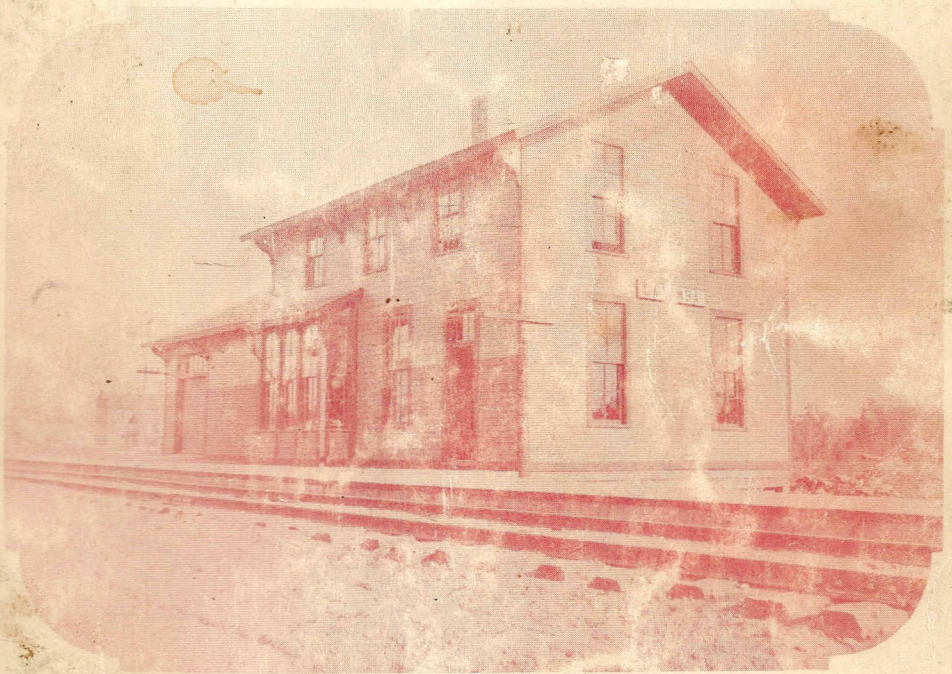


Memories of



Catawba, Wis.

Memories  
of  
Catawba, Wis.

CATAWBA BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

March 1, 1976

## MEMORIES

*We would like to dedicate this book to all our senior citizens, both here with us now and the ones who have gone home to their reward. This book is the thoughts and memories our early settlers have told us of how Catawba was first settled and up to the present day. Maybe all the dates and names or knowledge are not exactly correct, but everyone should enjoy it from beginning to end. Many people have asked questions or given answers over the years, and we have tried to put this together in a short period of time, too short, but happy reminiscing anyway. Many thanks to all who have cooperated with information and pictures.*

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In about 1865, the government surveyed this area in what is now Price County and divided it into sections and townships, and one of these was the township of Catawba.

As far as we know, people did not settle here until after the railroad was built through here. Just before the coming of the railroad, some logging of pine was carried on in the vicinity of Catawba. There were a number of logging camps through this area. Logs were cut and skidded to the logging roads where they were decked up to be loaded on sleighs and hauled to the mill — this was accomplished in the winter. During the summer months, the mill was in operation, and these logs were sawed into lumber. Back in the woods, the cutting was done by men with cross cut saws. They were generally paid so much per log, so two good men with a sharp saw, an axe apiece, a couple of wedges, and a bottle of kerosene to sprinkle on the saw to keep it from sticking in cold weather, could make good wages in those days.



Logging with Hammer's Mill — John Bushman - Louie Weyers - Frank Weyers.

The teamsters and swampers were usually paid by the month — this wage seems to have been about \$30 per month. The swamper's job was to cut the limbs off the trees after the sawyers were finished with it. The camp crew consisted of a cook, a bull cook whose duty was to peel the potatoes, set tables, put the food on, wash dishes, and do all the clean-up work, and if the men were working a distance from camp, to haul the hot meal out to them.

In 1884, as far as we can ascertain, the railroad was built through this wilderness. So many logging camps, and a sawmill came as a result of this. The railroad brought supplies within easy reach of these camps, and made it possible to ship the lumber to market.



A Logging Camp.



Bill Kempen on the load.

Catawba is one of the villages that sprung up as a result of the railroad going through in the late 1800's.

How Catawba got its name is an interesting story — there are two different versions of it. One version says that a crew of gandydancers working on the railroad were laying over for some reason, either waiting for material or due to inclement weather, or both. These men were mostly Italian immigrants and were traditionally wine drinkers, and it seems that their favorite brand was Catawba wine. The story goes that they drank so much of it that it was decided to call the place Catawba. The other version is that the lumberjacks were in the habit of going to Kennan to a saloon for their recreation, and it seems that they made a habit of drinking Catawba wine also. As a result, when they would come in somebody would always say, "Here comes that Catawba bunch," and this is how it came by its name.

By 1902, Catawba had its sawmill, that we understand was started by Peter H. Hammer. This was called the Red Birch Lumber Company, and in addition to this, he and his wife Isabelle had the Commercial Hotel. This was patronized by the men working in the camps and sawmill. Also next door, (this was all on the south side of the railroad tracks) he started a company store, later called the ACA store. This building also housed the lumber company office, and in later years this building was used as a house and burned to the ground in 1935.



The A.C.A. Store & Red Birch Office

Some of the oldtimers that worked in one of the P.H. Hammer camps in 1901 were Albert Budde, Richard Budde, and Herman Budde. Albert was a cook in the camp and Herman was bull cook. Ole Wick, who later established a general store, was bookkeeper for Red Birch Lumber Company. An Albert Reigher lived where Jerry Retzlaff lives now; he was an engineer at the mill. Many of the young and older fellows you will see in the pictures in this book were employed here.

When Mrs. Hammer gave up the running of the hotel, they built the residence now owned by the Art Zorns. Richard Budde hauled the pine logs to the Hammer Mill that were used in the building of this residence, and many cheese makers have lived in this residence, some of whom were H.S. Bennet, Al Soden, Raedel, Krause, and there were several more. The present family, Art and Martha Zorn, owned the cheese factory which the sons now operate, along with a whey drying plant. The sons are Leslie, Kenneth and Niles, and the Zorns have a daughter Arlene. This is still a very nice home — after those many years, both Martha and Art have worked hard to keep it in this fine condition. They have both been very active in many other areas of the community.

Homestead of Charles & Anna Ohrstrom. Annie, Carl, Esther, Blenda, Ella, Anna (mother) holding Selma, Charles (father) & Waldemar.



Anton Nelson, a long-time carpenter, dismantled the old Commercial Hotel and built a house on the site of the former ACA store. He and his wife Daisy lived there for several years along with their daughter Aveline. Mr. and Mrs. Nelson have both passed away and the home is now owned by Joe Kosar and his daughter Agnes. Joe had a farm for many years south of Catawba. This he sold and he retired to town. This home also was owned by two of our managers of our local bank, the Roger Samuel family and the Joe Loula family.



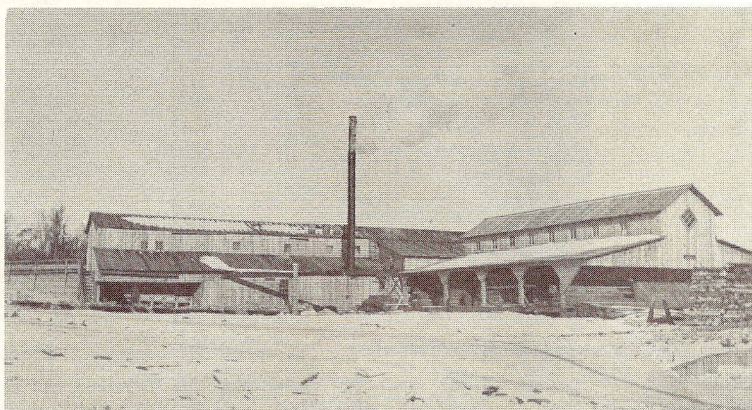
The Commercial Hotel was sold by P.H. Hammer to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Moore Sr., and it was operated by them. They were the parents of our former rural mail carrier and the grandparents of our present mail carrier, Jerome Moore. Some years ago Tom and Gertrude Wanish retired from their farm south of Catawba and built a new home on the site of this old hotel. Their son John with his wife Mary and family, now own and operate the farm. Some of the Wanish children live here — namely John, Tom, Luella and Wally, while Ruth, Glen, Arlene, Ione, Myrtle, Viola and Vern live in other localities. Mr. Wanish passed away, but Gertrude still has her home here.

Back to the sawmill, sometime in the early 1900's, Charles and Amy Beyers and in connection with a Mr. Morner, bought the P.H. Hammer mill and lumber business and continued to operate this and probably expanded it. There were a lumber yard and buildings on the site of the new Farmers Union Feed Mill, and on the east end of the property was a lathe mill.



Red Birch Lumber Saw Mill.

Across the road in the area between the Wayne Anderson residence and the Old Barn Bar was a lumber yard. They continued to operate this mill until in the middle 1930's; they employed quite a number of people.



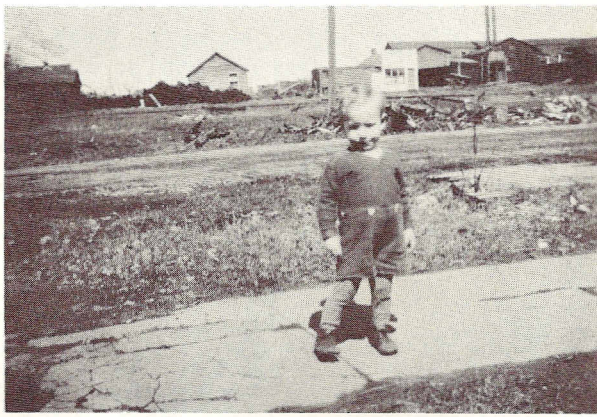
Hammer's or Beyers' Saw Mill

During these early years Beyers and Morner had a small office south of what is now the Ceil Hauenstein house, although it is still known as the Beyers' house, and there was also a blacksmith shop. Charles Peisker worked in it for P. H. Hammer.



Ole Netland - Hauling for Hammers Mill

Charles Olsen was a blacksmith in a logging camp south of Hawkins. In the spring of 1902, he walked to Catawba on the railroad track looking for a place to settle down and do blacksmith work. He went to a blacksmith shop owned by Red Birch Lumber Company. Mr. Peisker was doing blacksmith work there. Mr. Olsen told Mr. Peisker that he was looking for a job, whereupon Mr. Peisker said, "You can have my job. I am going farming." Mr. Olsen asked Mr. Hammer, who owned the mill and shop. He said that work was slow in summer, so he should come back in the fall. The first part of November, 1902, he came from Chetek and roughly built the old part of the house that Walter still lives in. The last part of November, 1902, Mrs. Olsen and two daughters came. He ran the shop for Red Birch until Mr. Hammer sold out to Beyer Morner Lumber Co. He ran it for them for about one year. He then built the shop north of town in 1913. In 1926, it was operated as Charles Olsen and Son until 1935, when Walter took over.



In the background is the blacksmith shop and the mill on the south.

The Peisker farm is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Szarowicz. The Peiskers had one son Kenneth who has now retired from the ministry. Mike and Loraine Jablonsky farmed this farm for several years with their family. These were Ernie, Beverly, Joyce, Micky, Ronnie and Roger. They have since moved to Phillips, Wisconsin. The Beyer house was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Beyers and their daughter Gertrude; it is now owned by Ceil Hauenstein and rented by Gerald and Cindy Rodriguiz and baby daughter.



Sometime during the early 1900's, Charles and Annie Olsen built the present Walter Olsen place north of town, and he had his blacksmith shop here for many years. They raised a family of three: Leora, Florence and Walter. He must have been a very hard working fellow with all of the horses to shoe in those days, and to stand bent over day after day doing it. His son Walter continued this business up until a few years ago, and as I would watch him shoe horses, I would marvel as how his back stood this type of work. In this day and age a blacksmith is a rare sight. Walter and Della lived here and farmed and raised two children, Bob and Margie. Della passed away several years ago, Walter remarried to the former Lelia Anderson, and they continue to live on this farm most of the year, except for the winter months spent in Florida. Lelia had a son Wayne; she retired from the Catawba Post Office after spending 30 years as a clerk. She was formerly married to Mandel Anderson, and Mandel's mother, Mrs. Christina Anderson lived with them for many years. She was a jolly, warm person, so neighborly; there is a picture of a ladies' birthday club here in this book and she is one. As you look and reminisce, you will remember these ladies, and the good times they had, and their children tagging after them.

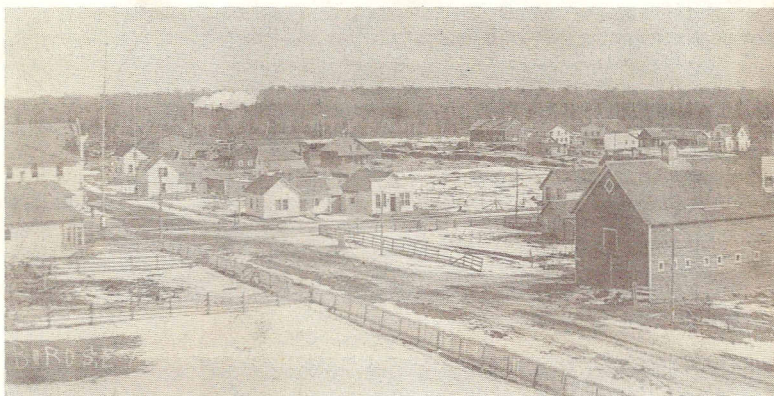




First Birthday Club: Mrs. Chas Olson, Mrs. Adolph Kresheck, Mrs. Chas Anderson Mrs. Martin Evenson, Mrs. John Adams, Mrs. Walter Olsen, Mrs. Paul Gehring, Mrs. Francis Retzlaff, Mrs. Mandel Anderson, Mrs. Frank Ayers, Mrs. Rudy Krescheck.

A quilt or quilts will be displayed on Bicentennial Day which these ladies made. Each made a quilt block for each of the others with their name and birth date embroidered on it, so each had a complete quilt, a nice remembrance for future generations.

Back again to the Beyers' house. It was built by a Mr. Dolan, then it was owned by the Beyers until the early 1940's when it was purchased by George and Minnie Kempen when they retired from their farm. They have since passed away, so as we mentioned before, it is now a rental house.



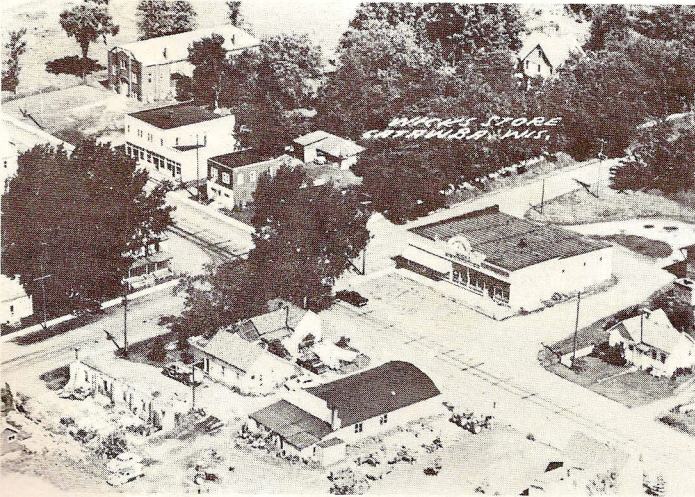
A View of Catawba, Early 1800's.

Now down the road apiece to the east of the feed mill, the Ed Menning family lived; their house has since been torn down, but Ed and Elsie raised a family of eight children: Nathalie, Carl, Dorthy, Kathleen, Elsie, Florence, Lorraine and John as I remember them. Formerly this was the spot where the lathe mill was located. While here, Ed worked in the garage owned by his father Gust Menning Sr. The garage was located on Main Street, and Mr. Menning Sr. lived across the street from it with his wife; their children were Ed, Gust, Walter, Paul and Bernice. I believe that there was another daughter who lived away from here. We think as near as we can ascertain that the garage was built by a man named Bell. Then it was purchased by the Menning family, and they operated it for may years until it was destroyed by fire in 1948.

Gust Menning Jr. and his wife Sophia are not living here now, but did live in several places while here with their family of thirteen children. They were Sophia, Mildred Kempen, who still lives here, Clarence, Helen, Marian, LaVerne, Kenny, Bob, Adelaine, Ted, Florence, Herman and Susan. Gust had his trucking

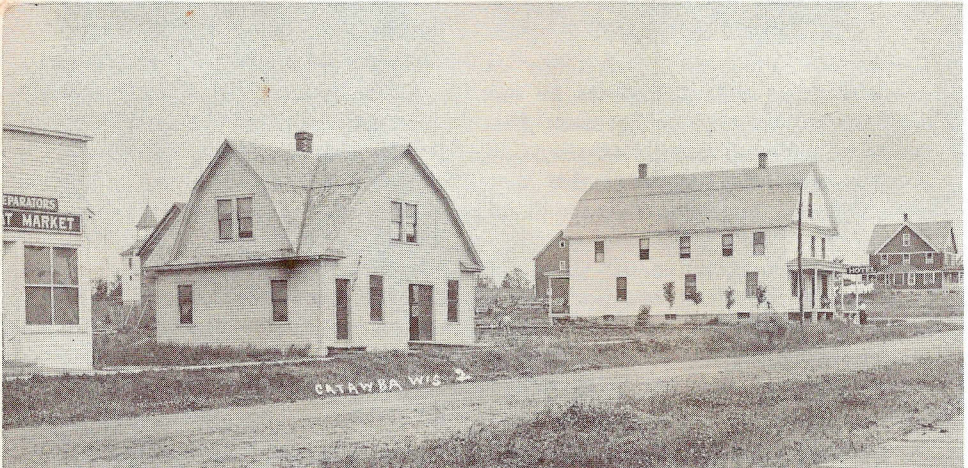
business in earlier years and hauled cattle, hay and gravel, and he owned the first school bus in Catawba and ran the bus route. In about 1944, he purchased the garage from his father and operated that until it was destroyed by fire.

Where Gust Menning Sr. lived was at one time a butcher shop owned and operated by W.J. Bendixon — this was about 1915. He was the father of Oscar Bendixon, Hattie Halmstad, Emma and Anne. Mr. Bendixon would deliver meat door to door and Emma helped wrap and prepare the meat for sale. At that time the family lived in a house located on the site of what is now the Krescheck home; this house later burned and the present one was built.



Aerial View of Catawba.

Later this butcher shop was operated by Frank Ramsden. Much later the Mennings bought this and moved it back from the street and built a basement and made it into a home. Just south of where the Menning garage was situated, the village built a small garage to house their fire truck after the fire department was formed.



Bendixon Meat Market, Emil & Verna Hahn's house, Krich Hotel, Edna Pierrard Home.

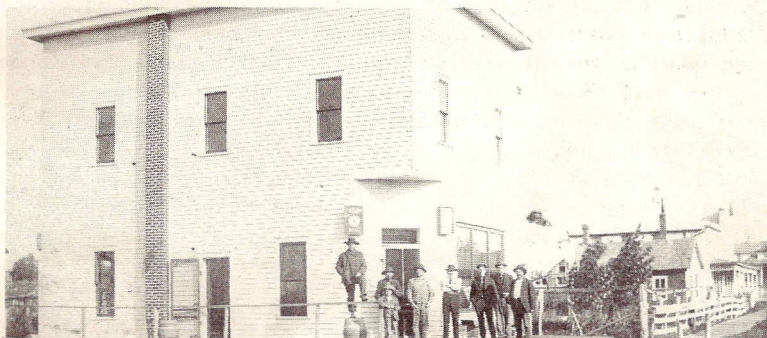
Next to this and probably a little south in the early 1900's, Emil Swanson had a soda fountain and confectionary. As memories come back, I can recall that John Adams had a barber shop in the same building for a time. This building also was destroyed by fire many years ago. In later years, the Soo Line depot agent Frank Kukkola purchased this property and had a mobile home on it. Later Effie Joslin, a school teacher, moved her mobile home on it and lived there until she retired and moved to Tomahawk where she now lives.

Across the road we have the Barrel Inn Tavern owned now by Janet Halmstad. The building on this site now is relatively new; the original building was destroyed by fire. It was built by the Hamms Brewing Company about 1905 and was a saloon and pool hall, and was operated as such until prohibition days. At one time, there were a shoe repair shop and shoe store upstairs. This was owned and operated by Leon Lizak, who later moved to Phillips. In the rear and on the ground floor with a side door was a dentist's office; this was a Mr. Kelly. Later John Adams moved into this building and had a pool hall and soda fountain; this is according to what information we have been able to obtain. At the end of prohibition days, in 1933, it was purchased by Frank Ayres, and he operated a tavern until 1947, when it was purchased by Mike Litvinoff. In August, 1953, it burned to the ground. By October, 1953, they had rebuilt and were back in business; this is the present building.



Inside Ayres Tavern, now Barrel Inn. Herman Budde, unidentified, Claude Cotton and Chas. Fuchs tending bar.

The Litvinoffs sold the tavern to Lucian Anderson and Mike went on to college and has been a teacher in several local schools and is now assistant principal at the Kennan Middle School. Lucian lived in the mobile home on the south side of the tavern while he operated it, then he sold it to Vincent and Juanita Strobl and bought the mobile home on the north side of the tavern.



Barrel Inn Tavern, about 1900. Next, Lee Stevens Barber Shop, and next, Mrs. Miller's Hotel, on Main St. looking west.

Juanita operated it as Nita's Candlelight until recently she sold it to Janet; it is now the Barrel Inn. Vinc and Nita have a home on Highway 86 and live there with their children Carol, Tim, and Todd. Janet also owns the former Gust Menning home next to the tavern on the north.

Next door to this home is the one owned by Emil and Verna Hahn, who with their family Fred, Irma, Bill, Mary and Peter have lived there quite a number of years. This house was built and owned by Dick Retzlaff Sr. in the early 1900's. Later the Frank DeMark family lived there, then it was purchased by William Teske, and a family by the name of Kadel lived in it. Then Kenneth and Gladys Peisker purchased it and had the post office in a part of it. Kenneth was a postmaster until he joined the Navy during World War II, then Verna was acting postmaster from 1942 until 1949, keeping it in the same house. Verna is now a cook at the Catawba school and Emil works at the Kennan Lumber and Supply Company.

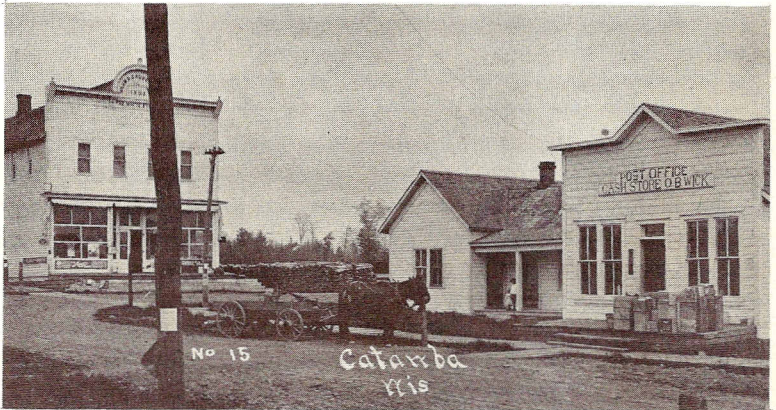


Catawba Bank.

After 1949, the post office was moved to the back part of the bank building; it was there until it was moved to the present location in September, 1967. Jerome Moore followed Verna as postmaster from September, 1949, until he was re-assigned rural carrier in November, 1952. Verna was again acting postmaster until May, 1953, when the present postmaster, Martin Netland, was appointed. The present post office is housed in the building owned by Herbert and Ruth Whitney. It was formerly a tavern and restaurant, and also their living quarters; they now are custodians at the Catawba and Kennan schools. They have three daughters, now all married — they are Janet Prohaska of rural Catawba, Janice Ostling of Prentice and Cora Lu Schultz of Ladysmith. This building was erected by George and Margaret Loch in the 1920's and was used as a butcher shop, and they lived in what is now the William Field's residence. Later it was purchased by Leslie and Ruth Colby, who with their daughter Ardith ran the business and also added some grocery items. Later they changed it to a tavern. It was then purchased by Mr. and Mrs. William Morrow (she was better known as "Ma" by her patrons) and daughter Gertie, who operated it as a tavern and cafe. Then it was owned and operated by Ted and Anna Kuchera. From them it was purchased by the present owners, Herb and Ruth Whitney.

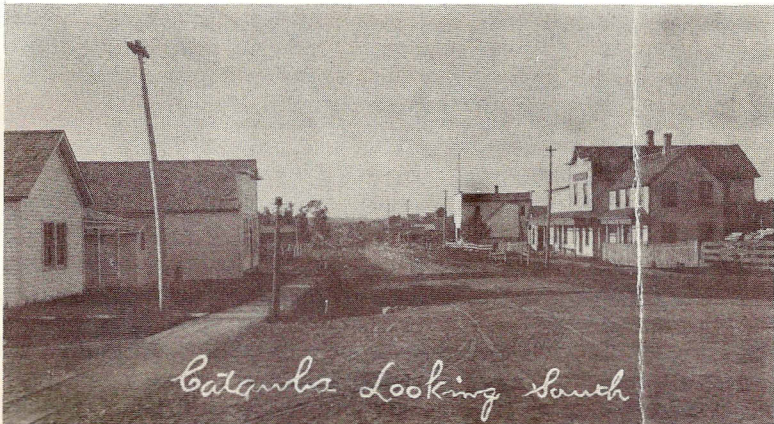


Inside of first Wick's where Blechschmidts live.



Gruber-Blood Store & 1st Wick's Store.

On the corner is Wick's store. This started out south of the highway where John and Wanda Blechschmidt and daughter live. First a Mr. Landry had a saloon here; and then it is not clear if there were any other business here before Ole and Hilda Wick had their first store and post office here. It was built clear out to the street, and there was a lean-to on the south side which was used as a feed warehouse. This and the front part have since been torn down.



Later these were made into two adjoining homes; one was occupied by Robert and Helen James, their two daughters Sandra and Pamela, and Robert's mother Mary. The attached house is now occupied by Jerry and Jodie Retzlaff and daughter Jessica. These folks are the new owners of the Catawba Oil Company, which they very recently purchased from the Ted Kucheras. The house was built by Miran Goodwin in 1905; he was an engineer at the Hammer sawmill.

Later a Albert Reiger, another engineer for the sawmill, lived in the house. Next it was purchased by Ole and Hilda Wick, and they started a general store and also had the post office. In the late 1930's, Oscar Helland, an employee of the Wick's store, and his wife Evelyn and children Lloyd, Earl, Edith, Ronald, Lois and Gordon lived here. The last occupants before the present ones were Maurice and Bernice Halmstad and children Kathy, Janet, Danie, David, Kenneth and Jeannie. Quite recently they moved into a mobile home on their place on Highway 86.

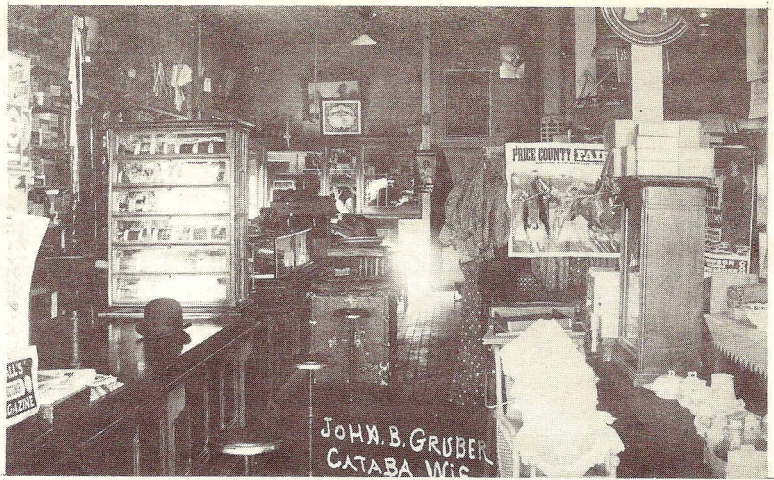
During the 1940's, Oscar Helland and Robert James built the Catawba Sales and Service shop which handled John Deere farm equipment. Robert sold out his interest in the company to Oscar, who in company with his son Gordon carried on the business. Oscar passed away several years ago, and now Gordon is the owner and operator. He and his wife Diane and children Cori and Chris have a new home on High Street, which is a nice addition to our village.

On the site of the present Wick's store was a two story building erected by John B. Gruber and Eugene Blood; the bottom floor housed a general store, while upstairs was what was known as Gruber's Opera House. This was used for functions such as graduations, plays and other special events.



Upstairs of Gruber & Blood Store. This was a graduation class, in Gruber's Opera House.

About 1907, this building burned down. It was rebuilt as the present Wick's store by John B. Gruber and John Bushman. Sometime prior to 1917, Mr. Gruber built the bank; this was the Catawba State Bank.



Downstairs of second "Wick's" Store. Then it was Gruber & Blood's.

Sometime during the 1920's, Ole and Hilda Wick bought the store from Mr. Bushman. During this time Ole Wick was hospitalized, and he passed away, so Hilda operated this store until in the 1950's. This was one of the general stores where one could buy anything from a pin to a farm tractor or horse harness. She hired many people over the years to work in the store. During the late 1930's and early 1940's, they had free shows every Tuesday night mostly behind the store, and this drew a very large crowd from the neighboring towns too. This was a big night for everybody. There was another building in the rear of the store; this was a slaughter house and butcher shop and also an icehouse. The ice was cut in the winter time and stored in here, packed in sawdust; this was for summer use. This business was operated by William Hitzler. Hilda Wick and he were later married. He also had a Perfection milking machine dealership in connection with another man. The post office, during these years, would shift between the store and the bank each time there would be a change in political parties. After 1938, this was changed, so that a postmaster could not be changed, regardless what political party he belonged to. There was a stable in the rear of the store for the convenience of the people to leave their horses while they were shopping, especially in inclement weather. The slaughter house was finally turned into a feed mill. It was operated in connection with the store for several years, and then sold to Clarence Peterson and Martin Netland, who later bought out Clarence Peterson's share. He operated it several years until being appointed postmaster, then sold it to Allen Peterson, then it was bought by Farmers Elevator of Antigo. Rusk County Farmers Union bought it out and moved to a new location and built a new modern mill, which is now operating, serving the needs of our farming community. This new mill is on the site of the old sawmill that operated here for many years.

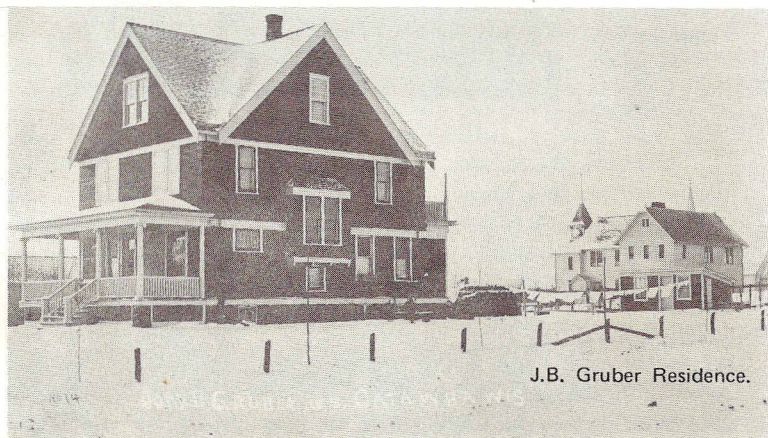
After Hilda Hitzler (Wick) retired, she sold the store to her brother Harold, and nephews E.J. Pierrard Jr. and Dwain Pierrard, and later E. J. and Dwain had it, then E. J. operated a Coast to Coast store in another community and Dwain sold to Tony and Helen Zikan and sons Dan and Greg. They also have two more children, Randy and Cheryl.

December 26, 1916, at 8 a.m., the Catawba State Bank was officially launched by John B. and Augusta Gruber. It was deeded to the Catawba State Bank Corporation which was founded by: Carl G. Beyers, John Bushman, Charles Peisker and M. J. Welton. In 1939, it was purchased by the State

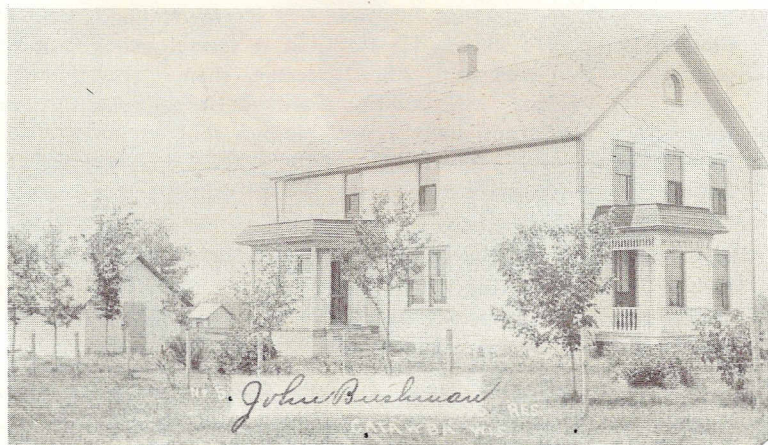
Bank of Phillips and is now the Catawba Branch of the State Bank of Phillips, with Idella Boehn as the manager. During the last few years this building has been remodeled both inside and out and is very attractive and an asset to our community.

In years past, the back room of the bank was used for different things; it served as an office for two different doctors, then it was an office and display room for a milk machine dealer, then the post office was located there from 1949 until 1967. Now it is used in connection with the bank.

While John B. Gruber operated the bank, his daughter Francis acted as cashier. He and his wife Augusta built the large house where Edna now resides; this is located on Main Street. The Grubers had three children: John, Francis and Connie.



This home has always stood very stately on the hill, and has been kept up very well through the years. It is the same as it was originally, never having been remodeled. Edna Pierrard lives here alone since both Hilda and Harold, her sister and brother, have passed away. Edna and her husband and family lived here in the village until they moved to a farm near Kennan, and when her husband Alvin passed away, she moved to the village. Edna's children are Muriel, Dwain, Kenneth and Barbara. Muriel is now our county treasurer. A Dr. Gorenstein had his office in the front for a time; he also lived there with his wife.



John Bushman home, now Mike Litvinoff's.



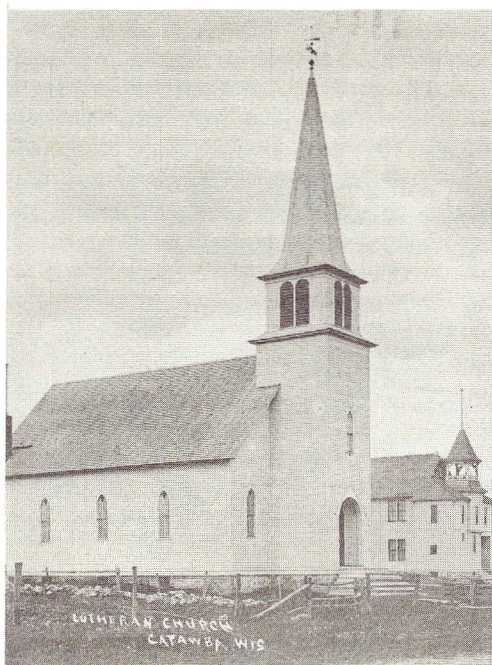
Skipping up the road on Gruber Avenue, on the hill is the home of Mike and Arlene Litvinoff. This house also is much the same as when it was built from the outside. The full-length porch has been added during the years. This is one of the first homes built in Catawba. A little barn was torn down. A Pastor N. M. Minnie and his wife Bertha came in 1901 — a call was put out for a pastor — and Rev. Minnie accepted. He was a minister in South Dakota, and he traveled back and forth at first. In 1905, he built the now Litvinoff house and brought his family here. He asked the people from his congregation to come too. The Madson family, Gilbert and Gunhild Lee, Halvor and Gunhild Lee were some to follow him and get their beginning here. Rev. Minnie's children were Agnes, Nels, Phillip, Martin and Clara. Two of these children are still living, but not in Catawba. The story is told that because the winters were cold here, and no doctors were available, the preacher's wife decided to try to toughen her children in so they wouldn't get sick. They had to run around the outside of the house barefoot a few times every day. The family lived here until 1911. After this, John and Mary Bushman bought the house and lived here until 1928. While living here, they raised a family of eight children: Anna, Ses, Margaret, Clara, Henry, Agatha, Leo and Norb. Mr. Bushman worked in the woods. In 1928, their daughter Margaret and her husband Joe Freeman and son Ray purchased this home. Joe managed the bulk gas company for Frank Garluck. They lived here until 1948, at which time Steve and Sophie Litvinoff retired from their farm in Kennan and bought this home. They lived here with their son Mike and his wife Arlene and two daughters Debbie and Shelly. Mike and Arlene are still living there.

Rev. Minnie was the first minister of the Catawba Lutheran Church. Like most churches, it had a humble beginning, consisting of a few Scandinavians who gathered together for services in the homes and school house. They were determined to have the Word of God preached and the Sacraments administered regardless of the many handicaps in the pioneer days. The worship services were held in the Village Hall, what is known as Kuchera's Store now, and the business meetings at the parsonage until 1905, at which time the church cornerstone was laid. On May 3, 1903, Pastor Minnie called together a small group of people and they organized a congregation. The first officers were Pres. Rev. Minnie, Sec. Gilbert Lee and Trustees John Fegstad, Staale Ausdahl and Halvor Lee. There were 21 charter members and the first church was called Bethania Scandinavian Lutheran Church of Catawba. Quite a handle in those days; then I believe it was Bethany Lutheran and now just Catawba Lutheran Church. It has merged and become an A.L.C.W. Congregation. Rev. Minnie donated the lot on which the church was built, so he must have had quite a bit of land on this hill.



The church today is about the same as in those days, outside anyway, and the inside was just insulated and paneled.

Catawba Lutheran Church



In 1904, they decided to build and had \$460.30 and got a loan for \$1,000. Seems interesting – if that's all we had together today, you wouldn't get far. In 1909 to 1910, the church cemetery was secured and is still in the same place. The land for the cemetery was donated by Charlie Peisker and is located up on Midway Road on the hill south of town. It's been enlarged and the Lutherans have the west side of the driveway and the Catholics have the east side and the Cemetery Association does try to keep it looking nice. The building committee for the church was Peter Hammer, C. E. Eng, John Fegstad, and Staale Ausdahl. P. H. Hammer donated the church bell, and it's still ringing, plus there are chimes added to the tower for music during the day; they were given in memory of Gerald Moore. The lumber for a horse barn in back and some of the lumber for the church was given by Mr. Hammer.

Pastors in this church were: N. M. Minnie, Olai Hill, John Retland, O. A. Running, J. E. Nord, O. G. Sahl, E. B. Swenson, W. T. Hexom, Geo. K. Berg, V. O. Aoker, Rev. Peterson, R. Sundbo, R. Drefs, C. Thorson, and our present Pastor Ausmund E. Norson and his wife Dorothy. These pastors, I believe, all helped serve Hawkins Parish as well and lived in the parsonage there.

The first Ladies Aid Officers were: Pres. Mrs. Peter Hammer; Vice Pres. Mrs. John Fegstad; Sec. Mrs. Anton Munson; Treas. Mrs. Chas. Olson. It was organized on Jan. 8, 1913. The ladies had many ice cream and pie socials and quilting sales and dinners on election days etc. They bought the carpet, helped get the furnace, basement repairs, etc. They must have been busy ladies. Mrs. O. G. Bendixson crocheted the lace cloth for the altar. Mrs. Ole Netland, Mrs. Gunhild Lee and Mrs. O. Noe translated the constitution from Norwegian to English. The first child baptized was Nels Berther Ragnuald Minnie, the

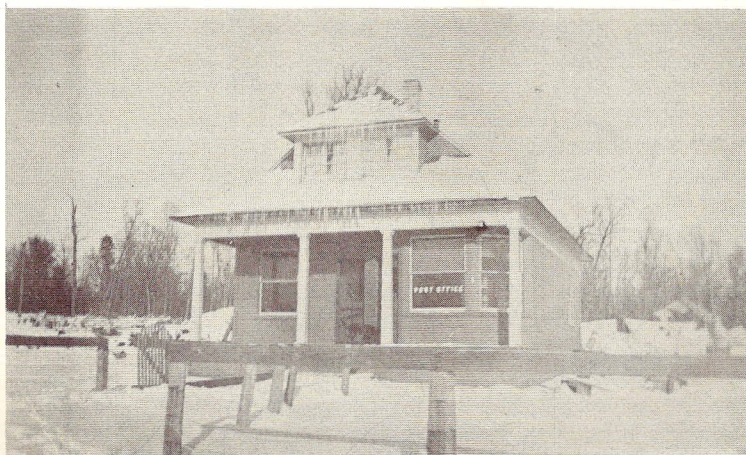
preacher's son, and quite a name he had, and I believe he is still living, as is his sister Agnes. The first marriage was Anton Halmstad and Celia Madson on April 30, 1907. Hans L. L. Jorgenson's funeral, Nov. 16, 1907, was the first burial. There is one son of the congregation — a pastor, Kenneth Peisker, and his wife Gladys (nee Lee). They are now retired and their son, Gene and family is a pastor.

Up the hill from the church live Wilhelm and Marie Frenzer and children Steve, Rudy and Susie. This property belongs to Central School District and is a nice rental home. This house was moved up from the bank corner, and they turned the house around. Many years before, our first house and settlers were here on this hill. It was the farm of the Hans Wintersteller family.

Catawba's first residence.



On our button this year for the Bicentennial Celebration, will be the picture of this log house. Mary Krich is scaling the picture of this log house down to size. They had quite a lot of this area then and cleared it off and raised their family and animals. Must have been hard to make it through some days. Not too much is known about them. Eventually this farm must have deteriorated, and in later years Frank and Helene Ayres bought the Matt Miller building that housed a little store and the post office on the bank corner, and they moved it up Gruber Avenue to the top of the hill and turned this completely backwards, and this is the house that's here today.



Matt Miller Store & home & Post Office. Now the Frenzer home, turned around.

In that family, there are Bob and Roma and Dorothy Ayres — — they don't live here but each have families of their own. Some years after Helene passed away, Frank married Millie (Tudee) Lester. They lived here until Frank passed away, and now she lives in Hawkins. Through the years, many renters have lived here. Matt Miller built this building on the corner of Main Street and Gruber Avenue. He had lived out next to the Ida Pierrard house, south on the Milk Pool Rd. He and his wife had a log house there, (must have been early 1900's), and he was a land cruiser; they had 3 children: Bill, Clara and George, but Mrs. Miller passed away, and I believe he then built this building downtown and later married Lena Hanrahan. She had 3 children: Nellie, Adelaide and Dolly. So they raised this family together and had a small store and post office here. Lena was the postmistress, and Matt Miller took the mail to the train and he'd hang the bags on a crane or arm that stuck out there along the railroad track. The train came through, and they grabbed the bags off and went on their way. He met the train twice a day - - morning and night. I believe later a Mr. Glass occupied this place and had a barber shop here. Soon after this Mrs. Miller had the first hotel that stood next to the present Krich Hotel.



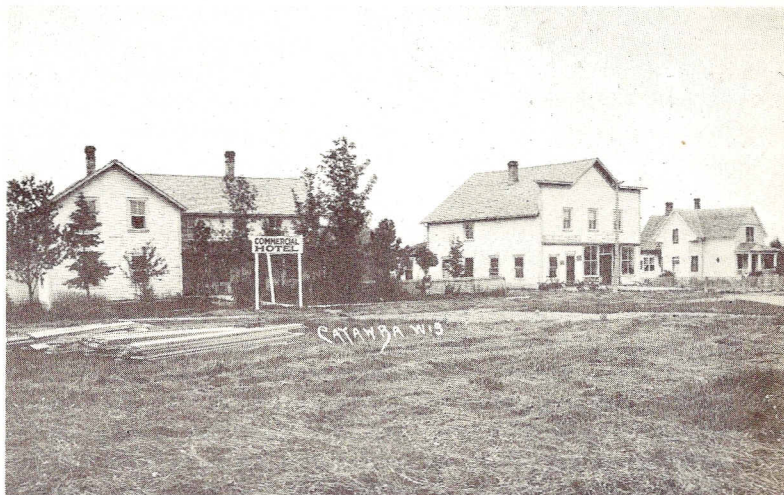
Lena Miller Hotel, now burned down.

A Mr. Lee McGann had this hotel and a saloon here first, then Ed Landry had it for a saloon, and in the early years this burned down. This was quite a large building. Next to it on the south was a small building and Lee Stevens had a barber shop here about 1900.



View looking north from R.R. tracks.

When all this burned down, Lee Stevens built the present Krich building for a hotel for his sister, Mrs. Lena Miller. Salesmen would come in on the train with their samples in big trunks and stayed overnight for lodging and meals and catch the next train back the next day. This was about 1917. I suppose men who worked in the mill stayed here too. Mr. and Mrs. Joe Moore, who had the Commercial Hotel down on Railroad Ave., bought this and continued to run it as a hotel and served meals.



Commercial Hotel, A.C.A. Store, Hammer House - now Zorns.

Later Josie Moore owned this, and at one time there were apartments upstairs and several people operated a soda grill and restaurant downstairs. Bernice Weise and her father, Art King and daughter Leta had a nice business here for years, and during this time Bernice married Fred Worsech and continued in business as a soda fountain and lunch room. For many years the building stood empty and people wished someone would buy it and restore it.

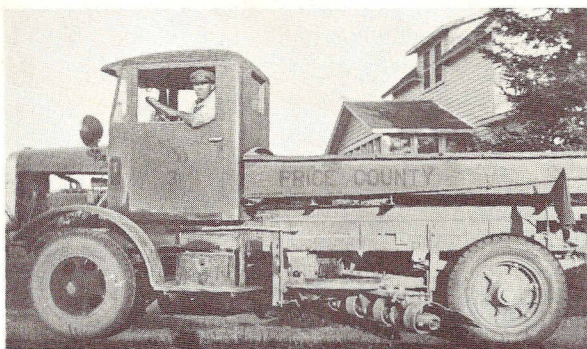


Mrs. Lena Miller Hotel, now Krich Hotel.

Dave and Shirley Krich bought it, and now Ervin and Mary Krich and son Gary have. It's been remodeled after a small fire did some damage, and it's being put to good use now as a veteran's home with Ervin and Mary operating it.

Next door is where Art and Walter Kutzback live. They've retired here from their farm. This house was the back part of the Frank Ayres Tavern. Joe Moore moved it here and remodeled this and also built a garage next to it. Mr. Fish and Tony Marcussen lived here, as did the Vince Strobl family. Then Denis and Marian Shaver and family, Tami and Shawn, bought it and lived here for several years and sold it to the Kutzback Brothers. Denis and Marian built a new home north of town on Oak Ridge Rd. This was the former Melvin Neisinger home and Jake and Mrs. Neisinger lived here and raised their family of four sons: Earl, John, Carl and Leonard. A Mr. Jorgenson originally built this. It was a cement house, very unusual; they farmed here. Later Wally and Dorothy Wanish owned this for extra farm land, selling it to Denis and Marian.

The village limits are a mile north of the main intersection in the village proper, starting from the Walter Olsen farm and blacksmith shop, mentioned earlier, which is at the intersection of Worsech Road and Main Street. Here is the home of Rita Lindemann and her daughter Debbie. Two other daughters are off on their own; Cheryl is furthering her education and Barbara is married. Rita bought this house from Mollie Netland, and has done a great job remodeling it. Originally Hans Jorgensen built this place, and it was occupied by a Gunnar Olsen, and also by a Albert Riger. At this time it was owned by Anton Halmstad, and Ole and Malva Netland bought it from him in 1919. They had one son Martin and twin daughters who passed away at the age of six weeks. Ole Netland passed away in 1962, but Mollie continued to live there until about 1965. Ole Netland came to this country from Norway at the age of 19. He worked for P. H. Hammer in the woods and in the mill, and also spent some time working on the ore docks in Superior, Wisconsin. He worked for the county highway department from 1913, and was the first patrolman on what is now Highway 8, (at that time it was state highway 14). He first used horses, and in 1936, the first motor patrols were put into use. John Plutul, another oldtimer who came to this community in about 1904, worked in the woods and mill and later was a horse trader. In his last years, he lived in a mobile home on the Netland place.



Ole Netland in the first power grader.

Continuing down Main Street and around the corner, is the place occupied by Joe Nabbefeld. The house was originally on the Martin Evenson property part of the filling station and home of the Evensons. Prior to this he lived with his father in the place where Theresa Nabbefeld now lives with her family, and he owned and farmed the place where he now resides.

Next is the old Sacred Heart Church and parsonage. This is now occupied by Father Regh, and more will be told about this later in the book, as there is a new beautiful church at another location.

The John Fields farm is next. This is quite large, and he has a nice home and buildings - - this home goes back quite far also. It was built by a Frank Vant, who was a worker in the mill also. Mr. Fields has had this farm since the early 1930's. At 82, he is still farming and working on his farm; sometimes we think that these older folks are harder than us young ones. Mrs. Fields has helped him; they were married 60 years and both seemed so young. His wife Rose just passed away this last year. They have three children: Rose, Bill and Ethel. Bill and Ethel live here, and Bill and his family and his father farm together. Every year from Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve, the Fields have gone to Janesville and Rockford with Christmas trees and have done this for 43 years. Mr. Fields says he considers this his vacation; it is quite a unique vacation.

Joe and Frances Gehring live in the mobile home adjacent. They built a new garage and have a beautiful garden and flowers in the summer. Joe enjoys the garden and flowers very much, and he puts in much time caring for them. They have one daughter living in rural Catawba, Lila, Mrs. Ed Lasee, and their other children are Ida, Joe Jr., Tom and Mary. Formerly a Henry Smith family built a home here. Henry Smith, Frank Vant and Nels Good built the Oliver Halmstad place. They were brothers-in-law and came here together and worked in the mill. Still later Frank and Clara Shubel lived here, and Frank worked in what is now the Wick's or Zikan's store, with his brother-in-law John Gruber. After his wife Clara passed away, his brother Charlie lived with him.



Main Street. Back of Jerry Retzlaff's house. Charlie Schubel's Livery Stable, Now Jerry Kuchera's Yellow Building. Across the street - Gruber & Blood Store, Opera House upstairs, School, Lutheran Church.

Charlie had a livery stable. Most of us remember Charlie as a short-whiskered bachelor, full of stories of the old days. If he were still around, he could probably do a better job of writing this book - - at least he could do away with all the research - - he had it all in his head.

Mark and Arlene Birdeau and daughter Nicole reside in the next home. Mark is a mechanic for the Central School District, and Arlene works as a teachers' aid at the local school, while Grandma Peggy enjoys babysitting with little Nicole. Going way back on this spot someplace the house now occupied by Ted and Anna Kuchera was built and was occupied by a school teacher. His name was L. J. O'Neil and about 1906, according to the best of our knowledge, is when he moved it to its present spot. Bert Williams, another teacher, lived in this house too. Then Eli Cork and his son George lived in it. Mr. Cork had a shoe repair shop here for quite a number of years. It was also occupied for a time by Leslie and Ruth Colby. Now this is the home of Ted and Anna Kuchera and is next door to their store.

Now back to Main Street, where Mark and Arlene Birdeau live. His grandfather Dick Retzlaff built this house, and he and his wife Frances lived there and raised their family. They were Dick Jr., Donald, Peggy (who lives next door), Bill, Hubert, Marshall, Dolores, Faye, Sarah and Larry. Hubert owns a farm south of town and is a construction worker, Dolores and her husband Ed Zubricky and family live on a farm near town, Faye and Irvin Anderson and their family live south of town also on their farm, Larry and Annabelle and their family live and farm here also. Larry is also a construction worker. All the rest of the family do not live here.

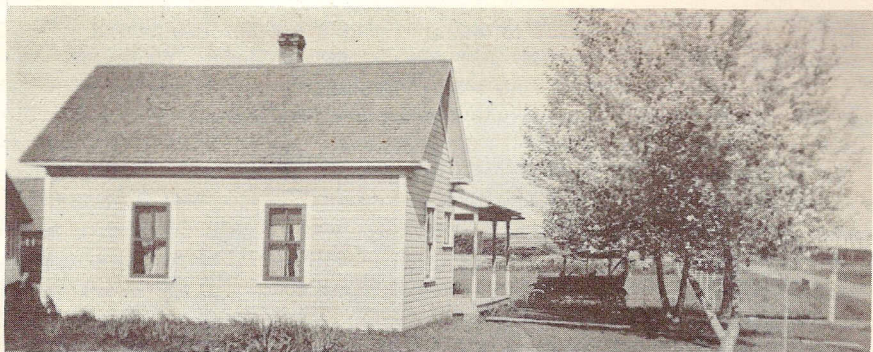
Dick Retzlaff Sr. was a millwright and a carpenter. Next door to Mark, live his mother and father, Norman and Peggy Birdeau. They have another son Neil, who is employed away from here. Norman is a construction foreman and heavy equipment operator and is also restoring a few old antique cars and has them shining. He enters them in some of the parades, and they will be a welcome addition to this parade.

Around 1930, Ben and Julia Bushman built this house. He logged and also had an evergreen factory. This building has since been torn down. He bought the ground pine and evergreen boughs and these were made into wreaths for decorations. We believe there were three children in their family: John, Marie and Jimmy. They moved away from here in 1934. This house was bought by Charlie and Annie Olsen when they retired from their farm and blacksmith shop, after about 40 some years of living and working there. They both lived there until they were in the late nineties. Their former house, here still, looks the same on the outside, neat and well-kept, with a nice job of modernizing and remodeling on the inside.

Back north a piece is the farm of Oliver and Lucille Halmstad, their family Arthur, Carolyn (who lives next door), Bruce and Randy here in Catawba, Gary, away, and Bonnie and Cindy at home. Anton Halmstad came from Norway at the age of seventeen and to Catawba in 1903. He married Celia Madson and bought this place that a Nelson Good had built. Anton worked in the woods and mill for P. H. Hammer, and later farmed. There are six children and five are still living in Catawba: Evelyn, Alice, Oliver, Edna, Maurice and Helen, who lives in Eau Claire. Celia died as a young woman in 1930, and Anton raised the family alone for many years. He was a patrolman on County Highway 1 for years until the power patrols came into use about 1936. He married Hattie Campbell and continued to farm the place until they retired and moved to the present house that Hattie lives in on Gruber Avenue. Oliver is now on the home farm.

The house that Hattie lives in was built by an Art Rickle, and before that it was a slab pile and sawdust yard as part of the sawmill operation. We have some names of McGann, Noller and Riger living here too. Dale and Minnie Clark also lived here and Dale had an auto livery.





Hatti Halmstad's home, now. Then Dale Clark's & his car "Auto Livery Service."

At that time the salesmen had to travel by train, and when they would get their business finished in one town and had to get to the next one and the train schedules were such that they could not make connections, they would hire someone with a car to take them. This is what Dale was occupied with. Their family were Florence, Gwendolyn, Leona, Elaine, and Joyce.

Mr. and Mrs. Halvor Helland and son Franklin lived here for several years. Mr. Helland passed away here, and she continued to live here; this was Oscar Helland's father and stepmother. When the kids would run errands for her, she would give them molasses cookies, and they would be giant ones, and the kids would sure love them. Anton purchased this home from Mrs. Helland's son Albert, and there was a little house in the back yard where Hattie's sister Nellie lived for several years. Anton lived here until he passed away in 1969.

On the cross street called Church Street is the house where Mrs. Elizabeth Raab occupied. This house was moved in from some other locality; now it is owned by an out-of-state family. Mrs. Raab had been a cook in restaurants in the Chicago area for years until her retirement. Her son Bill and his wife Gerry and family live on a farm south of town, while Millie, Edith, Herman, Eva and Gust are scattered throughout the country. Both Mr. and Mrs. Raab have passed on.

Coming down Main Street is the home of Theresa Nabbefeld. This house was built about 1905 by John Kramer and the Frank Jones family lived here, also the Farrells, the Hufschmidts and the Rickles. Now Theresa and her family Marylou, Carol, Don, Rick, Joan, Jane, Christy and Julie reside here. Her husband Phillip and one son Chuck have passed away. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Nabbefeld, Joe, Johanna and Phillip lived here prior to when Phillip and family purchased it.

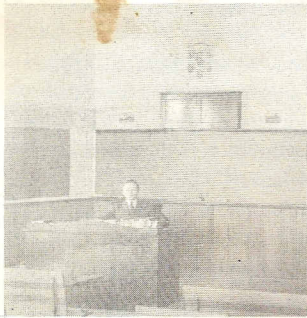
The village of Catawba now has a population of 215, I believe, but in the winter months of the early 1900's, it was as high as 350, so it was rather a booming place. Most of the logging was done before the 1930's. A bad forest fire raged through this area and kept burning for about six weeks, and the memory of this is that it came nearly up to the village limits, when the wind changed and it burned itself out. Fires were a problem in those days, both forest fires and residential fires, but now our fire department goes on the run and not too many places are lost. Our fire department started out with an old Model T fire truck, with Herbert Whitney as the official fire chief and the fire truck was housed in the garage to the rear of their place of business. Later the village built a

small garage on south Main Street to house it and the other equipment. Now we have a brand new fire hall and village hall combined. We have two fire trucks, a tanker, and all the related equipment needed to make an efficient fire fighting team. This is the site of the first school.



This is now Kuchera's Store, but it was the first school house.

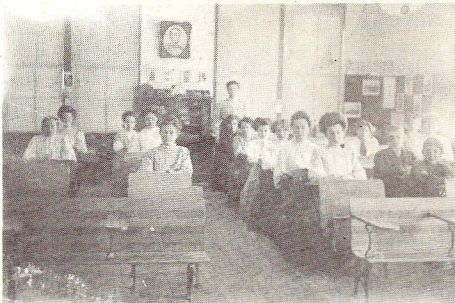
The first school was held in the village hall which was where Kuchera's store is now located; in fact, part of the store is made up of this old building. There was also a jail behind this building. Then in 1902, a large two-room school was built where the fire hall stands now, and in about 1908, two more rooms were added to it.



Herman Stierm, in old school



Catawba Lutherna Church



Inside of Catawba School



School House

The school has a story about how it got its first water. First in 1895, they used an old oaken bucket to pull the water up out of the well, and it was later sold for one dollar when the school bought a wooden pump in 1900. In 1902, an iron pump was purchased to replace the wooden one. The first teachers were single women; if they married, they lost their jobs. In 1892, the records show that the salary of the teacher was \$190.00 for seven months, and in addition to this, she had to do her own janitor work, each classroom was heated with a wood stove, and the children seated close to the stove roasted and the ones farther away froze. They had to leave their lunches in the hall and by the noon hour they were frozen. Also there were inkwells on each desk and in the morning they would be frozen. It was great going to school in those days, a real challenge. Some of the children had to walk a great distance to school, but then in later years small country schools were built, so school children would not have to walk over two miles; the only ones who had farther than that to go were from the Pass Road, and they were hauled in with a horse-drawn bus on a wagon in the summer and on a sleigh in the winter. Anton Halmstad drove this all the time that this was used, which was several years. This was a canvas-covered vehicle, and in the winter it was heated with a little charcoal stove. It was quite a cozy affair. Some of the children rode ponies to school.

There were eight grades of elementary school and two years of high school, and those who wanted more education went the last two years to Hawkins; they would stay with a family and work for their board and room. Then after a few years, a school bus would take the kids to Tony. About 1944, we integrated with Phillips and made the Central School District. From then on there have been only eight grades here in the old school. The first graduations were held in Gruber's Opera House, which was mentioned before as being above the Gruber-Blood store. It was quite a festive occasion at that time. During later years, all the eighth graders in the district went to Phillips, and all graduated at the same time. We now have a new school behind the Lutheran Church and we have kindergarten through fourth and Kennan has the fifth through eighth, and the high school is in Phillips.

Kuchera's store is operated by Ted and Anna Kuchera. Ted has been busy with the Catawba Oil Company for quite a number of years, and grandson Jerry Retzlaff is the new owner and operator of it. Many years ago this store was the village hall and people from Ogema came here to vote too. They would bring a picnic lunch, and it would be a whole-day affair. The whole township voted here, and it was the school and the first church services were held here also . . . that would have been in the late 1800's and early 1900's. It was put on a basement and added on to by Louie and Maude Menning. Louie barbered here and had a soft drink parlor. Sometime after this, a man from Minneapolis by the name of August Asp started a gas station here and sold pop and candy and ice cream, and it was a great card-playing place when the men of town had a few hours to kill, if the weather was bad or in the evenings.

In about 1921, the town hall was built, and in 1922, the village was incorporated. After this, the village used the Modern Woodmen Lodge Hall as a village hall, eventually leasing it. It was a two-story building, with the lodge holding their meetings upstairs. After this lodge disbanded, the village made a one-story building out of it, and used it until the new combination village and fire hall was built a few years ago. The V F W post used the town hall for several years.

In the late 1800's or 1900, the Old Village Hall down on Railroad Street was pretty lively. In this two-story building and downstairs they had lots of dances, wedding dances, and Joe E. Moore played the fiddle. The Modern Woodmen Lodge had their meetings upstairs. They had vaudeville shows downstairs too. The Meyers Family from Northfork (now Jump River area) came in and played violins, later Josie Moore played violin and Henry Moritz, the guitar and Emma Bendixon, the organ - - that was quite an orchestra. The Ellmans from Kennan provided the music at times too. The ladies were the "Royal Neighbors" and for the 4th of July celebration, they had two ice cream stands and made their own ice cream. One stand was in front of the Modern Woodmen Lodge and one was in front of Gruber's store. It was a fun day with races and ball games and dancing and ice cream was sold for 5 and 10 cents a dish. During the years, the top story was taken off as was mentioned earlier, and the Boy Scouts made use of it and the hunters during hunting season.



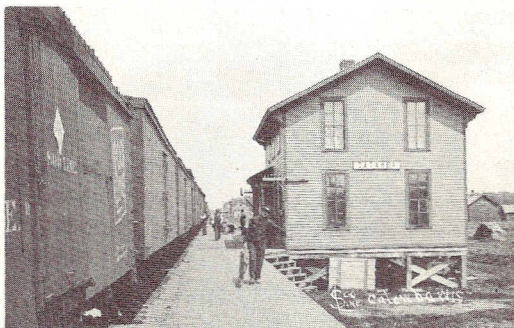
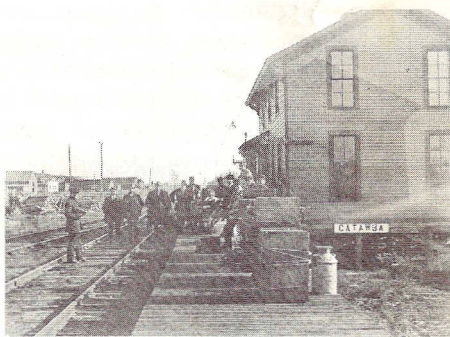
Mrs. Burke, Mrs. Colby, Mrs. Moore (Josie's mother), Mrs. Beyers, Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Miller, Grama Cotton, Mrs. Colby, Mrs. Welton, Mrs. Bursham, Grandma Sperrl.

Bud Mabie and three sons Kenny, Wayne and Lonnie live next door. In about 1901, John Gruber built this house and Henry and Laura Moritz lived here and he was Catawba's first rural route mail carrier in 1905. He first used a horse and cutter in the winter and a motorcycle with a sidecar in the summer. Next Joe E. Moore took over about 1906 to until November 16, 1952. Then he retired after about 46 years of all kinds of roads and weather and the mail went through. Now his son Jerome has the route, taking over in 1952, and of course, he has more modern, faster ways to deliver the mail today.

Charles and Maggie Colby lived here for many years and raised a family of six: Earl, Mae, Kate, Leslie, Lloyd and Vernon. Mr. Colby was the first section foreman, and they lived in the section house which was along the tracks across from Zorn's house. It must have been a sweet lullaby with those trains going by so close to the house at all hours of the day and night. There were two freights, two passenger trains and two limiteds at night. There was the first depot about there too, and it was a box car set on ties. Later after it was no longer in use as a section house, it was bought by Pete and Tom Netland and was moved onto what is now the Wally Wanish place. These two were bachelors, and they worked in the woods in winter and in Superior on the ore docks in the summer. John Plutul, a horse trader, lived here also and rented the land and barn from them. Mr. and Mrs. Colby bought a house next to the old village hall and lived there for many years, then Mr. and Mrs. Herman Tegan retired from their farm and purchased the house, then Claude and Cora Larkin lived there, and now Roy Mabie and boys own it.

Wally and Dorthy Wanish now have the farm that the former Tom Wanish bought from the Netland boys, which was a small farm of only a few acres. Wally has expanded until he has a very large place, about the largest one in the vicinity, and it is modern in every way, a real asset to the community. There are three children in the family: Jill, Kenneth and Loren. Jill is married and lives down the street in the former Christ Nussberger home. When Christ and Kathryn had it, they had a small grocery store connected to it, and Christ has a cattle-buying business. After he retired, the two boys, Don and Willis, operated it, and finally expanded into a fairly large trucking business. They operated from a garage next to Don's house, and when this garage was destroyed by fire, they moved their business to Prentice as there was no available building that was suitable for their business here. A big part of their business was hauling material to Omark Industries, and the finished product out to nearly every state in the union. The Christ Nussberger house was built by Wm. Ferguson in 1904, then a Minnie Kincannon, as well as Frank Clark and the Cavills. Now it is owned by Lynn and Jill Arndt.

The next neighbor is the Kresheck family, Rudy and Ceil and children Marian, Lenard and Doris. Adolph and Marie were Rudy's parents and lived in a mobile home on the same property. Rudy worked for the Conservation Department for twenty-one years. They moved here about 1937, and Ceil has sold Avon products for thirty-six years. She has worked hard all these years. The Leland Harrisons built the house — a two-story house at first — then Henry and Esther Floyd lived here and he worked out at Northfork and was killed with dynamite. After Esther married Dave Gillett, this house burned, and the present house was built. Esther was a sister to Joe E. Moore.



Catawba Depot

The depot was built on the west side of Main Street and it stood there so lonely all by itself for so many years and so cold in the winter time. But many trains went back and forth for many years, until the roads were improved and trucks took over a lot of the freight hauling. At first, the Wisconsin Central Railroad was the principal carrier, then the Soo Line, which still operates over this line. Many depot agents have come and went and lived here; for memories sake, remember the Vern Ashcrofts, Vern Griffiths, Boltman, Al Richards, Paul Noe, Sayles, and Frank Kukkola. The first agent was Bob Welton. Charles Colby and Mr. Senn we remember as section foremen.

The Mobil bulk plant that Lloyd Helland has was started by the Bell Oil Company and soon Frank Garluck purchased it, and Joe Freeman managed it for him and also ran the route for many years. Then George Kornuth worked for him on the route, then Dick Retzlaff, and Lloyd Helland, who later bought it out. Herbert Whitney also worked for Mr. Garluck on the gas route too, before Lloyd took it over. There has been a siding here with a log landing all these years. The depot has been torn down, and all the car-loading business has to be handled through Hawkins.

Joe and Alice Kempen live on the south edge of the village. This farm is where some of our first settlers lived. The Fred Hahn family came in 1898 with their seven children: Bill, Alfred, Ervin, Emil, Emma, Alma and Lily; they worked hard and cleared their land. Emil is still a Catawba resident, living here all his life. The Peiskers bought this farm and farmed the land along with their other farm. Joe and Steve Kempen bought this in later years, and finally Joe took it over and lives here with his family, Bardena who passed away, Pat, Mark, Jacob, Joanne, Myron and Byron, twins, Arthur, Luke, Luann, Carla, Janet and Tilla. I think back when the Hahns bought this land it was \$10.00 an acre and the neighbors to the south, the Buddes, bought theirs for \$7.00 an acre - - they came about the same time as the Hahns. Mrs. Amelia (Budde) Fisher says that when they came, there were only logging roads or a trail and they went to town about once a week and had to carry their groceries home in a flour sack. Sometimes it was hard going when the weather was bad and the mud was deep, sure different than our roads today. If we had to do that today, we would never make it, methinks. These people raised nearly everything they needed except the staples, so there was not too much money changing hands at that time. They started out with a couple of cows for milk, enough for their own use, and some cream to sell. This was shipped out on the train, and as more land was cleared and more hay and feed could be raised, more cows were added until twelve or fifteen cows were a large herd. She said that there were only about half a dozen farmers here when they arrived. Some were Louis Weyers, Peiskers and Hahns. They used grub hoes to grub out the stumps and dried blueberries and blackberries as a cure for the so-called "back door trots". Maybe it would be a good remedy today. They also made medicine from leaves and rhubarb roots. As there was no doctor, they had to make do with what they had on hand, so they stayed pretty healthy; while they could still walk, they were not sick. Mrs. Fisher is going to be ninety years old this year, and is still busy at the nursing home where she has been a resident for a number of years. Her husband Albert has been gone for many years now; their children were Sam, Henry, Viola, Jim, Wilbert, Verna, Art and Pete. Sam and his mother lived where Ken and Susie Fisher and family live now across the road from where the new Saint Paul the Apostle Catholic Church now stands.

Joe E. Moore and his wife Mabel built this house and raised their family who are Jerome, Gerold, Raymond and Jean. Next door is the Helen Fisher

home; she and her husband Wilbert owned this new home, but Wilbert did not enjoy it very long as he passed away shortly after it was completed. The neighbor to the west is Mamie Madson, and this house was moved from the village proper many years ago. It was built by Arndt Hammer, later was occupied by the Bursheim family, and also the Vesterby family. It was located south and a little west of the Charles Beyer home near the sawmill. Ed Madson moved this large house with a team of horses and a stump puller. It was mounted on some steel wheels, and it took two days to move it from its site in the village to its present spot. Up the road apiece is a new home belonging to Howard and Cheryl Moore who reside there with their son Jodie. Just beyond this home and down the hill is the former Milk Pool Cheese Factory; it had a large number of cheese makers. Now it is Seversons Welding and Repair, owned by Maynard Severson and his wife Kathleen and daughter Stacy. There are living quarters upstairs. He purchased Walter Olsen's blacksmith equipment, so there is a little bit of the "Village Blacksmith" here yet — nostalgia —.

Another family that lived next to the Ida Pierrard home back before 1900 was Anton and Gayda Goffin. They were a couple that had each been married before and each had children. Together they had eight more: William, Lexan, Oren, Walter, Elzworth, Esther, Olga and Floy. Floy is the lady who married Oscar Bendixon and lived in Catawba for many years. Oscar passed away and Floy now resides at the Pleasant View Nursing Home in Phillips. She is eighty-nine years young. Her son Richard lives in the village next to Catawba Sales and Service.

The Martin and Bertha Madson family lived just south of the Milk Pool Cheese Factory. They came here in 1904 as a result of Pastor Minnie asking some of his congregation to come here and settle. Grandma Madson, as she was known to many, had a big job accepting all these woods after coming from the open country of South Dakota. The children they raised have made their homes through this area: Edward, Hilda, Minnie, Celia, Mollie, Ida, Mabel, Edna, Melvin and Harold and three of these people are still living: Ida, Edna and Melvin.

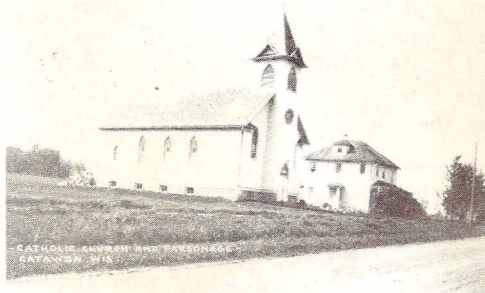
When so many of the first settlers came, they came on the train, and I imagine, wondered just where to begin. From lumbering and logging, this area went into quite a bit of farming, some in the village and the town; it's mostly farming now. Many of the people of this area are working in factories in nearby towns now, also.

The first mode of travel was just trails through here. There was one logging road from the mill here in the village out along the north of the railroad track, out to the intersection by Hauberts, over to Prentice. Another went through the lumberyard south of Curly's Tavern to east of Field's farm, through the fields that we see now and up to Prather's Road.

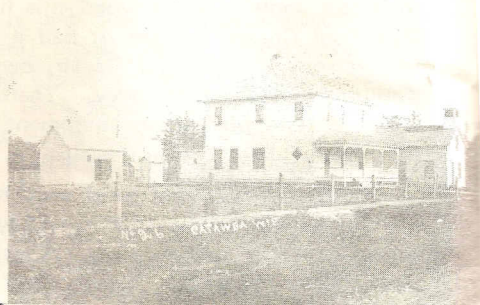


Road Crew

When the highway first went through Catawba, it was Highway 14. It went from town here and out past to where you turn south from Long Branch Bar and past Hoogland's. There was a bridge across "Hanson's Swimming Hole", as we know it, then Jump River Bridge and on out straight east. Now the part that goes straight east off Hwy. 86 is "Old 8"; that was old Highway 8. In 1949, the new Highway 8 went through and we got our concrete highway. Really coming up in the world.



Parsonage & Catholic Church No. 1



Catholic Church No. 2

We have a beautiful new Catholic Church here now, too. It was built in 1969 and 1970 and was dedicated on Aug. 23, 1970. They celebrated mass in the new church in the early spring. Father John Regh is the present priest here now and was instrumental in organizing the building of the new church. George Kempen's was the first funeral service held here.

Back about the turn of the century, Carl and Olga Halmstad built a house on this piece of ground. They raised their family: Carl, Harry, Ovid, Edwin and Robert here. After that, a bachelor, Hank Vanderloo, lived there. Then a family named Dahl owned it and then Mr. and Mrs. Berger Namtvedt and family. Then the new church was built on this land.

On the north end of Main Street is the original "Old" Catholic Church. It's been used for various other things since the new church was built. For awhile there was a Youth Center here. This building also had a humble, but strong, wonderful beginning. A Father Schell was concerned about the people in this part of the county. There were only 18 families here that would like a Catholic Church, but despite their small number, these families were immediately enthusiastic about the idea. They proceeded without hesitation and with a fearlessness inspired by faith, they formed Sacred Heart Parish.

One of the first parishioners, Frank Nelezen, said "Build the priest's house and we will have a priest. You can't have a parish without a priest." All were in agreement. The land was purchased in the fall of 1907 at a nominal cost from Matt Miller. There were 5 acres. In the spring of 1908, the pioneering 18 families went to work. Trees were felled, logs were sawed into lumber with every hand in the parish taking a part, and the Rectory was built. There was a small house here, and they remodeled this into a church. It stood on the north side of the Rectory. After building it they realized they had to support it, and they did and it flourished. The church itself was only 16 feet wide and 30 feet long, but the faithful hearts that beat within its walls as they knelt at prayer at Holy Mass were undeniably big. The first priest was Fr. A. Lehnen. He came Dec. 18, 1908. A very happy Christmas.



As more people came, there was a need for a bigger church. Fr. Peter Rivers served from 1916 to 1917 and helped get the present "Old" Catholic Church started. Under the direction of Fr. Theodore Stromberg, the basement was dug and foundation in the fall of 1917. Then Fr. Bernard Gerlitzki directed the building project and finished this in 1918. They recall it cost about \$9,000 and was built on the south side of the rectory. It was built by Bert Hicks of Phillips. A Fr. Charles Schwaab, who followed Fr. Gerlitzki, wired the church and installed the hot air furnace. Not too much more was done until Fr. Joseph Gleesier came in 1941 and some repairing and restoring were done. In 1907 the first families are a real memory: the Bill Kempen Sr.'s, Wilbert Kempen, Anton Tennessen, Louie Weyer, Frank Nelson (Nelezen), Matt Miller, Henry Hoen, Sr., George Bushman, Paul Fuchs, George Seibers, Frank Seibers, Martin Seibers, Wolfgang Bochler, Peter Casanet, John Gruber, John Kraimer, Barney Lasee and George Kempen families. So this little church survived from 1908 to 1970 and had services for 62 years, and it is still a nice building in Catawba and I imagine still very sturdy. I understand the first little church was moved off for other uses.

During these years it has been served by the following priests: Frs. A. Lehnen, Joseph SeeBoth, W. Tabenski, W. Kohlman, Peter Rivers, Theodore Stromberg, Barnard Gerlitzki, Charles Schwaab, Msgr. Neisen, B. M. Mcelligott, L. Mortriner, Joseph Gleisner, G. Sherman, Henry Kiel, Leon Schloemer and John Regh. Also Fr. Gerlitzki is buried here in our cemetery in Catawba.

The farm to the far west of the present St. Paul the Apostle Church is Ida Pierrard's home, and there is another house next to Ida's and that is where her sister, Mrs. Minnie Clark lived until her death. Ida's grandparents, Halvor and Gunhild Lee, built this place about 1901. They were one of the families that came when Rev. Minnie told about how the area of Catawba would be an opportunity to settle in. Enos and Ida Pierrard bought this from them in 1940, and have raised their three sons Marvin, Louis and Enos, Jr. Enos was the depot agent at Kennan for many years. Minnie Clark had lived in Milwaukee and Tomahawk and after her husband Dale passed away, she came to Catawba to make her home. During the 50's Enos Jr. and his wife Eddie lived here with their children Sue, Steve, Scott and Keith.



Mr. and Mrs. Wilbert Kempen & sons Pete, Henry, Bill, George & Mary Weyer holding her son Frances.

The next farm east of Pierrard's belongs to Betty Kempen. She and her husband Norb farmed this land for many years and daughter Jeannie. Norb passed away just recently. Norb's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kempen, started this place. There's an interesting story here where the parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wilbert Kempen, Sr. wanted to be sure that each of their sons had a piece of land and get started in life; so three sons, Henry, Bill and George were given 160 acres apiece and Pete got the home place. I guess they were also given other help, too. This seems like such a nice, close family, and as a result there have been Kempen families that live around here. The Henry Kempens had nine children: Norb, Elmer, Billy, Kathryn, Rita, Marie, Agnes, Betty and Josephine. Norb was the only one of this family who ended up staying in Catawba.

The Pete and Lena Kempen farm was up on the east corner of Midway Road on the hill and it overlooks the village.

This was the homestead of Mr. and Mrs. Wilbert Kempen, Sr. Pete and his wife Lena took care of the folks here and farmed and raised their family. Their children are Mary, Lucy, Joe, Steve and Felicity. Mrs. Kempen came here as a bride of 16. Lena is fondly remembered by all as a kind Christian lady; they have both gone to their reward.

The farm of Mildred Kempen across from the cemetery was built by Bill and Anna Kempen, and his dad helped him with some of this. Anna Kempen is 88 years old and still living with her son Walter in Ladysmith. Her daughter Ceil Kresheck still lives in Catawba and the other children are spread around. There were 15 children: Clara, Walter, Louis (died at 3 months), Ceil, Margaret, Rose, Louie, Hank, Ed, Frances, Bud (Raymond), Florence, Ses, Clayton and Dickie. Hank and Millie farmed this place from 1950 until Hank's recent death, and now Millie has taken over the farm and they have seven children: Mary Jane, Gloria, Wilbert (Billy), Kathleen, Jennifer, Gerard (Jerry), and Dale. Most of the children are still at home or live in Catawba.

Mike and Gloria (Kempen) Lyons and their two children live on the adjoining farm to the west, buying this from Carl and Theresa Erickson.

In 1900, Kramer built the first little house and it was down where the barn is now, and then about 1917, Bill and Nell (Hanaahan) Budde and children Phylis and Norman bought it. During the time they owned it, they had the house moved to the spot where it is now. They used 8 horses and block and line and inched it up the hill. It's been added on to and remodeled through the years. Then, for 16 years Mr. and Mrs. Herman Wentlant lived here and just rented it. In 1937, Carl and Theresa Erickson came up from Abbotsford and bought the place and have worked hard here since until their retirement, when they made their move over to where they live now. Mike and Gloria farm quite a bit of land in this corner of Catawba. Carl and Theresa's place to most of us was better known as the Kosterman place. Back in 1899 or 1900, the Mike J. Weltons built this place, and he was the fellow who sold maple syrup, among other jobs. They had four sons as we remember: Bob, Fred, Hal and Ray. In 1920, Gerhardt, better known to us as Pete and Anna Kosterman, bought this and farmed until 1941, I believe. The Kosterman children were Margaret, Elmer, Helen, Florence, Rosie, Janice and Ed. Ed lives in Phillips now, but he did farm south of Catawba for many years. In 1941, Dick and Edith Denny bought this and they also farmed further south where Oliver and Avis Slattery and family now reside and farm. The Dennys are living in Phillips. Their children aren't living in Catawba, but they are Jim, Eva, Lyle, Joanne, Randy and Jeff. In 1946, Walter Kempen owned it for just a short time, and then in 1947, Steve and Kathryn Kovac, Theresa

Erickson's folks, bought it and farmed here until they passed away. Now Carl and Theresa are working and remodeling this home. Their children are Carl Jr., Eugene, Audrey and Sophie, and they don't live in Catawba.

Jim and Denise Zwick live on the place to the north of this road, and Fred Gehring built this somewhere around 1900. Jack and Anna Zwick had made this their home for a good many years. They farmed and in earlier days he worked for Bissel Lumber Co., and he was a mill wright at Tripoli and Hawkins. He also drove a "Cat". Mrs. Zwick is still living, but is in a nursing home now.

We have an empty spot next to the Mike Lyons farm, but there was a farm there. Paul and Helen (Kramer) Fuchs and family lived here and built this about 1901. In later years, Claude and Cora Larkin farmed here until their retirement when they moved into the house now owned by Bud Mabie.

Going back down County 1 to the Midway Road in the east corner, there is still a little forlorn looking building behind some trees, but this at one time was owned by Mr. and Mrs. John Israel. They farmed and raised their family here. Their children Celia, Theresa, Agnes and John, who is an ordained priest, no longer live in Catawba, as well as Mary, Margaret and Kathryn. This family came to Catawba in 1923-1924. Back about 1900, the Pete Hendricks family built the place.

The Bruce Halmstad home is next. This is one of the old original homes here, too. The Bill Smiths built this. Bill worked at the mill. Still later, Dale and Minnie Clark and family lived here, then the Alvin and Edna Pierrard family. In later years, Fred and Emma Wester retired from their farm on Hwy. 86 and lived here. Their children no longer live here, but their son Fred Jr. and his wife Beatrice live in Kennan. Fred does carpenter work and Beatrice, a teacher for many years, is now teaching at the Kennan Middle School. Pete and Tony Hean, a couple of bachelors, lived here for a spell, and now Bruce has it. Just down the road a little, there is an empty spot and Wally Wanish farms this land, but we remember the old Evergreen Factory being here. First it was our first cheese factory, run by Mr. Farrell. We have a picture of it showing Pete Kempen hauling the first load of cheese here.



First Cheese Factory — Later the Evergreen Factory with Wilbert Kempen & Mr. Farrell, the cheesemaker & Pete Kempen on the wagon.

Then a John Perman bought this and made it into an evergreen factory in the early 1900's. People collected evergreens and ground pine and sold them to the factory for 2 cents a pound. The evergreens were dyed and used in wreaths. Just before or after 1930, Ben and Julia Bushman and family had this business. Later Les and Ruth Anderson, a brother to Lucian, and their family had this and lived in the back. Leslie used the front of the building for a repair shop.

We have a nice size cheese factory doing a good business here. It is owned and operated by the Zorns, a family corporation, and it has been expanded through the years, and is able to handle an extremely heavy flow of milk. They also operate a whey drying plant in connection with the cheese factory. The equipment from the first factory across the road was probably moved into this location, and it seems that a Mr. Reishus was the first cheese maker.

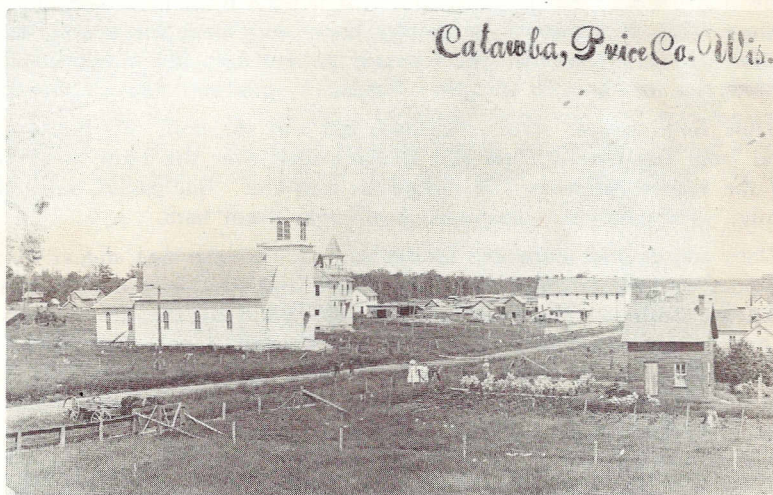
Just north of the factory was the house presently occupied by the Don Nussbergers. It was moved by him to its present location. Next is the house owned by Steven Frenzer. This house was gutted by fire and is not suitable for living purposes at this time. The next lot was at one time owned by Henry Kenning who had a home and large machine shop on the property. Mr. Kenning was the Justice of the Peace here in the village for years. It is interesting to note that in the books of the proceedings of his justice court that it seems that there was a lot of violating even in those days. It seems that as far back as 1913 a hunting license was required for deer hunting and also for most other game, but at that time the fee was \$1.00, some difference from present fees. Before the Don Nussberger home was moved, they lived in it at the location just north of the cheese factory; the location of it now is just east of where the old sawmill was. They have really remodeled it both outside and inside — it is a real nice-looking home. They raised a family of five children: Jim, Dan, Pat, Luann and Kip. This property was occupied years ago by three tie camps and the Covell family, Joe Moore, Wm. Kincannon and Roberts lived here and worked at the mill or in the woods. Moore, Kincannon and Roberts were brothers-in-law. Kathy Nussberger's folks, Joe and Josie Lukes, live in a mobile home near their daughter. Back to the Steve Frenzer house — it was built several years ago by the Jacob Neisingers, who retired from a farm north of town. After they passed away, it was purchased by Ida Bartholmew; she has since passed away also.

Baders Store, owned and operated by Harvey (Buggs) and Jeanette Bader, is a general store with a well-stocked antique shop in connection. They have their home upstairs. Their children are grown and have families of their own. They are Harvey, Ronald and Gary. This was one of the early business places built during the late 1920's by Frank DeMark. He started it as a furniture store and undertaking parlor; he later sold to Mr. and Mrs. William Teske and Mr. and Mrs. Kadel. The DeMarks moved to California where he had a mortuary in connection with his daughter Evelyn and her husband Teske, and Kadel operated it for a time. Then Teske operated it alone as a Red and White store. Next it belonged to Art and Lil Parpart, then Ralph and Ruth Adams, with the Baders acquiring it from them.

Across the street, Jerry and Shirley Kuchera have the J. Music Company; this building was originally a livery stable. Charlie used to stable his livery horses here. This might be a good place to inject a little story that was related to me quite some years ago by an oldtimer that knew Charlie real well. He used to take salesmen to the surrounding towns and especially when he had to make a trip to Phillips, he had his price that he would quote them

for the trip, but when he got halfway there, he would raise it on them. John and Margaret Adams bought this building and remodeled it and made it into a home and barber shop which he operated for many years. They raised a large family: John, Kathryn, Henry, George, Betty, Aggie and Evie. He also had the upstairs fixed into a couple of apartments which he rented out.

Between this and what is now the Ervin Krich Veterans Home, Jerome Moore had a Standard Station, where he sold candy and cigarettes, fixed tires and it was a good place for a good old bull session and a little card playing. Jerome and Luella have a new home up the road apiece; they have raised a family of four. Howard, who with his wife Cheryl and son Jodie have a new home out west of town near the old milk pool cheese factory, Shirly, who is married to Roger Arndt and lives in Kennan, Sherry and Nancy at home are their children. Jerome is the rural mail carrier and Luella drives a school bus for the Central School District. The location of their home is where the Halvor Lee family built their home when they moved here from South Dakota. The Halvor Lees were the parents of Bertha Madson. Later Jerome Moore's grandfather Arne Larson lived here; he was the janitor at the Lutheran Church. He was a gruff old fellow and the Sunday School kids sure used to give him a bad time — he would take the broom after them, things would get rather warm after a time. Riley and Alice Shaver had the place after that and Jane and Denis were both born there. Riley worked on the Alcan Highway, and now he works for Owens-Illinois as a pulp cutter. They also have a new home out in the country along highway 8. Alice has been head cook at Catawba School for 27 years.



Moen House, Lutheran Church, School, Gruber-Blood Store

The present Frank Freeman house is one of the old homes; it was built by a Mr. Moen about 1904. I really do not have any specific information on what his occupation was, but he supposedly worked in the mill. After Bill Hitzler came to town, his mother moved here too, and she lived there until her death. At that time there was an outside stairway and school teachers rented the upstairs — it was made into an apartment. Mr. and Mrs. John Izreal, who had farmed up on Peisker's hill, retired, sold the farm and bought it and lived for quite some time. The three Freeman brothers bought it; George and Jim are both dead and Frank still has it, but he is a resident of the Pleasant View Nursing Home at Phillips after having a broken hip.

Elmer and Bernice Lasee have the stone house on the second hill from here. They were residents of rural Catawba and are back after having resided in Rockford, Illinois for some years. Martin and Murrey Netland built the house, while Martin owned the feed mill and store, then traded it to Bill and Marie Steele for a farm nine miles from town on Highway 86. This had a log house put together with wooden pegs, for it was an old homestead settled back in the late 1800's. Before the Netlands built the stone house on the place, the first one was built by Helge Helgeson family. Then John Bushman, who lived in the Litvinoff house, built the barn and had the place for awhile, also a Bill and Charlotte Clark and later Bob and Anna Freeman lived here. Ed Madson owned it, farmed the land and rented the house. The machine shed was moved from what was known as Gilbert's Meadow. It was an old house, and in the process of tearing it down and moving it, Henry Vandelloo, a bachelor living next door, was hurt and later died from his injuries.

Across the road is the Herbert Lee farm; Herbert and Althea, with Robert and Sharon live here while Dolores, Patty and Gilbert live elsewhere. Herb's dad built this house for his bride Gunhild. They farmed here since the early 1900's. They raised a family of four: Herbert, Myrtle, Gladys and Louise. Herbert has been on this farm all his life and has done a very good job of farming this land.

Up on High Street going north, Dani and Debbie Halmstad live in the mobile home with their son Jay; this was bought from Paul and Lena Gehring. They had this for a summer home and spent the winters in Florida near their daughter Aveline. Paul passed away there, and now Lena lives there full time; she has another daughter Rosemary who lives here in the state.

Tillie Gehring lives across the road; Bill and she built this house when they retired from the farm. Their son Richard took over the farm, then he sold it to the Walter Petersons and moved to Hawkins. Bill passed away fairly recently. Tillie has two daughters, both away from here.

Niles and Sophie Zorn live in the next house with one son at home, Tad. Craig goes to college, while Perry is married and lives in a mobile home on the old George Bushman place east of town on Old 8 by the river. Niles moved this house from north of Kennan and first located it near the cheese factory, later moving it to the present location. They have done a beautiful job of remodeling it. A bachelor, Fred Kenning, originally had a small house on this site back in the 1920's and early 1930's.

Don and Mary Ellis and three children have the old Weber house. Nick and Francis retired from the farm in 1946, moved this house from Ogema and remodeled it and lived there for a number of years, until they both passed on. Webers came to Catawba in 1914; they lived on a farm east of town on Highway 8 near the Jump River. They had lived in Minnesota and Oklahoma. Mr. Weber was a school teacher prior to coming to Catawba. There were thirteen children in this family: Cynthia, Gertrude, Hilaria, Ottmar, Carl, Norbert, Clarence, Robert, Norman, Jerome, Alma, Gerhard and Tillie. They all live away from here, with the exception of Norb who lived on a farm on Highway 86. He also drove school bus for the Central School District for 30 years, and he retired from the farm recently and moved into a mobile home nearer town, and has since passed away. Tillie and her husband Joe Sieverts and family live on a farm east of town on Highway 8.

Across the road and to the north is the home of Elna Husby. Her husband John built this house and they raised their family here: Violet, Glen, Wilma and Eugene. They all live in Chicago now, including Mrs. Husby. John worked as a carpenter there for several years; he is now gone. Next there was a small house that belonged to the Houven family, who were the parents of Mrs. Joe Gehring Sr. The next house was built by Fred Worsech, and different families lived there including Rube Nelson, Frank Makalonis, Robert Olson, who was school principal before the district was consolidated. Mr. and Mrs. Pat White lived there, and then Mr. and Mrs. Bill Lasee bought it, and Mrs. Lasee still lives there. They retired from their farm and their son Eddie and wife Lila and family took it over. Next to this, a Billy Shafer had a small house where he lived until he passed away. Then Mamie Madson owned it until Larry and Carolyn Makovsky bought it and moved a mobile home on it and live there with their two sons Dale and Timmy. Back down High St., Evelyn Helland has a home. Since Oscar passed away, she lives alone and has a small upholstery business. This was purchased from Bob and Helen James who moved it from the Town of Harmony to the north of us. It was the old Jensen school, and Bob remodeled it extensively. Lloyd and Connie Helland have a new home on Main Street next to the old Gruber house where Edna Pierrard now lives. They live there with their three children: Larry, Coleen and Alvin. In the early 1900's, a family by the name of Alstiens built a nice home on this site, and later a bachelor and tinsmith lived in it, and he had his business in it. It burned down, and the lot has been empty until Lloyd erected this new home.

Going back on the west end of South Street, there is an empty house; it was built by Vincent Cison who lived there for some time. Then it was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Olaf Larson, until they moved to Michigan to be near their children. The next one to the west belongs to Mrs. Grace Felix; this house was moved in here by Frank Garluck, and Dick Retzlaff and family lived in it for some time. It was built by Oscar Bendixon and was located on Old Highway 8 east of the Long Branch Tavern across the railroad tracks. The house that Bud and Rose DeBoth have was built by an Ausdahl family in



Louis & Mary Weyer's farm - east end of village.

the early 1900's. When Anton Halmstad came to Catawba, this was where he slept the first night. Ole and Mollie Netland and son Martin owned this until

1919, and sold it that year to Bob and Anna Freeman. John and Mary Bushman bought it in 1931, and Frank Branker, a tailor, lived in it for a time. In 1948, Bud and Rose DeBoth bought this house from the Welfare Department. Mary Weyers, Rose's mother, was living with the DeBoth family at the time, so she moved into this house and lived there the rest of her life. A few years ago, the Historical Society honored her for being the oldest citizen in Catawba. The DeBoths lived on the same property in a mobile home, but moved into the house in September, 1973. Bud has been a construction worker. They also own the house next door to the east. This was first owned by the John St. Germans, then the Casper Heims, and Mrs. Wintersteller; Frank and Weeta Hettler lived there for several years. He logged and also dug wells, and finally the last resident was John Borth. Vernon and Darlene (Baeten) Schneider bought it from Oscar Helland, and Schneider rented it to John Borth. The DeBoths bought it from them in the late Sixties. Mrs. Dentyne and Darlene lived here for awhile. Rose's folks had one of the first farms in this community; his farm was in the village proper too.

Louis Weyers, Rose's dad, came in the fall and built a small tarpaper house, and started the barn and the big house; this was in 1900. Mary Kempen came in 1902 and she and Louis were married September 13, 1903. They farmed here for many years and raised a family: Mildred, Francis, Rosella, Steve, Hank, Annie and Josephine. Steve and Dorthy Shumer were married in May, 1937, and took over the farm in October, 1943, and they now live in Oregon. This farm is now owned by John Simo.

John and Ethel Tews, Amy and Warren, have a new house on the Pass Road just west of the Simo place. Then there is a vacant house standing on the site of the old Anton Borth farm; this was homesteaded by them and their son John. The house was of logs and stood for many years, until it was replaced by the present one after Joe and Rosalie Novak purchased it. Now the house and a small plot of ground are owned by a party from Illinois, and John Fields owns the land. Next is the home of Bill and Lucille Fields, Patty and Stacy. This place dates back to 1901 when Henry and Sarah Cotton must have built it. Then it was sold to S.R. Packard, and he in turn sold it to John B. Gruber. He in turn sold it to George and Margaret Loch; these are the people who started the butcher shop that now houses the post office. Bill and Lucille have done a nice job of remodeling it, and it is really a neat-looking place. The home occupied by Wayne and Donna Anderson and family is owned by his mother Mrs. Walter Olsen. This was built by the John Fegstads in the early 1900's and was occupied by them and their family: Inga, Alfred and Melvin. Mr. and Mrs. Fegstad were some of the charter members in the Lutheran Church and were instrumental in its building. He probably worked for Hammer in the mill. Mr. Senn, the section foreman replacing Chas Colby, lived in this house for a time.

Curly Hilliard is the proprietor of the Old Barn Bar across the road from the new feed mill. It has been all remodeled and it is a very nice place and he has a nice clientele. Curly and Dorothy bought this place and worked it together, but Dorothy passed away. Curly has a mobile home in the rear of the tavern, and this tavern has had many owners and renters since it was started by Elmer Bushman. Then it was bought by John Pass and moved a few feet to the east to its present location, and additions were built onto it. There were several renters before the Haubert Brothers, including Tom Wanish, Bill Taylor and Richard Bendixon. It was then purchased by John Tomasek and his sister Ceil Hauenstein. Later Ceil owned it alone and Curly and Dorothy purchased it from them.



Next is the house built by John Pass. After John moved away, it had several renters until it was purchased by Rudy and Linda Scotch and children, Lori and Kevin. This lot, along with the one where the tavern is, was purchased from Martin Evenson. The yellow building between Rudy's house and the Martin Netland mobile home was built by Mr. Evenson as a repair shop. Then John Pass bought it for a Radio and TV Repair Shop, and then it housed a dress shop run by Mrs. Joe Novak. It was later a shop selling knit materials run by Glenda Bichrt; she also taught sewing.

Martin and Murrey Netland live in the mobile home next; this is directly across from the Richard Bendixon home. Their children are Marty, Russ, Ken and Cheryl. Martin is now postmaster. Martin and Mabel Evenson built the first home here, and it housed a Texaco Service Station in the front with living quarters in the rear. Later he bought the Charlie Erdmann shoe repair equipment and had a shoe repair shop in the same building. The Evensons came in 1923 along with sons, Murphy (Pat) and Murrell (Swede), and all worked for Beyers at first. Murrey and Marthinus were born here. August Asp leased the station for several years.

The Richard and Rita Bendixon property goes way back, Matt and Pauline Miller must have built it in 1898, and Charles and George and Mary Reichert had it and sold it to P.H. Hammer in 1900. Then it went to Packard in 1901, to Henry and Sarah Cotton in 1903, to Herman and Caroline Fiebig in 1905. Those people must sure have moved around. It then went to Tom and Minnie Olson in 1917, Leon and Josephine Lizak in 1937, and to Elmer and Edna Bushman in 1938. The next owners were John and Josephine Pass in 1941, Don and Wilma Haffeman and son Robert in 1948, John and Clara Jensen in 1949, and Richard bought it from the Jensen estate several years ago. South of the Bendixon home, there were two homes. These two homes are long gone; one was destroyed by fire, and the other was moved to another location. The one nearest the road was occupied by the Tom Vesterby family and later the Tom Bursheim family, and the Oliver McCumbers lived in the second. Where South Street joins with Highway 8, that portion was not graded into a street at that time. Just two board sidewalks extended towards the railroad tracks.

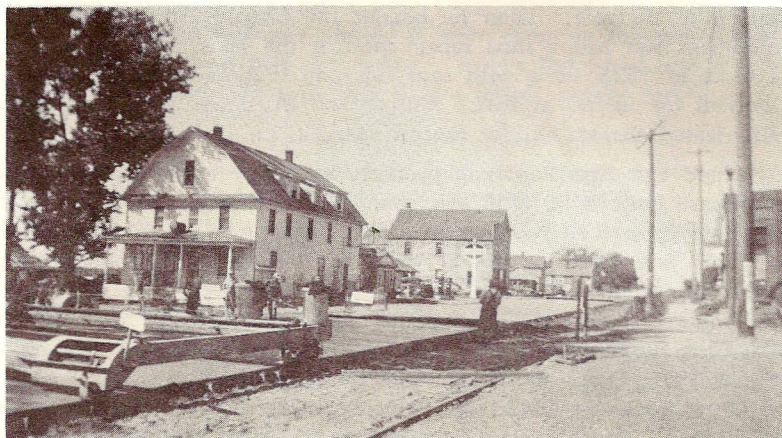
The John and Christina Herber farm in the southeast corner of the village was first owned by the John Kramers. He built a log house on the property and lived here for some time, losing the place through foreclosure due to the fact that he had borrowed money from a New York bank at thirteen percent interest and just could not make his payments. In 1913, John Herber's parents bought the place and it has been in the family since, with Henry and his father farming it together. Henry has four sisters: Kathryn, Lillian, Rosemary and Shirley, all living away from here.



A Road Grading Crew

In the early years, the roads around here were all built with horses and graders, with only small portions being built each year, so sometimes there was only a trail through the woods. When the weather was rainy, the roads were muddy, and when the weather was cold, the snow was deep.

It was about 1949 or 1950 that the road through here was paved. First it was gravel, then blacktop, then the concrete. In the 1920's, if one had a car it was used only in the summer months, and put up on blocks in the winter, because the roads were not plowed, and one resorted to the horse and sleigh.



Putting concrete through Catawba

Some interesting information was received from Amelia (Budde) Fisher regarding some of the early activities:

Mr. Coolage and a Mr. Holladay were the first to log off Catawba of the good timber, before settlers came to the vicinity. They had their logging camp one and one half miles south of Catawba, and they logged with oxen. The company's groceries were shipped in by train. When they got through logging, they sold off the land of 40, 80 and 120 acres. Matt Miller was the land agent. The first settlers made their living by selling log to the mill operated by P. H. Hammer. They also sold cord wood, sixteen-inch wood and also four-foot Basswood bolts. Matt Miller shipped the wood to Minneapolis and sold it for them. They worked up the ground between the stumps to plant gardens and potatoes. August Budde bought his first cow from John B. Gruber, and built up a herd from that. August and Richard Budde bought their land for four dollars an acre.

In addition to the history of the village proper we also have some information on the part of the Township of Catawba that was settled first.

## NORTH FORK

In the 1890's, Harry Floyd and his wife Catherine came from Eau Claire with their three sons and settled (either bought from the railroad or homesteaded) on land on the west side of the North Fork of the Jump River. The land was bounded on the north by a road running from Catawba to Prentice, which later became Highway 14, and on the east by the river and on the west by a road running south, later known as Lasee Road, now Moonshine Alley.

They built a log house and fed and roomed travelers or people who needed a place to stay overnight — a sort of an Inn. When the mill was built, the men who were not married boarded and roomed there. Later on, he built a frame house nearer to the highway, adding an extra room on the boarding house section for a general store. He had Cora Wagner from Eau Claire and Victor Berquist from Prentice helping out.

At this time, a man by the name of Meyers and his family lived up river, on the north side of the railroad track by the old dam (where the Adolph Makovsky family now live); Near him lived Alvin Dahlin; a school house was built there also. A man by the name of Melquist also lived near there.



Starload, hauled by Henry Floyd, North Fork, Wis.

There was a road from the Floyd property running north toward the railroad track where there was a spur track called Spur 161.

Some of this now came in later years, and along this road several houses were built to house mill employees.

On the corner was a house occupied by M. P. Munson who owned the land, this corner and the balance across the river. Later he built a house on the east side of the river.

The 40 acres west of this cross road, called Mill Road, was known as the mill 40. It was on this 40 by the railroad track where A. M. Hauson built his mill which began operations in 1901. He came from Waupaca.

At the old dam in the early days, logs were floated down the river and were loaded on cars at the railroad track, as there was a spur there known as

Spur 20. There was also an Arpin logging camp, west on the road going through from there to Highway 14. This road was known as Spur Road or also Weber's Road. There was a large log placed across the pond used as a foot bridge. Eventually houses were built east of the river which were either torn down or moved.

On the Lasee Road going south, Barney Lasee lived with his family as early as 1901. This is now owned by Frank Strobl Jr. Down this road during the years were several logging camps: Arpins, Ed Hewitt from Phillips, also a Miller from Prentice; no doubt there were more. Going west from this road were Anton Munson, then William Bendixon going as far as the railroad crossing. All this is now occupied by Jerome Hoogland. On the north side of the road, Oscar Bendixon built a house (now Elmer Calhoun's) which bordered on mill 40.

The first mill burned in a forest fire, and a company from Minneapolis-St. Paul, Greene and DeLattere, bought in and the mill was rebuilt and again was destroyed by fire. Nothing was saved except the office building.

At one time H. Helgeson and Henry Kenning had a portable saw mill on a piece of land owned by Wm. Bendixon on the north side of Highway 14, between the road and railroad track. It was only operated one year; this was custom sawing.

Across the railroad track from Mill by Shortcut Road were several houses too. The Charlie Anderson house still stands (now Joe Sievert's) and east and northeast were several houses between there and Meyers; all were serviced by Floyd's store and the North Fork Post Office later on.

Two brothers-in-law, Nystrom and Eagle, lived close by Andersons. The Eagle house was moved to the Ted Lallemon property.

Between Andersons and highway 111 were several houses; also between the railroad track and Shortcut road were houses — all gone now.

On the corner of 111 and 14 was Cozy Corner Confectionery which stood for a time until it was destroyed by fire. A man by the name of Johnson lived on the land east of 111. He sold out to C. H. Granstrom, who later moved to Prentice. Eventually Frank Garluck moved his nite club from its location on 86 to the corner location, now the Long Branch.

Most of these lands along the railroad track were railroad lands or were homesteaded. The pine had been all logged, and the men coming in worked in the mills, cut logs, hauled to the mills and cut ties, bolts, pulpwood and eventually made farms from these timber tracts.

The passenger trains didn't stop at the mill or Spur 161. So people had to go to Catawba and walk back on the railroad track, as at that time roads were only muddy trails, but the spur was a flag stop. There was no church, but the women of the community got together and with the help of Mr. Granstrom and a Rev. Pearson who lived south and east of the highway by the river, a union Sunday School was formed, the mothers taking turns leading.

For entertainment, everyone danced from the smallest to the oldest. There were a couple of fiddle players, Anton and Oscar Meyers. Nearly every weekend there was a party; the women brought lunch, the men carried the furniture out of one room, and everyone danced until daybreak.

The old log schoolhouse was replaced by a frame one-story building; all eight grades were taught, and the first teacher was Orville Schwendt from Prentice.



North Fork School

Later a new school was built on the lot in the southeast corner of the M. P. Munson land, where it was for many years, until it was moved to Prentice and made into a residence. After eight grades, children went to Catawba to continue their education.

There were all kinds of fruit in abundance and the women did much canning. Blueberries, strawberries, cranberries, raspberries and gooseberries were also abundant, along with plentiful pinchberries, chokecherries, blackberries and plums.

Our mail was picked up at the Catawba Post Office, until a rural route was granted. The route was east to 111, then north toward Phillips. Our mail for Northfork was placed in boxes on a large wagonwheel at the railroad crossing, and we picked it up there. We finally got a Post Office in the Floyd store. Mr. Floyd was named postmaster, and we had the name North Fork, Wisconsin.

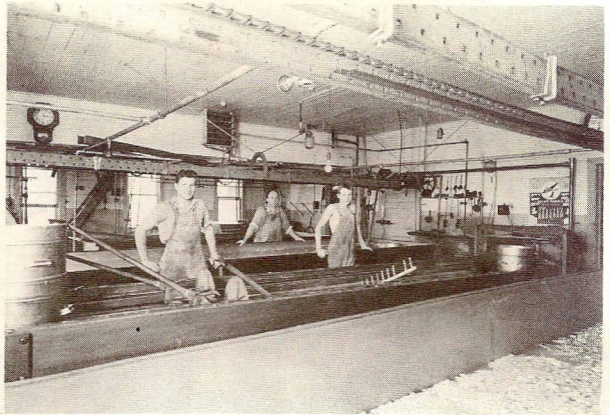
## THE OLDEST SETTLED SECTION OF THE TOWN OF CATAWBA

The oldest known settled area in the town of Catawba is located on Highway 86 near the south fork of the Jump River. The majority of the following places were homesteaded by Swedish immigrants in 1882. At that time, this particular section belonged to the town of Ogema.

The first two homesteaders west of the river were Charles Ohrstrom and Carl Jacobson (before that the nearest homestead was five miles east toward Ogema). The first building west of the river was a small log cabin built by Carl Jacobson in 1882, and it existed until 1975.

The homesteads usually consisted of 160 acres and the original houses were built of hewed logs pegged together in the corners. Of the many houses built this way, only two remain and are the Lindberg and P. Olson homes.

In 1885, the taxes on some of the homesteads were as high as 56 cents. This part of the area became part of the town of Catawba about 1909.



Inside of Zorn's Cheese Factory — Les - Art - Niles.

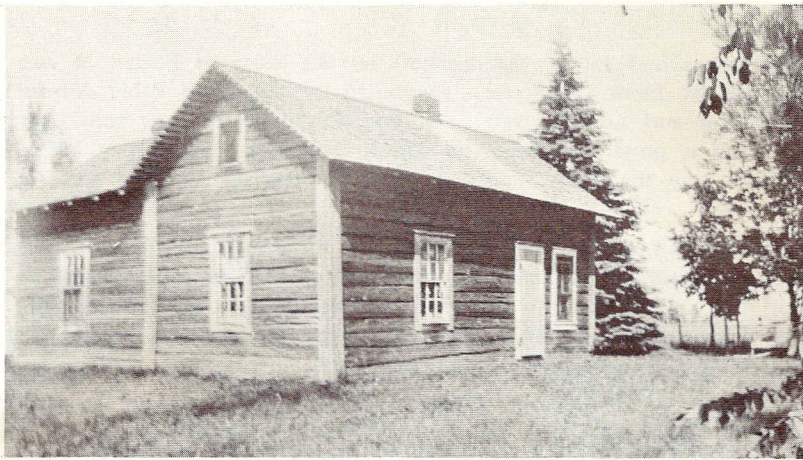
The Ohrstrom place was homesteaded in 1882, later passed on to their son Waldemar and his wife Helen, then to their daughter Arlene and her husband Ronald DeBoth. Now it is divided into three portions and owned by DeBoths, Larry Retzlaff and Jim Smugala.

Anna Carlson Ohrstrom was the oldest pioneer resident; she homesteaded with her husband in 1882 at the age of 19. She lived her entire life here and died in 1955 at the age of 92.



Wester Home

The place homesteaded in 1882 also by Carl and Caroline Jacobson, was passed on to their daughter Emma and her husband Fredrick Wester, then to their son Fred and his wife Beatrice. It was then purchased by the Norlanders and is presently owned by Clifford and Doris Nelson.



Dan Makowsky Home – Per & Anna Olson Home, 1880

The Olson place, settled by Per and Anna in the 1880's, passed on to their son Andrew and his wife Minnie, was then purchased by Glendee and Anna May, and then by Norbert and Rose Weber and presently by Dan and Florence Makovsky. Anna Olson was a sister to Caroline Jacobson. The Jacobsons gave the Olsons 40 acres of their property to start their home.

The Lindberg place was homesteaded by Carl and Anna, passed on to their son Alric and his wife Emma, then sold to Bill and Marie Steele, then Martin and Murrey Netland and presently belongs to David and Lynn Rae Kidd.

The Edlunds homestead was settled by Gustof and Johanna, then purchased by Stephan and Agnes Mucha, then by Charles Nelson, and presently occupied by Mabel Nelson.

The Strands homestead was settled by Peter Strand and his brother Charles Johnson, then was purchased by Steve and Emma Smugala, and is presently owned by Paul and Josephine Smugala.

Smugala's was owned by various lumber and logging companies, one of them being Upham. It was first settled by Adolph and Gustava Bergdahl, purchased later by Johan and Anna Smugala, now presently owned by Andrew and Lydia Smugala.

Lindsten's was homesteaded by Johan and Eva in the 1880's, then passed on to their son Carl and their daughter Josephine Wegner, and is presently owned by Richard and Arlene Mueller.



Lindsten's Home, 1880. Eva Lindsten - Josie - Clara & Carl.

Olson's was first settled by squatters by the name of Powell, it was then homesteaded by Erick Olson, later purchased by Felix and Ether Johnson, then by Oscar and Augusta Olson. It was passed on to their sons Darwin and Carl and is presently owned by various real estate companies. Henry and Olga Styblo own the house across the road, built also by Oscar and Augusta Olson in 1936.

Schetski's Mill and farm was first settled by Frank and Anna Schetski, later owned by Theodore Schetski, then by Roman Schetski, now by his wife Mary.

The first known school in Price County was built in the corner of the Ohrstrom property in 1887. Some of the first students were: Alma and August Edlund, Arlic, Eric and Martha Lindberg, Josephine and Gustof Lindsten, Andrew and Gust Olson, and Emma Jacobson. The Woodland school operated until 1944 and was then closed, and the property was returned to the Ohrstrom family. The building was used for a neighborhood club until 1957 when the log structure was dismantled and moved to the fair grounds at Phillips.

The last students at the Woodland School were: Glenda May, Lucille Lindemann, Gen Ohrstrom, Marianne Scotch, Edward Rictor, Rudy Scotch, Jim Lindemann, George Scotch, Arlene Ohrstrom, Bill Lindemann, Geraldine Rictor, Adeline Ohrstrom, Albert Steele and teacher Joyce Arndt.





## REMINISCING

You walk in the door, reach for the light switch, and you have instant light; think of walking in that same door fumbling for a match, then fumbling for the lamp chimney and getting it lit. Then you could only see the middle of the room, the corners were rather shadowy. Now you rush for the refrigerator for a snack. Back then you ate at meal time and made do. You might have had a root cellar to store things in so they would not spoil. It was cool there, you did not go out there in the dark just to look for a late snack; you decided you were not that hungry.

Monday morning came around, and you knew what day that was just by seeing a big wash boiler on the cook stove. Wash day again — that was an all-day job and a hard one too, scrub dirty clothes on the wash board, wring them out by hand. By the time mother got done with that job, she did not have enough ambition left to smack you one if you needed it.

Now you go to the store and buy everything that is needed for a meal. Back then in the fall, a day was set aside for butchering, probably a couple of pigs, maybe a beef. Then there was the job of rendering the lard; the only time you bought lard was just before butchering time. The last batch just did not last long enough. Then the meat, especially the beef, had to be canned, for that is the only way it would keep. The pork generally was smoked and the rest would be put in a big container and covered with salt.

Boy, that fresh bread sure does smell good! How about a thick slice swimming with fresh butter and how about a little sugar sprinkled on it? Makes your mouth water, huh?

People were pretty self-reliant in those days, churned butter, had butter-milk to drink, a lot of them made their own soap. A special treat on a hot Sunday afternoon would be home made ice cream. It did not happen much, but when it did, oh boy! There was always plenty of work for everybody, so every bit of leisure time was appreciated.

## IN CLOSING

*We who have tried to put this little book together want to say, we have tried to get most of Catawba included. We were primarily doing research on the village, but others have offered information on the town, so in this month's time, this is as much information or history that we could put together.*

*We hope that someone will continue this research now and take the time, be it a year or even more, to compile it more thoroughly and then we will have a true history of our heritage. It is something that we should keep, and make available for future generations if they are interested; some will be.*

*We would like to thank all those that helped with the research, and the ones that were pestered for information, and also for the help with the typing and the pictures.*

WE THANK YOU ONE AND ALL.

Catawba Bicentennial Committee  
Dated March 1, 1976

WICK'S STORE

HELEN & TONY ZIKAN

CATAWBA, WIS.

BADER'S GENERAL STORE  
& ANTIQUES

HARVEY & JEANETTE BADER  
CATAWBA, WIS.

KUCHERA'S STORE

JERRY KUCHERA

CATAWBA, WIS.

STATE BANK OF PHILLIPS

CATAWBA STATION

CATAWBA, WIS.

CATAWBA CREAMERY

ZORN BROTHERS

CATAWBA, WIS.

CATAWBA SALES & SERVICE

JOHN DEERE DEALER  
GORDON HELLAND  
CATAWBA, WIS.

PRICE CO. OIL CO.

MOBIL GAS & OIL  
LLOYD HELLAND  
CATAWBA, WIS.

CATAWBA OIL CO.

JERRY RETZLAFF  
CATAWBA, WIS.

LONG BRANCH BAR & GRILL

EDNA MOORE  
CATAWBA, WIS.

BARREL INN

JANET HALMSTAD  
CATAWBA, WIS.

CURLEY'S OLD BARN BAR

CLYDE HILLARD  
CATAWBA, WIS.

NUSSBERGER BROS.  
TRUCKING CO. INC.

CATAWBA, WIS.

FATHER JOHN REGH

CATAWBA, WIS.

CATAWBA POST OFFICE

MARTIN NETLAND, POSTMASTER  
CATAWBA, WIS.

