

THE MOVEMENT OF AMERICAN SETTLERS INTO WISCONSIN AND MINNESOTA

[Although the following article deals largely with events which occurred outside of the Iowa country, it is of interest to students of Iowa history as supplementary to the paper by the same author on *The American Occupation of Iowa, 1833 to 1860*, which appeared in THE IOWA JOURNAL OF HISTORY AND POLITICS for January, 1919. Conditions in Wisconsin and Minnesota were similar to those in Iowa. Indeed, the early history of the three States had much in common since Iowa was included in Wisconsin Territory from 1836 to 1838, and Minnesota was not separated from Iowa until 1846.—EDITOR.]

During the first three decades of the nineteenth century that part of the Upper Mississippi Valley included in the present States of Wisconsin and Minnesota remained practically in its primeval condition: only at widely scattered intervals were there indications of white settlements. The French were, of course, the original white inhabitants of the Upper Mississippi country. They were already settled in the Fox River Valley, at Green Bay, at the mouth of the Milwaukee River, at Prairie du Chien, and at other points along the Upper Mississippi when the Americans began to appear. They had mixed with the Indians, however, and did not constitute a particularly important factor in the development of the country during the years following the influx of American settlers. Some Swiss emigrants from Lord Selkirk's colony in the far northwest had settled at Fort Snelling with the permission of the military authorities.¹ A few Americans had established themselves at Green Bay, Blue Mounds, and Prairie du Chien. Along

¹ Williams's *A History of the City of Saint Paul, and of the County of Ramsey, Minnesota*, in the *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. IV, pp. 42, 43. See also Neill's *The History of Minnesota: from the Earliest French Explorations to the Present Time*, pp. 389, 390.

the falls of the Black River the lumberman's ax had disturbed the wild beasts and aroused the jealousy of the Indians.² With these exceptions the territory between the Upper Mississippi and the Great Lakes was practically as it had been for half a century.

During the spring and fall the trappers and traders collected hides and furs and assembled at Fond du Lac or Prairie du Chien during the summer to exchange their hard-earned wealth for additional supplies before resuming their uncertain occupations in the cheerless wilds of the neighboring forests. The territory was too valuable, however, to remain merely a hunting ground. The rich lead mines in the southwestern part of Wisconsin, the rapid increase in the population of Illinois after 1824,³ the suspension of active Indian hostility following the the Black Hawk War,⁴ the introduction of steam navigation on the

² Fonda's *Early Wisconsin* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. V, p. 225. See also *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. I, p. 97.

In addition to the settlement of Ebenezer Brigham at Blue Mounds, Henry Dodge had located at Dodgeville about twenty-five miles distant. The Frenchman, Solomon Juneau, had already settled at the mouth of the Milwaukee. Colonel John Shaw had erected a saw-mill on the Black River as early as 1819, but it was destroyed by Indians before it had been operated.—*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. II, p. 230, Vol. III, p. 437.

³ By 1824 the dispute over slavery had been settled in Illinois and immigration was encouraged. The people came in largest numbers during 1827 and 1828. Immigration was further encouraged by the introduction of steam navigation on the Illinois River in 1828. It "was no uncommon sight to see one hundred wagons in a single company going to the Sangamon country".—Pooley's *The Settlement of Illinois from 1830 to 1850* in the *Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, History Series*, Vol. I, p. 325.

⁴ The influx of white settlers preceding and following the Black Hawk War brought sufficient pressure to bear on the government at Washington so that treaties were exacted which gradually removed the Indians from the territory included within the present States of Wisconsin and Minnesota. The treaties opening this territory to the white settlers covered a period of more than thirty years beginning with the treaty made with the Winnebagoes in September, 1832. Outlines of the treaties, the date of each, with maps of the cessions are given in Royce's *Indian Land Cessions in the United States* in the *Eighteenth*

Great Lakes in the early thirties,⁵ and the fertile lands covered with dense forests along the Upper Mississippi and its tributaries were all factors in the immediate settlement of Wisconsin and the later occupation of Minnesota.

The southwestern part of Wisconsin was the first to receive American settlers in large numbers, and for several years the southern section contained practically all the population found within the borders of the present State. The people were drawn thither by the lead mines found in what are now the counties of Grant, Lafayette, and Iowa. This lead region—embracing the Wisconsin territory just mentioned, the extreme northwestern corner of Illinois included in the counties of Jo Daviess and Carroll, and that part of Iowa now included within the boundaries of Dubuque County—was one of the richest in the world.⁶ The mines had been worked by white men soon after the arrival of the French, and at the time of the American Revolutionary War the western armies of the contending forces had frequent skirmishes over the lead supply of the Fever River district. During the latter part of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth, Julien Dubuque was the most prominent miner in that section. In 1810 the Indians around Prairie du Chien, temporarily abandoning the chase, manufactured approximately two hundred tons of lead which they traded to the Canadians. During the

Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Pt. II. The treaties are given in the *United States Statutes at Large*.

⁵ There had been a steamer on Lake Michigan at a much earlier date. This pioneer vessel called "Walk-in-the-Water" made a trip to Mackinaw in the summer of 1819. Other trips were made by this same vessel in 1820 and 1821. In the latter year she carried two hundred passengers and a large cargo from Detroit to Green Bay.—*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. II, p. 94, note. See also Albach's *Annals of the West* (Second Edition), pp. 655, 656.

⁶ Thwaites's *Early Lead-Mining in Illinois and Wisconsin* in the *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1893, pp. 191-196.

following year, an American built a furnace on an island in the Mississippi east of Dubuque and smelted lead.

The Americans began a more general movement in 1819. Jesse W. Shull, the founder of Shullsburg, Wisconsin, erected a trading post near the present site of Galena and began mining operations. Three years later Colonel James Johnson of Kentucky took out a lease from the national government, camped on the present site of Galena with some negro slaves, and began mining on the most extensive scale known at that time. Then came crowds of prospectors from Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, and from southern Illinois. In 1825 about one hundred persons were engaged in mining in this section. By 1826 the number had increased more than fourfold.⁷ Then came the rush of 1827,⁸ the Indian uprisings, the treaties, and the increased immigration into Wisconsin. During the early thirties prospectors extended their operations over the entire lead area and were followed by settlers. Platteville, Cassville, Belmont, Blue Mounds, Dodgeville, Shullsburg, and Mineral Point were some of the places that came into existence during this period. On October 1, 1830, the only post offices in this part of Wisconsin were at Platteville and at Prairie du Chien. By April, 1831, offices had been established at Cassville, Gibraltar, Helena, and Mineral Point.⁹ Around

⁷ Thwaites's *Early Lead-Mining in Illinois and Wisconsin* in the *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1893, pp. 191-196.

⁸ In 1827 "hundreds rushed to the district, which, in a short time, was computed to hold five thousand inhabitants", according to W. C. Whitford.—Whitford's *Early History of Education in Wisconsin* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. V, p. 333. See also Daniel M. Parkison's *Pioneer Life in Wisconsin* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. II, pp. 328, 329, where he says the excitement of 1827 "became intense, equalling almost anything pertaining to the California gold fever."

⁹ *Table of Post Offices in the United States, Arranged by States and Counties; as They Were October First, 1830; with a Supplement Stating the Offices Established between the First of October, 1830, and the First of April, 1831.*

these frontier villages, where at night the wolves barked and howled unceasingly,¹⁰ the early American pioneers of Wisconsin squatted or staked their claims. Interest in agriculture increased after 1832,¹¹ but mining was the leading industry of these early immigrants. When the Territorial government was organized in Wisconsin in 1836, thousands of pounds of lead ore drawn by long trains of oxen were passing monthly from Mineral Point by way of Belmont and Elk Grove to Galena, Illinois, whence it was shipped by boats to St. Louis.¹²

Farther east, in the Rock River Valley and along the shore of Lake Michigan, pioneers of a different type were settling during the same period,¹³ having been drawn there in many instances by the extensive advertising which the Wisconsin country had received from soldiers who returned east after the Black Hawk War.¹⁴ By 1836 the site where Janesville now stands had been occupied by Henry Janes.¹⁵

¹⁰ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. VI, p. 302.

¹¹ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. II, p. 335. Parkison here says "the Superintendent of the mining country, seeing the absolute necessity of the thing, signified to the inhabitants, that he would not take any measures to prevent them from cultivating the soil; but could not, under his instructions from the General Government, give them any special permission to do so."

¹² *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. VI, p. 297.

In his message to the Territorial legislature on November 26, 1838, Governor Dodge said that "upward of ten millions of pounds of lead are sent east annually from the mines of Wisconsin."—*Niles' Register*, Vol. LV, p. 289.

¹³ Mathews's *The Expansion of New England*, p. 236.

The lead region was occupied by people from the South, the southeastern section of the State, by settlers who came from the East.

¹⁴ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. V, p. 335.

¹⁵ Janes's *Early Reminiscences of Janesville* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. VI, pp. 426-435.

Janes was a typical pioneer. He was born in Virginia in 1804, whence he moved with his father to Ohio. In 1835 he came to Wisconsin and from there crossed the plains to California in 1849. He finally settled in Uniontown, Humboldt Bay, California. In 1855 he wrote as follows to the *Janesville Gazette*: "Since that time [the time of leaving Janesville] I have been con-

Just north of there, two years later, people from New England and New York settled at Watertown, Jefferson, Fort Atkinson, and Lake Mills.¹⁶ Madison, before the forests were cleared or a house built, had been selected as the capital of the newly organized Territory in 1836.¹⁷ In the *Enquirer*, published at Madison under the date of June 1, 1839, appeared an account of an entry of twelve thousand acres in the vicinity of Fox Lake, two thousand five hundred acres of which had been purchased during the preceding fall by a company from the interior of New York, "and within the last three months another company from Pennsylvania has purchased nearly 5,000 acres for the same purpose. Immigrants are expected during the course of the present summer and approaching fall."¹⁸ Still farther east, as early as November, 1834, Gilbert Knapp had become the first white settler in the vicinity of Racine.¹⁹ Milwaukee had already been occupied and in western New York an organization was formed which was to have no small influence, either directly or indirectly, on the settlement of southeastern Wisconsin. This was the Western Emigration Company.

According to one who claimed to have been personally interested in the movement from its inception, the company owed its origin to a group of western enthusiasts who early in the winter of 1834 were guests of one J. Bullen, Jr., at

stantly working westward till the nasty Pacific has made a stop to further progress in that direction. In the fall of '49 I reached the Pacific, and yet the sun sets west of me, and my wife positively refuses to go to the Sandwich Islands, and the bark is starting off my rails, and that is longer than I ever allowed myself to remain on one farm; so that I am at a loss how to act in the present dilemma.'

¹⁶ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XI, p. 420.

¹⁷ Thwaites's *Wisconsin*, pp. 243, 244.

¹⁸ Quoted in *Niles' Register*, Vol. LVI, p. 264.

¹⁹ *Niles' Register*, Vol. LIV, p. 339.

a supper given in Hannibal, New York. At a later meeting a constitution was drawn up which included a provision that each member of the company should move west by June, 1836. The capital stock was fixed at \$8000, to be divided into shares of ten dollars each. A committee was appointed to precede the main body, select a site, and notify members of the company in Hannibal when they had done so. This committee proceeded to Milwaukee by way of Chicago. Turning south from Milwaukee they attempted to secure land from settlers who had located on the present site of Racine, but in this they failed. Following the lake shore they finally staked off claims where the city of Kenosha now stands, and during the summer and fall of 1835 about fifteen families, most of them from Hannibal, came to the new settlement. Adventurers, speculators, and homeseekers followed the first immigrants very rapidly.²⁰

²⁰ Some of the important articles in the constitution of the company were as follows:

"ART. 1. For the purpose of aiding those disposed to emigrate to the Western States or Territories, in the purchase of land and the pursuit of agriculture, manufactures, mechanics and other branches of industry, and the formation of a desirable community, we, the subscribers, do by the ratification and signature of this Constitution, agree to and hereby do associate ourselves into a joint stock company, to be called the '*Western Emigration Company*;' and we do severally promise and agree to and with each other, jointly and severally, to abide by and keep all and each of the stipulations herein contained — this instrument being intended for all the purposes of legal or equitable liability, as a contract between the parties thereto. . . .

"ART. 3. The capital stock, when paid in, shall be invested in the purchase of lands, improvements thereon, and claims thereto, in any of the Western States or Territories, and in such other manner as the Company shall, in pursuance of their general object, in regular meeting direct.

"ART. 4. The officers of the Company shall be a Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, a Board of Directors to consist of nine persons, a General Agent, a Treasurer, and a Committee of Finance. . . .

"ART. 16. The moneys arising from the sale of any lands, shall be distributed to stock-holders according to the amount of their stock, the Board of Directors to make such distributions, and the Treasurer to pay the same, on the order of the President of said Board.

"ART. 17. Whenever a stock-holder shall erect buildings, or make other im-

A somewhat similar but less pretentious scheme resulted in the settlement of Beloit on the Rock River in the extreme southern part of Wisconsin. In the village of Colebrook, New Hampshire, in October, 1836, the New England Emigrating Company was formed by a group of twelve men. They had determined to move west, and sent their agent, Horace White, ahead to select a suitable location. White was so favorably impressed with the country around the present city of Beloit that he closed a deal for the lands, and by the middle of the next summer the New Hampshire colonists had arrived. They proceeded at once to build homes and to cultivate the soil. By 1838 the village was laid out and arrangements were made for the establishment of a college.²¹

Between 1836 and 1840 the number of people in the Territory of Wisconsin more than doubled; between 1840 and 1846 over one hundred thousand more were added to the population of Wisconsin.²² Fruit trees of various kinds had been transported into the Territory. Wheat and corn

provements on any of the Company's land, or other lands held in trust for them, except mill sites, and the said lands shall afterwards be sold to any other person, such stock-holder shall be paid the actual value of such improvement, and shall be allowed to retain possession thereof six months after such sale, and until such payment be made.'—*Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. II, pp. 451-455, 458.

For a history of the Western Immigration Company see Lothrop's *A Sketch of the Early History of Kenosha County, Wisconsin, and of the Western Emigration Company* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. II, and Frank's *Early History of Kenosha* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. III. Lothrop was evidently a member of the company. The company was dissolved in December, 1836, but not until its stockholders had lost money in the enterprise.

²¹ Whitney's *The Settlement of Beloit as Typical of the Best Westward Migration of the American Stock* in the *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, 1898, pp. 131-135.

²² The population of Wisconsin at the periods indicated was given in *Niles' Register*, Vol. LXXI, p. 144, as follows: 1830, 32,45; 1836, 11,036; 1840, 30,945; 1842, 46,678; 1846, 155,277.

were growing well, and oats, rye, barley, buckwheat, peas, and beans were to be found to a lesser degree. There were numbers of farmers in 1838 who were cultivating from one hundred to one hundred and fifty acres of land, and had imported good breeds of horses, sheep, cattle, and hogs.²³ But these prosperous settlers with their fields of growing grain occupied the country in the southern and eastern parts of the Territory. Comparatively few homes had been built north of Madison and west of the settled area along the lake.

The first Americans to follow the fur traders into northwestern Wisconsin and into northeastern Minnesota were the lumbermen. They had begun to establish themselves at advantageous places along the streams of the north at a very early period. Colonel John Shaw had built a saw-mill on Black River as early as 1819.²⁴ In 1822 another was constructed on a branch of the Chippewa River by a man named Hardin Perkins from Kentucky. A treaty concluded with the Menominee Indians in 1836 opened a strip six miles wide and forty miles long to the lumbermen on the upper Wisconsin, and was followed by the construction of a number of mills in that section.²⁵ Wausau later became a center for the lumbermen of the region.²⁶ A treaty made with the Chippewa and the Sioux Indians in 1838

²³ *Niles' Register*, Vol. LIV, p. 339.

²⁴ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. II, p. 230, Vol. III, p. 437.

²⁵ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. II, p. 132, Vol. III, p. 438. These lands were purchased from the Menominee Indians by the United States and surveyed by the government evidently after they had been occupied by Americans.—Interior Department Lands, L. B. (manuscript), Vol. I, p. 122.

Through the courtesy of C. W. Alvord and of the Library of the University of Illinois I have been given access to *The Calendar of the Archives of the Department of the Interior at Washington* from which the manuscript material cited throughout this paper is taken.

²⁶ Ellis's *The "Upper Wisconsin" Country in the Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. III, pp. 437, 438.

opened the St. Croix Valley to the lumbermen. Mills were erected at St. Croix Falls, at Marine, at Point Douglas, at Lakeland, and at Osceola;²⁷ and the lumbermen, assisted by the fur traders, discouraged the more permanent settlers.²⁸ In fact some of the lumbermen even at a later period sent petitions to the government praying that their pursuits be not interfered with until the land should be brought into the market.²⁹ Like the fur-traders, the lumbering interest were opposed to the agricultural settlements.

One of the most interesting of the early enterprises of this section, because of its connection with a people who were attracting considerable attention along the frontier at this time, was that conducted by the Mormons above the falls of the Black River. After these people had moved to Nauvoo they determined to build a Mormon temple and a Nauvoo house that would do credit to the religion which they had accepted. To procure material for the work they purchased mills in Wisconsin estimated by one of their number to be worth twenty thousand dollars. As many as one hundred and fifty men were employed at times in the service of the Mormons, and during the summer of 1843 they sent to Nauvoo a large amount of hewed timber and about two hundred thousand feet of sawed timber. The lumber sent down, however, was used for other purposes than those originally intended, and the difficulties in which the Mormons soon found themselves offered opportunities for unscrupulous members of their own sect to appropriate property which belonged to the community.

²⁷ Folsom's *History of Lumbering in the St. Croix Valley, with Biographic Sketches* in the *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. IX, pp. 291-324.

²⁸ Gibbs's *Sketch of Prescott, and Pierce County* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. III, pp. 459, 460.

²⁹ Interior Department Lands, L. B. (manuscript), Vol. I, p. 181.

The mill was sold for a few thousand feet of lumber about the time of the death of Joseph Smith.³⁰

A census said to have been taken by Dr. Aldrich in 1845 gave to northwestern Wisconsin and to that part of the present State of Minnesota lying between the St. Croix and Mississippi rivers a population of fourteen hundred and nineteen.³¹ Until comparatively recent times, in fact, the lumbermen dominated that territory, and such towns as developed first were essentially centers of lumbering interests. Settlers first appeared in this section along the Mississippi and the St. Croix rivers. Hudson, under the name of Buena Vista, and later of Willow River, was laid out in 1848.³² Settlements were made in La Crosse County as early as 1841, but very few immigrants came before 1850. The town of La Crosse was settled during the latter year.³³ In the same year settlements were made farther east in the vicinity of Sparta.³⁴ Indian villages, which in 1840 were scattered along the Mississippi and the St. Croix rivers northward from Prairie du Chien, were replaced in a few years by the thriving towns or cities of Lansing in

³⁰ The interesting document from which this data is collected is published in the *Historical Society of Southern California Publications*, 1917, pp. 86-171. Under the title of "*De Tal Palo Tal Astilla*", by H. W. Mills, are published the fragments of a diary and a number of letters written by George Miller. Miller was a prominent member of the Mormon Church at Nauvoo, and was the member of that organization who had charge of the Wisconsin lumbering enterprise during the early forties. He was intimate with Joseph Smith and may have had ambitions to succeed the latter as head of the Mormons. The fragments were presented to Dr. Mills by George Miller, Jr., the son of the author of the diary and letters. The document will undoubtedly be of interest to students of Mormonism.

³¹ Hall's *Hudson, and Its Tributary Region* in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. III, p. 467.

³² *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. III, pp. 467, 468.

³³ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. IV, pp. 383, 384. The county was organized in 1851.

³⁴ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. IV, pp. 387-389.

Iowa, Prairie la Crosse, Prescott, and Hudson in Wisconsin, and Winona, Red Wing, and Stillwater in Minnesota.³⁵ Farther east near the central part of the State settlers began to occupy the country around New London. Northport, Hortonville, Iola, Ogdensburg, Scandinavia, Waupaca, and Shiocton were settled in the early fifties.³⁶ Many of these settlers were interested in farming.

American settlers had come at an earlier period to the extreme western end of Lake Superior around Fond du Lac, Minnesota. In 1832 the American Board of Foreign Missions established stations on the lake and erected a school among the Indians of Sandy Lake. Two years later the station was moved to Fond du Lac.³⁷ The school was under the direction of Edmund Franklin Ely. After the Indian titles to lands around the head of the lake were extinguished in 1854 and 1855, Ely became one of the founders of Superior where he was joined by a number of ambitious "hustlers" from St. Paul who made Superior one of the thriving centers of the lake region. Later Ely moved across the St. Louis River and became one of the first settlers of Oneota, Minnesota. Here he built a steam mill and docks, and for six years served as postmaster. Some of these early immigrants moved eastward along the north

³⁵ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. II, p. 484.

³⁶ *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. III, pp. 482-488.

³⁷ Carey's *History of Duluth, and of St. Louis County, to the Year 1870*, in the *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. IX, pp. 241-278, 292.

Fond du Lac was at first located in Wisconsin territory but later was moved to the Minnesota side. The early settlers of St. Paul looked upon it as the lake port for Minnesota and therefore a place of considerable importance. In the Minnesota year book for 1851 it is described as a very old settlement on the St. Louis River twenty-two miles from its entrance into Lake Superior, and destined to be a place of great importance.

See also Neill's *The History of Minnesota: from the Earliest French Explorations to the Present Time*, p. 432. Neill gives 1833 as the year in which Ely opened the school at Fond du Lac.

shore of the lake and settled at Beaver Bay which was incorporated in 1857.³⁸

The demand for pine lumber created by the great influx into the lead region and the surrounding country and by the Indian treaties ratified in 1838 which opened to settlement the section between the Mississippi and the St. Croix rivers, brought eager lumbermen from Wisconsin, anxious to establish their industry in the new territory. Operations were begun along the west bank of the St. Croix as already indicated, but as the number of mills increased pioneer lumbermen began to move farther west.³⁹ Until after 1851 the Indian treaties of 1838 confined the industrial activities of the whites to the territory east of the Mississippi and south of the forty-sixth parallel. The first explorations, therefore, were made along the tributaries on that side of the river. The Rum River Valley had been explored before 1848 and found to contain a large amount of excellent timber. A mill erected at the Falls of St. Anthony began operations in 1848, securing its supply principally from this region.⁴⁰ In fact it was reported that preparations had been made for cutting and manufacturing from thirty to forty million feet of lumber from the public lands of Minnesota before 1855.⁴¹

Of the thousands of immigrants who took part in the westward movement of 1848 and 1849 "some learned wisdom", according to one patriotic chronicler,⁴² and stopped

³⁸ Carey's *History of Duluth, and St. Louis County, to the Year 1870*, in the *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. IX, pp. 241, 278.

³⁹ Folwell's *Minnesota: the North Star State*, pp. 79-82.

⁴⁰ Stanchfield's *History of Pioneer Lumbering on the Upper Mississippi and Its Tributaries, with Biographic Sketches*, in the *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. IX, pp. 326-362.

⁴¹ Interior Department Lands, L. B. (manuscript), Vol. II, p. 206.

⁴² Larpenteur's *Recollections of the City and People of St. Paul, 1843-1898*, in the *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. IX, p. 379.

in Minnesota. The number was sufficiently large to create a great demand for lumber at the Falls of St. Anthony and at St. Paul. The mill at the former place worked day and night in its attempt to supply the needs of the immediate community, and even then it was found necessary to have lumber shipped from mills at Stillwater in order to provide all that was necessary. Very soon, however, additional mills were constructed farther up the Mississippi and along the banks of its tributaries at Anoka, Centerville, St. Francis, Princeton, Monticello, St. Cloud, and Little Falls. Lumbering towns came into existence only to pass into oblivion when the industry which supported them ceased to operate, but the amount of the lumber cut increased down to the end of the century.⁴³ Some of the lumbering centers have retained their importance down to the present.

As soon as the mill was completed at the falls, the village of St. Anthony became a busy center. From the first it was an ambitious rival of St. Paul, which was located about six or eight miles by stage farther down the river. The former owed its advantage to its favorable location for the establishment of saw-mills, the latter to its position at the head of steam navigation on the Mississippi. By 1854 St. Anthony had become "a cheerful, pretty place, clean and well built, containing about 2500 inhabitants". The attractiveness of the scenery around the village, the location of the university there, and the "comfortable and civilized aspect of the town" had marked it as a fashionable summer resort, but along the river bank "saw-mills, foundries, shingle-machines, lath-factories", and other in-

⁴³ *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. IX, pp. 326-362.

During the three years including the period from 1848 to 1850 twelve million feet of lumber were cut by the mills in this section. From 1851 to 1860 there had been more than three hundred and fifteen million feet cut, and this was increased each decade throughout the century. During the nine years from 1891 to 1899 more than four billion, four hundred million feet were sawed.

dustries testified to the spirit of the community.⁴⁴ In St. Paul at the same period were "four or five hotels, and at least half-a-dozen handsome churches, with tall spires pointing heavenward, and sundry meeting-houses, and a population of seven or eight thousand to go to them, and good streets with side-walks, and lofty brick warehouses, and stores, and shops, as well supplied as any in the Union; and 'an academy of the highest grade for young ladies;' and wharves at which upwards of three hundred steamers arrive annually, bringing new settlers to this favoured land, and carrying away its produce to the south and east."⁴⁵ As in most western communities there was apparent here both industrial and educational vision.

A potent factor in bringing settlers into Wisconsin and Minnesota during the early years of their history was the extensive advertising which the sale of government lands received throughout the more densely populated areas. On May 24, 1849, Thomas Ewing, Secretary of the Interior, directed that all advertisements of land sales in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota should be published in the *Correspondent* of Chillicothe, Ohio, in the *Schnellpost* of New York City, and in the *Telegraph* of Buffalo, New York.⁴⁶ Upon request he had notices of land sales placed in the *Minnesota Pioneer*, published at St. Paul.⁴⁷ That Ewing personally had a high opinion of the value of the lands under consideration, particularly those in Wisconsin, is evident from his own

⁴⁴ Oliphant's *Minnesota and the Far West*, pp. 236, 244, 245.

A steamer of light draught had been launched above the Falls of St. Anthony and had navigated the stream—a distance of about eighty miles—to the Sauk Rapids.

⁴⁵ Oliphant's *Minnesota and the Far West*, p. 254.

⁴⁶ Interior Department Lands, L. B. (manuscript), Vol. I, p. 23.

⁴⁷ Interior Department Lands, L. B. (manuscript), Vol. I, p. 24; Interior Department, L. & R. R., L. R. M. (manuscript), Box 14.

statement.⁴⁸ A little later (August 11, 1852) a proclamation announcing land sales in Minnesota appeared in the *Register* published in Middlebury, Vermont.⁴⁹

In the meantime farmers had pushed up north of St. Anthony's Falls and had made settlements along the banks of the Mississippi and its important branches. The Rum River country had been occupied by industrious Germans, and homes were found scattered at intervals along the Mississippi up to the vicinity of Crow Wing.⁵⁰ Even free negroes petitioned for a share of the fertile lands in this far-off territory.⁵¹ Permanent settlers had increased in numbers on the banks of the St. Croix River; and in the northwest corner of the Territory, on the site of Lord Selkirk's experiment, farmers were raising wheat. But the place to which the early Minnesota booster pointed with greatest pride, the place which was referred to as "the prettiest country lying wild that the world can boast of, got up with greatest care and effort by old dame Nature ten thousand years or more ago, and which she has been improving ever since,"⁵² was the country along the Minnesota River. The fertile land along this navigable stream and its tributaries was the goal of many an early immigrant. It was doubtless

⁴⁸ On October 9, 1849, he is reported to have declared the government lands in Wisconsin to be more desirable than those in Illinois.— Interior Department Lands, L. B. (manuscript), Vol. I, p. 48.

⁴⁹ Interior Department Lands, L. B. (manuscript), Vol. I, p. 211.

⁵⁰ Oliphant's *Minnesota and the Far West*, pp. 215, 236, 239, 241. A farmer who ran a hotel at Sauk Rapids cultivated about 150 acres of land. Oliphant says his wheat crop averaged twenty-two bushels to the acre and his oats thirty-five. A stage was running twice a week from there to the Falls of St. Anthony.

⁵¹ On November 18, 1856, Robert McClelland, Secretary of the Interior, wrote Isiah Lawrence, a free negro, that there was nothing in the laws of the United States to prevent him as a free man of African descent from settling upon public lands in Minnesota and acquiring the right of preëmption.— Interior Department Lands, L. B. (manuscript), Vol. III, p. 347.

⁵² Oliphant's *Minnesota and the Far West*, p. 258.

this region which Colonel James M. Goodhue, editor of the *Minnesota Pioneer*, had in mind when he said: "We will give Illinois May the start, and Minnesota shall come out ahead. Don't care what the crop is — any grain, any root — anything from a castor bean, or an apple or a pear tree, or a pumpkin, to a sweet potato or a tobacco plant. Why, sucker, do you know you have frosts about two weeks earlier in Illinois than we do here? It is a fact! We will show these people *sights* who come up here in May, and go shivering back home, saying that Minnesota is 'too cold for craps'." ⁵³

By 1854 there had been founded along the banks of this stream the towns of Shakopee, Le Sueur, Traverse des Sioux, Kasota, Mankato, and Henderson, all "thriving cities", containing from one to fifty log houses, "but with imaginary public buildings, squares and streets enough for a moderately sized empire". ⁵⁴ Yet post offices had been established in every one of these towns, and in many others along the banks of the Minnesota, the Mississippi, and the St. Croix rivers. There were at least forty-six in Minnesota Territory in 1854. ⁵⁵

⁵³ Oliphant's *Minnesota and the Far West*, p. 255.

⁵⁴ Oliphant's *Minnesota and the Far West*, p. 258.

⁵⁵ Rode's *The United States Post-Office Directory and Postal Guide*.

The author claims to have compiled his list of offices from the records of the Post Office Department and to have corrected it up to April 1, 1854. The post offices are arranged alphabetically for the entire United States. Below will be found the list for Minnesota in 1854, including the county in which each post office was located.

COUNTY	POST OFFICE	COUNTY	POST OFFICE
Hennepin	Bloomington	Benton	Elk River
Wabashaw	Brownsville	Hennepin	Excelsior
Dakotah	Carlisle	Rice	Fairbault
Pembina	Cass Lake	Wanahtah	Fort Ripley
Hennepin	Chanhasson	Dakota	Fort Snelling
Benton	Clear Lake	Wabashaw	Hastings
Washington	Cottage Grove	Sibley	Henderson
Benton	Crow Wing	Dakota	Kaposia
Benton	Decorri	Dakota	Lac qui Parle

SETTLEMENT OF WISCONSIN AND MINNESOTA 423

According to Eli Bowen as early as 1851 nineteen or more post offices had been established in Minnesota with fairly well defined mail routes extending into remote parts of the Territory, and arrangements had been made for deliveries at intervals varying from once or twice a week to "according to opportunity".⁵⁶ Mail passed from Sauk Rapids to Pembina under the latter scheme, for instance, but from Swan River the mail was scheduled to leave for Pembina by way of Long Prairie on the first day of each month. There was another monthly route from Mendota via "Little Rapids, Traverse des Sioux, and Little Rock to Lac qui Parle." Between St. Paul and Fort Gaines by way of St. Anthony's Falls, Sauk Rapids, and the mouth of Swan River, the mails were scheduled once in every two

COUNTY	POST OFFICE	COUNTY	POST OFFICE
Dakota	Le Sueur	Ramsey	Red Rock
Ramsey	Little Canada	Goodhue	Red Wing
Benton	Little Falls	Wabashaw	Reed's Landing
Wahnakta	Long Prairie	Ramsey	St. Anthony's Falls
Ramsey	Manowine	Ramsey	Saint Paul
Blue Earth	Maukato	Benton	Sauk Rapids
Dakota	Mendota	Scott	Shak' pay
Hennepin	Minneapolis	Washington	Stillwater
Wabashaw	Minnesota City	Benton	Swan River
Wabashaw	Minnioah	Washington	Taylor's Falls
Wabashaw	Mount Vernon	Dakota	Traverse des Sioux
Pembina	Pembina	Benton	Watah
Washington	Point Douglass	Wabashaw	Winona
Pembina	Red Lake		

⁵⁶ Bowen's *The United States Post-Office Guide*, pp. 174, 300. There is another volume: *Table of Post-Offices in the United States on the First Day of January, 1851, Arranged in Alphabetical Order and Exhibiting the States, Territories, and Counties in Which They are Situated, with the Names of the Postmasters; also an Appendix Containing a List of the Post-Offices Arranged by States and Counties, to Which is Added a List of Offices Established, Changed, or Discontinued to May 31.*

The two volumes give the same list of offices for Minnesota Territory, but the latter does not give the routes. While the information contained in these and similar volumes for the early period may not be absolutely accurate, such errors as occur are likely to be errors of omission rather than errors of commission. There are numerous instances of the former in California, for example, as there are doubtless in other States. The spelling of various names, it will be seen, does not agree with that in use at present.

weeks, and there were several weekly deliveries between points along the Mississippi and the St. Croix rivers.⁵⁷

When Minnesota was organized as a Territory in 1849 it contained an estimated population of four thousand and fifty-seven.⁵⁸ A year later, according to the United States census of 1850, there were six thousand and seventy-seven. This increased to an estimated population of one hundred and forty thousand in 1854, and one hundred and fifty thousand in 1857.⁵⁹ The Federal census of 1860 gives the State a population of one hundred seventy-two thousand and twenty-three. In January, 1849, St. Paul was a village containing about a dozen buildings and about one hundred and fifty inhabitants; by the first of July following, it is described as having one hundred and forty-two houses and eight hundred and forty people. The population is said to have increased from eight hundred and forty during the summer of 1849 to seven or eight thousand in 1854.⁶⁰

While foreign immigration, as already indicated, does not occupy a prominent place in this study, in the particular territory under consideration the subject is too important to pass without a brief notice. The Welch came to Wisconsin during the early period of active interest in lead mining, and a little later we find them settled in several

⁵⁷ Bowen's *The United States Post-Office Guide*, p. 300.

⁵⁸ Leonard's *Early Days in Minneapolis* in the *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. XV, p. 497.

G. Fletcher Williams gives the population as four thousand seven hundred and eighty, more than seven hundred of whom lived in the Dakota territory. This included three hundred and sixty-seven soldiers in the forts.—Williams's *A History of the City of St. Paul and of the County of Ramsey, Minnesota*, in the *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. IV, p. 228.

⁵⁹ *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. XV, p. 497; Oliphant's *Minnesota and the Far West*, p. 259.

⁶⁰ Williams's *A History of the City of St. Paul and of the County of Ramsey, Minnesota*, in the *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, Vol. IV, pp. 208, 224, 228. See also Oliphant's *Minnesota and the Far West*, pp. 252-254.

large groups in Winnebago, Columbia, Dodge, Sauk, and Racine counties.⁶¹ As early as December, 1839, the *Peoria Register* stated that two thousand Russian families, flying from religious persecution at home, were about to settle in Wisconsin Territory.⁶² On January 4, 1840, *Niles' Register* noted that one hundred emigrants "from the pine clad mountains of Norway" had passed through Chicago a few weeks earlier en route to Wisconsin where they were to make settlements. By the thirteenth of March, 1847, according to the same authority, the legislature of Wisconsin had ordered three hundred copies of the Governor's message printed in the Norwegian tongue to accommodate "some thousands" of Norwegians who had settled within the boundaries of the Territory.⁶³ In 1845 a colony of nearly two hundred Swiss from the "frowning yet beloved mountains, on whose rugged sides they had left their poor homes"⁶⁴ in the canton of Glarus came to build for themselves a new Glarus in Green County. With these came Germans, Irish, English, Bohemians, Poles, Dutch, Belgians — in fact, practically every nation of the earth, except Turkey and China, was represented in Wisconsin's population by 1850, but the German element was the largest.⁶⁵ Many Germans came to America as a result of the Revolution of 1848.

⁶¹ Thwaites's *Wisconsin*, p. 294.

⁶² Quoted in *Niles' Register*, Vol. LVII, p. 272.

⁶³ *Niles' Register*, Vol. LVII, p. 304, Vol. LXXII, p. 20.

⁶⁴ Luchsinger's *The Planting of the Swiss Colony at New Glarus, Wisconsin*, in the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, Vol. XII, pp. 335, 350.

This "admirable paper", Thwaites says, "was the first monograph on the planting of an organized foreign colony in Wisconsin".

⁶⁵ *Seventh Census of the United States*, 1850, p. XXXVII. See Gregory's *Foreign Immigration to Wisconsin* in the *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, 1901, pp. 137-143. Following this are brief articles on *Influence of the Germans in Wisconsin*; *Polanders in Wisconsin*; *The Scots in Wisconsin*; and *Our Bohemian Population*.

As early as 1832, according to Reuben Gold Thwaites, a scheme was initiated in Bavaria to purchase a large tract of land in the United States which was to be occupied by the Germans and to be called New Germany. A number of books and pamphlets were published advocating the plan, and in several of these Wisconsin was suggested as the place most desirable for the successful establishment of such a colony. While the project was not realized it had advocates at intervals as late as 1878.⁶⁶ Between March 2nd and September 5th, 1840, about fourteen thousand Germans had arrived in New York, the majority of whom were on their way to settle in the West.⁶⁷ Some of these may have come to Wisconsin. By 1846 a number of individuals had begun to advertise Wisconsin among the Germans in the "Fatherland". Frequently their favorable accounts of this western territory were published in pamphlet form and distributed among eager readers at home. The descriptions of the country, the accounts of its natural resources, the clause in the new Constitution of the State permitting an alien to vote after a year's residence, the Revolution of 1848 in Europe, together with religious disturbances and other causes for discontent within Germany, were incentives for these people to seek homes in Wisconsin. After 1848 they came by the thousands. "Educators and physicians, musicians and artists, actors, theologians, army officers, and engineers — all of them independent characters, and longing for freedom and liberty — settled on the borders of civilization, in a country then in the prime of development."⁶⁸ At first they occupied the counties in the eastern part of the State and then spread "into the denser

⁶⁶ Thwaites's *Wisconsin*, p. 289.

⁶⁷ *Niles' Register*, Vol. LIX, p. 16.

⁶⁸ Hense-Jensen's *Influence of the Germans in Wisconsin* in the *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, 1901, pp. 144-147; Thwaites's *Wisconsin*, pp. 289-291.

woods of the north, which they soon converted into a productive and prosperous region."⁶⁹

In Minnesota the two thousand and forty-eight foreigners constituted a little more than a third of the Territory's population in 1850. Of these the largest number — fourteen hundred and seventeen — came from Canada, but there were Irish, Germans, and English, and a few representative from Scotland, France, Holland, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, and the other nations of the earth.⁷⁰ Between 1850 and 1860 fifty-six thousand seven hundred and fifty foreigners came into Minnesota, yet the percentage of foreign born to the total population in 1860 had increased less than two per cent over that of 1850.⁷¹ In 1860 more than ten per cent of Minnesota's foreign population was German. These, with the other foreigners, had settled for the most part in the rural districts rather than in the cities and constituted a valuable part of the citizenry of the Commonwealth.⁷²

In conclusion it may be said that the population in Wisconsin and Minnesota at the time of their admission to Statehood was drawn from varied sources. The people had come from almost every nation of the world and from all parts of the Union. The census reports of 1850 show that every State except California was represented in Wisconsin's population. Even in Minnesota at the same period there were people from all the States except Florida, Mississippi, and Texas. To be sure the representation from southern States was small compared with that from the

⁶⁹ Thwaites's *Wisconsin*, pp. 289-292.

⁷⁰ *Seventh Census of the United States*, 1850, p. XXXVII.

⁷¹ *Eleventh Census of the United States*, 1890, Vol. I, pp. LXXXIX, 472.

During this same period the foreign born population in Wisconsin had decreased about one and a half per cent.

⁷² *Eighth Census of the United States (Population)*, 1860, p. XXXI.

northern section, and even in the North some States had much larger representations than others. More than one-fifth of Wisconsin's total population in 1850, for example, came from New York. New York's total contribution — sixty-eight thousand five hundred ninety-five — was more than double that of New England which totaled twenty-seven thousand and twenty-nine. In Minnesota there were in 1850 four hundred and eighty-eight people from New York and six hundred and fifty-five from New England, three hundred and sixty-five of whom came from Maine. These Americans and their foreign neighbors, occupying the mining area and opening for cultivation the fertile regions in southern Wisconsin along the lake shore, in the valleys of the Mississippi and the St. Croix and their principal tributaries, building their mills in the rich pineries of the north, erecting their homes and their churches, and making liberal provisions for their educational institutions, were the founders of the present States of Wisconsin and Minnesota.

CARDINAL GOODWIN

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