Art work of Rock County.

Chicago, Illinois: The W. H. Parish Publishing Co., 1893

Art Work

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ROCK COUNTY

CHICAGO:

THE W. H. PARISH PUBLISHING CO.

1893.

VIEW ON ROCK RIVER.

ROCK COUNTY, WISCONSIN.

THE story of the nation for 200 years is the story of Rock county for sixty. There have been the same changes, albeit, swifter and with less delay between the different stages. Indian hunting ground has changed to battlefield; battlefield has smiled and blossomed under the pioneer's plow, and, in turn, the pioneer's cabin has been replaced by the factory, the mill and the comforts of city life—all within the memory of man. In large part, this quickness of development must be laid to favorable location. Setting aside minor details, Wisconsin presents two general slopes—a short, abrupt declivity to Lake Superior and a long, gentler incline southward. Through the center of this southward slope there extends a moderate south and north elevation or arch—a low anti-clinal axis—giving a southeasterly and southwesterly inclination to the strata on either side.

ROCK COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

VIEW ON MILWAUKEE STREET—JANESVILLE.

VIEW ON ROCK RIVER.

LOOKING EAST FROM MONTEREY BRIDGE.

RESIDENCE OF JNO. R. BENNETT, COUNTY JUDGE.

RESIDENCE OF ALEX GRAHAM.

VIEW IN THE PARK—JANESVILLE.

Rock county lies nearly on the summit of this arch, or, to speak more exactly, its western line does; while the rest of the county belongs to the eastern slope. The general inclination of the surface of the county is, however, decidedly southward. The valley of Rock river runs southerly through the center of the county, and at the point where it leaves the State is only about 150 feet above the surface of Lake Michigan. The surface of this valley slopes toward it. This includes all the county except the southwestern corner, which drains into Sugar river. In the immediate vicinity of Rock river there is an extensive plain, Rock prairie, three to five miles wide, with prolongations extending further back from the river. There is also a similar area bordering Sugar river, but with the exception of these and some minor areas the surface of the county is gently undulatory or moderately rolling. At a few points facing the streams there are abrupt cliffs, but the amount of surface too steep for cultivation is very small.

Ancient works exist in the valley of Rock river, not only below the State line, but also above it. Indeed, those south, in Illinois, are of much less importance than such as are known to exist to the northward. So far as the valley of this stream is concerned, throughout its whole extent, in Wisconsin, are to be found interesting relics of pre-historic man; some of the mounds being seen at the very sources of a number of its branches. In the lead region, for some cause, there seem to be few evidences of their existence. In one locality, however, on the Pecatonica, a branch of the Rock river, ancient works are noticed. It is probable that the necessities of these builders did not include lead, and there are no indications of ancient mining of that metal in the lead region, as in the copper mines of Lake Superior. The copper ore associated with lead was beyond the reach of their metallurgic arts. The works on the Pecatonica consisted of several oblong or circular mounds; there is also one tapering mound. The last mentioned is destitute of appendages or other indications of its relation to any animal form. These mounds are situated on sloping ground, and extend from the top of a hill half way to the Pecatonica. The soil at this point is sandy, being in the district of the sandstone, which crops out occasionally in that vicinity. There is nothing to distinguish these mounds from others more within the proper region, as it were, of the Mound Builders. In one of the mounds bones are said to have been obtained. Indian graves along the margin of the stream, when exposed, furnished a few glass beads and some trinkets. The point where these works exist is eleven miles west of Monroe, in Green county, Wisconsin.

STATE INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND.

VIEW OF JANESVILLE, LOOKING NORTH.

RESIDENCE OF G. L. CARRINGTON.

RESIDENCE OF M. MURPHY, City Treas.—Janesville.

VIEW IN THE GLEN—JANESVILLE.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

TRINITY FREE CHURCH.

VIEW ON ROCK RIVER.

The valley of Sugar river, a considerable stream between the Pecatonica and Rock rivers, appears also to have been to a great extent avoided by the Mound Builders. A few unimportant works have been seen, however, on some of the tributaries of that river. In Beloit, on the college grounds, some ancient works were surveyed in 1852, by Prof. S. P. Lathrop. They consisted of circular and oblong mounds. On the east bank of the river, three-quarters of a mile above the city, he also surveyed, in the same year, some interesting vestiges of the pre-historic race. Some of the mounds here examined were of animal shape. There is a group of earthworks about two and a half miles east of Beloit, on a bluff overlooking Turtle creek. These mounds represent animals of different kinds.

Proceeding up Rock river, the first works worthy of notice are near the junction of the outlet of the four lakes, at Fulton. At a place known as Indian Hill, about a mile above the mouth of the Yahara (Catfish) Dr. I. A. Lapham, in 1850, surveyed a series of oblong mounds on the steep slope of the hill, converging toward a point where there is a dug-way leading to the river. The hill has an elevation of seventy or eighty feet, and from its summit the valley of the river can be overlooked for several miles above and below. It may be that this was a most important post of observation, and the peculiar arrangement of the mounds was intended to guard the access to the water from the top of the hill. This hill is quite steep, and the graded way has been increased in depth by running water, but it bears evidence of its having originally been constructed by art.

At the intersection of Main and State streets, in the village of Fulton, Dr. Lapham found, in 1850, an irregular oval earthwork, consisting of a flat ridge, and resembling the roadway of a modern turnpike. The breadth varied from thirty to forty feet, and the elevation from two to three feet in the middle. The diameters of the oval were 500 and 300 feet. Such a structure might have had its usage in some of the public games or ceremonies of uncivilized life; but it would be idle, of course, to undertake to ascertain its particular purpose.

Besides the works already mentioned in this vicinity, Dr. Lapham found numerous tumuli, of the ordinary circular form, supposed to be sepulchral. They were occasionally arranged in rows, more or less irregular, along the margin of a brook or valley. Usually two or three mounds near the middle of the road were found larger than the others.

Three of these mounds were found on the east side of the Yahara, half a mile below Fulton, and a group a mile above the village. Two miles above, on Section 11, was found a group of eight, situated on the edge of a prairie, so as to be in profile. About a mile below Fulton there was found a group of fourteen, and another on the side of Rock river. All of these were circular mounds, not accompanied by others of imitative forms. Some had been opened, and were said in most places to have contained the remains of human skeletons, frequently of several persons in the same mound. In 1834, the government surveyors noted eight mounds on the west shore of Lake Koshkonong, immediately above where Rock river leaves the lake. Recently one of these mounds sixty feet in diameter and eighty feet above the water was opened by W. C. Whitford and W. P. Clarke, and found to contain some Indian skeletons and relics, also what are believed to be the skulls of three Mound Builders.

As early as the year 1632, the civilized world had knowledge, through vague reports of savages, of a tribe of Indians to the westward and southwestward of Lake Huron, who lived in a country "where there was a quantity of buffaloes." This nation, it is believed, was the one afterward known as the Illinois. They occupied what is now northern Illinois, extending their occupation, probably, so far to the northward as to include southern Wisconsin, and, of course, the territory now included in Rock county. Afterward they were driven beyond the Mississippi, but subsequently returned to the river which bears their name.

Meanwhile there commenced an immigration of tribes from Fox river of Green Bay to the southward. The Mascoutins and their kindred, the Kickapoos and Miamis moved to the vicinity of the south end of Lake Michigan. It is probable that one or more of these tribes had their homes for a time in the Rock river valley, after the migration of the Illinois across the Mississippi. Following them in at least a nominal occupation of southern Wisconsin were the Foxes, but these Indians and their kindred, the Sacs, instead of migrating toward the south, moved westward and southwestward from the river which commemorates the first mentioned tribe.

Though there is abundant evidence that the territory now known as Rock county by the Winnebagoes previous to the advent of the whites, it is impossible to fix the exact spots within the present bounds of the county where they located all their villages.

The character of the country so admirably suited to all the requirements of a primitive and nomadic people, well watered throughout its whole extent, and containing a broad expanse of

LINCOLN SCHOOL—JANESVILLE.

VIEW IN THE PARK—JANESVILLE.

MEMORIAL HALL—Beloit College.

VIEW ON ROCK RIVER.

LOOKING SOUTHEAST TOWARD JANESVILLE.

RESIDENCE OF J. C. JENKENS.

VIEW ON MADISON STREET.

prairie upon which grazed the herds of game or which were readily converted into fertile cornfields, affords presumptive evidence that it must have been a favorite abode of a portion of that tribe. Two of their villages were very favorably situated, one at the extreme northern boundary of the present limits of the county, the other at its extreme southern boundary.

The first mentioned was within the limits of the present town of Milton, on the west shore of Lake Koshkonong, and upon its immediate bank. The Indian name of this village was Tay-e hee-dah. When, in 1834, the government surveyors were there, they described it as the "ruins of an old Indian village." At the beginning of the Black Hawk war it was found deserted, but how long previous to that date it had remained so is not known. Tradition represents it to have once been populace below Tey-e-hee-dah, at or near the mouth of the Yahara. On the west side of Rock river it is probable that there was also an Indian village Concerning it, however, there is very little information extant. Still further down the river, at the point where the city of Beloit is now located, was the Winnebago village, called by the early traders and explorers the Turtle. It was evidently occupied not long anterior to the commencement of the Black Hawk war, how long is not known with certainty. When the army under Gen. Atkinson marched by the point in pursuit of the famous Sac chief, the dwellings were found deserted.

While the Winnebagoes occupied this western Eden—the Rock river valley—undisputed masters of all its beauty and all its wealth of game and fish, they were occasionally visited by adventurous white men, who took up temporary residence among them for purposes of trade. Others married among them and became what may be called Indian residents. Of the latter class was one Thiebault, a Frenchman, who established himself at the Turtle village probably about the year 1824. His cabin is noted in the plat of the government survey of the township in 1834. Here he remained until after the arrival of the pioneer settlers of the county.

There were many tribes of Indians who claimed to be sole owners of all the land embraced in the present State of Wisconsin when it finally came under the jurisdiction of the United States. This question of aboriginal ownership of the soil was then found to be inextricably complicated by conflicting claims of different tribes to the same land. The Menomonees, Chippewas, Ottowas, Winnebagoes, Sacs, Foxes, and Pottawatomies were all located within the present boundaries of Wisconsin, and the claims of several different tribes were frequently found to

embrace the same territory. Thus, for example, the Winnebagoes, the Sacs and Foxes and the Pottawatomies each claimed an ownership in the Rock river country, and the particular subdivision of it now known as Rock county was specially claimed by both the Winnebagoes and Pottawatomies.

The first treaty affecting the lands of the Rock river valley made with the Indians was that between William Clarke, Ninian Edwards and August Choteau, commissioners plenipotentiary of the United States of America, on the part and behalf of the said States of the one part, and the chiefs and warriors of that portion of the Winnebago tribe or nation residing on the Wisconsin river of the other part, which treaty was proclaimed January 30, 1816. Article two of this treaty stipulated that "The undersigned chiefs and warriors, for themselves and those they represent, do by these presents confirm to the United States all and every cession of land heretofore made by their nation to the British, French or Spanish governments within the limits of the United States or territories, and also all and every treaty, contract and agreement heretofore concluded between the United States and the said tribe or nation, as far as their interests extend." As, however, the country claimed by the Winnebagoes under the treaty of February 6, 1826, was bounded on the southeast "by Rock river from its source near the Winnebago lake to the Winnebago village about forty miles from its mouth," it is evident that the land ceded by this last treaty could not include the whole of Rock county as it now exists. The rest of the county was acknowledged to be the property of the United Nation of Chippewa, Ottowa and Pottawatomie Indians, and to extinguish their title a treaty was entered with them on the site of Chicago, September 26, 1833, whereby, for good and valuable considerations, this confederated nation of Indians ceded "to the United States all their land along the west shore of Lake Michigan and between this lake and the land ceded to the United States by the Winnebago nation at the treaty of Fort Armstrong, Rock Island, made on the 15th of December, 1832, bounded on the north by the country lately ceded by the Menomonees, and on the south by the country ceded at the treaty of Prairie du Chien, made on the 29th of July, 1829, supposed to contain about 5,000,000 of acres."

Finally, and to remove the possibility of any doubt whatever as to the validity of the title held by the United States to the lands lying on both sides of Rock river, a treaty was concluded at Washington city, proclaimed June 16, 1838, with the Winnebagoes whereby, in brief but

VIEW ON ROCK RIVER.

THE BELOIT COLLEGE.

LOOKING NORTH FROM BRIDGE—Beloit.

PUBLIC SCHOOL AT BELOIT.

RESIDENCE OF G. E. LEWIS—BELOIT.

RESIDENCE OF EDWARD D. EATON, PRES. OF COLLEGE.—BELOIT.

VIEW OF BELOIT, FROM BLUFF STREET.

comprehensive terms, "the Winnebago nations of Indians cede to the United States all their land east of the Mississippi river."

With this treaty the United States gained an unassailable title to all the lands lying within the present bounds of Rock county; but so fond of their former homes in this locality were the Rock river Winnebagoes that even after they had been removed to the reservation they continually revisited them in small parties, to the great annoyance of the citizens, and the government was finally compelled to send a military detachment to secure obedience to the order confining them to territory set off to them beyond the Mississippi. But, though forced to leave, they would frequently return in small parties, and when these straggling bands would pass their old-time burial places they would manifest the deepest reverence.

The summer of 1832 was a somewhat notable one in the history of the territory afterward included in Rock county. June and July of that year saw the gathering of Indian hordes within its limits, painted and plumed—at war with the whites. Black Hawk, the leader of the Sacs, had retreated up Rock river, until a point was reached just outside of what is known as the city of Janesville, where the savages remained some time in camp. It must not be understood that they were now at their former homes. This was not the case. It was not then the country of the Sacs; but, as previously stated, of the Rock river Winnebagoes. The last mentioned have not yet ceded their territory east of Sugar river.

While Black Hawk was in camp at the Janesville grove, which has received his name, there were brought in the two prisoners, Silvia and Rachel Hall, whose capture and ransom was one of the memorable incidents of the Black Hawk war. On Indian creek, fifteen miles from Ottawa, Ill., a settlement was wiped out by the Sacs, and everyone massacred with the exception of the two young ladies, fifteen and seventeen years old, who were carried into captivity. After much hardship they were ransomed from the Janesville camp, $2,000 being paid in wampum, horses and money. Through Rock county and north along the shores of Lake Koshkonong and to the Wisconsin river the Indians were finally driven by Gen. Atkinson and Gen. Dodge, and Wisconsin's last Indian war ended in the decisive victory won by Gen. Dodge near Fort Winnebago.

It was on the 14th day of July, 1835, that John Inman, of Lucerne county, Pennsylvania, and William Holmes, of Ohio, started from Milwaukee on an exploring tour of the center of

WASHINGTON SCHOOL—JANESVILLE.

RESIDENCE OF D. P. SMITH—JANESVILLE.

VIEW ON CHURCH STREET—EVANSVILLE.

LOOKING SOUTH FROM CEMETERY.

CATHOLIC CHURCH—JANESVILLE.

RESIDENCE OF GEORGE C. McLEAN, SR.—JANESVILLE.

VIEW ON MAIN STREET—EVANSVILLE.

VIEW ON CLEAR LAKE.

Wisconsin. Having heard the glowing reports of the returned soldiers of the "Black Hawk war" concerning the Rock river country, they determined to see it and judge for themselves. Rifle in hand they arrived at Fort Atkinson, on the Rock river, which had just been evacuated by Gen. Atkinson and army. Here they encamped for the night. The next day they traveled west to the mouth of the Catfish river and camped within the present site of Fulton village. Then shouldering their luggage they went down the river to the present location of Janesville, and after prospecting about during the day they encamped on the point of a high bluff. From this point Rock prairie was seen stretching away in the distance to the east and south until bounded by the horizon. The view was enchanting, and as the travelers looked out on the expanse of waving grass and flowers they felt that they had realized their idea of Canaan. Half a mile south of them was the late headquarters of the famous "Black Hawk," but just deserted, and the name Black Hawk, which they gave to the grove, still clings. From thence they went south across the prairie to the mouth of Turtle creek, the present site of Beloit, and there solitude reigned. They were fully satisfied with the result of their discoveries, and determined to make the Rock river valley their home. Back to Milwaukee they hastened to gather recruits. At that time there were but two white families in Milwaukee and but one betwixt that and Janesville; but others came on from the east, and November 15, 1835, John Inman, Thomas Holmes, William Holmes, Joshua Holmes, Milo Jones and George Follmer started from Milwaukee and headed for the Rock. On the 18th day of the same month they arrived opposite the "big rock," in Monterey (now part of Janesville). Here they built a log cabin and made preparations for winter. This was the first settlement in Rock county, and it may almost be said to have been the first permanent settlement in the State. About the 20th of December, Samuel St. John and wife arrived at the "big rock" settlement, Mrs. St. John being the first white woman settler. On the 15th of January, 1836, Dr. James Heath and wife joined the little colony. All these wintered in the log cabin together.

There was no such scanty population when another winter had closed down on Rock river. During the spring and summer of 1836 settlements were made at several places. A commencement was made at Beloit in the spring, Caleb Blodgett and associates buying the squatter's rights of Thiebault, a half-breed trader, who claimed half the county and a strip along the river running almost to Rockford, Ill. Fulton was settled in the spring or summer of 1836 by Robert Stone

and Daniel Stone. At Milton the first settlement was made by Isaac T. Smith in the spring of 1836. In the fall of 1836 George W. Ogden, Alfred Walker and Aaron Walker moved into the town. Henry Janes commenced at Janesville in the winter of 1836, and A. W. and V. Pope arrived the same year. Harmony was settled in 1836 by William and J. Spalding and G. H. Williston, Rock by J. Inman and others in the fall of 1835, Turtle by William Smith, Horace Rice and Hudson Case in 1836, Lima by James M. Burgess in the summer of 1836, Johnstown by Norman Smith in 1837, and Clinton, April 2, 1837, by W. S. Murray and others.

When the actual settlement of Rock county was first begun, in 1835 and 1836, the pioneers were confronted with a two-fold difficulty in selecting the land upon which they designed to make their future homes. The lands west of the river had been regularly subdivided, and disposed of by the government to non-resident purchasers, who had secured it for the purpose of exacting from bona fide settlers an advance upon the minimum government price—$1.25 per acre. The early actual settlers were not only indisposed to submit to this exaction of speculative greed, but, being in the large majority of instances men of slender means, were absolutely unable to do so had they been ever so willing. While the lands west of the river were thus effectually barred against occupation by the hardy adventurers who had sought this fertile valley to carve out a new empire by the development of these extraordinary agricultural and industrial resources, the condition of those lying along the eastern bank was but little more promising. Not one acre was open to entry. The settler taking possession of any portion of this territory was, in the eye of the law, a trespasser, liable to ejectment if the government should subsequently either decide to use the land for any purpose of its own, or by sale or otherwise convey to any person other than himself, in which event not only the land itself, but all the labor expended and all the improvements made would be lost.

As the entire community held their land by the same uncertain tenure and all were menaced by the same possible danger, they naturally and necessarily combined for the protection and preservation of their mutual interests and irregularly acquired rights. As the result of this combination, the "squatters" gradually adopted a series of rules governing the acquirement and occupation of "claims," which were in the process of time developed into a recognized though unwritten system of "border law," to which universal obedience was expected, and when necessary was unhesitatingly enforced. By this "law" every actual settler capable of performing

VIEW ON ROCK RIVER—THREE MILES NORTH OF JANESVILLE.

THE JANESVILLE CITY HOSPITAL.

R. R. BRIDGE AT MONTEREY.

VIEW ON THE ROCK AT CRYSTAL SPRINGS.

THE JANESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL—JEFFERSON BUILDING.

VIEW OF UPPER MILL RACE.

VIEW ON SOUTH FIRST STREET.

a day's work was entitled to "claim" occupy and cultivate a certain amount of land—one-half section (320 acres) being the maximum, and "a half-quarter" section (80 acres) the minimum. An unmarried man's right was limited to the smallest quantity; a married man without children could "claim" a quarter section (160 acres), and the head of a family was entitled to "take up" the largest allotment, one-half section (320 acres). Though inflexible in its main features, this "law" was susceptible of enormous expansion, as a settler with a number of sons between twelve and twenty years of age could "claim" "a half-quarter" for each of them, and the like amount for each hand he might employ, and could even extend the right to the "stranger within his gates," provided only the requirement of ability to do a day's work was met. It was in this manner that some of the earliest settlers acquired a recognized, though purely nominal, title to the large tracts which they subsequently traded off or sold to late comers.

The manner of establishing these "squatter" titles to "claims," though uniform in its general features, differed somewhat in its details in different localities in the territory which now constitutes Rock county. The essential requirements were first to establish definitely the limits or boundaries of the tract "claimed," and then to do some work upon the land so claimed, as an earnest or guarantee of the claimant's intention to occupy and cultivate it as a home.

The method of "marking off claims" differed according to circumstances. Where the government surveys had been completed, and the corners and section lines were clearly indicated by the post put up by the surveyors, the task was simple enough. The "squatter" had only to follow up the lines established in the government's subdivision, cut his name or initials on the posts found upon the boundaries of the tract "claimed," and his work was done. Where "claims" were made prior to the surveys, however, the task was not only more difficult, but necessarily much less accurate. In such cases the "squatter" first established a corner for himself, and then, guided by a compass, if he had one, or by the sun where he had not, "stepped off" his claim, as nearly in a right line as possible, to the next corner, which was marked by a stake bearing his name or initials; another line then was run at right angles with the first, another stake driven; the third line was then "stepped off" at right angles with the second and parallel with the first, and the fourth by returning to the point whence he started. In this system of measurement, so many "steps" were universally accepted as constituting the limits of a half-section, half that number a quarter, and half that again a half-quarter. This primitive

DRIVE IN CEMETERY—JANESVILLE.

LOOKING EAST FROM C. & N. W. GRADE—JANESVILLE.

JANESVILLE WATER WORKS.

VIEW ON ROCK RIVER.

JANESVILLE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

VIEW CORNER MAIN AND RACINE STREETS.

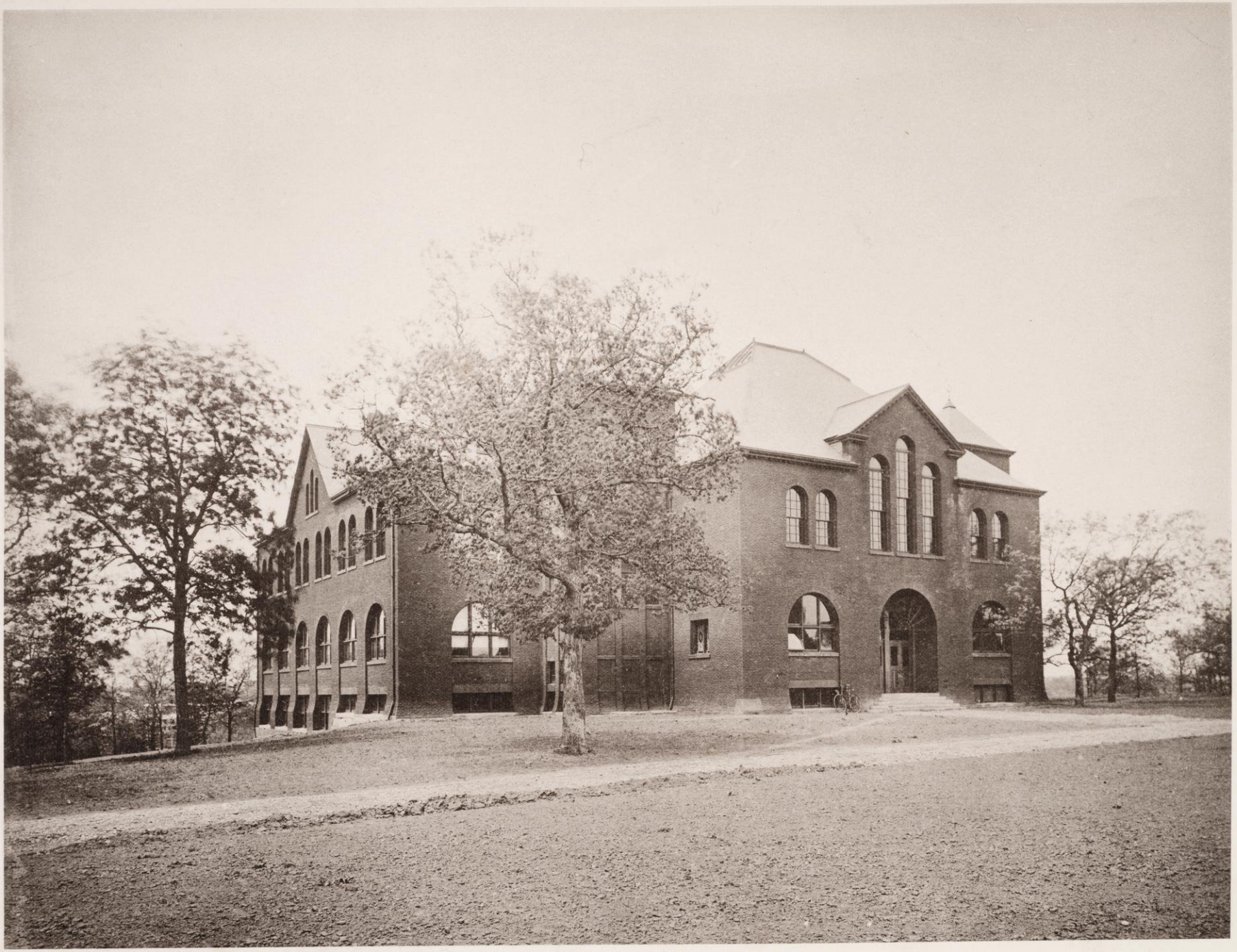
VIEW ON MILTON AVENUE.

method of measurement presented certain insuperable difficulties to the squatter, and subjected him to no inconsiderable uneasiness lest he might ultimately lose not only a part of his claim, but his labor and improvements as well. This will be evident when it is remembered that all these "claims" were made with the view of eventually obtaining a title from the government, after the surveys and subdivisions had been made. The squatter's corner might or might not be in the exact spot it should have occupied; the lines "stepped off" would almost inevitably deviate from those run by a theodolite, and the distance would quite as certainly exceed those measured by chains and links. It might easily happen, therefore, that the government survey would demonstrate that he had claimed and had been working and improving upon two or three, or even four, different half-sections, quarter-sections or half-quarter sections, as the case might be, and that he would find it difficult, if not impossible, to secure the benefits of his time and labor when the government placed the lands in market. Having marked off or staked out his claim, the squatter's next step was to do the work upon it necessary to secure recognition of his title under the "border law." To do this in the case of the smaller claims, it was necessary to run a furrow along the four lines marking the boundary of the claim, and erect a shanty or cabin anywhere on the tract thus plowed around. Where larger tracts were claimed, it was permissible to do some breaking, more or less, upon each of the quarter-sections, and erect a single cabin to serve as a home of the squatter's entire family, including employes and visitors. As this "border law" or usage permitted a squatter to claim and hold a fixed number of acres, it followed, as a matter of course, that if he disposed of a half-quarter or a quarter section to a new-comer he was at liberty to take up as much more, and to repeat the operation as often as a sale was effected; provided, of course, no existing claim was infringed upon.

As the settlements filled up the lands naturally increased in value, and attracted others anxious to secure claims to land which it was easy to foresee would be worth much more than the government price when it should be placed in the market. Many of these adventurers, more anxious to promote their interests than scrupulous as to the means employed, attempted to take possession of claims already taken up, insisting that, as they were neither occupied nor cultivated, the simple furrow plowed around them did not prevent them from occupation. This was termed by squatters "jumping a claim," and they immediately took measures to protect themselves against these unscrupulous interlopers. In each settlement a register was appointed to keep a

record of the names of the individual squatters, and of the extent and boundaries of their respective claims, which record was to be received as prima facie evidence of ownership of any specified claim. To still further protect their individual and collective interests, they appointed a committee of arbitration, to which all the disputes as to land title should be submitted; its decision was to be final and without appeal. To enforce its decree, this irregular court was authorized to call upon the entire community. Thus a "jumper" was complained of by the squatter to the committee. He was waited upon and notified that he was an intruder, and must establish his claim before the committee or vacate. The register's records were then examined and evidence heard, and if, after investigation, the committee or court decided adversely to the "jumper," it was optional with him to submit with the best grace he could, or to be summarily and forcibly ejected, possibly with broken bones or a cracked skull. So perfect was the organization of the "squatters," however, and so universal in obedience to the behests of their court, that violence was not necessary except in a very few instances. The defeated "jumper" knew he could expect no sympathy and but little mercy, and was therefore disposed to take the least possible amount of risk.

When the lands east of Rock river were at length brought into the market by the public sale at Milwaukee, in 1839, the squatters were menaced with the loss of their lands by the readiness of the non-resident speculators to buy them up at a much higher price than the minimum fixed by the government. But the former were a determined class of men, ready to maintain their rights, or what they deemed their rights, even though their defense involved a technical violation of the law and some degree of personal danger. In addition to this, they had for years protected themselves, and success had given them confidence in their organization. When informed of this new danger, therefore, they became boldly defiant, called meetings in several settlements, and selected one individual in each, who should attend the sale as the representative of the several committees and make a bid for each tract of land as it was offered at its minimum price in the name of the squatter who had claimed it. This done, they caused the speculators to be notified that they would not be permitted to run up the price of the lands they had squatted on, and that if they insisted upon bidding in spite of this notification the bidder would bring a fight upon his hands certainly, whether he secured the coveted piece of land or not. Nor did they content themselves with this precautionary notification. They attended the sale in large

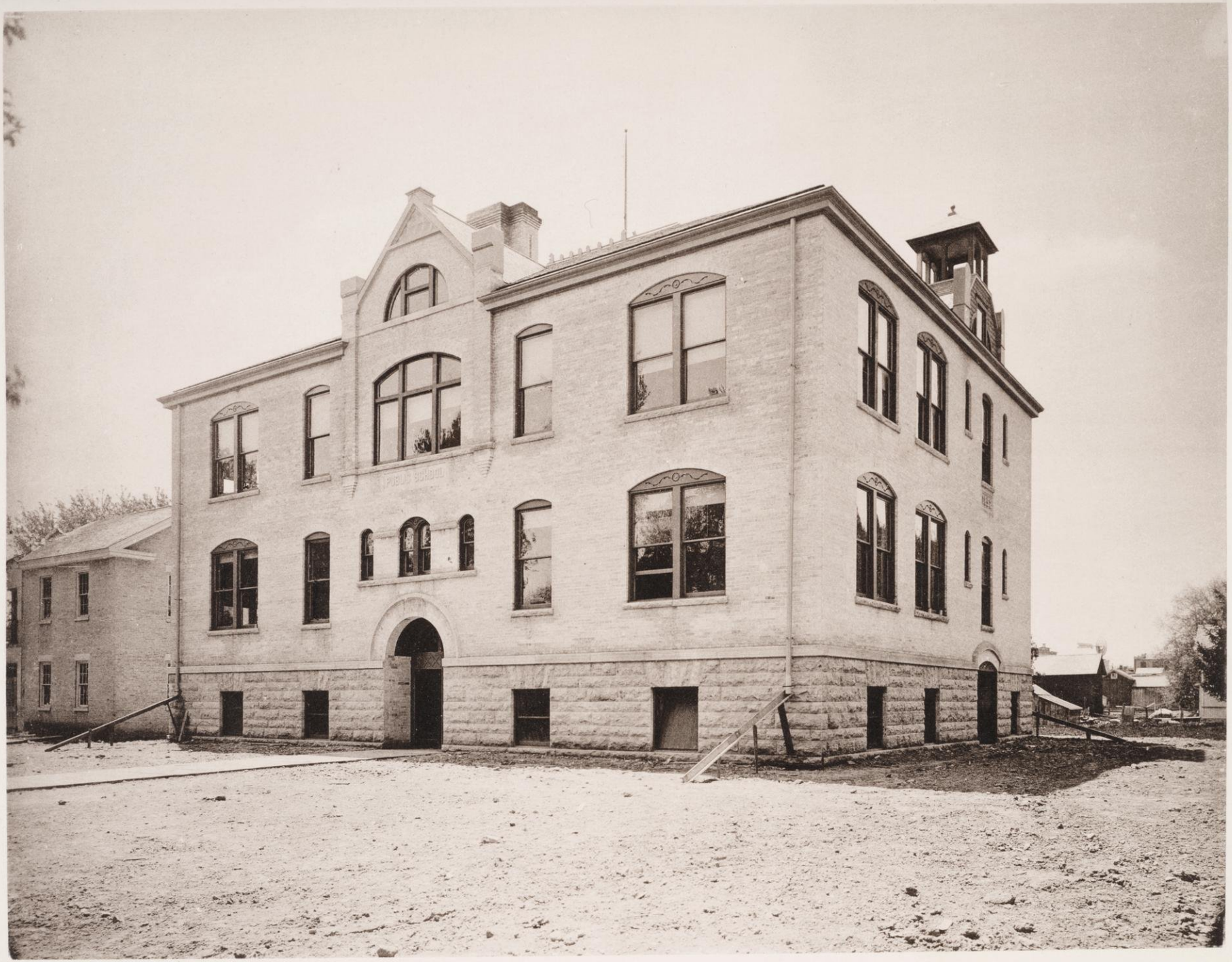


SCIENCE HALL AT BELOIT COLLEGE.

CATHOLIC CHURCH—EDGERTON.

GERMAN CHURCH—EDGERTON.

UPPER DAM AT JANESVILLE.



EDGERTON PUBLIC SCHOOL.

MAIN STREET IN EDGERTON.

VIEW ON CLEAR LAKE.

bodies, with arms in their hands, and, by force of numbers and their manifest determination, so overawed their competitors that but little opposition was made to their purchasing their claims at the lowest government price.

By an act of the Territorial Legislature of Wisconsin, approved December 7, 1836, Townships 1, 2, 3 and 4 north, of Ranges 11, 12, 13 and 14 east, of the fourth principal meridian, afterward the towns of Newark, Plymouth, Center, Porter, Beloit, Rock, Janesville, Fulton, Turtle, La Prairie, Harmony, Milton, Clinton, Bradford, Johnstown and Lima, were taken from Milwaukee county, and constituted a separate county, called Rock. It took its name from the "big rock" on the north side of the river, now within the limits of the city of Janesville, which had been for years one of the recognized landmarks of the country to the Indians, the traders, and later to the settlers, as indicating a point where the river might be safely forded.

By an act, approved June 21, 1838, Townships 1, 2, 3 and 4 north, of Range 12 east, subsequently the towns of Avon, Spring Valley, Magnolia and Union, were added to Rock county, thus giving it the boundaries and configuration it has since retained.

Though thus enlarged, the new country remained attached to Racine county for judicial purposes until its organization. Meanwhile, by an act, approved December 27, 1837, the seat of justice was located on "part of the northwest quarter of Section 36, in Township 3 north, of Range 12 east, of the fourth principal meridian."

By the records of the Board of Commissioners of Racine county, dated April 2, 1838, election precincts were established at what is now Beloit, at "the public house, Mr. Hackett, Dr. White and Mr. Field, judges;" at the public house of Nevins, in the village of Janesville, Hiram Brown, Daniel Smilie and Henry F. Janes, judges. At the second annual session of the commissioners, April 2, 1839, Rock county was divided into two districts, by a line running east and west about the middle of the country. An election was held May 28, 1838, at the precincts established by the supervisors as above, for "Pathmasters," which resulted in the choice of Lucius G. Fisher in Beloit, and John P. Dickson in Janesville.

Not until that portion of Michigan territory lying west of Lake Michigan and north of the State of Illinois had become noted because of its lead mines, did the valley of Rock river, below Lake Koshkonong and above Turtle creek, begin to appear upon published maps with any degree of distinctness. In a "Map of the United States Lead Mines on the Upper Mississippi

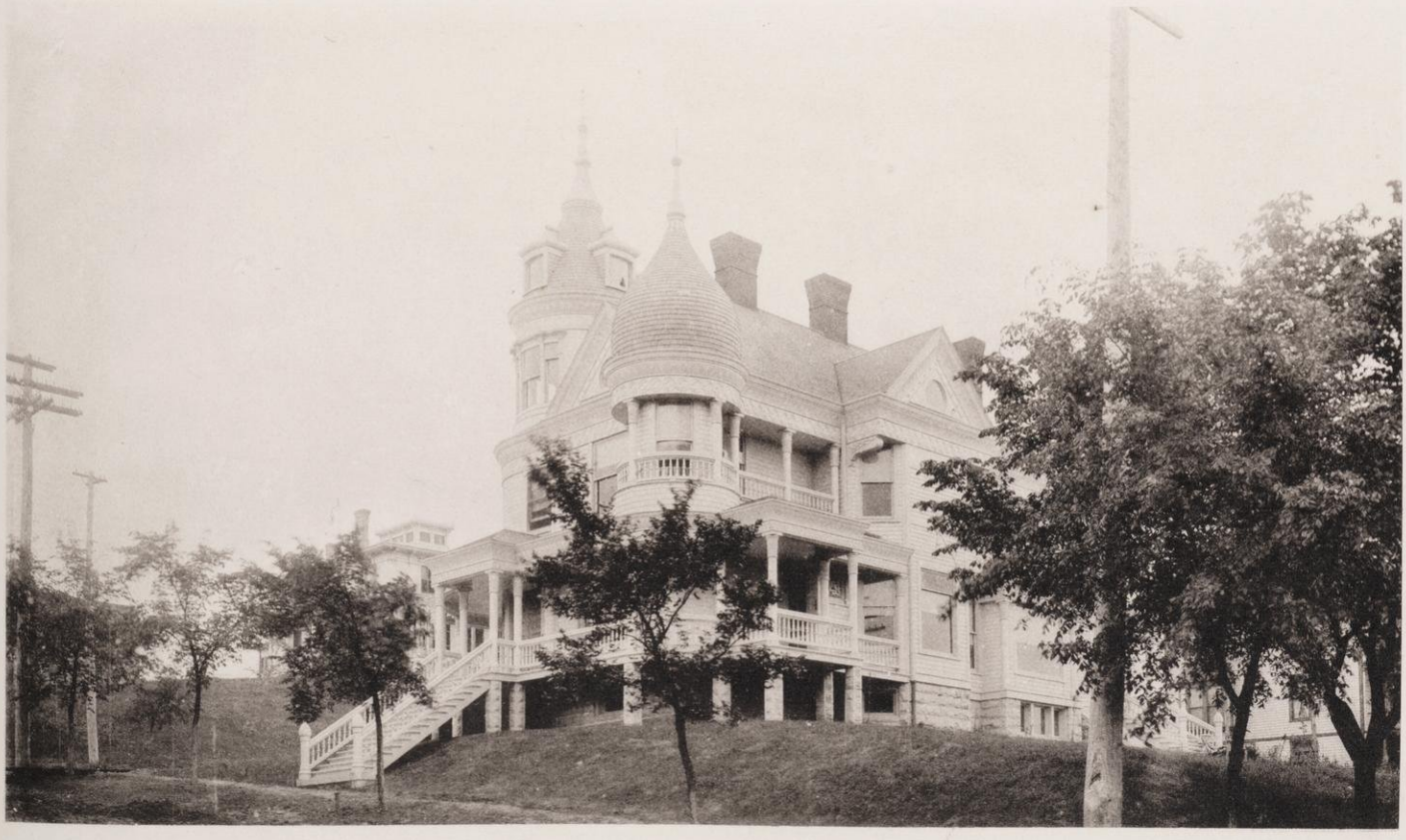
VIEW IN THE GLEN—JANESVILLE.

MAIN STREET, NORTHWEST FROM M. E. CHURCH—JANESVILLE.

LOOKING WEST AT MONTEREY.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT JANESVILLE.

RESIDENCE OF JNO. WYNAN.



RESIDENCE OF F. KIMBALL.

FREE METHODIST SEMINARY AT EVANSVILLE.

River," published at Galena, Ill., in 1829, the name "Cos-ca-ho-e-nah" is given to the Yahara (Catfish) river, while opposite its mouth appears this information: "Copper ore (sulphuret) has been found in its original deposit in such quantities and over such an extent of this country as to justify the expectation of that metal being produced in considerable quantities." It is almost needless to say that this "expectation" has not been "justified." At that date the Indian village at the mouth of Turtle creek, which now is the city of Beloit, was occupied by Winnebagoes. From this village a road led off in a northwesterly direction to another Winnebago town on Sugar river; thence, in nearly the same direction, to "McNutt's Diggings." North, and at no great distance, the Winnebago chief, "Spotted Arm," had his village. From the last mentioned place a road ran in a northeasterly direction to Green Bay, passing another Winnebago village on the banks of the second lake, in what is now Dane county. The road running through the Turtle village (now Beloit) was known as the "Chicago trace," and was a direct route from Chicago to the lead mines.

In June, 1836, the first steamboat from the Mississippi made the passage up Rock river so far as to reach Rock county. This was an "event" to the settlers along Rock river, and they availed themselves of the opportunity for a steamboat ride. Indeed, by the time the steamer had arrived at "Wisconsin City" its decks were pretty well crowded with passengers. Rounding to at "East Wisconsin City, it took on Dr. Heath and family and some gentlemen stopping with him, and made its way up the river. It was thought by some that the engines of the boat had not sufficient power to overcome the "St. John's rapids," that it would be best not to attempt a passage; but a majority thinking otherwise, it was determined to make the attempt. The steamer succeeded admirably, and went on beyond the site of the present city of Janesville, spending some time above, and then returned to the Mississippi.

In 1839 another steamer made its way up the river, taking on passengers at different points, pushing its way as far up as Jefferson. In 1844 a steamboat from St. Louis, 130 feet in length, passed up to Jefferson, stopping at various places, taking on and discharging passengers at the several villages, a number of the inhabitants improving this opportunity for steamboat riding. Next year a steamer came up from the Mississippi, arriving at Janesville on the 4th of July, taking at that point an excursion party and proceeding up the river. This boat plied up and

VIEW IN CEMETERY—JANESVILLE.

THE CHAPEL AT BELOIT COLLEGE.

VIEW AT SPRING BROOK.

VIEW ON SPRING BROOK.

THE MONTEREY DAM—Janesville.

NO. 1 COTTON MILL.

LOOKING SOUTHWEST FROM BRIDGE—Beloit.

down the stream during the picnic season, returning in the fall to the Mississippi. This was the last steamer from the Mississippi that reached Rock county.

It is true that, though the influx of seekers of new homes in Rock county was at an early day exceptionally large and was steadily maintained, the generous soil yielded so abundantly that in a short time the new settlers were confronted with the intensely practical diffictuly and embarrassment—a supply of agricultural products far in excess of the demand. Nor was this excess confined only to the results of farmers' labors. Energy, industry and enterprise speedily made the water power of Rock river subservient to the ingenuity and skill of the settlers, and various manufactured products were the result. The question then arose as to the best means to dispose of this surplus. The customary markets, Chicago and Milwaukee, were both "a long way off," if dependence was to be placed only on the primitive ox or horse team, and the time consumed in travel added greatly to the cost of production, but not one farthing to the market price. The old problem was to be solved once more; the producer and the consumer were to be brought near together, in time if not in distance, and the plain, rugged, common sense of the prudent and thrifty class which had built up the prosperous settlements in Rock county in a comparatively brief period saw that the railroad presented the only means of solution. With characteristic energy they addressed themselves to the task. Meetings were held in various portions of the State. Addresses were made, calling the attention of capitalists to the great prospective gains which must almost inevitably follow the construction of the railroad through so fertile and prosperous a country, particularly as the comparatively level surface of the Rock river valley presented but the slightest possible engineering difficulties, and rendered it certain that the cost of construction could be anything but heavy as contrasted with the benefits to be immediately derived. By these and all other available mediums of influencing the public opinion, and from promoting the success of enterprises, so indispensable to the rapid development and the permanent prosperity of the country, the undertaking was forced upon public attention.

The citizens of Janesville were the first to take steps toward the construction of a railroad, and as early as January, 1838, the council and House of Representatives of the territory of Wisconsin authorized the construction of the railroad line from Racine to Janesville. The incorporators of this scheme were Lorenzo Janes, Bushnell B. Cary, Elias Smith, Consider Heath, Eugene Gillespie, H. D. Wood and Charles Leet, of Racine county; Samuel F. Phoenix, of

LOOKING SOUTHWEST FROM COURT HOUSE—JANESVILLE.

NO. 2 COTTON MILL—JANESVILLE.

RESIDENCE OF J. C. AND J. A. STANTON.

RESIDENCE OF O. F. NOWLAN.

MONTEREY ROAD BRIDGE.

SAND BLUFFS AT SPRING BROOK.

THE BELOIT HIGH SCHOOL.

Walworth county, and Henry F. Janes, of Rock county. The capital stock was $500,000, divided into shares of $100 each. A partial survey of the route was made, but the project was abandoned after unsuccessful efforts to accumulate funds for the necessary expenses.

In 1844 another effort was made to construct a line, this time from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi river. It was the design of the projectors that the towns along the lake shore, as well as those on the eastern bank of the Mississippi, should compete for terminal privileges. It was intended that the road should pass through Janesville, no matter what the result at either end might be. Though nothing was done toward actual work upon the road, this scheme proved to be a sort of entering wedge to the almost interminable railroad strife which followed.

By an act, approved August 19, 1848, passed by the first Legislature under the State government, a charter was granted the Madison & Beloit Railroad Company, for the purpose of building a road up the Rock river valley from Beloit to Janesville, thence to the mouth of the Catfish, and up that valley to Madison.

An act of the Legislature was procured, approved February 4, 1850, authorizing the company to terminate their road at any point on the State line between Illinois and Wisconsin, and to connect with any other road, and also to extend the road from Madison to the Wisconsin river. An act was also procured authorizing the company to extend its road from Janesville, by way of Fort Atkinson, Jefferson and Watertown, to Lake Winnebago, and the name of the company was changed to the Rock River Valley Union Railroad. A charter was obtained from the Illinois Legislature for the Illinois & Wisconsin Railroad Company to build a road running from Chicago northwesterly to the point where the company's road would intersect the State line. The Beloit & Madison line was resumed at a later day by a different company, and became the Madison division of the present Chicago & Northwestern railway.

The diversion of the Rock River Valley Union road, from its originally projected route through the city of Beloit to Shopiere, Jefferson Prairie and Janesville, was not only a disappointment, but a mortification to the residents of Beloit.

Nor were the manifestations of their displeasure confined to the depreciative comment. Energetic measures were inaugurated to secure a railroad to this city direct, and to this end negotiations were entered into with the Chicago & Galena Railroad Company to extend its line so as to make Beloit its northern terminus. Having already subscribed or agreed for $15,000

worth of the stock of the Chicago & Fond du Lac road, they now proposed to take, and did eventually take, more than five times that amount of stock ($80,150 was the amount) in the Chicago & Galena Company. These negotiations and this liberal subscription had the desired effect, and the branch road from Belvidere to Chicago was immediately surveyed and work begun, and so energetically prosecuted that by November, 1853, the branch from Belvidere (twenty-two miles distant) was completed and Beloit was connected by iron bands with the great railroad center of the West.

The work was vigorously carried on toward Madison, and, in 1854, a contract and lease were made between the Galena Company and the Beloit & Madison Company, by which the latter was to build its road from Beloit to Madison. During the same year the road was built and the iron laid seventeen miles from Beloit to Footville, and the road was placed in operation to Afton, eight miles from Beloit, and was run in connection with the Galena road. Work on this line had reached Magnolia, three miles further, when it was suspended.

The road and its property were afterward sold under foreclosure, and a new company organized, in which the Galena Company owned the principal portion of the stock, guaranteeing also the Beloit & Madison Company's bonds, and it took a perpetual lease of the road. In 1863 work on the line was resumed. The consolidation of the Galena and Northwestern Companies occurred June 2, 1864, and the new company prosecuted and completed the road to Madison, which was reached September 1 of that year. The Beloit & Madison Company was incorporated February 28, 1852, with the following officers: President, John B. Turner; secretary, Benjamin Durham; treasurer, Edward Illslay. The road runs on almost a direct line from Beloit to Madison, leaving Janesville seven miles to the east.

It was the original intention of the gentlemen at the head of the early railroad interests in Rock county to extend two branches of the road, then building from Chicago to Janesville, toward the north and northwest. Accordingly, charters had been obtained at the various sessions of the Legislatures of Wisconsin and Minnesota with this purpose in view, and in April, 1852, all these charters were amended so as to consolidate them into one. The plan was to build a branch from Janesville to Fond du Lac, of Winnebago, and from thence to Fond du Lac, of Lake Superior. Another branch was to run from Janesville to St. Croix Falls, via Madison and La Crosse; thence to St. Paul, and from St. Paul to the Red River of the North. From this point

LOOKING NORTH FROM STATE LINE BRIDGE—Beloit.

THE BELOIT ACADEMY.

RESIDENCE OF P. E. SHUMWAY.

RESIDENCE OF S. B. SMITH.

VIEW IN TILLMAN PARK AT CLEAR LAKE.

VIEW ON ROCK RIVER.

GRANT SCHOOL.

VIEW ON ROCK RIVER.

it was intended to build a branch westerly to the boundaries of Minnesota, with a fourth branch of these series to the British line, and thence back down the Red River of the North. The original, or second Janesville branch, was to be extended easterly to the head of Lake Superior and connected with branch No. 1 at Fond du Lac. This was the most magnificent system of (paper) railroads ever built by the citizens of Janesville. The company had its head office in New York, where the material for the road, then in course of construction between Chicago and Janesville, was purchased and its bonds negotiated.

In 1852 the Racine, Janesville & Mississippi Railroad Company was incorporated by the following gentlemen: Charles S. Wright, Marshal M. Strong, Samuel G. Pugh, James Catton, Peter Campbell, Henry S. Durand, James H. Earnest, John P. Dickson, Daniel Lawson, William J. Allen, S. S. Barlow, James McNeil and William H. Lawrence. The charter gave the company power to locate and build a railroad from Racine, by way of Janesville, through Rock, Green, La Fayette and Grant counties to the Mississippi river. In 1855, by the act of the Legislature, the name was changed to the Racine & Mississippi Railroad Company, and the intention to build a railroad to Janesville, and thence in Wisconsin for the Mississippi river, was abandoned. The road was pushed forward from Racine during this year, and completed to Beloit, via Clinton Junction, September 15, 1856.

An interesting incident connected with the construction of this road was the struggle to get to Jefferson Prairie ahead of the Chicago & Fond du Lac road, to entail upon that road the expense of "frogs," etc., which would have to be borne by the road crossing the track already laid. Both roads exerted themselves to the utmost; the workmen caught the spirit of their employers, worked with redoubled vigor as they neared the point of crossing, and when they came in sight of each other the work became an exciting race, which was won by the Chicago company by about ten minutes. Beloit agreed to take 1,000 shares of stock in the Racine & Mississippi road in exchange for bonds of the town to the value of $100,000, having twenty years to run, and bearing seven per cent. interest. This subscription eventually led to a protracted litigation, and an account of that transaction is essential to a complete history of the railroads in Beloit.

The town bonds were negotiated, and the road constructed, and, the town having failed to pay the interest called for by the coupons attached to the bonds, suit was brought on bond No.

95 in the Circuit Court of Rock county, without a jury, before A. Scott Sloan, judge of the Circuit Court. The case was decided adversely to the town.

The case was then appealed to the Supreme Court of the State, the appellant relying upon the alleged unconstitutionality of the act of the Legislature, authorizing the town to subscribe to the stock of the railroad company, first, because it imposed a tax, and was not passed by yeas and nays; and, second, because it authorized the town, "an integral part of the State," to become a party in the construction of a work of internal improvement, and "to create a debt for that purpose and to enforce taxation to obtain money for the payment of that debt, when, by the constitution the whole State could do such thing." The decision of the lower court was affirmed.

This line, known as the Western Union Railroad, recently became the property of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Company.

Pioneers as they were in advancing the interests of the State, it is but natural that the men of Rock stood at the front when the nation itself was in need. Rock county's war record is of a character to which her people may ever refer with pride and satisfaction. One of the first counties in the State to respond with volunteers, she never faltered during the entire struggle. When the first alarm was sounded, and President Lincoln called for 75,000 men, Rock county answered promptly, and from then until the surrender was ready at all times to manifest her patriotism. The draft was enforced three times during the war, but in Rock the quota was filled with volunteers, and the county furnished 2,817 men and upward of a half million dollars to beat back the foe. By actual count, 1,493 men were enlisted before November 11, 1861. Many of the "boys" who went out from home to battle for the Union with only the benediction of a mother's prayers came back shrived in glory. Many returned, having left a limb in the swamps of the Chickahominy, on the banks of the Rapidan, at Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, or the Wilderness. Many still bear the marks of the strife that raged at Stone River, Iuka, Chickamauga, or on the heights of Lookout mountain; of that strife which raged before Atlanta, Savannah, and in the Carolinas. But there were many who came not back. They fell by the wayside; or, from prison and battlefield, crossed over and mingled with the ranks of that grand army beyond the river. Their memory, too, is held in sacred keeping.