

# 1925 TO 1930

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MANY ORGANISTS HAVE PLAYED THE MIGHTY BARTON

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

There should have been a birthday party on July 15, 2001, but no one even took notice of the event. True, a few strangers passed by and marveled at the beautiful house the birthday observer lived in, but even his best friends did not take note of the event, even though one was present.

Yet the birthday "person" still speaks with authority in Baraboo. Moreover, only seven other much larger cities in Wisconsin can claim such an outstanding personality, and what's more, this is the only one able to rise six feet off the floor!

The birthday, of course, was that of the Mighty Barton organ at the Al. Ringling Theatre, first played on July 15, 1928. The tourists on a guided tour last July marveled at the theatre and heard the organ "speak" but even the guide and organist were not aware of the occasion, a 73rd birthday. And yes, only seven Wisconsin cities have theatre organs, and only the Baraboo Barton still rises from the floor of the orchestra pit upon the bidding of the organist.

Harold Lloyd Thomas

This article is occasioned by the recent death of Harold Lloyd Thomas, whose body was returned here from the east for burial on Sept. 8, 2001. It was Thomas, in his late teenage high school years, who played the theatre organ not only for the patrons, but for a Sunday radio concert on WIBU. His theme song was "Cruising Down the River".

Besides organ, he was accomplished in the accordion, and in wind instruments.

Thomas was born to Frank and Eva (Davis) Thomas of Fairfield twp. in 1928, thus sharing a birth year with the Barton. After high school he went on to the University of Wisconsin, where he joined the UW band, going with it to the 1945 Rose Bowl. He later was sergeant in the army in Europe, playing in an artillery unit band. Still later he lived in Washington D.C., Chicago, and Boston. His history as an organist at the Al. has inspired research into other organists in the past, to be noted later in this article.

Baraboo in 1928

Installation of the Barton had been eagerly awaited since it was ordered on May 1, 1928. There was a farewell concert on the old Hope-Jones Wurlitzer on June 3, and a pit orchestra was used for the silent movies for the next 6 weeks. Creator Dan Barton was here for the opening day--his organ company had just finished the largest organ in the country for the Chicago Stadium.

Meantime, life in Baraboo went on. There were band concerts in the band shell at Ochsner Park, and people were gossiping over a body found in Devil's Lake, believed to be that of a local "ladies man". The roof of the brand new high school, now the civic building, was being poured, and workers were to start next day to lay 160,000 yellow bricks. The City Council voted to ban U-turns on Broadway

at third and fourth avenues.

At the theatre, new drapes and curtains were installed, and the old organ was sold to the Evangelical Church, Fifth and Ash, where "the theatrical effects were stripped from the organ" before installation there by Frank Terbilcox and Bob Aton. It's re-dedication there was the same day as the Barton dedication.

For the latter, there was not only a silent movie for the organ to accompany, but five vaudeville acts on stage, accompanied by a full orchestra. It was a big day.

#### Early organists

The paper announced that the first organist would be Jack Martin, who had a background of music in New York City. His length of tenure was short, for in October Frank Terbilcox became the organist and served for many years. Frank had played the previous organ in the past.

The first talking picture arrived in just over a year, on August 3, 1929, and the need for an organist rapidly faded. Today skilled organists are occasionally engaged to show old silent movies, with their accompaniment on the organ. An excellent theatre presentation earlier this fall (2001) featured three old silents with a 12 piece orchestra for accompaniment.

#### Bouton on the Barton

Another early organist is remembered for the alliteration of combining his name and that of the organ, namely as "Bouton on the Barton", Bouton being his surname. He is also remembered as somewhat dapper, with spats,

a derby, and a Ford roadster with yellow wheels. His years here are not known.

#### Schellkopf and Morse

There are many gaps in this account of organists at the Al., and after talkies arrived it is possible that there was no regular salaried musician. Manager McCoy has received a letter from Dr. John Schellkopf of Pacific Palisades, CA., who relates that he played the organ and worked at the theatre in the 1940's. He writes that an Earl Morse, hotel desk clerk, would play the organ at intermissions sometime in the 1940's. Schellkopf was allowed to play the organ in the late 40's and early 50's, and that frequent patrons at the theatre included Agnes Moorhead of Reedsburg.

Dr. Schellkopf also played after Harvey Mudd purchased the theatre, particularly during intermissions while 3-D reels were being changed. He writes "At one time Clark Wilkinson and I sponsored a cinophile convention...at the theatre, where I accompanied a silent feature film on the organ...we used to watch the Baraboo parades from atop the marquee...at the end of each movie band music of the Ringling circus band was played from 78rpm records."

#### Theatre Organ Society

In recent years, use of the organ has increased with use of the stage. The organ frequently serves as a warm-up before stage shows while the audience gathers, even before the orchestra begins its prelude to a musical. In the year 2000, recognition was given to the theatre and the organ by the



American Theatre Organ Society. Some 400 national and international members came from their Milwaukee convention in eight buses to hear the organ and see the historic theatre. Featured professional organist was Ken Double, who in his youth worked for Tommy Bartlett at Lake Delton, and during time off came to Baraboo to play the organ.

Today, the organ is regularly used for guided tours of the theatre, generally played by Joe Vodak, Ruth Pischke, and this writer. David Saloutos also plays it on occasion. Its "toy box" of theatrical sounds are demonstrated by other tour guides when an organist is not present. Tuning and maintenance is provided by Bryant and Irving Hazard, and on occasion by Herb Head and others.

The days of Martin, Terbilcox, Bouton, Thomas, Schellkopf, Morse, and Double are gone, but the organ stands ever ready to proudly "speak" with gentle authority, despite its over seven decades of service. One thing about it--those old pipes don't have to worry about cholesterol.

Addenda: Dorothy (Carpenter) Shult should have been mentioned as playing the organ for Sunday morning broadcasts. Also overlooked was Ethel Romelfanger, longtime Baraboo musician, and Wayne Chapman, who recorded a 33rpm record. No doubt there are others who should be listed also.



*John Schellkopf*



## HOW THE CONSOLE OF THE MIGHTY BARTON WORKS

### Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

How did high school student Harold Lloyd Thomas, in 1947, learn to play the Barton organ at the Al. Ringling Theatre, as related in last week's story? How could such a young man be skilled enough to have a regular Sunday afternoon radio broadcast from the theatre? And how could young John (later Dr.) Schellkopf learn to achieve the same skill a few years later? Why are there so few who play the theatre organ?

The organ even presents a formidable challenge for skilled pianists, as it requires reading still another line of music for the foot pedal, a skill some pianists fail to achieve. In addition, the organ has three keyboards or manuals, instead of one on a piano, plus a myriad of tabs, making possible a multitude of sounds even if only one key is pressed. Added to this are pedals and buttons for special effects.

It is amazing, then, that high school students like Thomas and Schellkopf could acquire these skills at such a young age, to the point of broadcasting on WIBU. Here is a modest explanation of the Barton organ console, as pictured in the accompanying photo. The reader is invited to refer to the picture in reading the descriptions of their various options.

#### Stops and Manuals

The circle of tabs or stops, in various colors for quick identification, represent some of the 600 pipes in the organ loft. Pushing down a tab activates or alerts one pipe group, and two to a dozen or so tabs can be used at one time for various combinations of sound. The pipes do not sound, however, until one of the white keys on the correct keyboard is depressed.

Most of the tabs on the left are controlled by the lower keyboard or manual, called the "Accompanying" manual. The tabs in the center are associated with the middle or "Great Organ" manual. Those on the right side are controlled by the upper or "Solo" manual. Each manual has 5 octaves, or 180 keys total. There are small tabs just above the upper manual to convert the sound from that like a church organ to a more sweet tremulo sound.

#### The Pedals

In addition to his hands, the organist employs his feet to play the pedal manual, arranged in several octaves like the other manuals. There are also foot buttons to produce the sound of singing birds, or thunder, and three pedals to regulate volume and other effects.



Some of the stops produce not pipe sounds but such effects as bass drum, snare drum, castanets, tom tom, wood block, harp, chimes, or xylophone and other effects. None of these sounds are produced electronically, for there are actual drums, tom tom, xylophone, etc. in the organ loft. All but the birds are real---well, maybe the thunder isn't real, but the rest are true mechanical operations.

#### Pre-sets

Sixteen white buttons just below the manual can be pre-set to produce selected tab combinations without the organist having to lower each individual tab while playing a song. Thus by a quick depression of a white button, the organ switches from one group of pipes to another instantly for variety of music within a single song. A skilled organist, however, while playing a manual with one hand, plus the foot pedals, can be seen darting the other hand up to add or subtract a stop for different effects during a song.

The musician also has a control for raising or lowering the console some six feet into the air. This handle is difficult to operate, and the organist must do it while playing a song with his right hand and both feet.

Just to complicate things a bit more, reflect that there is a split second before the sound from the pipes in the organ loft reach the ear of the organist at the console, slightly affecting some of his timing as he continues to play. The organist can be a very busy person with all of these choices!

Overlooked in last week's article on organists was Dorothy Carpenter Shult, who also played the organ for radio broadcasts. She and young Thomas and Schellkopf must have been bright young organ students indeed.

THE OLD GOLF COURSE  
AT DEVILS LAKE  
Yesteryear Revisited  
By Bob Dewel

It has been forty-one years since the last hasty warning, "fore", was shouted on the old Devils Lake Golf Club course. Judging from the closeness of the fairways in the accompanying photo, the "fores" must have been sounded frequently, when an errant slice or hook crossed a narrow fairway or two!

Old timers have fond memories of this course, however, and of the social life it presented for the club members. The clubhouse was the present Nature Center at the park, small compared to most golf clubhouses today but considered nice and cozy then.

The Aerial view in the picture looks South. The light area in the upper left is the North shore of the lake. On the left, the double track of the once proud Northwestern Line proceeds toward its passage along the East bluff of the lake.

Crossing the picture horizontally is County DL, but out of the picture on the lower left would be the location of the Devi Bara supper club. The light spots on the picture are sand traps. There are nine holes if you can count them. In the early days, the ball was teed up with sand from a convenient sand box.

Also not shown, because of the heavy foliage, is the Warner Memorial Road, which winds its way through the forested area on its way from Baraboo to the lake. It passes the clubhouse, and then downhill to the north shore. The road once led directly to the Chateau, and the old 1920 paving can still be seen if one walks north a couple hundred feet from the Chateau.

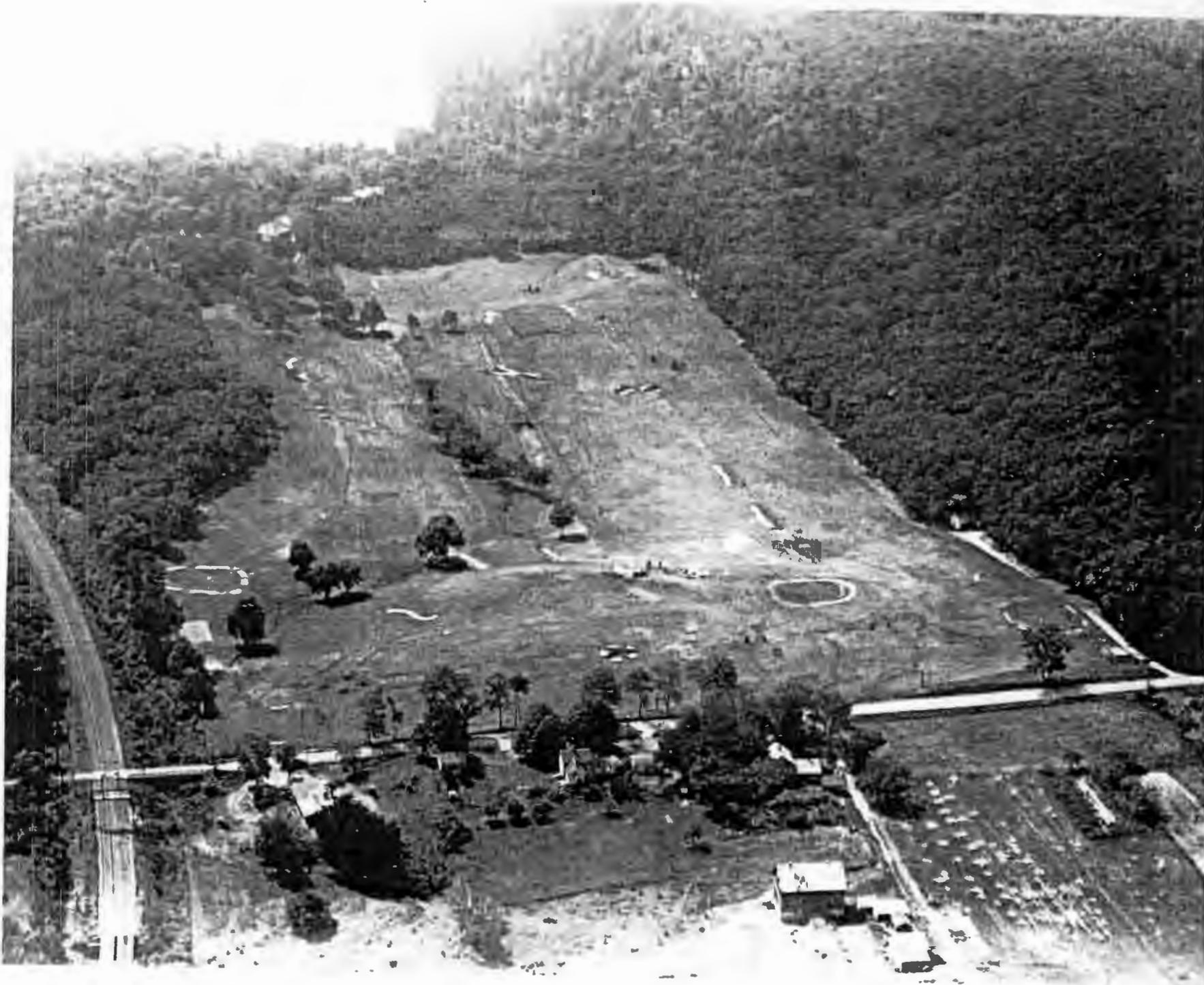
The remarkably small 20 acre nine-hole course, though open to the public, was apparently leased by the Park to the Baraboo Golf Club. Lange reports, in his booklet, A Lake Where

Spirits Dwell, that "a group was operating a golf course in the park. This group had rented the Claude cornfield at the north end of the park in 1922, and had a nine-hole course built shortly thereafter". The longest hole was 460 yards.

According to a copy of the incorporation owned by Glen Quale, the group was incorporated on Feb. 13, 1925. The papers were signed by Frank Shults, John Malone, J. Van Orden, H.M. Langer, and F.C. Peck. The corporation name was The Baraboo Golf Club, but a 1923 telephone directory lists the phone number as 24J, under the listing of Devils Lake Country Club.

There were showers for the men, and a Mrs. Banks catered the Thursday evening meals. The course was replaced in 1961 by the present Baraboo Golf Course between Lake Street and Highway 123 on the South edge of town. The view from the new course is spectacular, with the Bluffs to the South showing prominently.

The old golf course has long since been converted into camping, with many a camp site probably occupying an old tee or golf green. There certainly are old golf balls buried in various places on the grounds. Perhaps some surprised camper, trenching around his tent, may come across a rusted seven iron or so, flung in disgust after it failed to produce the expected approach shot---the fault lying in the club, of course, not in the player.



Aerial view of Devils Lake golf course

## BUS MISSES COVERED BRIDGE, PLUNGES INTO RIVER

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

It was a bridge waiting for an accident to happen.

Happily there were no fatalities, but 33 persons would be hospitalized on the unfortunate evening of July 3, 1926. Only one person escaped injury.

### The Setting

The scene was a covered bridge over the Baraboo river, the bridge area commonly known as the Butterfield Bridge. The vehicle was a 1926 vintage bus, state of the art for its day, and it had plunged 30 feet down into the Baraboo river. The road was known then and now as Highway 33, and it joined Fairfield Road in a four corner intersection a few hundred feet north of the present Butterfield Bridge.

The junction of highway 33, Fairfield Road, and what is now County U was directly on the west bank of the river, and the eastbound traveler had to make a sharp right turn directly into the covered bridge.

It was this corner that the bus failed to negotiate. No power steering or power brakes then for the bulky bus, and it took out some flimsy wooden guard rails and went down the embankment.

With the bus at a 45 degree angle, its human cargo of 34 students had been thrown forward into the area of the driver, Ammon Ames of Madison, all but crushing him. He remained alert enough to call out a warning not to light matches for fear of a gasoline explosion. It was 9:30 P.M.

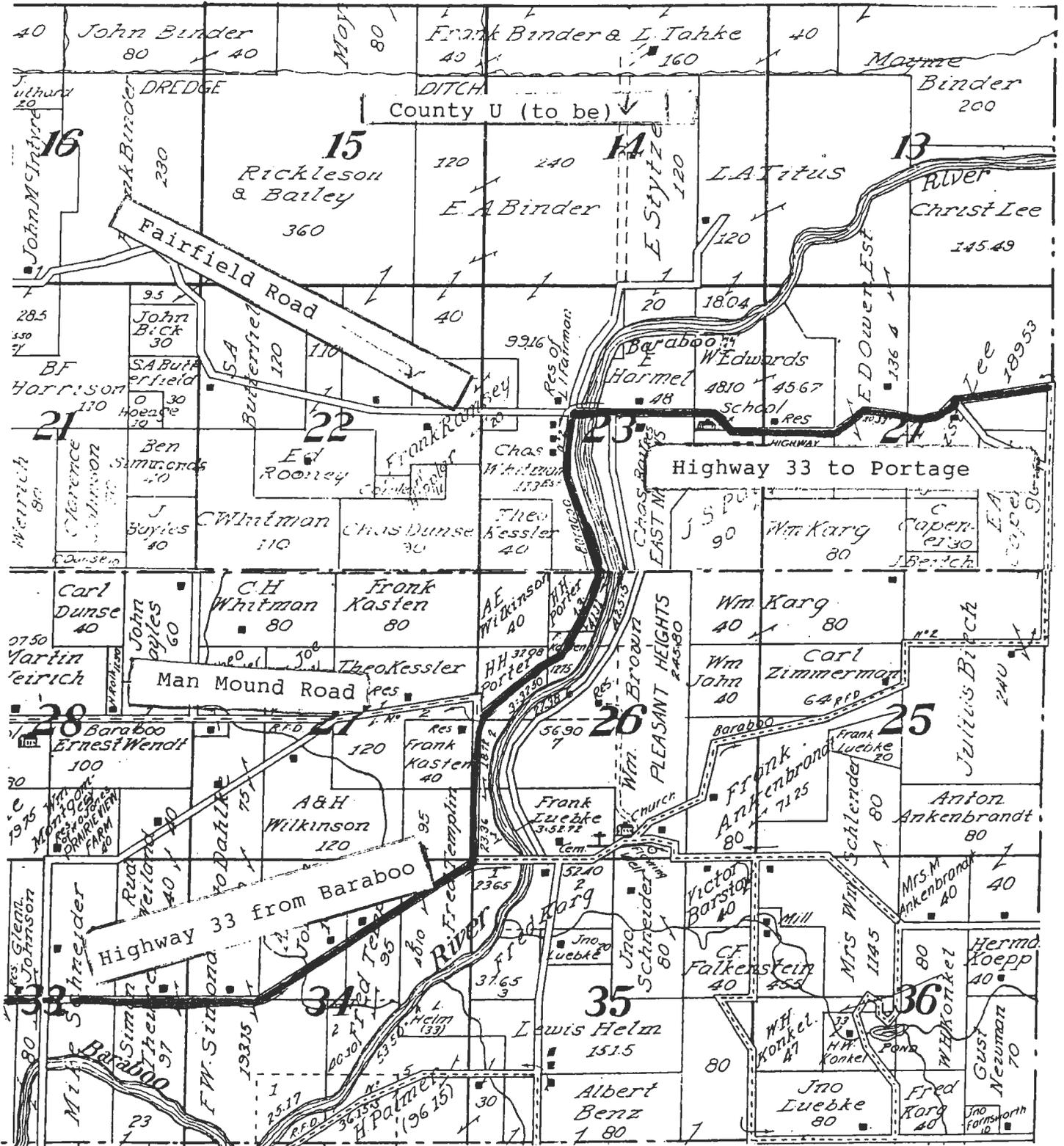
Nearly all of the passengers were young women from UW Madison, returning from a day's outing at Devil's Lake and Kilbourn. Three men, apparently instructors, were also present. The paper reported that the girls had been singing up to the moment of the crash. A moment of stunned silence was followed by screams and cries for help.

Following the bus was another busload of students, and they aided in extracting the injured from the stricken vehicle. Nearby residents, the J.S. Billings, aided in the effort, and the nearby Walter Paske home became a makeshift emergency center until other help could be summoned.

Other Help? No 911 number to call then--even negotiating the farm telephones was an experience, for you had to summon "central", the town operator, by manually turning a handle on the phone. Central then manually plugged your call into the slot for whom you were calling.

There was no county patrol then, and the sheriff's office was only lightly staffed. Moreover, no ambulances, just the hearse of a local funeral director. Even station wagons were rare, and no vans as we know them today.

But there was the other bus. Twenty-eight of the injured were taken to the little Baraboo hospital, a large wood frame house on Oak between 10th and 11th, formerly the home of Alf. T. and Della Ringling, now divorced. There were fewer



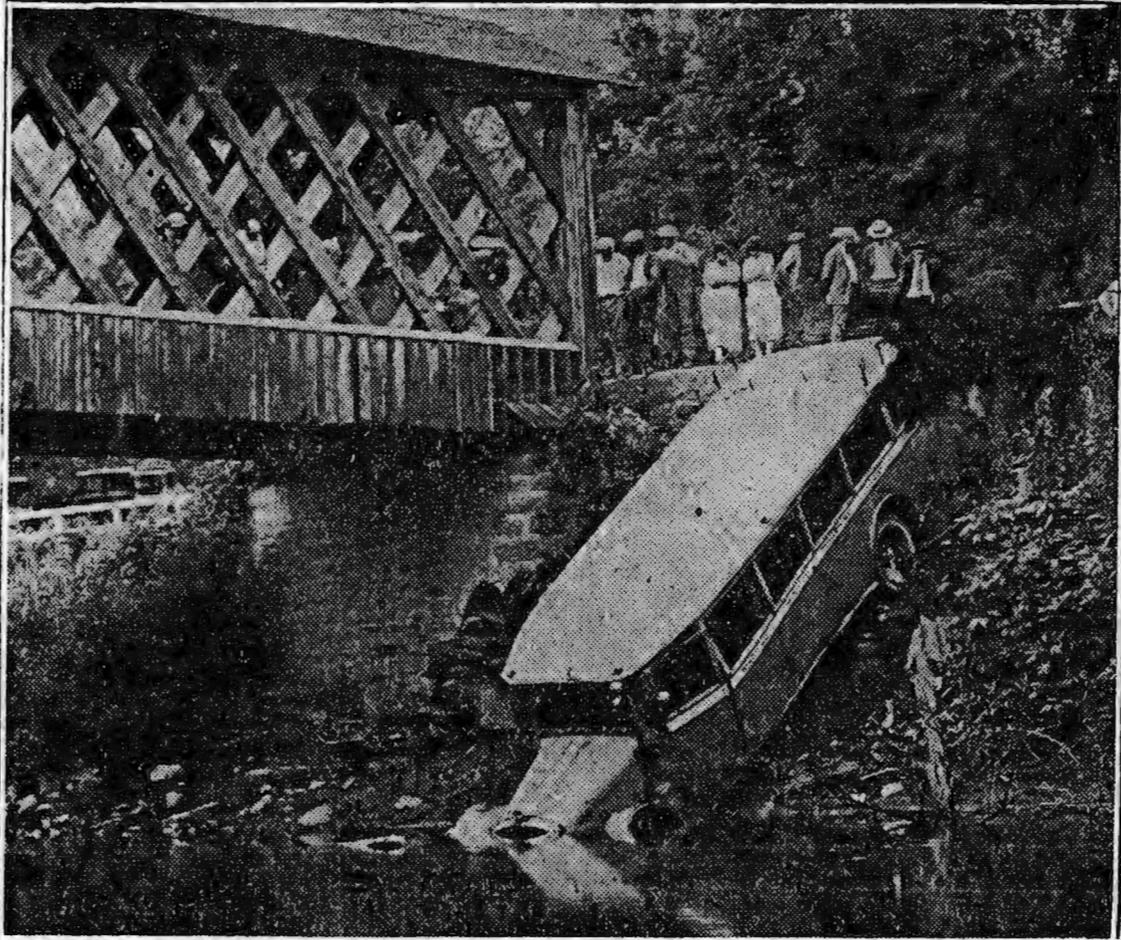
The map, from an early plat book, shows the sharp curve which the bus, coming from the left, failed to negotiate as it turned onto the Butterfiled covered bridge. Highway 33 is outlined in black.

Saturday Night, July 3, 1926

NEL

ALL THE PICTURES

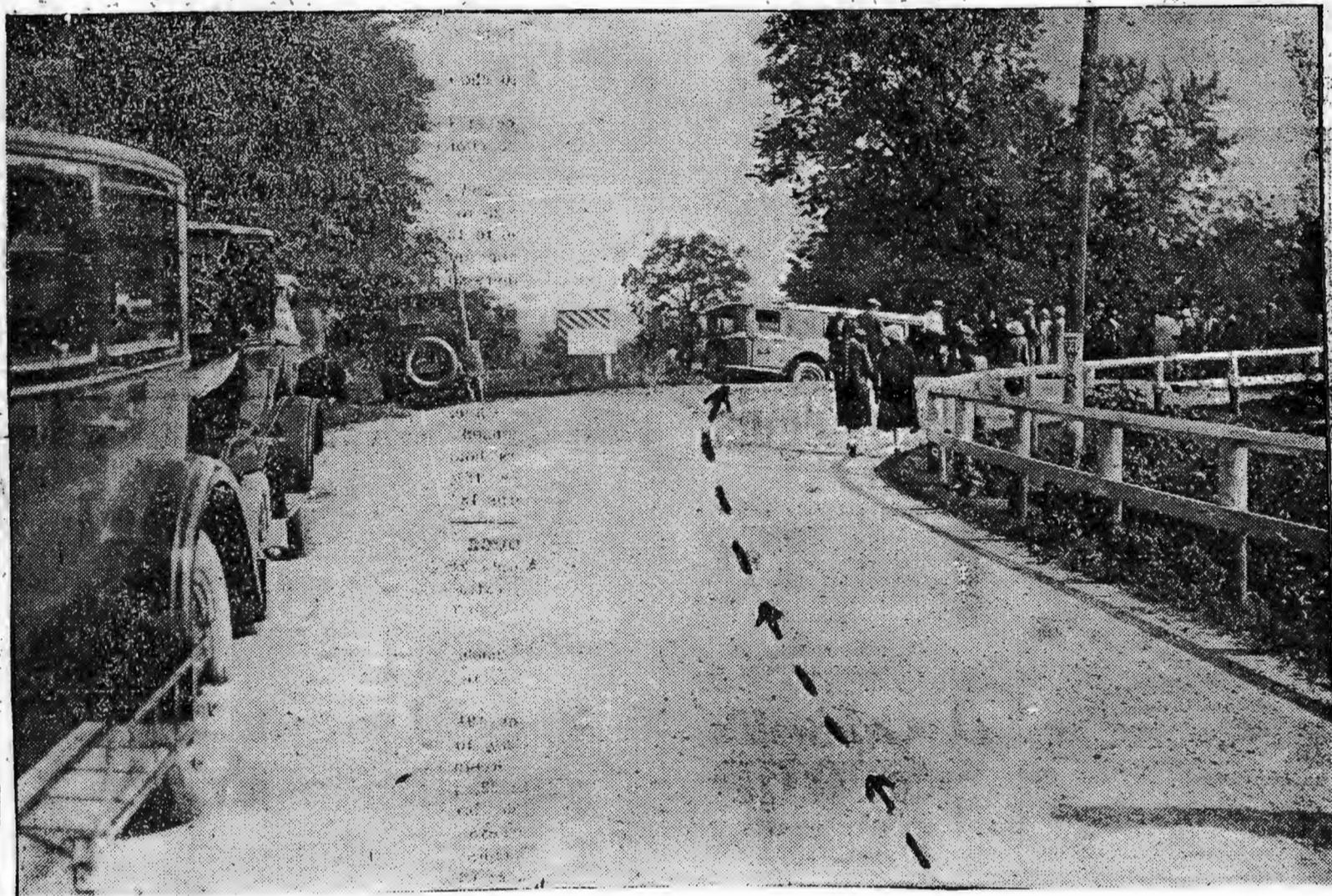
## W. Students Escape in Bus Wreck



The bus next to the covered bridge. Fortunately the river was not at flood stage.

*Key Copy*

## At Scene of Big Bus Crash



Arrows show the route of the bus, which has been pulled back out of the river

doctors then also, especially surgeons, but practitioners from Kilbourn and Reedsburg assisted. Five injured had been taken to Portage. Miraculously, all survived, including the hapless bus driver.

#### The Bridge

The 1876 covered bridge had already been the subject of some concern, and it is said that it had been condemned in 1920. It was destroyed in 1933, and the abutments are said to be still there. Not until 1930, however, was construction begun on an iron girder bridge similar to the smaller one connecting Ochsner and Attridge Parks in Baraboo today.

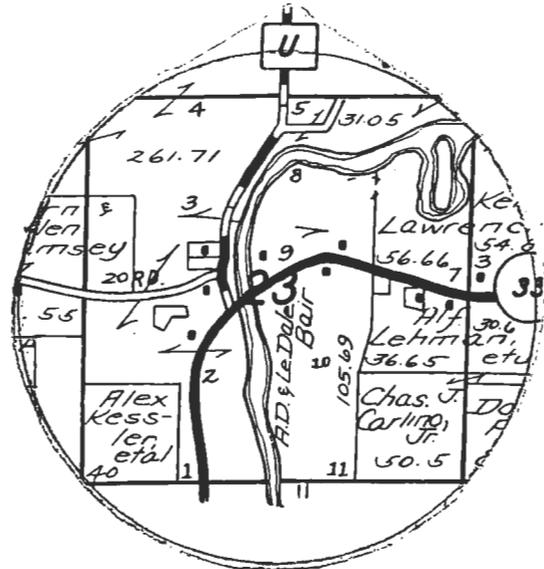
Later the approaches to the narrow 1930 bridge became a concern as traffic speeds increased, and it was in turn replaced in recent years with a wide bridge on a gentle curve.

The map shows another point of interest, for there was apparently a township road leading from County X along the east side of the river, joining 33 just east of the covered bridge. Nothing remains of it today.

The accident was the talk of the town for several days, but soon other news trickled in. Al Smith of New York announced for the Democratic nomination for President. There had been nine lynchings so far that year, six black, one white and 1 Indian. Firemen had been called to a fire in the kitchen of the Warren Hotel.

Most exciting of all, however, was news that the Ringling Circus would be in Madison on July 29. Only eight years had passed since

the Circus was Baraboo's claim to fame. Today the Circus World Museum expertly supplies that function. People soon forgot about the bus.



The new bridge and highway in 1931 is similar to today's new bridge.



**75 years ago this week**

• A suit for \$25,000 damages, the first of a number of contemplated actions arising out of the bus accident near the Butterfield Bridge in which 33 persons were injured, was filed in circuit court against the Royal Rapid Transit Bus Company and the New Amsterdam Casualty Company of Maryland. The suit was brought by Helene Woodruff, one of the most severely injured. Nov ~~19~~ 1951

## Baraboo Y.M.C.A. Important for 40 Years

### Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

Can any of our senior citizens remember the Baraboo Y.M.C.A (Y)? Not too long ago we could have asked Ezra Schaefer, Beryl Newman, Merle Hanley, or Fred Arndt, for each of these men participated in the "Y" programs as youths. The structure, handsome in its day, was located on the NW corner of Ash and Second Streets.

#### Raising the money

It was unusual for a town of Baraboo's size then to have a Y, but as a busy railroad division point in 1890, the Northwestern railroad deemed it prudent to help provide a Y for their single young employees. The real impetus, however, came from an 1890 donation of \$4000 from Frank Brewer, "benevolent citizen and President of the Baraboo Savings Bank", as the News reported.

Actually, a loosely organized Y.M.C.A affiliate group already existed, having been organized in 1882, but was stymied for lack of facilities. Its purpose was "Christian training and influence for young men, especially between the ages of 18 and 25."

The railroad added \$1000 to the fund Brewster started, and soon a purse of \$5500 was available, but this was \$2500 short of the minimum amount needed. Local businessmen donated the remaining funds, aided by children who saved their pennies. Ladies held several lawn socials, and it became a community event, as usually happens when things need to be done in a small city. Final cost is said to have been \$10,000, though one article says \$15,000.

#### The new building

On May 29 of 1891, a flagstaff 28 feet tall topped the newly constructed building, and for nearly 40 years the non-denominational Y became the recreational center for many Baraboo citizens. Its aim was to promote "education, recreation, and uplifting the spirit" for young boys and men, and "installing patriotism, temperance, and love of spiritual right living."

The building was quite imposing, and included a basketball court, dimension not given, and a full time secretary, D.A Lewis of Wauwatosa, to direct activities. A July 23, 1931 article in the News-Republic indicates that the slogan was "As a man soweth, so he reapeth".

Apparently the Y was quite commodious, for a January, 1915 report of a New Year's Eve party speaks of activities on three floors. A basket ball game in the gymnasium was followed by demonstrations on the Parallel bars and the horse, followed by a clown and a stunt act.

On a floor above, a short program was given including solos by E. Earl Faber, who later went on to an operatic career. Raymond Roser was then featured with coronet solos. "Excellent punch and wafers were found in abundance here," and on the third floor one could purchase sandwiches and coffee. It is not clear whether rooms were available for the railroad men to rent, but another article speaks of a comfortable furnished lounge.

The final article about the Y will detail its glory years, and its final decline and demise. Also related is how the patriotism the Y instilled in one young man became a significant factor in his service in World War II.



*The YMCA NW corner of Ash and Second St.*

## The "Y" Thrives, and then Declines

### Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

As described in the previous article, the Baraboo Y.M. C. A. (the Y) was for nearly forty years a significant factor in the life of the young men of Baraboo, providing not only social but athletic and religious opportunities from 1890 until about 1930. Classes were given in stenography, bookkeeping, arithmetic, spelling, English, and something called Air Machinery, and were "splendidly attended."

Ernst F. Boettcher

The Y was non-denominational Christian, with gospel meetings and Bible study classes, according to a story in the July 23, 1935 News. The article contains a letter to H.G. Schadde from a former director and physical secretary, Ernest F. Boettcher, recalling the glory days of the Y. He served from 1899 to 1906.

Boettcher, who sent photographs and tintypes, told how he had brought his new bride from Philadelphia to a gracious reception in Baraboo.. As director of sports and physical training, he wrote of "the results in terms of interest, benefit to the body and mind, and rejoicing in a victory won in clean sports were ever ours,"

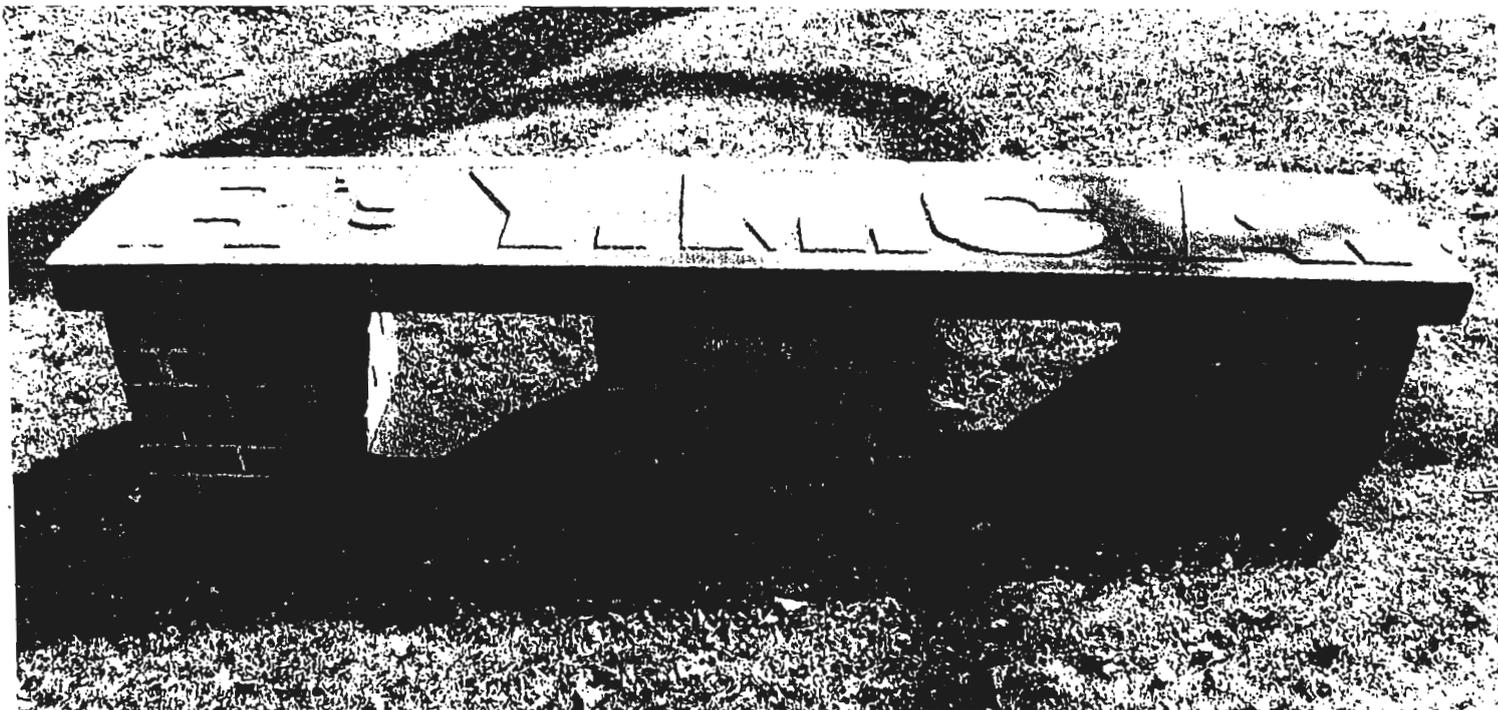
The Y seems well organized, for Boettcher speaks of several departments in addition to sports, such as Religious, Social, and Boys Work departments. There was also some missionary work for China and Korea. Social work included "homelike parlors, frequent receptions, entertainments, get-togethers, and stunt nights, involving members and strangers alike." Boettcher mentions the names of many local men involved as volunteers, names like Marriot, Hood, Roser, Ringling, McGilvra, and Schadde for example. There was an active Ladies Auxiliary also.

#### The Decline

With such fine quarters and activities, why did the Y fail? By 1925 "the brave spirit seemed to break," and according to one news article, "the roof and eaves were neglected and deterioration of the bricks began. Perhaps the handsome new (1927) high school across the street, with its up-top date (then) gymnasium contrasted with the shabbiness, but the building's air of good architecture remained." Just when the Y closed is not yet known.

By February 1936, the News-Republic reported that the sidewalk by the building had been closed off, "due to the fact that two big blocks of stone and a quantity of bricks have fallen from the upper parts of the building to the sidewalk below, by the Ash Street entrance." Further action was delayed until it could be determined who owned the building.

This seems strange, for a clipping at the Sauk County Historical Society indicates that on May 3, 1931 the city council had accepted the offer of the Y.M.C.A. to deed the property to the city, and some action was considered to remove the building at that time.



Many things did not get done during the Depression. Perhaps there was more damage than was realized from a fire in the Y building at 3 P.M. on May 10, 1905. It was confined to the roof, and was caused by” flames from a blow lamp.”

#### Patriotism and Beryl Newman

The Y had apparently still been active in 1929, for there is mention of the Boys Club, as well as the Hi-Y Club, which was later continued in the high school for many years. Today all that remains of the building is the Nameplate, now used as a bench in the yard of the Sauk County Historical Society. That Society supplied some of the material used in this story.

The mention of patriotism in a paragraph above, and the mention of Beryl Newman in the first paragraph, attests to the value of the Y. As we have written in a previous article, Beryl Newman is one of the less than 20 Wisconsin men to receive the coveted Congressional Medal of Honor. The Baraboo High School athletic field, as we have reported, is dedicated to Newman’s bravery and service beyond the call of duty.

We hope that the adult leaders of the Boys Club took note of his brave actions in WWII, possibly a result of their teaching of love of country in the classes in the Y.!

Old Picture Shows  
Baraboo Boys in 1928  
Yesteryear Revisited  
By Bob Dewel

This is article number 280, more or less, in the Yesteryear Revisited series. In many cases, after an article has been printed, I discover or am informed that there is much more that could have been written on the subject, This is true of our recent Y.M.C.A. (Y) articles.

John Turner

Printed on this page is a picture supplied by John Turner of a class in the Y building for boys age 9 to 17. The photo is not dated, but appears to have been perhaps 1928. Note how well the boys are dressed—grunge was not acceptable then!

Thanks to the good memory of Turner, many of the boys have been identified. Turner, for example, is in the front row on the left, sitting on the lap of an older boy, Carl Ocherhauser. John is not sure, but believes that Ocherhauser played football for Army a few years later, perhaps as a punter.

Local sports expert Curt Page Jr. confirms that Ocherhauser went to West Point, but was not sure about the sports career. Carl's parents ran a bowling alley in the lower business district on Walnut Street, he recalls.

Returning to the picture, the boy on Turner's left is Phil Scheible, while the boy covering his ears is Lyle Coles, and Bob Wickus at the end of that row. Older residents will recognize Bill Ott in the 3<sup>rd</sup> row left with dark shirt and tie. Standing at the fireplace is Charlie Adams, with John U. Dithmar in the back row third from the left, in a striped sweater. Many others can be recognized also, and the known names are listed under the picture.

John says this group was known as the Bronze Square Club, consisting of boys age 12 and over. Turner also remembers a ball team of that day

called the 60 inch club, for you could not be taller than 60 inches to be on the team. John is not sure whether this was a Y team or a church team however.

Bob Ott

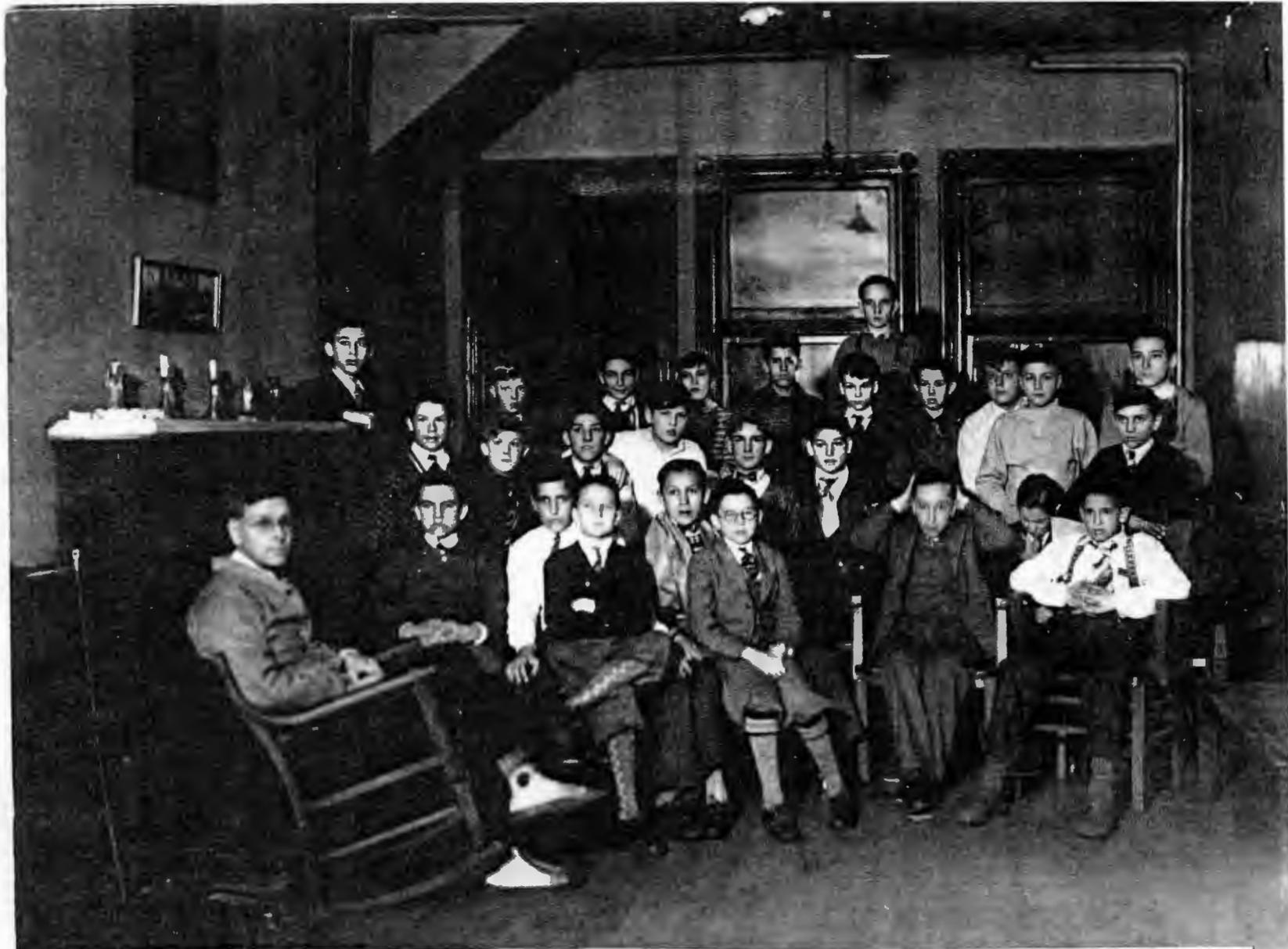
Another memory of the Y was given to us by Bob Ott. It seems that his father Bill got the contract to raze the building, and salvaged parts were used in the construction of several Baraboo houses. It was the job of young Bob Ott to scrape the mortar off the bricks so they could be used again!

William Jennings Bryan

We also have learned that a speaker at one of the Y dinners was none other than William Jennings Bryan, a three times national Presidential candidate. He spoke on May 11, 1911, at least a decade before his involvement in the famous Scopes trial in Tennessee. Scopes, a schoolteacher, had dared to teach evolution in that somewhat sheltered state, and this was against the law. Bryan prosecuted the case.

Bryan died a broken and ridiculed man a week after the trial, but all of this was ahead for him in 1911 as he spoke at the Y. He had previously visited Baraboo as a speaker at the old Grand Opera House, which burned in 1905. He also appeared in Baraboo at a Chautauqua meeting.

With regard to the picture at the Y, Turner is not sure when it was taken, but 1928 or 1929 seems logical. The Y would close its doors shortly, perhaps the victim of the Depression, as were so many of the institutions and traditions of that day.



In front, from left are Fred Babcock (in the rocking chair), unidentified, Carl Ocherhauser (white shirt and tie), John Turner (sweater and tie), Dick Koepp (bow tie), Phil Scheible (glasses), Lyle Coles and Bob Wickus. In the second row are Warren Glover, Bill Ott, "Speed" Porter, Billy Johnson, "Windy" Hatch, the rest unidentified. In the third row are Charlie Adams, Marvin Hanley, Francis Fleming, John Dithmar, Ray Wickus, Joe Rocher, Robert Tobler, unidentified, Bill Frenz, John Platt and Iris Federman. In back is Bill Wilkinson.



RAY WICKUS PHOTO  
**This photo, taken in the lower level of the YMCA in the late 1920s, shows (seated) Harold Wickus, Sidney Wakefield, Tom Ocherhauser, Earl Geyman, Carl Ocherhauser, Iris Federman, (standing) Ezra Schaefer and Merl Hanley.**

## "Y" Secretary In 1899 Gives Early History

7-23-35

H. G. Schade of this city is the recipient of an interesting history of the local Y. M. C. A. which has been before the public's eyes of late with the demolishing of the "Y" building.

The historical article was written by Ernest P. Boettcher of Raston, Penn., who was general director and physical secretary from 1899 to 1906. The two families had been neighbors during the Boettcher's residence here and Mr. Schade sent the former secretary clippings and articles regarding the departure of the "Y."

### Sends Photographs

Mr. Boettcher not only responded with the article but included a photograph and tintype of various Y. M. C. A. members in olden days, the latter having been taken of the delegates to the National Railroad Men's Y. M. C. A. convention at Philadelphia, Pa. The photograph was made at Atlantic City, N. J. The two have been placed in the Baraboo News-Republic window.

Those men shown in the tintype as given to the best of Mr. Schade's memory and his inquiries of other Baraboo residents include Conductor Mahar, Conductor William Haven, now in Adams; Conductor Matt Dickens, who was stationed at Elroy when the Baraboo man last located him; Conductor Joe Degan of Baraboo, and the superintendent of the Madison division, believed to be a Mr. Bidwell.

Messrs. Moran, Tudor, Stewart, Williams and Adams are seen in the photograph with another young man whose identity is unknown and one who is believed to be Fred Effinger.

Baraboo people will be interested in hearing that Mr. Boettcher's son, Walter Boettcher, who was born in this city, is now a professor in Lafayette college at Easton, Pa.

### The Exit of the "Y"

Following appears the article of

the Pennsylvania man:

The exit of the "Y", meaning the building, is indeed seen with deep regret. But the "Y" spirit and its purpose cannot and never will die. We still hear the striking words "As a man soweth, so he reapeth," and that remains through eternity.

Having had the call and the real joy to act as general secretary and physical director of your Y. M. C. A. for seven years, during the period 1899-1905, I was somewhat surprised to receive the information of the passing of the Y. M. C. A. building of your city, Baraboo, Wis.

It came to me, that a word from one with whom you dared and shared in the investments for a cycle of years in the boyhood and young manhood of that day would not be amiss. So let me go back and try to live my life over. I know many choice and splendid co-workers will be omitted since it is quite a long time since my days of service with you then and one will forget—"It is human to err."

No doubt some of you will recall, I came to your city as a young man. Soon after my arrival I went East, back to Philadelphia, Pa., for my bride. When we returned, that reception you folks so kindly gave us is not forgotten by Miss Boettcher nor by me either.

Immediately the Y. M. C. A. and its purpose claimed our attention and the results confirmed our efforts had been well spent.

Classes in stenography—book-keeping, Commercial Arithmetic, Spelling, English and Air Machinery were conducted and splendidly attended. The outcome was most gratifying. Some of these students and instructors (the latter's work was volunteer service) attained high rating in their chosen professions. As I recall a few I will note their names: Messrs. Ervin F. Rau, W. C. Schorer, Arthur Rumpf, W. T. Main, F. C. Fosdick, O. E. Whitcomb, W. Haven, etc.

The officials of C. N. W. R. R. Co., Pres., Marvin Hughett, Vice Pres. Gardner, Supt. Motive Power, Robert Quayle, Supt. Madison division, Mr. Bidwell, recognized this effort and efficient work among their employes with promotions.

During these years the work of the physical department reached its highest mark, the enrollment in the classes and teams was the biggest. The results, in interest, benefit to the body and mind, and rejoicing in a victory won in clean sports were ever ours; look back and then forward to the years near by. The necessary equipments were always

added by a happy people, our own. In the religious work department the Y. M. C. A. attempted to give the boys and the young men the opportunity of accepting the higher life, the Christian life, and to use same in their relation with their fellowmen. With this in view, gospel meetings, Bible study clubs, cottage prayer meetings, shop Bible study classes, Home Bible study class and special evangelistic services were conducted. Many happy hearts recall these efforts with much joy and thank God for them. The results of these meetings will never die, tho buildings may pass out.

The social work made use of the homelike parlors by frequent receptions, entertainments, get-togethers and stunt nights, welcoming the members and strangers alike.

The Boys' Work department was reorganized, governed by the boys themselves. It was the most promising. It took large strides in membership and usefulness. As then the boys needed the Y. M. C. A. so do the boys of the present day need the Y. M. C. A. Boys' nature changes very little. Father is only the boy grown up.

The Baraboo Y. M. C. A.'s vision was not only on its own field, but it placed some of its money and prayers in the Y. M. C. A. effort in China and Korea and we locally did not suffer by it, but rejoice at the fine Christian victories there.

Much of the real joy of life came to me in the personal contacts I had with my directors, self-sacrificing men. Let me recall, Dr. Walter A. Hazelton, Dr. F. W. Greiner, F. R. Bentley, Fred Risley, George O. McArthur, George W. Andrews, Ed. Luth, O. E. Whitcomb, H. H. Stanley. I have and do thank God for their constant, everyday help. Men whom God loves to honor.

To that list of God's noble men let me add:

Phillip Keyser, W. T. Main, Clarence Kindschit, Charles Ringling, Mr. Hoiden, Mayor Marriott, T. Maher, Harry Tudor, Fred Stewart, Elmer Johnston, Ed. Matke, William C. Schroeder, Henry Schade, Prof. A. B. Stout, Hood Bros., (Republic), Burr Williams, Leonard Roser, William Moran, Fr. Durward, Fred Nehs, Arthur Rumpf, F. C. Fosdick, Rev. Richard, Ed. Luckow, Cole-Dorsett, (News), Max Adams, Harry Scott, Ed. McGilvra, J. Worthman.

These among many others were my helpers to whom I could go for consultation and advice. All ever ready to help financially if the cause was worthy and a need there. My mind flashes to the splendid groups representing our Y. M. C. A. at the state, district, and national conventions.

No better work was ever done than mother did for her son at Bar-

## Red Brick for Public Buildings was Standard Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

The recent series on the old Baraboo Y.M. C. A. began as one story, and soon ballooned into three. Many commented to us on the series, ranging from early morning calls to a phone call from LaCrosse. This call was from Ray Wickus, long time resident who now lives there to be near the children.

Ray's contributions are shown on this page: (1) a photo taken in about 1927 on the front steps of the Y building, apparently at the Ash street entrance; (2) a photo in the lower level of the Y. Note how well dressed the boys are, even during the Depression, denoting a pride in appearance less apparent today. Ray has been able to identify many of the boys in his age group.

The Y followed the usual plan of those days, namely that public buildings should be of red brick. So it seems, anyway, for the public and even many semi-public structures in the city were red brick. Baraboo had a brick yard at one time but it is believed that it produced only yellow bricks.

The old city hall, which we have pictured in other articles, was red brick, with a tower comparable to that of a church steeple. It was still in existence in 1960 when Chappie Fox arrived to direct the Circus World Museum, where an attic room was provided to him for the balance of the winter.

In the 300 block on the west side of Broadway stood the old red Jail, scene of the incarceration of at least one of the Chicago hoodlums during the 1961 manhunt. It too was an imposing and also bulky structure, soon to be replaced by an addition to the Courthouse, in pre-cast concrete. The Courthouse was an exception, appearing light, as it is today, since 1905. It had replaced a red brick structure,

however, that was damaged beyond repair by a fire in 1905. The present building will be feted this year on its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Watch the News-Republic for details

The decade of 1950-60, and a few years into the following decade, was marked by removal of several red brick elementary school buildings, East and West and South schools of today replacing them. Red brick was used for East School and the High school, while South and West and Willson school were in a lighter tan or pink color.

The new St. Joe parochial school in 1960 was in a tan or yellow brick, but St. John's Lutheran school on Fifth Street was built with red brick, as was the Middle School. In an attempt at compromise, the new City Services building appears to be half red brick and half poured or pre-cast white concrete.

One older red brick schoolhouse still stood in the 1960's on the east side of Oak Street in the 300 block. It had been built as a high school in 1907 following a fire, and served as such until a high school, the present civic center in the 300 block of Ash street, was opened in 1927. After that, the Oak Street building served as a Junior High School for a number of years, eventually falling to the wrecking ball.

Thus the Y was not alone in its red brick appearance. Wickus reports that he attended at least one year of school in the Y, where classes were held due to overcrowding until the High School on Ash Street was completed. Yellow or tan brick was used here. Styles change, and red brick is again in style for many commercial buildings. The modern red brick seems more subdued, not what one used to call "brick red."

Like others, Ray Wickus has good memories of the Y. He recalls a violin duet (Minuet in G) with Carl Effinger. He says that the Y had a makeshift radio station in 1927, a time when every boy knew how to make a crystal set and use it as a window to the wonderful new world of radio.



RAY WICKUS PHOTO

**This photo of the Hi-Y Club, taken on the steps of the YMCA building in 1930, shows (front row) future schools superintendent Gordon Willson, Ray Wickus, Milton Feinberg, Robert Harding, (second row) Martin Luther, Ed Horkan, Hubert Scales, Gordon Inglebritson, Carl Effinger, (third row) Jack McGann, "Shorty" Engilman, Merle Hanley, Kenneth Morley, (top row) Robert Mead, "Shorty" Schierholtz, Tom Ocherhauser, Lyle Corsaw and YMCA director Fred Babcock.**

# Family album contains pages of time

## Terbilcox photos display Baraboo-area history

Lifelong resident Frank Terbilcox Jr. is an avid viewer of the passing scene in Baraboo and Sauk County. He recently retired from being resident manager of the Leopold Reserve on Levee Road.



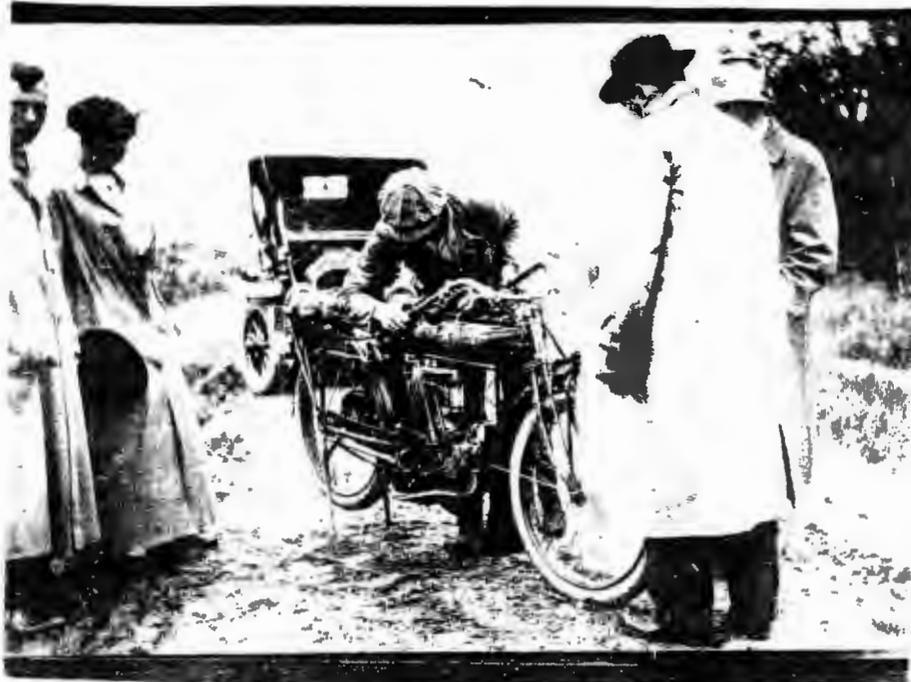
BOB  
DEWEL

▼  
YESTERYEAR  
REVISITED

While sorting through family memorabilia, he chose a number of old-time pictures to loan to the News Republic.

Though there is no unifying theme or story to the pictures we have selected, there is enough early 20th century historical flavor in them to justify appearance in today's Yesteryear Revisited column.

The description below each picture speaks for itself. The Terbilcox family traces three generations in Sauk County, Frank Jr.'s grandfather arriving here as a railroad engineer. His son, Frank Jr.'s father, is mentioned in several of the pictures.



At right, it was commonly said in the early days of the gasoline engine that you could fix anything with a length of baling wire. There are three successive photos of this breakdown, indicating that baling wire was in short supply. The onlookers were from the sporty roadster in the background, and had stopped to help or to hassle as was the custom in those days.



In the photo above, circa 1920s, Rollo Prothro is at the wheel and Frank Terbilcox Sr. acts as brakeman. In the background is the old red brick high school, later a junior high. Long since razed, it was located on the corner of Second and Oak streets.

Automobile dealers then were highly competitive, especially with regard to speed, and these men are proudly displaying their trophy on the radiator cap. These are probably hard rubber tires, no air cushion to soften the bumps.



Was This Baraboo's first Taxi?



Our current summer and fall have been unusually dry, but not as dry as it shown in this undated photo of Devils Lake. The pier rises from five to six feet over the water and lake bed. Of interest is the rather large boathouse at the end of the pier. If the Minnewaukan steamboat was on the lake at this time, it would have trouble docking at the pier. ↑



Frank Terbilcox Sr. was an accomplished musician and harpist, having studied that instrument in Chicago as a young man. His orchestra consisting of himself, his brother Fred on violin, and Bernice Terbilcox on the cello, was often joined by Jasper Warn with his Double B Bass. They played engagements not only locally but throughout the Midwest. Born in 1888, he passed away in 1972, well known throughout the city. For some time he was the organist at the Al. Ringling Theatre, where the mighty Barton still speaks with authority. The organist played before all shows, and for the silent movies of those days, as well. Frank also served Charlie Ringling, carrying the money for the show at times. He and his brother operated the Yellow Cab company in Baraboo for a time also.



*A Model-T Ford convention in downtown  
Baraboo 1930's*

## ENTERING BARABOO OVER THE HIGH BRIDGE

### Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

Many people claim they read these articles, but now there is indisputable proof. Our story published on Dec. 28 discussed the early highways into Baraboo before the bypasses. As a result, Betty (Dean) Smith has contributed a postcard showing the approach to the old high bridge from the south.

#### Looking North

As can be seen in the accompanying picture, this is not the usual side view of the high bridge, but rather the approach to the bridge as the traveling stage, carriage or wagon driver would have seen it before 1915. An occasional car crossed also. The street is Vine Street on the south side of Baraboo.

As can, be seen, the most prominent building was known recently as the Long Branch Tavern, until it was razed in about 1973. In it's day, and in the picture, it is The Effinger, a hotel and bar, as can be read from the sign in the window.

The proprietors lived in a small apartment upstairs, with many rooms for rent to travelers detaining at the nearby station. Train engineers roomed there also. Tracks on the gravel road in the foreground appear to be wagon tracks, not automobile tire tracks.

Below The Effinger is a livery stable, also convenient for the train traveler. The horses were kept in the basement and

brought to ground level on a ramp when needed.

Beyond the livery stable can be seen the walkway on the side of the rather narrow and very high bridge over the Baraboo river. It probably was a breezy walk, summer or winter, but brought you nearly to First Street in downtown Baraboo.

In the far distance can be seen the hills north of Eighth Street, soon to be occupied by homes and a hospital. Far to the right in the picture is the steeple of the Presbyterian Church, still standing today after well over 100 years.

#### Looking South

The next postcard shows the high bridge as viewed looking south. On the left is the old red brick school, built in about 1906 and removed in about 1964. Since the cupola on the courthouse was replaced with the Gatticker Memorial Clock in 1915, the picture must have been taken between 1906 and 1915.

The neatness of the lawns and sidewalks may be partly due to the skill of the artist who touched up the original photograph with color, still vivid on the card. The north abutment for the high bridge remains today as something of a river view point.

#### The Business Section

The third postcard is the view of the business section which greeted the traveler as he proceeded north off the bridge onto Oak Street to where it crosses Second Street. It would be here, at this intersection in 1917,

Oak St. Looking South  
High School at Left,  
Baraboo, Wis.



John McNabb Collection

Looking South on Oak Street, toward the High Bridge

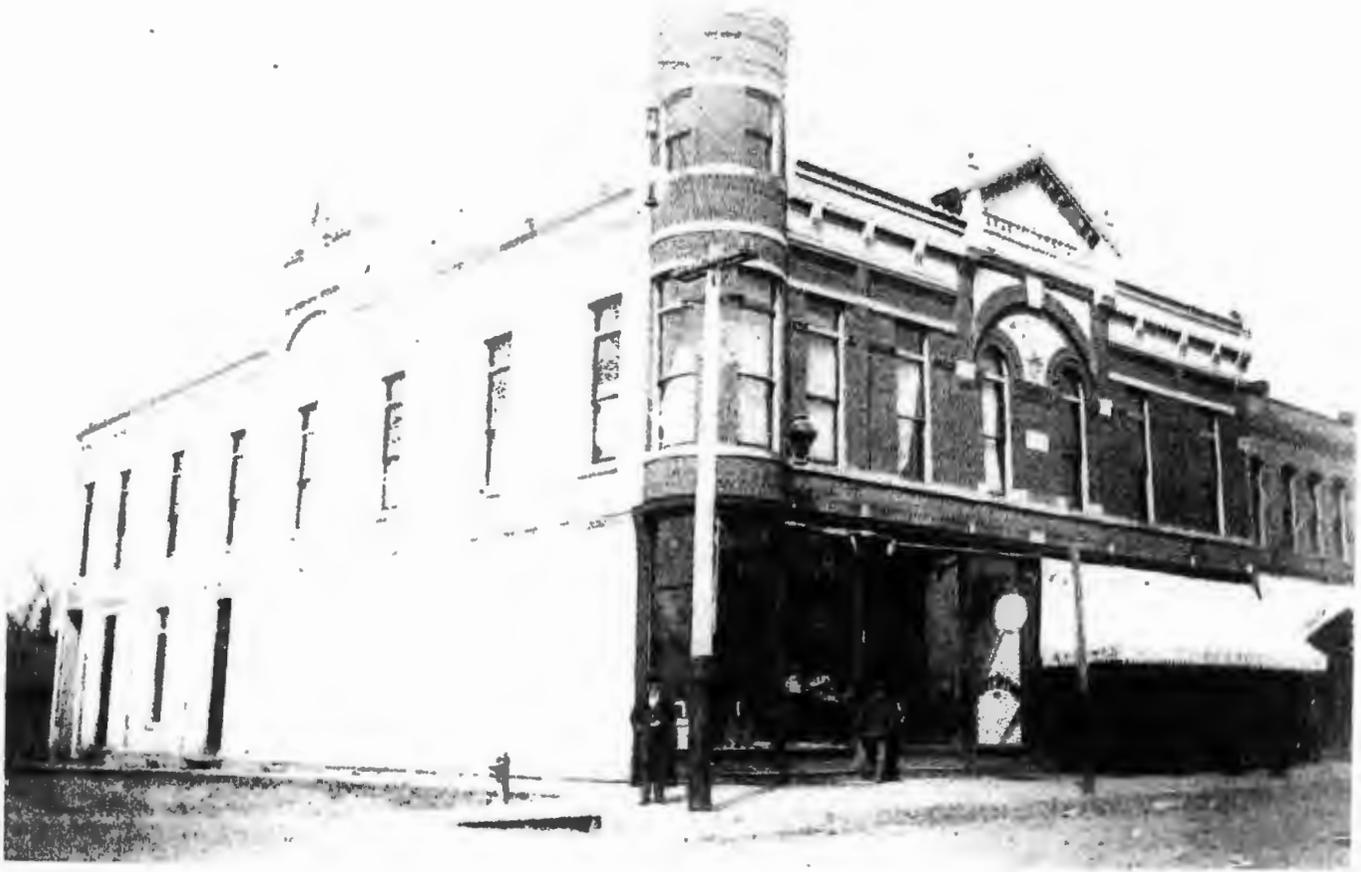
that some still unnamed high school students burned their German textbooks in a vigorous patriotic gesture.

The early traveler would have been impressed by the building on the left, owned by the Masonic Lodge, the quarters of which were upstairs. The lower level was rented by the McGann furniture store and funeral parlor, and the entire building would be razed by fire nearly half a century later.

Mrs. Smith, who lent the postcard looking north, is a Baraboo native, born Betty Benardis. Her father had run away to join the circus at age 14 and became a trapeze artist.

Baraboo was the center of the circus world in those years, just as it is the world center of circus research and memorabilia and circus wagons today. It was natural, then, for Benardis to retire from the circus to Baraboo. In later years he became the proprietor of Benardis Electric.

The High Bridge was removed in perhaps 1929, when the first bypass of downtown was effected by the construction of the Broadway Bridge in 1928. The second bypass, highway 12 into West Baraboo, occurred in 1937, and now there is talk of bypassing even West Baraboo. To its credit, Baraboo has taken all the bypasses in stride.



corner of Oak and Second Streets  
 The Masonic Temple is on the left, above McGann's

The fine Broadway bridge, with twelve street lights at one time, is now to be razed. In recent years Baraboo has seen the rest of its river bridges replaced, often with purely utilitarian structures devoid of classical

form. One bridge, the historic old Manchester Street bridge, now gracefully connects Attridge and Ochsner Parks on the city's west side. Hopefully the new Broadway bridge will feature some style and class----and lights!.



*Photo Courtesy Betty Smith*

*Highway 12 entering Baraboo via the High Bridge,  
looking north.*

# VIRGIL H. CADY

of Baraboo

DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE

For

# GOVERNOR

General Election, Tues., Nov. 2, 1926.



Authorized and Paid for by Democratic State Central Committee,  
Raymond Moore, Secretary, 2000 Hampstead Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.

# A Really High Bridge for Baraboo?

## Tales of Earlier Days

By Bob Dewel

There's been a lot of talk about the Baraboo River this summer--Riverfront planning, the great flood of early June, and of course, all of our seven bridges--Eight if the curious bypass is constructed to speed tourists past Baraboo to "tha delz". Also remarkable was the courageous and successful stand made by the old iron Manchester Bridge against the great deluge of '08, which still connects Ochshner and Attridge Parks.

Relocated there as a foot bridge after its move from Manchester Street several years ago, it defiantly withstood not only the surging waters, but the indignity of having a tree thrust through its innards. Also surviving was the Circus World foot bridge. All of our bridges defied the onslaught of the record high river.

But the Baraboo River has always been a premier subject of local conversations. After all, it was the river and its multiple rapids that determined the location of the city. It once supported four and possible five dams at the same time and there were frequent reports of "freshets" regularly destroying those primitive structures. One year Roseline Peck saw her stand of young trees commandeered without approval or compensation to bolster one of those primitive early dams. Everyone who was here remembers the 1993 "flood of the century. Little did we know what was coming in June 2008!

Little remembered now, however, are the bitter disputes in the 1920's as to the replacement and

possible relocation of the somewhat spectacular High Bridge, spanning the river at Oak Street at a dizzying height above the river. Built somewhat cheaply in 1890, the narrow roadway was restricted to 5 miles per hour by a nervous city council while it deliberated the questions of replacement and, later, relocation. Tempers ran high on the matter, and it required mass meetings and a referendum to resolve the issue. The result changed the face of downtown Baraboo to some degree, as we shall see.

Thanks to City Attorney Virgil Cady, and the use of his scrapbooks by Bud and Ardice, we have the complete newspaper accounts of the dispute. It all began -on April 22, 1925, when Mayor Andro reported on the deteriorating condition of the High Bridge on Oak Street. The matter smoldered until early 1926, when three ideas were presented.

One proposed either a new bridge at the current high level, or one at near river level, or one spectacular structure crossing high over the river and then arching even higher over the railroad tracks! This latter plan would cost up to \$650,000, compared to \$240,000 for an ordinary high bridge. The County Board, approved it with amazingly little discussion, the state providing 50%, the County 30%, and the city 20% of the cost.

As may be imagined, now the debate began! From February 1925 on the paper was filled with pro and con arguments. For the first time, the novel idea of placing a bridge at the south terminus of Broadway was broached by the mayor. Meantime 300 persons attended two meetings, one on Feb. 15, 1925.

As may be expected, a large majority opted for the cheaper river level bridge over the higher bridges. However, a committee of seven (Risley, Jones, Dithmar, McFetridge, Halsted, French, and Hood), chosen apparently at the meeting, met with state officials to preserve the elevated high bridge site.

Incidentally, the idea of Merimac bridge was also briefly considered by the state.

Again what was refer to as the Broadway Bridge idea was mentioned, with an underpass. However, a subsequent mass meeting called for retention of the High Bridge location. Newspaper reports here are conflicting, one story praising the potential beauty of the high bridge over the river and the railroad tracks. Again the Broadway location was casually mentioned, stating it would hook up with the Warner Memorial Road somehow. It would pass through the low ground south of the railroad known as Dutch Hollow, with a potential drainage problem. By now, however, sentiment seemed to be for a low level bridge at Oak, and one suspects the businessmen wanted the traffic to continue to flow on Oak Street, a priority in thinking in those days.

In frustration over the disagreements, the Council called for a referendum, on April 6, 1924, including the possibility of a Broadway bridge in place of the other ideas. Sentiment was against that idea, the vote being 587 against to 351 for. On the Oak Street proposition, the usual high level bridge was preferred 696 to 351 against an elevated span over the railroad tracks.

We're sorry to note that this appears to be the end of the bridge saga in the Virgil Cady papers we have. The present volume ends in April 1926, and Baraboo and the state appear to be in agreement on replacing the High Bridge with a similar structure, still on Oak Street. Some people must have been disappointed, preferring what would have been a very spectacular bridge extending from Second and Oak to Vine Street well beyond and over the railroad tracks. Either bridge made traffic follow a path through the center of the city, with possible profit from tourist business.

Bud and Ardice Cady have been generous in allowing use of their Grandfather's scrapbook. And now a

confession: The scrapbook is chronological, and to my astonishment, the scrapbook ended at this point. To a greater surprise however, was a discovery, while looking up something for this article. I knew I had mentioned the fact somewhere, and I found that actually I have already written extensively about the 1928 construction of the Broadway Bridge!

I'll not repeat that information, but readers can find two reports in my Book II, Section VI, pages 52 to 55, at the Library or at the Historical Society. They are also in the single spiral bound book for the year 2004. Both sets of books can be seen or purchased at the Booksmith. Briefly, despite fierce opposition, the highway department wisely wanted Highway 12 off narrow Vine and Quarry streets, and prevailed on the council to go along with a Broadway crossing. If other information appears in future Cady scrapbooks, I will report on it.



CONTRIBUTED

**This is the old High Bridge, due to be demolished in 1926. Some people had great vision in those days, and proposed a spectacularly High Bridge, as high as the superstructure of this old one.**

## More Great Bridge Battles of 1926 Tales of Other Days By Bob Dewel

The July 9 story on downtown bridge problems ended abruptly, as did the Cady scrapbook I was using. The Cady's have allowed me to copy the next scrapbook by Bud's Grandfather, and now I can fill in some of the details. This presents a challenge, for there are 23 news stories related to the old High Bridge, and the same number related to the new and somewhat unwelcome Broadway Bridge.

Let's review the Broadway Bridge first. There had never been a bridge at the foot of Broadway, there being two formidable problems—the railroad, and the low marshy area to the South known as Dutch Hollow. It was supposed that even with a railroad underpass, there might be flooding there—and indeed there has been on occasion. Moreover, the low Dutch Hollow ground would invite standing water, which it did until extensive city storm sewer systems were put in.

### The Broadway Bridge

As stated in the previous article, the Broadway choice of a bridge location was rejected, voters preferring a new High Bridge or possibly a really spectacular high bridge and overpass for the railroad. Not impressed by that referendum, however, was the state Highway Commission, which virtually dictated that any new bridge they constructed would be the foot of Broadway.

They pointed out that this was much cheaper, only \$276,000 as compared to \$389,000 for a new high Bridge. Part of the costs would be picked up by Baraboo and by the County. In the end, the bridge and highway rerouting cost less than projected, and the city received a

refund from the County a few years later for \$12,761. Work began in August 1927 despite complaints by a critical segment of the population, and the bridge opened in 1928 with a great celebration. The legion Band played, thousands gathered on the sparkling new edifice, and there was general acceptance.

A note about the previous entrance to the city: Highway 12 wandered in on the present Quarry Street, with sharp curves to get it onto narrow Vine Street, which led into the High Bridge. After a bumpy ride over the very busy Northwestern tracks, one then motored over the narrow High Bridge, entering Oak Street on the north bank of the river at First Street, sometimes called Bench Street.

### The Oak Street Demands

So, why the dissention? Basically there were two reasons. There was still heavy dependence on passenger train traffic, and the High Bridge made it easy for visitors and salesmen to walk a fairly level path from the depot to the business section, rather than descending to the Walnut Street Bridge, and then struggle up the hill on Ash Street. The High Bridge was level, and it was shorter. Broadway would be an even longer walk.

The other reason was business. In those days, every highway wound through the business section of a town, with merchants hoping to attract motorists to stop and shop. Broadway then, despite its nice width, was only on the fringe of the business section, and was easily overlooked by travelers. Actually, it presented little more than three churches then, plus a corner building on the Third and Fourth intersections. Eventually it was home to eight gas stations!

The businessmen feared a significant drop in patronage, and there probably was some loss. Little did they know that in less than 10 years the entire city would be bypassed by a high bridge into West Baraboo. Beyond imagination



The High Bridge



or logic then, (and perhaps now), is the possibility of a "bypass to bypass that bypass", as currently is proposed a mile west of the present highway 12 in the Baraboo area. It barely grazes the new city limits. Highway traffic is speeded to the North, but then travels down the frenetic main street of our neighbor to the North! So much for bypasses.

There were dire predictions in 1927. A committee of heavy hitters headed by Kingsford declared that the City would "be compelled to build a new High Bridge on Oak at Baraboo's own expense". Mayor Andro repeated this to the City Council, saying the city would be "required (despite the Broadway bridge) to retain a bridge on Oak Street". Various petitions with alternate plans were circulated, but it was a losing battle. The Highway commission was adamant, and the city was not about to replace the old bridge, having just completed new bridges on Walnut and Second Avenue and into Lyons, (plus possibly the waterworks bridge).

During some of this time, the High bridge had been closed, first to vehicle traffic and then even to walkers. An inspection had revealed several serious defects, and the cheaply built structure had only lasted 35 years. As an additional indignity, during that winter the road crews removed some of the floor boards so as to dump snow from city streets into the river. It saved them from descending down Ash Street to river level, and then back up again. In a final petition, promoters circulated a petition to at least repair it for use as a foot bridge, but to no avail. In June 1929, the bridge was removed for salvage, costing the city only about \$2500. The North abutment, of course, remains to day and is to be a scenic outlook if plans are fulfilled.

As for the attached picture, I am adding it to my collection of unique ways in which the unusual name Baraboo is used around the world. The license plate may be seen in Western

Australia! The owner is Kathy Sims, who has been in Baraboo in the past, as a guest of the Gordon Caffish family. It is said that she talked so much about Baraboo that her husband arranged for this plate for her.

During bridge construction, Highway 12 was routed for a time through Baraboo in many ways, one being via Carpenter Street, Moore Street, and Second Avenue. It is reported that at first 12 proceeded North on Broadway to Fifth Avenue, but the merchants prevailed upon the authorities to bring it over to Oak, thence back west to Broadway on Fourth Avenue. It then proceeded out Fifth Avenue and Angle Street. The reason it did not go to Eighth Avenue, was that there was no Eighth Avenue between Broadway and Center, due to a large hill yet to be removed. The cement marker on the northeast corner of Ochsner Park once occupied the center of the intersection of Oak and Fourth.

So by 1928, the Broadway Bridge joined new structures on Walnut, Second Avenue, Island Court, and perhaps the Manchester Bridge. Soon to be built was the West Baraboo bypass bridge. Ninety years later, all have had to be replaced, again with controversy in some cases. Baraboo is fortunate to have so many bridges, but it is expensive when you build cheaply.

## Part 2: Dissention in 1928 over Broadway Bridge

### Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

FOR NEWSPAPER

Today, in 2004, nearly everyone seems pleased with the prospect of a new Broadway Bridge and 5 blocks of paving, all lighted. Broadway is barely navigable, and some merchants have had delivery and patronage problems, but in general the project seems looked upon with favor.

Not so in 1928, when the first Broadway bridge was constructed. As was indicated in the previous article, there never had been a bridge on Broadway, and the familiar High Bridge connecting Oak and Vine Streets across the Baraboo River was to be destroyed.

First, a little background: A 1928 Daily News story pointed out that there were 30 bridges over the river, six of which were in Baraboo. In the county it was estimated that there were 300 bridges over streams, a bridge being any passage over six feet in length. Sauk County had perhaps the most bridges of any Wisconsin county, thanks to its rugged but beautiful terrain and plentiful streams.

In Baraboo, the water power was harnessed and providing power for the Woolen Mill, employing 500 persons, plus the McArthur Mill employing many in the Linen factory. The City dam supplied some electric power for the city. Today all of the dams and industries and power dams are gone, inconceivable at the time of the article in 1928. Now there are seven bridges, counting those on Highways 12 and 113, plus the Ochsner-Attridge and Circus Museum pedestrian bridges.

No one seemed to contest the need for a new bridge in 1928, and it was obvious that the narrow and aging High Bridge could no longer serve the growing city. The city had long since put a 5 mph speed limit on it. The question was whether to replace the High Bridge or build a new one on Broadway. Some said to do the latter, but keep the High Bridge for foot and bicycle traffic.

Actually, there seems to have been a city referendum, with most voters preferring the High Bridge location. The first hint of a change came in a March 17, 1928 Daily News story, headlined "Oak Street May Not Get New Bridge." State surveyors felt that the sharp turns on Blake Street were not appropriate with a new bridge and highway approach to the city. They recommended that the bridge should be built at the foot of Broadway. A diagonal street to the Warner Memorial Highway (now State 123), would create a "Y" on the south edge of the city, with no sharp turns.

Expense was a factor, as the Broadway Bridge would be 320 feet shorter than the High Bridge, thus cheaper. Complicating the 1928 financial picture was the \$225,000 city bonding for a new high school, the building now known as the Baraboo Civic Center. Though the nation was prosperous, Baraboo was still recovering from the loss of the railroad division point and the two circuses.

At an April 21 open meeting it was stated that the Broadway plan would be cheaper by \$130,000, the total cost of the Broadway proposal being projected at \$271,000 according to the State Highway Commission. This apparently included paving "from the Irish Corner." The Northwestern Railroad would pay for the underpass.

As may be expected, there was plenty of dissention. Some 100 business men and others assembled at a meeting and presented their own plan with the highway coming into the city on Lynn Avenue, passing under the railroad tracks and continuing on Lynn to Vine Street. There a low level bridge would be built at the location of the High Bridge. Feeling was strong for this plan so as to keep the traffic through downtown on Oak Street. It was even threatened that Baraboo would be "compelled to build a new bridge on Oak at its own expense" if the Broadway plan went through! To be continued.



The new bridge and highway in 1928, complete with underpass, was clear of billboards and signs. The new oil station featured the pumps with gas visible at the top of the pump

## Part 3: Broadway Bridge Gains Acceptance in 1928 Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

In the previous article, the city was in an uproar in 1927, opposed to the State Highway Commission's plan of relocating Highway 12 to a new bridge at the foot of Broadway. In those days Broadway was almost devoid of business, having mostly a lumberyard and garage, plus two churches and the county jail. It dead-ended at the river, and also at Eighth Avenue, but it was wider than Oak. People liked the Oak street location of the High Bridge and most businessmen wanted it replaced, not abandoned. Little could they imagine the seven gas station that would appear when the highway went through.

How opinion can change! The Daily News reported a year later that the new Broadway route received hearty praise both for the bridge and the new South Boulevard approach. A new business was the Ritz oil station at the "Y", the current location in 2004 of Culligan Water Service. The newspaper noted that "there are bound to be extensive developments in this section of the city", and indeed there have been, all the way to Highway 12 where it crosses County W today, and beyond.

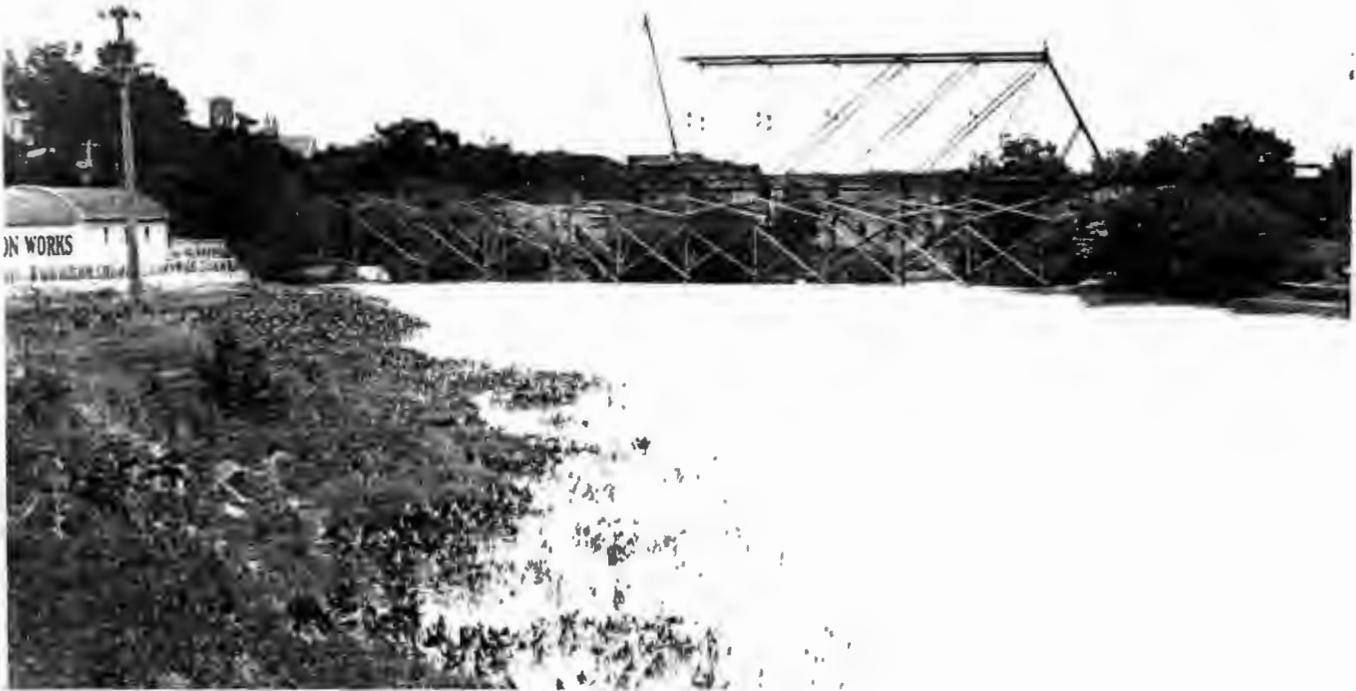
Especially praised was the "splendid wide bridge" on Broadway, so unwelcome a year ago. There was talk that O.E. Philbrick might develop his property south of the bridge, to perhaps including a "flying field." Dedication for the new bridge and road was held on August 9, 1928, complete with a parade and the American Legion Band. Both Chamber President Kingsford and Mayor Andro spoke, as did Governor Zimmerman.

Interestingly, a highway commission member hinted that highway 12 might be routed straight north through West Baraboo via another bridge in the near future. Indeed this was done in 1937, and now, by the end of 2004, both that bridge and the Broadway Bridge were outdated and will have been replaced.

The saga of the bridges was not yet over. On May 30, 1929, the News announced that the High Bridge was to be removed, and indeed by June 20 it was half gone. See the attached picture, obtained from the city for us by Bill Schuette. It cost \$2,500 plus the salvage rights to the wrecker. Because the new bridge and highway came in under estimates, the city requested and received the sum of \$12,761.93 from the County, apparently without rancor.

The sum was received on October 3, 1929, at about the same time as the stock market crash. The city's share of the project thus came to only about \$33,000. It is safe to say now that the downtown merchants would have long since been inundated with highway traffic had the High Bridge site been selected, and the downtown remains busy and vibrant despite the rerouting of tourist traffic.

A future proposed bypass will route traffic even further away from Baraboo and West Baraboo, speeding tourists toward "tha dellz" on still another bridge. We predict a bypass will never even be considered around Lake Delton, despite what surely is the worst traffic situation between Chicago and St. Paul.



It only cost the city \$2500, plus salvage rights  
To remove the bridge in 1928. Part of the  
pedestrian walk railing still exists and may be  
Used along the new riverwalk

1928 Broadway Bridge  
was Talk of the Town  
Yesteryear Revisited  
By Bob Dewel

The new Broadway Bridge now under construction in 2004, plus the extended repaving of Broadway north to Fifth Avenue, is the talk of the town today. It is about time, for the old street had become a patched up eyesore for downtown Baraboo.

Imagine, though, the chatter that was taking place in 1928, when the existing but now condemned bridge was first built. There had never been a bridge on that spot before, and Broadway was only a nine block street that dead-ended at Eighth Avenue on the north and the Baraboo River on the south. Some Broadway!

This would be a major change in 1928, with Highway 12 passing through the business district on its west side, on Broadway. Until then, US 12 proceeded north from the High Bridge on Oak Street, right through the middle of the business area. Many business men on Oak feared for the loss of tourist business.

That old highway joined highway 33 on the corner of Oak and Fourth Street-Avenue, both proceeding west, and then northwest on Angle Street, to Eighth Avenue and thence west. A center turn marker from that era now rests in Ochsner Park, on the corner of Park and Eighth Avenue.

To digress for a moment: Highway 12 appears to have had several routes from the south through the city over the years, but it always culminated on Vine Street, so as to cross over the High Bridge and proceed north on Oak through the business district.

#### Early routes

In even earlier days the primitive route came over the bluffs from the present powder plant area, on what we now call the Burma and South Lake Roads. It crossed the river on a covered

bridge where Ash Street becomes Walnut today. Another route of entry was probably Quarry Street coming from the west, turning onto Blake Street, then left on Vine so as to cross on the High Bridge. A map is helpful in following these routes more accurately.

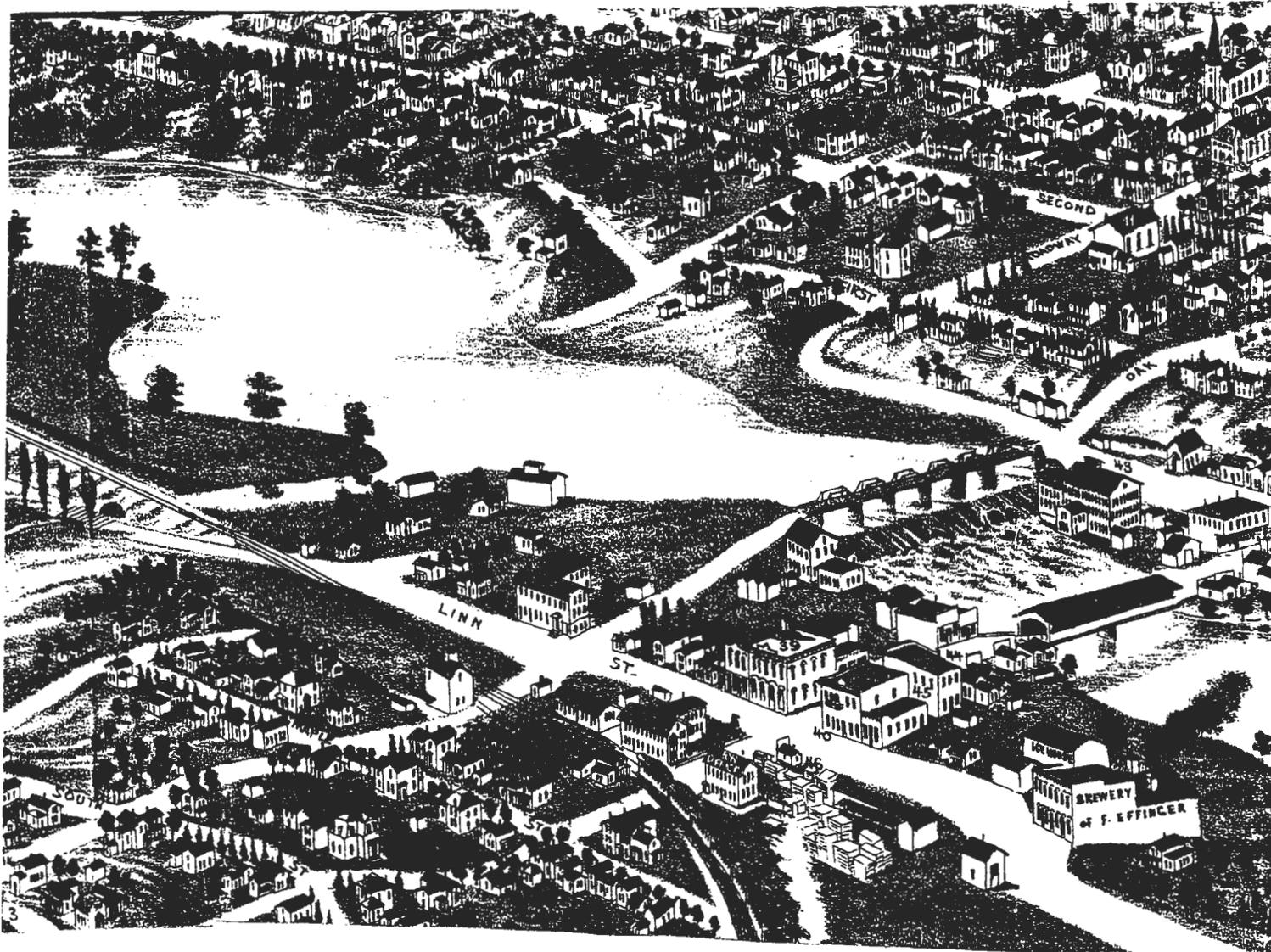
The new bridge would alter all of the past routes. Highway 12 now already met County W as it does today, but there would be no bridge in West Baraboo until 1937. Therefore the highway would proceed east on South Boulevard to the new bridge in 1928, just as the City 12 route does today. Broadway ends at the bridge, and South Boulevard begins at its southern edge. Today this route seems perfectly sensible, but the change was hotly contested in 1927-28.

The problem had become pressing when the High Bridge was declared to be unsafe, and its narrow lanes unsuitable for the more modern transportation of the day. It had served well for decades, especially for quick access to downtown from the depot. When Baraboo had nearly a dozen passenger trains each way a day, this quick approach was more important than the highway system with regard to getting downtown. The new Broadway Bridge, and the loss of the High Bridge, would be quite inconvenient for railroad travelers and salesmen.

#### Before the Bridge

So, what was the south end of Broadway like before 1928? City maps show only a turn onto Water Street going east, with two blocks to travel before one reached the lower business section of town near the covered bridge on Ash-Walnut Streets. To the right at the foot of Broadway it was probably swampy, with a gorge, known now as the paved Birch Street, emptying into the river. Birch appears to make possible entry to a river path leading west to Mary Rountree Park, which once had a brickyard nearby.

In 1872 surveyor Canfield mapped the city, and it shows that the



Credit: Sauk Co Historical  
Society

This bird's-eye sketch, done in the 1880's, shows a wide mill pond at the foot of Broadway. Birch street provides access to the river for fishermen and for ice harvesting in winter. The Ash-Walnut covered bridge can be seen on the lower right. The Oak Street bridge is one that preceded the High Bridge.

mill pond at the foot of Broadway was the widest point in the river, hardly the first place one would plan to place a new bridge. Even more instructive is the birds-eye drawing from the late 1880's, which shows a small stream entering the river almost exactly at the south end of the Broadway bridge location. The stream followed roughly the path of the present South Boulevard back to the present South Boulevard back to the swimming pool of today. No wonder this area of the street sometimes floods!

The same birds eye view, skillfully done by an unknown artist, shows Birch street leading directly into the river, perhaps for fishermen and their boats, or for ice retrieval in winter. The railroad tracks were in their present position, but there was no underpass of course, and Linn Street rose up and crossed the tracks, no doubt a dangerous crossing with all the trains on the busy track.

If all this seems a little confusing, imagine the consternation and quibbling that took place when the bridge plans were announced! To be continued in the next article.



**Welcoming home the WWI Veterans, 1919. Oak St. in Baraboo**



*A Riverwalk now passes under Broadway Bridge*

## TALES FROM EARLIER YEARS IN BARABOO

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

Note: This story was developed when the computer was "down".

The News-Republic has been generous over the years in allowing qualified local history buffs access to the columns of the paper. Writers such as Adrian Pfeiffer, Francis Schluter, and DeSautelle come to mind from the past. Another is Clark Wilkinson, the movie memorabilia collector of whom we have written previously.

### Sliding

This year's copious snowfall of Dec. 10, 2003, brings to mind Clark's description of sledding in the 20's and 30's. Wilkinson reports that Oak Street would be blocked off all the way from 4th Street to 11th Street, and the more adventurous sliders would rocket down the hill at a purported speed of 60 mph, some going as far as the Warren Hotel corner on Fourth Avenue. Both toboggans and sleds were used.

This was back in the days when highway 33 joined highway 12 at the Warren Hotel corner. A stone pillar was located in the center of that intersection. It was later moved, and can now be seen in Ochsner Park near the corner of Park and Eighth Avenue. Traffic was light during those early years of the automobile, and many men put their car up on blocks during the winter season, removing the tires and battery.

The city was smaller then, and downtown was often within walking distance. For out of town trips, there were plenty of passenger trains to take. Streets were not plowed then as they are now, partly to leave a sliding surface for the farmers, who came to town in sleighs, often complete with sleigh bells. Wilkinson, a farm boy, recalls such trips, and says he whiled away his time at the Gem Theatre while his parents shopped and visited. Today streets are quickly plowed and salted, and the city is developing a sliding hill at the new but unnamed northeast park.

### Bridges

During World War I soldiers marching across the High Bridge had to break step for fear that their combined stomping might bring down the bridge. This structure was removed upon the completion of the Broadway Bridge in 1928... That bridge is to be replaced in 2004 with a new bridge, hopefully complete with lights and a style befitting the approach to downtown.

The High Bridge was important in its day as a quick means for train travelers to cross the river and approach the business section without the downhill-uphill route of Walnut and Ash streets, with its covered bridge. Still visible is the mid-stream abutment of another bridge, a foot bridge for railroad men, crossing the river from the roundhouse area to the foot of East Street. Suspended by cables, it swayed when in use. Wilkinson reports twelve passenger trains a day, and in summer families packed sack lunches and took the train to Devils Lake, returning on an evening train.

### Influenza

An influenza epidemic, and possibly a pandemic, is much in the news in these closing days of 2003. In his column "Do You Remember?" Clark Wilkinson recalled the quarantine notices used in his youth. Signed by the local health authority, these prominent notices were posted at the front door of the home of anyone with certain diseases. Common childhood diseases such as measles and chickenpox did not always warrant the notice, but the more dreaded smallpox, scarlet fever, and diphtheria were prominently posted, with a warning not to enter the home.

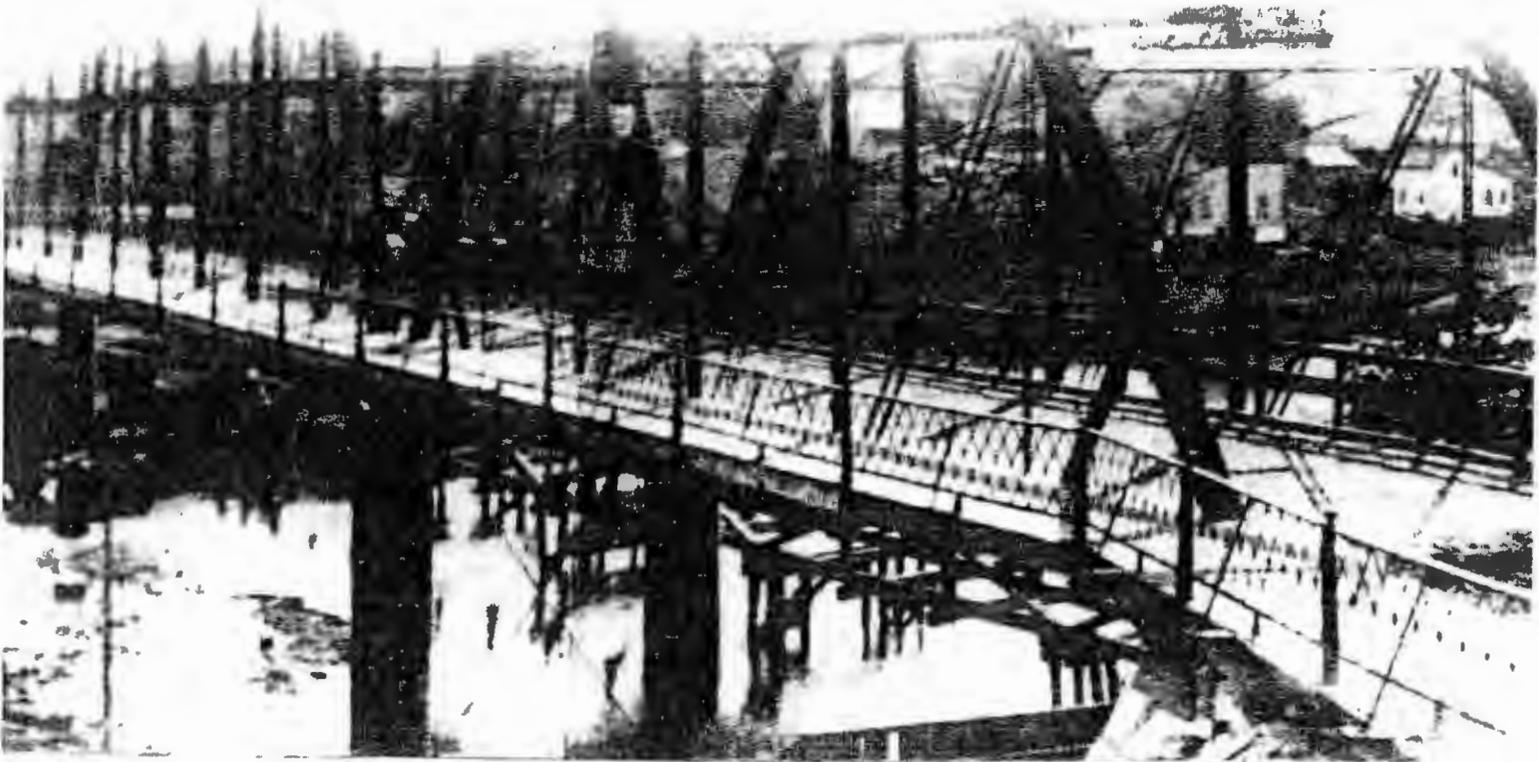
This practice seems to have been abandoned before the polio epidemic of the mid-century, and is no longer used by the health authorities. The current influenza threat reminiscent of the widespread influenza in 1919 following WWI, detailed in a previous article. Churches and schools were closed, as well as the theatres and public meeting places. Children under the age of 16 were not to leave their homes. In Wisconsin 8,459 persons died, with an estimated 20 million deaths worldwide. No flu shots then, of course.

### Livery Stables

Baraboo's Yellow Pages today list dozens of automobile garages, but at the turn of the century it was livery stables. Here one could rent horses or carriages and similar conveyances, or board your animals for periods of time. Commercial stables are known to have been located at the the following five places: (1) 117 Fourth Street, now the Alpine Cafe and Glacier Paint; (2) about 507 Broadway, near the north end of what is now the space occupied by the West Square Building; (3) 610 Oak Street, now the New China Buffet; (4) at about 110 Fifth Avenue, near the present Gavin offices; and (5) "on the south side of Oak Street, now torn down for the Power and Light Company offices".

The first Masonic Lodge building was built in the latter location in 1892, so that strategic location, coming off the High Bridge a block to the South, may be in doubt for a stable location. Perhaps it means the south end of the high bridge, where there was a stable, and where Power and Light, now called Alliant, has facilities.

It would be hard for folks in those days to imagine that about the only time a horse has been seen in downtown Baraboo for the last 40 years or so are those seen in a parade. Will the same thing happen to the automobile? Don't hold your breath.



An unusual close-up view of the high bridge, copied from the 1895 Baraboo city directory. It provided easy access from the railroad station to downtown.

1929, The City  
Attorney vs. the  
Newspaper  
**Tales of Earlier Days**  
By Bob Dewel

1929 was a year of some historical significance in Baraboo/Sauk County. Announcement had been made of the merger of the Daily News and The Republic, also a daily. 1929 was significant in another way also, for twice within 12 months the Courts ruled on actions involving the Baraboo city government.

The seemingly routine business merger of the two daily newspapers would become the catalyst for a bitter and acrimonious dispute between the City, more particularly the City Attorney, and the newspaper's owner, H. K. Page. The matter would only be settled the following year by a ruling of the State Supreme Court. That would coincide with the voluntary retirement of the City Attorney from public service after seventeen years of apparently outstanding public service. Even the office of Mayor Andro would be chastised by that court, and lead to his retirement!

#### The Newspaper Dispute

As best we can determine, the newspaper had, since 1922, received a total annual stipend of \$100 to print a regular transcript of the proceedings of the City Council. Printing of ordinances regarding streets and sewers, etc. was paid in a different manner, which Mr. Page did not challenge—only the printing of proceedings. The \$100 sum seems inadequate even in those days, but had lasted as long as there were two competing newspapers—The Daily News and The Daily Republic. Now, with their merger into the News-Republic, it seemed an opportune time, thought Mr. Page, to rectify the financial shortfall,

and on May 11, 1929 he notified the City Council to that effect. He also ceased publication of the transcripts.

City Attorney Virgil Cady, of whom we have written recently, was nearing completion of his second decade in that position, and had served well. It appears, however, that he was what we might call today a strict fundamentalist as far as city law was concerned. It appears that several months ago, before the merger, the usual routine contract for the services at \$100 a year had been agreed upon if not signed. On April 25 the Council directed the Clerk, with Cady's oversight, to prepare printers copy of proceedings. Cady saw no reason to accommodate Mr. Page with an altered and more generous contract in May, and started a mandamus proceeding to force publication.

#### Cady's City Bulletin

Believing that a report of city proceedings was vital, to the city's interest, City Attorney Cady actually began publication and distribution, on July 1, 1929, of his own "Baraboo City Bulletin", rather highly flavored with criticism of Mr. Page. It included a couple of sewer and paving ordinances, a report of council proceedings, and Page's written refusal to comply with the old statute enacted the previous February.

We already know, from previous scrapbook items, that Cady and City Clerk A.C. Reiner were political foes, and Cady generously includes a copy of an advertisement, apparently by Page, copying Reiner's statement that the City Council has not authorized publication of Cady's Baraboo City Bulletin. Page now says he will report the Council's proceedings, or some at least, as news and at no cost rather than submit to the \$100 maximum compensation per year.

Up to this time Cady's scrapbooks have been a model of chronological entry, but now page after page contains copies, some out of order, of the five bulletins he issued

between July 1, 1929 and March 28 1930. In this issue he is not kind to Reiner's candidacy for re-election and promotes his secretary, Elizabeth Schmitt for election to Reiner's position. Reiner by now has issued his own bulletin. Soon Cady, in an editorial in his bulletin, calls for "a live, militant community newspaper", a shot across the bow at Page and the News-Republic.

#### The Court supports Page

During all this time, Mr. Cady has not received the support of the city Council. However, the Council does not move to acceded to Mr. Page's request for more money formally, since he is currently reporting parts of the proceedings at no charge as news items. To his credit, Cady also reports in complete detail the statements made by Page, Reiner, and others in opposition to his own point of view.

Mr. Cady's case seems doomed when he is overruled, in August, 1929, by a lower court, but he proceeds to the Supreme Court of Wisconsin. On Feb. 4, 1930, Madison newspapers announce that the court has ruled in favor of Page. Justice was rapid in those days, the decision being made less than 9 months. In his bulletin on Jan 23, 1930, Cady announced his retirement from the office of city attorney, perhaps in anticipation of an adverse ruling. Walter Jenks and Robert Gollmar then filed for city attorney, and Gollmar prevailed. Like Cady, long time Mayor Andro does not run also, due to an unrelated dispute in city affairs.

#### Cady Retires

One can assume, I think that there are currents of political animosity below the surface of this relatively minor dispute, and there are occasional nuances in the Cady and Reiner publications to suggest it to be so. We don't know the reason why Cady elected not to run at this time. Hopefully it was not his potential defeat in the News-Republic matter. He was enough of a politician, we believe, to shrug off the defeat. The last two pages in the

scrapbook are reports of his death and funeral in April, 1934, only four years after his resignation. We hope that time softened the sting of his loss, and that he was able to recognize it as politics in government.

#### Mayor Andro Departs

So, what about Mayor Adolph Andro and a modest legal transgression? Why did he decline to run after 5 terms (ten years) as Mayor? Well, Andro had his own fight going. For years he had served, along with being mayor, as Justice of the Peace. Political enemies who developed over the years seized on this apparent impropriety and took him to court in the fall of 1928. The Court ruled that Andro could not serve both as Mayor and as Justice of the Peace.

Andro indicated he would remain as Mayor for the balance of the current term, and apparently ceased his office of Justice of the Peace. There was some mention of Andro for the State Assembly, but no other reports appeared in the newspaper clippings. In the ensuing Mayoral election, Rollo Prothero defeated William Hayes by a slim margin. Baraboo now had a new Mayor new City Attorney, and would, within a few months, start feeling the effects of the 1929 stock market disaster the following Fall. More than ten years would elapse before the Badger Ammunition Plant roused the town from the lethargy of the Depression.

## SCHS had many Housing Chances

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

[www.drbobdewel.i8.com](http://www.drbobdewel.i8.com)

We all are invited on March 20 to the observation of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Van Orden Mansion. Currently the home of the Sauk County Historical Society (SCHS), it was first occupied on March 24 of 1904 by banker Jacob Van Orden and his family.

It is not the oldest home in Baraboo by far, but it is distinguished by the fact that its architect was "local boy made good" Alfred Clas who, with his firm, also designed the courthouse and the state capitol building. Jacob's home was among the finest in the city, and served the family for many years.

Though it has served as the home of the SCHS since its purchase in 1938, history shows that other sites might well have been the Society's location. From a meager display in the old turn of the century courthouse to the tremendous collection of today, the Society has done its work so well that larger and larger quarters have been required.

### The Noyes Residence

Such was the case in 1927, when the opportunity rose for housing the growing collection in the historic Noyes residence near the Northeast corner of Ash and First Streets. More accurately, it was just across the alley south from the present Dr. Konen dental offices. Built in 1850 as an elegant Colonial style brick home with a porch with pillars, the city by 1927 owned the once imposing property. It was scheduled to be razed for a curious reason.

The school system was about to erect a new high school, the building now known as the civic center, on the Southwest corner of Second and Ash Streets and extending to First Street along Ash. Part of the school property

was still occupied by private homes considered to be in better shape than the old Noyes home, so the latter was to be destroyed. This would make room so that a house could be moved on to the property from across the street, thus vacating the proposed school grounds.

To historians of the day (and now), the graceful and historic Noyes house was rare and significant. Noyes was one of the first editors of the Baraboo Republic, as well as an early postmaster and Civil War Officer. The SCHS of 1927 was more than interested in obtaining the property, and the newspaper files reveal many efforts on their part.

Unfortunately, the Society was strapped for money as usual, and unable to purchase the property at the stated price of at least \$2700. Their best offer was for up to \$1000 to make needed repairs, in hopes the city would donate the property to the SCHS, a county organization.

Despite the petitions of 700 citizens, the council held firm, perhaps believing it was a matter for the county to act upon. It was then that a house was moved onto the property after the Noyes home was destroyed. This was a bitter blow to the young historical society, which already had among its projects the preservation of Man Mound.

### Petitions

Among the letters to the editor was one from Mrs. Southard, from whose scrapbook, now in the SCHS archives, the information in this article was obtained. Another letter was from O.D. Brandenburg, editor of the Wisconsin State Journal. He had been influential a decade earlier in obtaining the funds donated by W.W. Warner for the Warner Memorial Highway to Devils Lake.

The proposition to save the home did not fail for lack of significant support. Such luminaries of the day as Judge Evans, Supt. Kingsford, R.E. Berkley, and R.B. Griggs supported the attempt to save it. The old building had the last say, however. While it was being



On June 19, 1898, few persons in the Noyes 50th Anniversary picture could have believed that this, the Col. D.K. Noyes brick home, would someday be torn down so a house in better condition could be moved onto the property.



*Eagle Craig at Devils Lake*

demolished, the files of an old newspaper, the Independent, published between 1866 and 1868, were uncovered. They were to be given to the Historical Society, and it was an invaluable find.

#### Eagle Craig

By 1938 the SCHS was able to purchase the present quarters, the Van Orden Home, which still exudes grandeur despite the patina of age. In 1951 the Society had another opportunity to obtain a significant property, the Claude home in Devils Lake State Park. Built by hand in 1857 in the English Tudor style, the home, known as Eagle Craig, was held together by wood pegs.

A feature was the large fireplace with hand carved butternut mantle, and much of the furniture was hand made by the owner. It was his son who, as an architect and contemporary of Frank Lloyd Wright, designed some 139 Midwest structures, including the present Civic Center and the library in Baraboo. As usual, the Society was strapped for money and reluctantly declined the offer, and the home was razed.

Recently the Society purchased, at a price so modest that it approached the status of a gift, the Reul house at the south end of Ash Street. Although the main floors are rented out to the Leopold Foundation, the lower level is used for storage of the burgeoning stock of memorabilia and historical records of the Society.

The coming anniversary of the construction of the Van Orden Mansion is billed as a house warming. This is unlike the scene 100 years ago when the Van Ordens simply moved in to the new home. Van Orden family films from the 1920's and 1930's will highlight the evening.

Not reproduced however, will be the dirt streets, the horse-drawn carriages, and snow covered with coal soot, all of which were accepted as commonplace in 1904. One wonders

how our way of life will be remembered in the year 2104!

# Local boy makes good, but who remembers?

You've heard the expression "A prophet is without honor in his own country?" This is a story about a Baraboo boy who did very very well in his profession and is recognized elsewhere, but is relatively unknown in Baraboo.

The story begins with the birth of a son to Louis and Elvira Claude in 1868. Who were the Claudes? Old-timers will remember their home on the north shore of Devils Lake, where the amphitheater is now. The English Tudor style house was built by the elder Louis in 1857 some 50 years before the area became a state park, and carried the name Eagle Craig.

The name Claude, when remembered in Baraboo at all, is usually associated with memories of the elegant house. There is a better reason to remember the name, however, for that son, born there shortly after the Civil War, became a highly respected and somewhat renowned architect in his day.

As luck would have it, however, he was both a fellow student and later a fellow employee with another man who was to take the public spotlight as an architect — one Frank Lloyd Wright. Both men were first associated with the prominent Chicago firm of Louis Sullivan, but later each went his own way; and Claude was overshadowed by the flamboyant and controversial Wright.

Growing up in Eagle Craig must have been a delight for young Louis, with the relatively uncrowded lake almost to himself much of the year, though summers brought day tourists after the railroad came through in 1870. The house, built by his father board by board, was held together by wood pegs, yet exuded the quality and style of an English manor. This was for good reason, for the elder Claude, as the youngest son of a titled English family, had no

claim to the family fortune and was sent into the world alone after reaching his majority, ending eventually at Devils Lake.

The elder Claude was a civil engineer and for a time was a stockholder in the dam and mill at the upper end of the rapids of the Baraboo River, near West Baraboo.

Young Claude must have marveled at the hand-carved butter-nut mantle piece, and the many paintings hung on the walls. His father also made most of the furniture in the home.

Young Louis graduated from Baraboo High School, such as it was, in 1886, riding into town on a horse every day — evidently one horsepower was considered quite adequate for a young man in those days! He then pursued higher education at the University of Wisconsin, while working part-time in several architectural firms. By 1893 Claude was employed by the university for the magnificent sum of \$225 for the fall quarter.

## Claude and Starck

Eventually Claude teamed up with Edward Starck to form a highly successful architectural firm, with contracts in five states. According to "The Prairie School Review," from which parts of the article are taken, Claude "is reputed to have been most responsible for the design and direction of the firm."

The firm was noted for its variety of architectural styles and designs. Like Wright, they employed stained glass in many home plans, usually designed for the more prominent citizens of a community. Unlike Wright, they usually used a steep roof, which presumably did not leak as readily as the nearly flat roofs of many of Wright's designs.



Louis Ward Claude

## The Carnegie Public Library

Besides homes, the Midwest is dotted with public buildings designed by Claude, including the Carnegie Public Library in Baraboo, erected in 1903. It was perhaps the first of Claude's classic library structures, and the southern aspect of the building remains almost exactly as Claude designed it just after the turn of the century.

The massive addition of recent years was cleverly designed to match the original structure. A library in Watertown is strikingly similar to the Baraboo design, and though the Baraboo cost is not given, the Watertown structure cost \$20,000. Baraboo's library was partially financed by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation. Libraries designed by Claude soon appeared in Whitewater, Stoughton, Delavan and Monroe, as well as in other

states.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SAUK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Later, the style was altered to one more in the tradition of Louis Sullivan, buildings appearing in Tomah, Barron, and Columbus. The Reedsburg library followed in 1911, and Wisconsin Dells in 1916.

#### Baraboo High School

Claude began designing schools as early as 1906 and continuing until 1928, the Baraboo building (now the Baraboo Civic Center) appearing in 1927. Other Claude schools can be found in Stoughton, Madison, Waunakee, Watertown, and Monroe. Even the Rock Springs high school was a Claude design.

With regard to the Baraboo building, the *Prairie School Review*, which devoted an entire issue to Claude in 1981, said, "The top of the parapet contains a handsome terra cotta ornamentation ... the entrances to the school are ornate, with terra cotta designs on either side rising to cast figures with a leaf design."

#### The Island Woolen Mill

Built in 1917, the Island Woolen Mill building bears a striking resemblance to the high school building. When the *Prairie School* booklet was published, the mill building stood "in partial ruins today, as though its beauty haunts a desolate river bank." They should see it today, a city building which in part houses the Baraboo Youth Center.

Like the libraries and schools, Claude-designed buildings dot the Midwest, and a listing of known structures adds up to 139. Although not listed, it is believed the old post office on Second and Oak, now the school administration building, is a Claude structure.

The Claude and Starck firm was dissolved in 1929. The scholarly *Prairie School Review* booklet, however, says that an examination of the records "lead one to the conclusion that Louis Claude was undoubtedly the (leader) in the firm and the advocate of the original architectural thought."

The breakup of so successful a firm in 1929 appears to be the result of personal differences with Starck. The latter was a teetotaler while Claude, though not a habitual drunkard, "did cycle through periods of almost total abstinence, the modest drinking, followed by a heavy involvement." All this took place during Prohibition, America's failed attempt to legislate morality.

#### Down years

After the breakup Claude opened his own office, but "seldom had an experienced draftsman with him ... (he) involved himself in his death." Frank Lloyd Wright had a similar down period, following some of the scandals in his life.

Because of their early association as students together, Claude and Wright met often at Taliesin or Madison. Because the men were "fond of criticizing each other's work ... this would result in (one or the other) stomping out of the office." \*Involved himself with imaginary commissions in the 18 years before death



Although married, Claude had no children, and after his wife died in 1946, he returned to Eagle Craig to live with his spinster sister Louise. They both died in 1951, and all are buried in the Walnut Hill Cemetery.

#### **Warner Memorial Road**

Ken Lange, in "A Lake Where Spirits Live," reports that the Claudes never approved of the Warner Memorial Road which so nicely linked Baraboo to the lake. Louise felt so strongly that she traveled on the road only once, but with her eyes closed! She even directed that her funeral procession leave the park via the exit east of the railroad tracks, and presumably on into town via the old lake road.

David Bouchet, the Devils Lake Naturalist, maintains a large file and scrapbook on the Claude house, no doubt collected in part over the years by Lange, the former naturalist.

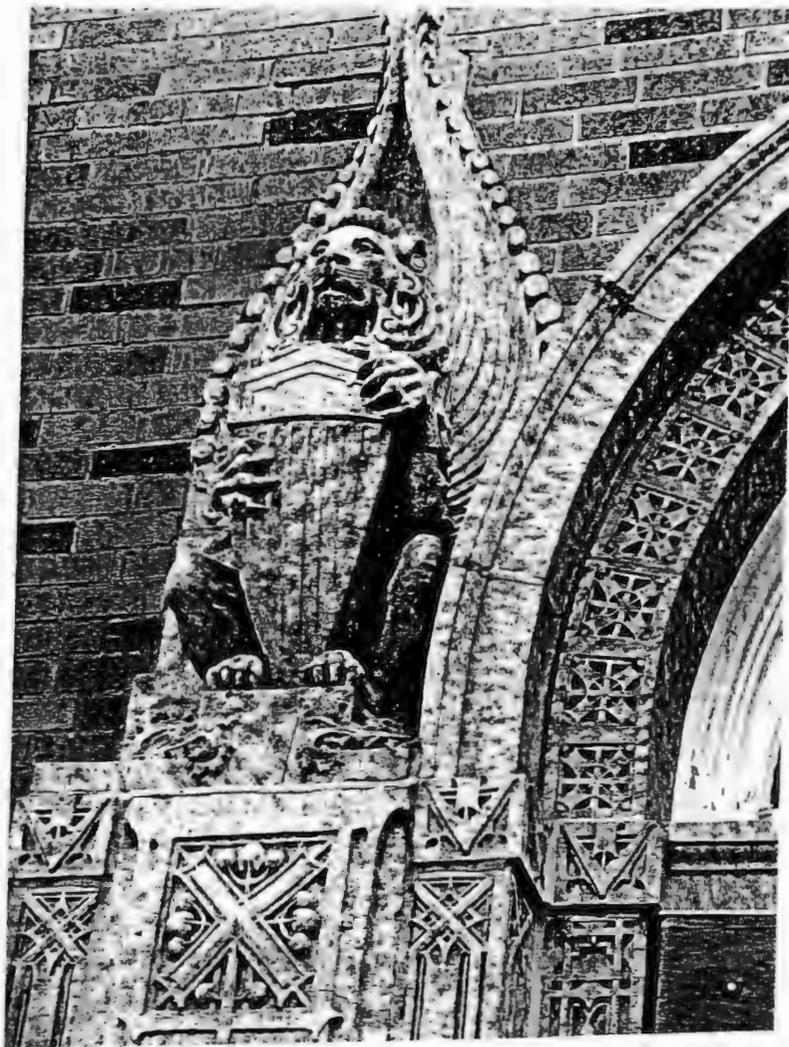
In the file is a memorandum written by Paul Luckey, a family friend. He states that the Claudes allowed Eagle Craig to fall into considerable disrepair, and that if the roof leaked or the wallpaper peeled away from the wall it was God's will. Others say that the family finances were desperate in the final years.

#### **The historical society**

A news item dated November 1951, after the death of the brother and sister, reported that the Sauk County Historical Society reluctantly decided that they could not accept the offer of ownership of Eagle Craig, as it would "require thousands of dollars to make necessary repairs and added thousands to renovate it to its original condition."

Eagle Craig, once one of the finest homes in the county, was torn down in 1953. Next time you drive to the South Shore of the lake, note the corkscrew descent to the level of the lake. It was designed by Louis Claude!

*The idea for this article was suggested by Richard Peidelstein.*



CONTRIBUTED

There are at least six of the above figure on a Baraboo building. Can you name it? Below, the Island Woolen Mill building is a Claude design.



*Became property of Historical Society in 2007*

## "Do You Remember" Column is Remembered

Yesteryear Revisited

By Bob Dewel

This writer has been producing this column, Yesteryear Revisited, for some six years now, but the News-Republic has featured similar columns in previous years. Mary Hoffmeister recently gave us copies of several columns by her father, the late Clark Wilkinson, under the title "Do You Remember",

Though no single topic is big enough for a full column today, there are gems of information contained in his remembrances of the Baraboo of his youth, all worth retelling in this article.

### Devil's Lake tents

Many people remember the dozens of small cottages, privately owned, that cluttered both the North Shore and the South Shore of Devil's Lake from 1920 until their removal in the 1970's. Wilkinson, however, remembers that before the cottages, there were tents with wooden floors, directly on the shoreline, which local people owned or rented for the summer. The Historical Society would like to see and copy pictures of the tents if anyone has copies.

Also, when speaking of Devils Lake, Wilkinson recalls, and perhaps confesses, that "In the 1930's you could park your auto right up to the waterfront and spark (court or woo) your girl friend. It was beautiful on a moonlight night."

### Frank Lloyd Wright Pole?

As soon as the leaves have fallen, walk some 200 feet into lower Ochsner Park from Second avenue and look across to the opposite river bank. There you will see a lone concrete pole. If you cross the river and examine it, you find it is no ordinary power pole, but more of an obelisk, with red quartzite stones artfully embedded in it. The woolen mill was owned by McFetridge, friend of Frank Lloyd Wright, and Wilkinson speculates that Wright designed the pole.

What was its purpose? Wilkinson says there were four poles, supplying electrical power from the woolen mill water-powered generator across the river and up the hill to the grand McFetridge residence in the 500 block of Fourth Avenue.

If this is indeed a Wright design, it should be preserved as the city's only FLW structure. At least the trees and brush for ten feet around it could be cleared and the ground leveled a little. We once had Wright's observation decks at either end of the Woolen Mill dam, but they were unceremoniously ripped out along with the dam some thirty years ago. If preserved they could have been an integral part of the Ochsner-Attridge park system. Let's save this artifact!

### The Elephant Barn

Wilkinson destroys an ongoing myth, namely the belief that the Elephant barn was not heated in winter, relying on the body heat of the animals to fight the winter chill. Apparently this is not true, for, as a youth, Wilkinson recalls groups of boys timidly opening the Ringling barn doors, clearly marked, "danger, do not enter". There they saw a stove in the middle of the room attended by an unsmiling man who spoke not a word.

The elephants were chained by their feet to the structure. In the Cat barn, they saw the same scene, a man and a stove, but the lions and tigers were in cages. The boys liked to feed an orange to an ostrich and watch the bulge go down the neck of the bird. Another trick was to watch the progress of a rabbit carcass as it passed down the length of a boa constrictor.

### Cisterns

Wilkinson reminiscences about the old days in his column, and one of special interest concerned cisterns. Most every home had one in and before the Depression,

where rain water from the eaves trough of the house was shunted into an underground brick and mortar cavern called a cistern. No in-house water softeners existed in those days, but the rain water was soft, so it was carefully saved in the cistern. When needed to wash ones hair or clothing, water was pumped out of the cistern and heated, usually on a small wood or coal fired laundry stove in the basement.

There is more to be learned from Wilkinson's reminiscences, which we will report from time to time.



This photo of a portion of the historic obelisk shows the unusual construction, with imbedded quartzite stones and steel cross-arms for the electric power insulators.

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*Became property of Historical Society in 2007*

**Wilkinson would be surprised that in 2007 the old woolen mill property had new owners—his neighbors, the Sauk County Historical Society! Much renovation has already been accomplished in 2008**