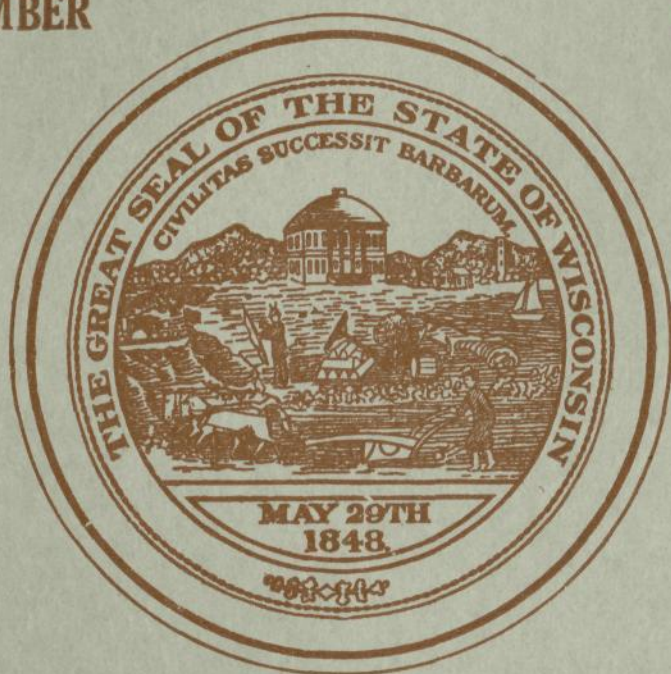


# THE WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

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SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

## THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

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## THE TOWN OF TWO CREEKS MANITOWOC COUNTY

J. F. WOJTA

THE town of Two Creeks (township 21, range 24 east) is located on Lake Michigan in the northeastern extremity of Manitowoc county, Wisconsin. Because of the constant wave action on the eastern portion of the township, the land lost during the past fifty years has variously been estimated to be from 75 to 160 feet, depending upon the topography of the land, the type of soil, and the nature of bank adjoining the lake shore. The area of land in the township is 9,652.62 acres, of which 97.9 per cent is in farms, and the balance in waste land which is located in the extreme southeastern portion of the town—much of it bordering on Lake Michigan. It is estimated that less than 800 acres are in open and wooded marsh. Very little woodland remains in this area.<sup>1</sup> It is of interest to note that areas formerly represented as marsh on governmental plats are now dry and arable. In a number of cases streams have entirely disappeared and others have become mere periodical runs, doubtless due to the removal of forests and the cultivation of soil.

Heavy soil, silt clay-loam predominating, covers 86.2 per cent of the area of the town, the highest in the county. A narrow strip of sandy soil follows the lake shore in the southeastern portion of the town. The black sand found there some years ago was used in the manufacture of

<sup>1</sup> *Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, Agricultural Statistics*, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Bulletin no. 202, county series no. 17, prepared by the Wisconsin crop and livestock reporting service, State capitol, Madison, Wisconsin (August, 1940).

matches. Small pieces of floating copper have also been found by farmers plowing their fields, giving evidence of the early movement of the glacier which gathered material along its course at least 300 miles to the north of this region.

The topography varies from the nearly level in the southern part to moderately rolling in the northern section of the township. All the streams flow in an easterly direction and empty into Lake Michigan. The drainage is generally good.

The encroachment of the lake has been quite noticeable at various points. As an illustration, the late P. J. Schroeder, one among the early settlers of the town, purchased 320 acres of land in 1858, bordering nearly three quarters of a mile on Lake Michigan. More recently and after a period of eighty years, this property was resurveyed when it contained only 295 acres or a loss of 25 acres in the lake.

The fertile soil of the area is adapted to the growing of a wide range of farm crops, necessary to the feeding of the dairy cow and other farm animals. The climatic condition and the temper of its people make the township a most prosperous and progressive one in the county.

Extreme heat and cold are prevented through the mitigating influence of the lake. The autumns are pleasant, frequently extending into November; the spring is characterized by more humidity than at any other season. There is no record of detrimental storms, such as hurricanes or cyclones, in this area.

On June 21, 1836, David Butterfield was the first white man to make entry on all lands covering section 12, township 21, and range 24 east. This entry was recorded on August 10, 1937.<sup>2</sup> The above property together with land

<sup>2</sup> Recorded in the *Book of Original Entries*, office of register of deeds for Manitowoc county, Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

in fractional section 1 has since washed away and no longer exists. What is now the town of Two Creeks was formerly a part of the territory of Brown county, but in 1838 a separate county government was organized by an act of the territorial legislature.

In 1842 Peter Rowley built the first house on section 24 in the township. Five years later Neal McMillan located on lot 1, section 25, township 21, range 24 east. These were the first two families to build homes and settle in the town in the territory of 'Wiskonsan.'

It is of interest to note that the northern boundary line of Manitowoc county was the township line, running between towns 20 and 21, ranges 21, 22, 23, 24, and a fraction of range 25. Not until February 9, 1850, by an act of the legislature was the northern tier of towns, now Two Creeks, Cooperstown, Gibson, and a portion of Mishicot within town 21, taken from Brown county and added to Manitowoc county. On July 28, 1859, the town of Rowley was set off which represents the area now in the town of Two Creeks, as was also the body of water bordering on its lake shore. Today it is known as Rowley's bay, doubtless named after the Rowley families, who early settled there.

Evidently the appellation 'Rowley' did not appear satisfactory to the voters of the town, and they requested the county board of supervisors to change the name to town of 'Two Creeks.' The name was officially changed as requested, with respect to area and boundary, on November 2, 1861. Since two creeks empty into the lake at a point where a village was about to be started, the name appeared to be appropriate. It was the eighteenth and the last township to be organized in the county. The first chairman was H. Luebke, and the town clerk August Zerlant.

Those who made entries on government land through 1850 were:

David Butterfield, June 21, 1836  
Peter Rowley, March 11, 1842  
Neal McMillan, February 11, 1847

Joel Fisk, September 4, 1847  
Albert Harding, July 22, 1848  
Johan J. Wagenen, March 11, 1850<sup>1</sup>

Others who settled there early in this decade and who contributed substantially to the agricultural, economic, and social development and progress of the town through the years were: Ole Mickelson, Halvor Johnson, Joseph Wojta, Peter J. Schroeder, George Taylor, Mathias Mathiesen, Joachim Lehrmann, William Taylor, Martin Schimel, and Charles Le Clair.

Prior to 1852, few patent rights were secured on United States government land in the township. However, at the close of the decade entries were made on public lands almost in every section. Guido Pfister of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, made twenty-two entries on various parcels of land in sections 11, 13, and 24, respectively, much of which bordered on Lake Michigan, in a hemlock-growing area. His holdings represented a total of 1,429.9 acres of land.

The United States census of 1840 was taken by districts in the territory, and apparently no white persons were enumerated at that time. In the 1850 census the following record appears: Neal McMillan, thirty-year-old fisherman, came from Scotland; Peter Rowley, fifty-four-year-old lumberman, New York; Patrick Flynn, thirty-five-year-old wheelwright, Ireland; and David Crowley, forty-four-year-old laborer, Ireland.

During the 1840-50 period, the average monthly wage paid to a farm hand with board was \$16.00. The day laborer received with board 75 cents per day, and without \$1.00 a day. Carpenters' wages averaged without board \$1.50

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*



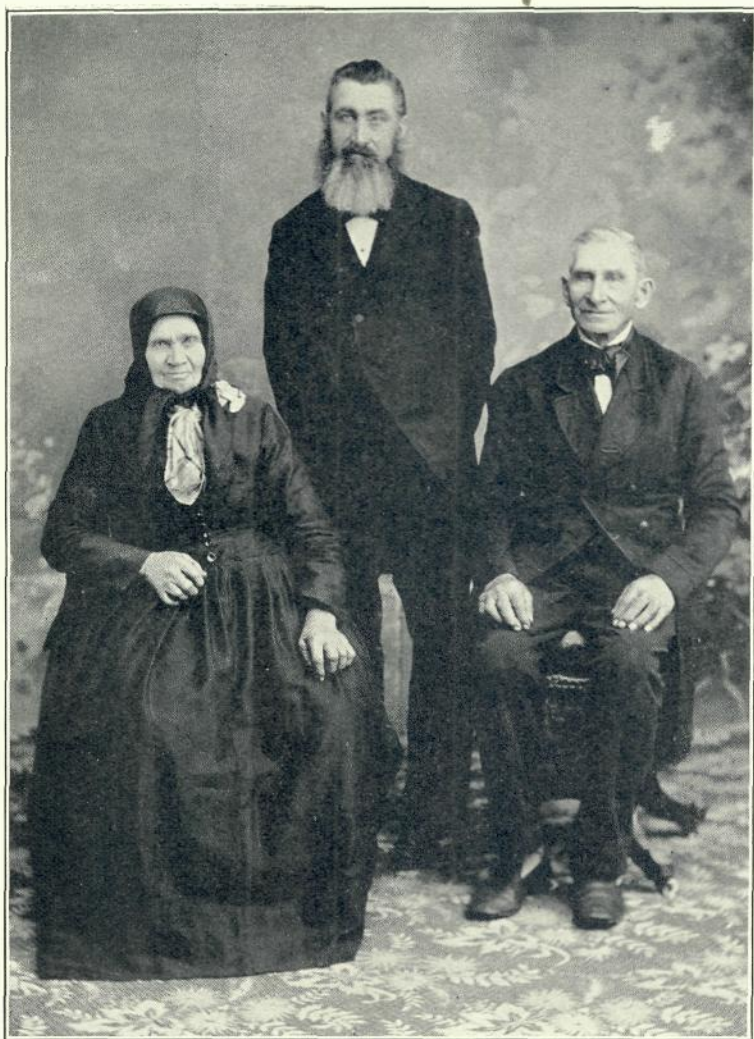
per day. A female domestic with board was paid \$1.75 per week. The laboring man paid \$1.75 per week for his board.

The 1860 census for the town of Rowley enumerates 57 families and 17 single persons over twenty years of age, 281 population including children. During 1860 the tannery of the Pfister and Vogel Leather Company was established on the site of what later became the village of Two Creeks, which furnished employment for the pioneers in that region.

Many early settlers invested in small acreages of land which was quite customary. The statement was frequently made 'to clear and improve from 20 to 40 acres of land is a lot.' In many cases they were in the habit of farming small acreages in the countries from whence they came. However, they soon realized that their units were too small to support families of average size, and purchases of adjoining properties, improved and unimproved, followed.

The 1860-70 decade found heavy immigration to the township from Germany and Bohemia. The 1870 census enumerated 104 heads of families with a total population of 471, or an increase of 190 persons for this period. There were 883 acres of land under cultivation which produced chiefly spring wheat, oats, peas for seed, barley, rye, and hay. Oxen and horses were used for power on the farms. By temperament the farmers were naturally fitted to carry on the dairy industry, in addition to raising other cattle, sheep, and swine. They owned a total of 101 milch cows which produced 7,775 pounds of butter, which was churned at home.

The plunger or dash churn was used, an equipment in which the cream was agitated by means of paddles. Barrel churns came into use later. Churning of butter in the early days had become a more or less wearisome job with members of the family. However, with the advent of the more modern



MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH WOJTA AND SON IGNATZ



churn, the work became more approvable. The surplus butter was sold at the nearest general store for whatever it brought.

In 1880, the census of the town shows marked progress, especially in the improvement and enlargement of farms, which resulted in increased production. The number of farms had increased by 172 per cent, value of land and buildings by 146 per cent, implements by 54 per cent, and farm products by 85 per cent. During the same period working oxen had increased only 13 per cent while the number of horses had increased over 400 per cent. Oxen were especially useful in the clearing of new land—as a beast for power, they were slow, steady in action, and easily maintained. As the improved acreage grew larger, there was apparent need for more rapid action, and horse power was found to accomplish more. The dairy cows increased by 136 per cent and butter by 43 per cent. It is evident there were no cow testing associations then. Sheep increased by 85 per cent, hogs by 23 per cent, and poultry by 200 per cent.

In the production of farm crops, barley increased tremendously which may be attributed to its usefulness both for feeding to animals and for brewing purposes. Wheat increased 565 per cent, oats 336 per cent, and rye 40 per cent. The value of forest products had diminished by 52 per cent. Obviously, the wood industry had reached its peak, and full-time farming had superseded it.

In 1905 the State census of the town lists 138 heads of families plus 46 parents, either fathers or mothers (retired), who were living on the same farms with their married children. The total population was 590. The number of families had increased 40 per cent since 1880. All the available land in the township was taken up, and no further settlers sought

homes there. It was during this period that sons and daughters of first and second generations of immigrants were in the lead acquiring farms in communities. The tendency to explore, speculate, or remove elsewhere had taken a downward trend, while the desire to own, operate, and improve the farm and home had brought about greater progress and stability.

In 1930 there was a total population in the township of 489 persons, or 18 per cent less than in 1880. Of this number 419 were on farms. There were 94 farms or an increase of 8 per cent over 1880.

The crops of oats, barley, corn for silage, clover, timothy and alfalfa for hay and seed had been steadily on the increase. Spring wheat, rye, peas for seed and canning, and potatoes were on the decline evidently. During the preceding forty years, the number of horses had increased 80 per cent, while working oxen had entirely disappeared from the farm program. Milch cows had increased 408 per cent, swine 40 per cent, and the number of sheep remained practically the same. The production of milk and cheese made dairying the chief industry and the leading source of income for the farmer.

The native vegetation of this town merits careful consideration because of its rapid disappearance. This area was originally covered with virgin growth of maple, birch, beech, elm, basswood, oak, ash, poplar, and wild cherry. Among the conifers may be mentioned the hemlock, pine, cedar, and balsam.

It was during the early sixties and seventies that lumbering, bark peeling, tie hewing, cordwood chopping, and fence post cutting were at the zenith of production. The wood industry was most flourishing. There was a ready market frequently with 'store pay' at the village of Two

Creeks and at Mathiesen's place. The piers at both places were piled high with wood and farm products waiting to be shipped by vessels or steamboats which often called daily. In approximately two decades, the lumberman and the settler had harvested the major portion of the growing virgin timber but had left a sufficient quantity to build farm buildings and supply firewood for years.

In localities where there were hard maple groves, settlers would look forward with pleasant anticipation to springtime when activity centered on overhauling of containers, spiles, buckets and barrels to be used in the process of 'sugarin'. Basswood blocks, 8x10 inches in diameter and two feet in length, were halved and hollowed out in troughlike shapes to be used for containers.

'Saps a runnin'' meant a call to action. Holes were bored into the trees, buckets hung or containers placed in position into which the sap dripped. The sap was next collected in buckets and poured into barrels. This was one of the most difficult tasks to perform. The barrels were loaded on a sled having wooden runners and carted by ox team to the evaporator, where the sap was deposited. The fire was kept up day and night under the evaporator during the height of the season, so as to evaporate the moisture rapidly. At the right moment, the thick, hot syrup was dipped from the evaporator into pans. There it quickly congealed into sticky, sweet candy with the finest kind of a flavor. By continuing to boil some of the syrup a few minutes more and stirring it with a wooden paddle, it became a soft, creamy sugar.

Freezing, frosty, starlit nights, sunshiny and snow-melting days in alternation would incite the flow of sap; at the approach of stormy weather it would cease to flow. The quantity of sap produced from an average sugar-maple tree



ranged from 5 to 10 gallons. A family in favorable season would make from 25 to 100 gallons of maple syrup and from 15 to 50 pounds of sugar.

The most destructive element to timber was the great forest fire, the so-called 'Peshtigo fire,' of 1871, which not only brought death to many settlers—though all escaped in the town of Two Creeks—but destroyed the forests, the farm homes, barns, and other buildings. This fire under pressure of high wind traveled rapidly and consumed everything in its path.<sup>4</sup>

Isolated settlers surrounded by standing timber and dried brush piles were in precarious position. Some communities kept vigil day and night. Others assisted their neighbors in carrying and pouring water on roofs of buildings to extinguish fires wherever started through intense heat. It was so dry that manure or rubbish heaps in farmers' barnyards would take fire. Their furniture and other belongings were buried at the bottom of dried streams, creeks, or mud puddles so as to save them from burning. The fiery ordeal was followed by undue clearing of more land and the consequent development of larger farms in the area. Other fires raged in the neighborhood, but aside from the destruction of humus in the soil, especially in dry marshy places, no serious damage resulted.

#### THE VILLAGE OF TWO CREEKS

The extensive growth of hemlock, useful for its bark and lumber, and the facilities for shipping, had been the cause for the Guido Pfister Leather Company of Milwaukee to establish their tannery in this locality. Trained laborers in tanning were imported, and soon there followed an influx

<sup>4</sup> Father P. Pernin, the village priest at Peshtigo, experienced this devastating fire. His narrative 'The Finger of God Is There,' can be read in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, II, 158-180, 274-293.—ASSISTANT EDITOR.

of people who sought employment. The industry developed rapidly, and within a few years a village was created including in addition to the tannery, a sawmill, planing mill, public school, general store, boardinghouse, tavern, blacksmith shop, a wagonmaker, tailor and shoemaker, a meat market, telegraph office, and a large market for hemlock bark, logs, ties, cordwood, and other forest and farm products. The first resident of Two Creeks was K. K. Jones.

The Pfister Leather Company built houses for their employees who were directly employed in the sawmill and the tannery. These residences were located mainly at the intersection of the two roads, with a few scattering homes about the premises. At the height of its prosperity, the village population was estimated at from 150 to 200 people.

It was expected of the tanners to be possessed of a reasonable amount of technical knowledge and efficiency in handling their chosen line of work. The hemlock bark consumed by the plant was secured within a radius of twelve miles of the tannery. It was not an uncommon sight to see twenty-four or more ox and horse teams, following each other in line, drawing loads of bark and other wood products to the village to be sold at the company's store.

Simultaneously with the erection of the tannery the Pfister and Vogel Leather Company built a pier at this point at which to receive and to ship products of the tannery, forest, and the farm. The company's leather was shipped to Milwaukee and from there reshipped to other points. Since the local section of this territory could not supply the necessary hides for steady operation, boatloads of this material were received at the pier from Milwaukee, Chicago, and other points on the lake.

The company encouraged the settlers and landowners to produce hemlock bark, ties, fence posts, cordwood, and other

products which the company would buy from the settlers and pay in exchange with 'store pay.' It afforded the settlers a source of income and at the same time proved profitable for the company. It was at this time that the average settler's progress in farming was slow. This was due to the fact that much of his time was spent in the woods getting out wood products and less in developing a farm.

Many settlers in the immediate vicinity were employed in the tannery, the sawmill or yards during the day, and in the evening they proceeded to clear their land by rolling logs into piles or chopping brush and burning it until late into the night. It was the dogged determination of some of these settlers which resulted in the many large and profitable farms now located in the neighborhood.

The Pfister and Vogel Leather Company maintained a so-called 'logging train,' operating westward from the pier about three miles. It facilitated the transportation of bark and logs to the tannery and the sawmill. The track was built of rails made of hardwood. There was no locomotive to operate this train. The cars were loaded at the source at the west end, and the decline was toward the east to the lake. Going west it was moved either by ox or horse teams. After being loaded, the train would move when set off, on its own inertia, until it would stop at an elevation. The resistance would then be overcome by hitching on the team and bringing the load over the elevation when the loaded cars would again by their momentum move on until their destination was reached.

In the company's yards hundreds of cords of hemlock bark, cordwood, and railroad ties were piled up. The peeled bark was 4 feet long and six tiers (one tier 4x16x300 feet) were grouped side by side to form a huge bark pile, covered

with a tilted roof so as to shed water. These bark piles were arranged in rows (six in a row), near to the tannery, approximately 300 feet long and 24 feet wide. There were frequently from six to ten or more of such piles, and hundreds of cords of wood and railroad ties on the grounds at one time.

It is of interest to note that the pupils of the public school which was located near-by took every opportunity to use the surroundings as a playground. The boys crept to the top of the piles and used them for imaginary battlefields, pitching snowballs as instruments of destruction. The girls utilized an open space in front of the piles, playing 'ring-around-a-rosy' and 'London bridge is falling down.' Baseball was also played by the pupils, and occasionally the ball would be lost among these piles of bark and wood.

In the early days Two Creeks had a tri-weekly steamboat service. The names of the boats that landed settlers here were the *Seabird*, the *Alpena*, and the *Propeller*, which was not its official name but was so designated because it was the first boat that stopped at the pier which had its driving gears shifted to the rear. All three boats were lost in Lake Michigan.

The *Seabird* went down on April 9, 1868. This Goodrich steamer, en route for Chicago, burned some eight miles from Waukegan, and it was reported that thirty-five crew members and passengers lost their lives. This incident caused much excitement in Two Creeks, since many of the people who settled in the town had arrived on this steamer in previous years. One young man named 'Legro,' who resided in the vicinity, together with a number of other young men on their way to Colorado on a gold rush venture, all lost

their lives in this disaster. Only three of the crew members on board escaped.

A number of two- and three-mast sailboats made the Two Creek pier frequently during the season, delivering and loading freight. Chief among them may be mentioned the *Josephine Lawrence*, the *Traverse City*, and the *Alaska*. They employed men coming from the neighborhood—stevedores and others to unload and load cargoes of lumber, hemlock bark, ties, cordwood, baled hay, grain, and other products of the farm. The more experienced men were paid for loading from 15 to 25 cents per hour, while the less experienced younger men were paid from 10 to 15 cents per hour. It would generally take from six to ten hours to load a boat—depending upon the tonnage it would carry.

The *Alaska* with her cargo of wheat foundered about one mile south from the lake shore at Two Creeks, and only a small portion of that cargo was saved. It was reported most of it went overboard and was washed ashore. Farmers in the vicinity scooped it up and hauled it home in wagon-loads where it was fed to chickens and hogs. During the years, all three ships above-mentioned were lost in storms on the lake.

Halvor Johnson, one of the early prominent farmers of the town, built a scow in 1890 and named it *Emily Taylor* for his married daughter. Captain Johnson also owned and developed a fine farm bordering on the lake. His family operated the farm during the summer months while he was sailing and hauling cargoes of lumber, shingles, slabs, and baled hay to different ports on the western shore of Lake Michigan. On one occasion, particularly, the scow with a cargo of freight was tied to the pier at Two Creeks, ready to be unloaded, when a heavy storm ensued. In order to

save the boat from being battered against the spiles, the ropes anchoring it were severed, and the boat was beached. Both the cargo and boat were recovered. After sailing for more than a decade, the boat too was lost in a storm.

As the years rolled by, there was not enough hemlock bark produced for consumption in the town, and on several occasions bark was shipped in from elsewhere. Then, too, the supply of forest products was constantly reduced, and as the volume of business became less and less, the Pfister and Vogel Leather Company found it unprofitable to continue and finally decided to close its plant at Two Creeks and move the equipment to Milwaukee. After it was closed down for several years, the plant was destroyed by fire—about in 1885. Thus closed the operation of the tanning industry in this section of the State.

At the conclusion of the operation of the tannery, the company continued to develop its farm consisting of nearly 300 acres and to buy, sell, and ship such products of the farm as were available for the market. For more than a quarter of a century the company operated the farm store. The transitional period had arrived, and the change from the lumbering industry to the farming business was now taking place in the community.

It was not an uncommon occurrence to see one or two sailboats and a steamboat tied to the pier, either loading or unloading cargoes of freight, coming and going daily or weekly. In the decade from 1890 to 1900, Two Creeks ranked among the leading ports for the shipping of baled hay, grain, and especially seed peas to distant markets on the lake. The pier, too, gradually gave out, and the company did not see fit to rebuild it since the business did not appear to warrant it. Eventually shipping by boat was suspended



entirely and so the pier no longer was repaired. What remained of shipping was carried on overland by trucks.

The general store and hotel were among the last to be operated and finally in about 1920 were destroyed by fire. Since then the land has been sold to adjoining farmers as has also all other property. The evidences of the village are still there, but the once thrifty and industrial village of Two Creeks is no more.

#### AGAIN TOWN OF TWO CREEKS

Before the advent of the white man, the Potawatomi and the Menomini Indians roamed over and occupied the land now included in the township of Two Creeks. The descendants of the former are now located on several sections of land near Laona, Forest county, and in the upper peninsula of Michigan; the latter group occupy a reservation covering five townships with headquarters at Keshena, Shawano county.

There was no trading in furs or blankets between the aborigines and the whites. However, the squaw would bring a piece or a quarter of venison to a settler's home and usually would receive in return a loaf of homemade bread or biscuits. This food she carried to the brave who remained outside near-by and together, seated on a log, they would eat it.

At intervals during the summer months, the Indians conducted their powwows at Two Creeks, Jumbo Creek, and Tisch Mills now in the town of Mishicot. The beating of drums, dancing, chanting and the unrest of the Indians during the day and night were interpreted by the settlers as a forerunner of some drastic action or a massacre. The New Ulm, Minnesota, uprising and cruelty of the Indians was quite vivid in their minds. The settlers were fearful and

suspicious. Day and night vigils were kept during the period of the powwow in order to spread the alarm in case of trouble. The Indians, however, were not treacherous—rather peaceful—and nothing unforeseen happened.

Wild animals, such as deer, bear, wolf, fox, racoon, rabbit, mink, badger, squirrel, skunk, woodchuck, and other animals were found there. Chief among the birds may be mentioned the partridge, wild pigeon, owl, hawk, and aquatic fowl, as well as songbirds. Wild pigeons were numerous in the early sixties and seventies of the past century, so much so that their flights in the spring of the year would obstruct the view of the sun. The birds would destroy newly seeded grains and other crops in the fields close to timber or brush. Wild pigeons roosted in hardwood and would feed early in the spring on maple wood buds particularly. They were easily disturbed, and their clamor and sudden flights from partition fences or thickets would cause ox and horse teams working in the near-by fields to run away frequently.

A hunter would seldom attempt to shoot at one or two birds for he believed they were not worth the price of the ammunition used but tried to bring down at least six or more birds at one shot. When food became scarce among the settlers, it was not uncommon for a family to dress, salt, and store a supply in a pork barrel for consumption during the year. The wild pigeon, so numerous at one time, today has disappeared from the scene.

Fishing furnished one of the chief sports of the season. This was especially true of fishing for suckers in the months of April and May when schools of them would enter both creeks from the lake and travel up stream to spawn. A short distance from the mouth of the north creek, a dam,

a flume, and a floodgate were constructed so as to regulate the water above the dam which was also used for power in the sawmill, for tan liquor in the tannery, and other uses. When the floodgate was raised, the water in the creek below the dam would rise, at which time large numbers of suckers would come up stream. By closing the floodgate, the water was shut off, and the fish in the creek between the dam and the lake would be left in shallow water and would encounter difficulty in escaping into the lake. It was then that the fishermen and spectators would get into the creek, catch the fish with their bare hands, with spear or net, or stun them with sticks and land them on the banks of the creek. Much excitement would prevail among those engaged. The fishing period would last from fifteen to twenty minutes when the real fun was over. Every participant usually had his 'catch.' Fish which were not consumed immediately were smoked to be used for food later in the year.

There were always a few commercial fishermen in the town. Seines with regulation meshes were used in lake waters close to the shore while gill nets were set farther out in the lake. The catch would consist of whitefish, trout, herring, suckers, perch, and other lake fish.

Fishing from the pier for perch with hook and line also furnished much sport during the summer months. It was a common occurrence to see a barefoot boy with hook and line in his pocket, wending his way in the direction of the pier. Fishing for perch from the pier not only appealed to the people of this locality but to those of neighboring villages and cities as well.

A well-known, enthusiastic hunter, a pioneer in the town named Ignatz Wojta, a boy aged twelve in 1857, received his first lessons in hunting from the Indians then numerous

in the town. Some of the fundamentals in hunting were to know the topography of the land, the coverage, natural habit and instinct of the animal, and the direction of the wind so that the animal did not get the direct scent of its pursuer.

On one occasion, Ignatz mortally wounded a deer when an Indian appeared and accompanied the boy in pursuit of the wounded animal. The Indian at the first opportunity dispatched the deer. He immediately proceeded to drag the deer away. Ignatz protested and asked for his share of venison, but the Indian refused to yield and directed him to proceed homeward. The boy further pleaded for at least a small portion of the venison, which vexed the Indian, and he removed his ramrod from his gun and indicated that he would use it if Ignatz lingered any longer. The Indian directed the boy to follow an old logging road, and this brought him safely home. After this experience, Ignatz refrained from hunting in company with Indians.

In the early days, settlers of the township utilized the Indian trails for travel over land south and west. Trails became paths and wagon roads. Today in a large number of cases the public highways connecting different villages and cities in contiguous areas were located by the aborigines and early settlers. There were no highways, no stagecoaches, railroads, telephones, nor means for travel from one point to another. Settlers were obliged to walk and to carry on their backs the few things they urgently needed. It was not uncommon for a person to walk from Two Creeks to Green Bay and back, approximately a distance of sixty-five miles, in three days.

Transportation improved with the arrival of the stagecoach. The stage operated daily between Two Rivers and points south on the direct line north through the village of Two Creeks to Kewaunee, Algoma, and Sturgeon Bay.

The mail reached the village from both directions each day, except in stormy weather when roads were impassable. The stagecoach was discontinued with the advent of rural mail service which was inaugurated at the close of the last century.<sup>5</sup>

The United States Telegraph Company constructed a telegraph line connecting the cities of Two Rivers, Kewaunee, and the outside world, which passed through the village, in 1864. The telegraph was of valuable service not only to the people of the village but to residents of the township. When the wood industry was exhausted and the business of the village was on the decline in about 1885, the operation of the telegraph office at this point was suspended; the line, however, continued to pass through the village, but no office was maintained.

The people of the town affiliated themselves either with the Lutheran, the Roman Catholic, or the Congregational church. In the early days the Lutherans attended the church of their faith near-by, in the town of Mishicot, and since 1900 have erected a church at West Two Creeks, which now serves this group.

In 1857, the Rev. Joseph Maly was the first itinerant Roman Catholic priest, who came to serve the families in the township spiritually during the summer months. He was stationed at St. Boniface church in Manitowoc. Father Maly read mass at different homes in the community on as many occasions as his time would permit. About 1860 a church was built at Tisch Mills, Wisconsin, and the families who professed the faith attended there. Those living in the

<sup>5</sup> *Annual Reports of the Post-Office Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1897* (Washington, 1897), 104, has the following information on rural free delivery in Wisconsin: 'Rural free delivery has been put to the test of practical experiment in 29 States and over 44 differing routes.' In November, 1896, the system was placed on trial over selected routes, Wisconsin being included with several other states in the experiment.—ASSISTANT EDITOR.

southern part of the town attended at Two Rivers or Mishicot.

The Congregational church was organized in 1895 in the southern part of the township by the Rev. J. N. Davidson of Two Rivers. The Rev. Mr. Davidson conducted services on Sundays in homes and in the rural school, in about 1900. Today this group is affiliated with the Congregational church at Two Rivers.

In 1860 according to the United States census, there were 18 pupils enrolled in the public schools of the town. Three persons, over twenty years of age, could neither read nor write, in a population of 281. In view of the fact that the people came to the township from twenty-eight different areas of the globe, the percentage of illiteracy seems very small.

The first ungraded school was established in 1862 in the unincorporated village of Two Creeks. This was the only school in the town. Approximately 48 pupils were enrolled and they came from the village and the outlying sections which were then being rapidly settled.

It will be of interest to note the school was a frame structure, 36x60 feet, equipped with long benches, seating 8 pupils, having a total capacity of over 100 pupils. Chief among other equipment may be mentioned, a *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*, maps of the two hemispheres, including maps of the United States, the State, county, and township of Two Creeks; a small globe, a call bell, a couple of wall pictures of United States presidents, a limited amount of blackboard space, and recitation benches.

Records show that G. C. Baker taught the school in 1868, with Ignatz Wojta as the district clerk. The next year J. H. Leonard served as teacher for the term of nine months. His letter of application to Clerk Ignatz Wojta,



of September 29, 1869, which follows, is particularly interesting for the information it contains on the salary expected by a teacher of the early day:

Mr. Widow

I hereby make application to you for the school of this district for the coming term. I offer you two separate proposals which you will see in the contracts I have written and which accompany this application. As you will observe, one proposal is to teach for Forty-five Dollars per month, and teach but twenty days to the month; This is on the same conditions which Mr G C Baker taught the school last winter. The other proposal is to teach Twentytwo days to the month for Fifty Dollars per month; I have taught twenty two days during the summer term for Fortyfive Dollars, but as everyone knows a winter school is harder to teach than a summer school and teachers wages are always higher in the winter than in the summer.

The difference per day of the two proposals is small, being as follows

20 days for \$45.00 equals \$2.25 per day

22 days for \$50.00 equals \$2.27 6/22 per day

The latter would give 3 weeks more school at an additional expense of \$35.00 and I think would therefore be the best for the district. I shall be pleased to receive your answer at as early date as possible.

John Nagle of Manitowoc, later county superintendent of schools and editor of the Manitowoc *Pilot*, taught the school for two terms (1872-73).<sup>6</sup>

During the winter months, the attendance at school was largely by groups of boys and girls up in their teens when work on the farm and village was at its ebb. The younger children would attend in the early fall and spring seasons when the roads were in better shape, for some pupils were obliged to walk a distance of three miles or more to school.

The attendance at the public school grew steadily with each succeeding year so that in 1878 there was a total enrollment of 110 pupils, with a daily average of approximately 65 pupils. Thomas J. Walsh of Two Rivers, later United

<sup>6</sup> See *Wis. Mag. of Hist.*, xiv, 219-223, 'The John Nagle Memorial,' which contains the address of the late Senator Thomas J. Walsh, delivered at the dedication of the Nagle stone tablet.—ASSISTANT EDITOR.

States senator from the State of Montana, taught the school during this period for two successive terms. It was an ungraded school and of necessity from twenty-four to twenty-eight recitation periods were conducted daily, so as to accommodate the pupils. It was inevitable to alternate recitations especially in the Upper Form of studies to every other day.

Among some of the leading general exercises conducted were spelling contests, rapid calculation exercises, memory work in geographical terms, word building matches, recitations, dialogues, orations, and drawing contests. Prizes were usually awarded to the winners by members of the school board or some enterprising citizen in the district. In 1880 the ungraded public school was relocated to its present location, now known as the Lake View school district number 1, Two Rivers, Route 1.

There appears to be no record available of public school number 2, prior to 1872. In that year Kate O'Donnell taught the school for a period of six months at \$40 per month. This school was relocated to the west, its present location, in order to place it more centrally in the district. It is now known as the Twin Elder school, Two Rivers, Route 1. These two public schools are the only ones ever to be located in the township. The term in both schools ranges from seven to nine months annually, and male teachers are usually employed. Nearly all the teachers hired in the township reside elsewhere in the county.

In many cases the teachers did not attend higher institutions of learning but secured their educations by their own efforts and qualified as teachers by passing satisfactory examinations to teach public district schools. In some cases teaching served as a steppingstone to a more permanent vocation. Teachers frequently taught until they began

preparation to enter professional life, such as law, medicine, banking, merchandising, or public office.

In concluding the sketch of the town of Two Creeks, it may be safe to say that originally 60 per cent of the population came from Germany and the balance migrated there from Norway, Bohemia, Ireland, Poland, and England. The assimilation process of the descendants of these immigrants has steadily been going on through the years. Community interest in social life and rural welfare, as well as intermarriages and other factors, have almost completely wiped out the line of demarkation between the nationalities. Today one finds the residents of the township a homogeneous group of civic and forward-looking people.