sugar and Pecatonica Rivers. Most of the sand formations, such as dunes, ridges, and sandy prairies are derived from glacial deposits which were deposited during the latter period of Wisconsinian glaciation.



PRESETTLEMENT AND CURRENT DISTRIBUTION OF FOREST AND PRAIRIE IN WINNEBAGO COUNTY

Illinois is nicknamed the "Prairie State" after the extensive prairies that once covered the state prior to settlement. The word "prairie" is old French in origin and means a "meadow or meadow ground". It was first introduced by the French explorers as they advanced west of the Appalachian Mountains. The English referred to the prairies as savannahs or meadows.

The American Indians called the prairies "Mas-ko-tia", or "the place of fire", because of the recurrent prairie fires. In the Algonquin dialect the word "scoutay" means fire; in the Illinois and Potawatomi dialects, it is "scotte" and "scutay", respectively. The Indians who lived on the prairies were known as "Maskoutens" a name which was rendered by the French explorers "Maskoutines" or "Mascoutens", or "people of the fire" or "Prairie Country".¹² Frederick Hodge writes on p. 810 in his *Handbook of American Indians* (Vol. 1); that the use of "Mascoutens" as "People of the fire" probably arose from the mistranslation of the Algonquian term "ishkote" fire, which could be easily substituted for "Mashkode" or prairie. He further adds that early writers on American Indians used the term "Mascoutens" to include all those Algonquian tribes living on the prairies of Wisconsin and Illinois.

PRAIRIE FIRES

The original forested lands in Winnebago County ran in a northeast south westerly direction paralleling the direction of the predominantly southwest winds. From this directional pattern it has been proposed that soil moisture and prairie fires were the dominant environmental factors in determining the original forest locations in Winnebago County.¹³

Prairie fires were started either naturally or intentionally. A natural cause was lightning, and a non-climate cause was the Indians who lived on the prairies. When the prairie grasses were dry during the hot months of late summer and early fall, they were highly combustible. Once ignited, these fires would burn unimpeded across the flat and rolling plains fanned by the prevailing southwest winds. Reports of these fires burning for days are common among the records of the early settlers. James Hall, Illinois legislator from 1827-31, writes on page 244 of his *Tales Of The Border* (1835):

The prairie fires have been

represented in exaggerated pictures of men and wild animals retreating at full speed, with every mark of terror, before the devouring element. Such pictures are overdrawn. Instances, of loss of human life, or animals,...occasionally occurred, although the preventive was simple. The usual remedy was to set fire against fire, or to burn off a strip of grass in the vicinity of the improved ground, a beaten road, the treading of domestic animals about the inclosure of the farmer, would generally afford protection. In other cases a few furrows would be plowed around the field, or the grass mowed between the outside of the fence and the open prairie.

The purposes of the prairie fires started by man were various. It is known that the Plains Indians used fires to flush game out, both large and small.¹⁴ Amos P. Stoddard writes on p.213 of his *Sketches of Louisiana* (1812), of his technique: "...it is a common practice among the Indians and other hunters to set the woods and prairies on fire, by means of which they are able to kill an abundance of game. They take secure stations to the leeward, and the fire drives the game to them." Other historians indicate that the Indians used fire to create lush green areas attracting the larger grazing animals, the deer and the buffalo, in the spring. Fires may also have been used to facilitate travel in the tall grass. A last cause possibly effecting the distribution of forest and prairie was the large grazing animals themselves. The size and number of the buffalo and bison herds were certainly large enough to create some effect on the woodlands.

PRESETTLEMENT FORESTED AREAS

The original vegetation of Winnebago County prior to 1830, was approximately 75% prairie land and 25% forested lands, consisting of open woodlands or more dense timbers.¹⁵ Illustrations 6 shows the original distribution of forests and prairie compiled from the 1837-40 Land Survey of Winnebago County. The "open woodlands" as reported in the Land Survey consisted of "open timber" or mixed timber and prairie, and were composed almost exclusively of scattered Burr Oaks, a fire resistant species. This would support the theory that fire was the dominant environmental factor in determining forest distribution.

DISTRIBUTION

The distribution of forest and prairie vegetation found in the 1837 Land Survey

reflected the influencing factors of soils, topography, climate, including rainfall and temperature, wind direction and speed, and other environmental factors such as man.

In the sand areas east of the Sugar River and elsewhere in Shirland and Rockton Townships, the presettlement dry upland woods were primarily Burr Oaks and White Oaks. Open woodland mixtures of White and Burr Oaks were found in the extreme northwest corner of the county; and timbers containing Hickories and Red Oak mixed with Burr and White Oak existed at the south central boundary of the county. Of the "witness" trees recorded in the 1837 survey, Burr Oaks were the most common trees, numbering 905, or 57% of the 1,588 trees recorded. White Oaks numbered 447 or 28%.¹⁶

East of the Rock River, in the area most recently effected by glaciation, there was a much higher ratio of forested vegetation to prairie vegetation. The land here is also higher and more hilly. The presettlement forests were open Burr Oak groves or denser dry upland forests of White Oak timbers, containing Pin Oak, Hickories, and some Sugar Maples. These forests were usually located away from the river beyond the gravel outwash; on high land approaching the Rock or Kishwaukee River; and on well-developed flood plains. These higher forests, or open oak groves, were protected from fire by the rivers or bluffs. The river bottom forests were saved by the nature of their environment. The prairies, which thrived on fire, occupied the rest of the county.

CURRENT DISTRIBUTION OF WOODLANDS

When the settlers moved into Winnebago County in the mid 1830's the true prairie communities and virgin forests began to disappear. As Rockford, Illinois, developed into the major commercial center in Winnebago County, more lumber was utilized for building and industry. In the late nineteenth century Rockford became one of the principal centers of furniture and cabinet manufacturing in the United States. This increased the demand on the dwindling woodlands. Since World War II, the boom in urban growth has continued to encroach upon the remaining forest and prairie in the county. Illustration 7 shows the remaining wooded areas in Winnebago County. In 140 years, 65-75% of the woodlands have been removed either for agriculture or urbanization. It is estimated that only 5 to 7.5% of the remaining noncultivated and nonurban land in the county is forested and far less than 1% remains as true prairie land.¹⁷ Most of the natural areas of the county

Natural History

have been taken over by agriculture or the sprawl of Rockford's growing city limits and other urban areas of the county, which occupied 23,574.4 acres in June, 1975. The city of Rockford, Illinois grows in area by about 640 acres per year.¹⁸

Most of the open oak groves, either Burr or White Oak, have been cut to facilitate farming the land. In the area east of the Sugar River, where formerly there were open groves of White Oaks, there are now Black or Hill Oak timbers. The river bottom forests have continued much as before settlement because this land is too wet for farming. Many of the upland forests have been trimmed to remnants of their former size. One redeeming point is revealed by the location of the forest preserves and parks in Winnebago County. Almost all are located in what were formerly major forested areas.

FAUNA OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY

As the forests and prairies changed with the advance of man, many of the characteristic animals found here have left or become extinct. The large mammals such as Black Bear, Elk, Timber Wolf, and Mountain Lion, were extirpated, along with the tremendous Bison herds that had left the area by 1814. The abundant waterfowl common to the wet areas have disappeared as these areas have been disturbed. The following is a partial list of the extirpated or endangered mammals and birds in Winnebago County:¹⁹

Extirpated

Mammals

Bison - 1814
Black Bear - 1860
Elk - early 1800's
Timber Wolf - late 1870's
Mountain Lion, Cougar - 1840-1850
Fisher - 1830-1840
Red Squirrel - 1920, now rare
White Tailed Jackrabbit-Rare, N. W. Ill.

Birds

Prairie Chicken - 1945
Sharp Tailed Grouse
Ruffed Grouse
Sand Hill Cranes
Bald Eagle
Turkey
Passenger Pigeon
Canada Goose

Very Doubtful Or Endangered

Mammals

Bobcat
Coyote

Birds

Bob White Quail
Red Shoulder Hawk

Bluebirds

Extirpated And Returned

Mammals

White-tailed Deer
Beaver

Less Common

Mammals

Grey Fox
Badgers
Fox Squirrel

Birds

Ducks
Geese

More Common Due To Adaptation Or Current Suitable Habitat

Mammals

Opposum
White-tailed Deer
Grey Squirrel
Red Fox

Birds

Crackles
Red-Winged Blackbirds

Introduced Mammals And Birds

Mammals

Norway Rat
Roof Rat
House Mouse
Domestic Animals

Birds

Starlings
Pigeons
House Sparrows
Red Necked Pheasants
Hungarian Partridge
Chuckar Partridge

The following is a partial list of mammals that once inhabited or visited northern Illinois after the Pleistocene Epoch or Ice Age:²⁰

Canada Lynx - 1800's
Caribou - skeletal remains
Giant Bison - skeletal remains, Alton, Ill.
Giant Ground Sloth
Giant Beaver
American Mastodon - skeletal remains (local)
Woolly Mammoth - skeletal remains (local)
Peccary - skeletal remains - Galena and Alton Ill.

Musk Ox - midwest remains
Moose - until 1700
Bobcat, Wild Cat - 1930
Otter - 1940
Wolverine - Rare 1800's
Prairie or Brush Wolf
Porcupine - skeletal remains
Marten - 1840

Further wildlife lists of endangered animals of Winnebago and Boone

Counties and the state of Illinois can be found in the appendix.

Note:

We would like to thank Matthew Paris and his students in the Graphic Art Department at the Rockford Area Vocational Center for their generosity and assistance in helping to prepare the illustrations for this book. Sources used in the section on "Geology" were obtained from various bulletins and reports of the Illinois State Geological Survey. Those geological survey reports not listed in the footnote section are: M. M. Leighton, George E. Ekblaw, and Leland Horberg, "Physiographic Divisions of Illinois", Illinois State Geological Survey Report 129 (Reprint from The Journal of Geology, Vol. 56, No. 1, January, 1948), Urbana, Illinois, 1948; J. E. Lamar, "Handbook on Limestones and Dolomites for Illinois Quarry Operators", Illinois State Geological Survey Bulletin 91, Urbana, Illinois, 1967; and Kernal Piskin and Robert E. Bergstrom, "Glacial Drift In Illinois: Thickness and Character", Illinois State Geological Survey Circular 490, Urbana, Illinois, 1975. Material used in the section on "Location and Climate", "The Prairies", and the "Sand Areas" was taken from Egbert W. Fell in his Flora of Winnebago County, Illinois (Washington, D. C.: Nature Conservancy, 1955) and "Grasses of Winnebago County", Illinois Nature Conservancy (Rockford, Illinois: 1959). We would like to thank George Fell for permission to use these sources in the preparation of this chapter. Material contained in the section "Drainage, Streams, Ponds and Lakes" was taken from an "Abstract of Winnebago County" prepared by Gregg Tichacek in April 1970. Material concerning the distribution of forest, prairie, and fauna in Winnebago County was taken from Donald L. Ivacic's. "A Comparison of Presettlement And Current Flora And Fauna Of Winnebago County, Illinois", Rock Valley College, September 1975. We gratefully acknowledge the use of these sources in the preparation of this chapter. We would also like to thank the following persons for providing us with information: Mrs. Gladys Campbell, Gerald Paulson, and William Schaller.

SECTION III

HISTORY OF NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES THAT ONCE INHABITED WINNEBAGO COUNTY

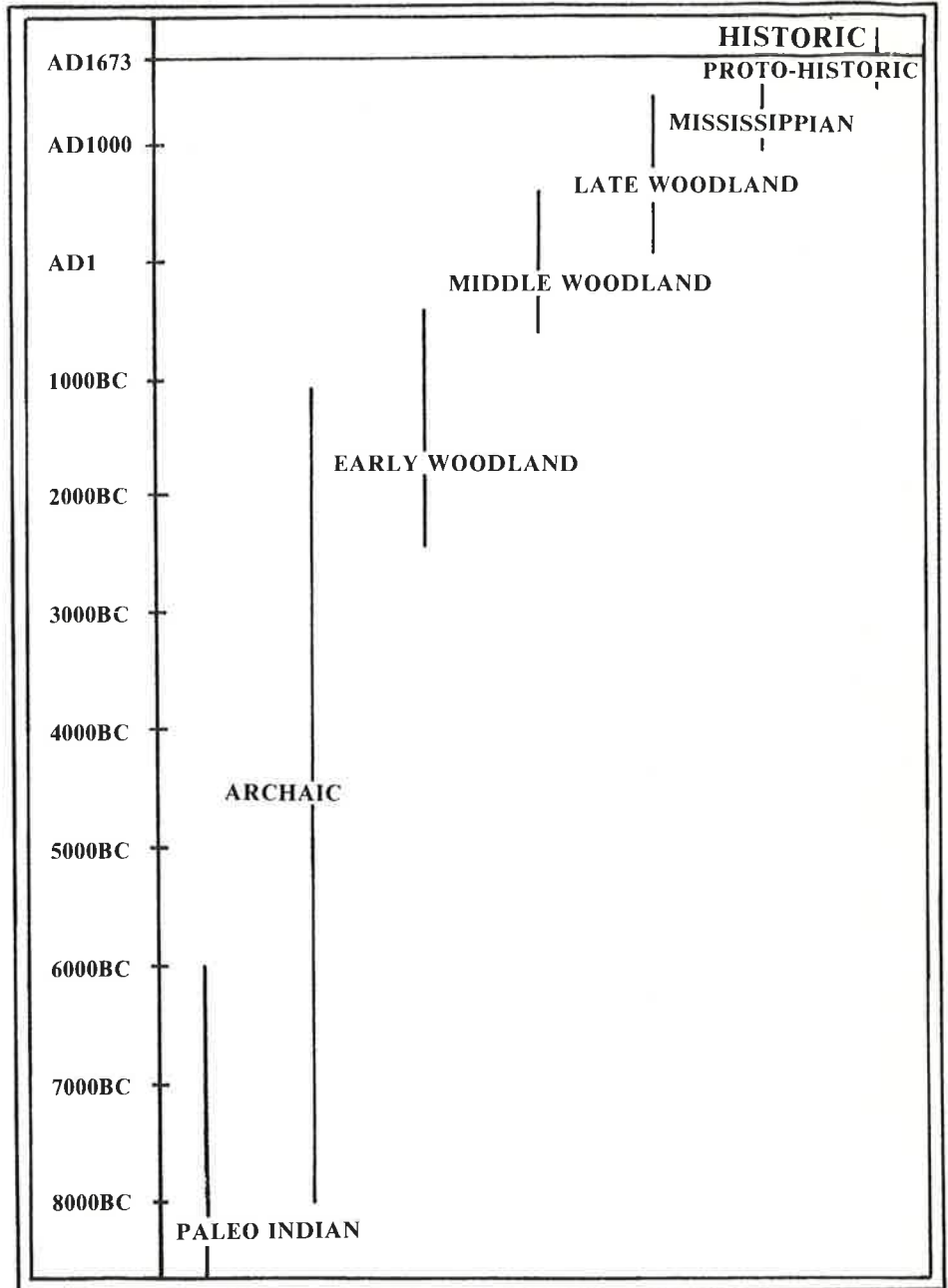
The statement is frequently made that Winnebago County does not figure prominently in Native American History. Often this has been used as an excuse for some writers to briefly mention the subject or ignore it altogether. Aside from the obvious fact that this County and Forest Preserve District are named after an Indian tribe, the documented Indian presence in and around many of the forest preserves made some research into this area a necessary part of this project.

Information and suggestions for source material were made available to us by local colleges, state universities, the Illinois State Museum, and the Illinois Department of Conservation. Information from the historic period relating directly to specific forest preserves is included in the appropriate preserve chapters.

PREHISTORIC PERIOD

Available evidence indicates that the Indians probably entered Illinois from the northwest during the latter part of the Wisconsin glacial epoch, 20 to 14,000 years ago. Archeologists have assigned different names to the sometimes overlapping phases of pre-historic cultural development. The earliest of these, known as the *Paleo-Indian* period, identifies a nomadic culture characteristic of the earliest inhabitants of the North American Continent. These people probably hunted large animals on the fringes of the glaciers. Spearpoints similar to ones found in the Great Plains to kill buffalo and the extinct mammoth have been found in Illinois in the past two decades. A rock shelter near Modoc on the Mississippi River in Randolph County is the only Paleo-Indian site yet identified in Illinois.

With the recession of the last glacier, approximately 10,000 years ago, the people inhabiting this region were forced to rely on smaller game and plants. A more complex social system was also required involving regular hunting camps and seasonal activities. Campsites were located on knolls and close to navigable streams and rivers which indicates that the streams were used for transportation. Burials were in pits or on the surface of the ground with a shallow covering of soil and rock. Wooden working tools augmented the spears and darts during the later part of this *Archaic* period (5,000-1,000 B. C.), and widespread trade between groups began to occur. Archaic material has been located in the general vicinity of the



Indian Cultural Phases (Courtesy Illinois State Museum)

Macktown and Atwood Homestead Forest Preserves. It has also been found in the vicinity of Shirland, Harrison, and the area near the Hinchliff preserve. Publication of precise descriptions and locations is not possible until trained archaeologists have studied the sites.

The next cultural phase is marked by the appearance of pottery and different regional pottery styles. This development is known as the *Early Woodland* period. Early Woodland sites have been dated

from 2,500 to 500 B. C. This period is a transition from a nomadic to an agricultural way of life and, although agricultural development was not uniform, sophisticated experimentation with plants did occur. Burial mounds were common. The *Middle Woodland* period (roughly 300 B. C. - 500 A. D.) was characterized by large settlements mainly along the Mississippi, Illinois and lower Wabash rivers. Dwellings and artifacts were more sophisticated. From approximately 200 B. C. to 400 A. D.

Kickapoo and Mascouten

there is material and cultural evidence of a uniform culture which was shared by otherwise diverse peoples throughout the eastern United States. This phase of development is known as *Hopewell Culture* because pottery characteristic of the culture was first discovered on the Hopewell farm in Ohio. The extent of Hopewell influence can be gauged by the fact that shells and alligator teeth from the Gulf Coast have been found in burial sites in Ohio and Illinois. The first large burial mounds were produced at this time, usually along bottom lands. They were symmetrical, conical, and usually quite apparent. Religious rituals developed and there were clearly defined social classes. More important individuals were placed in group burials while lesser individuals were placed in individual tombs with little or no ceremony of offering. Early and Middle Woodland evidence has been located near Macktown, along the Kishwaukee and Sugar Rivers, and also in the vicinity of Rockton. A Hopewell village was identified not far from the Hinchliff preserve.

Regional specialization resumed with the decline of the Hopewell Culture. Corn was the primary agricultural product and village size increased during the *Late Woodland* period. Gambling and gaming were known at this time. Some of the effigy mounds of the Rock River and Apple River may be Late Woodland. Material evidence associated with this period includes stone vault burials; small triangular and side notched arrowheads; conical antler arrowpoints; bone fishhooks; handled pipes; shell spoons and hoes; bone hairpins and cord roughened pottery vessels. Late Woodland material has been identified near Macktown, Atwood, and Hinchliff preserves, and also near Shirland and Harrison.

The Late Woodland period persisted in the eastern United States until the arrival of the Europeans. In the Ohio-Mississippi river valley there is evidence of different cultural influences. Sites typical of the *Mississippian* period (900-1500 A. D.) were several acres in extent and situated in rich, tillable bottomlands. Excavations frequently indicate the presence of fortified palisades and towers. This culture seemed to be evolving toward the development of city-states and it is possible that the region was influenced by the highly developed civilization of Mexico. The temples at Cahokia are the most famous evidence of this, but pottery styles and varieties of corn grown are also similar to those in Mesoamerica. Material found in the vicinity of the Rockford Airport is generally believed to date from the Mississippian period.¹

THE HISTORIC PERIOD

Contact between the Indians in Illinois and the white man began with the voyage of Louis Jolliet and Father Jacques Marquette down the Mississippi and up the Illinois in 1773. At this time northwestern Illinois above the Rock River was occupied by the Miami tribe which presumably had sought refuge there from the Iroquois sometime in the 1640's. The Kickapoo were settled farther to the east, on the middle reaches of the Rock River and its tributaries in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. The Mascoutens were settled in the vicinity of the Fox River. The Fox, Sauk, and Winnebago were still located in Wisconsin although the Fox used the land in Illinois between Lake Michigan and the land inhabited by the Mascoutens as a winter hunting ground.

There are a few generalizations that can be made about the way of life of the woodland prairie Indians that inhabited northern Illinois at the beginning of the historic period. These tribes subsisted on the basis of hunting and agriculture, and specific periods of the year were devoted to each activity. Each activity also required a different form of village.

Residence in the summer village, which was the largest and most permanent type, began in late spring. By necessity this village was located near tillable land and was, for purposes of transportation, usually situated along the bank of a river. Corn, beans, and squash were the principal farm products. Women were occupied with planting crops while the men built up their supplies of hunting and fighting equipment, brought in fresh meat, socialized, and made household repairs.

In early June the whole population, with the exception of the very young, the aged, the infirm, and a few guardian warriors, left the summer village for the communal bison hunt. This hunt was intended to augment the meat supply for the coming winter and it lasted from five to eight weeks. The type of village which the tribe used while on this hunt consisted of temporary single family shelters. Easy mobility was a primary consideration while the tribe was out on the prairie.

Upon their return to the summer village, the women returned to their tasks of tending the house and garden and making clothes. The men went on hunting or war parties. The principal religious ceremonies were held when the corn began to ripen in September. After the corn was harvested it was sorted along with cured bison, dried beans, and smoked squash in underground bins.

Following the harvest, the village

separated into relatively large winter hunting bands. Each band constructed a semi-permanent village at the site of its winter hunting ground. These small villages were situated near a river and a woods. In the spring the bands reassembled at the summer village.

The clothing worn by these tribes varied greatly with the season. While indoors in the summer, the men frequently went naked. A breech cloth was worn when walking about the village. The women wore a knee-length skirt of dressed deer hide or smaller animal skins sewed together. The men wore hip length leggings and a skirt, and the women knee-length leggings and a skirt or simple dress, when the weather became colder. In winter bear robes, with the hair worn on the inside, were wrapped around the shoulders.²

THE KICKAPOO AND MASCOUTEN

The Kickapoo are of interest in the history of Winnebago County primarily for the reason that they were the inhabitants of the Rock River Valley at the dawn of the historic period.

The Kickapoo are of Algonquin stock and their language and culture is similar to that of the Sauk and the Fox. Their name in English means "Walking Indian". They frequently associated with the somewhat mysterious Mascouten tribe. The Mascouten present some formidable difficulties for ethnologists and historians. Their name was often misunderstood by the whites who came in contact with them, they usually lived with other tribes, and they signed no treaties with the United States which would enable adequate linguistic studies to be made. The most recent studies indicate that if they were linked linguistically and culturally with anyone, it was with the Kickapoo.³

Sometime around 1683 the Iroquois attacked the Mascouten, who were in eastern Illinois near Lake Michigan, and carried off a number of them as prisoners. The remainder of the Mascouten, as well as the Kickapoo in this area, fled westward to avoid further attacks. It seems likely that this was the beginning of the Kickapoo's occupation of the Rock River Valley. The Franquelin map of 1684 shows the Rock River of Illinois as the River of the Kickapoo. Minet's map of 1685 also places the Kickapoo on the Rock and Homan's map of 1687 shows the Mascoutens to be between the Rock River and the Wisconsin. The Rock River was occupied by the Kickapoo until about 1770. This fact is partly responsible for the scarcity of information about the Indians in this area in the early historic period. The Kickapoo

were extremely conservative, extremely anti-European, and would not even permit Europeans to visit their villages. In 1702 the combined Kickapoo and Mascouten were estimated to have only 450 warriors and thus a total population of only about 2,250 individuals. Many Kickapoo and Mascouten left the Rock River area and settled near the Wabash River in Indiana.

Some time after 1712, Kickapoo chiefs named Pechicamengoa and White Robe were reported to have villages on the Rock which were the center of activity for this branch of the tribe. After 1734 the majority of the Kickapoo and Mascouten were concentrated in the southern part of Illinois. Those who remained in northern Illinois migrated to the Illinois River Valley sometime after 1769.

During the war of 1812 some of the Kickapoo joined the Sauk on the Rock River where the British were distributing free gunpowder. Among this group was a band led by Pemwatome, who established a village on the Pecatonica River. The precise location of this village is unknown. When they learned that the war had ended, they informed American representatives that they would return to their villages along the Wabash.⁴

The Mascouten had by this time apparently become absorbed into the Kickapoo tribe. The Kickapoo were divided into two main groups. Those who were living on the prairie between the Illinois and Wabash rivers were known as the Prairie band. Those centered around the Vermilion River (a branch of the Wabash) were known as the Vermilion band.⁵

The Kickapoo began migrating across the Mississippi early in the 19th century. Governor Edwards put great pressure on the remaining elements of the tribe to migrate to a reservation in Missouri. Both bands agreed to cede their lands in separate treaties signed in 1819. A large group refused to go to Missouri and migrated to Texas and Mexico instead. Those who did go to Missouri were eventually removed first to Kansas and then later to the Indian Territory (Oklahoma). In 1950 there were an estimated 800 in Oklahoma and Kansas and an undetermined number in Mexico.⁶

THE POTAWATOMI

The Potawatomi were an Algonquin people who, from a very early period, formed a confederation with the Ottawa and Chippewa known as the "Three Fires". There was a great deal of intermarriage between the members of these three tribes and, at least when they were in Illinois, one tribe did not act without consulting the other two. The languages of these three tribes, as one would suspect, were closely

related and mutually intelligible. The prehistoric home of this confederation was east of Lake Michigan.

The Potawatomi began moving into northeastern Illinois from the vicinity of Green Bay, Wisconsin, at the beginning of the 18th century. By 1743 they were established in the Chicago region and they later moved into the Illinois River Valley. They even extended into Indiana and southern Michigan.

When the Potawatomi learned that their lands along the Illinois had been ceded by the Sauk and Fox to the U. S. by a 1804 treaty, they insisted that the Illinois Valley had never been part of Sauk territory and that therefore the Sauk could not give it away. It was not uncommon for the whites to acquiesce to the practice of one tribe selling another's land.

The Potawatomi not only refused to cede their land, but in fact concentrated their numbers in the Illinois River Valley. Six to seven hundred warriors returned to the Illinois River in the fall of 1815 and other Potawatomi from Michigan were moving into the Chicago vicinity at the same time.

The Potawatomi finally agreed to the cession of their land by signing their own treaty with the United States on August 24, 1816. By the terms of this treaty they were granted hunting and fishing rights on their former land as long as it was the property of the United States. It is likely that the Indians were unaware of the actual import of this clause. As soon as private citizens purchased the land from the government, it would no longer be the property of the United States and the Indians would be subject to removal.⁷

When Major Long's expedition reached Illinois in 1823, he estimated that there were 1,200 Potawatomi living there. At Chicago, Long talked with Chief Alexander Robinson and learned that the Indians of the region were mixed Chippewa, Potawatomi, and Ottawa. They had even formed a confederation with 600 or so Kickapoo in the area and the total confederation population around Lake Michigan and vicinity was said to number 2,500. The western boundary was the Rock River and the eastern was the Wabash.

Long left Chicago on June 11, 1823, and found a Potawatomi village near Des Plaines. More importantly, as far as the history of Winnebago County is concerned, Major Long came upon another Potawatomi village at the mouth of the Kishwaukee River in July. This village was reported to be a settlement of Potawatomi, Chippewa, Ottawa, and Menominee under a Potawatomi chief.⁸ It is indicated on a map drawn by Lucius Lyon (circa 1830), and it is also the same village that was visited by the Sauk war leader Black Hawk

during the hostilities of 1832.⁹ (See Sauk and Fox section). William H. Keating's account of Long's expedition is interesting because it provides us with one of the earliest descriptions in English of a site in present day Winnebago County. The Hincliff Forest Preserve is located in this same area.¹⁰

On the 14th day of July, the party reached Rock river which is the most important tributary of the Mississippi, between the Illinois and the Wisconsin. Rock river is termed, in the languages derived from the Algonquin, Sen-se-pe, and in the Winnebago, We-ro-sha-na-gra, both which names have the same signification as the English term. It forms the division between the hunting grounds claimed by the Potawatomis, on the eastern side, and those of the Sauks, Foxes, and Winnebagoes on the west. At the place where we crossed the river, it was about one hundred and twenty yards wide; and its depth was such that it could not be forded at that time, though we were informed that it is customary for horses loaded with furs, to cross it without difficulty. We were ferried over in a small canoe, sent for us from an Indian village in the vicinity. We crossed Rock river just above the mouth of the Kishwake, the same stream which we had passed the day previous, but which, from its great increase, we scarcely recognized, when we saw it three miles above its mouth, where we were again obliged to cross it. Opposite to the mouth of the Kishwake there is a large island in Rock river. At the lower crossing of the Kishwake, we passed through an Indian village, designated by the name of the river, and which is inhabited by a mixed race of Potawatomis, Chippewa, Ottawas, Menomones, &c. The chief, who belongs to the first of these nations, was away at the time we were there, and in his absence we saw no person who could converse with us. A lad, who was in the village, and who, as we were told, was the son of the late chief, when spoken to, made no answer, but seemed to be very stupid; although the other Indians did not appear destitute of intelligence, yet not one of them could converse with us. This indeed is one of the Characteristics of Indians. The business of receiving and replying to speeches belongs to the chief, it is one of his proudest prerogatives, and it is one in which

he chiefly endeavours to excel; while the other Indians, seeming to consider it as no concern of theirs, pay no attention to it, and are always at a loss, when spoken to by those whom they are accustomed to treat with respect or with regard: but with the traders, whom they ridicule, and for whom they openly profess the most manifest contempt, they will join in conversation very freely and familiarly. After having crossed Rock river, we stopped to dine on the high bank which confines it on the west side, and were not a little amused at the apparent delight with which the little Indian boy, who had brought the canoe to us from Kishwake village up Rock river, partook of the bread and bacon which we gave him:..

In 1829 the government began the first steps toward the removal of the remaining Indians from Illinois. In 1830 the agency for the "Three Fires" was transferred to the Rock River to encourage the Indians to leave the Illinois River Valley. A group of the chiefs agreed to make this move early in 1832.

The majority of the Potawatomi assisted the United States during the conflict with Black Hawk. In return for this service the government informed the tribe that they would be able to fish and hunt on ceded land. Not long after this assurance had been given, the Potawatomi were accused of destroying fences and burning the bridge over the Winnebago inlet to Galena. Other rumors maintained that the tribe was entering into a war alliance with the Winnebago.

Using these accusations as a pretext, the governor ordered the tribe to vacate the state on December 3, 1832. They were forced to cede their remaining lands the following year.

Many Potawatomi still reside on reservations in Oklahoma and Kansas. It is likely that the population of the tribe was considerable during the time that they were in Illinois because there were 3,000 living in Oklahoma and 2,000 in Kansas in the 1950's.¹¹

THE SAUK AND FOX

The Sauk and the Fox Indians were a close alliance of two Indian tribes that were the principal contestants against the United States in the Black Hawk War of 1832. The two tribes are probably branches of one original stem though both tribes have always remained politically and territorially distinct. The U. S. Government blurred their identities when they combined both tribes under one name, the

"Sac-and-Fox", after 1783. Originally, the Sauks inhabited the eastern peninsula of Michigan, and the Fox northwest Ohio and southern Michigan. Their early migrations were probably parallel, creating some confusion as to their origins and movement.

The Sauk, "people of the outlet", and the Fox, "Red Earths", were two of a number of Algonquian tribes that were culturally and linguistically related with the Kickapoo and the Mascoutens prior to European contact. There is some evidence that the Sauk, with the tribes mentioned above, were first known to the Europeans as "Gen de Feu", or "People of the Fire". Father Allouez in 1667 described the Sauk and Fox as more savage than all the other peoples he had met. Allouez was told that "...if the Sauks and Foxes found a person in an isolated place they would kill him, especially if he were a Frenchman, for they could not endure the sight of the whiskers of the European."¹²

As a result of continuous warfare and pressure from the Iroquois, the Sauk and the Fox were pushed west into Wisconsin. The Fox first settled on the Wolf River in northeastern Wisconsin and then moved south to the Fox River. The Sauk settled around the Green Bay region. Father Allouez contacted both tribes around the Green Bay region in 1666-67.

In the early eighteenth century the Fox began to interfere with the French traders and trading routes. This interference turned into war when a party of Fox and Mascoutens moved to Detroit in 1712. The commander thinking that the Fox and Mascoutens planned to destroy the post, incited a group of Indian tribes to attack the Fox. The Fox resisted but were eventually pushed back to Wisconsin. In 1716 an uneasy peace was agreed upon between the Fox and the French.

In 1728 the French learned that the Fox were forming another alliance against them and reopened the war. The French policy adopted at this time explicitly aimed at solving the Fox problem by complete extermination of the tribe. The war continued until 1733 when the surviving members of the tribe sought refuge with the Sauk near the present city of Green Bay, Wisconsin. When the French commander at Green Bay, Nicolas-Antoine Coulon de Villiers, demanded the release of the Fox, the Sauk refused. With a small force De Villiers attempted to take the remaining members and was killed. The French along with the Ottawa, Menominee, and Chippewa as Indian allies, retaliated against the Sauk and Fox and the result was twofold: 1. The creation of the alliance of the Sauk and Fox which would last until the middle of the nineteenth century and: 2. The

removal of the Sauk and Fox from the territory of Wisconsin south to Iowa. In 1737, after a disastrous retaliatory campaign, the French ended the Fox Wars by granting both the Sauk and Fox a pardon. After the war the Sauk and Fox returned to Wisconsin where they remained until the end of the eighteenth century when the majority of the Fox settled in Iowa and the Sauk settled between the Rock and Des Moines Rivers.¹³ One band of Sauk settled near the mouth of the Rock River at a village which became known as Saukenak. It was here that Black Sparrow Hawk or the warrior "Black Hawk" was born in 1767.

In the early 1800's the Sauk and the Fox began to visit British posts in Michigan and Canada for trading goods and firearms. This aroused tremendous apprehension on the part of the U. S. Government and the frontier settlements in the Illinois and Michigan Territories. To try and appease this situation Governor Harrison, Agent for Indian Affairs of Indiana Territory, was asked to negotiate a treaty with the Sauk and Fox "...To procure from the Sauks, such cessions on both sides of the Illinois as may entitle them to an annual compensation of five or six hundred dollars; they ought to relinquish all pretensions to any land on the southern side of the Illinois and a considerable tract on the other side."¹⁴ At St. Louis in 1804 a Sauk band, which later became known as the Missouri River Sauk, was drawn into negotiations which ultimately laid the basis for future conflicts and the Black Hawk War. By the treaty of 1804 the United States received "The United Sauk and Fox tribes into their friendship and protection and said tribes agree to consider themselves under the protection of the United States and no other power what-so-ever."¹⁵ In return for the annual annuity of \$600 to the Sauk and \$400 for the Fox, the chiefs ceded all their claims on the east of the Mississippi River and a segment on the west side. This area included the present state of Illinois north and west of the Illinois River, a portion of Wisconsin, and one small segment of Missouri. Article VII of the treaty stated, "As long as the lands which are now ceded to the United States remain their property, the Indians belonging to the said tribes, shall enjoy the privilege of living and hunting upon them."¹⁶ Black Hawk interpreted this clause in 1832 as justification to return to the Rock River Valley because the Sauk tribal council, which alone had the authority to sell land, had never accepted the treaty as valid.

When knowledge of what the Missouri River Sauk had negotiated reached the other Sauk and Fox bands, they were incensed. Black Hawk said of the treaty in

his *Autobiography*.¹⁷

This was all myself or nation knew of the treaty of 1804. It has been explained to me since. I find by that treaty all our country east of the Mississippi and south of Jeffreon was ceded to the United States for one thousand dollars a year! I leave it to the people of the United States to say whether our nation was properly represented in this treaty, or whether we received a fair compensation for the extent of country ceded by these four (?) individuals. I could say much about this treaty, but I will not at this time. It has been the origin of all our difficulties.

During the War of 1812, most of the Sauk, including Black Hawk and his following, sided with the British. After the war, the British abandoned their Indian allies and the Sauk and Fox signed treaties with the U. S. Government in 1815 and 1816 reaffirming the 1804 treaty. Black Hawk, who signed the 1816 treaty, later insisted that he was not aware that he was confirming the treaty of 1804. In the years prior to the Black Hawk War of 1831-32 the Sauk divided into two camps. The "British Band" led by Black Hawk was hostile to the U. S. and against the treaty of 1804. The peace party led by Keokuk, Black Hawk's rival, advocated reconciliation with the U. S. Government and migration across the Mississippi.¹⁸

By the spring of 1831, so much friction had taken place between the settlers and Indians that Governor Reynolds of Illinois called out the Illinois militia. General Gaines, trying to avoid bloodshed, summoned Black Hawk and his coalition to a convention at Fort Armstrong. The convention failed and on June 15 the militia burned Black Hawk's village, Saukenak. The night before Black Hawk had moved across the Mississippi and camped under a white flag.

On June 30th Black Hawk and twenty seven of his followers signed the "Articles of Agreement and Capitulation". By the terms of the treaty Black Hawk and his "British Band" agreed to submit to Keokuk's authority, remove to the west side of the Mississippi River, and never return without permission. Further stipulations demanded that Black Hawk's followers were to terminate all British communication and grant the United States rights for military and post roads.

During the winter of 1831-32 Neapope, Black Hawk's principal lieutenant, returned from Canada and deceived Black Hawk into believing that the British would assist them with arms and ammunition if they would attack the United States. He

also told Black Hawk that the Potawatomis, Chippewas, and Winnebagos had agreed to aid the Sauk and Fox. Elated, Black Hawk sent emissaries to all the various tribes trying to consolidate a position against the white settlers. It soon became apparent that Black Hawk was intent upon returning to Saukenak in the spring. On April 5, 1832, Black Hawk and his "British Band" of warriors, women, and children, crossed the Mississippi River near the mouth of the Iowa River.

The Black Hawk War of 1832 was hardly a war. It lasted fifteen weeks and cost the lives of but seventy settlers and soldiers. Although Black Hawk and his followers were prepared to fight, if necessary, they did not constitute a war party and certainly were not prepared for the series of retreats that degenerated into a march of hunger and starvation. From a military standpoint, the Black Hawk War was a campaign highlighted by inept leadership and poor discipline. At several points in the protracted march Black Hawk dispatched peace emissaries to terminate the conflict. Invariably they were misunderstood by the inept Illinois militia who were totally unpredictable in their response to military action. Black Hawk's position was continually deteriorating. In his *Autobiography* he states:¹⁹

Finding that all our plans were defeated, I told the prophet that he must go with me, and we would see what could be done with the Pottowatomies. On our arrival at Kish-wa-co-kee, (The Indian village located at the confluence of the Kishwaukee and Rock Rivers mentioned in the Potawatomi section) an express was sent to the Pottawatomie villages. The next day a deputation arrived. I inquired if they had corn in their villages? They said they had very little, and could not spare any! I asked them different questions and received unsatisfactory answers....I afterwards spoke to them privately, and requested them to come to my lodge after my people had got to sleep...I asked them if they had received any news from the lake from the British? They said, no. I inquired if they had heard that a chief of our British Father was coming to Mil-wa-kee, to bring us guns, ammuniton, goods and provisions? They said no!

When the "British Band" was attempting to cross the the Wisconsin River, troops under General James D. Henry engaged them in battle. In a series of brief but bloody forays the main contingency of warriors were forced into a hasty retreat. Black Hawk, realizing that resistance to

the militia was futile, moved his band west to seek refuge across the Mississippi River. At the mouth of the Bad Axe River, where the Indians were attempting to cross the Mississippi, the steamer "Warrior" intercepted them and shelled their camp. The next day General Atkinson engaged the remaining Indians, including many women and children, in a desperate struggle. Those Indians that did reach the other side of the Mississippi River were killed or captured by the Sioux. Black Hawk, with a small following, attempted to seek refuge to the north in Chippewa country but he was captured by a party of Winnebagos near the Wisconsin Dells.

On September 21st a treaty was signed by all the Sauk and Fox including Keokuk and Black Hawk. The treaty stipulated that the remnants of the "British Band" must go to live among those Indians that had remained neutral in the war. The Indians also ceded a strip of land fifty miles wide running almost the length of the Mississippi frontage of the present state of Iowa. For the cession estimated at 6,000,000 acres of land, the United States would pay the Sauk and Fox \$660,000 over a period of thirty years. The results of the Black Hawk War have been eloquently summarized by Dr. Anthony F. C. Wallace in the epilogue with which he concluded his summary of the conflict:²⁰

The Black Hawk War might have been avoided at any time up to and including the evening of May the fourteenth, 1832. If it had not been for the incompetence of Stillman's militia, it could have ended then, either by negotiation, or by the capture of Black Hawk. The consequence of that inglorious skirmish was a campaign which ended in the almost complete annihilation of Black Hawk's band, the demoralization of the Sauk and Fox nation, and untold hardship and inconvenience to thousands of white persons - to say nothing of the impetus camp life gave to the spread of the cholera epidemic.

Reviewing the circumstances from which these unhappy events flowed, the anthropologist and the historian may perhaps draw one conclusion: that the prime emotional factors in the entire situation were the white man's attitude of contempt for persons of an alien color and culture, and the Indian's bitter resentment of and gradual demoralization under that contempt. In a world where such small and foolish wars as the Black Hawk campaign can be the sparks which ignite an entire planet, and all peoples do in

fact live in close contact with others of alien color and culture, intelligent men must realize that contempt is one of the most suicidally destructive emotions which the human mind can entertain.

After the treaty of 1832 Black Hawk, along with his two sons, was transferred from Fort Jefferson to Fort Monroe on Chesapeake Bay. Interned only briefly, Black Hawk and his companions were escorted by the way of Norfolk, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, and the Great Lakes, to Keokuk and his tribe in Iowa. It was during this trip that the romantic literature concerning the Black Hawk War was generated.

Black Hawk lived on the Iowa Reservation until his death in 1838. Reservations were established in Iowa, Oklahoma, Kansas and Missouri. As of 1950 there were 1,200 Sauk and Fox in Oklahoma and 600 in Iowa and Kansas.

THE WINNEBAGO

HISTORY

The Winnebago were relative newcomers to northern Illinois. When they were first encountered, in 1637, by French Jesuit Missionaries they were living in the vicinity of Green Bay, Wisconsin. The name by which we know them was actually given them by their Central Algonquin neighbors (Sauk, Fox, and Chippewa) and literally means "people of the filthy water". Cadillac, the French explorer, ventured a probable explanation for this rather strange name.²¹

They take their name from their river whose water is very muddy.... during the heat of summer, either because of the quality of the water or the excessive number of fish, the water may be seen all covered with fish; and as they quickly become putrid one can hardly approach the shore on account of the stench. This is why this tribe is called the Puans (French) meaning "Stinkers"; for in their persons and habits they are the cleanest of all Indians.

The Winnebago were of Siouian linguistic stock and their own name for their tribe was "Hotangara", a word which has never been successfully translated. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the Winnebago began to disperse as a result of contact with white fur traders. Each generation established new villages of 100 to 300 people farther west and south of Lake Winnebago. Permanent rectangular dwellings began to be replaced by domed wigwams. By 1699

the French had spotted Winnebago hunting parties as far south as the Illinois River. The Dixon Swamp became an important hunting area for Winnebagoes living on the Rock River.²²

By 1750 the Winnebago were divided into two principal groups - those in the vicinity of Green Bay and those in the Rock River Valley.

In 1777 the Spanish at St. Louis reported that Chief Lepy and a band of 150 warriors was living near the juncture of the Rock and Mississippi Rivers.

In the following year George Rogers Clark made a treaty with Chief Chourarchon of the Rock River. Zebulon Pike noted Winnebago villages on the Rock in 1805.

It is necessary to emphasize, however, that the main Winnebago village at this time was still in northeastern Wisconsin. An English visitor named Carver (1778) spoke of "The great town of the Winnebagos situated on a small island, just as you enter the east end of Lake Winnebago" and stated that a queen presided over the tribe.²³

During the war of 1812 some of the Winnebago fell under the influence of the anti-white teachings of the Shawnee prophet and attacked frontier settlements. One of their villages was located at the present day village of Prophetstown, Illinois. In the years after the war the majority of the Winnebago were living in the Four Lakes region near Madison, Wisconsin, but many were neighbors of the Sauk and Fox and were moving south to the Chicago, Illinois, and Fox Rivers to hunt. George Davenport, a fur trader, reported in November of 1826 that there were 600 Winnebago hunting on the Rock.²⁴

In 1827 there was a minor war between the Winnebago and the Chippewa. Many of the Winnebago who were living on the lower Rock temporarily fled north to Lake Koshkonong. Following a treaty of peace in August of that year some of the tribe returned to the Rock. Chief Winnesheek had a village in Stephenson County which was located on Spring Creek near the point where it enters the Pecatonica River.²⁵

In 1828 a leading medicine man named Wabokieshiek (White Cloud), later known as the Winnebago Prophet, was encouraged by Indian agents to hunt on the Rock because he was believed to favor peace with the whites. The Prophet was eventually established at Whittico's Village which was said to be 50 or 60 miles up the Rock, probably near present day Sterling. In 1828 the camp of Spotted Arm was reported to be on the Pecatonica River.

The establishment of fur trading centers at Prairie du Chien and Portage,

Wisconsin, made the Winnebago less dependent upon Green Bay. Smaller operations such as the one established by Stephen Mack at Bird's Grove (Hononegah Forest Preserve) were located throughout Winnebago territory. The traders gave the Indians traps, guns, blankets, and household implements on credit each fall. In the spring they were repaid with the Indian furs. By 1830 there were nearly 40 known Winnebago settlements ranging from the Fox-Wisconsin portage route and the Black River in the north to the Rock River in the south. The settlements extended as far west as the banks of the Mississippi.

The increasing penetration by the whites into northern Illinois was motivated primarily by the desire to mine the abundant minerals which were found on Indian land. In 1828 the Winnebago delegates were summoned by U. S. Commissioners to Green Bay in an attempt to purchase this land. Chief White Crow declared that the Winnebago had lived on the Rock for ten years and did not wish to sell it. This council thus resulted in a boundary being established between the lands of the Winnebago and the U. S.

Spotted Arm and other Winnebago chiefs led their bands to another council at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, where they ceded part of their land to the U. S. on August 1, 1829. The area of present day Winnebago County west of the Rock River was part of this cession. Prophetstown was at this time the best known Winnebago camp in Illinois. It was also at this time that Stephen Mack was trading with Winnebagoes and French half-breeds from the camp at Bird's Grove, now part of Hononegah Forest Preserve. Most of the Winnebago still lived near the Wisconsin or upper Mississippi Rivers. A map drawn in 1834 shows a Winnebago village on the site of present day Rockton.²⁶

The Winnebago Prophet was quite active in resisting further white incursion. When a white family attempted to establish a ferry at Prophetstown he promptly drove them away. By 1831 he had moved his band west of the Mississippi where he associated with the "British Band" of the famous Sauk warrior Black Hawk. Other Winnebago chiefs asked William Clark to destroy Prophetstown since it was the headquarters of their own renegades. Paul Radin wrote the following concerning the origin of such prophets.²⁷

"One of the interesting developments resulting from the Indian contact with the whites has been the appearance of prophets. In almost all cases these prophets were concerned with attempts to so adapt the life of their fellow-Indians to the

new conditions that they would be better able to cope with the invaders who were sweeping all before them. Whether prophets sprang up only in response to the peculiar conditions resulting from the presence of the whites it is impossible to say, but there seems no reason to believe that such had always been the case. It is quite possible that conditions similar to those developing from the occupancy of America by Europeans had occurred in pre-Columbian times when one tribe was hard pressed by another.

Detachments of soldiers burnt the Prophet's village and Whittico's on May 14. As a result of the war, the Winnebago were forced to cede all of their remaining land in Illinois and lands in Wisconsin as far north as Lake Winnebago. In return they were to be given a reservation on the west side of the Mississippi above the upper Iowa River.

This treaty cites three main groupings of Winnebago; (1) A group in the vicinity of Prairie du Chien (2) The Fort Winnebago band at Portage, Wis. and (3) The Rock River group. The last named group was led by Whirling Thunder who continued to trade at John Dixon's store and whose village was 10 miles above Dixon on the Rock. A chief named the Turtle also had a village at the mouth of Turtle Creek near Beloit on the Wisconsin-Illinois state line. By February of 1833 Thunder was reported to be living on Sugar Creek, and alarmed citizens of Galena reported that the Winnebago were still prowling their former haunts.

Smallpox visited the Winnebago twice before 1836 and in that year an estimated one-fourth of the people died. The majority of the tribe had apparently moved north of the Wisconsin River but continued to hunt down into Illinois. They were forced to cede all remaining lands east of the Mississippi by a treaty concluded at Washington on November 1, 1837. In 1840 one group was still near the portage from the Fox to the Wisconsin. They stated that they would rather die than leave. Those who refused to leave lived as fugitives in Wisconsin for 27 years. (They were finally allowed to take up 40 acre homesteads in 1881).²⁸ Shortly thereafter most of the tribe was removed to the "Neutral Ground" in Iowa. Force was used against all who resisted. Over a period of the next twenty years the Winnebago were moved from reservation to reservation. Conditions on these reservations were quite harsh:²⁹

When they finally reached the reservation it turned out that these Woodland people were expected to survive on an open dry plain where

not even grass grew well, where there was no water for crops, no wood for homes or fuel, no game, and no neighbors except their bitter enemies, the Sioux. Government employees tried to build homes for them with only a portion of the promised supplies. No farming equipment came, and had it come would have been useless. The wind blew dust storms daily. Rations were irregular. Indians died.

In 1846 they surrendered their reservation in Iowa for one north of the Minnesota River. Again in 1848 they were removed to Eagle Creek Reservation, also in Minnesota. The tribe reportedly consisted of 21 bands in 1852 and had a total population of 2,521. They had lost many members owing to disease and were kept on the reservation only by force. Following the Sioux war of 1862, the people of Minnesota demanded their removal. They were first taken to Crow Creek Reservation in South Dakota. There was great difficulty in keeping them there and eventually they fled to the Omaha reservation in Nebraska. Only 1,200 of the 2,000 originally taken to the Crow reservation survived the trip. In 1865 the Indian office stated that the Winnebago, including those not living on the reservation, numbered 2,546 persons. Tribal enrollments in 1974 indicate that there are approximately 2,500 Winnebago living in the Nebraska group and about the same number residing in central Wisconsin. Populations numbering as many as several hundred persons reside in Minneapolis, Milwaukee and Chicago.³⁰

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION³¹

The Winnebago social organization was based on two phratries (brotherhoods) known as the Upper (air) and Lower (earth) divisions. The Upper division contained four clans, the Lower contained eight. An Upper individual was required to marry a Lower individual and vice-versa.

The Thunderbird clan was regarded as the most eminent of the Upper division clans and its lodge was the place where the chief of the tribe adjudicated disputes between tribesmen. It was also a sanctuary for any offender who sought refuge within its walls.

In a similar manner the Bear clan was considered the most important clan of the Lower division and its lodge was the war or disciplinary lodge wherein prisoners were killed and offenders punished. Each clan had a large number of customs relating to birth, the naming feast of the newborn, death, and the funeral wake. It was prohibited for a member of one clan to be buried by members of another clan of the

same phratry.

The longest period that the Winnebago remained continuously at home was three months during the winter. They were also at home for a month each at planting time and harvest. During the fall they were away from their villages continuously on hunting trips.

No important undertaking of the tribe was attempted without a council. The actual workings of such councils are unclear but it is known that the clans entered the council lodge in a strictly specified order. The seating arrangements gave special prominence to clans with specific governmental functions.

MARRIAGE

Girls were married as soon as they were of age. Although the marriages were arranged by the parents, there were few instances where the couple raised objections to the proposed match. The parents took care in their selection and if one of the couple did object the parents usually relented.

Men were permitted to have more than one wife but generally they were monogamous. If there was a second wife it was often the sister or niece of the first wife. The first wife herself often induced her husband to take an additional wife especially if she thought that he was losing interest in her.

The marriage was considered binding after the customary presents had been exchanged. The husband usually lived with his parents-in-law during the first two years of marriage and hunted, fished and performed minor services for them.

After this period, the couple returned to the husband's lodge where they remained as long as they wished. Since the old gable lodges held up to forty people it was not unusual for the large family groups to live together more or less permanently. In later times the husband would most likely move to his own lodge after the first child was born.

RELIGION

The religious beliefs of the Winnebago were similar to that of other Central Algonquin tribes in that the central figure of their mythology was Man-una or Earthmaker. Their major myths consist of cycles of stories dealing with the five beings whom the Earthmaker sent out to free the world from giants and evil spirits such as "He-who-wears-heads-as-earrings" and the "Hare." There are numerous other myths relating to the Thunderbird and other clans and much of the mythology is evidence of the relation with other Siouian tribes.

The Winnebago

It was a widespread belief among the Winnebago that death was only a momentary interruption of consciousness and certain gifted people could pass directly from one existence to another. Opinions as to who could be reincarnated varied greatly.

CEREMONIES

The Winnebago possessed two important tribal ceremonies, the Medicine Dance and Winter Feast. The Medicine Dance was performed in a long tent in the summer by men and women who were initiates of a secret society. There were five ceremonial bands which occupied the north, south, east, west, and southeast of the tent. A secret vapor bath ceremony preceded the first part of the general ceremony and another secret ceremony preceded the second part. The public general ceremony had as its purpose the prolongation of life and the instilling of certain virtues. The instilling was accomplished by the simulated "shooting" of a shell, contained in an otter skin bag, into the body of the initiate.

The Winter Feast was intended to increase war powers. This was accomplished by propitiating the supernatural deities with offerings of food and deerskin. The Winter Feast was performed separately by each clan and required the use of a sacred clan bundle which was handed down from generation to generation.

Certain "power" was supposed to reside in this bundle and such power was believed to have been bestowed by the Thunderbirds and night spirits. The number of spirits to whom offerings were made varied from feast to feast and a fireplace was set aside for each spirit. The ceremony culminated in the deerskins being thrown through the roof of the lodge where they were supposedly seized by the spirits. There were a number of minor ceremonies including a ceremony called the Herucka where things were given to the needy.

HUNTING AND FISHING

Only a few animals were not eaten by the Winnebago: the skunk, mink, marten, otter, horse, weasel, gopher, crow, and eagle.

The bow and arrow was of a simple type with ends pointed by rubbing them on stones. The string was made of sinew. There were five types of arrow distinguished by the nature of the arrowhead and its use. The bird arrow, rabbit arrow and one type of battle arrow were usually made entirely of hickory wood. This type of battle arrow was little more than a pointed stick. A large mammal arrow and the other battle arrow had separate heads

attached. The head of the large mammal arrow was made from the turtle claw and the battle arrow from a fragment of flint.

The Winnebago interviewed by Paul Radin had no recollection of their people ever making flint arrowheads. They claimed that they used only those that they found in the ground. The Winnebago also used traps. Rabbit traps utilized nooses attached to springs made of pliable wood inserted into the hollowed out end of an upright post. Deer were impaled on stakes when they were forced to leap over brush obstructions that were constructed on trails they were known to use.

Buffalo were hunted on horseback in the period following white contact. Bears were hunted by the individual and by the tribe collectively. Before an individual went hunting for bear he underwent a ceremony for the "concentration of the mind". Often this involved the construction of a special lodge. A kettle containing corn and dried fruit was placed on the fire which was intended to placate the particular bear the man wished to kill. The same ceremony was performed before starting on a deer or raccoon hunt. Special medicines that the hunter had obtained as a result of his fasting were rubbed into the arrow. If a man killed a bear he always referred to it in respectful terms.

The tribal bear hunt took place in the summer. Paul Radin made the following translation of an account of the bear hunt:³²

When the Winnebago went on the bear hunt they always traveled in large numbers. They would always be able to find bears in the groves of red timber-oak, and it would be very easy to kill them. Nevertheless the old people considered it a very dangerous affair, especially if the hunters came upon breeding bear. If anyone killed a breeding bear he would cause very much trouble. The male bear would get very angry and chase the man who had done the killing, and if it ever happened that he was out of ammunition, the man surely would be killed. The bear would jump upon him and tear him to pieces. It is said that when bears kill a human being they always eat him. Another way of getting at the bears was to clear away the ground for them. It is very easy to kill them then. This generally takes place at the time of the year when the acorns fall to the ground. The bears gather in the cleared spaces and lie down there. They lie in the timber under the trees. They look like black objects in the distance. It is customary to shoot at them from

some distance, but care is always taken not to shoot all of them, nor to shoot when the wind was with them, for then they would scent the hunters or hear the noise and run away. For this reason the hunters are very careful about these two things - namely, the number of bears shot and the direction of the wind. The method of hunting bears when the acorns fall and they come to the open or cleared spaces is known as the *Hiruci* method. When the bears eat acorn then only is it easy to find them and kill them without much effort.

During the tribal hunt individuals were prohibited from taking the initiative without permission. The movement of the tribe was strictly regulated by the Bear clan.

Fishing was done by spearing or shooting. The spear was a long stick provided with a bone or horn point. The spearing was generally done at night with the aid of pine pitch torches. For shooting, a long arrowlike stick with a pointed end was shot from an ordinary bow. The trap most commonly used was a triangular weir which was loaded with stone at its base and placed at the head of a waterfall caused by artificial damming of a stream. The eel and the dogfish were the principal fish that were considered taboo.

GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

Lacrosse was the favorite game of the Winnebago and it was generally played on ceremonial occasions. The two divisions of the tribe formed the opposing teams. Men's lacrosse was played with 12 to 22 men to a side. Two goals were formed from saplings bent in a U shape and placed at each end of the field. A small mound was constructed midway between the goals. At the beginning of the game the ball was thrown straight into the air from the mound. Lacrosse sticks were used to advance the ball. One goal guard from each side was positioned in front of each goal, thus there were four guards in all. The object of the game was to put the ball through the goal four times.

Women's lacrosse involved ten women to a side all of whom were positioned in front of their respective goals. The stick used was straight and the ball was in fact two balls tied together with string. The goals consisted only of lines scratched on the ground. The 16 or 20 women on each side arranged themselves before their respective goals.

The principal markmanship game involved shooting from various distances at a selected tree which was usually only 8

inches in diameter. The roughest Winnebago sport was a simple kicking contest between two men. The two men kicked each other in turn until one could no longer hold out.

A favorite game involved five men on each side who sat opposite their opponents. Each man had a moccasin or receptacle placed before him but only one on each side had a small object concealed in it. The men each took turns trying to guess which moccasin on the opposite side contained the object. The bystanders were permitted to heckle the men in an attempt to get them to alter their facial expressions and reveal which moccasin contained the object.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

The Winnebago who were interviewed in the early twentieth century insisted that their tribe had not made dugouts prior to the introduction of the ax and the knife by the white man. Until that time birch trees were plentiful in the land inhabited by the Winnebago and they utilized birch bark canoes. Once they migrated southward they obtained tools from the whites and began to use dugouts.

WARFARE

Status as a warrior was the ideal which every Winnebago male tried to achieve. Individual initiative in matters of warfare was strictly regulated. An individual life was extremely important to a small community and it could not be endangered without the approval of the chief.

Whenever an individual wished to go on the warpath he fasted in order to gain the blessing of the spirits. He then presented evidence of such blessing to the chief. If the chief expressed disapproval the man was not permitted to go. If he went without the chief's blessing he was held responsible for any deaths that occurred and had to make payment to the relatives of the deceased.

A war blessing had to be quite specific before it could be approved. It contained a description of the number of enemies to be killed, the manner, place, and time of death, the food to be provided on the warpath, the manner in which the participants were to return, and many other exacting details. Those who failed to obtain blessings could either purchase them from a shaman or accompany another warrior whose party had been approved.

A man could go on the warpath for two reasons: either because he wished to revenge the death of a slain relative or because he wished to obtain glory. If the matter was one of revenge he was permitted to fast and steal out with a friend

in the night. He could also give offerings to a shaman and the shaman would lead a war party to avenge the deceased.

BURIAL AND FUNERAL CUSTOMS

There appear to have been two burial methods among the Winnebago. Simple inhumation was used for members of the lower phratry. Platform burial was practiced by the upper phratry. Each clan seems to have had a few rites peculiar to its members but the general practice was the same for the whole tribe.

The deceased was dressed in his best clothes and often beads were placed around his neck, bracelets on his wrist, rings on his fingers, and earrings in his ears. The mourners blackened their faces with charcoal and followed the corpse to the grave or platform. A post was usually placed at the head of the grave. In some clans it was customary for the warriors present to draw representations of their war victories on the post. By doing this the warriors were putting the spirits of the enemies they had killed at the disposal of the deceased. They would help him overcome the obstacles that he would face on the road to the spirit land. The mourners were not permitted to look back upon leaving the gravesite.

After the burial the Four Nights Wake began. The wake was conducted in the house or lodge of the deceased. Warriors usually recounted their war exploits during the first three nights of the wake. It was important that they relate the number of enemies they had slain without exaggeration. Such exaggeration would cause the deceased to stumble on his journey to the spirit world.

A chief mourner was selected by the relatives of the departed. On the fourth night, it was the chief mourner's duty to address the spirit of the departed and advise him concerning the road he was to take to the spirit land and the obstacles that he would encounter on the way. There was no single formula for such advice. Food and tobacco were abundant at a wake and some of each was offered to the dead one's spirit.

Often the warriors present were given gifts of calico or beads. They then gambled for these gifts by playing the favorite game of the deceased. Frequently, the chief mourner took all the belongings of the deceased but gave the deceased's relatives an equal amount of new goods.

Prior to the twentieth century the mourning period was four years. However, a widow was often admonished not to continue in low spirits and to do anything necessary to forget her grief.

MATERIAL CULTURE

The Winnebago appear to have had eight types of lodges; the round lodge, long lodge, the tipi, the grass lodge, the gable lodge, the ceremonial lodge and the sweat lodge for the sick.

The round and long lodges were constructed by driving poles of ironwood into the ground which were bent over and lashed with basswood bark. Other poles bent in the opposite direction. Basswood bark was also used to attach the cedar bark or reed matting that formed the walls. The walls on the inside were supported by a varying number of poles, and often a series of transverse exterior poles. Such lodges were generally used for temporary purposes in ancient times.

The earliest type of lodge used by the Winnebago was the ten fire gable lodge. This was a rectangle constructed on a platform or on the ground which had its ends formed by cedar poles forked at the top. Transverse poles were laid in the forks and to these the roof was attached. Poles were arranged in the center of the lodge to support the roof. Beds were placed along both of the sides on a platform raised 2 feet. Frequently a platform 4 to 5 feet high was erected in the rear of the lodge and partitioned off. This was to accommodate a child of the family who was fasting. There were two entrances to the lodge and a spot in the front was always kept carefully cleaned.

The ceremonial lodge was a large version of the long lodge made of grass and used merely for overnight shelter. The sweat lodge was a round bark lodge having a framework of four poles. The tipi was of a simple type provided with a three pole framework. The round bark lodges were used in the winter and the reed matting lodges in spring and summer. According to the oldest informants, ancient villages occupied for a considerable period consisted entirely of gable lodges.

AGRICULTURE AND DIET

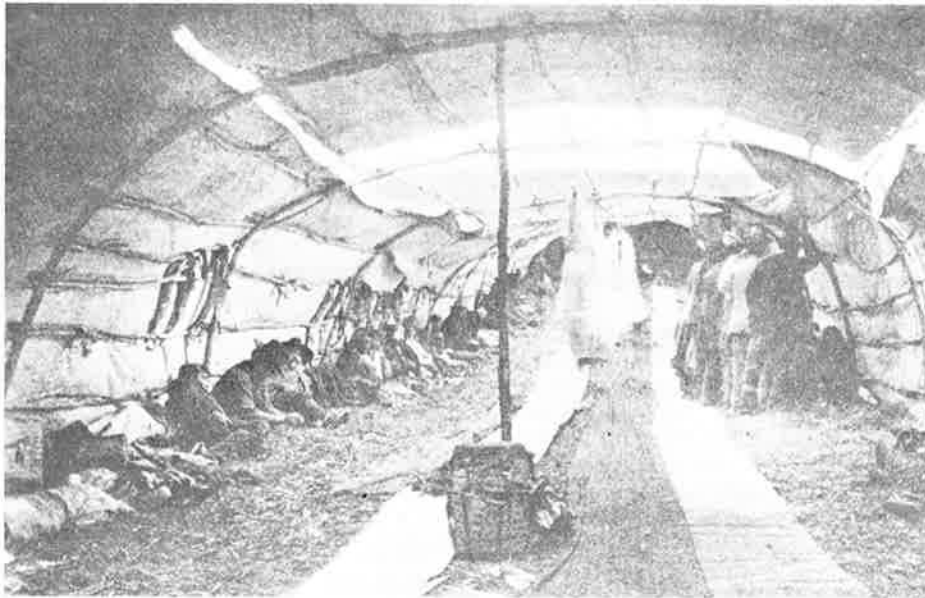
In the old days the Winnebago always raised corn, squash, and beans in their permanent villages. These villages consisted of a group of families belonging to the same clan. Each family group tended to cultivate its own field. In the middle of the field an earthen representation of the clan animal was usually constructed. Most Winnebago had small fields of tobacco which were regarded as very sacred. Wild rice and berries were gathered at the appropriate time of year.

Meats were prepared by broiling on stakes over a rack or under hot ashes. Only the ribs and breast were considered good portions but other portions were eaten.

The Winnebago, Indian Artifacts



Typical Winnebago Reed Matting Lodge - Historic Period. Photographed in Nebraska (Courtesy Smithsonian Institute.)



Interior of Typical Winnebago Medicine Lodge (Courtesy Smithsonian Institute)

The head of the deer was also considered a good portion. Soups were prepared with meat, vegetables or berries.

Corn was pounded on a rock, shelled, steamed, and then cooked in a pit covered with husks. Squash was sliced, seeded and put on poles to dry. Fruit was dried but the process is not known.

INDIAN ARTIFACTS TYPICAL OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY

The numerous conical and effigy mounds found in the state line area are perhaps the most interesting local evidence of this region's prehistoric past. Effigy mounds of the type found in southern

Wisconsin and Winnebago County are unknown elsewhere in the United States. They were not used for burial and their precise purpose remains obscure.

The most famous effigy mound in Winnebago County is the "Turtle Mound" which is located in Rockford's Beattie Park. It measures 150 feet in length with a width of 50 feet between the front legs and 39 feet between the hind legs. The tail measures 102 feet and the height at the highest point is 6 feet. The shape of this mound has also been compared to a headless alligator. Turtle and bird shaped effigy mounds and conical mounds have been found in the Rockton area and in the vicinity of the Hononegah Forest Preserve. It is now generally accepted that these mounds were not built by the Winnebago tribe and that they date from the prehistoric period. Current studies of these mounds are being conducted by Dr. Robert Salzer of the Logan Museum of Anthropology at Beloit College.

Many of the surface finds of Indian artifacts within this county were made by Mr. C. G. Scott of Seward, Mr. F. J. Osborn of Winnebago, and Mr. R. B. Gill of Rockford. The quantitative results of their finds from 1895-1937 were published in Volume 30 of the *Journal of the Illinois State Academy of Science*.

Arrowheads comprised 90 percent of their finds and of these 75 percent were of the notched base type. The balance were stemmed or triangular and the workmanship ranged from crude to very fine. Chipped flint spear points rarely exceeded 6 inches in length. Almost all of the polished and pecked stone implements were celts (stones shaped like a chisel or axe-head) ranging from a few ounces to several pounds in weight. The remaining stone tools found were grooved axes, hammer stones, net sinkers, grooved mauls, gouges and chisels. A few gaming stones (discoidals) were also found. Pipes found were made out of quartzite, sandstone, slate, catlenite, and clay. One bone spear and numerous bone tubes and awls were found. Unusual stone representations of a two headed bird and frog were found by C. G. Scott. Both were formed out of similar light colored mottled stone.

Artifacts found within Winnebago County showed considerable evidence of trade with other regions. Many were made of such non-indigenous materials as copper, slate, obsidian, brown calcedony, hematite, agatized wood, Flint Ridge, Ohio flint, quartzite, catlenite, and soapstone. One slate celt was found in Rockford.

F. J. Osborn opened five burial mounds in Winnebago County in which he found skeletal remains. The remains had been

placed in an upright sitting position in two of the mounds. Two other mounds contained bundle burials while the fifth mound revealed a single skeleton buried full length with a stone pipe, copper bracelets, powdered hematite, and a small piece of worked flint interred with the remains.

Interest in Illinois archeology has grown in recent years and accompanying this growth there has been increased awareness of the value in having trained archeologists evaluate the finds of local collectors.

The collecting of artifacts found on the surface of the ground is not, in itself, harmful because such artifacts have been uprooted by plowing or erosion. But surface finds should be carefully marked on detailed maps and the artifacts labeled so that archeologists may evaluate them.

The excavation of mounds or burial sites by local collectors may be illegal and may also prove extremely harmful to the attempts by trained archeologists to construct a complete picture of the prehistory of a given region. Archeology in Illinois has made enormous strides in recent years and is gradually reshaping our understanding of early man in this state. The twelve layers so far uncovered in a cornfield on the Koster farm near Kampsville have revealed evidence of people living in permanent dwellings in the area some 14 centuries prior to the construction of the pyramids. Northern Illinois may also contain important archeological evidence. Local collectors are urged to report the location of possible sites to the State Historic Preservation Officer at the Illinois Department of Conservation.

SECTION IV

ROCK RIVER PRESERVES

The three forest preserves in this section lie along the banks of the Rock River in Owen and Rockton Townships. Each was important to the early history of Winnebago County. The county's first permanent white settler, Stephen Mack, operated a trading post on the Hononegah Forest Preserve and later founded a village on the present day Macktown Forest Preserve. The Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve is dedicated to the memory of another of the county's pioneer families.

LIFE OF STEPHEN MACK AND HONONEGAH

Stephen Mack Jr. was born in Tunbridge, Orange County, Vermont on February 2, 1798, the son of Stephen and Temperance (Bond) Mack.¹ The Mack family was of Scottish descent, and had been established in the New World for four generations.² Stephen Mack Sr. had served as the Colonel of a Militia regiment in the Revolutionary War, and he was engaged in the mercantile business and tavernkeeping in Tunbridge.³

In 1807 Stephen Mack Sr. left his wife and twelve children in Vermont and established his mercantile business in the struggling frontier village of Detroit, Michigan. His son Almon Mack would later state that the reason that Col. Mack left his family behind was the lack of adequate educational facilities in Michigan for his children.⁴ Mack was the first Yankee to open a store in Detroit. He eventually entered into partnership in the fur business, and the firm of Mack and Conant was known in the west for many years. He became a trustee of the village of Detroit in 1812 and eventually founded the city of Pontiac, Michigan. He was a director of the Bank of Michigan, and upon his death his entire estate was exhausted to satisfy claims against a cashier whose bond he had signed.⁵

It is known that Stephen Mack Jr. attended Moors Charity School, a preparatory school in Hanover, New Hampshire, from August 30, 1813 to August 24, 1816. He did not attend Dartmouth College as has often been stated. In the fall of 1818 Stephen wrote to his two sisters, who had joined their father in Michigan, and described the illness which had forced him to discontinue his studies at a college in Boston.⁶ Since the next existing letter written by Stephen Mack Jr. is dated in 1831, the years between that time and the time that he left Boston are largely a matter of

conjecture. It is generally believed that he joined his family in Detroit in 1819 and that he was later a member of a government expedition around the Great Lakes. The year of this expedition has not been determined. At Green Bay he supposedly learned from fur traders of the opportunities awaiting anyone who could establish a trading post on the Rock River in Illinois.⁷

According to the account related in Edson Carr's *History of Rockton*, Mack purchased an Indian pony and headed south until he reached the present site of Janesville, Wisconsin. He then followed the Rock River southward until he came upon the Winnebago village at the juncture of the Rock and Turtle Creek near present day Beloit, Wisconsin. Here he was told of another Winnebago camp at Bird's Grove, the present day Hononegah Forest Preserve, and he started out to find it but lost his bearings and ended up at the Potawatomi village at Grand Detour, Illinois.

Unfortunately, an established fur trader named LaSallier was already operating a business at a trading post located at Grand Detour. He had been trading on the Rock since 1793, and was known as far south as the Illinois River.⁸ Another fur trader stated that LaSallier built the trading post at Grand Detour in 1822.⁹ We know he was present after Mack arrived, because Mack eventually purchased LaSallier's cabin in February 1829.

The main problem is to fix a date for Mack's arrival in Grand Detour. It is unlikely that Mack would have attempted to become a rival to LaSallier, and it has been suggested that Mack may have served as LaSallier's clerk.¹⁰ It was common practice to send American clerks along with the traders and Bennet's 1896 *History of Chicago* lists Stephen Mack as a clerk employed by the American Fur Co. We do know that Stephen Mack was given three licenses to trade with the Indians. Such a license was required by law, and the Secretary of War annually reported to Congress the list of such licenses issued. On October 20, 1823, Mack was given a license to trade with the Indians on "Rocky River" with \$2,000 capital employed.¹¹ Another license was issued the following year for the same location with \$1,000 capital.¹² The final such license was issued on October 5, 1826, and the capital employed then was \$2,500.¹³ No such licenses were issued to LaSallier during these years. Gordon S. Hubbard reported that LaSallier operated three or four trading posts for the American Fur Company from 1813-1814 and 1826-1833.¹⁴ Perhaps LaSallier was inactive in the fur business for the period covered by Mack's licenses. An apprenticeship as a clerk might explain Mack's

having initial working capital of \$2,000, especially if that money was advanced by the American Fur Company.

Apparently Mack only spent the winter months trading on the Rock River. In a letter written from Chicago to his sister on May 30, 1832, he states that he had left his wintering ground and trading station on the 9th of May.¹⁵

Mack seems to have considered Chicago as his permanent residence. It is known that he voted and occasionally served as a clerk in elections held in Chicago from 1828-1830. It is also reported that Stephen Mack bought lots seven and eight, in block forty-three, in the original town of Chicago, September 29, 1830, for \$53.00. This block was bounded by West Randolph, North Market and West Washington Streets, and on the west by the old East Water Street.¹⁶

Edson Carr provides our only source for the story that Mack met and married his Indian wife, Hononegah, while he was trading in the Grand Detour area.¹⁷

...he went down the river until he finally reached a Pottowatomie village at Grand Detour. Here he located, and for two or three years traded with the Indians there, taking their furs in exchange for his articles of traffic and carrying his merchandise to and from Chicago on the backs of Indian ponies.

Mack's relation with this tribe was not productive of the best of feeling; and although he had taken the chief's daughter, Ho-no-ne-gah, for his wife, still his life was in danger, because he refused to sell firearms and liquor to the tribe. During one of his trips to Chicago with three of his ponies, a plan was fully matured to dispose of him on his return and take possession of his effects. His Indian wife, learning of their intentions, was on the lookout for her husband's return, and meeting him far out from camp, apprised him of his danger. It was quick work for her to mount one of the ponies, and together they started out for the Winnebago tribe at Bird's Grove, where they were gladly welcomed and promised protection. It became their home for a few years.

It should be noted that Carr's accounts must be read with caution. "Though several writers call Hononegah a Potawatomi, available records show no Potawatomi village on Rock River during the 1820's, when she was said to be living there."¹⁸ A Winnebago chief named Jarro had a village in the vicinity of Grand Detour at this time.¹⁹ John Blackhawk, an educated Winnebago, was quoted as

Stephen Mack & J. P. Bradstreet (7 others)
Claim

Viz All that part of sec. 23 Township 1st
Range one East of 3^d Principal Meridian
which lies on the west side of Rock River
and on the south side of the Pekatolica com-
prising the south half & two small fractions
of the north half of said section also a timber
lot lying part on the north East quarter of
Sec. 22 & part on the north west quarter
of Section 23 Township & Range a, above &
bounded as follows viz. south by Pekatolica
River on the north east & west by two slou-
gh or marshes which empty into Pekatolica
one on the east & the other on the west of said
timber lot the remaining boundary is at the
north west End of 3^d Grove where the 2^d marks
is approach to within a few rods of each
other and at which place the line crosses
from one to the other and is designated
by one or more marked trees - 2^d timber
lot computed to contain 80 Acres
More or less

This May 18. 1836
J. P. Talcott Sec^y

S. Mack also claims the west half of
Section 26 Range 1 East 3. 11. Town 46
N. 11. W. Transferred by order from Luce &
Brothers

J. P. Holmes Sec^y

Stephen Mack Claim letter May 18, 1836

Original Land Claim as filed on behalf of Stephen Mack, Jr., and J. P. Bradstreet of Albany, New York. This is recorded in the book kept by the Rockton area "Mutual Claim Protecting Society". This book was used to challenge the Polish land claim of 1842. (Courtesy Rockford Public Library.)

Pecatonic Jan^y. 24 - 1844
- Esq^r Croft
Dear Sir

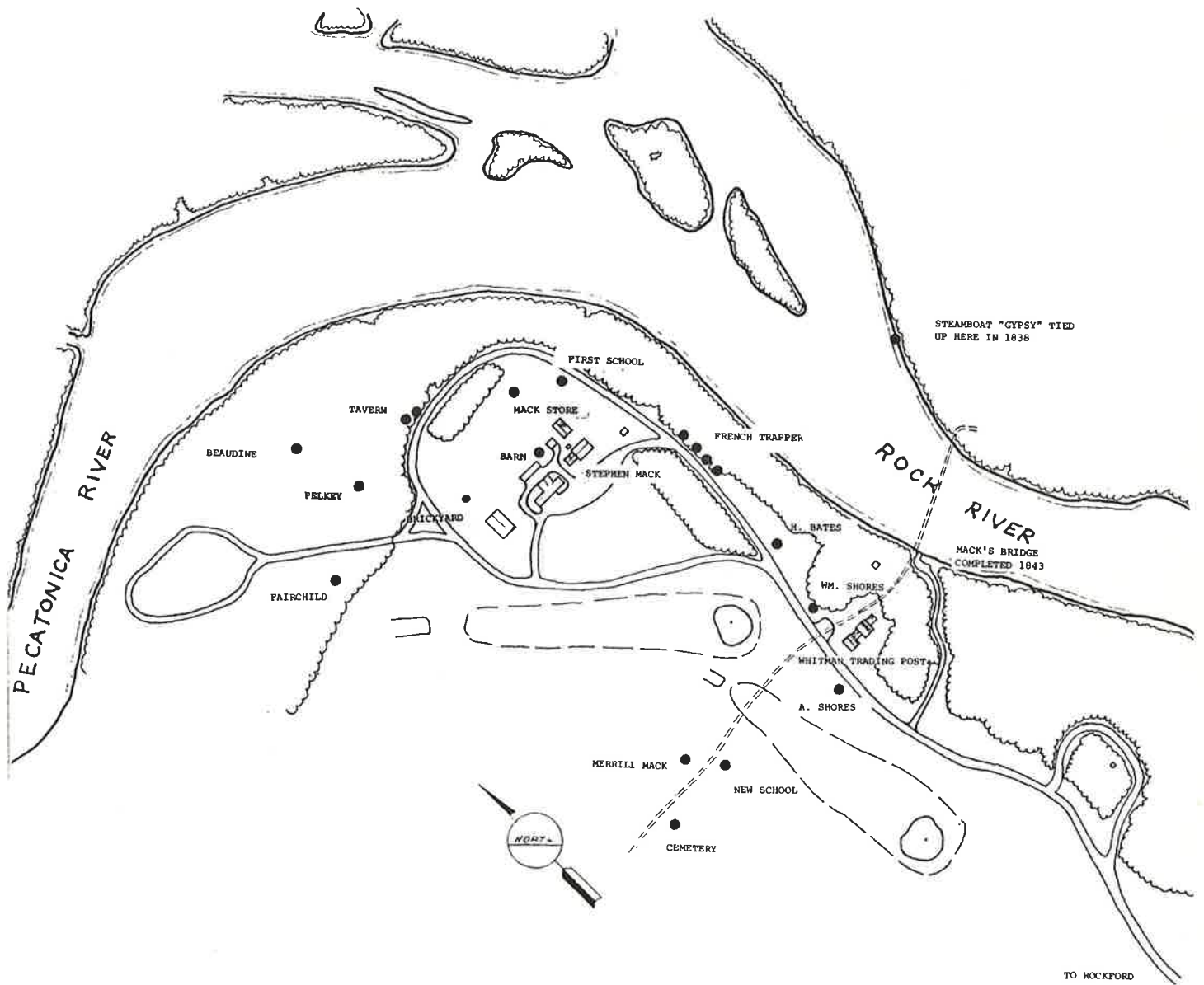
I am just informed that the People of Rockford are about to present a Petition to the Legislature for an act to make the Rockford Bridge a County Charge - If this should be done you will readily see the injustice that would be done to other parts of the County unless other Bridges are put on the same footing. You will see by the Charter granted to David Sewell, M. E. Mack & myself to build a Bridge across R. R. at this place it was intended that the Bridge when built should be County property and so maintained, But when the Bridge was ready for inspection by the Co. Commissioners they objected to the expense of rebuilding in case the Bridge should be destroyed and have refused or neglected to this time to have any action in the matter - It so rests at present. - This Bridge, commonly called Mack's Bridge is the best one ever built across Rock River, and the first ever built across said River in Illinois. It has a good Draw about 36 ft wide and is as permanent as such a structure can be made of wood - and it has more travel across it than every other Bridge combined in the County except Rockford Bridge - Now if the Rockford Bridge is to be put upon the Co. this Bridge (Mack's) must

be included or the greatest injustice would
be done to the People of this part of the County -
If the County will take Both Bridges and
maintain them I should be much gratified
but to take one which is half Broken down
and has no Draw and reject one that has a
good Draw and is otherwise perfect would be
too gross an act for a Legislative body to commit
if they are sufficiently informed on the subject
I Commit this subject to you and Mr Miller
in full faith that you will see justice done
to us of the North in this matter - - - -

The subject of the location of the Lock in the Rockford
dam is creating much excitement in some parts of
the County - I can now repeat what I wrote you a
few days since, that Out of Rockford the opinion
is unanimous that the lock should be in the Dam
and not in the Race - It is generally considered
that placing the lock in the Race will be tantamount
to declaring Rockford the head of navigation

So me the favour to show this letter to friend
Miller and accept the best wishes for him and
yourself of your humble servant

Stephen Mack



Approximate location of village of Macktown or "Pecatonic", c. 1845, superimposed on map of present day Macktown Forest Preserve. (Courtesy W.C.F.P.D.)



The Mack - Wingert House. This house was built circa 1839 by Stephen Mack, and was the first house built west of Stephen Mack's home. It was either floated or moved across the frozen Rock River to the Village of Rockton after Mack's death in 1850 (see text).

saying that Ho-no-ne-gah is a Winnebago word meaning "dear little one", and that the name is given to the first born in a Winnebago family.²⁰

Stephen Mack is supposed to have said that he had been living with the Indians for more than sixteen years prior to his coming to Rockton in the spring of 1837 and that he had been adopted by the Winnebagoes after he married the daughter of their chief.²¹ It is also a fact, however, that Stephen Mack's infant daughters received \$600 by the Chicago Treaty of September 26, 1833. This was a Potawatomi Treaty and thus Mack's children could not legally have collected the money if their mother was a Winnebago. Janice Schmaeng has suggested that Hononegah was perhaps half Winnebago and half Potawatomi.²²

The treaty also stipulated that \$500 dollars be paid to Stephen Mack "in trust for the heirs of Stephen Mack (Sr.) deceased". It has been conjectured that this money was intended to pay some debt that the Indians owed Colonel Mack.²³

Stephen Mack was apparently established at Bird's Grove at the time of the outbreak of the Black Hawk War. Edson Carr believed that Black Hawk actually visited the camp at Bird's Grove in an attempt to gain the support of the Winnebagoes there. Mack supposedly used his influence with the tribe and persuaded them not to become involved in the conflict. Black Hawk's resentment against Mack was said to have led him to fear for his life:²⁴

It is said that the feeling was so strong against Mack during the visit of Black Hawk, the chief of the tribe advised him to go away for a time for

personal safety. Accordingly he privately went to an island in the river, now known as Webber's Island, where he was supplied with food by his faithful wife until it was safe for him to return.

There are several problems with this account. *The Autobiography of Black Hawk* makes no mention either of Mack or of a visit to Bird's Grove. He does mention a visit to a Potawatomi village in southern Winnebago County.²⁵ Frank Stephen's detailed account of the Black Hawk War also makes no mention of a visit by Black Hawk to Bird's Grove.²⁶

Mack's own letters to his sister are descriptive of his participation in the war but he makes no mention of having encountered Black Hawk personally or of having to hide out on Webber's Island. He does relate the fact that some Sauk Indians did visit Bird's Grove:²⁷

We are at war at present with the Sack Indians....I left my wintering ground or trading station on the 9th inst. and as I left it the Sacks took possession of my house but were prevented from injuring me or my men by the Winnebagoes Indians who claimed me as their friend and trader....Immediately on my arrival at this place (Chicago) I joined with the inhabitants of the surrounding country that could get in in season....but I am sorry to say that our force was too small to enable us to go to the assistance of such as could not get in in season to save themselves, and in consequence three families consisting of 14

persons were killed and several houses burned.

Mack apparently later served in a Chicago Militia Company commanded by a Capt. Brown and he was present at the burial of the victims of the massacre at Indian Creek.²⁸

It was not until the end of the Indian hostilities that Mack was able to resume his trading operation. Believing that the Pecatonica River was navigable for 100 miles from its mouth and that the Rock was navigable for 150 miles into Wisconsin, Mack felt certain that the bluff at the mouth of the Pecatonica River would make an ideal site for the location of a settlement. In 1835, he was apparently in correspondence with J. P. Bradstreet of Albany, New York, in order to encourage prospective settlers back east to come to this site.²⁹ Mack's claim of over 1,000 acres, which he recorded in May of 1836, states that he made the claim on behalf of himself, "J. P. Bradstreet and others".

Sometime in 1835, Mack moved his trading operations to this site where he hoped to found a large settlement to be known as Pecatonic. It is now contained within the boundaries of the Macktown Forest Preserve. One of the earliest settlers of Rockton, Thomas B. Talcott, kept a journal in which he described his journey through northern Illinois as he looked for a place to settle. On July 25, 1835, he wrote that he and his family:³⁰

....came to the river and forded it again, crossed a small prairie, went into the woods and came to Stephen Mack's Indian trading establishment, and once more put up with a white man who had a squaw wife. Found we were on the bank of Rock River, two miles below the mouth of the Pecatonica and six miles south of the line of Wisconsin territory.... The land is very good and at the mouth of the river is in the hands of Mack and Bradstreet, of Albany, New York, where they calculate to lay out a town, and I think the prospect is fair for a large place to grow up here.

On the next day, Sunday, July 26th, 1835, he added:

Shall stay with our friend Mack today. There are no inhabitants in several miles except the Indians, who come around and Mack trades with them today as much as any day. All days are alike to the children of the forest. Mack is on the employ of the American Fur Co., and has been all his life time. The Indians have confidence in him and he has no trouble.

Mack reportedly sold several lots and at the height of his prosperity he was said to have valued a corner lot at \$1,000. When he was advised that his land was too uneven for a town, he is supposed to have replied, "It is far better than Milwaukee". Mack soon established a ferry across the Rock which was operated successively by William Hulin and Jesse Blinn, both prominent early settlers of the area. The rates for this ferry were set by the County Commissioners at 62½¢ for a wagon and two horses; 37½¢ for a single wagon and horse; 25¢ for a man and a horse; 6½¢ for each footman. The ferry connected Mack's claim with the rival settlement (present day Rockton) on the opposite side of the river which had been established by Captain William Talcott.

By the stipulations of the treaty negotiated at Washington on Nov. 1, 1837, the Winnebagoes were forced to vacate their remaining lands east of the Mississippi River. Provisions of this treaty provided for payments to the creditors of the Winnebago tribe and for additional payments to the relations and friends of the Winnebagoes "having not less than one-quarter of the Winnebago blood". The various claimants submitted their claims to a commission at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, in 1838.

Stephen Mack presented a claim for \$6,400 for merchandise that he had sold the Winnebagoes. This claim was pro-rated by the commission and Mack received \$2,329.50. He also received an additional \$5,000 on behalf of his five children.³¹ This second sum would appear to be additional evidence that Hononegah was at least half Winnebago.

According to Edson Carr, this money enabled Mack "to employ men and make a good deal of improvement." Carr describes the difficult conditions facing early fur traders.³²

Henry Lovesee tells when working for Mack in the fall of 1837, of taking a load of corn with an ox team to Lake Koshkonong to Thiebeau, an Indian Trader, and returning with a load of fur. There was only one settler on the entire trip. On his return the weather was extremely cold, and his only provision, some corn-bread, was frozen so hard that he had to break it up with a hatchet into small bits and thaw it out in his mouth. Tired, cold, and hungry, he arrived at Mack's late at night.

Perhaps the treaty money also provided Stephen Mack with the funds to construct his new home which still stands today.³³

At the time of its erection, it was the best house west of the lake

(Michigan), and but few equaled it in Chicago. It was built on a good foundation, the first in the place, and when completed was painted, which was a luxury rarely indulged in during those times.

At some point during the period 1842-43, Mack built the first bridge across the Rock River in Illinois. It survived damage by ice and flooding until it was entirely destroyed on the first of June, 1851.³⁴

Many of the land claims staked out in the Rockton vicinity were eventually endangered by the claims of a group of 235 Polish exiles. By Congressional enactment, this group had been given the right to purchase thirty-six sections of land, at the minimum price, to be selected in any three adjacent townships in Illinois or Michigan. This group selected two tracts. One of them included 10,970 acres and comprised most of the land within the present city of Rockford. The other contained twelve thousand acres in Rockton township including the parts of sections 23 and 26 claimed by Stephen Mack.

Stephen Mack was made the chairman of the committee of the local land claim association which protested the Polish claim to the Illinois congressional delegation. The agents for the exiles had originally promised that those settlers already in possession of land would not be disturbed. The conflict resulted in the Act of April 14, 1842, which ruled that the Polish group must choose their land elsewhere, and that the local residents were to be given the right to legalize their claims.³⁵

The first house constructed west of the Mack home was a frame one and one-half story structure which was used as a furniture workshop by Sylvester Stephens. The upper story was reached by an outside staircase and was used as a school for the local white and Indian children.³⁶ Stephen Mack paid the teacher's salary himself. Mack wrote in a letter to his sister Lovicy on April 4, 1841:³⁷

In reply to your inquires about my circumstances, I must say that I have enough to live on and a pleasant place...I have six children, three boys and 3 girls. I am under the necessity of employing a private teacher for them as we have no school yet...I have thought of sending two of them to New Hampshire to school this summer or next, but am not yet determined.

This building was later used as a dwelling after Stephen Mack constructed another schoolhouse. The former workshop-school was eventually dismantled and moved to Rockton where it was

reassembled. This structure, known as the Mack-Wingert Home, still stands at 305 West Franklin Street.

Further west was the store which Stephen Mack operated in conjunction with his cousin, Merrill E. Mack, until the latter's death in 1844. Also west of the Mack home was the double log house which Mack built and which was occupied by Eli Hayes. Hayes and his wife came from Indiana. This home was called "Hayes Tavern" because of the Hayes' willingness to entertain travelers. Jesse Blinn, an early Justice of the Peace, worked at wagon making in his early years in Pecatonic.

William Whitman, who had settled in Macktown in 1841, occupied the Hayes Tavern until he built the stone trading post in 1846. Grantor-Grantee records in the Winnebago County Recorder's office indicate that William Whitman obtained the trading post property from Stephen Mack on July 11, 1845. In October 1845, Whitman also purchased 40 acres of land from the government which was located in the northeast corner of Section 26, immediately south of Macktown. These transactions were not filed for record until June 1849. Whitman is listed on the 1850 Federal Census as William "Whiteman", age 65. His wife's name is given as Clarrissa, and both are listed as natives of Connecticut.

In 1950 a Rockton resident, Calvin Stephens, recalled that his mother, when she was a girl of nine, lived with her parents and two other families in the Whitman building and that she played with the Mack children.³⁸

Several French trappers were also residents of Macktown. One of these, a man named Pelkey, lived west of the tavern with an Indian wife. He was said to have once held title to Section 26 by virtue of his having an Indian wife and half-breed daughter. He supposedly had some trouble marrying off his daughter and is reported to have offered this section of land, a bushel of dollars, a horse and wagon, and forty ponies and fifty hogs to a prospective husband as a dowry. The prospective husband, Sylvester Stephens, is supposed to have declined the offer.

Another group of trappers occupied log huts along the bank of the Rock. The shop of Henry Bates, the shoemaker, was south of this point. Stephen Mack's cousin and partner, Merrill E. Mack, occupied an impressive home on the west side of the street which ran south from Mack's bridge. Stephen Mack later complained bitterly of the partnership and stated that the mercantile business which he and Merrill had managed had ended up costing him \$2,000.

Across the street from this house was the

new school house which was also used for meetings. Further south of this was the cemetery in which Stephen Mack, Hononegah, and their son Henry were eventually buried. Other children were also buried in this cemetery and one of Mack's letters following the first such funeral gives us a glimpse of what Pecatonic was like in 1841.³⁹

A funeral was held in my house yesterday of one of my neighbors. It is the first white person that has been buried in Pecatonic although it has been settled 6 or 7 years and now contains from 200 to 300 inhabitants.

Long after the treaty of 1837, there were a few Indians in the vicinity of Pecatonic. Edson Carr relates the story of the burial of an Indian boy named Billy Walk-Knife who was buried along the banks of the Pecatonica, not too far from Stephen Mack's home. This incident was supposed to have occurred in 1839.

The Indians passed under a blanket suspended from a tree limb on the opposite shore and then crossed the river by canoe and horseback. Some even swam. They then carried the bark coffin to the top of the hill. The boy's elderly mother was comforted by two other women. After a prophet had addressed the group, a box containing the dead man's personal effects was hung on a pole supported by two forked sticks driven into the ground. The Indians then took turns shooting at a mark that had been placed on a tree. Those who hit the mark were, each in turn, given their choice of the dead boy's effects. The body was then placed in a shallow grave.⁴⁰

In 1961, during the construction of a road at the Macktown Forest Preserve, a skeleton was uncovered in about three feet of sand in an area just west of the barn. It was thought that this skeleton was the remains of Billy Walk-Knife buried over a century before.⁴¹

Mack's letter of Oct. 26, 1845, also gives us some indication of his personal situation.⁴²

In regard to my circumstances, they are as follows, viz., I owe nothing and never will. I am trying to get out of the mercantile business and am preparing for farming more than hertofore. I have about 1000 acres-of good land, three good and one poor houses, two barns & c.

In 1845 Stephen Mack tried to interest the directors of Beloit College in establishing a Female Seminary in Pecatonic. He offered to donate 20 acres of his own land and he hoped that their choice of a site would not be dictated purely by material considerations.⁴³ The board of

directors eventually selected Rockford and thus it was there that the forerunner of Rockford College was founded.

Part of Mack's motivation for offering this site was his desire to educate his own daughters. Concern over the education of his children forms one of the dominant themes of his letters. Two of his daughters eventually attended the Female Seminary once it was established in Rockford. Carr wrote that while at school Mack's daughter Louisa "had an untamed nature, and often would just walk home whenever the notion took her fancy". Mack's daughter Rose attended, and later taught at a school for the deaf in Jacksonville.⁴⁴

Mack's failure to interest the directors in locating the seminary in Pecatonic was only one in a series of events which led eventually to the demise of his town. Increasing settlement meant a scarcity of wild game on which predators could feed and thus the supply of fur pelts for trade gradually, but inevitably, diminished.

The building of a mill race on the north side of the Rock meant that industry would develop near the settlement established on that side of the river. This settlement, which had once shared the name "Pecatonic" with Stephen Mack's town, was now being called Rockton. By an act of the legislature in 1846, Mack's Pecatonic and Talcott's Rockton were officially designated as Rockton. Mack was not even to see the name of his town survive.⁴⁵

When the steamboat *Gypsy* made a voyage up the Rock in 1838, Stephen Mack had disappointedly watched it tie up to a stake on the opposite shore. The last steamboat to attempt to navigate clear up the river was the *Lighter* in 1844. The course of the Rock had proved too difficult for dependable navigation and the dredging and dam building that Mack and others engaged in did not alter the situation. Barges were only able to make two round trips a year.⁴⁶ The building of other bridges across the Rock ended the monopoly of traffic across Mack's bridge, and the steady volume of trade that it brought to his store.

Stephen Mack seems to have sensed that the future belonged to the village north of the river. A search of the Grantor-Grantee Deed records reveals that Mack owned several parcels of land in Rockton. His name and Hononegah's name are found on the plats added to the town in 1847 and 1848.⁴⁷

Stephen Mack and Hononegah had originally been married in an Indian ceremony. As a result of his wish to assure his children that they would be legal heirs to his property, Mack and Hononegah had another marriage ceremony performed on September 14, 1840, by Justice of the Peace William Hulin.

In July 1847 Hononegah contracted a fever and died. She had been the mother of eleven children, one of whom was only a year old at the time of her death. All but two of her children survived infancy.⁴⁸

At the time of her death Hononegah had earned the respect of the white community and she was remembered as a person who showed great concern for the well being of others, white and Indian. She was frequently seen giving bread to passing Indians. "Only once in her life was she known to assume the garb of her pale-face sisters, and then it was by great solicitation; but she felt so ill at ease, and afraid to make herself conspicuous, she soon laid it aside and forever after was content with the costume of her tribe." When her relatives visited from Grand Detour she usually left the house and lived in their temporary lodges for a few days.

Mack's letter written a few months after she died is the most revealing of his relationship with his wife.⁴⁹

In her the hungry and naked have lost a benefactor, the sick a nurse, and I have lost a friend who taught me to reverence God by doing good to his creatures...Her funeral proved that I am not the only sufferer by her loss. My house is large but it was filled to overflowing by mourning friends who assembled to pay the last sad duties to her who had set them the example how to Live and how to Die...

In later years William C. Blinn related that after Hononegah's funeral "a little knot of neighbors were speaking of the loss. George Stevens, one of the party, said most impressively. 'The best women in Winnebago County died last nite.'⁵⁰

On the 4th of February, 1848 Stephen Mack married Mrs. Isabella Daniels of Harrison, Illinois.⁵¹ Mrs. Daniels was a 40 year old widow and Mack apparently married her for rather practical reasons. In a letter to his sister he wrote that, "I have entered into this marriage solely with the view to the benefit of my children."⁵² Mrs. Daniels had six children of her own. This marriage was unsuccessful and Mrs. Daniels did not return to Illinois following a trip to Detroit in May of 1849.⁵³

The earliest history of Winnebago County published by H. F. Kett and Company in 1877 makes the following observations concerning Mack and his second wife. Since this material is not corroborated by any other source, it is repeated here as a possible explanation for Mack's unsuccessful second marriage.⁵⁴

Hononegah, the Indian mother of Mack's children, died in 1847, and a year afterwards he married a white

woman. This marriage was an unfortunate alliance. The woman he chose for a second helpmate was not as good as his squaw wife. She robbed him whenever the occasion offered, and, finally set fire to their house while under the influence of opium, to the use of which she was a great slave.

Mack's remaining letters reflect his concern over his elderly mother's trip to Utah with Joseph Smith and the Mormons, and his desire for his sisters and brothers in Pontiac to visit him. In September of 1848 he wrote to his sister concerning a proposed visit:⁵⁵

If you come by steamboat to Chicago it will take three and a half days from your home to mine (by stage from Chicago to Pecatonic 1½ days.) A ride over our high dry Prairies would delight you as much by their beauty as the novelty of the scenery which would be entirely new to you....

Stephen Mack was elected an associate Justice of the Peace in 1849, and he was also the first Township Treasurer of the school fund. After township organization in 1850, Mack was barely defeated in the election for the first township supervisor by Sylvester Talcott. It was offices of this sort that once prompted him to write that he was "constantly charged with some unprofitable public duties or other".⁵⁶

After Stephen Mack had abandoned his trading establishment, he derived most of his income from his dairy farm west of Pecatonic. This farm was managed by the Stocker family.

Stephen Mack died suddenly on April 10, 1850. Cornelius Buckley wrote that "dark rumors were afloat in the neighborhood of Macktown for years, implying that his death was caused by poison administered by a person no blood relative who materially benefited by his death." Buckley attributed his information to correspondence with Mack's descendants.⁵⁷ None of the older sources mention any suspicions of poisoning.

Mack was originally buried next to Hononegah and his son Henry. The bodies were later moved to the Phillips Cemetery near Harrison. The bodies of two of the Mack children who both died in infancy, as well as the other people buried in the Pecatonic cemetery, were not moved and their graves were obliterated.⁵⁸ (The Macks were eventually reburied in the Macktown Forest Preserve in 1965). The *Rockton Herald* for May 21, 1880, describes the reburial.

The remains of Mack and his Indian wife were removed on

Wednesday from where they were buried on the Mack farm over 30 years ago, and interred in the Phillips cemetery in district #3. The bones were in a good state of preservation, but the coffins were so badly decayed as to easily crumble to pieces when disturbed. It was intended to erect a suitable stone to commemorate their remains. A glass bottle was deposited with the remains containing a paper printed as follows:

If in the course of time this should meet the eye of any person, be it known that the remains here are those of Stephen Mack and his Indian wife, Ho-no-ne-gah.

Stephen Mack was born in Poultney, Vermont, Feb. 1799, and settled in this county about 1822 as an Indian trader, and continued as a resident until his death in 1850. Mrs. Mack having previously died.

At the time of Mack's death he owned all of Sec. 23, in this township south of the Pecatonica river, and resided thereon at the time of his death. He was buried not far from where he lived by the side of his wife on his own land. Soon after his death, his children sold the land and went to Minnesota with their mother's friends, and at this time there are no relatives of Mack here.

The place where he was first buried being in a large field, and the land under cultivation over his remains, the undersigned friends of Mack and his wife in their lifetime, have moved the remains to this place, and placed a tombstone over the same. This is done out of respect and friendship for our departed friends.

Stephen Mack was the first permanent white inhabitant of Rock River Valley. He was a good citizen, a generous friend, a gentleman in deportment and an honest man.

J. R. Jewett,
William Halley
R. H. Comstock.

Rockton, May 19th, 1880.

In an interview in 1931, Mr. Burns Jewett, a member of the party that reinterred Mack, gave the reasons for the removal.

After Stephen Mack's death, the Macktown farm was sold to Mr. William Smith. Mack was buried in the middle of a field that was to be plowed and Mr. Smith told some of the old settlers that if they were interested in moving Mr. Mack that they had better do it. He was buried

on the second hill along the road as you come up from Harrison. There is a golf tee right over the spot where he was buried. There used to be a picket fence and some lilac bushes around the graves. The land was covered with second growth timber at the time he was buried...

Hononegah had a silver circle comb in her hair. Mack was identified by a broken tooth on the upper jaw next to the eye tooth. When I handed up the skull, Richard Comstock said, "That's Mack. He always carried his pipe where that tooth was broken out"....

Stephen Mack did not want anything to do with the north side of the river because most of the property there belonged to the Talcotts, and he and the Talcotts were sworn enemies. Mr. Talcott had donated the land for the cemetery so, of course, Mr. Mack would not have his family buried there.

It is possible that the hostility between Mack and the Talcotts was the result of a disagreement over the interest rates to be charged for parcels of land sold in the village of Rockton. Mack never charged more than six percent for the lots that he sold in the Adams and Fox subdivision of Rockton. The Talcotts eventually divided their lots into smaller parcels than Mack's and sold them at no reduction in cost.

Mack had been accustomed to extending credit and relying on verbal agreements when trading with the Indians. Janice Schmaeng suggests that Mack may have found the white settlers less reliable and this may have added to his hostility toward the settlement in Rockton.⁵⁹

Stephen Mack was the first permanent white settler in Winnebago County and one of a handful of authentic pioneers who first dreamed of establishing settlements in the wilderness of northern Illinois. In one of his last letters, written after the death of his sister, Mack speculated on the meaning of human life:⁶⁰

The destiny of man is: They come, they suffer, they go and are forgotten...But shall we leave no memorial to future generations of our existence? Shall we not add our mite to the general stock of Knowledge, Morality, and Religion? Shall we not strive to make our descendants more happy, more virtuous than our ancestors? If so we shall not have lived in vain, but shall have added a link to the progressive chain of perfection, and future generations will honor us, not as individuals, but as part of a

community who have employed their energies and wisdom for the amelioration and elevation of the Human family. Let it therefore be our ambition to contribute our mite to this result, and we shall have accomplished the aim and end of our existence.

Sources for the Life of Stephen Mack:

We wish to express our gratitude to Janice E. Schmaeng of Rockford for permitting us to read a copy of her unpublished dissertation on Stephen Mack which she prepared in 1974. A copy is available in the Rocktown Township Library. This work also provided a typescript of most of Mack's letters. The originals are in the possession of the Pontiac Historical Society, Pontiac, Michigan. We also wish to thank Congressman John B. Anderson for providing us with photocopies of House of Representatives Indian license abstracts.

The history of the village of Pecatonig that Stephen Mack founded has required documentation. Besides the Mack home, the only building still remaining is the trading post. The first name of the "Mr. Whitman" who operated the building was unknown. Our research concerning Pecatonig uncovered an executor's deed by which property was transferred from Stephen Mack to William Whitman. This transaction was recorded in Book M of Grantor Book No. 2, (1849-1852) p. 37. The first entry is probably that of the trading post property and is dated July 11, 1845. The property is described as Lot No. One and Two in Block G and Lots One and Two in Block M of the town of Pecatonig. Mack made this transaction as an executor of the estate of his bankrupt cousin, Merrill E. Mack. Mack sold his half interest in the same land to Whitman in June, 1846. A final entry dated October, 1845 records the purchase from the government by William Whitman of 40 acres of land in the northeast corner of Section 26, the section immediately south of Macktown. All of this material was not recorded for record until June 19, 1849. The information is on microfilm in the County Recorder's Office.

The division of the Mack estate between Thomas, Isabella, Caroline, Rosa, William, Mary, Edward, Louisa, and Matilda Mack is shown on a map in Deed Book No. 30 page 1. In Book No. 51 p. 289 a map is shown of the subdivision which was plotted on the property bequeathed to Matilda Mack. Edson Carr gives a brief account of the Mack children in his History of Rockton.

HONONEGAH FOREST PRESERVE

Hononegah Forest Preserve was the first acquisition of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. The county's first permanent white settler, Stephen Mack, operated a trading post on this site prior to 1835 and the preserve is named for his Indian wife, Hononegah. Hononegah Park was a well-known privately owned picnic grounds for over twenty years prior to its acquisition by the District.

The presence of Indians at Hononegah is reasonably well documented. It is likely that the area where Dry Run enters the Rock River was a temporary campsite for many years and became a small permanent village only after contacts with the whites in the 1830's. It does not appear on any of the early Indian village maps published by the Illinois State Museum. Some accounts state that the Sauk war leader Black Hawk visited Dry Run in 1837 and forced Stephen Mack to go into hiding. Sauk warriors did in fact visit this area seeking the support of the Winnebagoes living there but it is improbable that Black Hawk was among them.

This area was known variously as "Bird's Grove", "Dry Run", and "Dry Creek". Edson Carr's 1898 *History of Rockton* provides the oldest published account of the Indian burials found along the river.

There were several places along the river of Indians having their burial in the tree tops, being either done up in bark coffins or placed in a canoe and fastened up in the trees. Two of these coffins were in the tree tops below the Dry Run; on Mr. Bentley's farm. These in time fell into the river and were carried away. A short distance up the river from the Dry Run Creek are still to be seen the remains of a rude stone altar which was often used by the Indians in their religious devotions. For some years after the tribe had practically left the country, migratory bands would often return to that consecrated spot and perform their oblations as their fathers had done.

Many Indian relics such as flint arrow points and spear heads have been found in considerable quantities, also stone axes and quite rarely mortars and pestles...

The permanent village of the post-white contact period was supposedly occupied by members of the Winnebago tribe as well as some French "half-breeds", of whom "Charles Challevaux, Joseph Pelkey, and

Peter LaVas were remembered by the early settlers of Rockton".

It is believed that French trappers once made maple sugar in the grove at Hononegah. In 1875 several old maples were cut down and showed evidence of having been tapped in their youth with a chisel and gouge. The cavity in one of the trees was covered by an outer growth of 162 rings. Subtracting this total from 1875 gives a date of 1713. The only white men who could have been in this area at that date were French trappers. A burr oak near the park entrance is supposedly the survivor of a fire which swept the area when the Indians lived there. Its bark presumably insulated it from the flames.

When the area was used as a private picnic area, Interurban Railway cars brought visitors from Rockford, Beloit, and Janesville every hour on weekdays and every half hour on Sundays. Admission to the park was 15 cents. A wooden bridge across Dry Run was located somewhat east of the present day bridge. To the left of the present day bridge there was a formal planting of arbor vitae and juniper which may have marked the entrance to the picnic grounds. The barn, which was built by the owner A. F. Goss, was taken over by the District and used as a park maintenance building. Cottages lined the lane to the river.

On July 10, 1924, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District purchased the initial 98.22 acre tract comprising the old Hononegah Park from Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Goss for the price of \$22,000. All but 20 acres of this parcel were wooded. One-third of the park was creek bottomland and sparsely covered with trees, of which oaks and elms were predominant. The second third was upland timber consisting almost wholly of oaks. The remaining third was river bottomland shaded by elms, ash, maple, willow, boxelder, and nut trees, with clumps of hawthorns and a small patch of oak timber.

This land had once been heavily wooded. County Forester T. G. Lindquist was dissatisfied with the relative scarcity of trees in much of the tract and felt that it resembled a park rather than a forest preserve. It was his goal to restore the area to a dense woodlot utilizing both natural and artificial plantings.

It was first necessary to remove or repair the various buildings on the property. These included a dance pavilion, bowling alley, the summer cottages, and numerous shacks and sheds. By the summer of 1925 the house and barn had been remodeled for a caretaker's home.

By April of 1925 nursery stock had been set out on 8 of the 20 non-timbered acres.

This stock consisted of maples, tulip trees, and about a dozen kinds of shrubs. The peculiar topographical features required a considerable expenditure for the construction of the 75 foot rainbow arch bridge in 1925. A new drive was also constructed from the entrance to the top of the hill.

On March 6, 1928, the District purchased an additional 50.06 acres from Mr. and Mrs. John H. Shannon for \$5,060.00. This tract joined the western boundary of the original preserve. With this addition the park extended from the river banks to the Rockton-Roscoe road.

By 1929 the District nurseries contained over 100,000 trees and over 80,000 of these were planted at Hononegah. Several varieties of shrubs were also under cultivation. Many small conifers had been reset from the smaller nursery to more open ground and nearly a thousand walnut trees had been planted in the river bottom. The caretaker's home and stone Bird's Grove shelter house were built by the CWA in 1934.

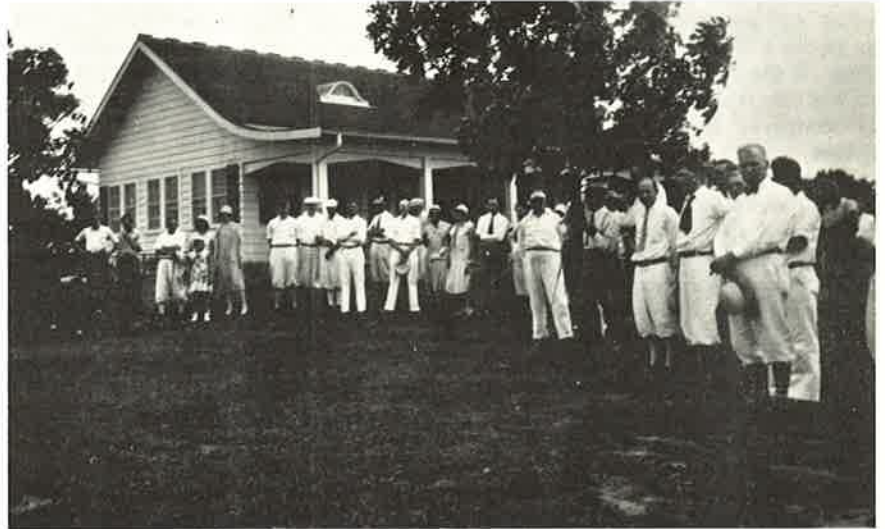
In response to a campsite survey in August of 1967 Superintendent James Fennessey was able to report that Hononegah contained 50 developed campsites, of which 20 were capable of accepting travel trailers; 50 picnic tables; 20 fireplaces and grills; hiking trails; boat launching facilities; and a playground area.

In 1978 the pine and spruce stands planted in the 1920's were thinned out by CETA funded work crews. In 1979 an 80 acre addition was added which bordered the original preserve on the west. The subdivisions which now surround the preserve on three sides will prevent any additional expansion.

MACKTOWN FOREST PRESERVE

ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

On September 18, 1926, the *Rockford Daily Register-Gazette* reported the purchase by the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District of 220 acres in Rockton Township. This property was purchased from Fred Rockwell of Rockford for \$19,454.74 and it included the site of the abandoned village of Macktown (Pecatonic) which had been plotted by Stephen Mack nearly a century before. The property was described as being "at the end of the new North Main Street paving". The article further stated that the purchase had been made due to the recommendations of County Forester T. G. Lindquist and it praised him for his activities in preserving



Opening Day at Macktown Golf Course, August 5, 1931. (Courtesy W.C.F.P.D.)



Jack Nicklaus conducting golf clinic prior to exhibition match at Macktown Golf Course, July 19, 1965. (Courtesy Rockford Morning Star)

this "historical property".

By June of 1929 the Forest Preserve District had completed a series of improvements to this preserve. A road was completed and gravelled beyond the Mack home and, in addition to picnic tables and a 20,000 tree seedling nursery, the District had also constructed the 40 x20' Highland Shelter House.

It had proved necessary to erect a lattice fence around the stone Whitman Trading Post building. Except for the Stephen Mack home, this structure was the only remnant of the village of Macktown and it was also the oldest existant commercial structure in Winnebago County. In recent years the building had been used to store grain. The fence had proved necessary to

Macktown Preserve

prevent trespassers from entering the building and possible injuries that might have resulted. The Mack home was used initially as the caretaker's residence. The barn was also rebuilt after a fire in August 1929 destroyed much of the original structure.

It is not known whether the construction of a golf course had been one of the original motivations for acquiring the Macktown property. In June 1930, the Forest Preserve Commission authorized the construction of such a course and the formation of a Citizens Golf Advisory Committee. This committee was to act in conjunction with the County Forester and the Real Estate Committee to assist in the design of the golf course. The committee members consisted of Attorney Frank Welsh, Fred Johnson, C. G. Lampman, Ed Peterson, and Frank Rutz. These advisors represented local country clubs where golf courses had already been constructed and it was hoped that they could incorporate their knowledge into the Macktown design.

Lawrence McGonigal, the present supervisor at Macktown, remembers that the construction of the course was accomplished entirely with hand labor with the exception of two Model A trucks. One truck was rented and the other belonged to the District. At times over 100 men were working together on the project. Much of the labor was provided by county work relief workers. The clubhouse was completed in 1930 at the cost of \$5,000.

The major force behind the course construction and design was County Forester T. G. Lindquist. On August 5, 1931, he was able to announce that the course would be opened on the following Saturday at 1:00 p.m. The opening followed the approval of plans for operation by the Forest Preserve Commission. A round by round fee system had been adapted whereby the general public would be charged 50 cents for an eighteen hole round. County residents would be charged 20 cents a round on weekdays provided they teed off before 10:30 a.m. Jack Clothier, who had previously been a pro in charge of courses at Laval, Mississippi, and Mason City, Iowa, was appointed as Macktown's first pro. Lindquist was forced to keep his crews working after dark during the week prior to the opening, and County Clerk Howard Short's office was flooded with requests for the special resident permits required of county residents.

The opening ceremonies included a flag raising and speech by Forest Preserve Commission President Carl Issacson. The first foursome to tee off consisted of four of the members of the Citizens Golf Advisory Committee: Frank Welsh,

Frank Rutz, Charles Lampman, and Fred Johnson. Six foursomes composed of forest preserve commissioners followed the first group and then the course was opened to the general public. The rules of play were as follows:

Section 1 Rule 1-US Golf association rules shall govern all play.

Rule 2-All games must start from No. 1 tee and the regular teeing grounds must be used; at the order of the starter, games may start from the No. 10 tee.

Rule 3-No more than four players will be allowed in a match or to play through together.

Rule 4-Foursomes and four ball matches are the only form of play allowed on Saturday afternoons, Sundays and holidays or at any other time when the starter deems it necessary.

Rule 5-Each player must be provided with a bag and at least three clubs; one of which shall be a putter.

Rule 6-Clubs must not be thrown from one player to another.

Rule 7-Every player must wear flat low heeled shoes on the links.

Rule 8-Non-players are not allowed on the links except by special permission of the starter and then at their own risk.

Rule 9-Juniors under 17 years of age may obtain junior permits at 30¢, good for 18 holes of play any forenoon except Sundays and holidays, providing they tee off before 10:30 a.m.

Rule 10-No player shall play until those in front are out of range (200 yards) nor play up to the putting greens until those in front have holed and moved away.

Rule 11-To expedite the steady progress of players, it is requested that golfers lay their bag off the green on the side nearest the next tee, proceed without delay to putt-ball farthest from the cup to be played first and so on. When all members of match have putted out, replace the flag and leave the green at once toward golf bags and the next tee. Do not stop to figure scores, try over putts; be considerate to others.

Rule 12-Practicing on greens is strictly forbidden.

Rule 13-Players looking for a lost ball must allow the match following to play through and get out of range.

Rule 14-Players shall replace all turf displaced by them.

Rule 15-Save the trees, shrubbery, vines, and flowers. When your stroke or ball would injure natural growth of any kind, players are requested to move the ball a club away without penalty.

Rule 16-Winter golf; when signs on the course, on the fairways, etc., request winter golf because of new construction or repair work ball may be lifted to firmer ground adjacent without penalty.

Section 2 Any person violating any of the above mentioned rules shall be subject to a penalty of not less than \$5.00 nor more than \$25.00 for each and every violation thereof.

According to Mr. McGonigal, horses were kept in the southeast corner of the maintenance shop and were used for mowing the golf course during the 1930's. Personal financial problems resulting from the Depression caused many of the Macktown patrons to play only nine holes instead of eighteen. Nine hole tickets were sold for 20 cents.

The first extension to the clubhouse was authorized in 1937, and tile taken up from the floor of the old courthouse was used to resurface the maple floor and porch of the clubhouse in 1940. The Forest Preserve Commission approved a proposal for expansion of the clubhouse in November 1955. Eighteen feet were added to the north of the building and 20 feet were added to the east side. The addition increased the size of the building by approximately one-third and it was designed to accommodate men and women's shower and locker rooms in addition to a new area for the pro shop. The change in the location of the pro shop permitted expansion of the dining facilities. The new addition was formally dedicated at a luncheon in May 1965. T. G. Lindquist, Attorney Frank Welsh, State Senator Charles W. Baker and many past and present county officials were present.

On September 25, 1960, former County Forester T. G. Lindquist was presented a plaque in recognition of his contribution in engineering the construction of the Macktown Golf Course. A plaque similar to the one given to Lindquist was placed in the clubhouse. Ransom Bradley, Peatonica Township Supervisor and Forest Preserve Executive Committee member, presented the award at a smorgasbord dinner held in conjunction with Macktown's all day family festival for season ticket holders and their wives.

The men's locker room was remodeled and a store room added in 1959. An additional 39 x 15' room was added to the clubhouse in 1973. The Cosmopolitan Club of Rockford donated a concrete floor for the snack bar east of the clubhouse in

the summer of 1963.

PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR GOLF AT MACKTOWN

Macktown was the site of the Cosmopolitan Women's Open Golf Tournament from 1958 through 1965. This was a 54 hole tournament sponsored for charity by the Cosmopolitan Club of Rockford and sanctioned by the Ladies Professional Golf Association. The Cosmopolitan attracted the leading women professionals in the United States and drew as many as 3,000 spectators.

In July 1961 the final two hours of this Tournament were covered by WREX-TV, Channel 13, which marked the first time that a PGA tournament was so covered. The winners in both the Professional and Amateur Divisions for the eight years of the tournament were as follows:

YEAR	PRO	SCORE
1958	Mary Lena Faulk	216
1959	Kathy Cornelius	214
1960	Betsy Rawls	208
1961	Betsy Rawls	213
1962	Sandra Haynie	210
1963	Ruth Jessen	213
1964	Clifford Ann Creed	211
1965	Sandra Haynie*	210

YEAR	AMATEUR	HOME
1958	Barbara Slobe	Waukegan
1959	Shirley Dommers	Belvidere
1960	Carol Sorenson	Janesville
1961	Lois Drafke	La Grange
1962	Lois Drafke	
1963	Nancy Roth	Hollywood, Fla.
1964	Carla Jean Glasgow	Whittier, Calif.
1965	Lois Drafke	

*Sudden death playoff with Kathy Whitworth and Marlene Hagge.

Marlene Hagge led the pros in winnings at Macktown (\$4,339.86) but she never won the tournament. PGA winnings leader Mickey Wright competed four times at Macktown but never finished higher than third. The best competitive round was a 66 by Sandra Haynie in 1962.

Macktown has been the scene of numerous men's amateur tournaments since its construction. Rockford amateur Dick Jungen holds the course record with a ten under par 62.

The current all time PGA money winner, Jack Nicklaus, conducted a golf clinic at Macktown on Monday, July 18, 1965. This clinic was sponsored by the Smith Oil Company which also donated furniture to the Macktown clubhouse and it was one of three clinics that Nicklaus conducted in the area within a two day period. The others were at the Dixon Country Club and the Kishwaukee Country Club in DeKalb. In a phone conversation with a Smith Oil Company

spokesman prior to his arrival, Nicklaus stated that it was doubtful that he could break the course record. He felt that Macktown was a short course and that he would not be able to use his long game to his advantage.

The match between Nicklaus and local amateurs Alex Welsh, Ted Seeley, and Art Lewis attracted a gallery of nearly 5,000 spectators. Nicklaus carded a 32-36-68, four strokes under the course record at that time.

Several modifications have been made to the golf course over the years. Twenty yards were added to both the 14th and 15th holes in the summer of 1953. A practice tee was first added in March 1955. Golf cart paths were added in 1977. In 1978 Macktown continued to be the most popular golf course in the Forest Preserve District due to its mature trees and the short but challenging nature of the course.

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

The present caretaker's home at Macktown was constructed under a contract awarded in June 1951. Macktown was first opened for winter sports in the winter of 1951. The baseball diamond was flooded to make a skating rink and the remainder of the park was made available for sledding and skiing. A 40 x 27' concrete boat ramp was installed in the fall of 1954.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

In the act of acquiring the Macktown Forest Preserve, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District also became the custodian of one of the oldest historical sites in northern Illinois.

Both the Stephen Mack Home and Whitman Trading Post were in various stages of disrepair when the site was purchased. The restoration of both homes was listed under the proposed CWA project No. 1133 which was submitted in February 1934. The Trading Post was to be restored to its original "interior ruggedness". The CWA was to furnish labor, supervision, and material amounting to \$1,784.40. The District furnished only \$283.15 for material, nearly half of which was sand, gravel and interior millwork which was available at the site. An article in the *Rockford Register-Republic* for April 20, 1934, reported this first attempt to rehabilitate the Mack home:

With hammers and trowels, shingles and plaster, CWA laborers completely rehabilitated the Old Mack Home, residence of the county's first white family, before the federal job program was completed April 1. A new roof was

installed and plastering was patched and replaced throughout the building which is now used by the custodian.

In the spring of 1950 the Forest Preserve Commission decided that the Stephen Mack home was no longer adequate for the caretaker's residence and made plans to demolish the structure. The Rockton Women's Club circulated a petition in Rockton, South Beloit, and other parts of the county protesting the proposed destruction. Seven hundred persons signed the petition and the Forest Preserve Commission eventually decided to build a new caretaker's residence northwest of the Mack home.

The Rockton Township Historical Society was organized in the fall of 1952 and obtained a charter from the state in the following year with 98 charter members. In the fall of 1953 this organization petitioned the Forest Preserve Commission for authorization to renovate the Mack home and convert it into a museum.

On October 24, 1953, members of the Society and county officials met with an architect to discuss the feasibility of further restoring the structure. Shortly prior to that meeting a representative of the State Historical Society had visited the home and encouraged the Rockton group to undertake the project.

The Society was granted the right to restore the building provided that it paid for the project out of its own funds. The members were first given the choice of restoring the Mack home or the Whitman Trading Post. When they decided to concentrate on the Mack home, the Forest Preserve Commission agreed to have the building properly wired and to provide running water for the kitchen. The great-granddaughter of Stephen Mack and Hononegah, Mrs. Robert Mitchell of Chicago, visited the Mack home in October of 1954 and later sent a donation for the restoration project. Architect Armour Titus prepared the drawings for the proposed remodeling.

The opening of the Stephen Mack Museum in June 1956 was the culmination of the unceasing efforts of members of the Rockton Township Historical Society to raise the necessary funds to repair the home. Money had been raised through bake sales, card parties, and donations.

The Museum contained mementoes of the Mack family as well as antiques and artifacts pertaining to the early history of the county. Much of the flooring in the home was the original walnut board laid by Mack, and the window casings and staircase were also original. Among the items on display in the Museum were a silver teaspoon set, silver candle-snuffer,

Macktown Preserve

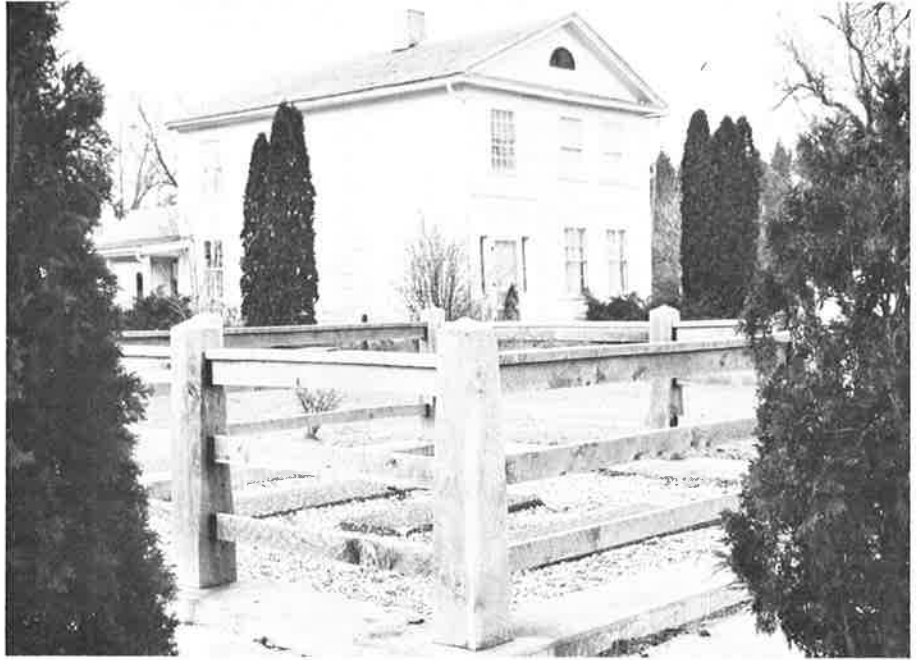
and silver tray, all of which belonged to Stephen Mack's father and mother; a walnut cradle which Mack made for his children; arrowheads and an Indian stone ax which were found on the property; an old store account book from 1812; an 1847 model sewing machine with wooden shuttles; a trundle bed and two large beds about 100 years old; 1856 and 1857 entries from the account book of the District No. 2 school clerk; and a bull's eye watch that belonged to Thomas Talcott, who with his father, founded the village of Rockton. Over 550 visitors had toured the Museum during the first two weeks following its opening. In August the Museum received several photographs from Mrs. Bio De Casseras, the eighty-two year old granddaughter of Stephen Mack. Three of the photographs were of Mrs. De Casseras in Indian costume when she was a young woman in her thirties. Mrs. De Casseras real name was Mary Adele but the Indians had given her the name Bio. Before her death, Mrs. De Casseras toured the home and later willed the Museum many of her furnishings.

On June 12, 1960, a historical marker which had been presented by four chapters of the Daughters of the American Colonists of the State of Illinois was formally dedicated at the Whitman Trading Post. Participating in the dedication were members of the Rockton Township Historical Society and the Swedish Historical Society of Rockford.

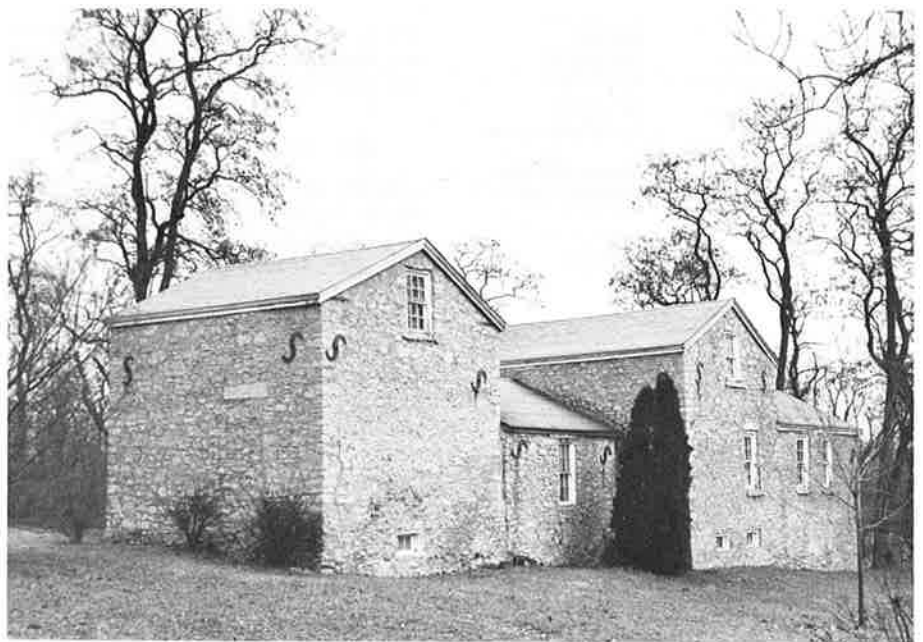
In April of the following year forest preserve workers uncovered several Indian fireplaces at Macktown near the spot where the Indian skeleton (see Stephen Mack section) had been unearthed five years before. Superintendent Ronald Pennock reported that the cooking pits were buried under a foot of soil and that a large number of clam shells were also uncovered which presumably had been discarded after the Rock River clams had been cooked.

In 1964 Superintendent Pennock decided to remove the bodies of Stephen Mack, Hononegah, and their son Henry to a new graveside next to the Stephen Mack home. Although he had obtained permission of the Mack descendents prior to attempting to move the remains from their resting place in Phillips Cemetery, Harrison Township, the proposed removal aroused protests from many area residents. The gravestone had split in half and had seriously deteriorated. Pennock felt that a grave near the home would provide a more fitting memorial.

The bodies were moved in July, 1965. A new memorial was designed by Rockton architect Armour H. Titus. The gravesite was enclosed by a fence and bronze markers installed to identify the remains.



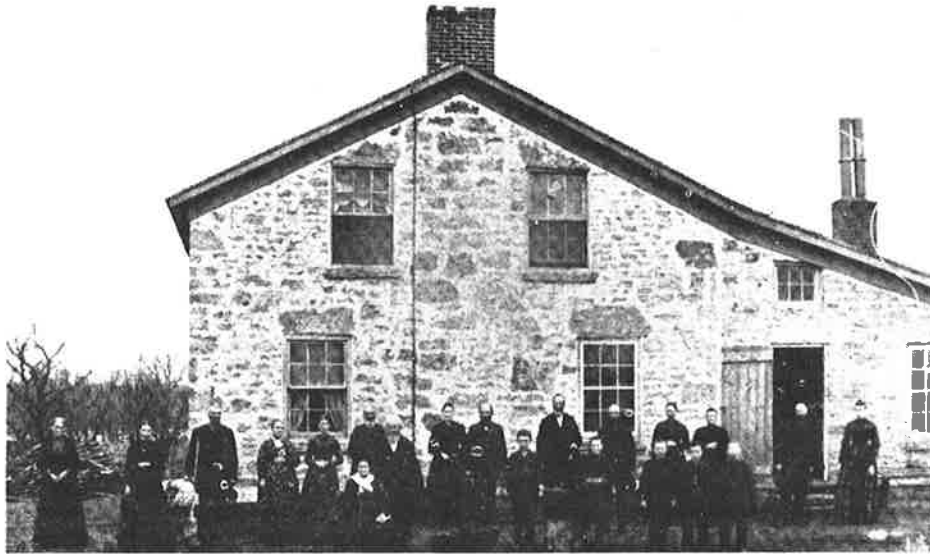
The Stephen Mack home built in 1839. The graves of Stephen Mack, Hononegah, and their son, Henry, are enclosed by the fence in the foreground. (Courtesy W.C.F.P.D.)



Rear view of William Whitman Trading Post, c. 1846. (Courtesy W.C.F.P.D.)

In 1968 the Whitman Trading Post was reopened to the public after being restored as a replica of an early store. Boards for the counter and shelves were hand sawed at the Rock River Saw Mill and square nails were used in the construction. Some of the spice

bins were brought from a store in what is now the Talcott Free Library in Rockton. All of the artifacts displayed in the store were handcrafted items made prior to the machine era.



Atwood Homestead, c. 1886. (Courtesy Atwood Family)

Family and their contributions to Rockford and Winnebago County preserves the integrity and history of their achievements. The history of the Atwood Family gives impetus to the present citizenry to achieve the same excellence.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE ATWOOD FAMILY¹

The Atwood Family has been traced back to 1203 A. D. in England. By the 15th century a branch of the family had acquired substantial landholding in Landerstead, Surrey, England. The great 19th century manor house was destroyed by bombing during World War II but the family church with its adjacent cemetery are still extant.²

It is not known when a member or members of the family migrated to the "new world" but its first noted member, Joseph Atwood, was born in New England April 8, 1756. Little is known of Joseph Atwood but it is recorded in *Connecticut Men In The Revolution*, that he served three enlistments during the Revolutionary War: May 7, 1775, to December 18, 1775, in the 6th Company of the 2nd Regiment of Connecticut Volunteers; from May 26, 1777, to January of 1778; and from August 18, 1780, being discharged December 4, 1780, from the 9th Connecticut Regiment. Between his second and third enlistments, Joseph Atwood married Ruth Cross, February 16, 1779. They were married 21 years. Ruth Cross Atwood died December 6, 1800. They had no children.

In the spring of 1801 Joseph Atwood married Polly Powers. Four sons and three daughters were born of this marriage: Irene, Joseph, Patten (born January 11, 1805, in New Hampshire), Laura, Candace, Ira, and Alfred. 57 children were born from the sons and daughters of Joseph and Polly Atwood: Patten Atwood 15 children, Joseph Atwood 14 children, Candace Wilson 17 children, and Lura Warner 11 children.

The Atwood family continued to live in New England until 1816, when they moved to Canada. For three or four years they lived without incident when in May of 1820 Joseph Atwood was fatally injured constructing a barn for a neighbor. He died eleventh months later April 9, 1821. Left with the responsibilities of raising a family, Polly Atwood maintained the family until she passed away September 9, 1826. Six months prior to her death, Patten Atwood married Anna Brooks on Valentines Day, February 14, 1826.

For two or three years after their marriage, Patten and Anna Atwood made their home on a farm in Dunage, Canada. He then moved his family across the Thames River to Longwood, Ontario, in

It is possible that the trading post was originally constructed in several stages. The walls of the two-story portion on the south are separated from the one-story section north of it. The front and rear walls of the other three sections are contiguous which suggests that they were all built at the same time. The S-irons which indicate the tie rod ends are presumed to be later additions which were installed to stabilize the walls. The southernmost unit of the structures is also distinguished from the other three by the oak boards set into the stone under the eaves. It is possible that these boards were used originally to fasten a cornice. The walls of the building are built of rough local limestone and the lintels and sills are of dressed stone.

The Mack home itself was originally a simple rectangle. The cornice, the framing around the front door, and the proportions of the house indicate the influence of the Greek Revival style. It is not known precisely when subsequent alterations to the design were made.

In March 1977 the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council recommended that the Macktown Historic District be included in the National Register of Historic Places. This is an official list of the cultural resources in the United States that have been deemed worthy of preservation. The Macktown Historic District has as its boundaries not only the area around the Mack Home and the Whitman Trading Post, but also much of the area that comprised the village of Macktown. Many of the foundations of the various buildings are still in evidence.

In January 1978 Congressman John B. Anderson announced that the Macktown Historic District had been formally

entered in the National Register by the United States Department of the Interior. Inclusion in the Register makes the Macktown District eligible for federal historic preservation grants and also helps to protect historic buildings against demolition.

ATWOOD HOMESTEAD FOREST PRESERVE

INTRODUCTION

The Atwood Homestead was graciously donated by Seth B. Atwood in 1962 to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District in memory of the Atwood Family that settled there in the fall of 1840. The plaque that adorns the Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve commemorates Seth B. Atwood's grandparents and parents. It reads:

Atwood Homestead Preserve

In memory of:

Patten Atwood 1805-1898

and

wife Anna Brooks 1808-1890

Patten B. Atwood 1843 - 1930

and

wife Emma Catlin 1848 - 1918

Donated by:

Seth B. and Mae Glanville Atwood

Seth G. and Patricia Lang Atwood

Barbara Mae Atwood

Patten and Anna Atwood, with seven children, came from the East with ox team and covered wagon December 1839 and made their home here.

The philanthropy of the Atwood



Seth B. Atwood (Courtesy Atwood Family)

Exford Township, where he built a saw and grist mill. Longwood was the scene of a minor engagement between the British and Americans on March 5, 1814, during the War of 1812. It is located 30 miles southwest of London, Ontario, between the cities of Mt. Bridges and Glencoe.

As a miller, Patten Atwood was exempt from military service and provided supplies for rebels and Tories during the Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38. Seven children were born at Longwood: Lydia, Eliza, Susannah, William, Candace, Ann, and Mary.

In 1839 Patten and Anna Atwood decided to leave Longwood for northern Illinois. About the middle of October 1839

they gathered "their eight children and household effects into two covered wagons, with two yoke of oxen, seven or eight cows, and 30 or 40 sheep", and started toward northern Illinois. Considering the existing road conditions and the time of the year, the 450 mile journey was long and arduous.

From Ontario the Atwood party passed into Michigan and traveled south to the town of Chicago, Illinois. Arvilla Atwood, who wrote "The History of the Atwood Family", writes that at one point in Michigan: "the cows were stolen one night by a gang of thieves, causing a delay of 11 days and considerable worry and expense before they were recovered and

the emigrants could continue their journey".

The night of December 1, 1839, the Atwood family spent in Newburg, Illinois, northeast of the present town of Cherry Valley. The next day, December 2, they started for the town of Pecatonica west of Rockford. As the Atwood party entered Rockford on East State Street they met Elder Sayers, a Baptist missionary, who informed Patten Atwood that it would be impossible to cross the Rock River at this time. The Atwood party turned north. Near Knightsville, Illinois, William Mead overtook them and made a tentative arrangement for the Atwoods to spend the remainder of the winter at his home. That evening the Atwoods spent their first night in Harlem Township at the farm of Fred Pickard. On December 3rd the Atwood family moved up the Rock River to the Mead farm and quartered there for the duration of the winter. Joseph Atwood was born there February 26, 1840.

In the spring of 1840, Patten Atwood bought the 120 acre Peter Mabie farm, located on the east side of the Rock River, and built a log cabin for his family.

In the fall of 1840, Patten Atwood traded his farm for land on the west side of the Rock River and built another log cabin near a stone quarry on the property. This tract comprises the present day forest preserve. Several years passed before he built the Stone House which has remained as the landmark of the "Old Homestead" of the Atwood Family. On November 13, 1849, Patten Atwood was granted the Warrant Deed for the property from a Levi M. Taft and his wife Electa G., for the sum of fifty dollars.

At the "Old Homestead" five more children were born to Patten and Anna Atwood; Irene, Patten Brooks (born March 10, 1843), father of Seth B. Atwood, Harriet, John, and Phillip.

SETH BURTON ATWOOD

Seth B. Atwood was born in Rockford, Illinois, August 24, 1886, one of four sons and a daughter of Patten B. Atwood and Emma Catlin Atwood. As a child his development was profoundly influenced by his parents and the heritage of the Atwood family. His father was the son of Patten and Anna Brooks Atwood who came to northern Illinois from Longwood, Ontario, and settled at the Atwood Homestead in 1840. His mother was the former Emma Catlin who was born in Litchfield, Connecticut, and came west to teach school in Pecatonica Township, where she married Patten B. Atwood.

Seth B. Atwood's love for nature and the outdoors was instilled in him by his mother Emma Catlin Atwood. When he was

young, they enjoyed canoeing and ice fishing together, and also botany and geology field trips. She also helped him with his classwork in zoology and encouraged his interest in natural science. In a *Rockford Morning Star* interview given December 4, 1974, he said, "My mother was a wonderful woman...she was an expert botanist and caused me to have a terrific interest in nature and natural science".

After finishing his early education in Rockford, Seth B. Atwood attended the University of Wisconsin and graduated in 1907. While at school he became a charter member of Beta Gamma Sigma, College of Commerce Honorary Fraternity, and a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon social fraternity. After school he returned to Rockford where, with his brother James T., they co-founded and developed the Atwood Vacuum Machine Company in 1909.

In 1910 Seth B. Atwood married Helen Mae Glanville. They had met on a blind date which Seth had tried to avoid. His marriage to Helen Mae Glanville was very fruitful and beneficial. Mrs. Atwood continuously supported and encouraged his interest in parks and recreation all her life.

For the next few years Seth B. Atwood placed all his energy and attention on his business. In 1924 he was asked to address the Rotary Club on the subject of city parks and recreation. He was a bit reluctant:

When I got out of college, I was working and concerned only with business...I was a member of the Rotary Club and I was to give a talk on parks and recreation. I didn't care to do it, but my wife prodded me into going to Chicago to look the parks over. I would never have done what I have if my wife hadn't prodded me that first time...She's been aside me ever since, aiding, abetting, and encouraging.³

With his wife's assistance Seth went to Chicago and made a comprehensive study of parks and recreation. This pause from his business concerns brought to his attention the lack of adequate river-front and park property in the Rockford community. To remedy this he began to acquire property and to address this problem to various civic clubs and organizations.

ROCKFORD PARK DISTRICT

On the basis of his interest in parks and recreation, Seth B. Atwood was appointed to the Rockford Park Board in May of 1928 to fill the vacancy created by the

death of Frank L. Cleveland.⁴ He was given a position on the "finance and privileges, permits and playgrounds" committee until the April 1929 election. He was elected to the park board to serve the remainder of Mr. Cleveland's unexpired term, and he served continuously until his resignation in April of 1960. While on the Rockford Park Board, Atwood served as vice-president from 1937-1941, and he was appointed president in July 1942. He held that position until 1960.

LAND DONATIONS

In February of 1959, Seth B. Atwood and Rockford Park District Superintendent, Earl F. Elliot, met before the Winnebago County Board to discuss the acquisition of the former Camp Grant Rifle Range for use as a park for the Rockford Park District. In 1954 the federal government had declared Camp Grant military surplus and offered it for sale. The County Board had submitted the first application to purchase the 312 acre camp. The federal government offered Camp Grant to the county for half its appraised valuation of \$7,800. Later, the appraised value was set at \$30,000; the cost to the county being \$15,000 plus costs.

Seth B. Atwood told the County Board that he would pay the cost of acquiring Camp Grant if it could be obtained by the Rockford Park District. He said that he would pay whatever price the federal government charged and that he would make a gift of the purchase to the Rockford Park Board. Atwood asked that the County Board withdraw in favor of the park district or transfer its application. The County Board unanimously voted to withdraw as a purchaser and allow the Rockford Park Board to be the preferential buyer. On July 31, 1956, Seth B. Atwood gave the Rockford Park Board a check for \$15,818 as a gift for the purchase of Seth B. Atwood Park.

In July 1962 Seth B. Atwood donated the original "homestead" of the Atwood Family to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. It had been offered to the Rockford Park District as a potential site for a golf-course, but they had declined the offer. In 1966 Seth B. Atwood donated an additional 110 acres to the Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve. In July 1972 Atwood donated 15 acres of his personal estate, now known as the Trask Bridge Forest Preserve, to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District.

In all, the Atwood Family has donated more than 1,000 acres in parks and recreational sites to Rockford and Winnebago County.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SETH B. ATWOOD

The personal philosophy behind the contributions of Seth B. Atwood reflects his heritage and development in the Atwood Family. It reveals a personal commitment to enrich the environment which benefits everyone. As Atwood stated in a *Rockford Morning Star* article July 30, 1972, "I was brought up to believe if you have something, you have the obligation to share it. You couldn't have any fun if you kept it all for yourself". Atwood added, however, that his philanthropy was the direct result of a series of steps taken to achieve a definite goal rather than any attempt to patronize his affluence on the community:

It wasn't any dogooder thing. It was a logical sequence of events made possible by fairly reasonable financial success. It was based on my upbringing, but I never set out to do good. It just happened.

At the time Atwood began to acquire land for recreational use, he understood that individual initiative would be the determining factor:

You couldn't go out and start public campaigns to get some of these things done...An individual had to do it. Altruism, however, was not the motivating factor in acquiring these lands:

There is no virtue in it...We (the Atwoods) were blessed. We started from scratch and everything got better. We were fortunate to be able to do the things we've done...It took money, plenty of it, but it was something we wanted to do. Beyond that would be braggadocio.

The philosophy behind Seth B. Atwood is one of contribution. He undertook the initiative to preserve and donate valuable parklands when foresight was necessary and the means available. In one sense Seth B. Atwood represents the American ideal of personal excellence and perseverance towards a definable goal. But in a greater perspective, he realized a need within his community and formulated a response with his heart and mind. His decision to preserve valuable park and river-front property enlarges the word responsibility to its true context—"the ability to respond". We are indebted to his capacity to act.

FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

In October of 1961 the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission

Atwood Homestead

created the Land Advisory Council to seek additional lands for the Forest Preserve District. In early 1962 Leland Fetzer, Chairman of the Land Advisory Council, sent a letter to Seth B. Atwood, inquiring about the possibility of the Atwood Family donating the 240 acre "Atwood Family Homestead" located on Old River Road in Owen Township. On May 10, 1962, Seth B. Atwood attended a conference with members of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee and Board of Commissioners and offered to donate the "Atwood Homestead" to the Forest Preserve District. Mr. Atwood indicated that the Atwood Foundation, a non-profit organization which held an option on the land, would purchase the property and then give it to the Forest Preserve District.

On February 28, 1963, the warranty deed for the Atwood Homestead was presented to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District from the Atwood Foundation. On August 30, 1964, the Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve was formally dedicated by Seth B. Atwood as a memorial to his parents and grandparents. Mr. Atwood gave the main address for the program which was attended by approximately 500 people. The remainder of the program consisted of speeches by William H. Phelps, Chairman of the Winnebago County Board of Commissioners; Leland Fetzer, Chairman of the Forest Preserve Land Advisory Council; Reverend Dr. Joseph Cleveland, pastor of the Second Congregational Church; and a performance by the Purple Knights Drum and Bugle Corps.

Initial development of the Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve began in 1963. During that year, two miles of road were graded and excavated to allow public access into the preserve, along with repairs to the old stone homestead. In 1964 a boat ramp was constructed with grant money received from the Illinois Department of Conservation. In 1966 an octagonal shelterhouse was constructed at the preserve. In 1975 funds from the Illinois Boating Act were used to construct two more boat ramps at Atwood Homestead. These additional boat launching facilities provide free public access for camping, canoeing, fishing, and power boating along the Rock River.

1966 ATWOOD HOMESTEAD DONATION

On December 25, 1965, Christmas Day, Orson E. Loomis, Chairman of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee, reported that he had discussed with Seth B. Atwood the donation of the remainder of the Atwood Homestead, 110 acres, which was

located immediately west of the 240 acre forest preserve. Chairman Loomis also stated that Mr. Atwood had offered to donate the additional land to the District, provided that a program for development of the additional land include a golf course. On February 15, 1966, the warranty deed for the additional 110 acres was given to the Forest Preserve District making a total of 350 acres donated by the Atwood Family.

In a resolution presented to the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners on March 8, 1966, a program for the development of both tracts of land was outlined. Provisions in the resolution called for the development of a golf course by June 1, 1972, and required that the District begin developing an outdoor education program at Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve.

ATWOOD HOMESTEAD GOLF COURSE

In the proposed Forest Preserve Budget for 1968, presented in December of 1967, \$200,000 was appropriated to finance the construction of an eighteen-hole golf course at Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve. Anthony Colletti, Chairman of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee, indicated that Charles E. Maddox, golf architect from St. Charles, Illinois, was ready to present preliminary plans of the Atwood Homestead Golf Course to the

District in early 1968. On May 9, 1968, a resolution was approved by the Forest Preserve Commission authorizing Mr. Maddox to prepare a seedling and watering plan.

On November 14, 1968, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission approved a resolution accepting the bid of \$313,304.89 from the Maddox Construction Company, Inc., of St. Charles, Illinois, to construct the eighteen hole Atwood Homestead Golf Course. Initial construction on the Atwood Homestead Golf Course began in late 1968 and was completed by the summer of 1970. The course provided for 8,000 - 10,000 square feet teeing areas; large greens averaging 9,000 square feet in area; and total yardage for men's regulation tees at 3,320 yards for each nine and 6,640 yards total. Tournament yardage was figured to be in the +7,000 yard category.

On May 5, 1971, the Atwood Homestead Golf Course was dedicated by Seth B. Atwood in a ceremony attended by county officials, the media, and golfing enthusiasts. In his address Mr. Atwood stated that, "The Atwood family appreciated the opportunity to serve the county and golfers with this course. I only hope that over the years that follow, the work that has been done here will be truly appreciated by many, many people". As a tribute to Mr. Atwood, the Forest Preserve Commission passed a resolution on August 12, 1971, establishing the annual



Seth B. Atwood talking to children at the dedication of the Outdoor Education Program in the old barn at Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve, January 10, 1969. (Courtesy W.C.F.P.D.)

Seth B. Atwood Golf Tournament.

On November 18, 1969, a resolution was approved by the Forest Preserve Commission authorizing Larson and Darby, Architects, of Rockford, Illinois, to design and supervise construction of the clubhouse at Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve. On April 26, 1970, the Forest Preserve District approved the sketches which called for the clubhouse to use the existing shell of the Atwood Family Homestead as the focal point of the new clubhouse. Samuel Darby, architect, stated that his firm decided to preserve the limestone homestead because the structure was "steeped in the tradition and history of the area". The plans for the clubhouse called for renovation of the interior of the homestead, replacement of the roof, and construction of a fireplace in the main lounge area. The floor plan was designed to have 4,900 square feet compared to 2,500 square feet at the Macktown Clubhouse. During Phase I construction, the new clubhouse was built around the Atwood Homestead, leaving the interior of the homestead to be improved later. Phase II construction of the Atwood Clubhouse involved the building of a restaurant and locker rooms for use by the general public.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS 1969-1973

Two outdoor education programs were utilized at the Atwood Homestead Outdoor Educational Center from 1969-1973. During the regular school year, September through June, the Outdoor Education Department of Rockford School District 205 conducted a Day-School program. The classrooms in the renovated "Old Barn" were used daily from September through half of March and then intermittently through June. All grades from elementary school through the graduate level participated in the day program.

During the summers from 1970-1973, the Title I Summer Program, funded by the federal government, was conducted at the Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve. The curriculum used by the Title I Program was an interdisciplinary approach to environmental appreciation, designed for underprivileged elementary school children. The Title I Program director was Robert Weirick, who was the director of the Outdoor Education Program for District 205 during the regular school year. After the summer of 1973, the Title I program was conducted by the Rockford Park District.

HERITAGE DAY PROGRAM 1970-1971

On May 1, 1970, and April 21-24, 1971, a "Heritage Day" program was conducted at the Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve. The "Heritage Day" program was sponsored by the Outdoor Education Department of Rockford School District 205, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, and the Rockford Park District. The director for both "Heritage Day" programs was Ruth Eck, who was the Day-School Coordinator for District 205's Outdoor Education Program. Ms. Eck had evolved the idea for the "Heritage Day" program from exhibits of early American culture that she had seen on visits to the parks and forest preserves in Chicago and Cook County, Illinois.

The first "Heritage Day" program conducted May 1, 1971, proved so successful that it was continued one additional day. Exhibits included: "Home-making Activities" such as dyeing and spinning of wool, butter churning, and soapmaking; "Settler Activities" involving digging wells, building a log cabin and a sod house; "Farming Activities" with exhibits from the Stephenson County Farm Museum; "Indian Activities" such as basket weaving and a bark lodge; "Children's Games" like hoop rolling, tug of war, and kite flying; and a display called "Flags Over This Land" which exhibited the national flags that had flown over the Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve. Each of the exhibits was researched by seventh and eighth grade students who were responsible for presentation and explanation of the displays.

The sod house used for the display on "Settlers Activities" was built by Ruth Eck and her husband. The sod was donated by Seth B. Atwood, and the oak slab supports came from Hononegah Forest Preserve. The log cabin, which was chinked with "wattle and daub", was built by Jim Schoonmaker. The pine logs used in the construction of the cabin were thinned from the forest at Hononegah Forest Preserve. The basement and main floor of the old barn were used to display exhibits. Many of the farm implements were provided by J. C. Moerk, resident curator for the Stephenson County Historical Society Farm Museum. The Rockford Historical Society provided the quilting demonstration.

In the 1971 "Heritage Day" program the same exhibits were presented with the addition of an "archeological dig" that depicted an example of an archeological site during excavation. The log cabin and sod house built for the 1970 program were retained and used again. 1971 was the last year for the "Heritage Day" program.

Note: We would like to thank the Atwood Family for their permission to use material from the Atwood Family Association Book (1928) for the early history of the Atwood Family. Material concerning the Outdoor Education Day programs conducted at the Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve was provided by Robert Weirick and Ruth B. Eck. We gratefully acknowledge the use of these sources in preparing this chapter. We would also like to thank the following persons for providing us with information: David Burdick, Robert Facklam, Lowell Hamilton, and Steve Olejnik.

SECTION V:

NORTHEASTERN PRESERVES

The three preserves in this section all lie within the area of most recent glaciation in Winnebago County. Extensive glacial outwash and gravel hill prairies can be found along the east bluffs of the old Rock River Valley from Rockford north into Wisconsin. These glacial deposits account for the sandy soils found at Roland Olson and the gravel deposits found in Kieselberg. The Ledges Forest Preserve is named after one of the few outcroppings of St. Peter Sandstone in Winnebago County which is known as the "North" and "South" Ledges. The two branches of Kinnikinnick Creek that traverse the Ledges flow into the Rock River from the east.

ROLAND OLSON FOREST PRESERVE

AREA HISTORY-HARLEM TOWNSHIP

According to Kett's *History of Winnebago County* (1877), Hiram Wattles settled Section 31 of what is now Harlem Township in 1835. Wattles plotted a town which he named "Scipio" but he was unsuccessful in attracting settlers to this site. The township name was derived from the Dutch settlement, Harlem, on Manhattan Island, which itself was named for "Haarlem" in the Netherlands.

In 1836 Asa Taylor settled in Harlem Township after traveling from New York to Chicago by steam boat and from Chicago to Harlem by horse-drawn cart. In his diaries he indicates that the land he bought had sold for \$1.00 an acre in 1834, \$2.00 in 1835, and \$4.00 an acre when he purchased it.¹ Lewis Andrew Fabrique and his family settled in Harlem Township on what is now known as the Machesney Airport in 1838. His son, Lewis Andrew Fabrique, Jr., changed the family name to Fabrick. He owned all of the N. W. ¼ of Section 30 and the S. W. ¼ of Section 19 in Walling's 1859 *Map of Winnebago County*. He also served as the only agent for the Harlem Station on the Rockford-Kenosha Railroad Line.²

Harlem Village was first located in Section 20 in the 1840's. According to Mary Bittle's *History of Harlem Township* (1967), it contained a schoolhouse, a post office operated by a woman postmaster, and a stagecoach stop on the route between Rockford and Janesville, Wisconsin. In 1859 the Northwestern Railroad built the Rockford-Kenosha line through the township which followed Willow Creek through the present Rock Cut State Park down to Section 28 where it turned south

to Rockford. Harlem Village was then relocated in Section 28 and became the Harlem Station. The railroad line ran between Harvard and Rockford with twelve trains daily providing mail, freight, and passenger service. The line also served to transport limestone that was extracted from the Harlem Quarry near the present state park in the 1880's. The limestone blocks were used for heavy railroad masonry and building stone in Winnebago County.

The other station connected by way of the Rockford-Kenosha line was Argyle which was situated in Section 24. The village was named after the Mull of Kintyre, Argyleshire, Scotland, and became a center for Scottish immigrants in the 1830's and 40's.³ John Greenlee and his family first settled there in 1837 near the boundary line dividing Boone and Winnebago counties. In 1841 Greenlee began cutting timber near his quarry to construct the first log school house which was completed in 1842. By 1843 thirty families lived in Argyle which contained a grain elevator, saw mill, lumber yard, stockyards, grocery store, barber shop, harness and blacksmith shop, and a saloon. North of Argyle in Section 24 the First Scotch Presbyterian Church of Willow Creek was founded in 1840 with forty members. Kett records that the church had 400 members by 1877.

According to the 1859 county map, Charles Kery and William Peters owned portions of the present Roland Olson Preserve in Section 1. In 1871 Charles Kerr and L. Lawrence were the property owners. McMichael Road which lies south of the preserve was named after N. McMichael who had a farm in Sections 1 and 12 on the 1859 map. According to the 1853 *Illinois Survey Map*, Burr Oak Road passed through the "N. E." ¼ of Section 1 in Harlem Township. Floyd Eyster, a local historian, reported that a stone tavern and mill, serving a local stagecoach line, was once located on Burr Oak Road at the county line with Boone County.

ROLAND AND GLADYS OLSON

Roland and Gladys Olson were both born and raised in Rockford, Illinois. Mrs. Olson was the daughter of Walter and Anna Lawson. Walter J. Lawson was the founder of the Lawson Trucking and Storage Company which was located on 7th Street. Roland Olson's parents were Peter and Jennie Olson. Peter Olson was a general contractor and Roland Olson continued in his father's tradition becoming a residential and industrial developer.

Throughout their lives, Mr. and Mrs.



Roland Olson

Olson have donated their time and energy to many groups and organizations in Winnebago County. In 1966 Roland Olson donated and developed "Peter Olson Memorial Park" in Loves Park, Illinois, in memory of his father. In 1970 Mr. Olson was instrumental in the building of the "Walter J. Lawson Memorial Handicapped Children's Home" named after Mrs. Olson's father. In 1978 Mr. Olson built an addition to the children's home which was dedicated on October 15, 1978, as the "Gladys Olson Developmental Center for Multiple Handicapped Children". The Gladys Olson Developmental Center will work in conjunction with the Walter Lawson Children's Home expanding the progressive educational services and children's health care. The Center includes a therapy pool, offices for educational and administrative staff, a conference and resource room, and areas for individual staff contact with the children. In 1971 Mr. and Mrs. Olson donated the land and contributed much time in the construction of the new Loves Park American Legion Home. (Mr. Olson is also active in the Rockford Museum, the Svea Soner, the Swedish American Hospital Association, the Tebala Shrine Temple (Life Member-Tebala Horse Patrol), and serves as a board member for Lawson Memorial Children's Home and the Rockford Boy's Club. Mr. Olson is also Bank Director of First Bank of Loves Park, as well as on

In 1975, when the Olson's donated their farm to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, they expressed a desire that the facility be used for horse riding activities. The Olsons have owned and enjoyed horses all their lives and felt a public facility for riding was needed in Winnebago County. Mr. Olson personally donated his time and energy in the

Member of the Loves Park Riding Club.

Olson, Kieselburg Preserves

planning and construction of the Roland Olson Forest Preserve.

FOREST PRESERVE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

In March of 1974 Robert Mahnke, Superintendent of the District, gave an address to the Loves Park Rotary Club. Following the presentation, Roland Olson discussed with Mr. Mahnke the possibility of donating the Olson Farm to the Forest Preserve District. In April of 1974 Mr. and Mrs. Olson sent a letter to the Forest Preserve Executive Committee, offering to donate their 107 acre farm off Atwood and McMichael Road as a county forest preserve. When the Forest Preserve Commission met April 11, 1974 they agreed to begin formal acquisition on the proposed 107 acre donation.

On November 14, 1974, the Commission authorized the filing of a grant application through the Illinois Department of Conservation for federal funds from the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. The BOR grant for \$40,000 was needed to purchase an adjacent twenty acre tract of land that would be used to construct a safe access road and entrance from Atwood Road. The proposed 107 acre donation was offered as in-kind matching funds for the \$40,000 needed to acquire the entrance right-of-way.

At the January 9, 1975, Forest Preserve Commission Meeting, the District agreed to proceed with the acquisition of the additional twenty acres from the J. B. Atwood estate prior to BOR reimbursement. The Executive Committee also reported that John R. Cook Associates, landscape architects, had been approved to do the preliminary drawings for the horse riding trails and facilities that Roland and Gladys Olson had specified in the quit claim deed given the District December 29, 1975. On January 6, 1976, the District was notified that the BOR grant for the twenty acre acquisition had been approved by the Illinois Department of Conservation and the Federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation.

On February 11, 1976, the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners formally accepted the 107 acre donation from Mr. and Mrs. Roland Olson as the Roland Olson Forest Preserve. In the text of the formal agreement accompanying the resolution, Mr. and Mrs. Olson asked that the land be used principally for horseback riding and hiking, and that the area be left undisturbed and intact in its natural condition. Mr. Olson also was given approval to construct the brick entrance-way to the forest preserve at his own expense. During the same session, the

Commission approved the final purchase of the twenty acre tract adjacent to the Roland Olson Forest Preserve and the execution of the Illinois Department of Conservation BOR grant agreement.

DEDICATION CEREMONY

On September 17, 1976, the dedication ceremony for the Roland Olson Forest Preserve was held on the preserve northeast of Rockford, Illinois. Attending the event were the donors of the gift, Mr. and Mrs. Roland Olson; Frank G. St. Angel, President of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District; Carl F. Williams, Chairman of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee; and representatives from local equestrian clubs. The opening address was given by Attorney Bernard Reese. The Loves Park V. F. W. post served as color guard for the flag raising ceremony. Rev. Lester Reemstma, Pastor of Willow Creek Presbyterian Church, gave the invocation and benediction. After Roland and Gladys Olson presented the property, Mr. St. Angel and Mr. Williams gave acceptance speeches thanking Mr. and Mrs. Olson for their generosity on behalf of the citizens of Winnebago County. A portable speakers platform for the ceremony was provided by the Rockford Park District.

Following the dedication ceremony there was a reception for the Olsons held at the Stuga shelter house. Later in the afternoon the Tebala Shrine Horse Patrol conducted maneuvers in the Roland Olson Polo Field followed by a demonstration polo match. Throughout the afternoon horse drawn hay wagons conducted the public around the Forest Preserve grounds. On April 18, 1976, the Roland Olson Forest Preserve was officially opened to the public.

DEVELOPMENT

After the donation of the Roland Olson Forest Preserve in February of 1976, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District began improvements on the preserve property. In 1976 the main entrance road, brick gateway, and parking lot were constructed. The materials and labor for the brick gateway were donated by Roland Olson. A well was also drilled on the preserve in 1976 to supply drinking water. In the spring of 1976 the District began a reforestation program at the preserve, planting 20,000 seedlings, mostly Red Pine, in the sandy soil. An additional 10,000 seedlings were added to the preserve in 1977 to complete the program. In the summer of 1976 the "Stuga" shelter house was constructed north of the first parking

area. The word "stuga" is Swedish for cabin or cottage. The bridle paths and polo fields were also laid out at this time. In 1977 playground equipment was added to the preserve. In 1978 the 120' x 240' outdoor arena was graded and CETA work crews thinned the pine seedlings. Parking posts were also placed along the entrance road in 1978. The arena, complete with an announcer's stand, will be ready for use by June 1, 1979. Reservations can be made at the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District office. On April 5, 1979, Robert Mahnke, Director of the Forest Preserve District, met with representatives from the Rockford Polo Club to discuss improvements to the Roland Olson Polo Field. A preliminary agreement was written between the District and the Rockford Polo Club outlining the development and maintenance of the Roland Olson Polo Field.

Note: Biographical material on the Walter J. Lawson and Peter Olson families was provided by Mr. and Mrs. Olson. We gratefully acknowledge the use of this material in preparing this chapter.

KENNETH A. KIESELBURG FOREST PRESERVE

In May 1968 the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission agreed to finalize the sale of Willow Creek Forest Preserve to the State of Illinois for the purpose of expanding Rock Cut State Park. The Forest Preserve District received \$294,900 from this transaction and it used \$65,000 of that amount for the purchase of an addition to the Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve in 1969. An additional \$180,000 was used to purchase the Pecatonica River Forest Preserve in 1970.

At the suggestion of Commissioner Kenneth Kieselburg, the Forest Preserve Commission agreed to allocate the remaining Willow Creek funds toward the purchase of a forest preserve in Harlem or Roscoe Township. On September 21, 1970, the Land Advisory Council inspected the Ambrose F. Perrin farm on Swanson Road. This tract contained 211 acres and the council felt that it was very desirable for acquisition. It was located in an area of expanding population and there was no existing forest preserve in the vicinity. This site was also eventually endorsed by the City-County Planning Commission, the Ten County Conservation Commission, the Rockford Park District, and the Soil Conservation Service. At its October 1970 session the Forest Preserve Commission approved a resolution whereby the District would

purchase an option and agree to buy the property for \$126,600.

In the months that followed the Forest Preserve Commission's decision to purchase the Perrin property, the need for a county-wide landfill became acute. The State Environmental Protection Agency had granted a temporary variance to the Peoples Avenue landfill but it was urgent that a new landfill site be located. Rockford and Loves Park city officials became interested in the Perrin property as a possible solution to the landfill crisis. Originally the city officials were interested in leasing a portion of the property once it became a forest preserve. This question touched off a serious dispute involving most of the parties interested in the Perrin purchase as well as residents living in the Swanson Road area. Despite sign bearing protestors and a protest petition signed by nearly 600 persons objecting to the Swanson Road landfill, the Rockford City Council voted unanimously to buy the Perrin farm.

At the Forest Preserve Commission meeting on December 9th Commissioner Kenneth Kieselburg introduced the attorney for the area residents opposed to the landfill. The Commission was advised that it had a moral commitment to provide the residents of that portion of the county with a forest preserve. It was also pointed out that most of the area's property owners had shallow wells and were fearful that a landfill in that vicinity would create serious problems. A petition for a forest preserve on the property now contained over 1,000 signatures.

The possibility of another landfill site in Cherry Valley was the decisive factor in ending a long series of legal battles and city-county competition over the Perrin property. Purchase by the Forest Preserve District was finally completed on April 4, 1972. Forest Preserve Superintendent James Fennessy stated that reforestation of the new preserve would begin that spring. Congressman John B. Anderson later notified the District of the award of \$60,939.85 in federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation funds on July 18, 1972.

At the meeting of the Forest Preserve Commission which was held on the 28th of April an Executive Committee resolution was introduced whereby the new forest preserve would be named in honor of Commissioner Kenneth Kieselburg. A petition from the Loves Park Lions Club in favor of naming the preserve after Kieselburg was introduced and read.

The resolution naming the new forest preserve the Kenneth Kieselburg Forest Preserve was then passed. Among other things it cited Commissioner Kieselburg for "...his extraordinary efforts in locating and investigating potential forest preserve

sites in Harlem and Roscoe Townships, in acquainting other board members with potentiality of the site selected and for the tenacity of his defense against the use of the site for the construction of a solid waste disposal facility....."

DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

In the original application to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation it was stated that the Perrin property would be "reforested and used for picnicking, hiking, bicycle trails, nature trails as well as for toboggans and sledding in winter".

The property has required continuous work in order to prepare it for maximum public benefit. Numerous structures which had fallen into disuse have had to be removed including a two story house, double garage and silo. The windmill and pump were removed with District permission by Mr. Edwin Carlson and became part of a museum on his property.

The process of reforestation and the planting of grass at the preserve was continuous over the years. Construction of a road through the preserve was initiated in 1975 and \$11,000 was allocated for the southern extension of the road in the 1975-76 budget. An additional \$4,000 was allocated for the road and parking area in the same year. The roads and parking areas were completed as of January 1976. A baseball diamond, toilet facilities, a new well, and a \$8,000 shelter house were provided in 1976. The Winnebago County Sport Modelers were given permission to use the field at the preserve as a model airplane landing area.

THE LEDGES AREA HISTORY

Indian traders erected cabins in the grove near the mouth of Kinnikinnick Creek prior to the arrival of the first permanent settlers in Roscoe Township. A Pottawatomie Indian guide who had been hired in Milwaukee brought Robert J. Cross and Colonel Von Hovenberg to this same grove on August 3, 1835. The remains of the traders' cabins and the wagon tracks made by the army that had pursued Black Hawk were still visible. The maples in the grove showed evidence of having been tapped by the Indians. Cross, who was originally from Coldwater, Michigan, purchased a claim to the land containing the grove from an employee of Stephen Mack named Lavec. By 1837 Henry Abell and his son were operating a saw mill on the north branch of the creek and they eventually laid out a village which they named after the English historian

Roscoe.¹

Kinnikinnick Creek which passes through much of Roscoe Township, including the Ledges Golf Course, takes its name from an Indian word for tobacco, kin-ni-kin-nick, which was smoked by Midwestern tribes. This substance was described as a mixture of tobacco, sumac leaves, and the inner bark of a species of dogwood (*cornus obliqua* RAF). The contents varied between different tribes and localities and the name was often applied by whites to the various components used in the mixture.²

HISTORY OF THE LEDGES PROPERTY

The area surrounding the present day golf course takes the name "Ledges" from its layered outcroppings of St. Peter Sandstone. Local folklore states that wolves reared their cubs in what is known as the Wolf Den Cave, located near the number 4 green of the golf course. An old oak, known as "Barter Oak", was supposedly the site of negotiations between the Indians and white traders.

The Ledges was popular for picnicking and outings beginning in the 1850's. In the early part of this century the property belonging to John Porter was heavily used by weekend picnickers in their horse and buggies and Model T's. Presumably they paid Porter for the privilege of using his property, which was common practice in Illinois prior to the establishment of forest preserves.

Hjalmer Anderson bought this property on behalf of Security Builders in 1929. He and his brother planted hundreds of trees, built the dam on the creek, and named their property The Security Outing Place. Plans to fully develop the recreation potential of the area never materialized and the Andersons sold the property to Mr. Swanson of Elco Tool in 1940. In 1943 he in turn sold it to Ed Green, who renamed it the Evergreen Farm.

Alfred J. Bowen obtained the 330 acre Evergreen Farm in 1949. In 1953 Bowen bought an additional one hundred acres from George Atwood and the first subdivision into lots was made along Love Road by Bowen Projects Inc. in 1954. By 1961 an additional 110 acres had been added and other developments were initiated to the west and southwest of the original Bowen property.

Plans for the development of a golf course were first formulated by Al Bowen, Ray Nihan and Dean Lind in 1962. In March of that year an application was filed in Springfield for the chartering of the Ledges Country Club as a non-profit organization. In 1963 Al Bowen platted a 165 acre tract in his subdivision into six lots, five of which he donated to the Ledges

The Ledges

Country Club. Work began on the construction of the course later that year using a design prepared by Golf Course Architect Edward Lawrence Packard of LaGrange, Illinois. Total cost for the project was estimated at \$281,200.

The course was officially opened for play on June 15, 1965. A minimal number of the virgin oaks and other trees were removed for the construction as only one fairway had to be carved out of a heavily wooded area. The dam, which Hjalmer Anderson had constructed years before, formed two ponds which provided an unusual number of holes with water hazards. Each hole had three tee locations which allowed variations for women's and tournament play. For normal play the Ledges is a 6,675 yard par 72 course.

The Ledges Country Club was not open to the general public. Charter members comprised those individuals who purchased one of the 100 lots on the land donated to the club by Bowen. Sustaining members paid initiation fees and membership dues. Total number of charter and sustaining members was restricted to 300 persons. A temporary clubhouse was opened on the east side of the course in November 1967. The present clubhouse was constructed in 1974.

The lot that Al Bowen had retained when he made his original donation to the country club was later sold to the club for the purpose of constructing luxury condominiums. Failure to obtain zoning for this construction resulted in a considerable financial setback for the Ledges Country Club, and as a result it was eventually unable to meet its financial obligations.

The Beloit State Bank, which held the mortgage on the course, obtained the assets of the club at a sheriff's sale in April 1977. The South Beloit City Council was unable to obtain a federal grant to purchase the property and South Beloit officials hoped that the Forest Preserve District would eventually decide to acquire it.

After considerable debate, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission concluded that the price for the course was compatible with the expenditure made for the Atwood Golf Course, that the Ledges course would alleviate the overcrowding on weekends at Macktown and Atwood, and that purchase of the Ledges by the District would maintain the area for open space recreational use and prevent its being lost to commercial development. Money for the Ledges purchase was derived from funds obtained from the corporate levy. Final details of the sale were agreed to on September 15, 1977. The total purchase price for the Ledges, including the clubhouse, was \$436,000.

At the time of its purchase, the Ledges Golf Course required considerable restoration and maintenance work by the Forest Preserve District. The dam on Kinnickinick Creek had washed out in 1973 and the water had damaged the original beauty of the greens and fairways. The condition of the course had also declined during the period of receivership.

In 1978 the Forest Preserve District remodeled the entrance and access to the clubhouse to facilitate public use. Final legal rights to green number 11 were also obtained. Marty Hogan succeeded Sam Manarchy as Ledges concessionaire in 1979.

SECTION VI:

NORTHWESTERN PRESERVES

According to the fourteen natural divisions of Illinois developed by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, the Colored Sands and Sugar River Forest Preserves lie between the Freeport Section of the Rock River Hill County Natural Division, and the Winnebago Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division of Illinois. Because this area is located at the boundary of these two divisions, the land forms a complex pattern of sand dune, forest, prairies, and sloughs once typical of the Sugar River Valley and surrounding uplands. This great diversity of habitat in turn supports a large number of animal and plant species which are rare in Illinois. Oak fern, bearberry, and the blue-spotted salamander are a few of the rare species which are found in the area. The Sugar River has a sand bottom and is a relatively clear stream providing excellent fishing. The Sugar River Sand Country is also well known as an excellent research area for reptiles and amphibians as well as for botanists and ornithologists. This area is mentioned in Dr. Egbert Fell's Flora of Winnebago County, Illinois (*The Nature Conservancy, Washington, D. C., 1955*), and "Plants of Northern Illinois Sand Deposit" (*American Midland Naturalist, 58: 941-451*). A description of the Sugar River area is also included in Henry A. Gleason's "The Vegetation of Inland Sand Deposits of Illinois" (*Bulletin of the Illinois State Laboratory of Natural History, Vol. 9, October, 1910*). Laona Heights Forest Preserve which is located in Laona Township, six miles west of the Sugar River and Colored Sands Forest Preserve, is also part of the Sugar River Drainage system, and is considered to be the finest example of the dry to mesic forests typical of the Rock River Hill Country Natural Division.

SUGAR RIVER

George Seaton and Lemuel Fisk first settled Shirland Township in 1837. The village of Shirland, located in the southern part of the township, was originally known as Kepotah and a county atlas indicates that it was known by this name at least until 1871. A plat map drawn in that year indicates that J. W. Ren owned the land in Section 5 west of the Sugar River which eventually became part of the first land purchased for the Sugar River Forest Preserve. The land directly across the river in Section 4 was owned by Bradner Smith

and Company in 1871. This firm is not identified on the map's list of township business enterprises but it is possible that it was a logging company.

The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District made its initial acquisition on the Sugar River area with the purchase of 135.32 acres from Mr. and Mrs. E. Arthur Anderson on August 13, 1926. This was the last of the five original tracts purchased by the District and it was obtained for \$4,000. In his first Annual Report County Forester T. G. Lindquist reported that Sugar River was an ideal purchase for several reasons. "It has excellent timber, could not be used for agriculture, and lastly, it was bought at a cheap price."

This original tract contained bluffs and bottomland on each side of the river. It is likely that most of the preserve had been grazed or logged in the years prior to its purchase. Apparently the grass and undergrowth had nearly been destroyed due to the overgrazing of cattle and it was only after the District acquired the property that the wild flowers, young trees, and shrubs were able to recover. Some rare wild flowers such as the dogtooth violet were found in the preserve. Sugar River was a popular swimming area throughout the 1930's.

The record is somewhat sparse in regard to the early development of the property. Descriptions of the preserve emphasize the fact that it had been allowed to remain in its natural state. The Sand Bluffs shelter is marked as a "wooden shelter" on the CWA topographical maps. The CWA did not construct any shelters at Sugar River as part of its shelter construction program in 1933. The 20 x 40 Riverview shelter was constructed in 1939 using funds provided by the Works Progress Administration. WPA funds were provided for road construction and blacktopping. One mile of road was added to the preserve in 1939 and most of this was blacktopped in the following year.

Beginning in January of 1965 the Forest Preserve Commission took steps to acquire the Sam Goldy Farm as an addition to the Sugar River Forest Preserve. Sam Goldy owned 188 acres which bordered the existing preserve on the north. At the session of January 12, 1965, the Forest Commission Preserve Committee recommended that a bill be introduced at the 1965 session of the Illinois General Assembly to enable the District to sell Memorial Preserve to the Rockford Park District and use the proceeds to purchase the Goldy farm.

Forest Preserve Superintendent Ronald Pennock explained that the District felt that the public had a right to actively enjoy the forest preserves. Because of the engineering problems involved in any

development of Memorial Preserve he felt that it would be best to turn it over to the Park District for development as a nature study area. The Park District was, in his opinion, in a better position to spend funds for educational facilities for the children of Rockford. The Park District would not endanger the value of the land and the Forest Preserve District would be able to acquire a valuable addition to Sugar River. The Goldy farm had first been offered to the District in 1963 and there would not be another opportunity to obtain state legislation until 1967. The Memorial Preserve was to be sold for \$47,500 because that was the amount required to purchase the Goldy farm.

On December 9, 1965, outgoing County Forester Ronald Pennock gave the Forest Preserve Executive Committee a final briefing in which he advised the commission that Governor Otto Kerner had signed legislation permitting the sale of the Memorial Forest Preserve for \$47,500. The bill specified that the funds were to be used for the acquisition of the Goldy farm as an addition to the Sugar River Forest Preserve. The actual closing date for the Goldy farm was November 18, 1966, and approval for a \$23,930 federal grant payment under the Open-Space Land Acquisition Program was received on February 27, 1967. Approximately 40 acres of this addition was reforested with red and white pine in 1968-69.

In 1973 it was recommended that the camping facilities at Sugar River be expanded to provide facilities for trailers. The Highway Department estimated that it would take approximately \$14,000 to build a road into the proposed campground. In January permission was given to start development of the Sugar River campground and an overall site evaluation was to be obtained from a recreation consulting firm. It was decided to construct a butterfly road and parking pads for trailers. These improvements were reported as being complete in March 1975. Provisions had also been made for a canoe camp along the river. Snowmobiling was first permitted at Sugar River during the winter of 1975. In 1976 the trails were closed to snowmobiles but large open areas were made available for this purpose.

COLORED SANDS

The name "Colored Sands" was derived from an outcrop of St. Peter Sandstone found in a quarry in the 43 acre Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve. The sand found in this outcrop has various shades and tints of color due to its mineral composition. These deposits attracted the early settlers who used the sand in decorations similar to the terrariums made

Colored Sands

today.

Geologically the nature preserve property contains dunes, ridges, and sand prairies formed from deposits laid during the retreat of the last glacial advance, about ten thousand years ago. Most of the dunes have been stabilized by prairie and woodland vegetation. The largest sand bluff lies on the east side of the Sugar River, forty to fifty feet above the valley floor. It was formed as the Sugar River eroded the dune to form the high bluff.¹

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

The Illinois Department of Conservation has reported several archeological sites in Shirland and Harrison Townships. Most of these sites have not been excavated although pottery of the *Middle Woodland* period has been identified south of the Colored Sands Forest Preserve near Yale Bridge. *Archiac* and *Late Woodland* material has also been recorded around Shirland and Harrison, Illinois. One site has been recorded in the Colored Sands Forest Preserve. No historical Indian sites have been reported near the preserve.

SAND BLUFF BIRD BANDING STATION

The Sand Bluff Bird Banding Station located in the Colored Sands Forest Preserve lies on an important migration route used by over 150 species of small birds including warblers, sparrows, and thrushes. Mr. Lee G. Johnson, the previous land owner of the Colored Sands area, established the banding station in 1967. Since its beginning, the Sand Bluff Bird Banding Station has become the most active facility of its kind between the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains. Over 75,000 birds have been banded from this station providing valuable information for scientific research and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In 1975 Mr. Johnson and other volunteers banded over 13,000 birds, or approximately 2-3% of the total number of small migratory birds banded in the U. S. Mr. Johnson indicated that the variety of habitats for feed in the Colored Sands area and the large wild areas to the north in Rock and Green County, Wisconsin, may explain the large number of birds banded at the station.

In 1964 David Seal established a banding station for hawks on the same site. Hawks and occasionally Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons have been sighted in the area during fall migration.

EARLY HISTORY OF SHIRLAND TOWNSHIP

Among the first pioneers to settle in

Shirland Township in the 1830's were Arlow Seaton and his son, George G. Seaton. Arlow Seaton moved from Oneida County, New York, in 1837 and built the first log cabin in the township. The first settlement in the township was known as Kepotah, an Indian name that means "sweet water". The name was later changed to Shirland. Also, in 1837, Lemuel Fisk settled in Shirland Township. Fisk transported the timber used in the construction of the first schoolhouse in Shirland down the Pecatonica River to Rockton where it was cut into lumber. The schoolhouse was also used as the first church by the Methodists and Congregationalists around Shirland.²

In 1858 the Western Union Railroad established a refueling point at the confluence of the Pecatonica and Sugar Rivers. The town was then laid out around the station. According to Kett's *History of Winnebago County* (1877), a cheese factory was established in Shirland in 1869 by "Messrs. Winslow & McNabb". By 1877 the factory was producing 500 pounds of cheese daily.

OWNERSHIP HISTORY OF COLORED SANDS FOREST PRESERVE

Most of the prior land owners of the Colored Sands property were farmers. In Kett's 1877 Biographical Township Directory, the owner of a portion of Section 28 of the present preserve property, W. W. Hull, was listed as a farmer. Elon L. Yale, a Canadian, owned another portion of Section 28 during the same period. Yale made two unsuccessful attempts to harness the water power of the Sugar River at Shirland, Illinois. In 1859 he built a sawmill on the Sugar River which was destroyed by floods the following spring. He then attempted to build a dam across the river which was also destroyed by floods. Yale Bridge Road, the first road south of the preserve, was named after him. Descendents of Elon L. Yale still live on Yale Bridge Road west of the Sugar River.

The last property owner of the forest preserve area, Lee G. Johnson, first visited the Colored Sands area in 1948. He was told then that a portion of the southern part of what is now the Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve had been lumbered in 1943. Between 1948-1952 selective lumbering occurred on a northern portion of the nature preserve. In the early 1950's an upland area north of the nature preserve was used heavily as a grazing area for sheep.³

In 1963 Mr. Johnson began to purchase land in the area to protect its unique natural environment. In 1966 he purchased

the last parcel of land which contained portions of the present Colored Sands Forest Preserve. Most of the Colored Sands area, due to its poor soil and drainage, has had minimal disturbance by man.

FOREST PRESERVE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

In February of 1976 Robert G. Mahnke, Director of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, received a letter from Mr. Johnson in which he offered to sell his property to the District. In the letter Mr. Johnson outlined the unique features of the land and indicated that he had used the property as a private nature study area. He also stated that he would like to see a portion of the land designated as a nature preserve and that the banding program continue.

In March the Forest Preserve Executive Committee toured the property to determine its use as a potential forest preserve. In June the Committee discussed the acquisition of the 103 acre tract and met with representatives from the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission who presented the articles of dedication for the proposed 43.8 acre Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve. On July 8, 1976, four days after the Bicentennial, the Forest Preserve Commission approved a resolution authorizing the acquisition of the Colored Sands area for \$98,340. On August 16, 1976, the warranty deed for the Colored Sands Forest Preserve was transferred to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. In 1978 CETA work crews removed five acres of Black Locust from the Sands Bluff Nature Preserve.

COLORED SANDS BLUFF NATURE PRESERVE DEDICATION

On August 12, 1976, the articles of dedication for the Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve were approved by Daniel Walker, the Governor of Illinois, the Illinois Department of Conservation, and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. The following day the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners passed a resolution authorizing the 43.8 acre Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve as a perpetual Illinois Nature Preserve. During the 60th meeting of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission held in October of 1976, approval was granted by the Commission to include the Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve as part of the Illinois Nature Preserve System. The articles were then forwarded to Springfield, Illinois, for final approval by the Governor and the Department of Conservation.

The Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve is administered by the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District with the assistance of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. The purpose and value of the nature preserve is to protect the rare plant and animal species found there and to preserve the environment in as nearly a natural condition as possible. The nature preserve is used as a research area and access is restricted without prior authorization from the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. The remainder of the Colored Sands Forest Preserve also serves primarily as a wildlife refuge.

Note: Material concerning the natural history of the Colored Sands Forest Preserve was taken from reports prepared by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. The material in the section on the Sand Bluff Bird Banding Station was provided by Lee G. Johnson. We gratefully acknowledge the use of these sources in the preparation of this chapter.

LAONA HEIGHTS

AREA HISTORY

The settlement of Laona Township began in 1836. A large number of the original settlers were from western New York State and it is possible that the name "Laona" is derived from the village of Laona in Chautauqua County, New York.

The village of Laona, Illinois, which was located at the junction of Eicks Road and Rock Grove Road (County Highway 19) was apparently established quite early. From 1840-57 a village post office, a general store, and a blacksmith shop were located in this vicinity. The blacksmith shop was located on the present day Joseph Gaffney farm and it was said to still be in use after the closing of the last post office in 1875.

Milwaukee was the nearest large city during the early years of the settlement of the township and many of the first settlers hauled brick from there for their homes.

A creamery was built in the township in 1893 at the total cost of \$1000. Area farmers brought their milk to the creamery in light wagons and the butter produced there was shipped to Rockford and neighboring towns. This building was destroyed by fire in 1918. A cheese factory was later constructed in the eastern part of the township and the structure has been converted into a residence which is still in use. It must be borne in mind that the population of Laona township has always been relatively small and, according to Charles A. Church, it numbered approximately 500 persons in 1910.

Three of the cemeteries in Laona Township were rehabilitated by township officials for the Bicentennial. Weeds and overgrowth were removed from the Baptist cemetery on the Joseph Walsh farm, the Laona Township cemetery, and the Catholic cemetery. The ground for both of the latter cemeteries had been donated by James Fenlon, a descendent of Patrick Fenlon who came from Ireland with his wife and six children and settled in the Sugar River Precinct of Laona Township in 1836. Any property owner in Laona Township was entitled to be buried in the township cemetery free of charge. A potter's field and space for itinerants was also provided. The Catholic cemetery contains the graves of several members of the Fenlon family as well as the forbearers of several families still in the Laona area. Patrick Fenlon's son Peter received a grant for the present day Bernard Highlands property in 1843-45. The first Catholic mass in the area was celebrated by a traveling priest in Peter Fenlon's log cabin.

James Fenlon also donated the land for the Fenlon school in which many of the area's children were educated. Land for Laona Center School was deeded by Asa and Molly Barker, December 4, 1852, for a consideration of \$5 and it was located at the northwest corner of Yale Bridge Road and Eicks Road. The township elections were held at this school until April 1935 when they were transferred to the town hall. An addition for voting purposes was added to the town hall in 1974.

In early May 1950 the Laona Center School was sold to Walter Randall. It was rented as a home before it was purchased by Claude Oakley who razed the building and constructed a new home on the site.

ACQUISITION AND HISTORY OF LAONA HEIGHTS FOREST PRESERVE

The original owner of the land that comprises the Laona Heights Forest Preserve was John Lockwood who acquired the 40 acre tract on December 12, 1845. An atlas published in 1871 indicates that the north twenty acres of the tract belonged to E. (Let) Norton and the south 20 belonged to A. McDonald. The ownership is shown to be the same on subsequent atlases published in 1866 and 1905. The 1886 atlas does indicate the existence of a dwelling in the northeast corner of the north 20, but this building had apparently disappeared by 1905.

Shortly prior to its purchase by the Forest Preserve District the north twenty was acquired by two Durand men, Millard Mann and William "Billy" Walsh. These men cut off some of the timber.

The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District acquired the north 20 acres of the property from Mann and Walsh for the price of \$4,000 on September 4, 1924. The south portion consisting of 19.9 acres was acquired from Harry S. and Susan L. Deal on September 17, 1926, for the price of \$2,500.

Laona is described in a 1927 brochure published by the District as "one of the few remaining forests of virgin timber" in the area. The 40 acre preserve was comprised of 18 acres of virgin timber, 15 acres second growth, and 7 acres of open ground. The brochure suggested that "the way to appreciate the beauty of this forest is to spend one day communing with it in the study of the things of nature which can be found in no other part of the county". Laona became well known for wildflowers, wildfern, white-pine, maples, bass and oak woods. A tornado swept through the preserve in the late 1940's and destroyed all the large trees in its path.

Many area residents will recall that the caretaker of the Laona Preserve for 4 years was Charlie Traum, who retired from his job in March 1975 at the remarkable age of 83. Traum served under four different superintendents of the Forest Preserve District and his efforts in maintaining the preserve made it a popular place for family reunions.

SECTION VII:

WESTERN PRESERVES

The five preserves in this section all lie in the Pecatonica River Drainage system which empties into the Rock River at Rockton. The Pecatonica River occupies a wide plain producing the characteristic meanders, oxbow lakes, and sloughs typical of a stream valley in an "old age" erosional pattern. The wide plain is not, however, the result of stream erosion but the remnants of a glacial lake which was formed during Wisconsinian glaciation. Most of the natural water areas of Winnebago County are found along the Pecatonica and Sugar Rivers. Historically, Four Lakes, Trask Bridge, and Hartley Forest Preserves are all located near the Trask Bridge Road or "Lead Mine Trail". The former villages of Wempleton, Manchester, and Elton all developed along Trask Bridge Road (now Route 70) which served as the main transportation route to northwest Illinois and southwestern Wisconsin during the 1830's and 40's. This route was used for stagecoach travel and the movement of pig lead ore to and from Galena, Illinois. Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve is located near the former town of Vanceberg which was the first stagecoach stop on the "Old State Road" (now U. S. 20) west of Rockford, Illinois.

PECATONICA RIVER FOREST PRESERVE

The meandering Pecatonica River, which forms the eastern boundary of this forest preserve, takes its name from the Sauk Indian word for "muddy". The word occurs in the accounts of early white settlers and trappers with an almost endless variety of spellings ranging from "Peeketolike" to "Pickotonokee".¹

The settlement of what is today Pecatonica Township began in 1835. On October 21, 1836, Odgen Hance became the first white child to be born in Winnebago County. This event took place five miles northeast of the future village of Pecatonica. His father, Thomas Hance, owned a small plot of land within the old ox-bow formed by the river on the eastern edge of the forest preserve as well as the land in the preserve below the bend where Brick School Road winds into Judd Road. Thomas Hance's log cabin was without a door and it is said that Indians living in the area would often lift the blanket covering the opening in order to ask for tobacco. The Indian presence in the area has been verified by numerous archaeological finds within the preserve. Indians were said to annually visit their cemetery four miles east of Pecatonica after their removal from this area. Dr. C. G. Ives and George P. Gill

were reported to have recovered many arrows and other material at this location. Presumably the cemetery belonged to members of the Winnebago tribe.²

Two letters sent by Heman Hoit, one of the early settlers who farmed in the vicinity of the preserve property, have survived. They were addressed to his brother in Chatanquay, Franklin County, New York and dated March 15, 1840, and July 4, 1844. He describes the conditions for farming in the area and also gives his opinions on the political issues of the day:

I am now in good health but cannot endure so much hardship as before. We have 40 acres plowed and fenced. We tilled 26 acres last year. Raised 150 bushels of wheat, 3 or 4 hundred bushels of corn and about 100 of potatoes and as many turnips. We have two horses, two yoke of oxen, two cows, two yearlings, 20 hogs and pigs, 3 geese at one dollar a piece, 40 hens. We have two wagons, cost \$120. We are \$155 dollars in debt and have \$323 due to us... We have sold a part of our farm for \$350 and shall move next fall about one mile and not so far from our prairie. We have four eightys left and I could wish it no better if it lay together but it lies one mile and a half apart....

....As to our National concerns I have but little to say only this - the Texas question and the best method to perpetuate slavery is the main object with leading politicians (politicians) - we have laws in Illinois that would disgrace the edicts of Don Miguel or Santa Anna. Slavery needs only to be seen to be hated and it must and will go down....

Beginning in the 1850's maple sugar was processed each year at a camp located in the Sugar Bush grove north of the forest preserve. People from throughout the area gathered to tap the trees for sap. One of the early settlers of Elton, David Samuel Campbell, had brought a copper evaporating pan, a gallon measure made of copper, and a copper funnel with him from his native Vermont. Wooden barrels made in the cooper shop at Elton were used to collect the sap. (For details on the village of Elton see the Trask Bridge section).

Older residents recall that flooding was an even greater problem along the banks of the Pecatonica before the river underwent a change of course when the new Trask Bridge was built downstream. Homer Hamilton, who has lived in the area for over seventy years, recalls the fox hunts in the timber along the river. A line of men would chase the fox through the timber toward two or three riflemen who were waiting in the open ground. Timber wolves

were occasionally encountered in the heavily wooded area near the river. Buffalo wallows have supposedly been identified east of the forest preserve property.

AREA ROADS AND SCHOOLS

Brick School Road, which enters the preserve from the west, was named after the one-room schoolhouse which was located in the northeast corner of the intersection of Brick School and Pecatonica Road. The school was destroyed by a tornado on July 28, 1948. The Elton school, which was located north of the preserve was the school attended by the Bowerman children in the 1890's when they were growing up on what is now the forest preserve. Another area resident, Jason Judd, wrote an account of his life in which he described the type of schooling he received.

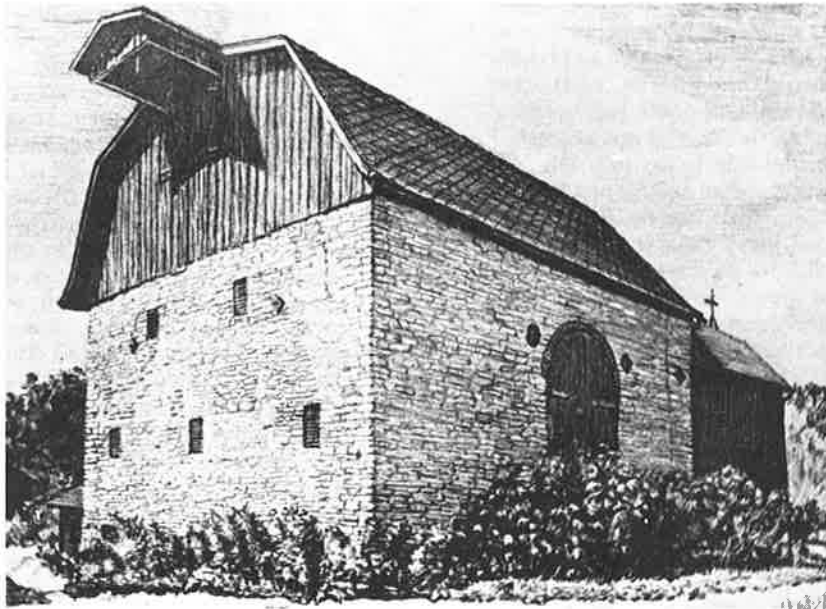
Schooling in my early days was vastly different to what it is now. There were no grades, and each scholar was promoted when proficient in his reader. They went from the first reader to the fifth and as one progressed in them: arithmetic, geography, spelling, grammar, or whatever a scholar desired he could study. But mind you, when you had finished that fifth reader, you would have a very good knowledge of all other subjects you had studied. Otherwise you stayed in whatever reader, 2-3-4 or 5th, for another year.... There were 44 scholars in one room and sometimes the air was "frowsy" in there. We all washed our hands in a tin washdish and drank out of the same dipper which, to my knowledge, was never washed. We drank about two pails of water each day from a well about four rods from the school.

The school year was different from that of the present day as it extended from the corn harvest for four months, November, December, January, and February. School was out until the summer term. This arrangement of school terms changed after my school days.

The intersection of Brick School and Judd Roads was formerly much closer to the river. Real estate abstracts indicate that there was a bridge over the river at this location as early as 1851. The bridge connected Cook Road east of the river with Judd Road. It has been stated that this route was used as a connecting line by the stage coaches travelling between the Old State Road to the south and the Trask Bridge Road to the north. Traces of the road as well as the old path of Brick School



The Albert M. Bowerman family. Back row from left to right: Herbert, Iva Neil, Leon, Albert Jr., William, Carrie Wallace, Joseph. Front row: Viola Houghton, Anna Hobson, Albert Sr., Chauncey, Catherine Burkhardt (mother), Charlie. (Courtesy: Chauncey Bowerman)



Drawing by Mary Hass of north side of barn which is currently being used as a study center at Pecatonica River Forest Preserve. (Courtesy Mary Hass)

Road are still visible in the preserve. Whether or not it was actually used by stagecoaches cannot be determined. It has also been suggested that the stone barn on the preserve was originally used for stage relays, despite the fact that the barn was completed in 1898, almost a half century after the end of stage coach travel. The location of the roads appears on the 1859 plat map of Winnebago County which is in

the Rockford Library.³ At some point in time, a telegraph line was also built across the river paralleling Judd Road and leading to Durand.

THE STONE BARN

The unusual stone barn on the forest preserve property was built by Albert Bowerman and two of his sons, Herbert

and Bill, at the turn of the century. Bowerman purchased sixty acres of land at this location from the Derwent family in the early 1890's. The tract contained farmland and timber. Chauncey Bowerman recalls that much of the timber was white elm which his father cut into cordwood and stacked into 16 foot high bee hive shaped piles to make charcoal. The pile was covered with straw and vents were left in the bottom to regulate the intensity of the fire. Bowerman lit a fire and closed the main opening. Later it was reopened, the fire doused with water, and the charcoal that had been produced removed. The charcoal was loaded into high horse drawn wagons and hauled to Freeport and Rockford where it was sold for 15 cents a bushel to hardware stores. Chauncey Bowerman states that the hardware dealers used the charcoal to heat their soldering irons. Albert Bowerman also supplied timber from his property for the sawmill operated by Ross Sarver north of the intersection of Barningham and Brick School Roads. The Bowermans also built a suspension bridge to cross the ravine formed by Beaver Creek northwest of the barn. The bridge has been rebuilt numerous times and was always difficult to navigate. A frightened horse is said to have been stalled in the middle and one of the Bowermans supposedly fell in the creek.

Albert Bowerman burnt his own lime for the barn construction in a kiln located west of the barn site near the creek. Sand from the bed of the Pecatonica River was utilized as well as limestone extracted from a quarry on the property. When the barn was completed in 1898 it was a flat roofed structure built entirely of native stone. Approximately three years were required for the construction. The north wall is quite concave and this is believed to have been built into the structure rather than having been the result of settling. The barn provides a rare example of the masonry and building skills that were utilized at the turn of the century.

In 1907, Albert Bowerman purchased the Pecatonica House Hotel and moved his family to Pecatonica. Mr. Bowerman died in 1913. The next owner of the property was Thomas Barningham. He added the hip roof to the barn, and built the silo in 1920. He also built a shed west of the barn. The windmill north of the barn pumped water into an underground tank near the corn crib. Thomas Barningham's daughter Bessie and her husband, Henry Tuttle, lived on the property for many years.

ACQUISITION BY THE FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

In November 1968 the Illinois Department of Conservation paid the Winnebago

County Forest Preserve District \$294,900 for the Willow Creek Forest Preserve. Willow Creek thus became an addition to Rock Cut State Park. The act of the state legislature which authorized the sale required the Forest Preserve District to spend the funds from the sale for additional land acquisition.

Nearly 1,100 acres along the Pecatonica River were considered for possible purchase before it was decided to appraise the Harold Cordray and Thomas Fisher farms in October 1969. These adjoining tracts comprise approximately 400 acres of both tillable and timber land. There are 9600 feet of river frontage. The areas near the river contain an abundance of poplar, cottonwood, and even a small grove of Kentucky Coffeetrees. The possibility of converting the stone barn on the Cordray farm into an outdoor education center was an important consideration in selecting the site.

Applications for federal assistance toward the purchase of the tracts were filed and the Forest Preserve Commission authorized the purchase of the property on December 11, 1969, for the price of \$180,000. A boat ramp and access road were added to the preserve in July 1977.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER

After the purchase and initial development of the Pecatonica River Forest Preserve, the Forest Preserve District proceeded with its plan to renovate the stone barn for use as an outdoor education center. On May 10, 1973, Stephen Tuthill, Assistant Superintendent of the Educational Service Region, gave a short presentation to the Forest Preserve Commission on the advantages of the Pecatonica River barn for classroom use. The Commission authorized the renovation of the barn using designs prepared by the architectural firm of Larson and Darby Inc. The ground floor was renovated under Phase I of the renovation and various structural repairs, heating, insulation, and a new roof added under Phase II. The Educational Service Region offered to provide a staff for the program while the Forest Preserve District was responsible for the provision of the facility and its maintenance.

The Pecatonica River Environmental Systems Study Center opened in the spring of 1974 with Stephen Tuthill and Dennis Davidson as the first instructors. Classes from any school in Winnebago or Boone County, whether public or private, are allowed to utilize the center's facilities. The purpose of the center is to augment students' studies in the natural sciences with field studies conducted in the various parts of the forest preserve.



View from suspension bridge showing original flat roofs on the barn and corn crib at Pecatonica River Forest Preserve, c. 1918. (Courtesy Mrs. Louis Markham)

The centers present instructors, Adale Buck and Shirley Knauf, took over the classes at the center in May 1977. They developed the concept of teaching different monthly themes coordinated to the specific time of the year in which a particular class visits the center. Study sheets and displays were prepared for each theme. Various areas of study include: aquatic life, animal survival in winter, animal tracking, map and compass work, fossil study, early man in Illinois, pollution, plant ecology, camouflage in nature, and birds and plants of the Pecatonica Preserve. The combination of classroom study and actual field experience has led to a steady increase in the popularity of the center. Over 9500

students and adults utilized the centers programs in the 1977-78 academic year. The center is now fully enrolled during the entire school year and a waiting list has been established.

Shirley Knauf was familiar with tapping trees and making maple sugar on her family farm near Owego, New York. In March 1977 Ms. Knauf and Mrs. Buck inaugurated the first annual Maple Moon Festival at the Pecatonica River Forest Preserve. The festival takes its name from the month long celebration held by the American Indians when they tapped the trees. Visitors take a guided tour of the preserve and are able to see the trees being tapped and the sap being cooked outdoors

in 40 gallon flats over a wood fire. Visitors are also given an opportunity to tour the study center and familiarize themselves with the type of instruction that it offers.

The Pecatonica River Environmental Systems Study Center is the only facility of its type being operated for the benefit of area students. It performs a vital service and provides a unique opportunity for younger generations to experience and appreciate man's place in his complex environment.

Note: Material concerning the history of the Pecatonica River Forest Preserve was prepared by two graduate outdoor students, Helen Wibben and Larry Schnorr, in the spring of 1974. Their research resulted in tape recordings, notes, and documents which were obtained from interviews with area residents. We gratefully acknowledge the use of this material in preparing this chapter. We would also like to thank the following persons for providing us with information: Mrs. Harley Barningham, Chauncey Bowerman, Adale Buck, Shirley Knauf, James Reid, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Markham, Carr and Marie Sarver, Don Sartoris, and Stephen Tuthill.

FOUR LAKES

The land on which the Four Lakes Forest Preserve is located was the site of a recreation area in the early years of this century. A baseball park and racetrack were located near the springs south of Trask Bridge Road. The racetrack was used for both saddle and trotting horses. The Knapp family also operated a zoo in this vicinity.

The Four Lakes ponds were originally constructed in 1924 as rearing ponds for the state fish hatchery system. Fish from the ponds were used to stock other areas; thus the ponds were not originally designed to provide a sport fishing habitat. Details of the actual method of constructing the ponds are obscure and it is not known whether a water retaining layer of clay or other material was utilized to prevent the water from flowing out through the sand in the bottom of the lakes. The residence on the property was also built during this period. The lakes comprise 30 of the 40 acres of land on the preserve. The foundation for the shelter house was originally one of the holding tanks. The shelter house was moved from the Kilbuck Bluffs preserve in 1964.

In May of 1958 the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission received a communication from the Illinois Department of Conservation regarding the proposed lake to be constructed at Rock Cut Forest Preserve. A total of 57 acres of

the preserve would be required for the construction of the lake and the state desired to purchase this land. The Rock Cut Forest Preserve was a tract of 192.74 acres which had been purchased in September of 1930 for \$19,160.00. The Forest Preserve District eventually agreed to trade the acreage at Rock Cut to the Illinois Department of Conservation in return for the Four Lakes fish hatchery. This action was approved by the 72nd Illinois General Assembly and the Forest Preserve District received a deed to the Four Lakes property in November 1961.

The Four Lakes Forest Preserve was officially opened for fishing on August 26, 1961. Parking lots were jammed and the crowd had swelled to nearly 1,000 persons by the official opening time of 8:00 AM. The District had stocked the lakes with 130 yearling large mouth bass and 1,000 bluegill. In the fall of 1961 600 yearling bass, 900 fingerling bass, 650 channel catfish, and 1,000 redear sunfish fingerlings were added. In 1962 it was decided that the bluegill had become too abundant and nearly 6,000 of them were seined out and removed by area sportsmen. The County Herpetological Society seined 18 young of the year northern pike from the Sugar River and stocked them in 1962. Ninety northern pike were added by the Forest Preserve District.

A population analysis made in 1966 revealed an excessive population of bluegill and other sunfish and an overabundance of aquatic vegetation. That fall the large game fish were salvaged and removed to the large pond while attempts were made to rehabilitate the three smaller ponds. The preserve was closed to fishing until July 1967. The 1967 bass catch was quite successful and the reproduction of the fish population somewhat improved.

It was recommended that the Forest Preserve District make careful studies of the ponds over the next few years to further insure the survival of the fish population. Various dredging and chemical treatment methods were studied in order to remove the excessive silt and aquatic vegetation that had accumulated in the ponds. In recent years the fish population has become hybridized to the point where all the fish in the ponds are small. The ponds were drained in the spring of 1979 under the direction of Alec Pulley, Regional Fisheries Biologist, Illinois Department of Conservation. Draining and reshaping of the ponds is necessary to provide a proper habitat for many varieties of fish. Additional shoreline, piers, and breeding areas will result. Over 25,000 cubic yards of excess silt will be removed and it is hoped that the draining and reshaping will allow sport fishing to resume at the preserve in 1981.

TRASK BRIDGE FOREST PRESERVE

LOCAL HISTORY— BURRITT AND DURAND TOWNSHIP

Several pre-historic and historic Indian sites have been identified in Durand and Burritt Township. Most of these sites have not been excavated though late Archaic ax-heads and grinding or gaming stones, known as discoidals, have been identified in Durand Township northwest of Trask Bridge Forest Preserve. During historic times, after the majority of Indians had left the northwestern portion of Illinois, many would return annually to their former encampments. Several campsites and one burial ground have been found near Trask Bridge Forest Preserve.

Burritt Township derived its name from the Burritt family who settled in Owen Township, the first township east of Burritt. Most of the early settlers of Burritt Township were farmers from England, Ireland, and Scotland. Burritt Township has maintained a rural economy since its settlement, and has never had an incorporated village, city, or railroad.

TRASK FERRY AND BRIDGE

Burritt Township is bisected at a diagonal by the "Lead Mine Trail" known as Trask Bridge Road or Illinois Route 70. It was known as the "Lead Mine Trail" because it was used to convey pig-lead ore from the lead mines around Galena, Illinois, and Mineral Point, Wisconsin, to the refineries in Chicago and Milwaukee during the 1840's. The name Trask Bridge Road was derived from Alva and Elias Trask who settled in Burritt Township and established the first commercial ferry across the Pecatonica River in 1836.

In 1835 the Trask Brothers settled and staked their claim near the point where Illinois Route 70 crosses the Pecatonica River. At that time the only way for settlers to cross the river was to swim or cross at an Indian ford on the Thomas Derwent farm several miles upstream.¹ For commercial advantages the Trask brothers decided to build a ferry across the Pecatonica River. On May 17, 1836, Harvey Lowe and Nelson Salisbury, along with Newman Campbell, became the first settlers to use the Trask Ferry. All three of them and their families had been detained a week at this crossing while they helped the Trask Brothers complete the windlass operated ferry boat. These settlers along with David Samuel Campbell and David E. Sterns proceeded west into Howard Township — present day Durand Township — and helped establish the village of Elton, Illinois.

Since the ferry was the first mode of transportation across the rivers, they were established by charter or license. In counties licenses for ferries came under the jurisdiction of the commissioners courts. In the *Winnebago County Commissioner Court Records* for 1836-42 (Vol. 1), Alva Trask first applied for a license for his ferry on March 6, 1837:

ORDERED, By the Court, That there be a ferry established across the Peeketonika River at the present place of residence of the said Trask and that the Trask shall pay for a license for keeping said ferry 5.00 Dollars, and that the rates of ferriage shall be the same as those allowed across the mouth of the Peeketonika.

Alvah Trask then paid the license and entered into Bond according to law.

Trask renewed the license on March 6, 1838, and on the same day in 1839. In 1839 the rates for ferriage at Trask's Ferry were recorded in the *Commissioner Court records* as follows:

For wagon drawn by 2 Horses	\$0.37½
For wagon drawn by 1 horse	31¼
Horse and Rider	18-3/4
Footman	6¼
Each Score Sheep Hogs & Goats	37½

Until 1839 when the first wooden bridge was built, Trask's Ferry served as an important crossing for settlers emigrating to the northwest corner of Illinois and the areas around Mineral Point, Monroe, and Madison, Wisconsin. In 1839 the settlement of Rockford, Illinois, incorporated as a town. A stage line was established between Rockford and Mineral Point, Wisconsin, and it is safe to assume that the first wooden bridge was built at this time. The Rockford-Mineral Point Road, or "Old North Road", ran from Aurora through DeKalb, Rockford, Trask's Ferry, and then through Stephenson County via Epply's Mill, Rock Grove, Oneco, Brewster's Ferry and on to Mineral Point.² It was made a state road by Act of March 2, 1839 (Laws of 1839, p. 64). In 1868 the wooden span was replaced with a wood and steel bridge. The *Durand Centennial Book* (1956) tells how the Indians viewed the new wooden-steel bridge:

...It was the source of pride to the settlers and a curiosity to the Indians who viewed it with suspicion. The new bridge had curved steel side beams making arched railings, and the Indians, seeing these beams during construction, thought they were to support the floor, and



Trask Bridge - 1909. (Courtesy C. Hal Nelson)

condemned the bridge saying there was no sense in making a horse walk up and down those curves to get across the river. Some of the settlers did not trust the strength of the new bridge, so many people cut green wood, loaded their wagons, and lined them up on the bridge, testing its strength. It withstood the test....

The 1868 wood-steel bridge served the public until 1931-32 when a new concrete road was built over the old Trask Bridge Road. As part of the construction a new bridge was built southeast of the old bridge location and two bends were removed from the Pecatonica River to eliminate flooding upstream in Pecatonica and Freeport, Illinois. In 1933 the old bridge was razed.

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

In the mid 1830's three settlements were established in Burrirt and Durand Townships. All of these villages or settlements developed on Trask Bridge Road. Wempletown was the first settlement leaving from Rockford, followed by the Village of Manchester, and then Elton in Durand Township. Most of these settlements have since disappeared due to the relocation of small village industries, such as grist and steam mills, blacksmith and wagon shops, or the development of the railroads in other sectors which attracted more settlers and created larger cities and towns.

WEMPLETOWN

The settlement of Wempletown was located at the intersection of Trask Bridge Road and Wempletown Road, also known as Burrirt Corners. Wempletown, according to the 1871 *Atlas of Winnebago County*, consisted of a Town House, blacksmith shop, and a community church. South of the blacksmith shop a Mr. Tressier and family resided. Mr. Tressier built a threshing machine which he operated in Burrirt Township and later shipped to Australia. In the southeast corner of the intersection a building housed the grocery store and post office and was operated by the Snowden family. In the S. E. ¼ of Section 15 was the "Batch Porter" spring which served, in the days of unfenced and unclaimed land, as the grazing and water-hole for area cattle herds. Wempletown is the home of the Burrirt Grange, which was founded in 1909, and sponsored the Trask Bridge Picnic from 1911 to 1965.

MANCHESTER

The earliest settlement in Burrirt Township was the village of Manchester which dated from 1834-35 and was located south of the intersection of Winnebago and Trask Bridge Road. The village never incorporated and it contained only a post office, blacksmith, wagon shop, and cemetery. Northeast of Manchester in Section 3 of Burrirt Township was another blacksmith and wagon shop owned by N. S. Shields. Shields built the

Trask Bridge

first horse-drawn cultivator for row-crops in Winnebago County. It was constructed of wood members, strap steel, and bolt stock.

ELTON

Elton village, located south of the intersection of Center and Trask Bridge Roads, was the first settlement in Howard, later Durand, Township. Orlando Coolidge was the first settler at Elton. He was followed by Nelson Salisbury, Harvey Lowe, and Scott Robb, all of whom came in the fall of 1835. In February of 1836 Newman Campbell arrived and, a week later, David Samuel Campbell and a carpenter named David E. Sterns reached the site. Additional families came to Elton in the following year and the settlement was formed. The settlers called the village "Elton" because the surrounding countryside reminded them of their farmland in rural England.

The first settlers erected several homes of brick and native limestone on both sides of Trask Bridge Road. Clay was extracted from Coolidge's farm which was used to make bricks to build his home and several others in Elton. The same brick was used to construct the blacksmith shop in Elton which was two stories high and contained three fires. Aaron Haughton, a stone mason, built the first limestone house in the village. The business district was established in front of the first school house. According to the *Durand Centennial Book* Elton once had:

...17 houses, a post office, a store, blacksmith shop, cooper shop (barrel-maker), and stage stop for travelers continuing west to Galena or taking the northwest fork in the trail to Mineral Point (Wisconsin)...

Elton also contained a grist mill and sawmill which were located along Beaver Creek on the north side of Trask Bridge Road. The grist mill was first built by Tom and Edmund Derwent who settled at Elton in 1842. The Derwents later converted the grist mill into a steam sawmill. Sam Sarver made wagons and Aaron Haughton, Jr., ran the blacksmith shop making nails by hand. John D. Jackson ran the cooper shop where he made barrels and butter firkins.

In 1874 ½ acre was purchased for \$3.00 from Benjamin Harrington to build the first stone school house. In 1880 Aaron Haughton and William Hobson built the school house and Sam and William Derwent were the carpenters. Aaron Haughton was also very skilled at erecting stone arches and, when the Rockford Court House dome collapsed during construction in 1877, he was called upon to complete the building.³

In the 1850's a stock company was formed to build a railroad from Milwaukee through Elton. Land abstracts show that many of the families mortgaged their farms to buy stock in the venture. In 1856 land was purchased from the Haughtons for a railroad right-of-way, but the railroad survey was later altered to go through Durand, Illinois, instead of Elton. The Derwents then moved their steam mills to Rockford where they promoted the Skandia Furniture Company. With the mills gone, Elton reverted to an agricultural economy and the village ceased to be a commercial center.

ELTON HOUSE STOCK FARM

One mile west of the former village of Elton, at the intersection of Sarver and Trask Bridge Roads, is the Elton House that was used as an inn for travelers in the 1850's. The property was originally staked and claimed by David Samuel Campbell who came to Durand Township in 1836.

David Samuel Campbell was born at Grand Isle, Vermont, on March 24, 1815, one of several sons of Samuel Campbell. At the age of twelve he left his home and began traveling, arriving at the settlement of Elton in 1836. Finding suitable farm land he went to the government land office at Dixon, Illinois, and purchased the original 160 acre farm. In 1840, at the age of 24, David S. Campbell returned to Swanton, Vermont, to marry Erixna Barker. Upon his return he replaced the original log cabin with a frame house and, typical of Vermont, constructed a stone fence around the dooryard which was ornamented with shrubs, herbs, and maple trees. He then planted an orchard containing snow apples, strawberry apples, sweet apples, hass apples, janets, russets, and cherry trees. In the early 1860's Campbell built a three story mill that was used to make apple cider. This mill, which is still standing, served as the first dance hall for Elton. The dances were held on the third floor with the Hobsons and Derwents, local farmers, furnishing music with their fiddles. Campbell also planted sugar maples on his property and along the north side of Trask Bridge Road towards Elton. When the maples reached maturity they were tapped for the maple sap that was collected and then converted into maple sugar, maple syrup, or maple taffy. The sap dripped from spiles made of sumac into wooden buckets made at Jackson's cooper shop in Elton. David S. Campbell also used a copper evaporating pan that he had brought from Vermont, in the process of making maple syrup.

In 1885 David Samuel Campbell retired from active farming and traded his farm to his son-in-law, Raymond Sarver. In 1922 Carr and Marie Sarver assumed manage-

ment of the farm which has remained in the family descendents of David Samuel Campbell for 143 years.

HULSE CEMETERY

Halfway between Sarver and Pecatonica Roads on Trask Road is Hulse Cemetery. In this cemetery is the grave of Samuel Campbell, one of five Revolutionary War Veterans buried in Winnebago County, and father of David Samuel Campbell. Samuel Campbell's war service began in 1780 when he served for three months in Capt. John Spoor's Berkshire County Regiment enlisted to reinforce the Continental Army. In October of 1781 he served for two brief periods recorded on Page 57 of the *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors Of The Revolutionary War (1897)*:

Campbell, Samuel. Private, Capt. James Campbell's Co., Col. John Ashley, Jr's (Berkshire Co.) regt.: enlisted Oct. 14, 1781; discharged Oct. 19, 1781; service, 6 days; marched by order of Brig. Gen. John Gellows and request of Brig. Gen. Stark on an alarm; roll sworn to at Sheffield; also, Lieut. Moses Hubbard's Co., Col. John Ashley, Jr.'s regt.; service, 7 days, in October., 1781; joined company at Stillwater from Capt. Campbell's Co.

Campbell also served in 1781 as a private in Capt. Abraham Salisbury's Co. of Vermont Militia.

Samuel Campbell later traveled west sometime before 1844 to live with his son, David Samuel Campbell, on the Elton House farm. According to a book on the Campbell family genealogy published by Duncan Stewart, Samuel Campbell was a member of the third generation of Campbells who originally came from Scotland and northern Ireland. On November 8, 1844, Samuel Campbell died. Many of his descendents are buried in Hulse Cemetery along with some of the early families of Elton including the Derwents and Haughtons. Hulse Cemetery is named after Henry Hulse who gave an acre of land from his farm for the cemetery.

TRASK BRIDGE PICNIC

From 1911 to 1965 Burritt Grange was the sole sponsor for the Trask Bridge Picnic known as the "worlds largest one-day farm picnic". It was held in Andrews Grove on Route 70 fourteen miles northwest of Rockford, Illinois. The Trask Bridge Picnic was very similar to any state or county fair, except that it was held for only one day. There were agricultural exhibits, amusement rides, prizes for pies and canned vegetables, horse-riding

exhibitions, baseball games, singing and dancing contests, political speeches, and plenty of refreshments. The date selected for the picnic was usually the last Wednesday in August. This allowed time for the farmers to harvest their summer crops and attend the event.

Oliver Hudson organized the Illinois State Grange in March of 1872. In that year 60-70 subordinate granges were organized in Whiteside, Lee and the surrounding countries in northwestern Illinois. The first grange picnic was sponsored by Whiteside county in 1872.⁴

The Trask Bridge Picnic began with a festival in 1911 at the home of Elmer Scott two years after Burrirt Grange had been founded in 1909. It was held on August 30th and drew 1,000 people. A few years later the the grange picnic was moved to Andrews Grove on the farm of C. A. Andrew. This same site had been used in the 1880's for church picnics and gatherings for the Modern Woodmen of America. The Burrirt Literary Society held a picnic close to this site in 1896.

Everett Davis and Walter L. Potter are credited with initiating the Trask Bridge Picnic. During the 54 consecutive years the event was held, the Trask Bridge Picnic became a popular arena for political candidates on the local, state, and national levels to announce their candidacies for public office. Among the speakers were: W. W. Bennett, Mayor of Rockford; Congressman Charles Fuller; Samuel R. Guard of the National Farm Bureau Federation; Senator Charles S. Deneen; Eugene Eckert, Illinois State Grange Master; Ruth Hanna Simms; Senator Dickinson of Iowa; and James Farmer, National Grange lecturer. The largest attendance record for the picnic was in 1953 when 50,000 attended the one-day affair. In 1965 lack of support forced the closing of the picnic.

FOREST PRESERVE ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the donation of the Trask Bridge property to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, the preserve area had been part of Seth B. Atwood's private 250 acre farm. Mr. Atwood had utilized the area as an "employee's preserve" for the Atwood Vacuum Machine Company. Eventually the company outgrew the capacity of the area and the land was then offered to the Boy Scouts in the Rockford area. The Boy Scouts, however, could not maintain the facilities. In July of 1972 Seth B. Atwood offered the use of his fifteen acre Trask Bridge property to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. In November of the same year the deed was transferred from Mr. Atwood to

the District. On January 9, 1973, the Forest Preserve Commission approved the donation and thanked the Atwood Family for their generosity. This was the second donation by the Atwood Family to the Forest Preserve District, the first being Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve donated in 1962.

The Trask Bridge Forest Preserve is currently open to the public for picnics and fishing is allowed from shore on the abandoned Pecatonica riverbed. The octagonal Coffee Tree shelter house is named after the native Kentucky coffee trees that grow on the preserve. Seedlings from these trees were donated by Seth B. Atwood and planted in the preserve.

Note: Material concerning the local history of Burrirt Township was provided by Clem V. Burns. Material concerning the community of Elton and the Elton House Stock Farm was provided by Carr and Marie Sarver. We gratefully acknowledge the use of these sources in preparing this chapter.

HARTLEY MEMORIAL FOREST PRESERVE

The Hartley Memorial Forest Preserve was donated to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District by Emily Barningham Hartley as a living memorial to her husband, Scott R. Hartley, and her daughter Ethel J. Hartley.

Jeremiah Campbell originally purchased the quarter section which contains the forest preserve from the United States Government on June 8, 1842. Campbell was born at Grand Isle, Vermont, and settled near the English and Scottish community at Elton in Durand Township.

William Hartley began purchasing land in this area in the 1850's. His son, Scott R. Hartley, was born on his father's farm December 30, 1860. On March 10, 1886, Scott Hartley married Emily Barningham, the daughter of Matthew Barningham, a neighboring farmer. Around the time of his marriage Scott Hartley purchased the 40 acre timber plot which is now the forest preserve.

Scott Hartley died at the age of thirty-nine on January 9, 1899, leaving as survivors his wife, Emily, and his nine year old daughter, Ethel. After her husband died, Emily Hartley sold 120 acres of the land to Theodore Meissen but she retained ownership of the 40 acre timber plot. She moved with her daughter to Pecatonica and later moved to Rockford. On March 6, 1912, her daughter, twenty-three year old Ethel J. Hartley, died after a short term illness. Emily Hartley remained a Rockford resident for the remainder of her life. She died in St. Petersburg, Florida, on March 14, 1940.

ACQUISITION

In 1922 Emily Hartley wrote to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission offering to donate her 40 acre tract in Section 34 as a memorial to her daughter, Ethel J. Hartley. On December 2, 1922, the newly formed Forest Preserve Commission discussed Mrs. Hartley's donation but it was not yet ready to begin land acquisition. In November of 1939, seventeen years after the initial offer, Mrs. Hartley offered again to donate the 40 acre tract as a forest preserve. On November 13, 1939, four months prior to her death, the warranty deed for the 40 acre timber plot was conveyed to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. In the deed Mrs. Hartley requested that the forest preserve be donated as a memorial to her husband and daughter, that no road or driveway of any kind be built on the preserve property, that no timber be cut on the preserve except to remove and replace dead and diseased trees, and that the preserve be enclosed by a fence.

DEVELOPMENT

Since acquisition of the Hartley Memorial Forest Preserve in 1939 the District has complied with the donor's request to maintain the area as an undisturbed natural environment. In 1964 the District made minor improvements to the fencing surrounding the preserve and began clearing a nature trail. In 1970 the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission conducted a survey of the Hartley Memorial Forest Preserve for possible inclusion in the Illinois State Nature Preserve System. The report prepared by the Commission recommended that the forest preserve of nearly virgin hardwood timber be dedicated as a Nature Preserve for research and teaching.

Note: We would like to thank Mrs. Harley Barningham and Barbara Winchester for providing us with biographical information on the Hartley family.

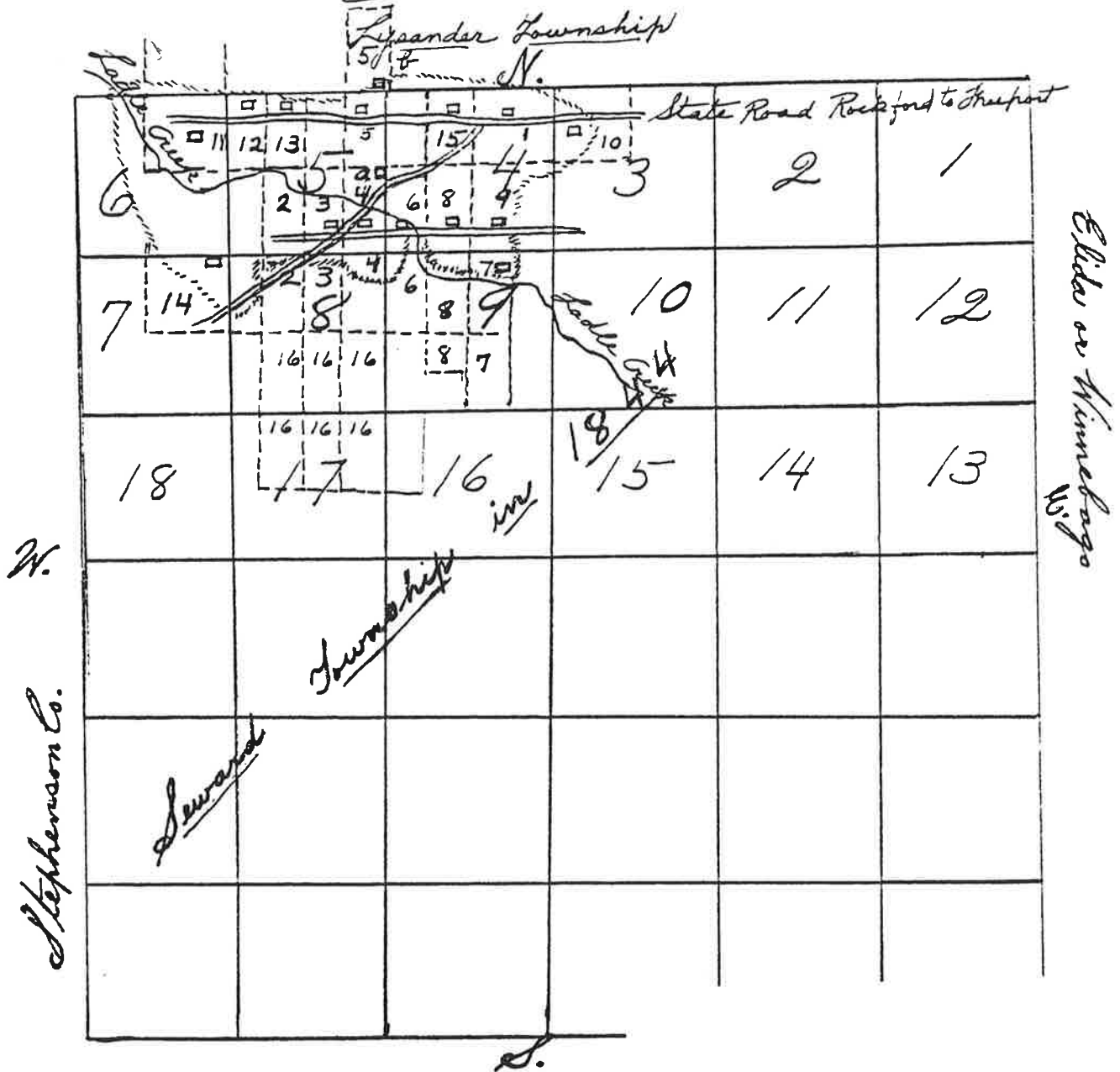
SEWARD BLUFFS FOREST PRESERVE

AREA HISTORY

Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve is the remnant of Twelve Mile Grove, a large wooded area which derived its name from the fact that it was located twelve miles west of Rockford. The settlement known variously as Vanceberg, Vanceborough or Vanceboro, which was established at Twelve Mile Grove as early as 1836, is remembered as the first stagecoach stop west of Rockford on the old State Road.

Prior to the settlement of the lead mining

Map Illustrating I. M. Grove Settlement
in 1844



Map of Twelve Mile Grove or Vanceburgh as it appeared in 1844. Map was drawn from memory by Rev. Rufus Patch in 1857. Most of the present day Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve is located in section 5. Legend and notes for map on opposite page. (Courtesy Juniata Scott and Seward Congregational Church)

Notes illustrating Map

- 1 Joseph C. Vance 1836 Died 1841 Ephraim Summer 1844
 - 2 Richard Robinson 1837
 - # 3 Eliphalet Whittlesy 1837
 - # 4 Edmund Whittlesy 1836
 - 5 Austin Andrews 1836
 - 6 Harvey Woodruff 1840
 - # 7 J. S. Judd 1843
 - # 8 David Weld 1844
 - 9 David Vance 1839
 - 10 John Vance 1839
 - 11 Morris Pierce 1839
 - 12 Thomas Williams 1841 Near the river 1836
 - 13 David Paul 1843
 - 14 Amos Durkin 1844
 - 15 Sullivan Daniels 1844
- (16) This is an error in the draft)

a. Log School house

Boundary of Grove indicated by crooked dotted line.

~ Roads
~ stream

b. Scene of Pierce's death

N. B. This Map does not claim entire accuracy

The above individuals ^{thus marked} still reside (1857) upon their original locations.

Austin Andrews died last March (1857)

H. Woodruff lives at Peconica (1857)

R. Robinson " near the center of Seward township.

See page 82

Inserted Sept. 1857 R.P.

Seward Bluffs

regions around Galena in 1819, northern Illinois was a wilderness of prairie and forest with no white settlers. The nearest settlements were the fur depots at Fort Dearborn (Chicago), Iroquois, Hennepin, and Peoria. The lead mining boom led to the establishment of Jo Daviess County, which included the area of present day Stephenson and Winnebago County, in 1827. The growth of the Galena region also increased the need for an adequate system of transportation between Galena and the rest of the state. In 1827, Oliver W. Kellogg established the Kellogg Trail from Peoria to Dixon's Ferry across the Rock River and on through the southwest corner of present day Stephenson County to Galena. The last engagement fought against Chief Black Hawk on Illinois soil was fought at Kellogg's Cabin west of Freeport in the summer of 1832. With the removal of the Indian threat, northern Illinois was ripe for further settlement.

It is not generally known that an earlier east-west route through Winnebago County preceded the laying out of the State Road. The first trail running west from Rockford through Seward Township was the Rockford to Savanna road. Careful examination of maps provided to us by the Library of Congress and the Chicago Historical Society indicate that this trail ran north of present day Montague Road. It continued to Crain's Grove (Cherryville) in Stephenson County and then went south intersecting the Kellogg Trail where it continued on to Savanna. The late Philip Keister made an exhaustive study of the early roads in Stephenson County and stated in his book that the Rockford-Savanna Road was in use as early as 1834, that it was recognized as a road on early government land surveys, and that it was made a state road by an act of the legislature on March 2, 1839. The term "road" can be applied to these early trails only in the most liberal sense. It took more than acts of the legislature to turn a series of mud holes into a road. The combination of heavy rain and the rich Illinois soil turned the roads into sloughs. "Forest roads were a succession of puddles, gullies, upturned roots, stumps, twists, turns and overhead brambles, which tried the souls of men and made travel a never-to-be forgotten ordeal." A map drawn prior to the construction of the state road in 1836 shows that east of Rockford this earlier route ran in a south-easterly direction toward Genoa and then to Geneva (Harrington's Ford) and Chicago.¹

The necessity of establishing better communication between Chicago and the Galena lead mining region led the Illinois legislature to pass an act on January 15, 1836, for the establishment of a state road



Tavern and Stagecoach Inn at Twelve Mile Grove or Vanceburgh, on old State Road (now U. S. 20). (Courtesy: Max Fry)

from Meachum's Grove in Cook County to Galena. Special commissioners were authorized to locate the road which was required to pass through "Elgin on Fox River, in Cook County, Belvidere on Squaw Prairie, in the county of LaSalle, and Midway (present day Rockford) at the ford on Rock River, in the county of Jo Daviess." State Street in both Belvidere and Rockford is a portion of this road. Winnebago County was created from the eastern portion of Jo Daviess County later in the same year. The records of the Winnebago County Commissioner's Courts from 1836-47 contain maps of most of the early county roads and include excellent drawings of the state road from St. Charles to Twelve Mile Grove.

The settlement of Vanceburgh grew up along this road and its early history was recorded in 1857 by Rev. Rufus Patch who was then a pastor at the Twelve Mile Grove Congregational Church. Patch also drew a map of the settlement as it looked in 1844. The beginning of Patch's handwritten account reads as follows:

The State Road was opened through the Grove during the Summer of 1836, just 21 years previous to the insertion of this Record - Oct. 18, 1857. Joseph C. Vance from Clark Co. Ohio located with his family in the Grove, near the present site of the Stone tavern, - on the State Road - 2 miles south and 1/2 mile east of the present village of Pecatonica.

His nearest neighbors were Ephriam Sumner, who lived 2 miles north of the flat near the river, and Thomas Williams, who occupied the

present location of Sumners Mill - 3 miles distant.

Mr. Vance was accompanied by Edmund Whittlesey and Austin Andrews, who afterwards became his sons-in-law.

This is followed by a chronological account of the arrival of the remainder of the early settlers up until 1844. It concludes with a description of the size of the settlement:

Thus, in 1844, after 8 years, the settlement embraced 15 families. The Grove was nearly all claimed. No farm was located entirely upon the prairie. There was no residence away from the Grove. On the south side of the Grove there were seven adjoining farms, embracing both Grove and Prairie, 6 of them crossed by a living stream of water.

This date, 1844, was the era of the erection of the log School House.

The above items are liable to inaccuracy, as the undersigned has obtained them only by referring to the recollection of the surviving early settlers.

The present day Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve is located in Section 5. From the map which Rev. Patch drew, it appears that the south part of the Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve was originally occupied by Richard Robinson, Eliphalet Whittlesey, and Ephraim Whittlesey. The north part of Section 5 consisted of farms belonging to Thomas Williams, David Paul and Austin Andrews. The early farms were laid out in four forty acre sections running in a north south direction. The Robert Neely Farm

Seward Bluffs

William Cunningham an early settler of Winnebago County, was employed by Frink and Walker as a driver between Twelve Mile Grove and Freeport. Ephriam Sumner built the stone tavern referred to by Reverend Patch in 1842 for use by the Frink and Walker line. This structure was razed in 1914. Since his arrival in 1835, Sumner had engaged in milling and farming, represented the district in the 26th General Assembly, and was commissioned postmaster at Vanceberg on February 11, 1845. The post office seal, which depicted a man on horseback with a small mailbag on his back, was still in existence at the turn of the century. Nathan Butts, who died of cholera in 1853, was the first superintendent of the stagecoach line. A solid walnut desk with pigeon holes used by a later postmaster of Vanceberg, J. H. Rogers, is also still in existence. J. H. Rogers daybook, which recorded his transactions from July 1844 to August 1845 is in the possession of Anna Rogers. Rogers also worked as a blacksmith, town clerk, and taught handwriting at night. His students were mostly adults from the settlement who would bring their own candles for use as a light source when taking their lessons. John Vance's hillside home, which appears at the eastern limit of the settlement on the 1844 map, was known as "The Lighthouse of the Prairie" because it could be seen from a great distance at night and helped to guide the early travelers over the wilderness.

A very old but undated newspaper clipping in the possession of Marie Sarver of rural Pecatonica states that Vanceberg contained "two stores, a blacksmith shop, a tavern, and stage barn, besides the log houses of a few settlers". Only eight structures are located on or near the state road on Patch's map. The location of the buildings is also shown on an 1859 county map in the Rockford Public Library. Portions of a stone wall were visible for many years which enabled the location of the settlement to be easily identified. This wall has since disappeared. A film made by Max Fry of Seward shows an area of clay soil and an old tree stump where the inn used to stand.

No description of the facilities at the tavern or "ordinary" at Vanceberg has survived. Mrs. Charles H. Spafford described her experience when spending the night at a similar inn on her journey to Rockford.³

From Chicago I traveled by stage, one of the old "Frink and Walker's", stopping at night in one of the extremely private wayside inns of that early period. The accommodations were not extensive nor luxurious in these little hostleries. I

was awakened in the night by a light in my room, and saw a man at the foot of my bed, busy with two large mail bags. It was the postmaster changing the mail. Remembering the limitations of the place, I immediately took in the situation, and made no outcry. It was a dreary ride from Chicago to Rockford in the old stage, and I was very glad to arrive at the end of my journey, where my brother was waiting for me at the Rockford House.

Stagecoaches departed from Frink and Walker's main office in Chicago every Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday and returned on alternate days. The fare from Chicago to Rockford was \$5 and twenty-four hours was the estimated travel time. The road from Rockford to Galena ran through Freeport, Waddam's Grove, Gratiot's Grove, and White Oak Springs. Late arrivals were the rule and complete suspensions of service for days or even weeks due to the weather were common.

A connecting stage coach ran in a southwesterly direction from Vanceberg and apparently intersected the old Rockford-Savanna road. This road appears on the map drawn by Reverend Patch and the traces of the road are shown clearly in the color film made by Max Fry in 1966. The road is quite visible in the Twelve Grove cemetery. The trail crossed the present highway into Seward four tenths of a mile south of Pecatonica Corners. It passed through the People's subdivision, crossed Burch's Creek (known to the pioneers as Ladle Creek) and went on toward Comly Road to the southeast of the forest preserve. Dr. George Thomson recalls that his grandfather, W. R. Stone, showed him the remains of another road on the Neely property running in a northwest direction toward the southwest of the original forest preserve. This road might also have joined the state road. The dates when it was in use cannot be determined nor does it appear on any map which we were able to find.

Early travelers have left us accounts which describe the primitive conditions involved in stage travel. Mrs. Oscar Taylor recorded her impressions of a trip she made as a young woman in the fall of 1839.

The curtains of our stage were rolled up (and) as we drove on through the beautiful morning I was entranced. I had heard of the western prairies, I had imagined them, I had read of them with Cooper, my father had written of them, but I had not formed the slightest conception of the actual vision of this country, which was then almost as it had been a century before when the red men roamed

over it at will. Gradually the flat levels changed to a more billowy surface, and small groves of oak appeared. Sometimes we passed through what seemed veritable gardens, so gorgeous were the fields of yellow golden-rod, broken by the deep purple and snowy white of the wild aster. And the gentians. blue and purple, fringed and closed, bloomed in bewildering beauty, while the great cloud shadows floating across the scene continually altered the face of the landscape. I looked to see deer or wolf, or some other wild creature start up as we passed, but in that I was disappointed.

Our late lunch had been a repetition of breakfast and I, tired and hungry, fell asleep as darkness gathered, to be aroused by a shout from the driver, "Rockford! Rockford! Here you can get a good Yankee supper." Most welcome news! It wasn't a Yankee supper after all, but a most delicious supper of native prairie chicken, cooked, however, with the skill of the traditional eastern housewife. At midnight we left Rockford, crossing the river by ferry, to me a frightful experience in the black darkness. Hardly were we on solid earth before the driver announced that the passengers must leave the stage and climb the sand bank just ahead, as the horses could not pull the load up the bank. I think I should have been buried in the sand had not one of the young men gallantly assisted me.

A paper prepared as an environmental study of Camp Grant in 1918 included an historical sketch of the history of Rockford area roads:

A man who traveled by stage from Galena to Chicago over the State road in the autumn of 1841, said "The means of traveling had by this time so much improved, that instead of the jolting, hard-seated, two-horse wagon, we had a regular Frink & Walker daily stage line, with comfortable coaches..." Apparently, however, the coaches were comfortable only in comparison with the wagon, for he added; "The coaches had three inside seats, calculated to hold three passengers each. The back seat seats were the most comfortable, as you had something to lean against - the others were seats of torture during a long journey. The stages did not stop at night, but drove right along. When morning came, the passengers, if they had

been able to sleep at all, would wake up stiff, chilled through, and tired; and after an indifferent breakfast would have to endure another day and night of torture. My recollection is it took us three days and two nights to reach Chicago (from Galena)."

Neither the roads nor the coaches were much improved as time passed. Said one who journeyed to Chicago in May, 1844: "My journey to Chicago was most unpleasant, by reason of the late heavy rains, which still continued. These so softened the rich soil, that the public coach was detained in a slough during a whole night; the weather cold and our feet wet, and our person chilled. Next morning, at eight, we were drawn out of our distressing conditions, by four yoke of oxen."

Many of the covered wagons heading for the West stopped at Vanceberg. The main reason that they traveled in groups or "emigrant trains" was to ensure that sufficient power would be available to pull the wagons out of the interminable sloughs and quagmires. The California Gold Rush in 1849 accelerated the already heavy traffic along the old State Road. In 1851, J. R. Rogers of Vanceberg wrote a letter to his brother in Connecticut describing the wagons passing in front of his home:⁴

I live in the main road from Chicago to Galena. My folks think they see more two, four, & six horse teams sometimes by looking out once, than they saw in Connecticut in a whole year.

Rev. Patch's account provides a description of the building of the first school and church at Twelve Mile Grove. The Twelve Mile Grove Congregational Church had actually been formed on March 27, 1841, and met initially in members' homes.

Previous to 1844 (nearly 8 years) the Twelve Mile Grove Settlement had no public building for either educational or religious purposes.

Near the center of the Grove, due south of the present center of the village of Pecatonica, where the farms of Edmund Whittlesey, Austin Andrews, Harvey Woodruff and Mrs. R. Vance -----, the families on both sides of the Grove united (1844) in a volunteer effort to erect a school house, which should also be used for religious purposes on the sabbath.

It was built of logs and during nine years was the center of the entire educational and religious

enterprise of the little community.

This log structure is clearly marked on the map near the southwest stagecoach road. This was near the building now used by the Twelve Mile Grove Cemetery Association just east of the present day forest preserve. The log structure was eventually moved to the John Rogers farm 1½ miles east of its original site. During 1854 and 1855 schoolhouses were constructed in the township in districts 1, 3, 4 and 5. The present day Seward school was the first consolidated school in Illinois. The Twelve Mile Grove Congregational Church changed its name to the Seward Congregational Church in 1863. The present edifice was dedicated on February 20, 1868, and later moved to its present site in the village of Seward.

Although the land which comprises Winnebago County was surveyed in 1836-37, it was not actually offered for sale by the government land office at Dixon until 1839. Serious disputes arose among settlers ranging all the way from legitimate misunderstanding to actual attempts at claimjumping. Rev. Patch recorded the story of one reputed claim jumper who moved into another man's house just north of the State Road in Lysander Township. Some of the residents of the Vanceberg area evidently became quite incensed and tried to pry the house off of its foundation with split rails. One of the rails broke and the man on it fell to the ground. At this same moment a shot was heard from inside the house which led the rest of the group to conclude that the man on the rail had been shot. They proceeded to fire repeatedly into the structure. The claim jumper succeeded in crawling through the window before he died as the result of his bullet wounds. The citizens involved were tried by a jury of their peers and found not guilty of the charges of murder and starting a riot.

It is reported that there was an Indian camp near the point where the stagecoach trail crossed Ladle Creek. Whether this was a hunting village or permanent campsite is unknown. Poles from Indian teepees and buffalo bones are said to have been found by the Cleveland family when they arrived in the 1850's. This property was known locally in later years as the "Hollembeck place".

The village of Vanceberg disappeared after the coming of the railroad. In his letter in 1851 J. H. Rogers reported that the railroad was "within 26 miles of this place. If the winter is favorable it will be made 12 miles farther (to Rockford) by spring".

The cemetery at Twelve Mile Grove contains the graves of many of the early settlers of the area including Abraham

Roberts and Chester Wells, two of the five Revolutionary War veterans buried in Winnebago County.

Dr. George Thomson prepared an excellent account of the Twelve Mile Grove area as part of a symposium at Iowa State University in 1974. He reminded his audience that the prairie groves not only provided fuel and shelter from the wind but the size of the trees determined the size of one's cabin. Popple clumps called towheads "grew in the wet pastures and at the edges of woods, and its members were long and slim enough to provide rafters for the barns - and these, along with the walnut sills, can still be found in the 100 year old barns near woodlots".⁵

He also described the forces that resulted in the disappearance of much of the woodland, a description especially pertinent for a publication dealing with forest preserves.⁶

Except in the Germanic communities no real attempt was made to save the forest for esthetic purposes, either for the citizens of a century ago or for us who choose to recreate in woodlands. The woods followed the streams and intermittent drainages, and seldom ventured up from the slopes onto the level land where periodic prairie fires perpetuated the grassland and withered the invading forest. Thus, there was little desire to clear forest for cultivation when the prairie, while obdurate and at first brutal to plow, could be cultivated with so much more success. Yet, the forest was cleared, partly for heating (a big farmhouse by 1880 or 1890 could gobble up 12 tons of coal or 24 tons of wood). In the four north-to-south forties that made up the average farm one would seldom expect to find more than 20 or 30 acres of woodland and the 12 cords of wood would just about be the annual increment from such a woodlot. So the forest was continually losing its older and bigger trees to the furnace and cookstove and replacing them with their progeny or at least those trees that could invade the shade of their elders. So the forest was always there but always changing - not because of forestry (which hadn't come to America yet) and not because of a desire to perpetuate it, but simply because, for awhile, demand and supply were in balance.

But the balance didn't last long because the railroads were already to the Mississippi by the Civil War and were ready to create the cattle towns across Iowa, Missouri, and

Seward Bluffs

Kansas; and the oak forest fell by the thousands of acres to provide ties and fuel. Nowadays, a 12-inch oak tree is approximately 100 years old, and seldom could one get more than two ties per tree. Thus, with 200 trees per acre, or 400 ties per acre, it would take between 35 and 55 acres of woodland to build a mile of track.

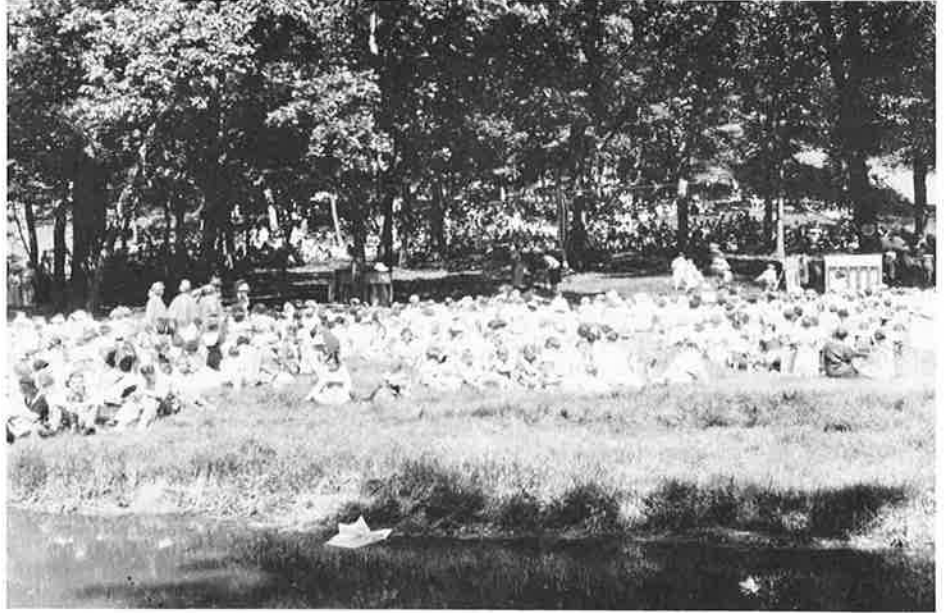
It's odd that the diaries of the early settlers don't comment on this passing of the forest, for the evidence of the tree rings is there to see; but no one ever sees a tree grow and perhaps the activities of tie-hacks and wood cutters were so commonplace from the beginning and so widely distributed, and perhaps provided for so welcome an opportunity for field and pasture expansion that they simply weren't worth comment.

But the clearing to bare soil a hundred years ago gave us back the oak forests that are once again old - and just in time for us, with our new-found esthetic sense and leisure, to enjoy them and worry over them as they teeter on the brink of their second-growth senility.

The part of Twelve Mile Grove belonging to the Whittleseys was the site of the Old Settler's picnics for many years. This area was still known as Whittlesey's Grove even after the last member of the Whittlesey family had departed. Mary Harris of Rockford remembers attending these picnics as a girl and believes that they dated back to the very early days of the community at Twelve Mile Grove. Records show that the Old Settler's association elected a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer and that the picnics were open to all in the community. A change in ownership of Whittlesey's grove in 1901 threatened to force the group to hold the event elsewhere. A newspaper article relates the conditions of the grove at that time.

The grove itself, the oldest settler of them all, also added its changes which time brings, for the large number of seasons of deficit rainfall the past seven or eight years and the severe winter of three years ago have told on the vigor and life of the trees. The old oaks are dying. Dead trees and the dying branches of living trees gave a hint on all sides of the possible passing away of the grove itself, which has sheltered so many happy reunions.

The people of that vicinity are puzzled to know what has happened to Twelve-Mile Creek, which is



Spring Song Festival arranged by Supt. of Schools Ervin Pearson, Music Director Harriet Hester and Harlan Lundgren at Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve, May 1935.

usually a large brook and has never before run dry, but this year has entirely ceased to flow, showing the effect of the drought.

Picnics, church outings, and school music festivals continued to be held in the Bluffs before the creation of the forest preserve. George Thomson recalls that Iowa State's Ray Conger, a local boy who became a member of the U. S. Olympic team, staged a demonstration run at a picnic held in 1928. The flat cliff known as Table Rock and the cliff on the eastward facing bluffs known as Pulpit Rock were famous area landmarks. A small kiln built by the early settlers was located under Table Rock. Several more of these kilns, probably used by early residents for firing limestone, were located in the Bluffs, including one in the low bluffs facing north 50-75 yards downstream from the bridge.

ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Purchases of several adjoining parcels of land at Seward Bluffs were recorded at the December 1929 session of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission. These tracts totaled 71 acres and their total purchase price was \$10,195.46.

It was originally decided that this new forest preserve would be known as the Thomas D. Reber Forest Preserve. Thomas D. Reber was the founder and president of the Rockford Lumber and Fuel Company. He was also a member of the County Board for many years and vice-

president of the Forest Preserve Commission in 1925. He died in 1928, one year prior to the purchase of the land in Seward Bluffs. However, one month after the Forest Preserve Commission decided upon this name, it received two petitions from the citizens of Seward and Pecatonica Township requesting that the name of the new preserve be "The Twelve Mile Grove Forest Preserve". It is not known how this matter was finally resolved but perhaps the name Seward Bluffs was the result of a compromise. The first caretaker, Oscar Reimer, and his two daughters lived in a tent in the southwest corner of the preserve during the summer when the Forest Preserve first fenced off the property. George Thomson recalls that camping was not allowed in the preserve in the early years of operation and that a few people would ask permission to camp in the woods next to the preserve boundary.

Two shelter houses and two well shelter houses were constructed at Seward Bluffs as a part of CWA Project No. 1133 which commenced in 1934. At this time there were two entrances to the preserve. The north entrance consisted of a long corridor which led from U. S. 20 to the preserve's northeast corner. A thousand feet of road and three stone arch bridges were added in 1935. These bridges were started by the CWA and had a foundation of native limestone. The District completed them with dressed stone.

The CWA also placed the long stone steps which lead down to the first of the

stone bridges. Just to the north of this bridge a swimming "hole" was formed by a cement dam in the bend of the creek. Leland Thomson used his father's team and worked one summer with a drag scoop to dig out the "lake". This swimming area was crowded with people in the early years of the preserve but sedimentation has long since destroyed the channel. Due to the increasing accessibility of other recreation areas, the crowds of picnickers and bathers that flocked to the preserve in the 30's and 40's have never been equalled.

In 1941 the Seward Congregational Church held its Centennial Pageant in the forest preserve. A covered wagon was built especially for the celebration by Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Neely. There were numerous displays of letters, documents and other historical material.

Following the sale of Willow Creek Forest Preserve to the Illinois Department of Conservation in 1968, the Forest Preserve Commission considered using the \$294,000 that it had received for additional land purchase. In June of 1969 the Commission finally extended an offer to real estate agent Hearl A. Peeples for 60 acres of land at Seward Bluffs. The total purchase price for the 80 acres was \$65,000 and most of this land bordered on the east and southwest of the original preserve. Approximately 60 camping sites were developed here. Twenty acres of the addition were planted in nursery stock in 1971. The expanded Seward Bluffs Forest Preserve serves an important reminder of this county's natural and historical heritage.

Note: We would like to thank Max Fry, Mary Harris, Juniata Scott, Dr. George Thomson and Anna Rogers for sharing their knowledge of the history of this area with us. The original map and history of Twelve Mile Grove prepared by Rev. Patch are in the possession of the Seward Congregational Church. The Camp Grant Study mentioned in the text is The Environment of Camp Grant by Rollin D. Sallisbury and Harlan Barrows published by the Illinois State Geological Survey in 1918. Sources for the quotations are not given. A copy of the 1901 article on Whittlesley's Grove belongs to Juniata Scott of Seward.

SECTION VIII SOUTHWESTERN PRESERVES

The two preserves in this section are located in the Freeport Section of the Rock River Hill Country Natural Division as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan For The Illinois Nature Preserve System prepared by the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. The Harry A. and Fannie B. Severson Dells Forest Preserve typifies the bluffs or "dells" that are found along streams throughout this division. The bluffs located along Hall Creek in the Dells Area are the result of stream erosion on the underlying outcrops of dolomitic limestone. Fuller Forest Preserve consists of mature dry-mesic upland hardwoods that are a remnant of the original forest vegetation found in this part of the county. River bluff drainage patterns and deep ravines are also characteristic of this section of the Rock River Hill Division.

HISTORY OF THE DELLS AREA

LOCAL HISTORY OF WINNEBAGO TOWNSHIP

The area surrounding the Harry A. and Fannie B. Severson Dells Forest Preserve is very rich in local history. Montague Road, which lies on the northern boundary of the forest preserve, was originally an Indian footpath that gradually developed into a road as pioneers from New England and Midway (Rockford) began to settle the countryside in the 1830's. The road is named for Richard Montague who was one of the first dozen pioneers to settle Midway. According to Charles A. Church's *History of Winnebago County* (1916) Montague came to Midway from Massachusetts in 1835 and began farming around the 1300 block of South Main Street. He was very prominent in the early development of Rockford and was the County School Commissioner for Winnebago County from 1837-1839. Rockford's Montague Elementary School is named after him.

Weldon Road which intersects Montague Road east of the Severson Dells Forest Preserve, is named after Jonathan Weldon who came to Winnebago County with his family from Providence, Rhode Island, in 1836. Richard Montague and Jonathan Weldon had known each other in New Hampshire prior to their departure to Midway. As John H. Thurston writes in his *Reminiscences, Sporting and Otherwise of Early Days In Rockford* (1891):

It was a current story in early days that Richard Montague said he left

New Hampshire, not only to better his condition, but also in the pleasing belief that he had succeeded in getting away for all time from the locality infested by Jonathan Weldon. To his utter disgust, almost the first person he encountered when he arrived at Rockford was "Thousand Legs." His sobriquet originated from his personal deformity of his legs, and to the best of my knowledge his wife, whom I never saw, was deformed like unto her husband but worse. His appearance as he swung along the trail on crutches, and he could only do so for a short distance, was a sight to be avoided by hysterical females. His head, arm and body were large and muscular, and his appearance from the waist up, was as depicted of John the Baptist. The man was intellectual and shrewd. In one instance, single and alone, he successfully opposed the entire bar of the county in a case where a road was proposed to be laid through his land, the judge deciding there was not a legal road in the county.

Thurston continues:

He (Weldon) was the cause of constant strife and turmoil in his neighborhood, and one dark night was taken from his house by a disguised party and carried out on the prairie, where they made preparation as he believed at that time, to hang him; but after a consultation took him to a school and left him in the fireplace covered with tar and feathers...

FIRST SETTLERS

According to H. F. Kett's 1877 *History of Winnebago County*, the first man to settle in Winnebago Township was David Adams Holt who came to New York State in 1835. He built a log cabin in Section 34 of Winnebago Township. William Holt came in 1836 and settled in Section 26. Elijah Holt, another brother, arrived in 1837 and built the first stone house from the quarry behind David Holt's home. The first school in the township was started in the David Holt home by Mary Treadwell who later married Elijah Holt. It was a subscription school and Mary Treadwell Holt was employed for two dollars per week. In 1844 a frame schoolhouse was built. In 1839 Duty Hudson and his two brothers, Richard and Horace, arrived from New York and settled in Section 33. Around 1843 Alonzo Hall, for whom Hall Creek was named, and his wife, Melinda Owen Hall, came from Canada and homesteaded a tract of 1500 acres

extending from what later became the Illinois Central Railroad right-of-way in section 15 to include the present forest preserve in Section 34. Alonzo Hall died around 1851 near Mt. Shasta, California, during the California Gold Rush.¹ Following his death the Hall Homestead was divided among his four children: Alfred Hall, Joshua, Charlotte, and Sophia. As the oldest son, Alfred fell heir to the original home on Montague Road and the surrounding land including the Dells area in Sections 34 and 35. The Dells acreage remained in the Hall Family until 1917, when Alfred Hall's widow, Emily McFarland Hall, sold the Dells area to C. Herbert Lewis.²

WESTFIELD CORNERS

The village of Westfield Corners at the intersection of Westfield and Montague Roads, began in the late 1830's when pioneers from New England settled in Section 33. Duty Hudson opened the first public house in Winnebago Township at Westfield which served as a station on the stagecoach route from Chicago to Galena.³ The inn was known throughout the area as the "Buck Horn Tavern" because of an immense pair of antlers which rested on a crossbeam in front of the tavern. The tavern was plastered outside and lathed and plastered inside. It contained five large rooms and a pantry downstairs with the upper story partitioned for sleeping quarters.⁴ In the spring of 1837, Deacon Holt of Westfield began operating one of the first lime kilns in Winnebago County. The kiln produced 200 bushels of lime that Holt sold to Daniel S. Haight, who hauled it to Rockford where he used the lime to construct his home and the Rockford House.

In 1839 the western area of the county, including Winnebago Township, detached from the Rockford and Kishwaukee precincts and adopted the precinct name "La Prairie". The first elections for the new precinct were held at the David Holt home, and fourteen votes were cast for thirteen candidates seeking office as justice of the peace and constable. In 1843 the polling place was changed to Duty Hudson's house and the precinct name was changed from La Prairie to Westfield. In 1849 townships were formed from the old precincts and the name of Elida was inadvertently given to Westfield. In 1855 Westfield Township was renamed Winnebago Township by petition.⁵

In 1848 the first post office in southern Winnebago County was established at Westfield, and Duty Hudson was appointed postmaster. The mail at that time came in from Dixon on horseback. According to the 1871 *Atlas of Winnebago County*,

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Elida contained a Methodist church, store, post office, barbershop, and blacksmith shop operated by Robert Spottswood. Spottswood was born in Scotland in 1817 and sailed from Annon, Scotland, to Quebec, Province. Spottswood lived in Canada for twelve years and moved to New York State in 1830. He settled in Winnebago Township in 1867.⁶

In 1846 the Winnebago Congregational Church began in the schoolhouse at Westfield. There were eight original members including the pastor, Deacon Laney, who had travelled from Oneida County, New York, in 1845. Additional members arrived from New London, Connecticut, via the Erie Canal to Buffalo and then to Chicago. As Congregationalists the members believed in equality of rights for others and many were pro-abolitionists. Mildred P. Geddes in *Out Montague Road* (1974), indicates that some of the Congregational Church members participated in the pre-Civil War "Underground Railroad".

Albert Wilson opened the first general store in the township at Westfield in 1853. It was located in the southeast corner of the crossroads and stayed in business for over 100 years.

GEORGE JACOB SCHWEINFURTH

On Weldon Road one mile north of the intersection of Montague and Weldon is a large, bright red Victorian farm house trimmed in white. Between 1887 and 1900 it was the seat of a communal religious sect called the Beekmanites whose leader was George Jacob Schweinfurth. During the sects existence, which claimed 1,000 members at the height of its development, several other religious communities were established in Chicago, Byron, East Paw Paw, and Plum River, Illinois; Alpena, Michigan; St. Charles, Minnesota; Kansas City; and Buena Vista, Colorado.⁷ Locally, the residence became known as "Heaven" with its counterpart "Hell" located on Weldon Road south of Montague. Much was written about "Heaven" and Schweinfurth. Local and Chicago newspapers related supposedly "immoral" activities occurring at "Heaven". Even an expose entitled *Six Years In Heaven*, written by Alex McClenaghan and published by Laird and Lee, Chicago, 1894, tried with little success to reveal "The Abominable Practices and Monstrous Professions of GEORGE JACOB SCHWEINFURTH—The False Christ".

Much of the material written reveals the character of the times and is saturated with so much rhetoric that it can hardly be considered historically accurate. Furthermore, there was never any serious attempt to understand the Beekmanites religious

philosophy. The only interview granted by Schweinfurth was given after the sects dissolution, and it reveals a personal integrity far surpassing much of the hypocrisy of the day. The facts that exist do not support the contention that he was a charlatan or that he was deluded in his religious convictions. The July 14, 1900, *Rockford Daily Register Gazette* even acknowledged that "Mr. Schweinfurth..... has been in a great measure misunderstood, and persistently misrepresented."

According to the biographical information contained in the first chapters of McClenaghan's *Six Years In Heaven*, George Jacob Schweinfurth was born in Marion, Ohio, in 1853. His parents were from Baden, Germany, not far from Stuttgart. McClenaghan states that Schweinfurth had worked as a book agent, blacksmith, and clerk. In the summer and autumn of 1875 Schweinfurth served as a sexton of a Methodist church at Jackson, Michigan. It was here that Schweinfurth developed his conflict with organized religion which continued during most of his life. In the interview given by Schweinfurth in the July 14, 1900, *Register Gazette*, he stated that he was never ordained as a Methodist minister though most other sources, including McClenaghan, indicate that he was.

After leaving his first parish Schweinfurth went to Alpena, Michigan. Here he met Dorinda Helen Fletcher Beekman, who founded the Beekmanites in 1877. Dora Beekman was the wife of Reverend J. C. Beekman who was the pastor of the Congregational Church in Byron, Illinois.⁸ Church states that in 1877 Mrs. Dora Beekman became possessed by religious vagaries. One of these was that Christ at his second coming had become re-incarnated in her. As a result of these revelations Mrs. Beekman traveled to Alpena, Michigan, where she established the new sect.⁹ Schweinfurth in the July 14th interview stated "the incident which brought me into touch with this movement was a chance visit to friends in Byron." He adds that at that time in his life, "the rites of the church had no efficacy and hence were really of little moment....It was while I was in this state of mind that the teachings of Mrs. Beekman were brought to my attention. I found her views much in sympathy with my own, and I was soon drawn strongly in the direction of this movement." Schweinfurth then returned with Mrs. Beekman to Byron, Illinois. Mrs. Beekman located her church in Byron, Illinois, until 1882, when the Weldon farm in Section 23 became the central church for the organization. In 1883 Mrs. Beekman died and Schweinfurth assumed leadership.

Between 1887-1900 the Beekmanites

maintained their community known as the "Church of the Redeemed" or "Church Triumphant" at Spencer S. Weldon's farm in Section 23. While Schweinfurth lived at the Weldon farm he enlarged and remodeled the farmhouse and outbuildings and organized the sect into some form of a communal living arrangement. The produce and food grown on the farm was used in the community and the surplus sold for retail in Rockford. At one point Schweinfurth held the deed for the Weldon farm but transferred it back to Spencer S. Weldon before the sect dissolved in 1900.

Most of the articles published about the religious community at the Weldon farm during the 1890's were very colorful. Typical of their character is the *Chicago Daily Tribune* of May 29, 1892, which described the "welcoming" Schweinfurth received from one of his proselytizing tours:

The woods were scoured and stripped of every blossom, florists at Rockford were called on for elaborate displays. One hour before he was expected, the prettiest damsels, checked in gala attire, carpeted the road for a mile with flowers. The heavenly host met him two miles from the house, unhitched the horses from the carriage that bore his sacred person, and attaching a rope covered with evergreen hauled him to the abode that was lonely when he was away. Cheers rent the air as the procession moved over the flower-strewn road...The welcome ended in a grand feast that evening, at which wine flowed like water-for Schweinfurth and his favorites - the rest of the poor devils ate dry bread and cold mush.

During the life of the Beekmanite Commune at the Weldon farm, the Rockford community deplored the "unenviable notoriety" that was obtained at the expense of their own self-esteem. The 1941 WPA American Guide Series on Rockford stated:

For nearly twenty years Rockford was alternately amused and shocked by stories of the scandalous events enacted at "heaven". Non-believers who lived on farms in the neighborhood of "heaven" declared that the behavior of the "angels" was frequently at variance with angelic tradition....Twice each week the "angles" donned flesh colored tights to dance and stage tableaux authorized by Schweinfurth. Some of the tableaux were biblical in character, others historical, and still others purely Schweinfurthian.

In the late 1890's efforts were made to bring Schweinfurth before the local courts. Rev. S. L. Conde, who was the pastor of the Westminister Presbyterian Church, took the initiative to ouster Schweinfurth. To complete his plan Conde hired a female detective from a Chicago agency to pose as a convert at the Weldon farm. According to the written account of that event in the September 24, 1910, *Register Gazette*, "she spent several days and nights at the place. She made advances towards Schweinfurth with a view to testing his moral character. She kept awake nights in the hope of learning something which might aid in the plan to prosecute the leaders....Despite her most persistent efforts the woman detective was forced to report to the local pastor that there was nothing doing in the line of immorality on the part of Schweinfurth personally...." According to another account, Schweinfurth was brought to court and accused of taking money and property from converts "who were required to surrender all their goods to the cult".¹⁰ All efforts to bring Schweinfurth before the courts, however, proved futile.¹¹

On July 14, 1900, Schweinfurth gave his only authorized interview to a reporter from the *Register Gazette*. In this article the paper described the dissolution of the community at Weldon farm and added:

The local press, which has been the means of carrying abroad much of the information about the community here, has itself been misled. Out of that atmosphere of misunderstanding have grown some circumstances which it may be conceded are not altogether a credit to our section. Now that the plans of the communal establishment have been abandoned it is...justice to Mr. Schweinfurth that the public have his own statement...(the reasons that) led to recommend its dissolution, as well as his statement of the belief to which they formerly held.

The tone of the paper's stance and Schweinfurth's interview lends greater credibility to the community at Weldon farm than anything previously written. In the interview Schweinfurth discussed his dissatisfaction with traditional religious organizations and orthodoxy, his conversion to the Beekmanite religious philosophy, the formation of the commune, and the dissolution of the sect. Stylistically it provides very interesting reading.

After the dissolution of the commune in 1900, Schweinfurth lived with his wife in Rockford and engaged in real estate. He also handled mining stocks organizing the Square-Deal Mining Company.¹² He then moved to Chicago where he died of

typhoid fever July 20, 1910.

JOSEPH MEDILL McCORMICK

In the southwest 1/4 of Section 31 of Winnebago Township lies Middle Creek Presbyterian Church. The original structure was built of wood by John Kosier and James Milligan in June 1855. Near the church and surrounded by four acres of pine and underbush is a mausoleum built for Joseph Medill McCormick, Illinois journalist, legislator, and United States Senator. The granite crypt itself was built on a hillside and constructed of 700 tons of New York granite. The crypt was executed by Frank Deuel, a Rockford realtor, and designed by Howell and Hood, the Chicago architects who designed the Chicago Tribune Tower on Michigan Avenue.¹³ The tomb with its massive stone construction once formed a dry water-course down the slope toward Montague Road. At one time it was open to the public but vandalism has forced the construction of a fence and access is no longer permitted. Currently the crypt is being dismantled to be relocated.

Joseph Medill McCormick was born May 16, 1877, the son of Robert Sanderson McCormick, diplomat, and Katherine Van Etta Medill, daughter of the founder of the *Chicago Daily Tribune*. After graduating from Yale in 1900 he began his career as a newspaper editor and publisher with the *Tribune*. By 1908 all departments of the paper were under his management.¹⁴

In 1908 McCormick began his political career and became an ardent supporter of Theodore Roosevelt and The Progressive Revolt. In 1912 he served as a member of the National Campaign Committee having complete charge of the Western headquarters of the Progressive Party. In 1912 he was elected to the Illinois House of Representatives and re-elected in 1914. In 1916 he was elected congressman at large from Illinois and served in the Sixty-Fifth Congress until 1919 when he took his seat in the Senate. Throughout his senatorial career he was a bitter opponent of the League of Nations and the Versailles Treaty. In the Republican Primary Campaign of 1924 McCormick based his re-election upon his successful fight to keep the U. S. out of the League of Nations. McCormick, however, was not successful during the primary and was defeated by Charles S. Deneen. He then retired to his estate, Rock River Farms, along the west bank of the Rock River near Byron, Illinois. He died in Washington, D. C., on February 25, 1925, a few days before his final term of office would have been completed.

During his legislative career McCormick

worked for the enactment of child labor legislation and introduced and successfully sponsored the first budget legislation for the U. S. Congress. He also supported deep-water legislation leading to federal provisions for an engineering investigation of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Waterway Projects.¹⁵

Joseph Medill McCormick married Ruth Hanna June 10, 1903. Mrs. McCormick took an active role along with her husband in child labor legislation, civic improvements, and was one of the foremost advocates of woman's suffrage. In 1928 her interest in Illinois politics led her to purchase the Rockford, Illinois, *Daily Republic* newspaper. In 1930 the *Daily Republic* merged with the *Morning Star* to form Rockford Consolidated Newspaper, Inc., which published the *Rockford Morning Star* and *Register-Republic*. Mrs. McCormick, who became Mrs. Ruth McCormick Simms in 1932, was president and publisher of both papers, as well as president of Rockford Broadcasters, Inc., until her death in 1944.¹⁶

MICHAEL SCHUCK BEBB

In Section 34 of Seward Township is Beeb Creek named after William Bebb, ex-governor of Ohio, who purchased nearly 5,000 acres of land from the federal government and settled there in 1850.¹⁷ William Bebb named the estate Fountaindale and built his residence, called the "Governor's House" in Section 34 in 1852. In 1909 the original building was destroyed by fire. The present landowner, William McDonald, has built his residence over part of the old foundation. The post office in this section of Seward Township was called Fountaindale until the 1880's.

The Charivari

In 1857 Michael S. Bebb returned from the east with his first bride to Fountaindale. As was the custom then, a "charivari" or mock serenade to the newly married couple was planned. Late in the evening the "din" began and the ex-governor intervened. The result was that the ex-governor accidentally shot to death one of the participants. Church writes:

...Twelve young men of the neighborhood proposed to charivari the bridal party. They assembled at the house about eleven o'clock at night, and began their performance with cow-bells, tin pans, three guns, and other articles which could contribute to the hideous din. The governor at length appeared with a shotgun and ordered them to retire. They paid no heed, and Mr. Bebb

The Dells Area

fired one barrel, which took effect in the face of William Hogan. The party then approached the house as for an assault, when the governor discharged the second barrel at the leader Lemuel Clemens, and instantly killed him. The crowd then speedily dispersed.

The ex-governor was taken to trial February 4, 1858, in the Circuit Court for manslaughter. The prosecution was conducted by State's attorney U. D. Meacham and T. J. Turner. The counsel for the defense was Tom Corwin of Ohio who later became Secretary of the Treasury under President Fillmore.¹⁸ William Bebb was fully acquitted of all charges.

Salicetum

The most significant botanist in the early history of Winnebago County is Michael Schuck Bebb who was born in 1833 and died in 1895. Bebb first came to Winnebago County with his father, William Bebb, around 1850. In 1857 he left and travelled to southern Illinois to continue the plant collecting that he had begun in Ogle and Winnebago Counties. In 1860 he published in the *Prairie Farmer*, "The Flora of Ogle and Winnebago Cos., Ill.", giving us the first botanical description of the plants native to this area. During the Civil War he lived in Washington, D. C., returning to purchase his father's homestead after the war. When he returned to Fountaindale in 1867, Michael S. Bebb began research on the "Salicaceae" or willow family on his willow plantation called *Salicetum*. At *Salicetum* he planted more than 1,000 cuttings of 175 willow species sent to him from Kew, England, and sent cuttings from *Salicetum* to Arnold's Arboretum at Harvard.¹⁹ Bebb also provided Charles E. Sargent, author of the first comprehensive work on trees in North America, *Silva of North America*, with the material from which the book's willows plates were drawn. Sargent named one willow species "Salix bebbiana" in his honor.

With his research on the willow family Bebb established a world-wide reputation as a botanist. Despite his accomplishments, there was very little recognition of his importance in this locality. In the early 1880's Bebb and his second wife moved to Rockford, Illinois, where he continued collecting and writing for botanical journals until his death in 1895. Much of his collection can now be seen at the Chicago Natural History Museum, the University of Illinois Herbaria, and the Evelyn Fernald Herbarium at Rockford College. In a letter written to a fellow

researcher he described himself as a "...farmer-naturalist musician....never made a noise in the world....never tried....don't think I should have succeeded if I had."

GEOLOGY

The Dells area is named after the ridges or bluffs that occur along Hall Creek through Sections 34 and 35. These ridges are composed of loess, glacial till, and drift which was deposited during the past one million years. The bedrock underneath these layers of loose earth consists of thick beds of Ordovician age dolomitic limestone. These beds of dolomite were formed from layers of shells, shell sand, and chaulky muds deposited in shallow seas during the Paleozoic Era 400 to 500 million years ago.²⁰ This limestone was used as a building stone in the first stone houses in Winnebago Township and taken from a quarry along Hall Creek in Section 34. These sedimentary rocks in turn rest on Precambrian granite. A geological unconformity exists between the glacial sediments some thousands of years old and the dolomite limestone several hundred million years old. In this area as much as 200 million years of erosion since the end of the Paleozoic Era have worn away a great thickness of rock.²¹ This same geological unconformity can be found throughout Winnebago County.

Prior to Wisconsin glaciation the Rock River Valley flowed south and east of its present course. When the westward flowing glaciers entered Winnebago County they blocked the original Rock River channel and diverted its drainage west creating the present course. Prior to glaciation the Hall Creek Valley probably joined the pre-diversion Rock River Valley just east of the village of Kishwaukee. After the glaciers left, the valley assumed its present position entering the Rock River just west of Meridian Road. The lower part of the Hall Creek Valley is now occupied by a small stream that flows northwest across Kishwaukee Road and enters the Rock River just east of the Winnebago County line.²²

PRIOR OWNERSHIP OF THE DELLS AREA

The first man to settle near the Dells was David Adams Holt who came from New York in 1835 and built a log cabin in Section 34. In 1836 William Holt, a brother, settled in Section 26. In 1837 Elijah Holt, another brother, arrived and settled in Section 35. Elijah Holt built the first stone house from a quarry behind David Holt's home in Section 34. The limestone farmhouse presently located on the Severson Dells Dairy Farm in Section

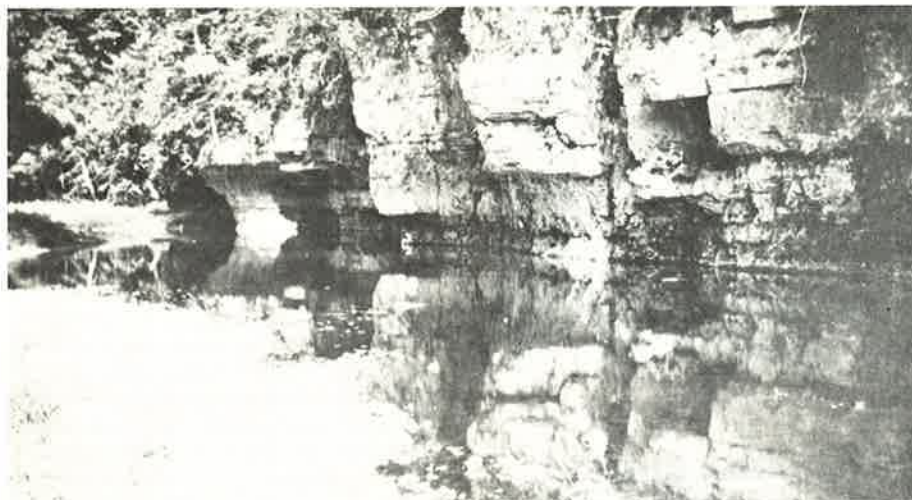
35 could be the original Elijah Holt home. This would make the farmhouse one of the earliest structures built in Winnebago County, c. 1840.

In 1844, Alonzo Hall, for whom Hall Creek was named, homesteaded a tract of 1,500 acres extending from what later became the Illinois Central Railroad right-of-way in Section 10 and 11 southward, to include the Dells area in Section 34 and 35. Hall at one time had 600 acres under cultivation and, between 1846-49, grazed 1,500 sheep on his pastures. The meadow located west of the forest preserve on the Perks property was known locally as Halls Meadow. In 1849 Hall lost 300 acres of wheat to wheat rust and abandoned wheat growing. In 1850 he made an overland trip to California during the gold rush. He died in November of that year near Mount Shasta, California. After his death the original homestead was divided among his four children. Alfred, the oldest, fell heir to the original home on Montague Road including a timber tract in the southwest 1/4 of Section 35. This timber tract now contains one of the few remaining stands of virgin White Pine in Winnebago County.

In *Out Montague Road* written by Mildred Geddes, she quotes Margaret Jacobsen, a local resident, who stated that a dam and sawmill was once constructed across Hall Creek. The dam was probably located at the deepest point along the creek. This would place the dam west of the bridge on Weldon Road which crosses Hall Creek. The lumber that was cut here was hauled out by teams of horses and used in the surrounding settlements.

In 1905 J. C. Rippentrop was owner of the major part of the N. W. and S. W. 1/4 of Section 35. Rippentrop charged groups a price to use the Dells as a picnic area. This was a common practice among farmers prior to the establishment of forest preserves. Margaret Jacobsen states:

...He allowed groups to picnic there - for a price. Cattle grazed in the pastures watered by the stream. They ate down the weeds and undergrowth so the banks were like a park. Near the dam at the sawmill there was a spring flowing from an outcropping in the rock. This provided an adequate source of delicious water for the usual group of picnickers. One time Rippentrop expected to rent the grounds to a temperance group. To accommodate them, he used some dynamite to open up the flow of spring water. Instead of accomplishing what he intended, the blast destroyed the spring itself. It changed still another feature of the area...The destruction of the spring eventually changed the



Galena dolomite bluffs on Hall Creek in Severson Dells Forest Preserve. (Courtesy Severson Family)

water level of the area and the marshy bog drained dry.

In 1917 Emily Hall, the widow of Alfred Hall, sold the remaining Hall acreage in the Dells to C. Herbert Lewis who owned the majority of the property along Hall Creek in Sections 35 and 34. C. Herbert Lewis was vice-president of the "Fay Lewis and Bros. Co." which operated a wholesale and retail tobacco store on West State in Rockford, Illinois. He was a brother to Fay Lewis who was president of the Rockford Park District from 1937 to 1941. Fay Lewis is regarded as one of Rockford's most colorful liberals. He campaigned vigorously to improve penal conditions in the Rockford jails in the early twentieth century. C. Herbert Lewis later operated a bowling and billard center on South Main Street.

C. Herbert Lewis employed two brothers by the name of Nason to build a log cabin on the 10 acre J. H. Jeffery tract in the southeast 1/4 of Section 34. The cabin was built prior to World War I and contained a sitting room, kitchen, and two small bedrooms. The Carl Johnson family used the cabin as a residence until 1928 when Harry A. Severson purchased the land. Lewis also placed an authentic cigar store Indian on the bluffs overlooking Hall Creek. The Indian statue was eventually destroyed by vandals.²³

Across from the log cabin and south of Severson Road in Ogle County was a farm owned by William Sloan. After William Sloan's death, the farm was willed to his daughter, Mary. Eventually Mary Sloan lost title to the land and it was purchased by a Rockford attorney by the name of

Monahan. Harry A. Severson purchased the land in the early 1930's and after his death in 1957, the land was sold to Leslie H. Geddes.

Note: Material concerning the history of the Dells Area was obtained from Out Montague Road by Mildred P. Geddes. Biographical information on George Jacob Schweinfurth was prepared from the first three chapters of Six Years In Heaven written by Alex McCleneghan and published by Laird and Lee, Chicago, 1894. Material on the geology of the Dells was taken from a "Summary Report On Geologic Features In The Vicinity of Severson Dells" prepared by Dwain Berggren, Education Extension Section, Illinois Geological Survey, in August of 1976. We gratefully acknowledge the use of these sources in preparing this chapter. We would also like to thank the following persons for providing us with information: William Boetcher, Lloyd Strauss, Ken Shramek, Mrs. Sam Patrick, and Mrs. Willard Winquist.

HARRY A. AND FANNIE B. SEVERSON DELLS FOREST PRESERVE

HARRY ASHTON SEVERSON

Harry A. Severson was born in Traverse City, Michigan, December 31, 1877, the son of Wesley and Alice Johnson Severson. His father, Wesley Severson, worked as a pharmacist and insurance executive. After attending public schools in Buchanan, Michigan, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Harry A. Severson enrolled at

the University of Wisconsin at Madison. While at the University of Wisconsin, Mr. Severson majored in civil engineering and was a member of the Tau Beta Pi Engineering Society and Beta Theta Pi Social Fraternity. As a civil engineer major, he wrote a paper on forestry management and conservation whose principles he utilized when he owned the Severson Dells Farm.¹ Harry A. Severson was graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1901 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering.

In 1901 upon recommendation by the Dean of Engineering at Wisconsin, Mr. Severson joined the Barber and Colman Company in Rockford, Illinois, and served with the firm for 56 years. In 1904 the firm incorporated as the Barber-Colman Co. and Mr. Severson became vice-president and general manager. In 1909 the firm became a partnership again with Harry A. Severson joining Howard D. Colman and Luther L. Miller as partners. When Howard D. Colman died in 1942, Mr. Severson became president and occupied that office until he was named Chairman of the Board in 1952. He served in that capacity until his death.

Throughout his career with the Barber-Colman Company, Harry A. Severson excelled as an administrator and general manager. Mr. Severson also made numerous trips to Europe for the Barber-Colman Company and helped organize subsidiaries in Great Britain in 1905 and in Germany in 1908. The Barber-Colman Company, which was founded in 1884, manufactures textile machinery, machine tools, environmental controls, industrial instruments, electric motors, and power controls.

Harry A. Severson's primary civic interest throughout his life was the Rockford Memorial Hospital Association of which he was a trustee and treasurer for many years. On July 27, 1977, Rockford Memorial Hospital and Board dedicated their new department of Radiology and Diagnostic Imaging to Harry A. Severson in honor of his leadership and contribution to Rockford Memorial Hospital. Mr. Severson was also a charter member and president of the Rockford Rotary Club and Mid-Day Business-Men's Club. He also served for many years as a trustee for Rockford College and a member of the University and Rockford Country Clubs. Outside of Rockford he was a member of the Union League and University Clubs of Chicago, Illinois.

Harry A. Severson had a very unique gift for friendship and was deeply and genuinely interested in people. This contributed significantly to his capacity for leadership both in his own company and in the Rockford community. As a philan-



Log cabin formerly located at Severson Dells Forest Preserve. Log cabin was built by the Nason brothers for C. Herbert Lewis, c. 1918. (Courtesy Severson Family)

thropist he was always willing to give of himself for the improvement of others. Among his friends he was known as a quiet, modest, but not retiring man.³ He was held in high esteem by his associates and had very loyal and dedicated friends.

Besides his business interests, Harry A. Severson was an avid naturalist and most of his leisure activities were spent traveling, hunting, and fishing in Florida and Canada, and on the Severson Dells Farm. Mr. Severson was a member of the Michigan North Woods Club of Marquette County, Michigan, and a charter member of Ducks Unlimited and the Senachwine Duck Club of Henry, Illinois. He also maintained a horse ranch on his farm and entertained his family and friends there. On February 21, 1934, he married Fannie Belle Zook in Akron, Ohio. Mr. Severson died in Rockford, Illinois, on April 18, 1957.

FANNIE BELLE SEVERSON

Mrs. Fannie B. Severson was born February 3, 1886, in Archbold, Ohio, the daughter of Jacob F. and Eliza Rupp. Her father was a farmer and inventor. As a child, Fannie Rupp's development was primarily influenced by her parent's Mennonite heritage. After completing high school, Fannie B. Rupp taught school in Eddysville, Ohio. She was then encouraged by her father to enroll in Goshen College, the first Mennonite

college in the Midwest. In her freshman year she met her first husband, Samuel Zook, who was a senior. In 1915 Fannie B. Rupp married Samuel Zook and moved to Rockford, Illinois, where Mr. Zook taught music and German at Rockford Central High School. During World War I, Mrs. Zook served as the executive director of the Red Cross at Camp Grant, and worked closely with Laura Potter Gregory who was instrumental in the organization of the Y. W. C. A. in Rockford.⁴ In 1920 they moved to Akron, Ohio, where Samuel Zook died in 1929. Fannie B. Zook had three children by her first marriage: John Gregory, Josephine Francis, and Robert Duncan. Mrs. Zook resumed her teaching career in Akron, Ohio, until 1934 when she married Harry A. Severson and returned to Rockford.

During the 1930's Mrs. Severson was active in the Rockford's Woman's Club and Rockford Children's Home. In 1934 she joined the Rockford Hospital Auxiliary. During her involvement with the Auxiliary, Mrs. Severson initiated the annual "A Day In The Country" picnic at the Severson Farm which became a very successful fund raiser. In 1942 she became president of the Rockford Hospital Auxiliary. She also served on the board of the Y. W. C. A. and helped to establish Gregory House, which was later razed to make room for the present Y. W. C. A. facility.

Together with her husband, Harry A.

Severson, they donated a lecture auditorium in Jewett Science Hall on the old Rockford College Campus. When the college moved to its new location on East State Street, they donated the Severson Auditorium in Scarborough Hall to the memory of their son, Robert Duncan Severson, who died in Germany during World War II. Mrs. Severson also authored a book as a memorial to Robert D. Severson, depicting the experiences of her sons, Robert and John, in the European Theatre during World War II.

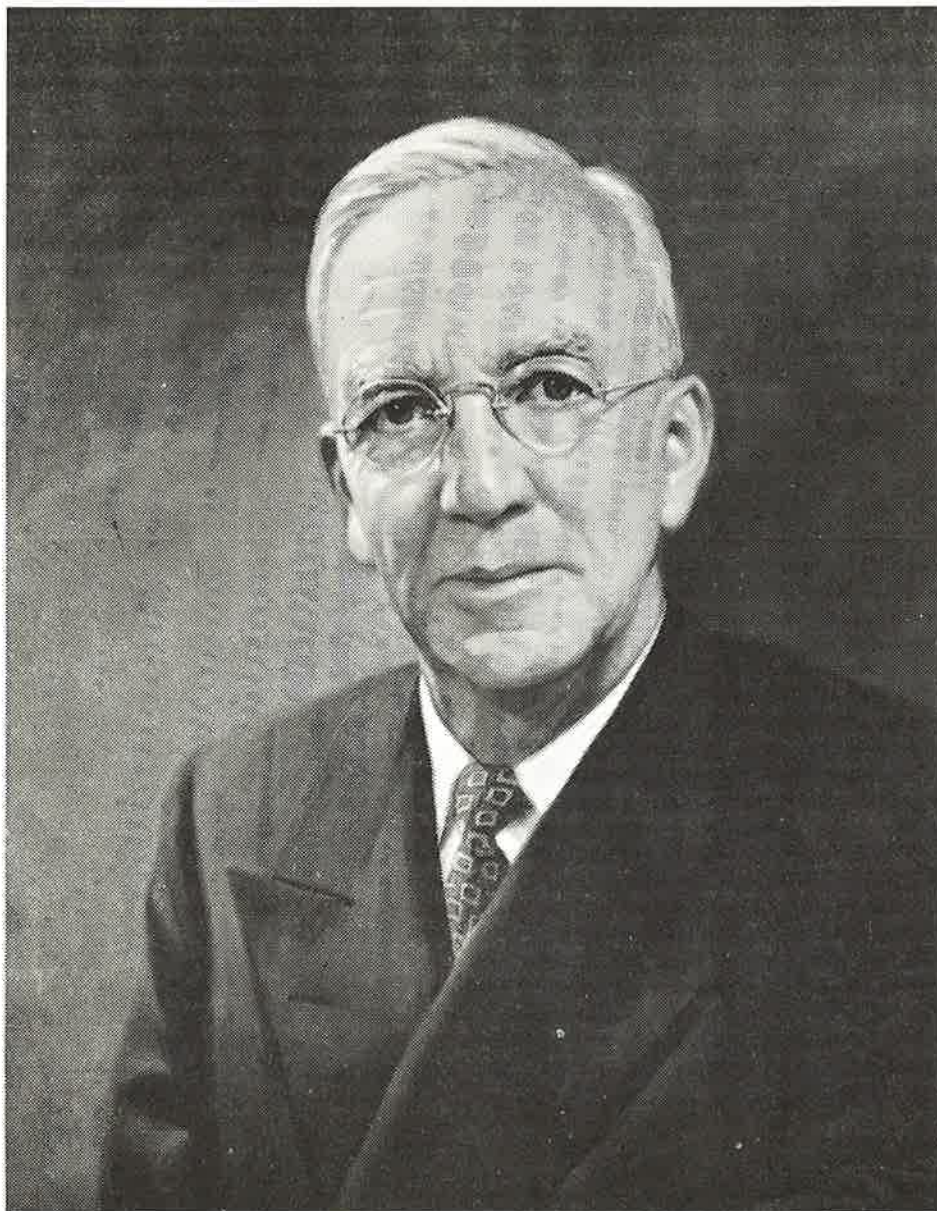
In 1970 Mrs. Severson donated a pipe organ to Goshen College in memory of her father, Jacob Rupp. In 1974, through the Second Congregational Church, she made a gift to the Heifer Project International.⁵ In 1975 she donated the Severson Dells Farm to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. Mrs. Severson died in Rockford, Illinois, January 19, 1976.

SEVERSON DELLS ACQUISITION HISTORY⁶

In 1928 Mr. Severson purchased the J. H. Jeffery property containing the log cabin that the Nason brothers had built for C. Herbert Lewis. Mrs. Fannie B. Severson restored the cabin after she married Mr. Severson in 1934. Mrs. Severson also directed the construction of the dutch oven in the yard which is still on the property. The cabin was used by the Severson Family for pig roasts, sleigh rides, and overnight campouts by the Girl Scouts. Because of frequent vandalism, the cabin and outbuilding were donated and transported to the Wagon Wheel Resort in Rockton in 1969, where they were used as a depot and gift ship for the miniature train railroad.

In May of 1928 and January of 1929 the Thomas A. Craig property was purchased. The Craig house was used as a summer retreat by the Severson family from 1929 through the 1950's. It was at the Craig house that Mrs. Severson sponsored many special projects including nature hikes, historical pagents, snow-shoeing, wood cutting, deer watching and photography, mushroom hunting, and horseback riding. She also entertained friends with picnics, tennis, gardening and canning on the Craig property and fishing along Hall Creek.

The Severson Dells Dairy Farm was purchased from C. Herbert Lewis in 1929. Mr. Severson used the farm to produce milk from his prize Gurnsey herd and to show friends and local farmers the latest innovations in dairy production. The stone farmhouse on the property is built of eighteen inch dolomitic limestone quarried from the bluffs behind the dairy farm. The farmhouse has an Italiante frieze and may date from the 1840's. Mr. Severson also



Portrait of Harry A. Severson. (Courtesy Severson Family)

operated the "Ogle Top Farm" horse ranch south of Severson Road in Ogle County. This property is presently owned by Leslie H. Geddes. Mrs. Geddes is the author of *Out Montague Road*.

The entire Dells area was purchased jointly between Harry A. Severson and Howard D. Colman in 1924. After the death of Mr. Severson in 1957, a division was made of the Dells area between the Colman and Severson families.

The Dells Deer Lodge, which is now used as the Severson Dells Environmental Education Center, was built between 1952-1954. The idea for the Deer Lodge originated with Mrs. Severson who used

the former Craig property to sponsor large group picnics for the Y. W. C. A., Circle 13 of the Second Congregational Church, and the Rockford Hospital Auxiliary. The first design for the Deer Lodge was a large enclosed shelter house which began prior to World War II. Architect A. Reynor Eastman drew the first plans for the lodge in the late 1940's which included a large living room with fireplace and two downstairs bedrooms. The site chosen for the lodge was an old Burr Oak tree at the northwest corner of the building estimated to be around 200 years old. The style of architecture and building materials were selected to blend in with the surrounding

woodlands. The cedar shake roof was cut in British Columbia and shipped by boat through the Panama Canal. Paving brick used for the floors in the kitchen and breezeway was taken from the old Illinois Central Railroad Depot in Rockford. The fireplace stone on the outdoor pavillion and exterior of the house was selected from a quarry in Lannon, Wisconsin. All of the outdoor post lights were originally 19th century gas lights used in Rockford. The interior of the Deer Lodge was originally furnished with antiques, contemporary sofas, and lounge chairs.

ALDO LEOPOLD AND PAUL B. RIIS

Between 1936 and 1937 Aldo Leopold, the founder of professional wildlife management, and Paul B. Riis, former Rockford Park District Superintendent, conducted one of the first studies on deer-forest management in the U. S. in the Dells area, including portions of what is now the Severson Dells Forest Preserve. Paul Riis, who was working for Howard D. Colman, had written to Aldo Leopold at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, requesting his assistance in a study on the food habits of the white-tailed deer in northern Illinois in order to determine if there was a possible overstocking of deer in the area.

In October of 1936 Leopold made his first field inspection of the Rockford deer range and estimated that the deer density might be as high as 64 deer per square mile, or twice the density of deer populations found in comparable wild areas. In his first report submitted to Howard D. Colman October 15, 1936, Leopold indicated that the Rockford range did not yet show signs of overbrowsing but, "...there is positively no room for geographic spread, the population (deer) is very heavy, and there has been a recent increase which may not yet have fully registered its effects". As a means of maintaining the carrying-capacity of the area, Leopold recommended that domestic crops (corn, alfalfa, winter grains) be distributed over the range and that certain wild feeds (box-elders and soft maples) be introduced into the area. Leopold also suggested that approval be obtained from the Illinois Department of Conservation to trap deer on the range if the deer population became too large.⁷

On September 21, 1937, Leopold made a second examination of the deer range with Paul Riis, Howard D. Colman, and Harry A. Severson. Upon the basis of this examination, Leopold indicated that the degree of browsing had increased from 1936 and that the Rockford range showed all the "preliminary symptoms of impending over population". He recommended that permission should be obtained from



Fannie B. Severson (Courtesy Severson Family)

the local residents and the Department of Conservation to begin deer trapping on the Rockford range.

In 1946 the Illinois Department of Conservation began to trap deer in the Rock River range in Winnebago and Ogle Counties. In November of 1948 Lysle R. Pietsch, director for the State of Illinois Natural History Deer Survey, obtained permission from Mr. Severson to begin trapping in the Severson Dells area. From the fall of 1946 to the spring of 1953, 158 deer were trapped on the Rock River Range, and 153 were relocated in southern

Illinois.⁸

FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Fannie B. Severson donated the 369 acre Severson Dells Farm in April 1975 to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. With the donation it was agreed that the land would be maintained and preserved to protect the flora and fauna native to the area in their natural estate, and that the Forest Preserve District would develop the land and

buildings for use as an outdoor education and wildlife study center. This request by Mrs. Severson reflected the enjoyment and appreciation that she and her husband, Harry A. Severson, and their family had derived from the Dells Farm. It was their intent to preserve this enjoyment and appreciation of the Dells area so that others would have the opportunity to share and experience that wealth of knowledge derived from life and living things.

ACQUISITION

In December of 1973 Robert Millard, Chairman of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee, wrote a letter to Mrs. Fannie B. Severson, asking that a meeting be arranged with Leland Fetzer, Chairman of the District's Land Advisory Council, Seth B. Atwood, and himself, to discuss her offer of a donation of the Severson Dells Farm to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. In January of 1974 a meeting was held between Mrs. Severson, Robert Mahnke, Superintendent of the Forest Preserve District, and Robert Millard, concerning the possible donation of the Severson Farm.

In early 1975 Mrs. Severson talked with her life long friend, Seth B. Atwood, concerning the development of a nature program on her estate and the procedures necessary for a donation. In January 1975 a memorandum was written suggesting a gift of the 369 acre Severson Farm to the Forest Preserve District. On March 7, 1975, an agreement was signed by Mrs. Severson and Frank St. Angel, President of the Forest Preserve District, outlining the conditions and agreement that the Severson Trust and the District had determined for the development of the donation. In the text of the agreement Mrs. Severson and her family indicated their personal wish that part of the Severson Farm, which included the facilities of the dairy farm and the Deer Lodge, be developed for use as an outdoor educational wildlife study center, and that the preserve be named the Harry A. and Fannie B. Severson Dells Forest Preserve.

On March 13, 1975, the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners passed a resolution accepting the donation of the Severson Farm from Mrs. Fannie B. Severson and execution of the agreement presented March 7th. Present at the formal acceptance were Jo Severson Haag, John G. Severson, and Seth B. Atwood. All three received the gratitude and appreciation of the entire Commission for their personal efforts in the donation. On April 30, 1975, the warranty deed for the Severson farm was conveyed to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District.

the use of the Deer Lodge, the development of a master plan, and the formation of the Severson Dells Advisory Committee.

*SEVERSON DELLS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE*

On March 11, 1976, the Forest Preserve Commission passed a resolution establishing the Severson Dells Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee was formed to advise the District in the development of the Deer Lodge Educational Programs, the distribution of funds derived through the Deer Lodge Educational Center Fund (precursor to the Severson Dells Education Foundation), and the development and implementation of the property master plan. On April 13, 1976, the Severson Dells Advisory Committee met in the Deer Lodge at the Severson Dells Forest Preserve where the following committee officers were appointed: John Spence was appointed chairman, Stephen Tuthill was appointed vice-chairman, and Gerald Paulson appointed secretary. The following sub-committee chairmen were appointed: Peter Damby was selected to be chairman of the Dedication Committee; Dr. Malcom Swan was appointed to chair the Education Committee; Gerald Paulson became chairman of the Master Plan Committee; Richard Kerr was chairman of the Agriculture Committee; and William Schaller was appointed to chair the Land Utilization Committee.

*SEVERSON DELLS
DEDICATION CEREMONY*

On Saturday, June 26, 1976, the Severson Dells Forest Preserve was formally dedicated. The ceremonies were held on the grounds behind the Deer Lodge and attended by over 200 people including friends of the Severson family, political dignitaries, and representatives of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District and Rockford Park District. John Spence, chairman of the Severson Dells Advisory Committee, gave the introduction; Dr. Joseph Cleveland gave the invocation and benediction; and the presentation of the property was given by Seth B. Atwood. Acceptance remarks were given by Frank G. St. Angel, President of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission, and Carl Williams, Chairman of the Forest Preserve District Executive Committee. In his acceptance remarks Mr. St. Angel stated:

It is appropriate that this acceptance take place during the year in which we celebrate the 200th anniversary of our country's foundation. An important part of the



View from Deer Lodge

(Courtesy Severson Family)

DEVELOPMENT

The Harry A. and Fannie B. Severson Dells Forest Preserve represents an ambitious and cooperative undertaking by the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, the Severson Dells Advisory Committee, and the Severson Dells

Education Foundation. All of these groups and individuals have contributed their initiative and insight into the development of this forest preserve.

In 1975 the stone entryway to the forest preserve was constructed as a memorial to Harry A. and Fannie B. Severson. The District in 1975 also began discussion on

Severson Preserve

Bicentennial celebration is a re-consideration and re-evaluation of our heritage, by work and by deed. So today, we celebrate not only this monumental gift which we know as the Harry A. and Fannie B. Severson Dells Forest Preserve, but more importantly, Harry A. Severson's great ideals of love of the land and enjoyment of life in harmony with nature, and of Fannie B. Severson who sustained those dreams into reality.

The Harry A. and Fannie B. Severson Dells Forest Preserve gives us today, and gives to posterity the opportunity to look a second time at the beautiful worthwhile things which nature endowed to us. And so implicit in our acceptance of this nature preserve is a profound sense of awareness that we act as trustees of Harry A. and Fannie B. Severson, and of their high ideals which they have assigned to us to preserve and implement. This is the pledge and the reality, the legacy and the promise, which we accept today.

After the dedication, a reception was held in the Deer Lodge where the guests met the Severson family and refreshments were served. During the reception, the Smississippi Audubon Society conducted walking tours through various parts of the forest preserve.

SEVERSON DELLS MASTER PLAN

On July 6, 1976, Gerald Paulson, Chairman of the Master Plan Committee, presented to the Forest Preserve District Executive Committee the tentative master plan for the Severson Dells Forest Preserve. The report, written by Mark Keister, then the landscape architect for the Forest Preserve District, outlined the objectives, methodology, and a tentative timetable to complete and implement the master plan. The objectives of the master plan were:

1. To establish policy and guidelines for use and development of the property.
2. To develop recommendations for specific uses and developments on the site including:
 - A. Land use
 - B. Educational Programs
 - C. Operation of the Farm Complex
 - D. Use of the Deer Lodge and other buildings
 - E. Public Use Areas and Facilities
3. To develop recommendations on the financial needs for

operation and development of the property according to the wishes of the donor.

SEVERSON DELLS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

In 1976 the Severson Dells Advisory Committee recommended that a private funding source be secured to develop the Severson Dells Environmental Education Center. In October of 1976, Jo Severson Haag and Peter Damby jointly created the Severson Dells Education Foundation. Private contributions obtained by the Foundation are transferred to the District to staff a full time naturalist, provide materials, books, and equipment, and to insure the continuity and ongoing development of the program. In 1978 the Foundation contributed \$15,000 to fund the educational program. The initial Board of Directors for the foundation were: Josephine Haag, Frederick Kalivoda, Nathan McClure, Jr., Frank St. Angel, John C. Tower, Edward Garst, Dr. Lawrence Forman, Peter Jay Damby, and Seth B. Atwood.

COORDINATOR - NATURALIST

In January of 1977 the Severson Dells Education Foundation and the Forest Preserve District began discussion on the hiring of a Coordinator-Naturalist to develop an environmental education program at Severson Dells. On April 14, 1977, the Executive Committee presented a resolution, which was adopted by the Forest Preserve Commission, establishing the employment position of the Coordinator-Naturalist and authorizing a contract between the District and the Severson Dells Education Foundation. Under the terms of the agreement, the District would hire and supervise the naturalist and the Foundation would provide funds in the form of donations for the naturalist's salary. The Coordinator-Naturalist would be responsible for the natural resource management of the Severson Dells Forest Preserve, the development of the educational program at the Environmental Education Center, and would be required to submit quarterly reports to the Foundation and the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District.

On May 12, 1977, the Forest Preserve District passed a resolution hiring Victoria Nuzzo as the first Coordinator-Naturalist for the Severson Dells Forest Preserve. At the June 23, 1977, Forest Preserve Commission meeting, Ms. Nuzzo gave a speech and slide presentation to the commissioners briefly describing the programs that would be developed for the Dells area. She indicated that future

programs would be designed for elementary through graduate school, business groups, senior citizens, youth clubs, garden clubs, and for the physically and mentally handicapped. She also stated that the Environmental Education Center would utilize an indoor and outdoor program so that it could be used throughout the year.

SEVERSON DELLS FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

In March of 1979 the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District prepared a list of future improvements and projects to be implemented at the Severson Dells Forest Preserve. These plans for development will occur in three areas:

Environmental Education Center - Plans for the remodeling of the Deer Lodge include the construction of an addition to the garage to create a 60 seat cinema and lecture auditorium; the main bedrooms to be converted into a library and meeting room; the living room to be converted into a small exhibition hall; and the kitchen area to be used for book sales. Larson and Darby, architects, have prepared the preliminary drawings.

Forest Preserve Physical Improvements - The District plans to improve the existing trails in the preserve, to place trail markers, to design and construct a nature trail for the handicapped, to build entrance gates, and to resurface the roads in the preserve area. The District also plans to begin the Severson Dells Arboretum and to initiate a program of prairie restoration on the preserve.

Severson Dells Farm Development - Farm improvements include the construction of a concrete feed lot, fence perimeters, one silo, and the building of a visitor's addition to the dairy barn. Land use improvements call for the development of a waste management system and to use terrace farming practices on the Dairy Farm in cooperation with the U. S. D. A - Soil Conservation Service. The Forest Preserve District also plans to utilize the farm for educational programs in land management and to restore the limestone farm house as an historical site.

Note: We would like to thank the Severson Family for their permission to use the family papers in the preparation of the life of Harry A. and Fannie B. Severson, and especially to Mrs. Jo Haag for her assistance. Material concerning Harry A. Severson's involvement with the Barber-Colman Company was in part obtained from an interview with Walter M. Colman. Material used in the preparation

of the Severson Dells Acquisition History and the formation of the Severson Dells Education Foundation was provided by Peter J. Damby. Material on the formation of the Severson Dells Advisory Committee was provided by Mark Keister. We gratefully acknowledge the use of these sources in preparing this chapter. We would also like to thank the following persons for providing us with information: Edward Colloton, Ned Garst, and Victoria Nuzzo.

LEVI AND ESTHER FULLER FOREST PRESERVE

The Levi and Esther Fuller Forest Preserve was donated to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District in October of 1950 as a living memorial to Levi and Esther Fuller.

Levi S. Fuller was born in Rockford January 22, 1868, the son of Levi B. and Anna Thomas Fuller. The Fuller family owned the property which comprises the present preserve for over a hundred years. John Fuller purchased 240 acres of land in Section 19 in 1841. The original certificates issued by the Galena Land Office are in the possession of the Rockford Museum Center.

Levi S. Fuller was once the president of the Rockford Real Estate Board and was responsible for the opening of several subdivisions in Rockford and Winnebago County. He lived on Montague Street for many years and served six terms as a fifth ward alderman. Before entering the real estate business, Fuller had worked in the offices of the Henry Price Glove Company, D. Ray Mead, and A. Appel and Company. Except for two years spent in Oak Park following his marriage to Esther (Wells) Fuller in 1900, he was a lifetime resident of Rockford.

Mrs. Fuller was born October 14, 1867, at Three Mile Bay, New York. She graduated from the Oswego Normal School and later taught school in several cities including Salt Lake City, Utah, and Oak Park, Illinois. It was while teaching in Oak Park in 1900 that she met and married Levi Fuller. They moved to Rockford in 1902.

Mr. Fuller died on January 28, 1945. His wife passed away two years later on May 28, 1947. In addition to their interests in wildlife and conservation, the Fullers were prominent members of the Second Congregational Church. Mrs. Fuller also belonged to the Rockford Colony of New England Women, the DAR, and the Hearth Club. Mr. Fuller was a member of the Rockford Elks. In later years the Fullers resided at 1835 Camp Avenue. They had no children.

DISTRICT ACQUISITION

Shortly following the death of her husband, Esther Fuller contacted Acting County Forester A. Carter about the possibility of donating her land on Fitzgerald Road to the county as a memorial to her husband. The Forestry Improvement Committee was favorably impressed with the property's potential after its initial tour of the tract on April 17, 1945. Carter had known both of the Fullers personally, and he advised her that the Forest Preserve Commission would be glad to meet with her and her attorney, N. P. Nelson, following the reconvening of the Commission in the later part of that month.

Mrs. Fuller's illness and untimely death in 1947 temporarily interrupted the proceedings. The property was left to Hazel Koch, a family friend. In a letter to County Forester Granville Coburn in January 1949, the attorneys for Miss Koch advised him that she intended to carry out Mrs. Fuller's wish that the property be donated to the county.

County Supervisor Jack Hunter worked with Miss Koch on the details of the donation. On February 24, 1949, the *Rockford Morning Star* was able to report "a gift of 137 acres of land, located between S. Main and Fitzgerald Roads with frontage on both highways, was offered last nite to Winnebago County as a forest preserve and bird sanctuary".

In the warranty deed which was conveyed to the Forest Preserve District in 1950, Hazel Koch made several stipulations concerning the maintenance and use of the new preserve. Forty wooded acres of the tract were to be set aside as "The Levi and Esther Fuller Bird Sanctuary". It was specified that this sanctuary was to be enclosed with a 5½' high fence and that only one gate was to be provided. This sanctuary was to be accessible only to District employees or their authorized agents and the gate was to be kept locked unless access was required for maintenance purposes. Furthermore, the sanctuary was to be kept as nearly as possible in its natural condition, except that appropriate trees and shrubs were to be planted in any "vacant" areas. The deed even went so far as to specify that any planting should include high bush cranberry bushes in a number and amount compatible with good forestry. If the Forest Preserve District abandoned operation and maintenance of the bird sanctuary then all of the Fuller Preserve would become the property of the Children's Home of Rockford.

The deed further stipulated that steps should be immediately taken to improve the remainder of the preserve so that it would be suitable for public use. Signs

were to be posted and maintained identifying the "Levi and Esther Fuller Forest Preserve" and the "Levi and Esther Fuller Bird Sanctuary".

DEVELOPMENT

When the Fuller Preserve was first acquired it consisted of the 40 acre bird sanctuary, 40 acres in sod, five acres which were mowed along the highway, and a remaining 50 acres which had been farmed in the years prior to the donation.

On December 9, 1968, a brush fire raged through 60 acres of the Fuller Preserve but was extinguished by the Blackhawk and West Suburban Fire Departments after only slight damage to the preserve. Approximately 1,000 pines which had been planted the previous year, as well as 50 seven and eight year old pines, were destroyed by the fire. Superintendent James Fennessy stated that the reforestation project at Fuller, which called for the planting of 20,000 trees over the next few years, would continue without interruption. Damage to the bird sanctuary was slight because the leaves in the northern part of the sanctuary did not generate as much heat as the burning grass elsewhere in the preserve. The eastern portion of the sanctuary escaped damage and by 1970 the entire area appeared to be rapidly recovering. Pines were being started in the nursery area north of the sanctuary and various hardwoods had been planted in the southern part of the preserve.

Playground equipment was added to the preserve in 1972 as the result of a donation by the Rockford's Sportsman's Club. The shelter house and shop were constructed in 1973-74. The pine tree reforestation area was thinned by CETA funded work crews in 1978.

Note: We would like to thank Miss Hazel Koch for providing us with information concerning the Fuller Forest Preserve.

SECTION IX: SOUTHERN PRESERVES

Hinchliff, Kilbuck Bluffs, and Trailside all lie in the Kishwaukee River Drainage system that flows into the Rock River south of Rockford, Illinois. Trailside Forest Preserve is a remnant of the Oak-Hickory forests that were prevalent at the south central boundary of the county prior to settlement.

EDWARD C. HINCHLIFF FOREST PRESERVE

The Hinchliff Forest Preserve was donated to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District as a memorial to Edward C. Hinchliff. This donation was made in April 1949 by Mr. Hinchliff's widow, Elizabeth C. Hinchliff. Although one of the smaller preserves, it has long been a popular fishing and picnicking area.

Edward Collins Hinchliff was a member of two of the families who pioneered Rockford's industrial development. He was killed at the age of 43 in the crash of an airliner near Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania, on July 17, 1948.

At the time of his tragic death he was prominent in both the business and civic affairs of this community. He was born in Rockford on December 1, 1904, the youngest of the eight children of William H. Hinchliff and Harriet Emerson Hinchliff. His maternal grandfather was Ralph Emerson, founder of the Emerson Brantingham Company. Among other things this firm was noted for the manufacture of some of the early reapers designed by Rockford inventor John Manny. The Emersons were related to Ralph Waldo Emerson the famous American essayist and poet.

Mr. Hinchliff's father, William E. Hinchliff, severed his business connections in Indiana five years after his marriage to Harriet Emerson, and came to Rockford in 1900 where he accepted a position with Emerson, Talcott, and Company. When the Burson Knitting machine was developed and the Burson Manufacturing Company organized, William E. Hinchliff became secretary-treasurer of the firm. Upon the death of Ralph Emerson he became president. William E. Hinchliff was a member of the United States financial and commercial commission to Uruguay and Paraguay in 1916. He was an avid sportsman and was said to have visited wild game districts throughout the United States.

Edward C. Hinchliff was a member of the first class to graduate from the Keith County Day School. He later became president of the Keith school organization, and the school's gymnasium was named in

his honor after his death. Mr. Hinchliff graduated from the Cornell University in 1926. He became a specialist in engineering at Burson Manufacturing, and was particularly responsible for the development of the firm's line of surgical wares. A vice-president of the Burson firm at the time of his death, Mr. Hinchliff followed a family tradition in doing volunteer work for Rockford Memorial Hospital, where he served on the board of trustees beginning in 1934. When he died he was president of that board and an active member of the committee which was seeking a new site for the hospital. Mr. Hinchliff also served as director of the Nelson Knitting Company and the Rockford Mitten and Hosiery Company, as well as being secretary-treasurer of the Rockford Water Power Company. He married the former Elizabeth Biddle at Altoona, Pennsylvania, on December 31, 1926. Mrs. Hinchliff, now Mrs. Seymour Dribben, resides in the East. The couple had two children, Edward, and Georganne. Edward died on August 28, 1975. Georganne Hinchliff Eggers resides in Rockford.

HISTORY OF THE AREA

Numerous archaeological sites have been identified in the vicinity of the Hinchliff Preserve. An Indian village existed at the junction of the Kishwaukee and Rock Rivers for many years. This village was visited by Major Stephen Long on his expedition to locate the sources of the Mississippi River. Long was a topographical engineer who had charge of government exploration between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains from 1818-1823. In 1824, Dr. Edwin James published an account of Long's Mississippi expedition under the title, "Long's Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River, Lake of the Woods Etc". This book provides a description of the Indian village and the area around the present day forest preserve. It is also probable that it is the earliest published account of a site in present day Winnebago County, and thus we have reproduced it in full in the Potawatomi Indian section. This same village was visited by the Sauk warrior, Black Hawk, during the Black Hawk War.

In later years there was an ambitious attempt to establish a town in this vicinity. This was the result of the desire of three Ohio missionaries to establish a seminary in this area which was to be similar to one which existed in Oberlin, Ohio. Dr. A. M. Catlin, Rev. Hiram Foote, and Siles Tyler arrived in Winnebago County in 1838. In 1839-40 the village of Kishwaukee was plotted, under the leadership of George W. Lee, on a hill overlooking the point where

the Kishwaukee flows into the Rock. A hotel, blacksmith shop, stores, and several dwellings were built along the wagon road on the side of the hill. This was in the vicinity of the junction of the present day Stillman Valley, Kishwaukee, and South Bend Roads. Construction was started on as many as forty dwellings and the settlement was intended to rival Rockford. A ferry, known as Lee's ferry, was operated across the Rock near the location of the forest preserve and is shown on many of the maps contained in the 1836-42 records of the County Commissioner's Courts. The settlers soon became preoccupied with farming but, nevertheless, a large structure for the seminary was eventually built.

The building of the State Road through Rockford, as well as the construction of a water power district in that city, ended Kishwaukee's hopes for development and the buildings were eventually dismantled. The Kishwaukee community cemetery is all that remains from this settlement. It is generally believed that the village of New Milford had its beginning between 1845-1849 the same time that Kishwaukee was abandoned.

The donation of the Hinchliff Preserve was made under the condition that it be used "solely for the purpose of a public park". The land that comprises the two acre forest preserve was made available when Kishwaukee Road was relocated to the north. The preserve provides public access to the Kishwaukee River for area fishermen and canoeists. Future plans call for the construction of boat launching facilities in the preserve.

Note: We would like to thank Mrs. Georganne Hinchliff Eggers for reviewing the material in this chapter.

KILBUCK AND TRAILSIDE FOREST PRESERVES

There is considerable evidence of Indian habitation in the vicinity of the Kilbuck Bluffs Forest Preserve. Kilbuck Creek derives its name from Killbuck Township and the town of Killbuck in Holmes County, Ohio. There are also creeks of the same name in Indiana and Ohio and it is the contention of one historian that the name was brought to Winnebago County by early settlers from one of these localities. The spelling has presumably become altered over time. The Indiana stream was named for Charles Killbuck, a Delaware Indian, who lived on its banks. Killbuck is the family name given by the Europeans to the descendants of a prominent Delaware Indian named Gelemend, an early convert to Christianity.¹

Indians are reported to have used the

Kilbuck and Trailside

area immediately southwest of the Kilbuck Bluffs preserve as a campsite. This was north of the South Bend Road behind the abandoned South Bend schoolhouse. Fifteen white families later lived in cabins in this same location. As many as sixty graves, both Indian and white, are said to have been uncovered in the area years ago. Unfortunately, the date of this discovery is unknown. That there were Indian burials in this area seems to be confirmed by the fact that the late Frank Osborn, a local collector of Indian artifacts, reported finding an Indian skeleton in this vicinity. Nearby, Osborn found the remains of an Indian woman with an arrow imbedded in her ribs. He also uncovered a skeleton along the banks of the Kishwaukee River. A tin container in this grave was evidence that the burial took place during the post-white contact period. According to Armour Van Briesen of the Ogle County Historical Society, an Indian skeleton was unearthed by Frank Mayer near the gravel pit in the Kilbuck Preserve. In 1915 the late Clarence G. Scott wrote an account of his discovery of Indian remains at this location following a period of heavy autumn rains.²

...A large mound which a year previous had stood at the brink precipitated down the glissade. Casting aside our tools and each taking a short stick we carefully picked our way down the escarpment, sliding and slipping ankle deep in the gravel. We were half way to the bottom before traces of mound contents appeared. A bit of broken pottery, first, then portions of ribs and phalanges, chance to say the thin and bleached bones of a child. Farther down, at the very foot of the slide, amid the original soil of the mound and washed by the royster-ing brook were the heavier bones...

It is probable that the area near Kilbuck Creek was settled as early as 1834. When David Smith Shumway arrived on the 29th of May, 1836, there was only one log house and shanty in the immediate area. Shumway built a sawmill at the south bend of Kilbuck Creek and cut much of the wood that was used in the construction of the village of Kishwaukee at the mouth of the Kishwaukee River. This sawmill was later burned by a group of bandits known as the Driscoll gang. This gang, which included John Driscoll and his four sons among its members, was known as the "Banditti of the Prairie." They robbed cabins, bought moveable property with counterfeit money, and passed stolen horses along a series of "stations" that extended from Wisconsin to St. Louis. They were finally driven out of northern



Closeup of dam and lake at Kilbuck Bluffs Forest Preserve. Photograph was taken in late 1930's (Courtesy W.C.F.P.D.)

Illinois by an Ogle County vigilante group.

David Shumway also erected the area's first gristmill. The mill pond was located in the present day Kilbuck Preserve and was formed by a dam on Kilbuck Creek. The mill race and mill were located to the east. The locations are shown on an 1840 map included with the early records of the County Commissioners Courts. The Forest Preserve District repaired this same dam a century later to create a lake at the Kilbuck Preserve. It is said that there were three or four houses in the vicinity of the gristmill. In 1877 the half owner of the South Bend mill was E. B. Betts. Jack Baxter's *History of New Milford* provides a description of the mill in its later years:

The mill was powered by two water wheels which turned the massive millstones. The mill was three stories high built on a frame of hand hewn timbers held together with wooden pegs. The corner braces and wall studs were all mortised into the main beams at both ends. The last to operate the mill as a flour grinding establishment was James S. Ritchie, who recalled in 1951, then seventy-nine years old, that he started working there in 1896. He quit when the mill went out of business in 1899. The mill was used briefly as a creamery by Harry Betts, son of E. B. Betts.

The mill was dismantled at the turn of the century and moved to a nearby farm where it was razed in 1951.

The early settlers established their claims on government land along the Kishwaukee River because their primary concern was the availability of water and good timber. Timber was found only along the river and the banks of Kilbuck Creek. The Trailside Preserve is the remnant of the only other significant wooded tract in the area. Eight different families owned five acre parcels of this woods in 1871. Later settlers found that timber was not as essential as had once been thought, and they built prosperous farms on the prairie back from the river.

ACQUISITION

Trailside Preserve was one of the five original tracts purchased by the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District in 1924. It was originally known as Meridian Forest Preserve at that time, because it was bisected by U. S. 51. The name was changed to Trailside when the highway was relocated to the west. The tract consisted of 8.94 acres and was purchased for \$1,035.00.

The first purchase for the Kilbuck Preserve was a 67 acre tract bought from William and Elizabeth A. Doran for \$7,697.87 on October 16, 1924. The majority of this section was north of South Bend Road. Half of this tract was upland oak timber, and a quarter was bottomland containing sycamores, locust, and elms. The remainder was creek bottom consisting of thick clumps of haws. An additional tract, consisting of 13 acres lying south of

the original preserve, was purchased from Reuben C. Haegg on August 21, 1926, for \$2,500.00. The western half of the preserve was also purchased from Reuben C. Haegg for \$7,574.22 in September of 1930. This tract consisted of 84.158 acres.

According to a brochure published by the Forest Preserve District in 1927, one of the shelter houses at Kilbuck had been constructed prior to that date. This brochure also states that the average Sunday crowd of picnickers during the summer months of 1926 was about 800 persons. The brochure also points out that "the wading facilities in the Kilbuck Creek have attracted hundreds during the past season and with the cleaning out of certain holes for wading, the popularity of this pastime will increase during the present season".

The drives through the preserve were constructed in 1927. Two bathhouses were erected in the following year "to accommodate visitors wishing to put on bathing suits". Following the addition to the preserve in 1930 a road was graded and cleared through the new section. Playground equipment was then added and 10,000 ash and 5,000 American Elms were planted.

In February of 1934, County Forester Tauge Lindquist presented a list of proposed CWA Projects which were to commence during that year. CWA Project #6 called for "the excavation of Kilbuck Lake and pools at Rock Cut and Seward Bluffs, and landscape development of adjacent grounds and gravel for parking areas". The stone Fort Chartres shelter house was also constructed by the CWA in 1934.

The 1935 Plot Book of the forest preserves and three existing photographs permit a reasonably accurate description of the Kilbuck Lake and dam to be constructed. The WPA Plot Book marks it as an "Old Dam Being Repaired" and also shows "The Extent of Old Beach". This was the location of the dam built by David Shumway a hundred years earlier. The dam and lake were located in Section 35 in the south west portion of the preserve. The steel bridge on the preserve served the old Township Highway which once crossed the creek at that point. The road was relocated to the east and renamed Baxter Road.

Shortly after the dam's construction a neighboring land owner complained of flooding so that County Forester Harlan Lundgren was instructed to open the control gate. This problem reoccurred after World War II. On November 4, 1952, the Forest Preserve Commission was petitioned by neighboring farmers who contended that the dam for Kilbuck Lake tended to raise the water level on adjacent

land and that extensive flooding and crop damage had resulted during the previous two years. The rising water level had not been a problem in the years prior to this because the land had always been in pasture. The resulting floods were also said to have made a deep ditch in an adjacent tract which raised the water and flood level and ruined the fence. The petitioners contended that they were entitled to have this water carried away by Kilbuck Creek in its natural state, and that, if the dam on Kilbuck Creek were moved, such flooding would not occur. They therefore successfully petitioned the Forest Preserve Commission for removal of the dam. Following the removal of the dam, the lower portion of the preserve was allowed to revert to its natural condition. The western portion of the preserve is now the principal recreation area on the property.

SECTION X: KISHWAUKEE RIVER PRESERVES

The four forest preserves in Cherry Valley Township all border the scenic Kishwaukee River. The two branches of the Kishwaukee unite in the southeastern corner of the county and flow westward through the Kishwaukee Gorge joining the Rock River west of New Milford. Blackhawk Springs and McKiski typify the Kishwaukee River bottomlands. The woods on these preserves contain red oak, Hill's oak, some chestnut and hard black maple.

The Rockford Rotary Forest Preserve and the Kishwaukee River Forest Preserve are located in the Kishwaukee Gorge, which extends westward to Atwood Park. The gorge is approximately 160 feet deep and 1/3 of a mile wide at its crest. The bed of the gorge is narrow and the banks and cliffs are generally densely wooded with oaks, maple, and some basswood.

Joseph Griggs first settled on the site of the present day village of Cherry Valley in 1835 where he built a log house with a straw and grass covered roof. He and his sons also eventually built a mill and operated a ferry across the Kishwaukee River. Thus the village of Cherry Valley was first known as Grigg's Ford, Grigg's Ferry, or Griggsville. By 1838 the Chicago based firm of Frink, Walker, and Co. had established stagecoach service through Cherry Valley Township to Rockford. "The stage came through Belvidere and out the country road, which, probably was West Lincoln Avenue, to Cline's Ford, where it crossed the Kishwaukee then out Newburg and thence to Rockford."

The township was noted for its limestone deposits and the Galena limestone extracted from the quarry in the village of Cherry Valley was used to construct railroad bridges and piers. Several pure copper nuggets were found in a crevice in this quarry and sold to tanners. Limestone kilns were also operated south of the village along the Kishwaukee River. One of these was located two and one half miles down the river from the village and the other, Trink's Quarry, was located a mile farther down. This part of the county was first known as Butler Precinct but the name was changed to Cherry Valley following township organization in 1856. With the beginnings of rail service in 1852, Cherry Valley became a center for grain and livestock shipment.

ROCKFORD ROTARY FOREST PRESERVE

The Rockford Rotary Forest Preserve was generously donated to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District by the Rockford Rotary Club on November 2, 1978. It is the site of Camp Rotary which was used as a summer camp for Rockford youth for over 50 years and represented a unique contribution to the youth of this community.

UNIQUE GEOLOGIC FEATURES OF CAMP ROTARY AREA

In the summer of 1921 Professor Morris M. Leighton, a geology professor at the University of Illinois and chief of the Illinois Geological Survey, gave a newspaper interview in which he pointed out the unique natural features of the Camp Rotary property. He explained that Bunker Hill, which is located on the Camp Rotary tract, was not only the highest point in the county, but was also one of the most interesting geological formations in Illinois. This hill stands at the entrance of the Kishwaukee Gorge and contains within its layers of rock the fossil record of a time when the North American continent was covered by a great ocean.

The limestone which forms the base of Bunker Hill resulted from sediment collecting at the bottom of the sea. In many places this limestone base is still visible and it is even more evident downstream on the Kishwaukee River where the river has formed glens by cutting through the rock. Species of sea life, plants, and shells left their imprint in this rock millions of years ago.

After a few hundred thousand years, the landmass emerged from the sea and the entire Kishwaukee River Valley was then a level surface. Area rivers formed as a result of the drainage of the surface water. The Rock River cut a deep narrow valley to the west and extended south between Davis Junction and Monroe Center, while the Kishwaukee River cut a valley to the east of its present course. The high ridge east of Bunker Hill marks the western edge of the old Kishwaukee River bed. The river flowed south and joined the Rock in the vicinity of Esmond in eastern Ogle County. Over a space of a few thousand years the two rivers cut deep channels into the old ocean bottom.

This era was followed by the onset of the first ice age. Ice sheets covered the northern states reaching southward beyond Winnebago County and as far west as Warren and Stockton. The history of the ice age is recorded in the peculiar markings on various rocks and rock ledges found in the Camp Rotary area. When the

ice finally melted, torrents of water from the north scattered granite boulders over the river valleys.

During the thaw, the old Kishwaukee channel was blocked and the water was forced to seek a new western outlet by cutting a channel through the limestone foundation south of old Camp Grant. In a similar fashion the Rock River cut a new channel to form its present course.

Following an epoch of several thousand years when the climate was warm and vegetation flourished, a new ice sheet again moved southward over the northern states reaching the vicinity of Belvidere, Bunker Hill, and Stillman Valley. Ice stood in the river valleys and forced the waters over the divide to the east of Camp Rotary, resulting in the formation of the Kishwaukee Gorge. The melting glacial waters crumbled the already eroded rock through which they eventually escaped and this accounts for the large amount of sand and gravel in the area.

HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY PRIOR TO ACQUISITION BY ROTARY CLUB

An 1859 plat map indicates that the ownership of the northwest ¼ of Section 28 was divided between J. W. Seek and the estate of W. Follett. Ken Kinson, Senior Chairman of the Board, United Bank of Loves Park, recalls that his father, Frederick Kinson, purchased the Camp Rotary property as well as land south of the road sometime around 1916. He believes that his father paid \$125 per acre for the land in that area. The camp property was non-tillable and only suitable for grazing, thus Mr. Kinson's father eventually sold the land north of the road.

THE ROCKFORD ROTARY CLUB

The Rotary Club, the city's first service club, was founded by 63 Rockford men. This group, along with 20 members of the Chicago Rotary Club No. 1, planned the organization of the Rockford Club during the course of a Rock River steamboat excursion on June 9, 1916.

The twin mottoes of the Rotary are "Service Above Self" and "He Profits Most Who Serves Best". John F. Parker, sales manager of Eclipse Gas Stove Co., was the founder and first president of Rockford Rotary. Parker emphasized that the ideal of service, individually and collectively, was the basis for success and happiness in business and community life. The first regular meeting was held June 15, 1916, at the Nelson Hotel.

In the year's prior to the purchase of Camp Rotary, a Rotary committee was annually designated to select and establish

Rotary Preserve

a campsite for the Rockford Boys' Club. Various locations were used for these camps including Hoisington's Rock southeast of Rockford, and the north bank of the Kishwaukee River near the spot where Camp Rotary was eventually established.

On May 4, 1921, the Rockford Rotary Club's directors made a historic decision to support the Rockford Boys' Club, to get behind the movement for a boys' camp in the Rockford area, and to raise funds for deserving boys who wished to obtain a higher education. The founding of Camp Rotary was only part of the club's consistent interest in the advancement of youth in the Rockford area.

PURCHASE OF CAMP ROTARY

Members of the 1921 committee to select a site for a camp included Seth B. Atwood, Boys' Club Secretary Leo Lyons, and Arthur Johnson. Atwood later recalled their inspection trip:

...Having made several canoe trips down the Kishwaukee, and being familiar with beautiful scenery and available sites, we put our canoe in at the Cherry Valley bridge. Our main objective was a careful inspection of the present Camp Rotary site with the idea that through some means we might secure it as a permanent location. We had a lot of fun. The canoe leaked. We got wet. But we had lunch on the bluff-later named Bunker Hill-where the flagpole now stands.

This group eventually located the owner of the property, Abel Larson, and wrote out an agreement for an option to purchase 38 acres of land. Larson was given "about \$10" to make the option binding. Atwood met later with Winthrop Ingersoll and, while he and Ingersoll were willing to put up the funds for the purchase themselves, they decided to submit the proposition to the Rotary members.

The first camp to be conducted on the site, in the summer of 1921, utilized canvas tents obtained from nearby Camp Grant. Maj. General George Bell was designated as Rockford Rotary's first honorary member in recognition of his lending the camp 13 tents and equipment for 100 boys. The camp was known as Camp Bunker Hill and accommodated boys for six weeks and girls for one week. The Rotary Club paid for expenses of the camp and the Boys' Club provided the first director, Leo Lyons. The charges were \$2.50 per week for Boy Scouts and \$5 per week for other boys. Milk cans were used to carry water, and heavy dew forced the campers to

remove their tents from the riverbank to the top of the hill.

A special meeting was held at the Bunker Hill Camp on August 4, 1921, attended by 150 Rotarians and their families. At that meeting it was unanimously resolved that the Rotary Club should purchase the Bunker Hill campground and make it into a permanent outing place for Rockford youth. A committee was appointed to arrange the details of the purchase.

The first deed, issued in April, 1922, was for 336 acres at \$135 per acre. Seven acres were added in March 1923 and 24 more in May 1925.¹¹ Rotary International objected to the Rockford Club's taking direct title to such a long range and complex project. Despite this, the Rotary Welfare Association was formed to hold title to the land. All members of the Rotary Club were members of the Association, and it was given a charter for the following purposes:

"To own, operate and maintain a camp or camps for the educational, physical and recreational benefit and enjoyment of boys and girls; to own and maintain suitable clinics and hospitals for the treatment of crippled children and to supervise the operation thereof, and to provide such children with vocational and manual training as shall be suited to their needs and requirements in connection with their preparation for a means of livelihood; to establish, maintain and disburse a fund for the purpose of assisting worthy boys and girls to attend college, university or a higher institution of learning, and in connection therewith to invest and keep invested such fund or portion thereof in such manner and in such securities as the trustees of said association shall deem advisable; to organize, supervise, carry on and maintain any work or movement tending to train, improve and benefit the citizenship of Rockford and vicinity."

DONATIONS TO CAMP ROTARY

It was estimated that nearly \$10,000 would have to be raised in order to cover the cost of the initial purchase as well as the improvements that would have to be made. Plans called for the immediate construction of a mess shack and lodge and it was hoped that year round camping would be possible. Several Rotarians expressed their willingness to make contributions of \$500 each. In the period 1920-28, during the time that Oscar Wilson, Charles Gorham, Webb Stevens, Seth B. Atwood, Harry Severson, Dr. Sanford Catlin, George Purdy, and Warren Thayer served as

Rotary presidents, the group raised \$26,652 for the camp. Charles Gorham died in 1931 and left \$25,000 in trust for use at Camp Rotary. The widow of George C. Purdy bequeathed \$5,000 to the camp in 1955 and the staff headquarters was named the Purdy building in her husband's honor. Rotarian Benjamin Kramlich contributed stock worth \$7,600 in 1960 and 1961. Individual Rotarians contributed to the camp fund after the birth of a child or grandchild. Annual fund campaigns were held during the camp's first decade and periodic improvement drives were conducted in later years. A portion of members annual dues was allocated to the camp fund.

CAMP DEVELOPMENT

By June 1922 a new dining lodge with two ranges had been completed and work was also completed on the nine 18 x 24' squad barracks, each of which had canvas sides and was designed to accommodate 18 boys. The camp was to accommodate 150 boys each week. Work on the road to the main highway was donated by T. G. Levings. The camp was divided into four areas. The first ridge was set aside for members of the Boys' Club and other boys who enrolled for the camp. The second was reserved for church groups and other boys organizations, while the third was to be occupied by boy scouts. A fresh air camp was located at the extreme rear of the woods.

Camp Rotary was formally dedicated by Seth Atwood, Rotary Club vice-president, on June 22, 1922, in the presence of three hundred Rotarians and their families. The dedication marked the start of the first 8-week session. Leo M. Lyons had charge of the camps and Francis Geiger, scoutmaster of Troop 7, directed the scout program.

By 1927 the camp was enrolling 1,598 boys and girls for its nine-week summer session. Boys went to the camp during three one week long sessions. These were followed by two 10½ day sessions for girls. Two more 10½ day sessions were held for boy scouts. Camp manager Oscar Dahlquist had a large staff of adults and the sanitation facilities were regularly supervised by city health commissioner Dr. N. O. Gunderson. Rockford plumbers donated the labor for septic tanks. Fire hazards had been eliminated with the addition of a central lighting plant in 1925.

The varying water level and muddy condition of the Kishwaukee River made swimming difficult during the camps first five years. The original swimming hole was located at the bend of the river a half mile east of the campsite. Attempts to dredge and blast a hole in front of the campsite were unsuccessful. In 1926 the Rotarians

voted to construct a 150 x 70' concrete pool using an oyster shell design suggested by Garnet McKee. The Anderson Brothers contracting firm of Rockford furnished 100 mules and other equipment and volunteered to do the preliminary work without charge. Their men worked on weekends without pay. Rotarian Roy Hunt installed the necessary plumbing without charge. The pool had a diving board at one end but, owing to its construction, over half the area was suitable for wading.

In September 1927 a \$7,000 24 x 24 ft. winter cabin was completed on the top of the hill near the camp entrance. It had a large assembly hall with an immense fireplace. It also contained a kitchen and storeroom. The structure was designed for winter camps and weekend outings for members of the Boys' Club, Girl Scouts, and Boy Scouts. This structure was used as a recreation hall in the summer.²⁰

The fresh air camp previously mentioned was operated by the Winnebago Anti-Tuberculosis Association and was used as a preventive camp for under-nourished and under-weight children in the community. The camp was free of charge for children of both sexes up to age 12. The camp had facilities for 48 children and operated for eight weeks, always at full capacity.

In 1938 a new water tower, well, and wash house were in use. It was announced that beginning that year water for the pool would be pumped from the well instead of from the river, but that chlorinators and filtering devices would be maintained.

Camp attendance was averaging 800 boys annually in the early 1950's. Principal activities included basketball, crafts, swimming, canoeing, and night time movies.

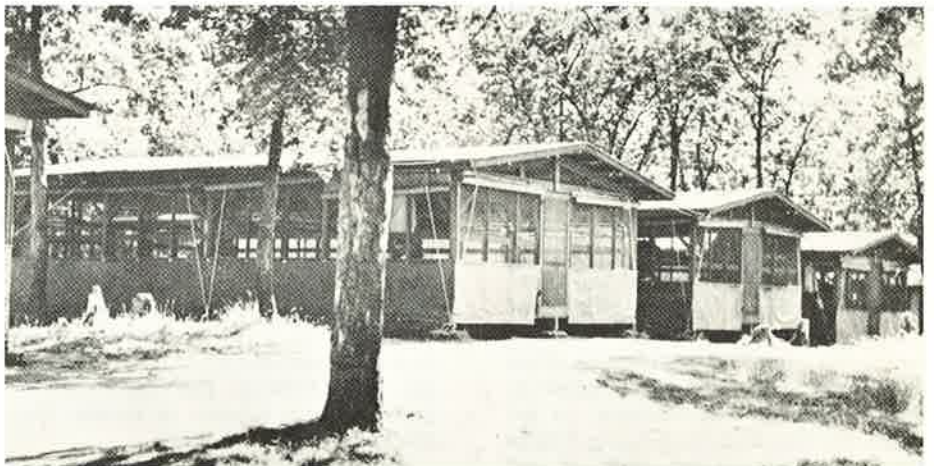
In 1967, a memorial fountain was dedicated to Oscar Dahlquist who headed the Boys' Club for 15 years. Dahlquist died in 1962 at the age of 64. In addition to being director of the Boys' Club, Dahlquist was one of the founders of the Rockford Industrial Athletic Association and the Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Rockford. He received the Rotary Club medallion for his work.

Harold Callihan succeeded Dahlquist and served as director from 1941 to 1957. Other directors were Ralph McLeod, Walter Buttmer, Richard F. "Dick" Johnson and David Ekebon.

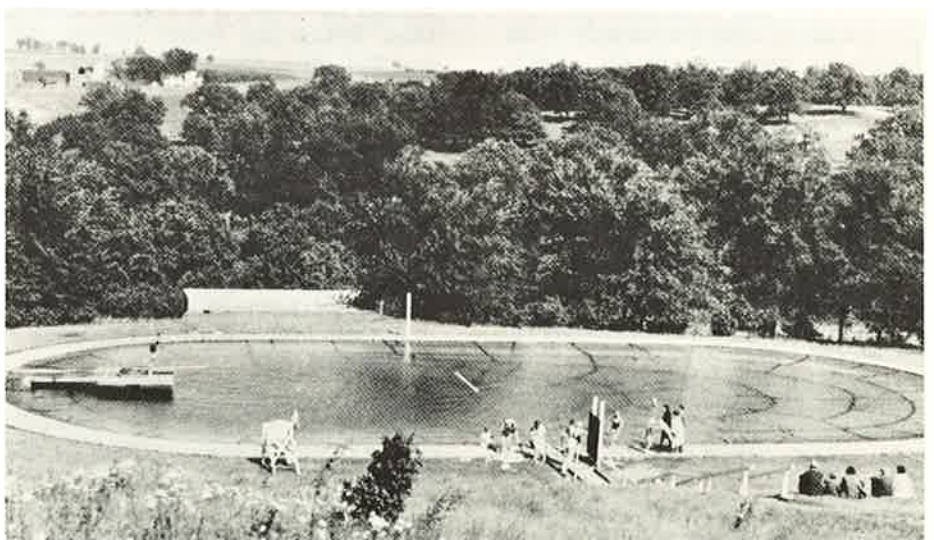
In 1972 the Federal Environmental Protection Agency ruled that the old gravity water system with its aging wooden tower must be replaced. A modern, pressurized system utilizing a steel tank was added as part of an \$18,000 five year improvement program at the camp. A new cabin to house camp personnel was also



View of youngsters in front of mess hall at Camp Rotary in 1923. (Courtesy Rockford Rotary Club)



First permanent sleeping quarters at Camp Rotary. (Courtesy Rockford Rotary Club)



One of the first photographs taken of the new swimming pool at Camp Rotary in 1926. (Courtesy Rockford Rotary Club)

Rotary, Kishwaukee Preserves

added. The Rotary Club had spent \$65,000 on the camp in the five years prior to 1972, principally for the renovation of the swimming pool. The Boys' Club was considering an enrollment reduction to 160 boys per session to make operations more efficient. They were also considering asking the Rotarians to hire a full time camp director to organize camp activities.

By 1974 the expansion of Boys' Club membership by over 300 percent and the inability of club personnel to staff both the camp and the club building had forced the Boys' Club to abandon its part in operating the camp sessions.

Rockford Park District Director Webbs Norman made a proposal to the Rotary Club whereby the Park District would take over the operation of programs for summer youth activities at Camp Rotary on a two year experimental basis. Rotary Club officials were at an impasse concerning the future of the camp. Club Secretary Warren Bate estimated that well over \$155,000 had been spent by the club in the 53 years of the camp's operation. Despite renovation, the swimming pool was a monumental maintenance problem. Under the plan agreed upon, the Park District was to pay operating expenses while the Rotarians were to pay all other expenses.

In April 1974 state inspectors required the camp to make repairs involving \$35,000 in plumbing and electrical work. Officials were faced with the prospect of canceling overnight camping for the first time in the camp's 53 year history. Park District officials met with the Rotarians in order to develop cost estimates for the repairs. By July, hazards such as tree limbs had been removed and electrical and plumbing hookups upgraded to meet state codes. Most of the wiring had been around live trees and had to be removed. The Rotary Club allocated \$30,000 to the Park District to take care of the camp's problems. However, the money required to meet state codes for the swimming pool made it necessary to close the pool indefinitely.

By 1978 the demands of increasing costs had forced the Rotary Club to consider selling the property to any purchaser who would agree to maintain it as open recreational land for public use. Realizing that the property would form a significant link in the open space corridor being developed by the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, the Rotarians overwhelmingly approved a resolution to donate it to the District on November 2, 1978.

On January 8, 1979, the Sinsissippi Audubon Society presented the Rockford Rotary Club with its 1979 Environmental Quality Award in recognition of the



Swimming at the Kishwaukee River Forest Preserve in the 1930's. (Courtesy W.C.F.P.D.)

impact that the Rotary's donation would have in preserving valuable open space land.

The Rotary Club was notified by Forest Preserve Director Robert Mahnke in March 1979 that it had been unanimously selected for the Friends of Recreation Award by the Board of Directors of the National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials. The award was to be presented at a banquet in Kansas City, Missouri, on July 16, 1979.

Over 100,000 youngsters enjoyed and benefited from the programs and facilities provided at Camp Rotary. It had indeed fulfilled the dream of men like Rotarians Oscar Wilson and Webbs Stevens who described the purposes of the camp in an article written in 1957:

Camp Rotary exists because some men had a vision. Vision to realise that in a fast growing industrial center like Rockford there was a need for its boys and girls to have a healthful place to play. A place where, under proper direction, they could get close to nature - a thing not possible for all in a crowded, busy industrial city.

Note: Much of the above information on Camp Rotary is contained in Oliver L. Cremer's 50th Anniversary Book of the Rockford Rotary Club published by the Rotary Club in 1966. We would like to thank Oliver Cremer and Warren Bate for authorizing our use of photographs from the anniversary book.

KISHWAUKEE RIVER FOREST PRESERVE

In March 1927 the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District authorized the purchase of two tracts totalling 145 acres on Blackhawk Road in Cherry Valley Township. This land was bisected by the Kishwaukee River and its natural features included a Galena Dolomite cliff as well as a ravine and bluff. The deep woods on the bluff supported several southern plant species including silvery spleenwort, witch hazel, and twinleaf that are not found elsewhere in Winnebago County. The preserve was appropriately known as the Kishwaukee River Forest Preserve. The word Kishwaukee is itself the transliteration of a Sauk Indian word "Keesh-a-wock-quai" which, according to one expert, means "sycamore".

The *Rockford Morning-Star* enthusiastically reported the new acquisition in its edition of April 2, 1927.

Purchase of a seventh county forest preserve of 145 acres at \$16,000 was made yesterday by Winnebago County. The new tract situated on the Kishwaukee river two miles north of Camp Rotary brings the county forests total acreage to 717.

The new preserve lies on both sides of the Kishwaukee river, and is known as the Condon and J. R. Johnson properties, 135 acres being in the former, 10 in the latter.

The new territory will be open for the public, T. G. Lindquist, county forester, announced yesterday. Forest Preserve workers will begin at once work of improvement, which will include drives. To get to the new tract take the Eleventh Street Road five miles from the city and drive east four miles, where the land begins at the Kishwaukee river.

Yesterday's purchase brings the total investment in county forest to \$78,000, and gives Winnebago County the finest preserves in the state outside of Cook County.

Plans have been laid to entertain half a million visitors to preserves this year. The new addition is conveniently near Rockford, beautifully located and is expected to be one of the most popular preserves.

Most of the land that comprised the new preserve had been used by the Condon Brothers Seed Company of Rockford as a seed farm. This firm was founded in 1912 by J. R. and Leonard Condon, sons of one of the first Irish immigrants who settled that part of southwest Rockford known as the "Irish Patch" during the middle of the nineteenth century. This firm has maintained a wholesale business and warehouse in the 600 block of Cedar Street since its beginning and for many years had its retail store at 513 W. State. At the time that the Kishwaukee purchase was made, Condon Brothers owned several other tracts in the same vicinity.

Improvements to the new preserve were gradually accomplished in the ensuing years. By 1929 one wooden and one concrete shelter house had been constructed, the river banks cleared for a beach area, and four bath houses built. Swimming became one of the preserves main attractions in its early years. By 1930 twelve thousand jack and white pines had been transplanted from the Hononegah nursery to the Kishwaukee preserve. The river was also a popular fishing stream. The preserve contained five acres of nursery stock and 1400 additional trees had been planted. The stone Fort Vicennes shelter house and the two bridges were built by the CWA in 1934. In the winter Kishwaukee was used for coasting and "skiing" and the stone shelter had been provided with removable rustic walls for all weather use.

When the preserve was first opened, an entrance to the eastern portion was located in the northeast corner at the intersection of Mulford and Blackhawk roads. In 1960 a parcel of land including this entrance was given to the Highway Department for the purpose of widening Mulford Road, and a turn-around constructed where the

entrance had once been. In April 1962 an artesian well was accidentally discovered in the eastern portion of the preserve. A year after it was originally drilled the well suddenly began to flow spontaneously. The water came from a depth of about 165 feet and was completely unpolluted by the nearby Kishwaukee River. The public camping grounds on the east side of the preserve were closed in 1973. A road through the west side of the property grants access to the Rockford Sportsman's Club tract. This organization has been active in feeding the wildlife in the area.

BLACKHAWK SPRINGS FOREST PRESERVE

Frank Johnson, the operator of the Blackhawk farm, which the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission approved for purchase on March 9, 1978, has researched the history of the various changes of ownership involving the property. This area was known for many years as Mulford Woods.

Jeremiah Hitchcock received the original government grant for Section 15 and the Northwest ¼ of Section 14 on October 26, 1839. At his death in 1852 the property belonged to his brother Chester and his two sisters. The property that today comprises the new forest preserve apparently changed hands through various mortgages until 1900.

The house on the property was once known as the Blackhawk Springs Hotel, a popular area resort during the 1890's. A man named Charlie Staff supposedly amused the guests at the Blackhawk Springs with a trained bear who was known to drink soda pop out of the bottle. The age of the structure and the date when it was remodeled, or perhaps even rebuilt, is unknown. Frank Johnson's mother, Mrs. Hanna Nohling Johnson, recalled that the house had a cupola on the roof when it was used as a hotel. It has been suggested that part of the structure might have been in use as a stagecoach inn. An 1840 map in the Library of Congress does show an early road from DeKalb (Coltonville) to Rockford that passes through this part of Cherry Valley Township.¹ However, the date of construction and the possible past uses of this building can only be determined by a qualified architectural historian.

The spring that is found on the property has deteriorated due to flooding but "health" water from this source was once bottled and shipped as far as California. The spring was also used to provide the drinking water for the house.

The hotel is briefly mentioned in a lease dated December 14, 1896, from Elizabeth Hitchcock to C. C. Conant. This lease was

to run from January 1, 1897, to January 1, 1902, and it covered all the property in Section 15. On June 28, 1900, Charles L. Mulford received a warranty deed from Elizabeth Hitchcock for the Blackhawk farm property. Charles Mulford was a descendent of one of the earliest settlers of that portion of Winnebago County.

HISTORY OF THE MULFORD FAMILY

William Mulford came to Winnebago County in 1835 from Rensselaer, New York, and purchased land from the government at the corner of present day Charles Street and Mulford Road. He seems to have traveled extensively in search of land to purchase in the Midwest. It is known that he bought land near Toledo, Ohio, in June, 1837, and that he then traveled to Milwaukee where he did not find any land suitable for purchase.

In a letter written to his father and niece after his return to Illinois, William Mulford described seeing Indian children with their young brothers and sisters strapped to their backs picking strawberries. He also observed Indian men shooting deer and prairie hens, and reported seeing as many as twelve deer at a time near his corn field.

Mulford wrote to his brother in 1839 and told of driving his first pair of fat oxen from the Rock River to Chicago, averaging about 20 miles a day for the four day journey. He noted that salt had been in short supply the previous fall due to the low level of the Mississippi River, and had sold for \$20 a barrel instead of the usual \$3 a barrel.

A few years after his arrival in Illinois, William Mulford married Lucy Stuart. In a letter to his father written in 1843 he described his crops as consisting of 600 bushels of wheat, 500 bushels of oats, and 22 acres of corn. He tilled all of these crops by himself except for a few days help at harvest time. In the summer of 1843 he built a barn and shed of pine lumber. Money was scarce in that year and pork was selling in Chicago for \$1 and \$2 per hundred pounds.

William Mulford built a red brick home on the southwest corner of Mulford Road and Charles Street. This structure still survives and its history it explained on a marker erected on the property.

Mulford was a robbery victim during the period when the Driscoll gang and other "banditti" terrorized this part of Illinois.

On October 28, 1844, a man who gave the name of Haines called on William Mulford, four and a half miles east of Rockford on the Cherry Valley Road. It had been

falsely reported that Mr. Mulford had received about \$14,000 a short time before and this rumor had reached the robbers. Haines professed to be in search of employment. His real purpose was to obtain money by other means than honest toil, and he had come to look over the premises. On November 9, about eight o'clock in the evening, three masked men, armed with pistols, knives, and clubs, forced an entrance into the house. The leader ordered Mr. Mulford to sit down. He then took the candle from the table, cut it into three pieces, lighted them, placed one in each of the two windows, and with the third one began his search of the house. With more direful threats the family were forced to submission. The keys to bureau drawers were demanded. They were told that they were in the stable behind the horses. This was a ruse to give Mr. Mulford an opportunity to reach his rifle in another part of the room. When the men went to the barn he attempted to reach the gun, but another man, who had been stationed at the door, held a pistol close to his head. The robbers could not find the keys in the barn and returned in a rage to the house. They swore they would "chain the old devil," and set the house on fire, and by that time they would tell where the keys were. Mrs. Mulford imagined she heard the clanking of chains, and told the robbers where the keys could be found. They unlocked the drawers and found the money in an envelope, just as it had been taken from the bank. One of the gang was identified as Haines, who had called in search of employment. It was subsequently learned that two men, armed with rifles stood outside, and for their benefit the candles were placed at the windows.

William Mulford issued a \$100 reward for information about the robbers and eventually three of the individuals were sentenced to the Alton prison. Haines was eventually found in the Rockford Island Jail awaiting execution for the murder of Colonel Davenport. In a letter to his sister, Mulford described his intention of searching for three of the other participants.

William and Lucy Mulford raised seven children. Their oldest son Eli was killed in the Civil War and is buried in the cemetery at Alpine and Harrison. Their second son Edward engaged in the grain business and owned a pharmacy in Cherry Valley. He

married Sophronia Johnson in 1867.

On June 28, 1900, Edward Mulford's son Charles purchased the Blackhawk farm. Charles, who never married, and his brother John, lived on the farm for several years. The barn on the property was constructed by a Mr. Garrett and was intended primarily to serve as a hay barn and measures 146' x 40'. Garrett also constructed a 180' long shed. The shed was destroyed by a 1912 tornado but the barn remained intact. "Charlie" Mulford hired a Mr. Conklin to rebuild the house.

When Charles Mulford was 69 years of age, he gave his nephew William B. Mulford a warranty deed for all of Section 15 and NW ¼ of Section 14. William B. Mulford is listed as the owner on the 1927 plat map of Cherry Valley Township. Charles Mulford lived to be 91 years of age. Following the death of William B. Mulford in 1957 the property was inherited by his grandsons, W. R. Mulford, Robert E. Mulford and David C. Mulford.

The tenants who managed the farm over the years were Claude Green, Bill Johnson, Walter Larson, Alvin and Charlie Rill, Albin Johnson and his sons Loyal and Frank. Frank Johnson operated the farm from 1941 to 1978. The farm was operated for beef production and public access to the woods prohibited.

DISTRICT ACQUISITION

In the spring of 1973, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District adopted the *Park and Open Space Policy Plan* prepared by the City-County Planning Commission. Several of the recommendations of this plan were responsible for the selection of the Mulford property for purchase, and also for the method of financing that was chosen.

The plan emphasized the inadequacy of funds generated by current tax levies to purchase the desirable tracts of open space land remaining in the county. It also pointed out that accelerated urban expansion and rising land values had made it imperative that the Forest Preserve District obtain the land that it needed as quickly as possible. It was urged that strong consideration be given to the use of the District's bonding powers in order that sufficient land for current and future use could be obtained at a reasonable price.

On the basis of the intensity of urban development pressure within a given area, the plan developed general priorities for land acquisition. It was felt that substantial urban growth could be predicted to the south and east of Rockford and that the Kishwaukee River Corridor should be among those open space areas given first priority for acquisition.

...The Kishwaukee River open

spaces would provide a natural break containing and defining urban expansion to the south and east of Rockford. The Kishwaukee River open space areas in Winnebago County would join with an open space corridor in Boone County currently being developed along the Kishwaukee River by the Boone County Conservation District. This would provide considerable space between Belvidere and Rockford.

The plan emphasized that failure by the District to acquire priority open spaces would very likely result in a "permanent deficiency of quality outdoor recreation near urban areas". In a list of natural areas in Winnebago County, it mentioned Mulford Woods as a large tract of woodland containing some near virgin forest and rapids in the Kishwaukee River. It assessed it as "valuable open space that could be developed for many types of recreation".

In 1976 the Forest Preserve District approved a \$2 million Land Acquisition Bond Issue. On March 9, 1978, a resolution was passed authorizing the purchase of the Mulford property at a price of \$1.8 million dollars. Of this amount, \$850,000 was allocated to the District by the federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. The remainder was provided by the bond issue. The preserve was briefly known as Hiawatha Memorial Forest Preserve. The name was officially changed to Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve in the spring of 1979.

Note: The information on the Mulford family is contained in Cherry Valley: Our Memories Are Warm 1835-1976. The article by Frank Johnson appears on pp. 126-130.

MCKISKI FOREST PRESERVE

On July 8, 1976, the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Commission officially accepted a donation by local realtor Herbert J. McKiski of a 33 acre tract on the Kishwaukee River. This parcel was formerly part of the Harold Anderson estate and is located ¼ of a mile northeast of the Rockford Park District's Espenscheid Park.

Much of the tract consisted of floodplain forest, some of which was of virgin quality. The property had originally been offered to the village of Cherry Valley and was also under consideration as a potential state park. When the village of Cherry Valley determined that it could not afford the expense of development and maintenance of the property, Mr. McKiski generously offered it to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. It forms a

valuable link in the District's plans for land acquisition in the Kishwaukee River Corridor.

At the time of its donation it was the intention of the District to allow it to remain in its natural state until a comprehensive development plan for the entire Kishwaukee River Corridor was completed.

The Kishwaukee River Corridor is perhaps the single most unique and significant natural feature in Winnebago County in terms of all of the combined objectives of the Forest Preserve District. It is part of a potential state scenic river system and contains a high quality band of natural lands. It also provides an open space corridor in an area of rapid urban growth and offers the only river corridor where continuous public ownership is feasible.

ESPENSCHIED DONATION

On Saturday May 26, 1979, the Rockford Park District donated 60 acres of land to the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District. This property was adjacent to the north boundary of the Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve. The property included the 41 acre Espenscheid Park which had been donated to the Park District by Harry Espenscheid in 1968 as a memorial to his parents, Harrison F. and Marguerite F. Espenscheid. The Park District also gave the Forest Preserve the 19 acre Hillside tract which it had purchased in 1978 for \$62,500.

The Park District made this donation in accordance with the Winnebago County Open Space Plan which designates the Forest Preserve District as the agency which will develop an open space corridor along the Kishwaukee River.

The resolution for the transfer was passed at a formal Park District meeting held near the canoe launching area at Espenscheid Park with Park Board President JoAnne Baker presiding. The Park Board presented Harry Espenscheid with a plaque thanking him for maintaining the property in the year following its donation to the Park District. Forest Preserve Commission President Laurence Ralston and members of the Forest Preserve Executive Committee attended the ceremony.

Appendix I

Information for this list of wildlife species was compiled at Rock Cut State Park during all seasons of the year by the SInnissippi Audubon Society, the North Central Illinois Ornithological Society, and the Illinois Department of Conservation.

Source: William E. Fraser, "Rock Cut State Recreation Area Master Management Plan Draft 1", *Illinois Department of Conservation*, April 20, 1979, p. 50-54.

BIRDS

The following legend indicates the relative abundance and yearly status of each species.

Yearly Status:	Relative Abundance:
PR - Permanent Resident	a - Abundant
SR - Summer Resident	c - Common
MV - Migrant Visitor	u - Uncommon
WV - Winter Visitor	r - Rare
A - Accidental	i - Irregular

Common Name	Yearly Status	Relative Abundance
LOON		
Common Loon	MV	u
GREBE		
Horned Grebe	MV	u
Pied-Billed Grebe	SR	c
SPARROW, ETC.		
Tree Sparrow	WV	c
Chipping Sparrow	SR	c
Field Sparrow	SR	c
Harris Sparrow	MV	c
White-Crowned Sparrow	MV	c
White-Throated Sparrow	MV	c
Lincoln's Sparrow	MV	u
Swamp Sparrow	SR	c
Song Sparrow	SR	c
Snow Bunting	WV	i
Common Junco	WV	a
WARBLER		
Blackburnian Warbler	MV	c
Chestnut-Sided Warbler	MV	r
Bay-Breasted Warbler	MV	c
Blackpoll Warbler	MV	c
Pine Warbler	MV	c
Prairie Warbler	MV	u
Palm Warbler	MV	c
Ovenbird	SR	u
Northern Waterthrush	MV	c
Louisiana Waterthrush	MV	c
Kentucky Warbler	MV	c
Connecticut Warbler	MV	u
Mourning Warbler	MV	c
Northern Yellow Thrush Warbler	SR	c
Yellow-Breasted Chat	MV	u
Wilson's Warbler	MV	u
Canada Warbler	MV	c
Cape May Warbler	MV	c
Black-Throated Blue Warbler	MV	c
Myrtle Warbler	MV	a
Black-Throated Green Warbler	MV	c
Cerulean Warbler	MV	u
American Redstart	MV	c
VIREO		
White-eyed Vireo	MV	c
Yellow-Throated Vireo	MV	c
Solitary Vireo	MV	u
Red-Eyed Vireo	SR	c
Philadelphia Vireo	MV	c
Warbling Vireo	SR	c

Common Name	Yearly Status	Relative Abundance
HERON, ETC.		
Great Blue Heron	SR	u
Green Heron	SR	u
Black Crowned Night Heron	MV	u
Least Bittern	SR	r
American Bittern	SR	u
GOOSE		
Canada Goose	MV	c
DUCK		
Mallard	SR	c
Black Duck	MV	u
Gadwall	MV	u
Pintail	MV	u
Green-Winged Teal	MV	c
Blue-Winged Teal	MV	c
Shoveler	MV	c
American Widgeon	MV	c
Wood Duck	SR	c
Redhead	MV	u
Ring-Necked Duck	MV	c
Greater Scaup	MV	c
Lesser Scaup	MV	c
Common Goldeneye	MV	u
Bufflehead	MV	u
Ruddy Duck	MV	c
Hooded Merganser	MV	u
Common Merganser	MV	u
Red-Breasted Merganser	MV	u
VULTURE		
Turkey Vulture	MV	u
HAWK		
Sharp-Shinned Hawk	MV	u
Cooper's Hawk	SR	u
Red-Tailed Hawk	SR	c
Red-Shouldered Hawk	SR	u
Broad-Winged Hawk	MV	c
Rough-Legged Hawk	MV	c
Marsh Hawk	MV	c
Osprey	MV	r
Sparrow Hawk	SR	c
UPLAND GAME		
Bobwhite Quail	PR	u
Ring-Necked Pheasant	PR	c
Gray Partridge	PR	u
RAILS AND ALLIES		
King Rail	MV	r
Virginia Rail	MV	r
Sora Rail	SR	c
Yellow Rail	SR	c
Common Gallinule	MV	r
American Coot	SR	c
SHOREBIRDS		
Killdeer	SR	c
Golden Plover	MV	c
Black-Bellied Plover	MV	r
American Woodcock	SR	u
Common Snipe	MV	c
Upland Plover	MR	r
Solitary Sandpiper	MV	c
Greater Yellowlegs	SR	u
Lesser Yellowlegs	MV	r
Pectoral Sandpiper	MV	c
Least Sandpiper	MV	u
GULL		
Herring Gull	MV	u

Common Name	Yearly Status	Relative Abundance
Ring-Billed Gull	MV	u
TERN		
Common Tern	SR	u
Black Tern	SR	u
DOVE		
Rock Dove	PR	c
Mourning Dove	SR	c
CUCKOO		
Yellow-Billed Cuckoo	SR	u
Black-Billed Cuckoo	SR	u
OWL		
Screech Owl	PR	c
Great-Horned Owl	PR	u
Long-Eared Owl	PR	u
GOATSUCKER		
Whip-Poor-Will	SR	c
Common Night Hawk	SR	c
SWIFT		
Chimney-Swift	SR	c
HUMMINGBIRD		
Ruby-Throated Hummingbird	SR	u
KINGFISHER		
Belted Kingfisher	SR	c
WOODPECKER		
Yellow-Shafted Flicker	SR	c
Red-Bellied Woodpecker	PR	u
Yellow-Bellied Woodpecker	MV	c
Hairy Woodpecker	SR	a
Downy Woodpecker	PR	a
FLYCATCHER		
Eastern Kingfish	SR	c
Gr.-Crested Flycatcher	SR	c
Eastern Phoebe	SR	c
Acadian Flycatcher	SR	u
Least Flycatcher	SR	c
Eastern Wood Pewee	SR	c
LARK		
Horned Lark	PR	c
SWALLOW		
Tree Swallow	SR	a
Bank Swallow	SR	c
Rough-Winged Swallow	SR	c
Barn Swallow	SR	c
Cliff Swallow	SR	c
Purple Martin	SR	c
JAY		
Blue Jay	PR	a
CROW		
Common Crow	PR	c
CHICKADEE		
Black-Capped Chickadee	PR	a
TITMOUSE		
Tufted Titmouse	PR	c
NUTHATCH		
White-Breasted Nuthatch	PR	c
Red-Breasted Nuthatch	MV	u
CREEPER		
Brown Creeper	PR	c
WREN		
House Wren	SR	a
Winter Wren	WV	c
Long-Billed Marsh Wren	SR	c
Short-Billed Marsh Wren	SR	c
MOCKINGBIRD		
Mockingbird	SR	r

Common Name	Yearly Status	Relative Abundance
Catbird	SR	a
Brown Thrasher	SR	c
THRUSH		
Robin	SR	a
Wood Thrush	SR	c
Hermit Thrush	MV	c
Swainson's Thrush	MV	c
Gray-Cheeked Thrush	MV	c
Veery	MV	r
Eastern Bluebird	SR	u
GNATCATCHER		
Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher	MV	u
KINGLET		
Golden-Crowned Kinglet	MV	c
Ruby-Crowned Kinglet	MV	c
WAXWING		
Cedar Waxwing	SR	a
SHRIKE		
Loggerhead Shrike	MV	r
WEAVER FINCH		
House Sparrow	PR	a
BLACKBIRD, ETC.		
Eastern Meadowlark	SR	a
Bobolink	SR	c
Western Meadowlark	SR	c
Redwinged Blackbird	SR	a
Orchard Oriole	SR	r
Baltimore Oriole	SR	c
Rusty Blackbird	MV	c
Common Grackle	SR	a
Brown-Headed Cowbird	SR	c
TANAGER		
Scarlet Tanager	SR	u
FINCH		
Cardinal	PR	c
Rose-Breasted Grosbeak	SR	c
Indigo Bunting	SR	c
Dickcissel	SR	e
Evening Grosbeak	WV	i
Purple Finch	WV	c
Common Redpoll	WV	i
Pine Siskin	WV	i
American Goldfinch	PR	a
Rufous-Sided Towhee	SR	c
SPARROW, ETC.		
Savannah Sparrow	SR	c
Grasshopper Sparrow	SR	u
Vesper Sparrow	SR	c

Common Name

MAMMALS

Fox Squirrel
Gray Squirrel
Southern Flying Squirrel
Franklin's Ground Squirrel
Thirteen-Lined Ground Squirrel
Eastern Cottontail
Muskrat
Raccoon
Striped Skunk
Beaver
Mink
Long-Tailed Weasel
Woodchuck

Common Name

Red Fox
Gray Fox
Opposum
Badger
Eastern Chipmunk
Eastern Mole
White-Footed Mouse
Meadow Jumping Mouse
Deer Mouse
House Mouse
Silver Haired Bat
Big Brown Bat
Little Brown Bat
Red Bat
Least Weasel
Short-Tailed Shrew
Masked Shrew
Meadow Vole
Southern Lemming

Appendix II

RARE, RESTRICTED, ENDANGERED AND THREATENED ANIMALS OF WINNEBAGO & BOONE COUNTIES

Source: Gerald Paulson, field representative *Illinois Nature Preserves Commission*

FISH

Western sand darter - *Ammocrypta clara* (Rare in Sugar River)

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

Pickerel frog - *Rana palustris* (Rare in Sugar and Pecatonica rivers)

Blue-spotted salamander - *Ambystoma laterale* (Rare in Sugar & Pecatonica sloughs)

Blanding's turtle - *Emydoidea blandingi* (Rare in wet prairie & marshes)

BIRDS

Veery - *Hyclocichla fuscescens* (Threatened; Sugar River bottomlands)

Henslow sparrow - *Passerherbulus henslowii* (Threatened; Sugar River prairies)

Upland sandpiper - *Bartramia longicauda* (Endangered; Searls Prairie)

Red-shouldered hawk - *Buteo lineatus* (Endangered; Sugar River forests)

Cooper's hawk - *Accipiter cooperi* (Endangered; probably extirpated)

MAMMALS

River otter - *Lutra canadensis* (Threatened; extirpated from counties)

Bobcat - *Lynx rufus* (Threatened; extirpated from counties)

White-tailed jackrabbit - *Lepus townsendii* (Endangered; old records for Winnebago Co., probably extirpated)

Red-squirrel - (Once found in county. Recently rediscovered along Kankakee River)

FISHES

Stoneroller, *Campostoma anomalum*

Hornyhead chub, *Nocomis biguttatus*

Common shiner, *Notropis cornutus*

Bigmouth shiner, *Notropis dorsalis*

Southern redbelly dace, *Phoxinus erythrogaster*

Bluntnose minnow, *Pimephales notatus*

Blacknose dace, *Rhinichthys ataratus*

Creek chub, *Semotilus atromaculatus*

White sucker, *Catostomus commersoni*

Brook stickleback, *Culaea inconstans*

Fantail darter, *Etheostoma flabellare*

Johnny darter, *Etheostoma nigrum*

AMPHIPODS

Gammarus pseudolimnaeus

CRAYFISHES

Orconectes immunis

O. propinquus

O. virilis

Cambarus diogenes

Appendix III

The following list has been adopted by the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board as the Official List of Endangered and Threatened Vertebrate Species of Illinois.

Source: Article 138, Section 337 of The Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act. State of Illinois Department of Conservation Administrative Order December 31, 1977.

To be in compliance with the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts, the following definitions apply:

FEDERALLY ENDANGERED SPECIES — Any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. (Denoted by two asterisks (**)) on adopted list).

FEDERALLY THREATENED SPECIES — Any species which is likely to become endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. (Denoted by a single asterisk (*) on adopted list).

STATE ENDANGERED SPECIES — Any species which is in danger of extinction as a breeding species in Illinois.

STATE THREATENED SPECIES — A breeding species which is likely to become a state endangered species within the foreseeable future in Illinois.

Endangered Fishes in Illinois

- Bigeye Chub
- Bluebreast Darter
- Bluehead Shiner
- Harlequin Darter
- Longjaw Cisco**

Threatened Fishes of Illinois

- Cisco
- Longnose Sucker
- Alligator Gar
- Pugnose Shiner
- Blacknose Shiner
- Bantam Sunfish
- Lake Whitefish
- Lake Sturgeon

Endangered Amphibians and Reptiles of Illinois

- Dusky Salamander
- Silvery Salamander
- Spotted Turtle
- Slider
- Illinois Mud Turtle
- Broad-banded Watersnake
- Eastern Ribbon Snake

Threatened Amphibians and Reptiles of Illinois

- Illinois Chorus Frog
- Western Hog-nosed Snake
- Whip Snake
- Great Plains Rat Snake

Endangered Birds of Illinois

- Double-crested Cormorant
- Snowy Egret
- Great Egret
- Little Blue Heron
- American Bittern
- Black-crowned Night Heron
- Mississippi Kite
- Cooper's Hawk
- Red-shouldered Hawk
- Swainson's Hawk
- Bald Eagle
- Osprey
- Marsh Hawk
- Peregrine Falcon**
- Greater Prairie Chicken
- Yellow Rail
- Black Rail
- Purple Gallinule
- Piping Plover
- Eskimo Curlew**
- Upland Sandpiper
- Wilson's Phalarope
- Forster's Tern
- Common Tern
- Least Tern

Black Tern
Barn Owl
Long-eared Owl
Short-eared Owl
Brown Creeper
Bachman's Warbler**
Yellow-headed Blackbird
Bachman's Sparrow
Threatened Birds of Illinois
Common Gallinule
Bewick's Wren
Veery
Loggerhead Shrike
Swainson's Warbler
Brewer's Blackbird
Henslow's Sparrow
Endangered Mammals of Illinois
Gray Bat**
Indiana Bat**
Eastern Wood Rat
White-tailed Jackrabbit
Threatened Mammals of Illinois
River Otter
Bobcat
Golden Mouse
Rice Rat

Appendix IV

INTERVIEW WITH EARLY SETTLER OF SEWARD BLUFFS

The following interview gives a first hand account of life during the early years of settlement in the Seward Bluffs area:

Statements of Henry L. Whittlesey in answer to questions propounded by his sons, Walter and Derwent, at the celebration of his ninetieth birthday anniversary, held at the Seward Forest Preserve, Winnebago County, Illinois, on June 5, 1938:

Q. Father, we know you do not like to talk about yourself, but I think if you were to answer a few questions you would give those of this generation an idea of what you went through about the time you were born. Will you tell us first where you were born.

A. Well, I was born in a log cabin about ten or fifteen rods northwest of where the barn on the Anderson farm stands. There was a spring about the same distance or a little farther from the house where we got our water. That was in 1848.

Q. How did grandfather happen to locate the house there?

A. Well, he engaged my mother's father in Rockford in the summer of 1836 to help him build a log cabin in Twelve-Mile Grove. They came out here the summer of that year and erected a log cabin on what is now the Grant Highway about a half mile east of the Seward-Pecatonica highway crossing, and while they were building that cabin their oxen strayed away and father was hunting them and ran across a spring which he thought was unusual, that is, it was a better spring than usual, and he determined to locate a farm on that quarter section, which he did in later years. That is the farm now adjoining the Seward-Pecatonica Highway where the school house over on the corner stands.

Q. You didn't live in the log cabin very long; grandfather built a stone house next didn't he? What year was that?

A. He built the stone house in 1851. I was born in 1848. The log house stood there for two or three years and then it was sold to Winthrop Newton, who lived on the State Road about two and a half miles east of what was then Vanceborough. I can remember very well seeing the logs going by the stone house after they tore it down and he was moving it to where he wanted to reerect it.

Q. In those days you were quite self-contained. The material in this house was most of it taken right from the Grove, was it not?

A. All the timbers and the stone, and the lime was burned on this Forest Preserve. The remnants of the lime kiln can now be seen just a half a mile east of this place.

Q. What sort of clothing did you have in those days?

A. Well, my mother spun the yarn that made the stockings and mittens, caps and scarfs, or comforters we used to call them, that we wore, and our work clothes were the same as we have now, either blue denim or butternut color, but at the time of the Civil War the confederates adopted the butternut color for their uniforms and that colored cloth became very scarce, so then they turned to the blue denim, which now prevails among all working people, and we wore hickory shirts. Our Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes were usually made up by a local tailor.

Q. What about the schools of those days?

A. The first school house erected in the Town of Seward was located right at the corner of the Twelve-Mile Grove cemetery. I don't remember the year that was built but it was the first school that I attended. Later, there was a school held in a church that stood on the corner of what was then the David Weld farm, now owned by the Needhams, a quarter of a mile east of the school house that stands on the corner of the Anderson farm now.

Q. Did you go to school in this school house that now stands there?

A. Yes, I went to school winters and worked summers on the farm after I was ten years old.

Q. What books did they use in those days?

A. Well, McGuffey's reader and Ray's arithmetic, both intellectual and written.

Q. The written part was not intellectual, I suppose.

A. Well, the intellectual was simply an analysis of problems that would come up in the school days. We had to repeat the problems and then analyze each transaction that occurred to solve it.

Q. You mention working in the summers. What sort of implements did you have on a farm in those days?

A. Well, the prairie sod was broken with a plow with a steel share and wooden mould board, but soon after I got big enough to handle a plow the all-steel plows came in manufactured down at Grand Detour.

Q. The grain was harvested how?

A. Well, the grass was cut with an ordinary scythe and the grain was cut with a cradle, and I remember very well of binding grain. We carried a rake in front of us with the handle resting on our shoulders against our necks and when we sweat in the harvest fields that handle would rub up and down our necks and make them sore quite often and it wasn't very comfortable.

Q. Did they use cultivators in those days for the corn?

A. Well, we had a double shovel plow and a five-tooth cultivator and the first time that I plowed corn I had to hold my hands up about as high as my head to reach the handles. I later rode the first riding plow that was brought into the neighborhood.

Q. How about the threshing of the grain?

A. My father and uncle and Mr. Robinson, who then owned the farm where we now are, bought a threshing machine. There was no separator, as they have now; it had no straw carrier. The straw was hauled away from the tail end of the machine by a horse hitched to a rope tied to either end or both ends of a rail. It was drawn out on the prairie and burned up and later came a fanning mill that fanned the chaff, separated the chaff from the grain, but with that mill the first separation was to take a shovel on a windy day and let the grain drop from the shovel and the wind blow the chaff out of it.

Q. Now-a-days we talk a good deal about depressions and recessions. Is that anything new?

A. No, I do not remember this, only get it from hearsay, but in 1856 our money was issued by private banks established by anyone who wanted to start a bank and that had enough money to do it. Well, the bankers had no government backing and some of the banks would close their doors over night and our money then would be valueless, so people that had to accept that for their product that they sold got rid of it just as fast as they could. They did not know over night whether it would be worth anything the next day or not; and along in the seventies we had another depression. We recovered from both of those and in 1890 there was still another. We lived through all of those and I think we will live through this if we live long enough. (Applause.)

Q. Perhaps if Congress would follow Will Roger's advice and go home it would get through quicker.

A. I said yesterday when the papers reported that the Congress expected to get through the 15th of June that I was very glad to hear it.

Q. Father, you mentioned Vanceborough a little while ago. Where was Vanceborough?

A. Vanceborough was a half mile east of the crossing of the Grant Highway and the Seward Highway.

Q. How did it happen to be settled right there?

A. Well, my grandfather, my mother's father, Joseph Vance, hired my father, who was then a young man living in what is now Rockford, to help him build a cabin in Twelve-Mile Grove. They came out here and built that tavern and that became the first settlement of the first house around--the first house that was built on what was then Indian Trail from Chicago to the Galena lead mines, and it was the first house between what is now Rockford and Freeport.

Q. It seems to me I have seen a trace of an old stage road right through here. Is that the old road that went to Galena?

A. No, that went to Savanna; it branched off. They established a station on what is now the Joe Johnson farm. I think Johnson has made a granary of the house. The barn stood where his barn now is and it was the stage station where they changed horses and they also branched off there to go to Savana, one branch, and the other one went to Galena to the lead mines.

Q. Is there anything left of that station now beside the house that you mention is now used as a barn?

A. There is an old house that stands there. Well, that stage house and my grandfather's house were the first buildings erected there and then Mr. Ephraim Sumner erected a stone tavern right across the highway from my grandfather's house. Then there was a blacksmith shop run by Mr. John Rogers, a wagon shop run by Roswell Palmer. A doctor located there and the house that he lived in still stands in that locality just as it always was.

Q. What happened to Vanceborough?

A. Then when the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad reached Pecatonica and established a station the village of Vanceborough moved on to Pecatonica and of course then it became nothing. Mr. Rogers had a post office there and Vernon Green had a shoe shop. Mr. Sprague and Robert and Thomas Shimmin had a general store.

Q. Those were all in Pecatonica later or in Vanceborough?

A. They were in Vanceborough.

Q. Oh yes. Did they actually move the buildings to where Pecatonica now is?

A. No, no, the buildings just gradually became obsolete and were torn down.

Q. Why did the first comers in this part of the world pick the Twelve-Mile Grove for their homes?

A. Well, they didn't think anyone could live on the prairie. They had to have timber for fuel and building. They had to have water and they settled near a spring and they had timber to build their log houses if they needed them. We had then what we called the Virginia rail fence. Most of the fences were made with rails like Abe Lincoln used to make, you know.

Q. How soon did they begin to use the prairie?

A. Well, gradually it grew a little farther and a little farther out from the groves and timber, as the people moved in and had to have a place to live.

Q. Now, how much of the original Twelve-Mile Grove do you suppose is left in woods?

A. Well, as I remember it the Grove extended from the creek running west across the Grant Highway near the Stephenson County line to the top of the hill on what we call the highest point in Winnebago County; the Lighthouse hill they used to call it. That is oh probably approximately three and a half or four miles round and it was just about as wide as it is now between the State Road and the road south of us running east and west. There were a few trees south of that road.

Q. I know you are very pleased to have some of it maintained for the future in the forest preserve.

A. Yes, I was very happy when the forest preserve purchased this tract of land. I very much hoped that they would purchase a part of my father's farm that is now owned by Mr. Anderson, but they did not want to buy it all. They wanted to buy a tract right through the center and that would leave Mr. Anderson's farm divided and he did not want it that way, so he refused to sell. The name of the forest preserve was given to Mr. Reber. Mr. Reber at that time was at the head of the Winnebago County Forest Preserve Committee on the Board of Supervisors, but I very much hoped that the forest preserve would be named Twelve-Mile Grove in order to perpetuate the name of the place.

Appendix V

The following is a transcription of Stephen Mack's letter of January 24, 1847, which is reproduced in the text. The Hon. Robert J. Cross, to whom the letter was addressed, settled in Roscoe township in 1835. He was a member of the Illinois Constitutional Convention of 1847 and represented Winnebago County in the legislature from 1847 to 1849. The "friend Miller" mentioned in the text was Anson S. Miller, who was then a member of the state Senate.

Pecatonic Jan. 24, 1848

Esqr. Cross

Dear Sir

I am just informed that the People of Rockford are about to present a Petition to the Legislature for an act to make the Rockford Bridge a County charge - If this should be done you will readily see the injustice that would be done to other parts of the county unless other Bridges are put on the same footing

You will see by the charter granted to David Jewett, M E Mack and myself to build a Bridge across R. R. at this place it was intended that the Bridge when built should be county property and so maintained. But when the Bridge was ready for inspection by the Co. Commissioners they objected to the expense of rebuilding in case the Bridge should be destroyed and have refused or neglected to this time to have any action in the matter - It so rests at present - This bridge, commonly called Macks Bridge is the best one ever built across Rock River, and the first ever built across said River in Illinois It has a good Draw about 36 ft wide and is as permanent as such a structure can be made of wood--and it has more travel across it than every other Bridge combined in the county except Rockford Bridge-Now if the Rockford Bridge is to be put upon the Co. this Bridge (Macks) must be included or the greatest injustice would be done to the People of this part of the county - If the County will take Both Bridges and maintain them I should be much gratified but to take one which is half Broken down and has no Draw and reject one that has a good Draw and is otherwise perfect would be too gross and an act for a Legistative body to commit if they are sufficiently informed on the subject. I commit this subject to you and Mr. Miller in full faith that you will see justice done to us of the North in this matter-----

The subject of the location of the Lock in the Rockford dam is creating much excitement in some parts of the county - I can now repeat what I wrote you a few days since, that Out of Rockford the opinion is unanimous that the lock should be in the Dam and not in the Race-It is generally considered that placing the lock in the Race will be tantamount to declaring Rockford the head of navigation Do me the favour to show this letter to friend Miller and accept the best wishes for him and yourself of your humble Servant

Stephen Mack

FOOTNOTES

Notes for Natural History of Winnebago County

1. James E. Hackett, "Groundwater Geology of Winnebago County, Illinois", *Illinois State Geological Survey Report* 213, p. 9, 1960.
2. Egbert W. Fell, *Flora of Winnebago County*. (Washington, D. C.: Nature Conservancy, 1955) p. 11.
3. Leland Horberg, "Bedrock Topography of Illinois", *Illinois State Geological Survey Bulletin* 73, p. 17, 1950.
4. Hackett, "Groundwater Geology", *Illinois State Geological Survey Report* 213, p. 24.
5. R. C. Anderson, "Sand And Gravel Resources Along The Rock River In Illinois", *Illinois State Geological Survey Circular* 414, p. 4, 1967.
6. Rollin D. Salisbury and Harlan H. Barrows, "The Environment of Camp Grant", *Illinois State Geological Survey Bulletin* 39, p. 47, 1918.
7. Winnebago County City County Planning Commission, 1975.
8. Fell, *Flora Winnebago County*, 1955, p. 9.
9. All of the information in this section was provided by Gregg Tichacek in an Abstract of Winnebago County prepared in April 1970.
10. Donald L. Ivacic, "A Comparison of Presettlement and Current Flora and Fauna of Winnebago County, Illinois." Rock Valley College, 1975, p. 8.
11. All of the material on the prairie grasses was obtained from Egbert W. Fell's, "Grasses of Winnebago County" *Illinois Nature Conservancy*, Rockford, Illinois, 1959, p. 2-5.
12. H. W. Beckwith, *History of Iroquois County, Illinois* (Chicago: H. H. Hill and Company, 1880), p. 35.
13. Ivacic, "Presettlement and Current Flora and Fauna", 1975, p. 20.
14. For a more detailed study see: Gordon M. Day's, "The Indian As An Ecological Factor In The Northeastern Forest", *Ecology* 34: 329-346.
15. Ivacic, "Presettlement and Current Flora and Fauna", 1975, p. 19.
16. *Ibid*, p. 14.
17. *Ibid*, p. 22.
18. *Ibid*, p. 16.
19. Compiled from Donald F. Hoffmeister and Carl O Mohr's, *Fieldbook of Illinois Mammals* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc.), 1972.
20. Prepared by Milton Mahlburg, Director, Burpee Natural History Museum, Rockford, Illinois, from *Illinois Natural History Survey and Field Museum Reports*, March 11, 1969.

Notes for Native American Section

1. For further summaries of Illinois prehistory see the Illinois Archaeological Survey Bulletin No. 1 entitled *Illinois Archaeology*. The fourth printing appeared in 1971. The Illinois Department of Conservation preservation guidebook, *Preservation Illinois*, includes a summary of Illinois prehistory by Dr. Frank Rackerby of Northwestern University. The Archeology Department at Northwestern also publishes a magazine entitled *Early Man* which describes the most recent developments in Illinois archeological research.
2. See the chapter dealing with the historical period written by Dr. J. Joseph Bauxar in *Illinois Archaeology*. Dr. Bauxar is now the archivist at Northern Illinois University.
3. Wayne Temple, *Indian Villages of the Illinois Country* (Springfield: Illinois State Museum, Scientific Papers, Vol. 2. Part 2. Revised 1966) pp. 156-7.
4. Wayne Temple, pp. 158-9, pp. 166-7.
5. Frederick Hodge ed., *Handbook of the American Indians* (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin No. 30, 1918) p. 684-685.
6. *Illinois Archeology*, p. 53.
7. Wayne Temple, p. 143-145.
8. Wayne Temple, p. 146.
9. Wayne Temple, *Indian Villages of the Illinois Country* (Springfield: Illinois State Museum, Scientific Papers, Vol. 2. Part 1. Atlas 1975 Supplement) Plate LII circa 1830. Drawn by Lucius Lyon. Original in National Archives.
10. William H. Heating, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River in 1823*. (Philadelphia, H. C. Carey and I. Lea 1824) p. 181. We would like to thank Dr. Wayne Temple for providing us with a photocopy of this page from the State Library rare book collection.
11. *Illinois Archaeology* p. 54.
12. Frederick Hodge ed., *Handbook of American Indians*, p. 471.
13. William C. Sturtevant, gen. editor, *Handbook of North American Indians*, 20 vols. (Washington, Smithsonian Institution: 1978) Vol. 15: *Northeast*. The material on the Sauk is by Charles Callendar pp. 643-644.
14. William T. Hagan, *The Sac and Fox Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958) p. 19.
15. Royal Brunson Way, *The Rock River Valley* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing, 1926) p. 58.
16. William T. Hagan, pp. 58-9.
17. Donald Jackson, *Black Hawk: An Autobiography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955. Reprint 1964) p. 54.
18. Wayne Temple, p. 121.
19. *The Black Hawk War 1831 - 1832*, Volume I, Illinois Volunteers, (Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield: 1970). Introduction by Anthony F. C. Wallace, University of Pennsylvania, p. 51.
20. *Illinois Archaeology*, p. 55.
21. Victor Vogel, "Indian Place Names of Illinois." *Illinois Historical Society Journal*. Vol. 55. p. 451.
22. *Handbook of North American Indians*, Volume 15. Northeast. Volume Editor Bruce G. Trigger. (Smithsonian Institution, Washington: 1978). The information about the Winnebago was written by Nancy Oestreich Lurie and appears on pp. 692 -693.
23. Frederick Hodge, p. 958.
24. Wayne Temple, p. 191.
25. Mary X. Barrett, *The Indians of Stephenson County Illinois*, (Published April 1966) pp. 15 - 16.
26. Wayne Temple, Vol. 2. Part 1. Plate XCI. Drawn by H. S. Tanner in 1834. Original in the National Archives.

FOOTNOTES

27. Paul Radin, *The Winnebago Tribe*, (University of Nebraska Press: Bison Books 1970) p. 27.
28. Nancy Lurie in *Handbook of North American Indians*, p. 702.
29. Mary X. Barrett, p. 18.
30. Nancy Lurie, p. 690.
31. The following information on Winnebago culture is taken from Paul Radin's book, *The Winnebago Tribe*, cited above, and *The Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian* which Paul Radin edited. (New York: Dover Books 1963).
32. Paul Radin, editor, *Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian*, p. 62.

Notes for Stephen Mack Section

1. Letter from Town Clerk, Tunbridge, Vermont to David Bishop, December 30, 1977. Various sources erroneously give Poultney, Vermont or Keene, New Hampshire as Mack's place of birth.
2. Marguerite Olds, *Biography of the Mack Families*, Rockton Historical Society, 1968.
3. Cornelius Buckley, "Stephen Mack, First Settler of Winnebago County." *Illinois State Historical Society Journal*. Vol. 12. 1919-20, No. 1-4. Apr. 1919-Jan. 1920, p. 54.
4. William D. Barge, *Early Lee County - Being Some Chapters in the Early History of Lee County, Illinois*. Chicago (1918) p. 13. Barge here is quoting from a History of Oakland County Michigan which he states was published in 1887.
5. Cornelius Buckley, p. 54.
6. Letter from Ethel G. Martin, Archivist, Dartmouth College, to Alma May Brookover, Beloit, Wis., July 3, 1956. Original in possession of Bessie Lotz, Rockton Twp. Historical Society. The letter by Mack is dated Boston, Sept. 9, 1818. Janice Schmaeng's text p. 103.
7. A book entitled *The Pilgrimage of Temperance Mack* by John and Audrey Cumming (Mount Pleasant, Michigan: 1967) is based on the letters written by Stephen Mack's mother and sister, Almira. This book states that Stephen Mack Jr. joined his father in Detroit in 1819, that he remained in Michigan for a few years and then moved west where he served as an agent for the American Fur Company. This information is contained in a letter from the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society to Craig G. Campbell dated February 8, 1978.
8. L. B. Neighbour, "Old Trading Post, First House of the Whiteman in Lee County". *Illinois Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 20, No. 1-4. April 1927 to January 1928, pp. 98-102. This article provides the date in which Mack purchased the trading post.
9. William D. Barge, p. 1.
10. Janice E. Schmaeng, *Stephen Mack and The Early Settlement of Macktown and Rockford*. Unpublished paper. Available in Rockton Township Library. p. 15.
11. 18th Congress, House Document 54. Photocopy courtesy Rep. John B. Anderson.
12. 19th Congress, House Document 118. Courtesy Rep. John B. Anderson.
13. 20th Congress, House Document 140. Courtesy Rep. John B. Anderson.
14. Janice Schmaeng, p. 14. Schmaeng quotes from Anthony J. Becker, *The Biography of a Country Town: U.S.A.* Spencer-Walker Press, Inc., (1954) p. 77. A Sectional Map of Illinois, dated 1836, in the possession of the Chicago Historical Society indicates that Grand Detour is the headquarters of the American Fur Company.
15. Stephen Mack to Mrs. Lovicy Cooper, Chicago, May 30th, 1832. p. 109.
16. Dates of Mack's voting are given in Earnest E. East's, "The Inhabitants of Chicago", 1825-1831. *Illinois State Historical Society Journal*, Volume 37, (1944), p. 153. William Barge, page 16, quotes histories of Chicago by Bennett and Andrews for the dates of Mack's voting and describes Mack's purchase of land in Chicago.
17. Edson Carr, *History of Rockton, Rockton, Illinois* (1898) p. 7.
18. Virgil J. Vogel, "Indian Place Names of Illinois." *Illinois State Historical Society Journal*. Vol. 55, p. 35.
19. Wayne C. Temple, *Indian Villages of the Illinois Country*, Springfield: Illinois State Museum, Scientific Papers. Vol. 2. Part 2. (Revised 1966) p. 194.
20. William D. Barge, p. 29.
21. William D. Barge, p. 12. Barge quotes from a *History of Rock County Wisconsin* published in 1879. This same reported conversation of Stephen Mack gives his birthplace incorrectly as Keene, New Hampshire.
22. Janice Schmaeng, p. 13.
23. William D. Barge, p. 21.
24. Edson Carr, p. 8.
25. *Autobiography of Black Hawk*, Donald D. Jackson, editor. University of Illinois Press, Urbana (1955) p. 122.
26. Frank E. Stevens, *The Black Hawk War*, Blakely Printing Company, Chicago (1903) p. 308.
27. Stephen Mack to Lovicy Cooper, May 30, 1832. p. 109.
28. William D. Barge, pp. 20-21. The national archives has no roster for Brown's Company. See Volume XXXV of the Illinois Historical Collections p. 551, Edited by Ellen M. Whitney.
29. Edson Carr, pp. 8-9.
30. Edson Carr, pp. 20-21.
31. William D. Barge, p. 25.
32. Edson Carr, p. 16.
33. Edson Carr, p. 60.
34. Edson Carr, pp. 9-10.
35. William D. Barge, pp. 23-24.
36. The description of the village of Pecatonic is taken from Edson Carr, pp. 60-64. Many of the foundations of the buildings are still identifiable.
37. Stephen Mack to Lovicy Cooper, April 4, 1841.
38. Herman C. Nelson, "Rockton Man's Mother Once Lived in Macktown Building", *Rockford Morning Star*, May 14, 1950. p. 26.
39. Stephen Mack to Mrs. H. M. Whittmore, April 4, 1841. pp. 115-16.
40. Edson Carr, pp. 57-59.
41. Herman C. Nelson, p. 26.

FOOTNOTES

42. Stephen Mack to Mrs. Lovicy Cooper, Oct. 26, 1845. pp. 119-20.
43. Stephen Mack to Committee of Location for the Female Seminary, July 7, 1845. Pecatonic p. 116-17. Original in possession of Rockton Township Historical Society.
44. Edson Carr, p. 11.
45. Edson Carr, p.70.
46. Janice Schmaeng, p. 43. She quotes from Carr p. 32, 80, and 82.
47. Janice Schmaeng, p. 45.
48. The names and dates of birth of the Mack children were: Rosa, born Nov. 14, 1830; Mary born July 15, 1832; William H., born May 6, 1836; Thomas G., born Feb. 9, 1838; Henry C., born Dec. 1, 1839; Edward, born Dec. 3, 1841; Matilda, born Nov. 26, 1843; Caroline, born Oct. 16, 1845.
49. Stephen Mack to H. M Whittmore, Pecatonic, Oct. 6, 1847. p. 127.
50. *Rockford Register-Republic*, August 23, 1924.
51. According to the *Rockford Register-Republic* of December 18, 1936 this marriage was recorded as taking place on the 24th of Feb. The source given is the *Chicago Daily Journal* March 8, 1848: MARRIED In Harrison, Feb. 24, by Horatio Knowles, Esq., , Mr. Stephen Mack, Esq., of Pecatonic, to Mrs. Isabella Daniels.
52. Stephen Mack to Lovicy Cooper, March 10, 1848, p. 131.
53. Stephen Mack to Lovicy Cooper, July 3, 1849. p. 137.
54. H. F. Kett and Company, *History of Winnebago County*, Chicago (1877) p. 223.
55. Stephen Mack to Lovicy Cooper, Sept. 3, 1848. p. 132.
56. Stephen Mack to Lovicy Cooper, May 17, 1846. p. 124.
57. Cornelius Buckley, p. 54.
58. Janice Schmaeng, p. 51.
59. Janice Schmaeng, pp. 73-75.
60. Stephen Mack to John Mack, Nov. 25, 1843. pp. 134-5.

Notes for Atwood Homestead

1. Material used in the section on the "Early History of The Atwood Family" was taken from the *Atwood Family Association Book*, (1928 2nd. ed.).
2. Personal Correspondence, Seth G. Atwood to Craig G. Campbell, January 3, 1979.
3. *Rockford Morning Star*, July 30, 1972.
4. *Rockford Morning Star*, May 23, 1978.

Notes for Roland Olson

1. Mary Bittle, *A Short History of Harlem Township* (1967).
2. Ibid.
3. Charles A. Church, *History of Winnebago County, Illinois*, (Chicago: Munsell Publishing Company, 1916), 941.

Notes for Colored Sands

1. Richard Thom, "Nature Preserve Values of The Lee Johnson Tract", *Illinois Nature Preserves Commission*, Rockford, Illinois. June, 1976.
2. C. Hal Nelson, ed., *Sinnissippi Sage*. Winnebago County Illinois Sesquicentennial Committee, 1968, p. 44.
3. Interview with Lee G. Johnson, Winnebago County Forest Preserve District, October 5, 1978.

Notes for Trask Bridge F. P.

1. *Durand Illinois Centennial Book* (1956).
2. Philip L. Keister, *The Early Roads of Stephenson County*, Stephenson County Historical Society, 1954, p.8.
3. *Durand Book*, (1956).
4. Solon J. Buck, "Agricultural Organization in Illinois", *Illinois State Historical Society Journal*, April, 1910, 3:14.

Notes for Seward Bluffs F. P.

1. The Rockford to Savanna, and Rockford to Geneva trails are shown on an early sectional map published in 1836. A copy of this map was obtained from the Chicago Historical Society. For more information about this route see Philip L. Keister's *Stephenson County Roads* published by Robert L. Koenig in 1954 for the Stephenson County Historical Society.
2. It is interesting to note that David Rugg and his wife deeded the strip of land west of the Neely farmhouse to their son-in-law George W. Flagg in 1860 under the condition that Flagg provide for their support and maintenance the rest of their lives.
3. Charles W. Church, *A History of Winnebago County* (Chicago: Munsell Publishing Co., 1916) p. 671.
4. Letter of J. H. Rogers dated Vanceboro, December 7, 1851. (Courtesy of Anna Rogers). Rogers states that the settlers of Vanceboro were from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, New York, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Kentucky, Missouri, England, (including the Isle of Man), Ireland, Scotland, Canada and Germany.
5. Dr. George W. Thomson, "The Prairie Grove Revisited", *Iowa State Journal of Research*, vol. 49, No. 2, pt. 2, November 1974, p. 165-168.
6. George W. Thomson, p. 167.

Notes for History of Dells Area

1. Interview with Mrs. Willard Winquist, Rockford, Illinois, July 7, 1978.
2. Plat of Herbert Lewis Farm, Th. L. Leon De Tissandier, Civil Engineer, April 6, 1917.
3. Mildred P. Geddes, *Out Montague Road* (1974) p. 11.
4. H. F. Kett & Co., *History of Winnebago County, Illinois*, (1877), p. 432.
5. Ibid, p. 659.

FOOTNOTES

6. Charles A. Church, *History of Winnebago County, Illinois*. (Chicago: Munsell Publishing Co., 1916), p. 805.
7. Kett's 1877 Township Directory of Ogle County lists J. C. Beekman as a minister in Byron.
8. Hazel M. Hyde, "Schweinfurth's Heaven". *Nuggets of History*, May-June 1966, Vol. 3:2.
9. *Rockford, Illinois*. American Guide Series (1941), p. 79.
10. Church on page 805 in his *History of Winnebago County* states that, "Nothing was ever legally proven, and the grand jury in 1890, completely exonerated him." Schweinfurth's obituary in the September 24, 1910, *Rockford Register Daily Gazette*, also indicates that he was never convicted of any charges.
11. *Rockford Daily Register Gazette*, September 24, 1910.
12. *Rockford Register-Republic*, September 22, 1927.
13. *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. by Dumas Malone (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), Vol. 11, p. 609.
14. *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White & Company, 1926), Vol. 19, p. 94.
15. *Ibid*, Vol. 34, p. 162.
16. Egbert W. Fell, *Flora of Winnebago County*, (Washington, D. C.: Illinois Nature Conservancy, 1955), p. 1.
17. *National Cyclopaedia*, Vol. 34, p. 162.
18. *Rockford Morning Star*, May 4, 1961.
19. Dwain Berggren, "Summary Report On Geologic Features In The Vicinity of Severson Dells". Educational Extension Section, *Illinois Geological Survey*, August 12, 1976: p. 1.
20. *Ibid*, p. 2.
21. *Ibid*, p. 3.
22. Interview with Lloyd Strauss, Rockford, Illinois, July 7, 1978.

Notes for Severson Dells F. P.

1. Interview with Mrs. Jo Haag, Rockford, Illinois, July 27, 1978.
2. Interview with Walter M. Colman, Chairman of the Board, Barber-Colman Company, Rockford, Illinois, June 23, 1978.
3. *Ibid*.
4. *Rockford Morning Star*, January 20, 1976.
5. Heifer Project International was founded in 1944 by the Church of the Brethren as a non-profit, non-sectarian agency. Currently, HPI provides agricultural and technical aid to small farmers in 27 counties and 13 states. Letter from Ms. Patti Webb, Heifer Project International, to Craig G. Campbell, May 23, 1979.
6. Material for this section was taken from Peter J. Damby's "Severson Dells Acquisition History", June 20, 1976.
7. Aldo Leopold, "Report to Mr. Howard D. Colman on Rockford Deer Area" October 15, 1936. (Courtesy: Paul B. Riis Papers, Natural Land Institute, Rockford, Illinois), p. 2.
8. Lysle R. Pietsch, "White-Tailed Deer Population In Illinois", Biological Notes #34, *Illinois Natural History Survey*, June 1954, p. 9.

Notes for Kilbuck and Trailside Forest Preserve

1. Virgil J. Vogel, "Indian Place Names of Illinois". *Illinois State Historical Society Journal*. Vol. 55, pp. 53.
2. From an account entitled "The Last Steps", written by Clarence G. Scott sometime before 1915. (Courtesy Juniata Scott, Seward, Illinois).
3. An excellent account of this area is provided in Jack Baxter's *History of New Milford* published by the Rockford Map Publishers Inc. in 1976. The map showing the mill location is on page 38 of the road maps which accompany the records of the County Commissioner's Courts (1836-1842).

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