

Wisconsin Magazine of History



● *Livestock Doctors, 1850-1890*

EARL W. HAYTER

● *History Museums: From Curio Cabinets to Cultural Centers*

EDWARD P. ALEXANDER

● *The Making of Menominee County*

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● *Sterilization: A Progressive Measure?*

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● *Cholera on the Wisconsin Frontier*

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Wisconsin Magazine of History

Editor: WILLIAM CONVERSE HAYGOOD

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MARCHING TO CHURCH

IN New York City last February, I walked rapidly through a slice of Columbia University. To many readers of this *Magazine*, Columbia will ring the bell of recognition since its Dean of General Studies is the dynamic and respected Clifford L. Lord. For me Columbia has an additional hold; it was here that I marched to church.

During World War II, the military dipped down into the colleges to pick its officer candidates. Green and gangling, I was sent to midshipmen's school at Columbia. The schooling we ninety-day wonders received there was good; it had purpose, content, and toughness. The regime was rigorous. Only in trying to convince us landlocked fledglings that the fifteenth floor of a dormitory was a "deck," the elevator a "lift," and the dining room a "mess hall," did the Navy go a little overboard. And on Sunday we marched to church.

Sunday was a day of general relaxation. The unlucky ones kept watch over the multi-storied dormitory while the majority headed out to see New York. On Sunday evening, after the dormitory had collected her brood, church services called them out again. Some who had particularly enjoyed their day in the big city did not remember much about the service. Others who had kept the dormitory "ship" afloat were impressed and awed by this urban religious experience. I remember that we marched to church.

Church was not far from the University, whether you went to the Catholic or Protestant service. Those of us who went to Riverside Church had about four blocks to march, and we did so with gusto, singing sea chanteys, marching songs, and related music. *Hup, 2, 3, 4, Hup, 2, 3, 4*—marching to church.

At the time it never occurred to me that there was something incongruous in marching to a religious service. How else could a bunch of Navy trainees get to church? Now it seems like laughing at a wedding, yelling at a funeral, or whispering during a silent prayer. Even if it had occurred to me, I should probably have dismissed it as irrelevant.

Herein lies a provoking problem for historians—that an event, whether it belong to the history of an individual or of a nation, should go unnoticed or seem irrelevant at the moment of its happening but seem incon-

gruous and significant after the fact. How can we explain the unknown and unimportant to our contemporaries when it suddenly becomes apparent and important? The best example of this grows out of the remarkable Constitutional Convention and the extraordinary document it drew up in 1788. Political parties were an irrelevancy or an anathema to the founding fathers and so our Constitution ignores them. Historians have been hard pressed to find a founding father who recognized the importance of political parties; James Madison, author of the 10th Federalist paper, comes the closest, but his allusion is to economically-motivated factions and does not quite fit. Historians must then seek an explanation of the incongruity of political parties, which existed both before and after 1788, in data which was unnoticed or irrelevant at the time.

A more specific example comes up in Stanley Elkins' book, *Slavery; A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (Chicago, 1959), in which he tries to explain the institution of slavery from points of view unrealized at the time. He uses modern sociological and psychological information, examining slavery as a community, a concept of which slaveholders and slaves alike were barely aware. Elkins' insights are illuminating because he recognized the incongruity of a community in the system. The unnoticed or irrelevant becomes significant and the history of an era becomes more intelligible.

This is the process which keeps history alive and vital. It can be useful in the study of local institutions where the insights of a new generation, right there in the community, are keener because of proximity. The article by Peter Harstad in the last issue of this *Magazine*, "Disease and Sickness on the Wisconsin Frontier," is a case in point. How incongruous that malaria would be rampant in this state; how futile were the efforts to stamp it out. And how necessary that we learn about the incongruity and the futility which was such an important part of the life of early Wisconsin settlers.

What was unnoticed or irrelevant might now seem incongruous—and important. Like marching to church, looking back in this way can have meaning and be memorable. It can be fun, too.

L.H.F., JR.



From "Hoss" Doctor, by R. J. Dinsmore

By EARL W. HAYTER

LIVESTOCK DOCTORS, 1850-1890:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF VETERINARY SURGERY

PRIOR to the emergence of the scientifically trained veterinarian in the latter part of the nineteenth century, one of the most acute and economically crippling problems facing the American farmer was that of illness and disease among his livestock. Eternally confronted with the normal accidents and ailments common to all farm beasts, he was further beset by the imminence of epidemics and maladies which often devastated whole areas of the nation. Many of these scourges, when they struck, took a fearful toll of the farmer's horses, cattle, hogs, sheep, and poultry. It was not uncommon for entire communities to have their domestic animals actually wiped out by disease.

In such a crisis the farmer was forced to rely on his own empiric knowledge—usually an amalgam of traditional superstitions and common sense—or if that failed, to resort to one of the variety of practitioners commonly referred to as "hoss" doctors or cow-leeches who either lived in the community or who were quack veterinarians passing through in search of possible customers. From the 1850's until the 1890's, when primitive practices began to give way to scientific procedures, it was these early predecessors of the trained veterinarian to whom the farmer turned for such livestock medical service as he could not perform himself.

In the western sections of the country the problems posed by illness and disease were further aggravated by the conditions under which animals were raised and tended. Since many states had so-called herd laws requiring each farmer to fence out all livestock in order to protect crops, stock roamed widely on the open prairie pastures. Under such herding conditions it was quite certain that maladies once begun could spread easily and be far-reaching. Furthermore, since many farmers and a greater number of breeders provided no shelter other than an occasional strawstack, the animals were compelled to forage outside all winter without regular food and water. One Western observer remarked that a large percentage of livestock in his area actually lived "in a condition approaching a state of nature." Another described the situation more fully when he asked, "How long will farmers neglect to take the necessary precaution to prevent starvation and disease from ravaging their stock-yards in the spring season of the year? There were thousands of cattle in our State last spring but just able to creep around, and thousands more had fallen prey to starvation and disease."¹

¹*Northwestern Farmer and Horticultural Journal* (Dubuque, Iowa), 4:213-214 (July, 1859); *National Live-Stock Journal* (Chicago), 5:255 (July, 1874); *Nebraska Farmer* (Brownville, Lincoln, Nebraska), 2:79-80 (May, 1878).

In addition to the problems growing out of epidemics and neglect there was also the problem of accident and injury which in many cases required some form of medical service. It was fairly common for horses to become entangled in barbed-wire fences, incurring serious and permanent injury; hogs—the most difficult of all farm animals as far as enclosure was concerned—were habitually dogged by the canines of the neighbors, causing not so many deaths as large gaping wounds and the loss of ears. The farmer's sheep also were attacked unless attended by a shepherd night and day, and even with expert attention an entire flock might be killed or severely wounded in a single night by marauding dogs.² One writer contemptuously stated that apparently the dog was the only creature on the farm able to withstand all onslaughts of "diseases, distempers, doctors, drug stores and death."

Moreover, the cruel manner in which livestock were handled and even mutilated by their owners while disciplining them often required the services of the local animal doctors. Numerous contemporary accounts record the "inhuman treatment practiced upon dumb animals by their owners and at times it was necessary for the editors of farm publications to intercede against the cruelty and excessive brutality."³ Animals were beaten "unmercifully and . . . crippled and ruined for life" in order to satiate the passions of their handlers, one Western journalist noted. Often overfed or not fed at all and frequently driven hard and long until they were near exhaustion, they were then exposed to the elements by being made to stand for hours hitched to a post in the street without further food or water. So common were these actions that they began to attract attention beyond the local communities; in time there were Anti-Cruelty Societies formed in the various states to cope with the problem.⁴

² *Vick's Monthly Magazine* (Rochester, N. Y.), 4:90 (1881); *Cultivator and Country Gentleman* (Albany, N. Y.), 48:478 (June 14, 1883); *Breeder's Gazette* (Chicago), 5:455 (March 30, 1882). Animals were killed and injured in large numbers on the unfenced railroad right of ways during this period. See also Earl W. Hayter, "The Fencing of Western Railways," in *Agricultural History*, 19:163 (July, 1945).

³ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 1:2 (September, 1870); Iowa State Agricultural Society, *Report*, 1873, 20; *ibid.*, 1874, 234-235.

TO DEAL with these difficulties—epidemics, accidents, cruelty, and neglect—the farmer and stockbreeder had to resort to whatever service they could find. At best such service was limited, since even as late as 1890 most localities lacked a trained veterinarian. But strange as it may seem, even had one been within driving distance, most farmers would have preferred the "hoss" doctor, cow-leech, or the community quack.

A fair characterization of these local practitioners would be that as a group they were too indolent to labor and otherwise too incompetent to obtain an honorable living except in the field of so-called animal doctoring. Their right to practice upon dumb creatures stemmed from no formal training, since most of them were wholly uneducated, but rested instead on intangibles of natural instinct or revealed religion attributed to them by the rural community. Because during the final decades of the last century people were so ignorant in regard to medicine, as applied to both man and beast, they were superstitious in their estimate of its powers and of the qualifications of its practitioners. They believed some men were born to be doctors, having been endowed by heaven with a certain tact and with a virtue in their touch which obviated the necessity of patient observation and study.⁵ It would not be difficult to understand, therefore, how this group of practitioners would indulge in ease and avoid exertion, when they had a constituency that was steeped in such a philosophy.

These rural medicine men were recruited from one of several possible sources: (1) they may have been former stablekeepers, who, after consulting a farrier's guidebook and learning a few techniques of treating animals,

⁴ *American Stock-Journal and Farmers' and Stock-Breeders' Advertiser* (Parkesburg, Penn.), 4:3 (January, 1869); *National Live-Stock Journal*, 3:390 (November, 1872); *Scientific American* (New York), 27:83 (August 10, 1872). Some farmers "allow the shoes to be worn just as long as they will stay on; often letting a poor horse do hard work with three, two, or even one shoe on." *Nebraska Farmer*, 4:115 (May, 1880). Despite current opinion to the contrary, broncho riders were often cruel and intemperate, on occasions beating their horses severely. *Rocky Mountain Husbandman* (White Sulphur Spring, Montana Territory), June 8, 1882.

⁵ *Western Farmer* (Madison, Wis.), 6:153 (March 5, 1887); *Medical Counselor* (Columbus, Ohio), 2:154-155 (February 16, 1856).

began labeling themselves "hoss" doctors; (2) they may have come from a group of skilled horsemen known as "fallen coachmen," and since they, at least in the farmer's mind, had once belonged to this class which "know all about a hoss," it was only natural that they should assume a fairly high status—even higher than that enjoyed by the trained veterinarian; or (3) they may have worked for a period with a practitioner who was also a part-time blacksmith, teamster, groom, ploughman, or "physic-monger"—the latter being known as a rural druggist or chemist. With such backgrounds they were considered by farmers and breeders as suitable for the so-called honorable art of "bleeding, blistering, burning and physicing."⁶

Cruelty became the pattern of these bogus doctors to an extent that staggers the imagination. Especially does this seem strange in the case of horses which were not only loved by most individuals but which also enjoyed the highest prestige of all farm animals. It is difficult to understand why such barbarous techniques of treatment as bleeding, blistering, burning, and the like were performed or even tolerated unless it was due to the fact that by 1875 there were estimated to be in the country as a whole not less than 500 quacks and cow-leeches to every qualified veterinarian.⁷ Furthermore, according to Dr. D. E. Solmon, one of the leading contemporary veterinary surgeons, it was impossible to develop sufficient public opinion among the rural people to outlaw this cruelty to their livestock.

For centuries, bleeding to alleviate certain human ailments had been common among physicians. Although by 1865 this ancient practice had just about run its course as far as human surgery was concerned, it continued to be used on farm animals in the rural areas of the nation, where vestiges of traditionalism still prevailed. The extent and importance of

the custom is well described by a livestock reporter who stated that there were few horses that did not bear several scars, each testifying to a separate operation at the hands of an ordinary horseman or a farrier. Regardless of the animal's age, condition, or disease, the practitioner always seemed to discover that it required depletion, and thus he earned a fee by performing an easy operation.⁸ When bleeding was resorted to for such ailments as blind staggers, colic, dysentery, inflammation, or a host of others, one to two quarts should have been the maximum; some "bleeders," however, went far beyond this amount and bled the animal until it could hardly stand alone. What should have been repulsive to owners and neighbors alike was, on the contrary, sanctioned by both. The technique was performed, as one writer has described it, by the surgeon "holding up the stable pail to catch the vital current which they allowed to flow until the poor animal actually staggers. . . . The strangest fact is that most owners love to see the purple life drained as long as the horse can stand. . . . There are, . . . too many persons . . . morally certain that every quadruped in their possession will be benefited by losing a gallon or so of blood three or four times a year."⁹

Another favorite practice in the "hoss" doctor's repertory, and one which was used extensively as a catch-all for many livestock ailments, was known as firing, burning, or blistering. In any of its variant forms the process was an operation requiring no particular skill, such as the use of a surgeon's knife, but was performed with crude irons designed in some crossroads blacksmith shop. Instead of irons, the more humane practitioner might substitute a blistering corrosive of his own concoction. Firing or burning with irons was usually an attraction for the rural bystanders and rarely failed to produce a show.

Firing was used to correct a difficulty called lampas that often appeared in horses' mouths. A congestion of the mucous membrane of the hard palate back of the incisors, this condition was due no doubt to the aftermath of teething in young horses and to digestive disorders in

⁶ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 1:137 (January, 1871); *Prairie Farmer* (Chicago), 21:100 (February 15, 1868); *Moore's Rural New-Yorker* (Rochester), 37:295 (May 11, 1878).

⁷ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 10:378 (September, 1879); *Nebraska Farmer*, 2:79-80 (May, 1878). Sheep with grub in the head would have a wire run up their nostrils in order to dislodge the parasite, or would be shut up in a tight room for many hours, in the expectation that the foul air and heat would drive out the grubs. *Iowa State Agricultural Society, Report, 1874*, 234-235.

⁸ *American Stock-Journal and Farmers' and Stock-Breeders' Advertiser*, 2:15-16 (January, 1867).

⁹ *Ibid.*; *Nebraska Farmer*, 1:77 (April, 1860).

older ones. Usually it caused some temporary interference with the animal's eating habits and its owner, seeing the swollen condition of the animal's mouth, would turn to the "hoss" doctor if there were one available; otherwise he would solicit the services of the community blacksmith. In this latter case the technique of firing was to hold a red-hot iron against the roof of the animal's mouth until it was burnt in a most barbarous manner; then, if the beast did not regain his appetite within a reasonable time, the process might be repeated.¹⁰ Despite the fact that this operation was cruel and that leading veterinarians throughout the nation constantly inveighed against it as useless, the farmers, apparently oblivious to the scientific explanations and admonishments, continued to patronize these neighborhood doctors.

Other practices of these "roasting veterinarians," as they were often referred to by the more intelligent members of the community, were their methods of administering to the spavin and ringbone disorders so often found among work horses. The common treatment of this bone ailment was either to burn with the irons the diseased part of the bone thought to have caused the lameness, or to administer some potent caustic medicine. A few practitioners became specialized at this business and acquired some prominence in the field; one in Iowa had a reputation as being the great "bone melter," while another gained renown for a medicine he devised to cure these disorders and sold under the name of "Magic Bone Disolvent." The claims of effectiveness for these various concoctions were such that one doctor went so far as to promise that his remedy would absolutely correct the bone ailments within a few hours without blistering or even irritating the skin!¹¹

Another ailment which the doctors treated was a condition, or an imaginary disturbance, labeled "wolf-teeth" by country folk. This concerned a supplementary set of teeth which appeared in young horses but which in most

cases dropped out rather early. However, while the teeth were present, the eyes occasionally had a tendency to swell and to show signs of irritation. Farmers not knowing the insignificance of this phenomenon frequently became alarmed—there was a traditional belief that if the teeth were not removed they would cause blindness—and called upon the horse doctor to administer his cure. With his large punch and hammer the doctor would set to work knocking out the offending teeth and leaving an almost incredible state of suffering, pain, and mutilation.¹²

Finally there was an ailment, less prominent than those previously described, called the "hooks." When a horse had some trouble walking, which might be due to any number of causes such as a sprained back or weakness from being overworked, the owner was often erroneously led to believe by the "hoss" doctor that the fault lay in a diseased eye, whereupon the doctor proceeded to remove the nictating membrane, or inner eyelid. When performed by the local practitioner the result was usually barbaric mutilation, often followed by the loss of sight.¹³ One of the leading Western veterinarians, Dr. N. H. Paaren, outraged by these practices, was provoked to remark in 1880 that such a cruel operation demonstrated that in the curing of animal diseases men still had not progressed very far along the road toward civilization.

Additional weapons in the arsenal of these putative doctors were the strong purgatives and drenches used to combat some of the more common indispositions of horses. Unfortunately these men had no conception of the unscientific nature or the debilitating character of these so-called cures, nor did they seem to recognize the evil results which followed their free use. A noted veterinary surgeon, writing in one of the journals, declared to his readers that if he should inform them of the horrible doses sometimes administered to poor suffering brutes it would be unbelievable. Another comparable authority, writing in a more popular magazine, stated that these nostrums were "poured down the animals" in season

¹⁰ *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 37:375 (June 15, 1878); *American Agriculturist* (New York), 40:271 (July, 1881).

¹¹ *Northwestern Farmer and Horticultural Journal*, 6:203 (June, 1861); *American Agriculturist*, 39:6-7 (January, 1880). In firing for founder the frog of the foot was cleaned, turpentine applied, and then ignited. See *Nebraska Farmer*, 1:29 (November, 1859).

¹² *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 37:375 (June 15, 1878); *National Live-Stock Journal*, 10:340 (August, 1879), 11:332-333 (August, 1880).

¹³ *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 37:375 (June 15, 1878).



The Cow-Doctor, an engraving from the American Agriculturist, June, 1875.

and out, and had been for centuries, whether the horses were well or sick; in most cases the noxious mixtures had no positive bearing on the health of the animal. Among the favorite articles found in the purges of these local teamsters, grooms, coachmen, and ploughmen—sometimes called doctors—were dragon's blood, black antimony, sulphur, spices, and condiments of all kinds mixed together in various unsavory concoctions. In some parts of the country strong mineral poisons, acids, and preparations of arsenic, antimony, and mercury were forced down the struggling beasts.¹⁴

For such complaints as were commonly included in the diagnoses as colic, bots, and the

like, two or three standard traditional techniques were used in administering a physic. When chemicals were administered in solid form the most prevalent method in use was called the "ball." The dose, in the form of an oblong mass of rather soft consistence but tough enough to retain its shape and wrapped up in thin paper, ordinarily ran from one-half to one ounce and was placed far down in the throat by means of a balling-iron which held the mouth open. The ball's contents were ostensibly secret, but actually the elements were known by most horsemen; in fact, the physic-mongers were quite willing to sell the minerals to almost anyone. When the drench was administered instead of the ball, the concoction was usually poured down the animal's throat from an ox's horn or large bottle. Such a method was not only wasteful of the medicine

¹⁴ *American Stock-Journal and Farmers' and Stock-Breeders' Advertiser*, 4:168 (June, 1869); Editorial, "A Good Chance for A Veterinarian Surgeon," *American Veterinary Journal*, 2:334 (November, 1857).

but on occasions was also fatal since the victim might be suffocated, especially if, as was sometimes done, the draught was administered through the nose.¹⁵

A typical drench, used when horses had the colic or bots, consisted of various combinations of strong chemical ingredients, or just plain local products found on the farm. Some doctors administered through the mouth a mixture of lard, soot, and pepper, while others might give as much as a pint of castor or coal oil through the nose. A reporter who had witnessed a spectacle in which the latter type was given, stated, "If you were bound to destroy the poor animal, you could scarcely have adopted a more certain, though slow and cruel method." Rural newspapers and farm journals carried advertisements or descriptions of many varieties of these cures not only for colic but for a considerable number of illnesses.¹⁶ Though some of the treatments were quite mild, others were more severe. A good example of the latter type was reported by an observer who had actually seen a rural doctor pour boiling water down an unfortunate animal's throat in the hope of killing bots. A second observer, Dr. C. A. Woodward of Madison, Wisconsin, described a colic cure just as painful as the one noted above except that it was an external treatment. The horse was laid on its side, a peck or so of salt was spread over the rump and dissolved by the use of cold water; then the belly was kneaded by a heavy man who wore thick boots and walked back and forth across the abdominal area where the obstruction or spasm was located. At times, as a rubbing instrument, a chestnut rail was substituted for the man and his boots.¹⁷

¹⁵ *American Stockman and Farmer* (Chicago), 3:2 (February 3, 1881); *American Stock-Journal and Farmers' and Stock-Breeders' Advertiser*, 4:168 (June, 1869), 6:241 (August, 1871). Horses in the spring, when fat and overfed, often were given as much as five drachmas of Barbadoes Aloes in the form of a ball or drench. *Michigan Farmer* (Detroit), 2:104 (April 1, 1871).

¹⁶ *Western Rural* (Chicago), 23:773, 781 (December 5, 1885); *Prairie Farmer*, 18:356 (December 1, 1866); *Ohio Farmer* (Cleveland), 70:199 (September 25, 1886); *Michigan Farmer*, 2:370 (November 25, 1871). "Soot and Salt" were the two most common ingredients in these many concoctions. Iowa State College Staff, *A Century of Farming in Iowa, 1846-1946* (Ames, Iowa, 1946), 340.

¹⁷ *Western Farmer*, 6:153 (March 5, 1887); *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 36:7 (July 7, 1877).

BESIDES this category of horse doctor, there was in rural America a type of practitioner known as the village or neighborhood cow-leech who mainly tended the farmers' cattle but who had numerous characteristics in common with the "hoss" doctor, not the least of which were a total ignorance of the true nature of internal diseases of farm animals and a lack of understanding of the simplest aspects of the fundamentals of veterinary science.

In addition to administering strong drenches the cow-leech often resorted, as did his horse doctor counterpart, to the practice of bleeding cows for certain ailments that beset them in the spring of the year after a long and hard winter. In some sections of the country these practitioners even advocated that calves be bled in order to increase their appetites, as well as to produce a veal with a more salable white meat.¹⁸ An evaluation of the cow-leech's work has been left by one of the agricultural journals: "The local 'cow doctors' . . . are wholly inefficient for the protection of our livestock, in case of . . . an epidemic like the pleuro-pneumonia or the rinderpest . . . they work on the 'guess' system, and treat all cases nearly alike; . . . if perchance an animal recovers under their treatment, it is in spite of it, and a case of pure luckiness, rather than a consequence of their skill."¹⁹

In the gamut of cattle diseases treated by the cow-leeches there were scarcely more than two ever described in the veterinary books. Rural dwellers called them "hollow horn" and "wolf tail," the latter being sometimes vulgarized to "tail-ail." Both were little more than broad terms covering almost any specific sickness, and neither was regarded by veterinarians as the prime source of most animal disease.

In one, the horn was thought to be the source of the disaffection. When the cow displayed signs of illness the cow-leech first examined the horns, and the usual procedure

¹⁸ L. C. Gray, *History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860* (Washington, D. C., 1933), 2:845. A Nebraska reporter stated that bleeding cattle in the spring, either from the "neck, vein or tail" was common in his community. See *Nebraska Farmer*, 2:188 (December, 1861).

¹⁹ *American Stock-Journal and Farmers' and Stock-Breeders' Advertiser*, 2:139 (May, 1867); 364 (December, 1867).

was to drill through the base of one with a gimlet. Since he believed that the horn was by nature a solid appendage whereas examination revealed it to be quite the contrary, that fact in itself was ample proof to the cow-leech that the locus of the affliction was centered in this external growth. The boring through the horn alone was an intensely painful operation, but the treatment that followed the diagnosis was doubly so. In his attempt to cure the animal the cow-leech generally resorted to spirits of turpentine which he applied freely and rubbed into the hole that he had made in the horn. If such local application did not soon restore the animal's health he would extend his rubbing with the same medication the full length from horn to tail, producing a solid blister down the entire back.²⁰

A second location for a whole series of bovine illnesses was thought to be the tail. Concentration upon this appendage by the leeches probably stemmed from the fact that the bones of a cow's tail gradually diminish in size until near the extremity they finally disappear in flexible gristle. During a time of illness it was observed that both bones and gristle tended to become somewhat more relaxed and less rigid than when the animals were well, creating the illusion that some of the bones were missing. On this evidence the cow-leech concluded that the absent bones had been devoured by a hypothetical worm, or, what was then called the "wolf."

The cow-leech, regardless of what the illnesses might actually have been in any particular situation, usually tended to diagnose a fairly large percentage as "tail-ail" and to take from his kit a sharp knife, split the animal's tail open near the extremity, and remove what he contended was a small worm which had eaten the gristle and flesh, leaving nothing but the skin for a space of six inches. Then he would rub red pepper and salt into the wound of the mangled and bleeding tail, thus increasing the pain and suffering. In removing this imaginary parasite the theory was that the extirpation would prevent further eating away of the tail by the "wolf" and thus keep it from affecting the spine and perhaps ultimately killing the beast. If the wretched cow

recovered it was owing to the removal of the "worm"; if she died, the operation had been performed too late and the parasite had taken its toll—so reasoned the farmer as well as the leech.²¹ To trained veterinarians, this splitting open of the tail was absolutely meaningless, a carry-over of ancient practices, surviving into the latter half of the nineteenth century only because there were still too many farmers and breeders opposed to scientific cures.

Although practitioners such as the horse doctor and the cow-leech were as ignorant of animal physiology and veterinary science as they were lacking in professional training, there is no question but that farmers patronized and believed in them. And, in spite of all their deficiencies, one point can be made in their behalf: cruel and barbarous as they were, the "hoss" doctor and the cow-leech were needed. There was no other way to meet the wants of the agriculturist in this period. As one prominent veterinarian has observed, despite their serious errors the doctors and the leeches were able to offer certain services that helped to bridge the gap between the old and the new.²²

ANOTHER important group of livestock practitioners was composed of the community quacks who took unto themselves the bought title of Veterinary Surgeon. In many ways they were no better than the horse doctor or the leech, and they definitely were more mercenary than either. A legitimate veterinary surgeon, writing in one of the professional journals in 1885, said of this group of fraudulents that "The 'hoss-doctors' at the country crossroads whom everybody knew to have no professional training, and who made no pretense of being graduates of any school higher than a blacksmith shop or a livery stable, were bad enough, but a horde of quacks, having no more theoretical knowledge and a great deal less of the practical, backed up by college diplomas would be a great deal worse; and it seems to me the authorities should protect the people from this form of quackery, and see

²⁰ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 10:260 (June, 1879), 11:52-53 (February, 1880); *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 37:539 (August 24, 1878).

²¹ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 12:157 (April, 1881); *Nebraska Farmer*, 2:36-37 (March, 1878); *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 37:375 (June 15, 1878).

²² James Allbright, "Veterinary Frauds," in the *American Veterinary Review*, 3:485-486 (January, 1885).

that those who hold themselves out as veterinary surgeons are so in point of fact, and not merely by virtue of a piece of purchased paper."²³

Few of these imposters had so much as a high school education; many could scarcely speak or read their own language; and only a small percentage could lay claim to any scientific training. Most of them came from rural backgrounds and had a personal enthusiasm for animal life. By memorizing the names of a few common drugs and some of the ordinary operations described in current livestock medical books they felt equipped to hang out their shingles. Bogus diplomas, enabling their owners to masquerade as Doctors of Veterinary Science, could be secured from so-called veterinary colleges and could be framed and hung on the wall for rural patrons to see.²⁴ But such quacks, despite their dishonest accoutrements of learning and experience, had, as one rural editor remarked, difficulty in telling "a case of glanders from one of nasal gleet and . . . ring bone from a wart . . . It would be impossible for a child to make greater blunders than some of these pretentious veterinarians do."²⁵

Responsibility for the traffic in bogus diplomas to all parts of the country rested on a few veterinary colleges located mainly in the large eastern cities. Founded some years before the entrance of this branch of science into the curriculums of state universities, most of these institutions, being private, were compelled to operate from fees. As a result large numbers of mediocre students were crowded into the classes and graduated at the earliest possible moment—sometimes at the rate of two classes per year. To supplement their income a few of the more disreputable colleges sold

diplomas outright at a handsome sum, without any qualifications as to scholarship or residence requirements. Philadelphia was the seat of most of these quack colleges which in 1877 were selling diplomas for \$100. Should the purchaser desire his diploma to contain a particular signature, as for example that of a scholar in a foreign university, the price was increased to \$135.²⁶ The purchase of a sheepskin was generally accompanied by the regular complement—at an additional fee—of veterinary books which, ostensibly at least, had been written by the members of the college staff. Possession of these articles would normally furnish a young man the necessary façade with which to begin his career.

This group of bogus veterinarians might be roughly classified into two main types: those who developed a regular community practice; and those who traveled about the countryside selling their services as well as quack livestock remedies. Of those who practiced in rural areas little need be said in regard to their work since it was similar to that performed by the local "hoss" doctor, with these possible exceptions: the quack was careful to classify himself as a *bona fide* doctor and careful to employ all the learned trappings of a regular surgeon in dress, office, and manner, including the ever-present diploma on the wall.

Two anecdotes may be cited to typify the gross ignorance and ineptness of these community quacks. A veterinarian in Springfield, Illinois, was called upon to prescribe for a certain highbred horse. After very learnedly inspecting the sick animal for a few minutes, the doctor turned to the owner and remarked that the horse was suffering from "a relapse of the epizoot," whereupon the owner, somewhat surprised, stated that the horse had never had the epizoot. "Oh, that's nothing," contin-

²³ George Rust, "Veterinary Frauds," in the *American Veterinary Review*, 8:454-456 (January, 1885); *Prairie Farmer*, 21:100 (February 15, 1868). During this period frauds were also prevalent in doctored and falsified livestock pedigrees. See *Northwestern Farmer and Horticultural Journal*, 3:258 (August, 1858); *The Farmer* (St. Paul, Minn.), 1:55 (June 3, 1886).

²⁴ It was not only the quack veterinarians who practiced this fraud but "even regular graduates . . . are often found laying claim to titles to which they have no right, and acting altogether in the most unprofessional manner," *National Live-Stock Journal*, 9:2 (January, 1878).

²⁵ *Western Rural*, 22:523 (July 16, 1884); *Prairie Farmer*, 21:100 (February 15, 1868).

²⁶ *Ibid.*; *American Agriculturist*, 39:418-419 (October, 1880). One of the Philadelphia diploma mills was closed in 1877 and the professor in charge at the time was fined \$2,000 and sent to prison for nine months. See editorial, "Philadelphia Veterinary Diploma Shop," in the *American Veterinary Review*, 1:291, 302-303 (November, 1877). In the case of medical schools, the situation was much worse. Diplomas were sold by the thousands by colleges located mainly in Philadelphia and Cincinnati. See *Hearth and Home* (New York), 5:324 (April 20, 1872); *Bistoury* (Elmira, N. Y.), 7:295-296 (October, 1871).

ued the quack, "it is nothing unusual for them to have the *relapse* first."²⁷

A second story concerns a Kansas quack who signed his name with the purchased degree of "V.S." No doubt attempting to take a leaf from the book of one of the diverse medical "pathies" so prevalent in America at that time, he boldly claimed to have discovered an infallible vaccine which would cure all sorts of animal diseases. According to him, he had been able to isolate certain poisons accumulated in animals' bodies as a result of eating plants and other substances, which in time caused illnesses. He proceeded to inject quantities of this vaccine, in itself a certain poison, into the sick animals under the well-advertised assumption that like cures like or that two things can not occupy the same space at the same time. Therefore, when these conditions prevailed, one of the poisons had to "get up and get." So humorous did this theory strike the scientific fraternity that one of its members was provoked to remark facetiously that "his pizen outpizens the other pizen."

THE MOST highly publicized type of quack veterinarian was the itinerant who went from one rural section to the next, as was the custom of so many bogus agents of humbuggery during the 1880's, hawking his wares and his numerous fraudulent cures. This class of doctor-agents varied little from their disreputable contemporaries, the quack physicians, who in great numbers likewise preyed upon the simple country folk, in what, as one recent study has shown, was the golden age of medical quackery.²⁸ When an epidemic affecting either man or beast struck a rural community, farmers could be assured of the quack's visitation. The livestock quacks operated chiefly by advertising their remedies in the farm journals or by mailing out circulars highly embellished with beautiful pictures of healthy farm animals to promote sales of their secret nostrums.²⁹ Doubtless the rural press, with some exceptions, defrayed much of its publication expenses with revenue derived from these

"dead-shot" advertisements covering the whole gamut of diseases from glanders to worms.³⁰ Although making certain to guarantee their cures or services, when it came to collecting their fees the itinerant quacks were careful to play it safe by insisting that the money be paid in advance. However, in time many of the farmers grew wise to this technique and agreed to pay only after the animals had been treated; others were willing to deposit the money in the local bank to be surrendered when the cure was effected. This position on the part of the farmers was ordinarily not acceptable to the traveling doctors who, recognizing their own limitations in effecting a cure, were well aware of the fact that they might not be able to collect the money at a later date.³¹

During the seventies and eighties numerous epidemics, such as pleuro-pneumonia, glanders, Texas fever, and cholera ravaged the nation periodically, sweeping away entire stocks of cattle, horses, swine, and poultry, and frightening farmers and breeders into trying many kinds of patent remedies.³² And in the case of cholera cures, the mobile quacks were able to strike it rich. Since no scientist at that time actually knew the real causes of this scourge, a general state of confusion existed in the rural mind—a condition favorable to the rise of a plethora of quack remedies which were developed and distributed not only by itinerant doctors but in many communities by the local druggists as well. A good illustration of the quack doctor's activity occurred in an Iowa community from which a Chicago quack carried off as much as \$1600 gathered from sales of his patent humbug Hog Remedy.³³ In fact, this skilful operator was so bold that he remained in the neighborhood selling his cure until some of his customers had lost nearly all of their hogs before he finally felt the need to depart to other fields. Another quack of the

²⁷ *Prairie Farmer*, 51:68 (February 28, 1880); *Western Rural*, 33:773, 781 (December 5, 1885). It was reported that more than one thousand cures for colic alone were known. *Bistoury*, 8:15 (April, 1872).

²⁸ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 12:157 (April, 1881), 12:543 (December, 1881); *Western Rural*, 23:613 (September 26, 1885).

²⁹ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 5:255 (July, 1874), 6:436 (November, 1875); *Nebraska Farmer*, 2:79-80 (May, 1878).

³⁰ *Ohio Farmer*, 70:199 (September 25, 1886); *National Live-Stock Journal*, 12:263 (June, 1881); *American Agriculturist*, 39:176 (May, 1880).

²⁷ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 7:250 (June, 1876).

²⁸ See Stewart H. Hollbrook, *The Golden Age of Quackery* (New York, 1959).

²⁹ *Michigan Farmer*, 13:4 (October 24, 1882); *Ohio Farmer*, 70:199 (September 25, 1886); *American Agriculturist*, 39: 418-419 (October, 1880).

same type boasted of a cure so successful that not only would it prevent and cure all of the ills besetting poultry and swine but would actually leave them better than if they had never had any disease.

Hundreds of these traveling charlatans circulated among the rural districts peddling their celebrated remedies, the most noted of which was the cholera nostrum created by a Dr. Joseph Haas of Indianapolis. Haas' medicine was sold far and wide by agents, doctors, and druggists; even editors of various farm journals were known to engage in marketing it for certain fees.³⁴ Certificates confirming its curative powers were secured by the dozens from gullible farmers on somewhat the same plan as were the testimonials for patent medicine remedies for humans.

Two situations made it particularly easy for the quack doctor to obtain an ample stock of bogus certificates. First, when a disease such as cholera struck a community there always came a time when the infection would normally run its course and subside. If, just at that point any particular cure had been in use, it logically would receive the credit and lead to the signing of a certificate, when in fact, nature and not the nostrum had brought about the cessation. A second situation might occur in which one farmer's hogs escaped the scourge while those of his immediate neighbors were severely hit. Under such conditions it was understandable that the fortunate farmer, who may have been using a particular remedy at the time, would be quite willing and often eager to sign a certificate giving the nostrum credit for his hogs' immunity.³⁵

That these cures, in spite of the signed certificates, had little merit was verified by the analyses made of them by reputable scientists of the day. In 1889, a leading chemist of the New York Agricultural Experiment Station, commenting on cures as a whole, said: ". . . If these substances . . . could do what is claimed for them, the dread disease would have been

wiped out of existence years ago."³⁶ Several others, including a trained pharmacist and a representative of the Illinois Industrial University, made similar analyses and all agreed that the ingredients used were valueless as cures, consisting as they did only of inexpensive substances such as common salt, water, and castor oil, with small percentages of such strong ingredients as cayenne pepper and spirits of turpentine.³⁷

AROUND the 1870's enormous quantities of livestock medical books purporting to help the farmer meet the dilemma caused by illnesses and epidemics among his increasing numbers of farm animals, appeared on the market. Some were written by reputable American and European veterinary surgeons and were read by many country physicians who in turn used the information to advise farm patients who were sometimes compelled to consult their family doctor concerning diseases of their livestock. Most of the books, however, were written by pseudo-veterinarians professing no scientific knowledge and who could only claim to have been born on a farm or to have had limited experience in the practice of livestock doctoring in some rural community. Their unscientific books were hawked about the country by quacks and agents, regarding whom one farm journalist reported: "Every rural neighborhood is infested with the inevitable book agent, who, with oily tongue, gulls the unsophisticated into purchasing some great 'Illustrated Stock-Book,' or 'Illustrated Horse Doctor,' or 'Complete Farrier,' or some other catchpenny swindling affair, not worth the white paper it is printed upon."³⁸

Additional sources of assistance to the farmers in their veterinary problems were the larger farm journals. While these journals took a negative approach to the exposure of the quacks and humbugs, they nevertheless had

³⁴ *American Stockman and Farmer*, 3:7 (January 20, 1881); *National Live-Stock Journal*, 11:530-531 (December, 1880), 12:28-29 (January, 1881); 263 (June, 1881).

³⁵ *American Agriculturist*, 21:69 (March, 1862); *National Live-Stock Journal*, 11:531 (December, 1880).

³⁶ *Illinois Farmer* (Springfield, Illinois), 5:114 (February 23, 1889).

³⁷ *Michigan Farmer*, 2:370 (November 25, 1871). So fraudulent, as well as ineffective, were the cholera cures that the Missouri Legislature in 1878 offered \$10,000 reward if a proven remedy could be found. See *Nebraska Farmer*, 4:285 (December, 1880).

³⁸ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 12:233 (June, 1881); *Medical Investigator* (Chicago), 3:103 (June, 1866).

their positive aspects in that they offered, in form if not always in fact, news of the latest medical and scientific discoveries in the care of livestock. Set aside in a certain section of the journal would be found a "Veterinary Department" or "Column" whose director was listed as a regular veterinarian and whose responsibility it was to extend expert advice to all inquirers as well as to offer an occasional commentary on the leading livestock problems. Inquiries describing as fully as possible a sick animal's symptoms would come in from readers, and a short time thereafter the journal would carry a discussion of the case.³⁰

Undoubtedly many of these columns contained a great deal of medical nonsense and many faulty prescriptions. Since persons trained in both veterinary science and journalism were rare, it was common practice for

³⁰ *Nebraska Farmer*, I:6 (January, 1877); *National Live-Stock Journal*, I:213 (March, 1871).



Holding a horse for drenching, an illustration from William B. E. Miller's *The Diseases of Live Stock*, published in Cincinnati in 1886.

all but a few editors to engage almost anyone who might have only the slightest medical knowledge to write these columns. While a few of the better farm magazines were fortunate in attracting well-trained surgeons as writers, answers to inquiries in a majority of the magazines were written by pseudo-veterinarians or by downright quacks. Dr. A. A. Holcombe, professor of pathology and surgery in the American Veterinary College in New York City, while traveling in Nebraska in 1880, was exposed to some of the columns of a certain William Horne, M.D., V.S., who gave expert advice to farmers in that state. Holcombe's reaction was so unfavorable that on returning to New York he leveled a strong indictment against this imposter "in order," he said, "to protect the farmers and stock owners of Nebraska from imposition."⁴⁰

One national journal, in an attempt to educate the rural population, decried the national dearth of properly trained veterinarians and praised those who by constantly endeavoring to disseminate correct information on veterinary matters were preparing the way for a more general appreciation of their profession and for the eradication of the bogus cures and the unreliable livestock books.⁴¹ Some trained veterinarians, seeking to counteract the harm done by quacks, not only wrote for farm journals but also offered their personal services far beyond their place of residence. An outstanding example was Dr. N. H. Paaren, one-time State Veterinarian of Illinois and at various times a veterinary columnist for both the *National Live-Stock Journal* and the *Prairie Farmer*. Dr. Paaren notified farmers that he would serve anyone within a hundred-mile distance of Chicago, provided round-trip fare to the nearest station were paid for in advance. His charges were moderate, especially if he was called upon to attend more than one customer.⁴² Apparently Paaren's gesture bore fruit, for in time an increasing number of farmers began to use such services. In fact, one journal in the eighties reported that its

⁴⁰ *Nebraska Farmer*, 4:149 (June, 1880); *American Stock-Journal and Farmers' and Stock-Breeders' Advertiser*, 4:245 (August, 1869).

⁴¹ *National Live-Stock Journal*, 12:233 (June, 1881).

⁴² *Prairie Farmer*, 18:356 (December 1, 1866); *National Live-Stock Journal*, 11:321 (July, 1880), 12:375 (September, 1881).

veterinary department had accumulated a sizeable backlog of unanswered inquiries.⁴³

IN CONCLUDING this study of the types of livestock practitioners who flourished in the decades following the Civil War, the final section will concern itself briefly with the emergence of a modern scientific veterinary profession. Its growth was slow, a fact particularly noticeable at a time when in other professions great strides were being made. In the 1870's and the 1880's, although there seemed to be a sufficient number of lawyers, physicians, and clergymen, the supply of efficient doctors for domestic animals was conspicuous for its paucity.

Why did farmers persist so long in allowing their sick animals to be practiced upon by "hoss" doctors, cow-leeches, and quacks with no more claim to the right than having been "brought up in a stable"? Why, when it was possible to do so, did farmers almost completely fail to patronize men who had been educated in the medical techniques of veterinary science? Why was the profession so long in developing? Why, as an Eastern journal asked in 1875, was it that "we Americans, a nation as enlightened as we suppose ourselves to be, so persistently ignore the claims of the Veterinary Art, and either allow our animals to suffer, and ourselves to sustain unnecessary loss at the hands of a set of ignorant men, self-styled Veterinary surgeons, who do not know the first rudiments of anatomy, pathology, or the actions of drugs?"⁴⁴

In attempting to answer these questions the writer would like to present what seems to be an intelligible explanation of why farmers chose to remain loyal to the rural practices and methods of animal doctors rather than to accept the more enlightened procedures of the veterinary science available to them.

There are diverse interpretations of this retardation, such as that advanced by James F. Smithcors in his recent book, *Evolution of the Veterinary Art* (1957). Smithcors maintains that American veterinary science developed slowly because of an unfortunate dependency on English leadership in the post Civil War

period when England lagged far behind most continental countries in the treatment of animals.

The interpretation which will be used here is the one recently developed within the psycho-social framework and applied to the Populist-Progressive tradition in Richard Hofstadter's *The Age of Reform, from Bryan to F.D.R.* From this intensive and unique study, which centers on what Hofstadter chose to call the "agrarian myth," it appears that for generations rural people had been caught between the expanding world of commercial realities and the unreal, self-sufficient life of noncommercial values. The more that agriculture developed scientifically and technologically, the more the farmer seemed to cling to the traditional ways in sentimental attachment. These traditional rural values exalted the goodness of farming, the sanctity of living in isolation, and, above all, the benefits that ensued from being close to nature. Simultaneously, and in juxtaposition with the same value structure there existed in the farmer's mind his age-old suspicion, mistrust, and fear of urban society, industry, and science.⁴⁵ To a certain extent this conflict between the farmer's cherished agrarian values and contemporary scientific realities rendered him unqualified to choose the new and reject the old; thus he continued to give his loyalties to the "mythical" ideals and values of an agrarian society and for many years, even after the establishment of an acceptable veterinary science, he continued to engage the services of folk doctors and to treat educated surgeons "as an inferior order of beings." His faith in the old remedies transcended his faith in the scientific ones, and as a consequence the demand for trained veterinarians was negligible, with the result that few young men could be induced to enter the profession.

Closely correlated with the agrarian myth idea was a traditional belief-system, referred to by modern sociologists as a complex of "agricultural magic." This system likewise sprang from centuries of rural living and had absolutely no basis in fact or principle and lacked all scientific explanation. It was rural magic, practiced in the planting of crops, in

⁴³ *Western Rural*, 22:312 (May 17, 1884).

⁴⁴ *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 34:281 (October 28, 1875).

⁴⁵ Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform, from Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York, 1955), 23-59.

the castrating or dehorning of livestock, or in the cutting of weeds by the signs of the moon. There was also the practice of divining for wells, involving a regular water witch with his carefully selected dowsing rod in the form of a Y-shaped branch.⁴⁶ These appeared to be the main types of agricultural magic, but hundreds of minor signs and superstitions were instrumental not only in motivating farmers to resist rational developments in farming practices but also in influencing them to continue to treat with traditional cures the illnesses of their livestock.⁴⁷

So deep-seated were these complexes of myth and magic in the value-prejudice behaviour pattern of the agriculturist that he was unable to extricate himself sufficiently to adopt the newer medical advances in the treatment of livestock diseases. Accordingly, he not only continued to subject his domestic animals to various cruel and barbarous cures at the hands of the local practitioners, but he himself also suffered financially through the loss of valuable stock.⁴⁸ Regarding this strange paradox one observer remarked that these same farmers followed a different pattern in the many other decision-making situations confronting them on the farm. When it came to selecting a blacksmith, a builder, a steamboat pilot, or a merchant their judgment was on a level with nonfarming people. But when it came to making the choice of animal—or even human—doctors they were babes in the woods, generally employing the most ignorant and boastful practitioners in the community.⁴⁹

Given this rural opposition to a trained professional class in veterinary science, it was logical that strong influences were built up in various ways to prohibit its development and to sanction its retardation. This was vigorously

expressed in the hindering of state or federal regulations designed to control the quacks and nonprofessionals. To support these folk-doctors and to cling to the old methods and cures, the farmers contended that if proposals were established by law, giving the right to practice only to trained veterinarians, a large percentage of the nonprofessional practitioners would be prohibited from performing their rural services and that such a situation would create a serious scarcity in areas where professionals were not within miles of most farmers.⁵⁰

A further hindrance to the science of veterinary surgery was the national government's failure to encourage its development. The Department of Agriculture for years ignored the problem of diseases—at a time when epidemics and scourges were rampant—and showed a complete apathy toward the establishment of a veterinary division. No country in the world had as many animals and took less interest in their behalf, as was demonstrated by a comparative study made in this and foreign nations of the number of veterinary colleges and the number of animals during this period.⁵¹ For example, Prussia, with one-third as many animals in 1877 as the United States, had as many as five colleges all maintained by the state. Great Britain had one-half the livestock, yet she had four such colleges. On the other hand, the United States, with two to three times as many animals as these two countries, had not a single college of national importance that was maintained by public funds.⁵² There were several private colleges in the East and none in most of the Western States, but the least said about the former the better, since they were largely diploma mills.⁵³

As for the number of veterinarians in the

⁴⁶ See Everett M. Rogers, "Agricultural Magic and Technological Change," paper read before the Ohio Valley Sociological Society, May 3, 1958, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

⁴⁷ One authority in this field has reported 467 different signs and superstitions found in American rural communities. One-fourth of these referred to climate and weather, while the majority pertained to plants and animals. Carl C. Taylor, *Rural Sociology* (New York, 1933), 145.

⁴⁸ *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 37:295 (May 11, 1878), 538-539 (August 24, 1878); *National Live-Stock Journal*, 6:463 (December, 1875), 7:243-244 (June, 1876.)

⁴⁹ *Medical Counselor*, 2:154-155 (February 16, 1856); *Western Rural*, 24:8 (January 2, 1886).

⁵⁰ *Western Rural*, 22:523 (July 16, 1884), 24:461 (July 17, 1886); *American Stock-Journal and Farmers' and Stock-Breeders' Advertiser*, 2:139 (May, 1867).

⁵¹ *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 37:796 (December 14, 1878); *National Live-Stock Journal*, 9:2 (January, 1878).

⁵² *Moore's Rural New-Yorker*, 36:44 (January 20, 1877), 37:796 (December 14, 1878). Canada had an excellent veterinary college patterned after those in England, and it attracted many students from the United States. *National Live-Stock Journal*, 7:243 (June, 1876).

⁵³ *Colman's Rural World* (St. Louis), 36:5 (January 25, 1883); see editorial, "Regulating Veterinary Practice in New York State," in the *American Veterinary Review*, 10:95-97 (March, [?] 1887).

United States, census reports for the various decades between 1850 and 1900 show to what extent the profession was retarded: there were no more than 46 in 1850; 392 in 1860; 1,166 in 1870; 2,130 in 1880; 6,494 in 1890; and 8,163 in 1900.⁵⁴ Even with this increase in numbers it was more an increase in quantity than in quality since the census figures included some who called themselves doctors but were not trained surgeons. Furthermore, these figures indicating the number of practicing veterinarians in America do not tell the complete story, for many had migrated from other countries and were not educated here. For example, the census for 1870 reveals the nativity of the various veterinarians to be as follows: 63.8 per cent were American born; 20.4 per cent were from Great Britain; 10.5 per cent from Germany; and 5.3 per cent from various other countries.⁵⁵ Thus, more than a third of the academically trained doctors had come to the United States from other countries. Even with the Old World's contributions the profession in America was still greatly retarded in comparison with other countries: its development had been stymied by the scientific climate and too long restrained by the agrarian values and ideals of the rural inhabitants.

But, beginning in 1890, as shown in the census reports, the tide had definitely turned toward an increasing interest in some specific aspects of veterinary science in the United States on both the state and national levels. In 1883 the Veterinary Division was established in the Department of Agriculture to meet the urgent needs for reliable information concerning the nature and prevalence of animal diseases as well as the means of eradicating them. In that same year the Bureau of Animal Husbandry was set up—superseding the Veterinary Division—for the immediate purpose of eradicating the pleuro-pneumonia epidemic.⁵⁶

By 1885 many of the universities and agri-

cultural colleges began to develop veterinary departments with well-trained faculties, offering respectable degrees, and maintaining definite standards for entrance and graduation. However, the private veterinary schools escaped control for some years to carry on their low-level type of instruction while continuing to flood the country with poorly trained practitioners.⁵⁷ State veterinary associations, especially in the more populous states, were organized and held regular annual meetings in which they discussed not only the usual scientific papers but also the pressing problems of educating the public as well as of regulating the profession. The first annual meeting of the National Veterinary Medicine Association was held in Chicago in 1884 with twenty-six delegates in attendance, a very humble beginning that within a few years developed into an important learned society.⁵⁸

By 1890 laws had either been enacted or were being considered in various states of the nation. But instead of prohibiting all untrained practitioners from practicing, the states generally took into consideration the nationwide shortage of surgeons, and most state laws permitted those with a certain number of years' experience to continue their work. This initial achievement could certainly be considered only the beginning of a long struggle for the creation of a veterinary profession, and the first step toward the recognition of a scientific basis for the treatment of livestock diseases.⁵⁹ The days of the "hoss" doctor, the cow-leech, and other varieties found in the rural communities were now numbered. Once again we were to witness another of the excellent illustrations of the modification of age-old values, superstitions, and folkways by the introduction and acceptance of science and technology into the rural areas of America.

⁵⁴ George W. Rust, "Veterinary Frauds," in the *American Veterinary Review*, 8:454-456 (January, 1885); *Nebraska Farmer*, 4:140 (June, 1880).

⁵⁵ *Western Rural*, 22:745 (November 22, 1884).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 22:252 (April 19, 1884); 523 (August 16, 1884); D. E. Solmon, "Bureau of Animal Industry," in the United States Department of Agriculture *Yearbook* (Washington, 1897), 236-258. By 1890 laws regulating the practice of veterinary science had been enacted in New York, Wisconsin, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. See Bert A. Bierer, *A Short History of Veterinary Medicine in America* (East Lansing, Michigan, 1955), 86-87.

⁵⁷ P. A. Fish, "Seventy Years of Veterinary Service in the United States," in the *Journal of American Veterinary Medicine Association*, 27:915-917 (1912, 1929).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* The 46 veterinarians listed in the 1850 Census were distributed as follows: New York, 20, Ohio, 8, Massachusetts, 5, Indiana, 5, Illinois, 4, Virginia, 2, Vermont, 1, and the District of Columbia, 1.

⁵⁹ United States Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook* (Washington, 1956), 2.

HISTORY MUSEUMS:

FROM CURIO CABINETS TO CULTURAL CENTERS

By EDWARD P. ALEXANDER

*A nationally known authority
discusses the rise and
development of the modern museum*

THE HISTORICAL MUSEUM in the United States today is an amalgam of at least three important cultural movements, the first of which is the historical society itself. Soon after independence had been won and the federal constitution adopted, historical societies appeared in this country. Their founders were men of restless imagination and abundant energy. They wished to emulate the antiquarian societies of Western Europe, but they were also possessed of an ebullient patriotism. According to them, Americans had defeated the powerful British Empire and wrested for themselves the rare opportunity to set up new governments at both the state and federal levels. Not since the days of Greece and Rome had such political progress been attained. Jefferson, John Adams, Madison, and the other founding fathers had made contributions to world civilization that should never be forgotten. The historical materials of this great continuing social experiment should be gathered, preserved, and disseminated.

The Massachusetts Historical Society, founded in 1791, was followed by the New-York Historical Society (1804), and the American Antiquarian Society (1812). By the time the State Historical Society of Wisconsin was established in 1846, more than fifty national organizations reflected this spirit of cultural manifest destiny.

* Adapted from a paper read at the Founders Day banquet held January 16, 1960, at Milwaukee.

Most of the societies marked out too broad an area for their activity. In New York, for example, John Pintard and his associates tried "to discover, procure, and preserve whatever may relate to the natural, civil, literary, and ecclesiastical history of the United States in general, and of this State in particular."¹ Special committees collected in the fields of zoology, botany and vegetable physiology, mineralogy and fossils, and coins and medals. As late as 1858, the Lenox Collection of Nineveh Sculptures was accepted and in another two years Dr. Henry Abbott's Egyptian materials including three huge mummies of the sacred bull, Apis. Not only were American historical portraits and paintings sought, but the society had the greatest gallery of European art in New York City until the establishment of the Metropolitan Museum in 1872.

Gradually, however, most historical societies gave away their natural history specimens, confined their fields to state or regional boundaries, and paid major attention to library materials. Though in 1855 the American Antiquarian Society accessioned the jawbone and tusk of a wild hog that lived along the Potomac River in the early nineteenth century, Christopher Columbus Baldwin, its talented librarian, tried to keep its collections free from such "antique trash." He also declared it absurd "to pile up old bureaus and chests, and stuff them with old coats and hats and high-heeled shoes."² Such a statement is nothing

¹R. W. G. Vail, *Knickerbocker Birthday: A Sesquicentennial History of the New-York Historical Society, 1804-1954* (New York, 1954), 451.

²Leslie W. Dunlap, *American Historical Societies, 1790-1860* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1944), 75-76.

short of shocking to our curators of the decorative arts today who will wonder whether the old bureaus and chests mentioned may have included a block front from Rhode Island or the work of New England cabinet makers like John Townsend or Benjamin Frothingham.

A SECOND FORCE in the American museum movement in addition to the historical society's cabinet was the public museum. In general the museum as we know it today throughout the world is a nineteenth-century development. The British Museum was not opened until 1759 nor the Louvre until the advent of Napoleon. The Charleston Museum is apparently the oldest in this country, formed in 1773 by a committee of the Charles Town Library Society in order to collect materials for a natural history of South Carolina. But the most important American museum center during the last years of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth was Philadelphia.

Pierre Eugène du Simitière, a native of Geneva, Switzerland, was probably the earliest American museum director. Imbued by a great dream of documenting the American Revolution, he painted miniature portraits of the Revolutionary heroes and gathered a curio cabinet that included Indian artifacts captured by General Sullivan's expedition against the Iroquois, a Hessian grenadier's brass cap ornament, and the shield, sword, and lance carried by Captain André as a white knight at the Meschianza, the elaborate party staged by Sir William Howe's officers when they held Philadelphia. Du Simitière also mounted natural history specimens and gathered unusual fossils, minerals, petrifications, and coins and medals. That perceptive French traveler, the Marquis de Chastellux, in the 1780's found du Simitière's collection "small and scanty" but "greatly celebrated in America where it is unrivalled."³

Upon du Simitière's death in 1784, his American Museum on Arch Street in Philadelphia was sold off in thirty-six lots, most of the collection going to Charles Willson Peale, accomplished artist, student of nature, and a kind

of universal scholar. By 1785 he was exhibiting a primitive type of motion pictures in his Philadelphia gallery. Entitled "Perspective Views with Changeable Effects; or, Nature Delineated and in Motion,"⁴ the show lasted for two hours. An assistant with screens and lights made the scenes appear to move. The program included portrayals of Market Street at dawn and at nightfall, a palatial Roman edifice in a storm, hell itself, its evil mood enhanced by appropriate music, and the sea battle between *Le Bonhomme Richard* and the *Serapis*.

During the next half century Peale's Philadelphia Museum was a leading attraction of the city. Most of its 269 paintings and prints, chiefly of the founding fathers, were done by Peale or members of his family. A whole room was devoted to mastodon bones, many of them excavated by Peale near Newburgh, New York. A stuffed buffalo represented the herds of bison still grazing the Western prairies. There were 1,824 mounted birds, 250 quadrupeds, 135 reptiles, 650 fishes, 800 Indian implements and costumes, and 8,000 minerals and fossils in a collection said to total 100,000 pieces. Peale's sons Rembrandt, Raphaëlle, Rubens, and Titian served as assistants in the Philadelphia institution or established branches in Baltimore and New York.

The Peales tried to keep their museums scientific and educational. They invited their visitors to attend "the great school of Nature," or with "the book of Nature open, explore the wondrous world, an institute of laws eternal."⁵ They classified natural history specimens according to the Linnæan system, mounted and preserved birds, animals, and insects in realistic poses with carefully painted backgrounds, and also displayed living animals and reptiles. Lectures, magic-lantern shows, and demonstrations interpreted the collections. The museums stayed open at night, even developing pioneer systems of gas lighting at Baltimore and Philadelphia.

At first Peale's Philadelphia Museum charged visitors a shilling for admission and then later

⁴ Charles Coleman Sellers, *Charles Willson Peale* (2 vols., Hebron, Connecticut, 1939; Philadelphia, 1947), I, 240-248.

⁵ Hans Huth, *Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes* (Berkeley, California, 1959), 17.

³ William John Potts, "Du Simitière: Artist, Antiquary, and Naturalist," in the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 13:353 (1839).

25 cents. In 1816 its gross income was \$11,924, indicating total paid attendance of nearly 48,000. The need to make a living drove the Peales to include curiosities and freaks in their displays, and calling them "rational amusement" did not excuse their unscientific character. At Philadelphia visiting farmers delighted in the exhibit of a five-legged, six-footed, two-tailed cow giving milk to a two-headed calf. At Baltimore crowds applauded J. Tilly, the celebrated glass blower, Signor Hellene, the Italian magician, a troupe of In-



Society's Iconographic Collection

Charles Willson Peale, "The Artist in His Museum," painted in 1822 and now owned by the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

dians, and an armless woman who performed incredible stunts with instruments held between her teeth.⁶

Much of the increasing loss of educational quality of the Peale museums must be charged to the rise of Phineas T. Barnum. This master showman took over John Scudder's American Museum in New York late in 1841. He was determined to make his fortune by amusing and entertaining the public, and

he never allowed truth to stand in his way. Barnum's American Museum had more than 600,000 accessions including a national portrait gallery, a model of Niagara Falls using water from the Croton Reservoir (Barnum said of especial interest to those newlyweds who could not afford the trip to the Falls), panoramas of the Holy Land and statues of Biblical characters, a series of wax-work figures showing the horrors of intemperance, models of new machines, the first American Punch and Judy show, and an anatomical Venus (one shilling extra).

Barnum supplied plenty of what our outdoor museums today call "life on the scene." "Industrious fleas" performed, and three serpents were fed their noonday meals before the crowds. There were the mysterious Madame Rockwell, fortune teller; General Tom Thumb and assorted midgets, giants, and bearded ladies; Chang Fong, the Chinese juggler; a dog that operated a knitting machine; two white whales in salt-water tanks; and the Ethiopian minstrel singers. Eventually Barnum's traveling circus developed from this start.

Though Barnum and humbug were synonymous, many considered him the finest museum director of his day. In 1865 after the first disastrous fire at Barnum's Museum, Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greeley, William Cullen Bryant, and other leading citizens proposed him as chief of a great public museum to be established in New York. President Johnson and General Grant furnished enthusiastic support, and S. H. Wales, editor of the *Scientific American*, thought that such an institution would "dignify, interest, and amuse the whole people."⁷ The plans were delayed, a second fire destroyed Barnum's new collection, and in 1869 the American Museum of Natural History was founded under more respectable auspices.

A THIRD influence on American historical museums was the historic house. In 1850 the Jonathan Hasbrouck House of Newburgh, New York, became the first historic house to open its doors to the public. As Washington's

⁶ Sellers, *Peale*, II, 233; Wilbur H. Hunter, Jr., "The Tribulations of a Museum Director in the 1820's," in the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 49:214-222 (September 1954); Latrobe Weston, "Art and Artists in Baltimore," in *ibid.*, 33:213-227 (September 1938).

⁷ Hans Huth, "The Historical Museum—Past and Present" (Ms., 1945), 4-5; M. R. Werner, *Barnum* (New York, 1923), 294-302.

headquarters at the end of the Revolution, it was associated with the General's angry refusal of the suggestion made by some of his officers that he become king of the new nation. Purchased by New York State, the Hasbrouck House was administered by a board of local trustees. In 1859 Mount Vernon, Washington's plantation home, was placed on public display by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union. It was acquired through the determined leadership of Miss Ann Pamela Cunningham of South Carolina after both the federal government and the Commonwealth of Virginia refused to purchase it. By 1876 Independence Hall, that precious shrine of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Liberty Bell, had become a public museum.

The historic house was at first not as we know it today. The early projects often destroyed the potential charm of their historic rooms by displaying historical and even natural science curiosities, sometimes in heavy glass cases. Not until after 1924 when the American Wing was opened at the Metropolitan Museum and 1926 when the restoration of colonial Williamsburg began was a new principle in furnishing and using historic houses generally accepted. This principle called for the natural arrangement of authentic furnishings so as to give the visitor a sensation of realism and participation. Flickering candles and fragrant flowers heighten his sensory perceptions; he experiences a feeling of historical mood, a haunting impression of having passed this way before. The historic house arranged according to this principle put the old planless, dingy, and crowded historical society collection to shame. It introduced new and powerful motivation in teaching history to the public.

The industrial revolution with its new leisure and its relatively cheap automobiles has caused historic houses to bloom throughout the American countryside. Perhaps an even more important reason for their popularity is the revival of interest in the basic concepts of American individualism brought about by the uneasy responsibilities of world leadership and the cold war with communist ideology. Today there are more than 1,000 historic houses and entire historic villages open to the public. The Scandinavian folk museums—the first one at

Skansen (1891) in Stockholm—stimulated the growth of historical villages that move old structures to a spacious and beautiful setting. Thus today there are authentic restoration villages after the Williamsburg pattern or outdoor folk museums like Henry Ford's Greenfield Village, the Farmers Museum at Coopers-town, or old Sturbridge Village. Both types use costumes and carriages, restaurants serving traditional foods, music and period plays, and other appealing devices to make history come to life.

The National Park Service entered the historic preservation movement fully when the Historic Sites Act of 1935 declared it "national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States." Some of the states have developed ambitious preservation programs including New York, California, Ohio, Illinois, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The National Trust for Historic Preservation (1949) is a central co-ordinating agency for privately financed preservation projects with nearly 300 member organizations.

THE State Historical Society of Wisconsin until recently took little part in the development of the American historical museum. After two false starts, the Society was reorganized early in 1854 with the driving and driven Lyman Copeland Draper as its executive secretary. This zealous collector of historical materials of the Old West never achieved his dream of producing a great series of histories of the frontier heroes. A demonic procrastination kept him from writing books and pushed him to the edge of the dark land of hysteria and despair; he often told his successor, Reuben Gold Thwaites, that he had wasted his life in puttering. Still, like a man waking from a nightmare, toward the end of his career he began to realize that his impotence was not complete. Though he had failed abysmally to attain his higher purpose, he had built a noble institution in his beloved Historical Society. His ceaseless struggle to discover, collect, and preserve the raw materials of history had been worth-while in itself.

When Lyman Draper and his friend Judge Charles Larrabee in 1853 drew up the statement of purposes for the Society's charter and

constitution, they listed the following functions in order of importance: (1) library; (2) publications; (3) picture gallery; and (4) cabinet or museum. This ranking remained in force throughout Draper's administration which ended in 1886.

Draper made several lasting contributions to historical society administration. He secured continuing and generous support from 1854 forward by building a society that served the broad historical interests of the state. Membership in the society was open to everyone interested in Wisconsin history, and annual dues were kept small with members receiving more services than they actually paid for. The crowning glory of the Society was its library, one of the great historical libraries of this country, with superb collections of books, government documents, newspapers, and manuscripts. Publications consisted chiefly of the ten volumes of miscellaneous *Collections*; though put together with more emphasis on antiquarianism than scientific history, they disseminated many valuable accounts of early Wisconsin. Even the picture gallery was pre-eminent with 135 oil and crayon paintings of leading Wisconsin political figures, pioneers, Indian chiefs, battlefields, and other subjects. Here, again, Draper's enthusiasm for collection interested artists, legislators, and businessmen in providing the paintings. He skillfully blended the appeals of historical importance and personal vanity.

But the cabinet or museum was carelessly gathered with no critical definition of its field and slight authentication of individual pieces. Accessions included a silken tassel from the bed of Mary Queen of Scots, a fragment of the frigate *Constitution*, a rosary of olive wood from the Mount of Olives, a leaf from the Charter Oak, two chips gnawed by beavers in Chippewa County, a small double-headed snake (in alcohol) found at Mineral Point, a section of the Atlantic Cable, an ivory cane head carved by a prisoner in the Bastille, two pistols taken from murderers serving life terms in the Wisconsin State Prison, and an Egyptian mummy's hand said to have been of a priestess or princess. It is difficult to find good historical materials among these curiosities. Artifacts of prehistoric Indians were sometimes important and included the Perkins Collection of 9,000 pieces, especially rich in copper implements,

obtained in 1875 and exhibited at the Philadelphia Centennial. There were also Wisconsin shinplaster currency, Indian trade objects, the silver belt buckle and seal of Charles de Langlade, Pierre Grignon's silver snuffbox, and much Civil War equipment.

After 1866 the Society was housed in the State Capitol. Its faithful cabinet keeper, who served voluntarily and as a labor of love for fourteen years before his death at the age of eighty-nine, was a fine old man, Isaac Lyon, a member of the Society's Board of Curators. In 1873 Dr. Draper reported that Lyon had "during the year materially enriched his collection of specimens of natural history and curiosities generally, now on deposit with the Society, and has generously continued his personal services in exhibiting them to our numerous visitors."⁸ The yearly attendance at picture gallery and cabinet was reported at between 20,000 and 35,000.

Reuben Gold Thwaites succeeded Draper as superintendent of the Society and moved in a dozen directions to improve its activities. Systematic and vigorous collection of the materials of Wisconsin history was coupled with a constant stream of publications, well planned, carefully researched, and attractively written. Best of all, Thwaites secured a beautiful new building for the Society on the campus of the University of Wisconsin so as to insure maximum use of historical resources by the faculty and students.

In 1899 Thwaites analyzed the functions of the Society. The library was its first concern and always would be. Next in importance came historical research and publication. Then followed the museum and art gallery, the part of the Society's work that chiefly appealed to the public; its importance as a factor in popular education could not be overestimated. Thwaites urged the state to support the first two functions and private benefaction the last. He had already established an Antiquarian Fund designed chiefly to support the museum and into which half the membership fees and receipts from the sale of duplicates went as well as special gifts.

When the Society moved to its stately neo-classic building in 1900, the museum found

⁸ State Historical Society of Wisconsin, *Collections*, 7:22 (Madison, 1876).

spacious new quarters on the fourth floor and was arranged in handsome cases, reported to look especially well when lighted at night. But the fourth-floor location and overhead skylights proved handicaps; the museum was relatively inaccessible to the public and unbearably hot in summer.

In 1908 the Antiquarian Fund's principal reached \$10,000, and the executive committee voted \$400 from it annually for "prosecuting historical investigation and for procuring for the Museum desirable objects of historic or ethnographical interest."⁹ That February, Charles Edward Brown became chief of the newly created Museum Department; at first he gave two-thirds of his time to the Historical Society and one-third to the Wisconsin Archeological Society.

Charlie Brown, as he was affectionately known throughout the state, set up a broad museum program. It included turning over the natural history materials to the University, pruning and reaccessioning the collection, systematically searching for historical and ethnographical objects, chiefly of Wisconsin, and organizing special exhibits in cases and on movable screens, some of which circulated in libraries and schools in the state. School classes and other groups began visiting the museum in large numbers. This lively increase in activity, backed by excellent newspaper and personal publicity, paid off, and in 1911 the legislature added to the Society's appropriation \$2,000 yearly, earmarked for museum use.

For the next twenty years the museum maintained its new level of interest and under Superintendent Milo M. Quaife its special appropriation reached \$5,000. But the depression years changed all that. The Society's funds were cut, the \$5,000 disappeared entirely in 1932, and as economic conditions became more dreary, Superintendent Joseph Schafer and the executive committee fought doggedly to save the basic administrative staff, the library, the publications program, and finally the museum. For a time Mr. Brown was directing a WPA project, and the museum was at a virtual standstill.

MEANWHILE, American museums had moved forward. When collection, curatorial care, and scholarship were their chief aims, heavy cases crowded to overflowing, poorly lighted and inadequately labeled, and pictures hung frame-to-frame and three or four rows deep were well enough. But a far-reaching change took place in the underlying philosophy of the exhibit. As education and interpretation became important purposes of the museum, better display methods were imperative to tell the story. Storytelling—that is the key word—became the heart of the exhibit. Materials must have meaning and be attractively arranged with taste and showmanship. They needed to communicate with a broader and broader audience—collectors, specialists, school children, family groups, casual vacationists, octogenarians.

New techniques developed rapidly from the series of world's fairs which began with London's Crystal Palace in 1851 and from the influence of department stores and advertising as well as the application of modern art and industrial design. The famed Armory Show at New York in 1913 brought radical European paintings like Marcel Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase" to the notice of an amazed, if not disturbed, public. Modern and traditional art might sometimes clash, but museums began to deal with structure, space, form, color, and light as a unified whole, not as unrelated elements.

As display became important, museums began to divide their holdings into study collections not shown to the public and into a constantly changing series of special exhibits. Dioramas with their miniature modeled groups portrayed great moments in history, preferably dramatic ones, with carefully scaled authentic details of architecture, landscape, furnishings, and costume. The period room, tried somewhat sketchily at Madison with a New England colonial kitchen and a Milwaukee drugstore, was brought to a point of near perfection at the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum opened in Delaware in 1951. Audio-visual aids such as color slides, filmstrips, motion pictures, and message repeaters became common. Museums of science and industry, patterned after the famous Deutsches Museum at Munich, added push-button operation and other visitor participation devices.

⁹State Historical Society of Wisconsin, *Proceedings*, 56:27 (Madison, 1909).

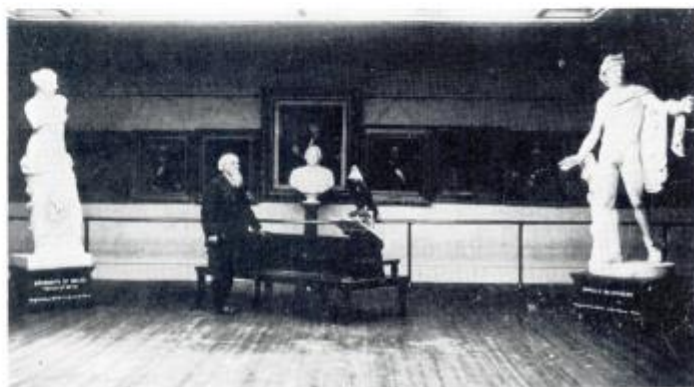
This modern concept of the historical museum was introduced at Madison in 1941 when a former director of the New York State Historical Association was chosen to head the Wisconsin Historical Society. The first issue of the *Wisconsin Magazine of History* that appeared in his administration carried a new section entitled "Chats with the Editor." One of the first chats dealt with "Modernizing a Museum" and announced changing monthly shows in the main ground-floor corridor of the Society's building.¹⁰ The first of these, "Wisconsin's Indians," was followed by "The French in Wisconsin," "Pioneer Life in Wisconsin," and many others. Each week one of the Society's portraits was to bask in well-lighted glory on a first-floor landing as "Portrait of the Week." Special programs for school classes were promised, and circulating exhibits to the schools. The magazine listed additions to the museum regularly just as those to the library had always been announced.

In the next five years the museum received as much emphasis as wartime conditions would allow. When the Society's director moved on to another position in 1946, negotiations were well along toward the acquisition of a branch historic house, the stately Victorian mansion of the Dousman family at Prairie du Chien, known as Villa Louis.

The next director of the Wisconsin Historical Society, Dr. Clifford L. Lord, also trained at the New York State Historical Association at Cooperstown, proved to be one of the most accomplished historical promoters of the entire country. The central museum at Madison profited from the better support he obtained for the Society in all its departments and in 1949 a separate museum appropriation was regained. A major improvement for the museum came when it obtained first-floor space after the University of Wisconsin Library moved into its own building.

Not only did Dr. Lord obtain a Historymobile (1953) to take significant exhibits far and wide throughout the state each year, but the Society took over the operation of three regional historic house museums. The first of these was Villa Louis at Prairie du Chien, put into first-class condition by the F. R. Bigelow

Foundation and opened under the Society's auspices in 1952 after a considerable dispute with a mayor of Prairie du Chien. The second was Old Wade House (1817-1851), a stage-coach inn at Greenbush halfway between Sheboygan and Fond du Lac. This property included Butternut House and several outbuildings, the whole beautifully restored and authentically furnished by the Kohler Foundation under the sparkling leadership of Mrs. Ruth De Young Kohler. The grounds are maintained by the Wisconsin Conservation Depart-



Ceylon Lincoln, janitor of the State Historical Society's museum, photographed in the portrait gallery about 1903.

ment which has even more to do with the third property, Stonefield Plantation, situated in Nelson Dewey Park near Cassfield. With the help of state and local authorities and public and private resources, Governor Dewey's plantation is being restored and a Farm and Crafts Museum is being constructed there.

The Society has also contemplated administering several other historic sites or museums. The general plan has been to develop them with capital funds furnished by some other agency or private group until they are in good running condition and then to turn them over to the Society with operating costs furnished through admission fees. Properties suggested for this treatment have included the Eleazar Williams Cabin at De Pere, the Wisconsin Territorial Capitol and Supreme Court Building at old Belmont, the Upper Mississippi Indian Village at Aztalan, the Circus World Museum at Baraboo, the National Railway Museum at Green Bay, the Brisbois House, and the Medical History Museum at Prairie du Chien.

¹⁰ *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 25:257-259 (March, 1942).

THIS rapid expansion has made the Wisconsin Historical Society a leader in the historical museum field in this country. All of us interested in historical museums as powerful instruments of popular education are watching Wisconsin and its Historical Society closely. Dr. Lord argued that "So long as the Society rigidly confines itself to sites of real importance located near major population centers and main arteries of travel, it can continue its present policy of operating these sites on a self-supporting basis." He justified "developing a network of really significant sites, bit by bit, year by year, on two grounds: (1) the obvious values of making history come alive, and (2) the crassly commercial argument of augmenting considerably Wisconsin's tourist business and visitor appeal."¹¹

These principles seem to be correct theoretically, but their application is not easy. The attendance figures for the three branch museums now in operation are not uniformly healthy, and capital improvements are not met in an entirely satisfactory way under present arrangements. The experience of other states has also shown that political pressures often enter into determining what historical sites possess real importance.

Experience elsewhere would suggest that the Wisconsin Historical Society would be wise to sponsor a careful survey of all historic sites and buildings in the state. The National Park Service is in the midst of such a survey as part of its Mission 66 program. It divided American history into 16 themes or periods and has added five archaeological themes. It will probably nominate between 2,000 and 4,000 buildings and sites of exceptional value in commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States. The Park Service will be under no obligation to acquire these places, but the desirability of preserving or restoring them will be pointed out to all public and private preservation agencies.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is doing a simpler survey for the historic buildings of Virginia. It has examined about 3,000 places of historical interest and is evaluating their importance and considering the assignment of priority classifications. The New

Jersey Department of Conservation and Economic Development is engaged in still another such survey.

This kind of historical planning would seem to have many advantages over the old laissez-faire method of preserving buildings because of chance, local conditions, or political pressures. Obviously not all buildings or sites listed would be suitable for public display, but many of them could be preserved by adapting them to other worth-while community uses. Such surveys are not inexpensive because they demand meticulous planning, thorough research, and expert technical assistance. But the Wisconsin Historical Society is ideally organized to provide over-all supervision and to enlist a jury of experts to pass upon the worth of buildings and sites. Perhaps foundation or private assistance could be found to finance such a project.

Art museums, science museums, and even children's and industrial museums have set high standards of planning, organization, and operation well understood by those serving these educational institutions. But history museums, though the most numerous of all, have lagged behind the others in defining their purposes and adopting professional standards. The Wisconsin Historical Society has the kind of organization that can achieve both a well-planned central museum at Madison and a properly co-ordinated statewide series of historic houses and outdoor museums. Its central staff can furnish the technical skill needed by the state system. This is the kind of pioneering opportunity that faced the Society under its first two great leaders, Dr. Draper and Dr. Thwaites, and the public response and enthusiasm for such a program of popular historical education can be greater than anything the Society has yet experienced.

As Dr. Julian P. Boyd has so gracefully put it: "Our historic shrines, our parks, our restorations, our pageants, and our monuments constitute a vast textbook across the land, wherein millions of people may deepen their experience, renew their acquaintance with the roots of their institutions, and occasionally encounter those rare moments of understanding and insight that regenerate our strength."¹²

¹¹ State Historical Society of Wisconsin, *Proceedings, 1955-1956* (Madison, 1956), 9.

¹² Julian P. Boyd, "The Uncherished Past," in the Wyoming [Pennsylvania] Commemorative Association, *Proceedings, 1958*, 8.

THE MAKING OF MENOMINEE COUNTY

By PAXTON HART



ON JULY 30, 1959, Governor Gaylord Nelson signed into law a bill creating Wisconsin's seventy-second county—Menominee. The governor's action is of more than ordinary historical interest for several reasons: Menominee County is Wisconsin's first new county since Rusk was formed in 1901¹; the Menominee Indians and their advisors had been working on plans for the new county for six years; and nationally, the new county establishes a precedent that may serve as a guide to future handling of Indian affairs.

The new law will take effect on December 31, 1960, when the federal government terminates its 105-year supervision of the Menominee Indians. The new county will be comprised of the seven townships in Shawano County and the three in Oconto County that are now the Menominee Indian Reservation. The population of the new county will be about 3,500—mostly Menominee Indians—making it the state's smallest in population, although its 365 square miles makes it sixty-fourth in area.²

The sequence of events leading to the formation of Menominee County began on July 13, 1951, when the Menominees won an \$8,500,000 judgment against the United States government. After fifteen years of litigation,

the tribe established that the government had mismanaged the Menominee forest prior to 1910 by permitting annual cuttings of more than the twenty million board feet allowed by law. When attorney fees were subtracted from the award, the Menominees netted \$7,650,000.³ This amount, plus the tribe's timber assets (currently worth about \$30,000,000 at stumpage value⁴) and its sawmill and other assets (worth about \$4,000,000⁵), makes the Menominees by far the richest of the six tribes in Wisconsin and one of the richest in the United States.

The judgment would have increased the amount of tribal money held in trust and accruing interest in the United States Treasury to approximately \$10,500,000. The Menominees asked that \$4,750,000 of this amount be paid to the 3,270 enrolled members of the tribe at a per-capita rate of \$1,500.⁶ Menominee families wanted to add this amount to the income earned from logging, working in the sawmill, farming, and from highway and other govern-

¹ John Patrick Hunter, "Wisconsin Gets its 72nd County as Nelson Signs Menominee Bill," *Madison Capital Times* July 30, 1959, p. 1.

² *Ibid.* The tribe expects considerable expansion in the population of the county through the leasing of recreational facilities.

³ Governor's Commission on Human Rights, *Memorandum Relating to Menominee Indian Tribe* (Madison, 1954), 3.

⁴ Wisconsin Legislative Council, *General Report* (Madison, 1959), V, 109.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Memorandum, op. cit.*, 3.

mental work. But Senator Arthur Watkins of Utah, then Chairman of the Subcommittee on Indian affairs, told the tribe that the payment would have to be tied to termination of federal supervision of the tribe's resources and affairs.

Realizing that termination of their status as "wards" of the federal government would mean that their 233,902-acre reservation would become subject to taxes, and fearing that their tribal assets and enterprises would be laid open to exploitation by white men, the tribe resisted. They told Senator Watkins to forget his termination scheme, and they in turn would withdraw their request for the per-capita payment. But Senator Watkins then said that termination was going through anyhow.⁷

In Indian affairs, "termination" means the withdrawal by the federal government from all responsibility to an Indian tribe and the transfer to the tribe of all property held in trust for it. Though suggested frequently in past decades, termination was not written into law until 1953 in the first session of the 83rd Congress. House Concurrent Resolution 108 declared it to be the sense of Congress that certain tribes, including the Menominees, "at the earliest possible time . . . should be freed from Federal supervision and control and from the disabilities and limitations specially applicable to Indians." The bill proclaimed that it is the policy of Congress "as rapidly as possible to make the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States, to end their status as wards of the United States, and to grant them all of the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American citizenship."

In opening the Menominee reservation to taxes, Public Law 399 of the 83rd Congress—the specific Menominee termination act—drastically curtailed the government's 1854 treaty with the tribe. This treaty, which provided the Menominees with their commonly held reservation in Shawano and Oconto counties about fifty miles northwest of Green Bay, named the reservation "a home to be held as

Indian lands are held,"⁸ that is, permanently and without taxation. At the time of the treaty Menominee head chiefs complained that they were forced to sign under threats of being removed west of the Mississippi, far from their homeland, which before the coming of the white man had consisted of approximately 9,500,000 acres in what are now Wisconsin and Michigan. Between 1831 and the 1854 treaty, the tribe had already ceded—at an average price of about thirteen cents an acre—over nine million acres for use by other Indian tribes and by the United States.⁹ So it is not hard to understand why the head chiefs complained and why, a hundred years later, their sons hanged Senator Watkins in effigy when they learned "what he did to us."¹⁰

HOWEVER, if termination had to become the new federal Indian policy, it was logical to pick on the Menominees. In addition to their tribal wealth (part of which, incidentally, they use to pay the salary of the government agent on the reservation and the expenses of schools, a hospital, welfare work, and law enforcement), the tribe is almost fully acculturated. Only a very few, mainly the old people, speak no English. Only 10½ per cent are illiterate. Only 5 per cent of the children between six and eighteen years do not attend school, though unfortunately very few go on to college.¹¹ Next to nothing is left of their old tribal customs or religious practices (most Menominees have long been Catholics). The Menominees work for a living, watch television, go to doctors and dentists, have a democratic tribal government, and drive late-model cars to Milwaukee to watch the Braves play ball. They are a handsome, intelligent, and industrious people. They live and think pretty much as do their white neighbors in Shawano and Oconto counties, with whom they have good relations. In the eyes of the federal government, therefore, they were ready to go it on their own.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁹ F. M. Keesing, *The Menominee Indians of Wisconsin* (American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 1939), 142.

¹⁰ Letter to the writer from a Menominee Indian.

¹¹ Black, *op. cit.*, 3.

⁷ Algernon D. Black, *Report on Conditions on Three Indian Reservations* (Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc., New York, 1954), 5.

But when Public Law 399 was passed, panic swept the tribe. In the minds of some of the Menominees, the law represented a forced land grab by the white man. Most Menominees felt that they would never be able to meet the taxes on their lands. They would have to sell out to lumber interests similar to the notorious Pine Ring, whose powerful lobby a hundred years ago nearly succeeded in wrenching the timber from the tribe.¹² Their jobs would disappear. They would lose their right to hunt and fish as they please on the land handed down to them by their forefathers. Their way of life as a people would be fragmented.

Public Law 399 stipulated that termination was to take effect on December 31, 1958. Thus the tribe had but five years to work out some kind of plan for salvaging its future beyond that date. One sociologist, keenly aware of attitudes of dependence and apathy built up in the minds of many Menominees by a century of wardship and paternalism, felt that the tribe should have had "a consistent and well thought-out program . . . many years in advance of the termination date."¹³ Many Menominees felt that they could never prepare adequately, no matter how much time they had.

Nevertheless, the tribal leaders and the more thoughtful members began considering ways of meeting termination. One possibility would be to liquidate the tribal assets and disperse. Such action would provide a single per-capita payment of about \$4,500¹⁴—hardly satisfactory. Moreover, the tribe would lose its identity as a people, and few Indian tribes, no matter how factionalized, want to disband.

There had been talk even before the termination act of making the reservation a state or national forest.¹⁵ Since this plan would not

mean the destruction of Indian homes or the logging operations, some Menominees favored it. But others argued that it would mean the end of unlimited hunting and fishing and that the Menominees would experience the humiliation of being added to the scenery as white men flocked into the woods with tents and cameras.

Still another possibility would be to merge into the political, social, and economic structures of Shawano and Oconto counties, with each Menominee retaining privately about sixty acres of the old, commonly held reservation land. But this would mean that the Menominees would no longer be a self-governing entity but a minority group living under laws made by the whites for the benefit of the whites.

It became clear that the best solution would be a separate Menominee county with a tribal business arrangement. If such plans could be worked out, the tribe would retain its identity as a people and have the opportunity to develop its own leadership and resources. After extensive discussion in its General Council, the tribe conducted a referendum on the issue on September 9, 1958. "Of 1,714 ballots, 721 were returned, and 622 of the 721 Menominee Indians who marked the ballot favored a separate county."¹⁶

These results constituted not only an overwhelming sentiment in favor of a separate county, but also a resounding vote of confidence in the special Coordinating and Negotiating Committee set up by the tribe in November, 1957, to co-ordinate all aspects of termination and to consult and negotiate with nontribal organizations with the goal of making realistic recommendations to the tribe on the problems of termination. As head of the committee, the Menominees elected George W. Kenote, an outstandingly able son of the tribe, who got a leave of absence from a good job in Washington as Assistant Director of Law and Order with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. As chairman, he was ably assisted by Gordon Dickie, Mitchell A. Dodge, and James G. Frechette, chairman of the tribe's Advisory Council.

One of the first actions of Kenote's committee was to ask for an extension of the effec-

¹² Keesing, *op. cit.*, 168-169.

¹³ David W. Ames, "Comments on the Menominee Plan for Termination," in *Materials for Menominee Indian Study Committee* (Wisconsin Legislative Council, Madison, 1959), R, 9.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2. If sale of property on a sustained-yield basis had not been required, this payment would have been more than doubled.

¹⁵ Professor Ames recommended this as "the relatively 'ideal' plan." See *ibid.*, 8. The real obstacle to this plan seems not to have been the Menominees' objections but rather the absence of about \$40,000,000 in federal or state funds, which would have been required to compensate the tribe.

¹⁶ *General Report, op. cit.*, 107.

tive date of termination. The 85th Congress responded with Public Law 488, allowing a two-year extension until December 31, 1960. The bill also provides that all termination expenses contracted before July 1, 1958, but only half those incurred subsequently will be reimbursed by the federal government. The total possible reimbursement provided for is \$275,000. The bill directs the tribe to prepare its termination plan (including arrangements for the future control of tribal property and for the service functions—health, education, welfare, credit, roads, and law and order) by February 1, 1959; but a subsequent period of six months is allowed for adjustments in case the Secretary of the Interior finds the plan unacceptable. In the absence of agreement between the tribe and the Secretary by July 31, 1959, the Secretary is directed to transfer the property to a trustee of his choice for management or disposition for the benefit of the tribe. The Menominees, of course, wanted to avoid that at all costs. Since they had to be terminated against their wishes, they wanted to be terminated their own way if possible.

Their own way, a separate county, would require special state legislation. And before the lawmakers would pass enabling legislation, they too, like the Secretary of the Interior, would require sound economic planning. To assist them with this formidable task, Kenote's committee retained the Milwaukee law firm of Fairchild, Foley, and Sammond.

Mr. Frederic Sammond took charge of the extraordinarily complex job of creating the legal language for the new county and business enterprise and of explaining the plans to and obtaining approval from the tribe, the state legislature and governor, and the Department of the Interior—all within a federally imposed schedule of deadlines. Difficult though the task was, out of it grew the plans for the county and the new corporation to be known as Menominee Enterprises, Inc.

THE PURPOSE of Menominee Enterprises is to operate for tribal profit the tribe's forest resources. The corporation will be controlled by seven trustees elected by the Menominees for seven-year staggered terms. Four trustees are to be Menominees and three are to be non-Menominees who are prominent Wis-

consin citizens and genuine friends of the tribe. The trustees are to serve without pay, to meet at least once a year, and to elect a board of directors.¹⁷

The board of directors will consist of four enrolled Menominees and five other citizens who, the tribe hopes, will be able and experienced businessmen, including persons with a knowledge of lumbering, mill operations, and finance. The directors are to be paid a reasonable compensation for their services and are to elect and direct the company's operating officers who will run the timber operations, recreational and resort activities (aimed at capitalizing on the scenery and wildlife), the local public utilities, and perhaps other industrial matters.

The operating officers will probably at first be experienced lumbermen who, over a period of years, will be expected to train and develop young Menominees for executive positions in the corporation.

In the original plans the board of trustees, like the board of directors, was to consist of more outsiders than Menominees. But in a meeting of the tribe's General Council held January 10, 1959, this provision was opposed. As one Menominee expressed it, "I have a family and children that I want to protect. It is a mistake to grant power in these boards to outsiders that don't have an investment here. I believe the balance of power should rest with the tribe. In years to come we will be condemned for allowing control to get out of our group."¹⁸ This sentiment carried, and the ratio was changed.

On the same day, a similar, though temporary, change was made in the composition of the board of directors. One of the persons supporting this change was a member of the tribe's Coordinating and Negotiating Committee. But the issue was brought up again in another General Council on January 17, and this man reversed himself:

¹⁷ This and subsequent information about Menominee Enterprises is drawn from the Articles of Incorporation and the Voting Trust Agreement contained in a general plan for the Menominee termination submitted to Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton by Fairchild, Foley, and Sammond with tribal approval.

¹⁸ *Minutes of the General Council of the Menominee Indian Tribe Held at Keshena, Wisconsin, January 10, 1959, p. 8.*

After returning home last Saturday, I sat down and thought of the action that was taken. I came to the conclusion that I for one made a mistake voting for that amendment. It is not always easy to publicly admit a mistake. But we have so much at stake that I feel it my duty now to take a position and explain to you in my personal opinion, I was wrong. I don't want anyone to think for one moment I am accusing the Menominees of being stupid. I won't accuse you of being stupid. All through the discussion I have tried to arrive at the conclusion as to what five tribal members I would want to have on the board of directors to handle the affairs of my three children. I am having trouble finding four, let alone five. This is one point I want to make. It is difficult to make, believe me. I talked this question over with a number of people in Neopit and Keshena. I have talked it over with my brother. I asked him point blank if I for one could serve capably on that board. "I want you to tell me the truth." "I don't think you know enough about business to serve on that board of directors," was his answer. I certainly could not qualify to serve on that board of directors. Of all the people I have talked to, not a single one could tell me they could, without hesitation, vote five tribal members to serve on that board of directors.¹⁹

But fear of white exploitation was strong. Another Menominee rose to challenge him:

Wouldn't it be better business for you people if you could run your own business? Why should anybody now here want to take away the last bit that you people have? Why do you have to give it up to the white man? The white man came and took anything he wanted for his own benefit. Why do we have to give up that little bit? It is time we oppose people outside.²⁰

In rejecting this challenge, the first speaker presented the heart of the argument for white control:

¹⁹*Minutes of the General Council of the Menominee Indian Tribe Held at Keshena, Wisconsin, January 17, p. 15.*

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 19.

I would like to point out, ladies and gentlemen, we do have some young people in time who will be capable of serving on the board well. I told you that before. I agree that it takes time. There is still a lot to be learned. Article V [of the Articles of Incorporation] provides in here that the board of directors will consist of nine, at least four of whom may be Menominees. When our young people become experienced and capable to handle the responsibilities, then I think we can rely on them to serve on the board of directors. It is extremely necessary and important we have a capable board of directors, experienced individuals, to guide us in our early years. The board of directors must then hire good officers to run the corporation. They have to have confidence to serve where there will be a majority. The original proposal does not limit membership to four Menominees; we may have nine, providing the trustees in viewing the possibilities, and as members of the tribe become qualified, they may place more Menominees on that board of directors.²¹

When the vote was taken, forty-nine tribal members opposed, but sixty-one favored rescinding the earlier action and retaining the five white to four Menominee ratio on the board of directors. (The General Council quorum is seventy-five.)

The assets of Menominee Enterprises will be owned by the 3,270 enrolled members of the tribe in the form of stocks and bonds. Under a minors' trust agreement, the "Menominee Assistance Trust," about 40 per cent of the entire shares will at first be voted by the First Wisconsin Trust Company. As Mr. Sammond explained to the General Council, "If each child would be processed through individual guardianship, the cost would be expensive and also [it] would divide the voting shares into possibly 1,400 different guardians. The minors will have the added protection of

²¹*Ibid.* As suggested by this quotation, the over-all controlling argument in the General Council was the stability that would be secured by obtaining white officers of high caliber. This could only be done by eliminating "tribal politics."

experienced people to vote their shares."²² And of course, the number of shares voted by the trust company will diminish yearly as minors turn twenty-one.

The provisions made for experienced management of Menominee Enterprises, and a special tax rate for the forest (to be discussed later), should assure the tribe of a sound financial situation after termination. When the present production of twenty-two million board feet of saw logs (the maximum allowable under federal law, which will disappear with termination) is increased to twenty-nine million feet, the estimated net profit will rise from the present annual maximum of \$550,000 to \$800,000. Projected budgets for town and county government require \$380,000 a year, including \$150,000 for the school district.²³ The remaining \$420,000, if earned, will pay the interest on the bonds, replacing the present annual "stumpage payments," an important part of the area's economy.

In addition to providing funds for local government and investment income for members of the tribe, the corporation and county plans will provide about 800 jobs for Menominee Indians.²⁴ And, as a corporation, Menominee Enterprises can post its land, thus preventing one of the tribe's chief fears—an invasion by an army of white men with fishing gear and guns. This does not mean that the tribe will not welcome white visitors and sportsmen. It will. In the spring of 1959, for example, the tribe opened its reservation for the first time in twenty-six years to the general public for fishing and camping. A system of fees, privileges, and restrictions has been worked out to assure tribal, rather than state or federal, control of these activities.

THE TRIBE completed its plans in January, 1959, thereby meeting the federal dead line of February 1. In April the office

²²*Minutes of the General Council of the Menominee Indian Tribe Held at Keshena, Wisconsin, January 19, p. 4.* The trust agreement includes, in addition to minors, those who are *non compos mentis* and those otherwise in need of assistance in caring for their property as found by the Secretary of the Interior under federal law. The savings to the beneficiaries under the trust will be about \$30,000 to \$40,000 initially and more than \$15,000 annually thereafter.

²³Senate Bill 598, May 21, 1959 (later passed as Chapter 259 of the 1959 Wisconsin Session Laws), 3.

²⁴*Ibid.*

of the Secretary of the Interior informed tribal representatives that the plan was approvable but could not be approved so long as it was contingent on future acts by the Wisconsin legislature. The tribe had until August 1 to get the state legislation completed. On July 17, 1959, the legislature unanimously passed three bills that had been considered by the Wisconsin Menominee Indian Study Committee which had been set up by the legislature and which had worked for nearly four years with the tribe on its termination problems. The bills were essentially the fulfillment of the requests and proposals made by the Menominee Coordinating and Negotiating Committee. This legislation must be understood in order to have a clear picture of the Menominee termination.

Chapter 259 of the 1959 Wisconsin Session Laws enables the creation of Menominee County, which will conduct its affairs under Wisconsin town and county laws. One political township is created for the whole county.²⁵ The town board is to be elected by the residents and to serve ex-officio as the county board. Because there are no lawyers on the Menominee reservation, the bill attaches Menominee County to Shawano County for Juvenile Court purposes and provides that the district attorney and superintendent of schools in Shawano County shall serve in these capacities for Menominee County. Presumably these offices can be taken over by Menominees as soon as any become qualified to do so. The bill includes Menominee County in the jurisdiction of the tenth circuit court and permits the issuance of stocks and bonds by Menominee Enterprises.

It is important to understand that in enabling the creation of Menominee County the legislature was in no way establishing racial segregation of the Menominee Indians. There is nothing in the legislation to prevent non-Indians from making their homes in Menominee County if they want to; there is nothing to prevent Menominees from leaving the county and settling elsewhere if they so desire.

²⁵Section and township boundaries will probably be established by a cadastral survey of the entire reservation area, if the Bureau of Indian Affairs responds affirmatively to a request for the survey made directly to the bureau by the Menominee Indian Study Committee.

Chapter 258 of the 1959 Wisconsin Session Laws quells about 60 per cent of the Menominees' original tax scare. It provides for the regulation and taxation of forest lands required by law to be operated on a sustained-yield basis. Between 1908 and termination, "sustained yield" has limited cutting to twenty-two million board feet a year. This limitation will disappear with termination, as has been noted, but the federal termination legislation still requires that some sort of sustained-yield protection of the forest be provided after termination. Chapter 258 specifies the sort of sustained-yield protection: "the lands . . . shall be operated in a manner which will provide for a continuous annual harvest of high quality forest products on a permanent basis." Twenty-nine million feet is the maximum agreed upon between foresters and the Wisconsin Conservation Commission to protect the Menominee forest.

Under this sustained-yield management, the forest will have an actual yearly market value of only 30 to 40 per cent of stumpage (or clear-cutting) value. In accordance with Chapter 258, Menominee Enterprises is to file an acceptable sustained-yield management plan with the state commissioner of taxation, and the forest will be taxed at 40 per cent of stumpage value.

The tax money will be used chiefly for local government and services. The Wisconsin Menominee Indian Study Committee believes that for the first few years Menominee Enterprises "is not likely to be in a position to pay" state and federal income taxes.²⁰ About \$10,000 a year will go to the state as the county's share of state property taxes.

Chapter 260 of the 1959 Wisconsin Session Laws provides for the transfer to Menominee County of the funds collected as taxes on incomes, utilities, and liquor, which are held in escrow for the Menominees by the Wisconsin state treasurer.

Senate Joint Resolution 62, also passed by the 1959 legislature, memorializes Congress that the federal government has a share of responsibility toward the Menominee people to ease the burdens of termination. It calls on the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Congress

to provide minimums of \$690,000 for highway improvement within the reservation, \$375,000 for education, \$50,000 for Menominee Hospital, and to provide avenues through which Menominee Enterprises can obtain loan funds from federal agencies on favorable terms.

When the enabling legislation was passed, it carried two amendments, both originating with Senator William F. Trinke, chairman of the Senate Committee on Labor, Taxation, Insurance, and Banking. The amendments were designed to prevent the Menominees from losing ownership of their tribal property to unscrupulous investors. One amendment authorizes the Wisconsin Investment Board, with the approval of the Emergency Board, to invest in any shares offered for sale by individual Menominees if Menominee Enterprises is unable to purchase the shares. This is something the tribe's Coordinating and Negotiating Committee would have liked to ask for but did not, fearing that it would be asking too much. As a further safeguard, another amendment provides that for thirty years Menominee Enterprises may not sell or mortgage any forest land without the approval of the conservation commission and the governor. This provision does not apply to homesteads, farms, or resort lands.

THE very generous spirit of co-operation by the Wisconsin legislature is as rare as it is praiseworthy. Most states with Indian populations ignore or are hostile to them, firmly insisting that Indians are strictly the concern of the federal government alone.

The Wisconsin action can probably be attributed to three causes. First, the legislators seemed to be deeply concerned that justice be done American Indians—specifically the Menominees. Second, legislators felt pressure from aroused groups of similarly concerned citizens. Such groups were the Christian Social Relations Committee of the Methodist Church, the Citizens' Committee for the Menominees, the Consolidated Tribes of American Indians of Milwaukee, the Illinois Yearly Meeting of Friends, the Social Action Committee of the First Congregational Church of Madison, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Chester Graham, Executive Secretary of the Illinois-Wisconsin Friends Committee on Legislation, lobbied vigorously for

²⁰ *General Report, op. cit.*, 111.

the favorable legislation. But more important than either of these two reasons is the third: the tribe itself made it clear to the legislature that, though most reluctant to undergo termination, it felt willing and able to maintain itself as a new county on a sound economic basis.

In a recent letter to James Frechette, chairman of the Menominee Advisory Council, Acting Secretary of the Interior Elmer F. Bennett summed up the status of the plans:

The Menominee Tribe's plan has been studied intensively by many people in the Department of the Interior and the State of Wisconsin over the past three months. Then on October 26 through 29, representatives of the Tribe, its attorneys, officials of the State of Wisconsin and the Department of the Interior met for many hours in negotiations over a great many refinements in the plan. At the end, there was unanimous agreement on the basic concepts of the changes adopted, and concession by all parties that the modifications had not substantially altered the intent of the plan that had been approved in principle by the Acting Secretary on July 31.²⁷

At this writing, Fairchild, Foley, and Sammond have just sent the revised termination plan, including the changes on which agreement was reached, to the Department of the Interior for critical reading. In his letter, Mr. Bennett told Mr. Frechette that, this step completed, the department will act to certify adoption of the basic plans as of July 31, 1959.

IT WOULD be premature, however, to predict confidently a bright future for the Menominee Indians. One obstacle they must work hard to overcome is a block of Menominees who do not understand or accept the termination plans. A number of them spoke at General Council Sessions, expressing such opinions as the following:

²⁷ Interior Department Reaches Agreement with Menominee Indian Tribe on Termination Plan," *Menominee News* (Menominee Indian Agency, Keshena, October–November, 1959), p. 1.

I cannot agree with the statements of these white people and I am not interested in those papers. I want to tear them up. I have not agreed to termination. My forefathers were promised by treaty with the federal government that we would never be molested and our reservation would remain forever intact to preserve our own way of life. I resent these people trying to terminate me, and another thing—we cannot understand all the provisions set forth in them papers. I say tear them up!²⁸

Do you believe this plan is fair to the people when nine tenths of them do not understand the plan?²⁹

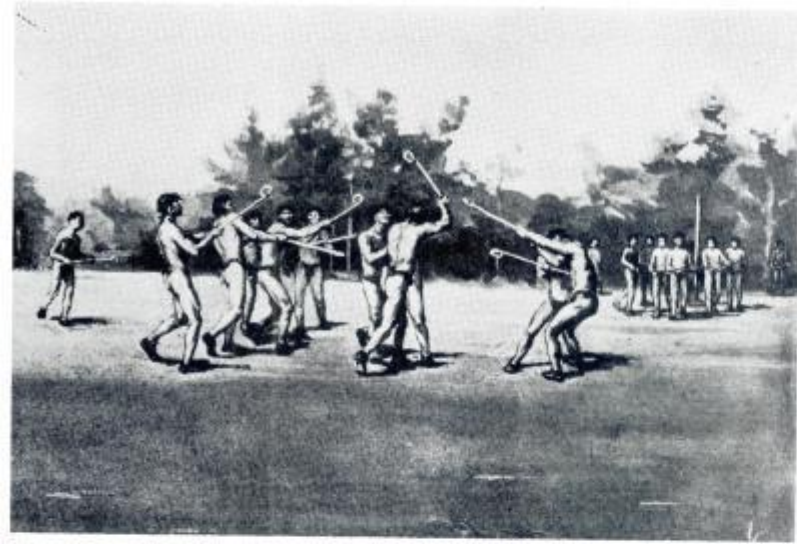
I would suggest that a delegation be sent to Washington to see if something could be done to stop this termination. We do not want it; we are not ready for it.³⁰

IN SO FAR as one can judge from the voting and outcome of the General Council sessions, these sentiments are not those of the majority of the Menominees. But they are those of a very vocal faction. The faction endangers the tribe's future because the county-corporation must have the understanding and active support of the vast majority of the tribe. Absenteeism in the sawmill, for example, heretofore tolerated, will have to be more strictly controlled. More Menominees will have to participate more actively in governmental and business meetings. It is to be hoped, then, that as the plan begins to function, and especially as more Menominees assume positions on the board of directors and take over the administration of the corporation, the recalcitrant faction will come to understand and accept the plan. In the meantime, the tribe's leaders must actively explain and interpret the plans. And the tribe must send more of its high-school graduates to college. There appear to be adequate tribal funds for this purpose, and the state of Wisconsin has a limited scholarship program for Indian students.

²⁸ *Minutes, op. cit.*, January 10, 1959, p. 5.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.



Society's Iconographic Collection



Menominee life, past and present: (top left) young men playing lacrosse; (top right and center) photographs taken about 1912 on the Menominee Reservation; (lower left) Governor Gaylord Nelson signing the bill creating Menominee County. Standing left to right are Gordon Dickie, Bernard Grignon, Hilary Waukau, Attorney General John W. Reynolds, James Frechette, and Al Dodge. (Photo by Dave Sandell.)

Madison Capital Times

*An absorbing study of the political, medical,
and sociological thinking that led to one
of the State's least known but most controversial laws*

By RUDOLPH J. VECOLI

STERILIZATION: A PROGRESSIVE MEASURE?

THE IMPACT of the Darwinian theory of organic evolution on social thought and public policy in America has received extended consideration by a number of historians.¹ However, a particular form of Social Darwinism, which has exerted a potent influence on the thinking of many Americans, has not yet received the close study it merits. This is the "science" of eugenics.

Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin and a brilliant English statistician, formulated the doctrines of eugenics—a term which he coined, meaning well-born.² Galton was profoundly influenced by the evolutionary hypothesis; but unlike the Social Darwinists of the school of Herbert Spencer, he did not believe that "natural selection" through an unimpeded struggle for survival would inevitably produce a higher breed of men. From his study of the genealogies of men of genius, Gal-

ton concluded that heredity was of primary importance in determining the physical, mental, and moral characteristics of human beings. The mating of humans ought, therefore, not be left to haphazard choice but should be regulated by "artificial selection" based on scientific knowledge of the principles of heredity. Through education and the intervention of the State, the breeding of the "biologically fit" was to be encouraged while procreation by the "biologically unfit" was to be discouraged and prohibited. The future of mankind rested on such "scientific" improvement of its racial stock.

These are, in brief, the eugenic doctrines which Galton and his followers preached during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Their argument for the overriding force of heredity was reinforced by the influential writings of Galton's contemporary, Cesare Lombroso, an Italian criminologist who taught that the true criminal was a biological type condemned by his inheritance to a life of crime.³

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these ideas of hereditary determinism gained much currency in America, especially among those concerned with the socially inadequate. Among social reformers, charity and correction officials, physicians, and sociologists there was a growing tendency to see paupers, criminals, the insane, and the feeble-minded as products of evil heredity.⁴

* The author is indebted to Merle Curti, John Higginson and the late Francis Carney for helpful criticisms and suggestions. For any shortcomings which may remain, he alone is responsible. An earlier version of this paper was read at the Annual Meeting of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, at Green Lake, June 22, 1957.

¹ Among others: Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (rev. ed., Boston, 1955); Stow Persons, ed., *Evolutionary Thought in America* (New Haven, 1950); E. F. Goldman, *Rendezvous with Destiny* (rev. ed., New York, 1956).

² Francis Galton, *Hereditary Genius* (rev. ed., New York, 1880), and *Inquiries into Human Faculty* (London, 1883). For a sympathetic treatment of Galton's ideas and influence see C. P. Blacker, *Eugenics: Galton and After* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952).

³ C. Bernaldo de Quirós, "Cesare Lombroso," in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, IX:603-604 (1933).

⁴ Albert Deutsch, *The Mentally Ill in America* (Garden City, N. Y., 1937), 348-385. According to Deutsch, at the turn of the century this belief in the

Yet historians of the Progressive Era have for the most part ignored the contemporary agitation for social measures inspired by eugenic principles, while those who have recognized it have tended to dismiss it as somehow inconsistent with the major tenets of Progressivism.⁵ The racist and elitist implications of the eugenic doctrines did not fit the historian's image of Progressivism as a democratic movement.

Certainly, the reformers of the Progressive Era were primarily concerned with ameliorating social conditions and correcting malfunctioning institutions. But many of these same reformers were convinced of the efficacy of eugenic remedies for certain social problems. The enactment of laws providing for the sterilization of certain classes of social inadequates by sixteen states between 1907 and 1917, the golden years of Progressive reform, strongly supports this thesis.⁶ Since sterilization was the ultimate weapon in the arsenal of the eugenicists, these laws marked the triumph of eugenic ideas among a considerable sector of the American people. Among these sixteen states was the stronghold of Progressivism—Wisconsin—which enacted its sterilization statute in 1913. This study will attempt to unravel the apparent paradox of the Wisconsin Progressives who, while renowned for their institutional reforms, nevertheless adopted a eugenic measure for dealing with the socially inadequate.

inheritability of mental and social defects caused the feeble-minded to be regarded by the man of science and the man on the street as "the most potent, if not the sole, source of all social evils." *Ibid.*, 152; A. E. Fink, *Causes of Crime: Biological Theories in the United States* (Philadelphia, 1938), 151-210.

⁵ Hofstadter, for example, while recognizing the vogue of eugenic ideas during the Progressive Era suggests that eugenics was a sham reform. *Op. cit.*, 161-167.

⁶ J. H. Landman, *Human Sterilization* (New York, 1932), Appendix B, "A Chronologic Presentation of the Various Sexual Sterilization Statutes in the United States," 291-293.

⁷ For the literature of the eugenics movement see S. J. Holmes, comp., *A Bibliography of Eugenics* (University of California Publications in Zoology, XXV, Berkeley, 1924).

⁸ "The Duty of the State in its Treatment of the Deaf and Dumb, the Blind, the Idiotic, the Crippled and Deformed, and the Insane," in *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters*, IV:27-29 (1876-1877).

Ideas are no respecters of political boundaries. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the eugenics movement was international in dimension; its adherents disseminated the teachings of Galton in many tongues. In the United States the eugenicists addressed themselves to a nation-wide audience through books, popular periodicals, professional journals, convention platforms.⁷ While this study restricts its description of the agitation for eugenic measures to Wisconsin, it ought to be kept in mind that the people of the state were also subject to eugenic propaganda through these national media.

PERHAPS the first Wisconsin eugenicist was Professor Russell Z. Mason, former president of Lawrence University (now College) at Appleton. In a paper presented before the Wisconsin Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters in 1877, Mason proposed that the State prevent propagation by "abnormal" persons who, he asserted, would transmit their physical and mental defects to their offspring. Bringing the jargon of Social Darwinism to bear, Mason argued that "If the doctrine is true, that the fittest only should live, then it follows as a rational corollary that, in a society of rational men, . . . the fittest only should be born." The highest duty of the State, therefore, was to "erect an impassable barrier, so that no person, man or woman, who failed to present the requisite credentials of a sound mind in a sound body, free from all forms of congenital and organic disease . . . should become the head of a family of children." Mason warned that "All theories of progress and true social development are useless and abortive unless these ends are first secured."⁸

In spite of this gloomy prophecy, the eugenic doctrines appear to have found little acceptance in Wisconsin until the 1890's when the economic crisis and social unrest of that decade stimulated a heightened concern for devising effective means with which to deal with those considered a burden on, or a threat to, society. A sense of impending cataclysm permeated the meetings of the Wisconsin Conference of Charities and Corrections during the nineties, and added a note of urgency to the discussions of these gatherings of charity and correction officials, educators, and philanthropists. The eugenic ideas took root in this at-

mosphere of anxiety; if one could attribute poverty, disease, and crime to innate biological deficiency rather than to human injustice, the responsibility for misery could be laid at the doorstep of Nature instead of Society.

One finds in the proceedings of the Conference an increasing recurrence of the concept of "defective classes" to explain social inadequacy. This was a eugenic concept, the idea that a segment of the population was composed of biological degenerates. Family histories such as those of the Jukes and *The Tribe of Ishmael* were cited to illustrate the curse of "hereditary taint." This evil stock, it was said, condemned yet unborn generations to lives of criminality, pauperism, prostitution, alcoholism, idiocy, feeble-mindedness, and insanity. As the Reverend A. O. Wright, secretary of the Wisconsin Board of Charities and Reform, expressed the idea: "Here and there in our country, and in every other one, are knots of defective classes all tangled up together, families closely related furnishing a whole population of criminals, paupers, idiots and lunatics among themselves."⁹ The social evils which appeared to be undermining American society thus had their source, not in industrial depression or social disorganization, but in morbid heredity. Clearly, as Wright observed, measures must be taken to reduce the numbers of these hereditary defectives. He took comfort in the growing tendency of public sentiment and legislation to be concerned with the prevention as well as the cure of social ills.

Indeed, much of the discussion at the meetings of the Wisconsin Conference during the 1890's centered on the question of the means by which reproduction by the "defective classes" could be curtailed. The question appeared to be of the gravest importance because of the common belief that the biological degenerates were multiplying at a much higher rate

than were persons of "good" heredity. This concern with the "differential birthrate" revealed the class bias of the eugenicists—their assumption that the upper socio-economic classes embodied superior hereditary qualities, while the lower classes had inferior biological endowments. William A. Scott, professor of political economy at the University of Wisconsin, viewed the rapid increase of "the dependent and delinquent classes," whom he appeared to equate with slum-dwellers, as threatening "the moral foundations of our civilization." Solemnly, he counseled that "No community could invest money to a better purpose than in the provision of some means or agency by which these classes could be annihilated or at least prevented from injuring the community."¹⁰

While the members of the Wisconsin Conference thought of themselves as humanitarians seeking to reform society, their expressions at times took on a tone of hatred and loathing quite at odds with their professed love for fellow men. The eugenic idea that there were fundamental biological differences dividing the human race reflected and justified the social distance which existed between the well-to-do reformers and the socially inadequate. The concept of "defective classes" enabled the reformer to place a portion of mankind outside the pale of normal human sympathy. How could one feel a kinship with an hereditary criminal if, as Professor J. J. Blaisdell of Beloit College asserted, he belonged to "a peculiar species, out of the reach of the influences and controlled by the reverse of the principles of the rest of men?"¹¹ Thus, W. S. Main, a state senator, could declare before the Wisconsin Conference: "If all these [hereditary criminals] could be marshalled into one great camp and with a mill stone around each of their necks, cast into the midst of the sea the people would be relieved of their weightiest burden and the pathways of coming generations brightened with hope as never before."¹²

⁹"The Defective Classes," in *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy*, VIII:184-185 (1888-1891). This paper was read before the Wisconsin Conference in 1889. The Rev. Wright was a nationally recognized reformer and an advanced eugenicist. In his presidential address to the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, Wright advised: "Unless we are prepared for drastic measures of wholesale death or equally wholesale castration, we must cut off defective heredity by the more expensive but more humane method of wholesale imprisonment." "The New Philanthropy," in *Proceedings of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections*, XXIII:5 (1896).

¹⁰"The Social Aspects of Pauperism and Crime," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference of Charities and Corrections for 1893*, 53-59.

¹¹"American Prisons in their Relation to the Reformation of Criminals," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1888*, 106.

¹²"Criminals and their Treatment," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1890*, 28. Typescript in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin library.

While drowning as a eugenic measure was not endorsed by the Wisconsin Conference, it did accept the principle that procreation by the "defective classes" should be prohibited. In 1893 the Conference's Committee on Reformatories and Penitentiaries addressed itself to the problem of "criminal heredity." Considering the alternatives for restricting the propagation of children "of the wretched class of physically predestined criminals," the Committee speculated that "The time may indeed not be far distant when the privilege of marriage will have such limitations put upon it, and such penalties will be affixed to concubinage, as in some measure to subdue the growing harvest of criminality, whose accumulations are outstripping far the growth of the population of virtuous sons and daughters."

But the radical innovation which the Committee broached was that of sterilization; it delicately asked: "Shall we deprive them of the power of multiplying—children, adult, aged—found certain to be criminals, and then at length set them free, the current of their blood quieted and the virility, which carries to the enterprises even of crime, taken away by the hand of the surgeon?"¹⁵ The Committee added that this alternative might in time become "no insignificant factor in the management of crime." Since the more subtle surgical procedure of vasectomy had not yet been devised the Committee was advocating castration, primarily for eugenic reasons, but with an expected therapeutic effect as well. Two decades were to pass before sterilization became accepted as public policy.

However, before the end of the nineteenth century the Wisconsin eugenists did achieve their first legislative triumph in the establishment of a Home for the Feeble-Minded. As early as 1888, H. H. Hart, secretary of the Minnesota State Board of Charities and Corrections, had advised his Wisconsin colleagues that "thousands of paupers can be prevented" by confining feeble-minded girls to an institution until they were past the child-bearing age.¹⁶ Two years later, H. H. Giles, a member

of the Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform, endorsed a school for the feeble-minded as a measure of "wise economy and enlightened philanthropy." "The law of heredity," he asserted, required the confinement of "those of weak intellects and strong passions, thus limiting the reproduction of inherited idiocy."¹⁷ The most ardent advocate of a school for the feeble-minded was Albert Salisbury, president of the Normal School at Whitewater. Under his leadership the Wisconsin Teachers Association lobbied for many years for the enactment of this measure. In addresses before the Wisconsin Conference and as chairman of its Committee on the Custody and Training of the Feeble-Minded, Salisbury argued for the establishment of an institution on the eugenic grounds that hereditary imbecility was a major source of the "deficient and delinquent classes."¹⁸ After years of persistent agitation, a law was enacted in 1895 founding a Home for the Feeble-Minded at Chippewa Falls.¹⁷

Of great significance for the eugenic cause in Wisconsin was the selection of Dr. Albert W. Wilmarth as the first superintendent of this institution. Wilmarth came to Wisconsin from the Pennsylvania Training School for the Feeble-Minded at Elwyn, where he had been an associate of Isaac N. Kerlin and Martin W. Barr, both authorities on mental defectives. During his work at Elwyn, Wilmarth earned the reputation "of having made the greatest number of pathological investigations of idiotic brains that has as yet been made by any one pathologist."¹⁸ Wilmarth brought with him to Wisconsin the concept of the "moral imbecile," a classification of defectives developed by Kerlin and Barr. The "moral imbecile" ac-

¹⁵ "Provision for the Care of Idiots," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1890*, 109-110. Giles urged that "yet more heroic measures" be applied in the case of mentally defective males.

¹⁷ "Report on Custody and Training of the Feeble-Minded," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1894*, 181-183.

¹⁸ *Wisconsin Session Laws, 1895*, Ch. 138; James E. Heg, "The Feeble-Minded of Wisconsin," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1897*, 23. Heg, who was president of the State Board of Control of Wisconsin which administered the state's mental and penal institutions, attributed the establishment of the Home for the Feeble-Minded in large part to the influence of the Wisconsin Conference.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 28; Fink, *Op. cit.*, 213-215.

¹⁶ *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1893*, 152-160. Professor Blaisdell was chairman of the Committee.

¹⁷ "Pauperism, its prevention, its relief and its cure," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1888*, 86-87.

According to Wilmarth was the offspring of ancestors who had for generations indulged their instincts and appetites while subordinating their reason and will power. Because their forefathers had weakened the portions of the brain which governed the "higher mental functions," the "moral imbeciles" were deficient in will power and unable to resist their "animal emotions." Mental degeneracy was thus aggravated from generation to generation, while the defectives multiplied promiscuously filling the ranks of "insane, feeble-minded, habitual criminals, habitual unchaste women, the pauper, the tramp."¹⁹

During his twenty-three years as superintendent of the Home for the Feeble-Minded, Wilmarth waged a one-man crusade for eugenic measures. In his reports, before the Wisconsin Conference of Charities and Corrections, before the State Medical Society, to the Legislative Visiting Committee, he never missed an opportunity to impress on his audience the urgent necessity for restraining reproduction by mental defectives. More than any other person, Wilmarth was responsible for winning Wisconsin for eugenics.

ALTHOUGH the Progressive Era is conventionally defined as the period between 1900 and 1916, the roots of many Progressive reforms are to be found in the preceding decade. This is certainly true of the eugenics movement in Wisconsin. During the 1890's, the interpretation of most forms of social inadequacy as expressions of defective heredity became fixed in the minds of many social workers, reformers, educators, and physicians. For example, in its report for 1896, the Wisconsin State Board of Control concluded:

The element of heredity enters so largely into the problem of general degeneracy that it would seem to demand the special attention of law-makers. Vice, pauperism, idiocy, and insanity are to an alarming degree hereditary and are closely allied. The day may possibly come when public opinion shall demand that the pruning knife be applied

in order that the taint of degeneracy may not affect the entire body politic. To protect itself society may reach the conclusion that criminals, paupers and the insane shall not be allowed to again mingle with the world, with the ability to reproduce their species and continue their kind into further generations.²⁰

Dr. Richard Dewey, chief physician of the Milwaukee Hospital for the Insane, put the matter in more dramatic terms when he told the State Medical Society in 1899 that "the human ovum or spermatozoid may be regarded as a microbe of all degenerate diseases, and the act of procreation, an act of conveying diseased infection." Yet he thought legislation providing for "the permanent imprisonment, electrocution, or castration of insane, imbecile, epileptic, inebriate, or degenerate beings" must, because of public sentiment, "at present, fail of enactment, or if enacted, fail of enforcement."²¹ After 1900, the eugenists intensified their efforts to convince the people of Wisconsin that severe measures were essential to curb the flood of degeneracy which was threatening to inundate society.

Negative eugenics, i.e., the restriction of procreation among the "unfit," rested on three policies; segregation, restrictive marriage laws, and sterilization. The first of these had been partially realized with the establishment of the Home for the Feeble-Minded. But as Wilmarth tirelessly reiterated in his reports and addresses, the facilities at Chippewa Falls were inadequate to accommodate all of the feeble-minded girls in the state. Condemning this situation as "unwise economy," Wilmarth called for state guardianship of all imbeciles to curtail their increase, with "a corresponding diminution of the public tax, and a constant decrease of a class from which the ranks of tramps, paupers, and petty criminals are constantly recruited." This eugenic argument was echoed in the recommendations of the Legislative Visiting Committee and the State

¹⁹ Wilmarth tirelessly reiterated this theory of moral imbecility as in: "Factors to be Considered in the Examination of the Feeble-Minded," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, V:468-474 (February, 1907).

²⁰ State Board of Control of Wisconsin, *Third Biennial Report* (Madison, 1896), 33.

²¹ Richard Dewey, "Remarks on Mental Contagion and Infection," in *Transactions of the State Medical Society of Wisconsin*, XXXIII:502-506 (1899).

Board of Control for increased accommodations for the feeble-minded.²²

Concurrently, a campaign was waged to institutionalize the epileptics. As Dr. William F. Wegge told the trustees and superintendents of the county asylums for the insane, "It is a quite generally accepted belief . . . that epileptics are particularly liable to transmit a hereditary taint to their off-spring. . . ."²³ Persuaded of the hereditary basis of epilepsy, the State Board of Control in 1908 urged the segregation of epileptics, since "to prevent their procreation is a great and pressing need."²⁴ Responding to these eugenic appeals, the state legislature gradually expanded the facilities at Chippewa Falls, and finally, provided for a second institution, the Southern Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded and Epileptic.²⁵

With the rapid growth of the institutional population, it became apparent that segregation was not the solution to the eugenic predicament. The cost of institutionalizing all defectives was prohibitive. How could degenerates be allowed to run free in society and yet be prevented from perpetuating their kind? "Deny them the privilege of marriage," the eugenicists replied. In his report for 1904, Wilmarth praised the restrictive marriage law of Connecticut as a measure which Wisconsin might profitably adopt. The following year, he presented a statement of reasons for restricting the marriage of defectives. Such a law, Wilmarth advised the legislators, would "save our industrious citizens many thousands of dollars each year, and our children much more . . ." and would ". . . diminish enormously suffering, poverty and crime in the community."²⁶ Such an appeal which held out the promise of both economy and social reform was not long

to be resisted. In 1907 the state legislature not only prohibited the marriage of epileptic, feeble-minded and insane persons, but declared it a misdemeanor for such defectives to have sexual intercourse as well as to marry and for anyone to unite such persons in marriage. Subsequently the law was made more rigorous. By a statute of 1913, applicants for marriage licenses were required to sign a statement to the effect that neither party was epileptic, insane or idiotic, and that the couple was not nearer of kin than second cousins.²⁷

Eugenic marriage laws, however, as Dr. Wilmarth admitted, were difficult to enforce; and the defectives, it was said, blithely reproduced out of wedlock.²⁸ What was needed was literally a foolproof measure to prevent the birth of new generations of incompetents. Sterilization was such a measure; Wilmarth described it as "the only sure method of curtailment."²⁹ From 1907 on, the Wisconsin eugenicists clamored with increasing vehemence for the enactment of a sterilization statute. It is significant that this intensification of the eugenics crusade coincided with the high tide of Progressive reform in the State.

THE YEAR 1907 marked a milestone for eugenics both in the United States and in Wisconsin, witnessing as it did the passage of the first sterilization law by the state of Indiana and the introduction of the first sterilization bill in the Wisconsin legislature. In the closing days of 1906, Elmore T. Elver, a member of the Legislative Visiting Committee and young Madison attorney, announced on December 23 that the Committee had decided to report a bill providing for sterilization as the only way to arrest the increase of the insane, feeble-minded, and degenerate. Anticipating strong opposition, Elver added that he would seek expert opinion in preparation for the debates

²² Home for the Feeble-Minded, *Fourth Biennial Report* (Madison, 1905), 378; Board of Control, *Eighth Biennial Report* (Madison, 1906), 15; "Report of the Legislative Visiting Committee" in Wis. Leg., 49th sess., *Senate Journal*, 923.

²³ *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Trustees and Superintendents of the County Asylums of Wisconsin*, 1911, 55.

²⁴ Board of Control, *Ninth Biennial Report* (Madison, 1908), 3.

²⁵ *Wisconsin Session Laws, 1913*, Ch. 689.

²⁶ Home for the Feeble-Minded, *Fourth Biennial Report*, 376; "Reasons why the Marriage of the Feeble-Minded, Epileptic, Insane and Idiotic Should Be Restricted," (1905?). Typescript in the library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

²⁷ *Wisconsin Session Laws, 1907*, Ch. 642; *Ibid.*, 1913, Ch. 709; "Report of the Committee on Public Policy and Legislation of the State Medical Society of Wisconsin," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, XIII:51 (June, 1914).

²⁸ *Report of the Legislative Visiting Committee* (Madison, 1905), 7.

²⁹ Home for the Feeble-Minded, *Seventh Biennial Report* (Madison, 1911), 242.

on the bill.³⁰ One of these experts, E. A. Ross, professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin and staunch Progressive, asserted that the current of favorable opinion on the sterilization of the unfit had become very strong in recent years among sociologists, philanthropists, charity workers, and penologists. With characteristic tough-mindedness, Ross wrote that "For my own part, I am entirely in favor of it. The objections to it are essentially sentimental, and will not bear inspection. Sterilization is not nearly so terrible as hanging a man, and the chances of sterilizing the fit are not nearly so great, as are the chances of hanging the innocent. In introducing the policy, the wedge should have a very thin end indeed. Sterilization should at first be applied only to extreme cases, where the commitments and the record pile up an overwhelming case. As the public become accustomed to it, and it is seen to be salutary and humane, it will be possible gradually to extend its scope until it fills its legitimate sphere of application."³¹

Heartened by this strong academic backing, the Legislative Visiting Committee endorsed sterilization as a measure to protect future generations from the burden of an "increasing volume of defectives." Its report, which ended on a note of urgency, said in part that "Too much stress cannot be placed upon the present danger to the race and rational measures for the eradication from our midst of the dangerous and hurtful classes. The public must be made to see that radical measures are necessary."³²

On February 12, 1907, Elver introduced a bill providing for the establishment of a board of examiners which could authorize the sterilization of idiotic, imbecile, and epileptic inmates of the state and county institutions. A long and spirited debate in the assembly ensued. The opposition was summed up by one critic who described sterilization as "cruel, inhuman, and contrary to divine law." Echo-

ing Ross, Elver scornfully replied that no reason except a sentimental one could be urged against sterilization of defectives. Couching his argument in economic terms, Elver noted that the care of defectives cost Wisconsin \$400,000 a year. He warned that the taxpayers' bill must increase if sterilization were not adopted. The assembly finally approved the bill by a vote of 36 to 24, but the opposition had nullified the measure by striking out the provision for compensation of the board of examiners. The senate allowed the emasculated bill to die.³³ Confident of their ultimate victory, the eugenists viewed this defeat with equanimity. As Dr. T. W. Williams of Milwaukee wrote, the fate of the present bill was of no great consequence. The important fact was the increasing education of the laity and medical profession in eugenic principles which insured that sterilization was "destined to become a universal rule of practice, just as vaccination."³⁴

The eugenists returned to the fray in the next session of the Wisconsin legislature. On February 23, 1909, Platt Whitman, banker, lawyer, and Republican assemblyman from Iowa County, introduced two eugenically inspired bills. One provided for the establishment of a chair of race culture at the University of Wisconsin for the study of human degeneracy. The other was a sterilization measure which differed from the 1907 bill solely in the addition of criminals as potential subjects. Both bills were lost.³⁵ The Madison *Democrat*, an enthusiastic advocate of eugenics, remarked that, "In Wisconsin the [sterilization] bill had many friends but aroused considerable ecclesiastical opposition, for just what sound reason is inconceivable to practical

³⁰ Milwaukee *Sentinel*, December 23, 1906; in "Clippings: Sterilization of Defectives," in the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library. Hereafter cited as "Clippings."

³¹ Letter to Charles McCarthy, January 30, 1907; unsigned copy in "Clippings." Dr. McCarthy was the aggressively Progressive director of the Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library.

³² "Report of the Legislative Visiting Committee" in Wis. Leg., 48th Sess., *Senate Journal*, 263.

³³ Milwaukee *Sentinel*, April 26, 1907; Madison *Democrat*, May 22, 1907; in "Clippings." The legislature did pass a joint resolution also introduced by Elver authorizing an investigation by the Board of Control into the alleged increase of mental defectives. *Wisconsin Joint Resolutions, 1907*, Jt. Res. No. 103, A. The *Wisconsin Medical Journal* welcomed this investigation as "an inquiry of great value," since the tendency of the feeble-minded rapidly to reproduce their kind portended "serious social evils" unless it were checked. See VI:9 (February, 1908).

³⁴ Milwaukee *Sentinel*, May 25, 1907; in "Clippings."

³⁵ Wis. Leg., 49th Sess., *Assembly Journal*, 281-282, 558, 898; *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 17, 1909. According to the *Journal*, these bills were the result of the Board of Control's investigation of mental defectives and had the backing of that body,

men of the world." But it took comfort in the fact that "the secular press, the magazines, medical publications, and medical societies are discussing the matter with freedom and frequency and creating a wholesome public sentiment which must soon be reflected in favorable legislation."³⁶

Indeed, in Wisconsin from 1909 on, there was a crescendo in the advocacy of eugenic policies. More effective segregation of defectives and more stringent marriage restrictions were agitated, but the sterilization issue became increasingly the center of discussion. Among the medical profession the eugenists found a particularly fertile field for their proselyting since eugenics provided the physician with a biologically based program of reform, one congenial to his professional and social point of view. Responding to the Progressive temper the medical profession had assumed responsibility for the larger problems of public health, as in the crusade against the "white plague." Physicians were now urged to exercise leadership in the campaign against racial degeneracy. As Dr. Wilmarth admonished his colleagues; "This subject rests more heavily on us, gentlemen, than on any other class of citizens, because it comes under the head of 'Preventive Medicine,' and its fruits are, frequently, long lives of poverty, suffering, crime and foul disease. What shall we do with it?"³⁷ Wisconsin's physicians proved to be ready and eager to accept this challenge, although it is true that the State Medical Society in 1909 voted unanimously to table a motion which would have put it on record as endorsing the vasectomy of "confirmed criminals and other defectives."³⁸ This vote, however, did not reflect skepticism regarding the eugenic doctrines, but doubt as to the wisdom of extending sterilization to criminals.

The medical profession's acceptance of eugenic ideas is clearly indicated by their favorable reception before the State Medical Society,

³⁶ *Madison Democrat*, November 30, 1909; in "Clippings." Despite its name, this newspaper was politically independent.

³⁷ "Results of Heredity and their Bearing on Poverty, Crime and Disease," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, IX:267 (October, 1910).

³⁸ "Transactions of the 63rd Annual Meeting of the State Medical Society," in *Ibid.*, VIII:99 (July, 1909).

and by the total absence of dissent. Dr. Arthur W. Rogers of Oconomowoc, for example, proclaimed sterilization as "the best promise of improving the race" and called upon the State Medical Society to sponsor a law enacting this eugenic measure. Dr. W. H. Washburn of Milwaukee, recalling with pride that he had advocated the emasculation of the degenerate as early as 1894, presented the alternatives for Western Civilization—eugenics or extinction. These and other enthusiastic eugenists were joined by the president of the State Medical Society in 1911, Dr. Byron M. Caples of Waukesha, who endorsed sterilization as indispensable since "the hereditary tendency of these classes (insane, idiots, imbeciles, sexual perverts, defectives, epileptics, rapists, criminals) to reproduce their kind is unquestioned."³⁹

BUT the most authoritative exposition of eugenics was presented to Wisconsin's medical men by Dr. Frank I. Drake of the Wisconsin State Hospital for the Insane. A eugenist of the most extreme kind, Drake extolled Galton as the prophet of "a new philanthropy, a new religious tenet, a new loyalty." Portraying degeneracy as a cancerous growth eating away at the vitals of the body politic, Drake criticized the efforts of reformers to ameliorate the environment since improved hygienic and social conditions only enhanced the survival of unfit stocks, thus checking "the natural purification of the state." To quote him further; "Nurture can never remove Nature's stamp of inferiority. The time and money of modern philanthropy are expended wholly in the conservation of the unfit; what the nation needs, alike from an economic and humanitarian viewpoint, is the prevention of their propagation." Denouncing the "absurd fetish of 'personal liberty'" which sanctioned the marriage and reproduction of the unfit, Drake pronounced sterilization as the simplest, most humane, and most economic means of preventing the propagation of degeneracy. Then, pointing out that "the most progressive men in and out of the profession" endorsed

³⁹ A. W. Rogers, "Possibilities of Prophylactic Measures in the Development of Insanity," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, IX:207, 213 (September, 1910); *ibid.*, IX:268-269 (October, 1910); B. M. Caples, "Annual Presidential Address," in *ibid.*, X:4 (June, 1911).

sterilization he not only called on the State Medical Society to add its stamp of approval, but also urged that the State University send out lecturers to overcome the public ignorance of eugenic principles.⁴⁰ These views were heartily applauded by the medical convention, which proceeded to adopt a resolution urging the establishment of courses in eugenics at the University.⁴¹

The contribution of Dr. Drake and his colleagues to the campaign for a sterilization measure in Wisconsin was substantial. Through state and county medical meetings, through medical publications,⁴² and through the press the doctors disseminated the doctrines of eugenics, lending to them the prestige of their profession. It was thus a matter of self-congratulation when the president of the State Medical Society hailed the enactment of the sterilization statute in 1913 as "monumental work."⁴³ The physicians' sense of gratification was enhanced by the knowledge that the author of the measure was one of them, Dr. George E. Hoyt.

The drive for a sterilization act was also greatly assisted by the establishment of the Wisconsin Branch of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology in 1909. This organization brought together professors, businessmen, editors, ministers, law enforcement officials, and others to reconsider the problem of crime in the light of current thought in anthropology and sociology. One of the first issues to which the group addressed itself was the relative weight to be given heredity as against environment in the causation of crimi-

nal behavior. Since heredity was acknowledged to be a factor in the making of criminals, a committee was created to study the question, "Should the sterilization of criminals in proper cases be authorized by this state?" At the 1910 conference, the committee gave its answer, "No, the sterilization of criminals even in proper cases is a practice not endorsed at present or for many years to come by public opinion." Though admitting that there were "proper cases," the committee thought an error in the determination of which were proper and which were not would be inhuman and intolerable.⁴⁴

Aroused by such lack of faith in the "science" of eugenics, the followers of Galton secured the appointment of a new committee to consider the question: "Should the sterilization of habitual criminals, imbeciles and lunatics be authorized by law?" The committee's reply was a foregone conclusion. Its chairman was Dr. Wilmarth, while the other members included Elver, the author of the sterilization bill of 1907; Dr. Charles Gorst, an advocate of sterilization; and Dr. Adin Sherman, also an adherent of eugenic views. The report of this committee in 1912, a classic statement of the eugenic doctrines, proclaimed that "the doctrine of hereditary transmission is now incontestably established" and presented as evidence twenty-two charts of family pedigrees illustrating the recurrence in successive generations of feeble-mindedness, alcoholism, criminality, sexual immorality, and epilepsy. The Wisconsin Branch, its doubts swept away by this wealth of "scientific data," unanimously adopted the committee's recommendations that the legislature provide for the sterilization of inmates of the state's mental and penal institutions; the establishment of a chair of eugenics at the State University; the creation of a laboratory for the study of mental diseases; and the compilation of genealogies of inmates of state institutions.⁴⁵ By placing such an influential organization in the eugenic

⁴⁰ "On Human Eugenics," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, X:626-632; "The National Importance of Eugenics," in *ibid.*, XI:142-145 (October, 1912). Drake went so far as to advocate the reorganization of society along eugenic lines into distinct castes which would not interbreed. As the lawgiver for such a society Drake nominated: "He who has a comprehensive grasp of all the factors of human biology..."

⁴¹ "Transactions of the 66th Annual Meeting of the State Medical Society," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, XI:50 (October, 1912).

⁴² The *Wisconsin Medical Recorder*, published in Janesville, was also heartily in favor of sterilization. Its editor, Dr. J. P. Thorne, was particularly devoted to the theories of Cesare Lombroso. See "editorial," XIII:372 (November, 1909).

⁴³ A. J. Patek, "Annual Presidential Address," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, XII:135 (October, 1913).

⁴⁴ Wisconsin Branch of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology, *Report of Committee on the Trial of the Issue of Mental Responsibility—Sterilization* (n.p., 1910).

⁴⁵ *Proceedings of Joint Meeting of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology and the Wisconsin Branch, 1912*, 62, 191-216.

ranks, this action lent tremendous impetus to the campaign for a sterilization law.

As in the 1890's, the "Wisconsin Conference of Charities and Corrections provided yet another forum in which the eugenic ideas were aired. Among others, George B. Mangold, associate director of the St. Louis School of Social Economy, advocated the adoption of eugenic policies to eliminate all inherited defects. He, like Dr. Drake, was angered by the appeal to "individual liberty" as an objection to eugenic measures. The price of such tender concern for the rights of individuals, he warned, would be "racial deterioration, stupid citizenship and social disintegration." These views were seconded by Dr. C. A. Harper, secretary of the State Board of Health, who told the assembled social workers that a sterilization law would be a great step towards improving Wisconsin's social and moral conditions.⁴⁰ The president of the Conference in 1912, the Rev. Walter F. Greenman, added his plea for action to halt propagation by "defectives." The Conference responded with a resolution directing its committee on social legislation to work for eugenic measures before the next legislature.⁴¹ Having agitated for tenement house, child labor, and other social reforms, this body now officially espoused policies based on hereditary determinism for dealing with the socially inadequate.

ALTHOUGH pressure was exerted upon the University of Wisconsin to devote greater effort to the teaching of eugenics, the doctrines of Galton by no means lacked champions on Bascom Hill. In the department of sociology, Professors E. A. Ross and J. L. Gillin expounded the hereditary basis of the "defective classes" in their courses on "Criminology and Penology" and "Charities and Corrections," while in the department of zoology, Professors Michael F. Guyer and Samuel J. Holmes stressed the potency of biological inheritance in their courses on "Heredity and Eugenics"

and "Problems of Evolution." Through correspondence courses and lectures of the University Extension Division, the ideas held by these four men were broadcast throughout the state.⁴²

The endorsement of eugenics by Charles R. Van Hise, president of the University and a nationally recognized leader in the conservation movement, attested to its academic respectability. In an influential series of lectures on the conservation of natural resources, Van Hise prescribed eugenic policies as the best means of conserving human resources. He proposed that "as a first very moderate step toward the development of the stamina of the human race, defectives should be precluded from continuing the race by some proper method." Admitting that sterilization might be the proper method, Van Hise insisted that whatever method was chosen, "it should be thoroughgoing."⁴³ Thus the State University, which was a powerful force in directing Wisconsin Progressivism, cast its weight on the side of eugenic reform.

By 1913 the agitation for eugenic measures which had begun in the 1890's reached its climax. The reiteration of the cry of "Sterilization or racial disaster!" from such diverse rostrums must have had a cumulative impact

⁴⁰For course descriptions see various issues of *The University of Wisconsin Catalogue* and the *Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, Extension Division*. These faculty members were among the most influential advocates of eugenic policies in the country. They were unanimous in recommending repressive measures against "defectives." Ross's forthright endorsement of sterilization has been quoted. In his much used textbook, *Poverty and Dependency* (New York, 1921), Gillin prescribed sterilization for the feeble-minded (376-387). The author of several books concerned with the issue of racial degeneracy, Holmes called for a more aggressive campaign of sterilization of "undesirable elements" in *The Trend of Race* (London, 1921), 381. Guyer wrote an eugenic best-seller, *Being Well-Born* (Indianapolis, 1916). Unlike his colleagues, however, he expressed doubts regarding the practice of sterilization, given the existing state of knowledge of specific types of defective heredity, but favored a strict policy of sequestration (p. 435).

⁴¹*The Conservation of Natural Resources in the United States* (New York, 1911), 370. Frederic C. Howe quoted Van Hise as follows: "If we applied to humankind what we know about the breeding of animals, the feeble-minded would disappear in a generation, while the insane and criminal classes would be reduced to a fraction of their present number." See Howe, *Wisconsin, an Experiment in Democracy* (New York, 1912), 151.

⁴²"State Care of Defectives," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1911*, 40-47; "The Anti-Tuberculosis Association," in *ibid.*, 165. Dr. Wilmarth also brought to this Conference his message of the urgent necessity to curb the increase of "moral imbeciles." See "The Feeble-Minded," in *ibid.*, 51-54.

⁴³"President's Address," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1912*, 12, 91.

on the thinking of those who considered themselves "well-informed" and "progressive-minded." Physicians, social workers, reformers, professors, editors, and ministers were calling on the legislature to strike down the hideous monster of degeneracy. Legislators had harkened to these voices when they had urged the enactment of advanced social legislation; why not do the same in the vital matter of racial betterment? Moreover, sterilization was no longer as radical an innovation as it had been in 1907. By 1913, eleven states had adopted this measure. Others must have felt as did Dr. Charles Gorst, superintendent of the State Hospital for the Insane, who, pointing to the initiative of these states, admonished Wisconsin to "wake up and be equally as progressive."⁵⁰

Rebounding from their defeat in the 1911 session, when a sterilization measure was lost by one vote, the eugenists pressed the attack in 1913 confident that this time Galton's truth would prevail. Senator George E. Hoyt, physician, bank president, and independent Republican of Menomonee Falls, had the honor of introducing the bill which authorized the sterilization of inmates of the state's mental and penal institutions. The *Madison Democrat* enthusiastically hailed his initiative in a news story headed "Hoyt to Halt Crime, Insanity and Imbecility."⁵¹

The opponents of sterilization, however, denounced this renewed attempt to solve social problems with a scalpel. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Milwaukee, in a letter which was read during the course of legislative debate, stated that while the Church had not yet taken a dogmatic position on sterilization he was opposed to it "in principle as an interference with personal independence and individual liberty." In continuation he wrote that "The state has no right over my body as given me by my creator. The state can protect itself against defective procreation by forbidding such parties to marry at all, or only under

certain safeguards. In my opinion it would be best to defer such legislation until the whole matter has been more fully discussed."⁵² The *Milwaukee Free Press*, the organ of Wisconsin Progressivism, found the Archbishop's objections to sterilization "to say the least, amazing," and proceeded to lecture the prelate on the "vast difference between liberty in the sound, normal being and liberty in the abnormal, degenerate, defective being." Concluding on a Rooseveltian note, the paper said: "In the case of the latter, as in the case of all conduct that militates against the well-being of society and race, the right of the state to control, limit and confine is being increasingly recognized."⁵³

Opposition to sterilization was also voiced by the Socialists through their journal, the *Milwaukee Leader*. Referring contemptuously to eugenics as a pseudo-science which was the antithesis of the science of Socialism, the *Leader* exclaimed: "Drunkness, prostitution, poverty, and the long train of evils flowing from capitalism are ascribed to vicious and feeble-minded and epileptic ancestors of those who lack the cunning and the greed to enable them to attain 'success' under the competitive system."⁵⁴ It condemned sterilization as a return to tribal and ancient practices. Some of Wisconsin's Socialists, however, found the logic of Galton's biological determinism more compelling than that of Marx's historical materialism. Of the five Social Democrats in the legislature, four voted in favor of the sterilization bill.⁵⁵

Despite these articulate protests, the eugenic forces carried the day. The senate approved the bill with little discussion by a vote of 22 to 3, while after a vigorous debate the assembly passed the measure by the close vote of 39 to 37. Scrutiny of the vote reveals that the Republicans were overwhelmingly in favor of the measure, the Democrats just as solidly opposed. Among those voting "aye" were many

⁵⁰ State Hospital for the Insane, *Fourteenth Biennial Report* (Madison, 1911), 9.

⁵¹ *Madison Democrat*, June 27, 1913; in "Clippings." Hoyt was a member of the Legislative Visiting Committee which in 1913 recommended a sterilization law "to prevent the increase in our state of the propagation of the mentally feeble. . . ." *Report* (Madison, 1913), 7.

⁵² *Milwaukee Free Press*, July 26, 1913; in "Clippings." It is interesting to note that the Archbishop tacitly admitted the eugenic case against procreation by "defectives."

⁵³ *Ibid.*, July 27, 1913; in "Clippings."

⁵⁴ *Milwaukee Leader*, August 1, 1913; in "Clippings."

⁵⁵ *Wis. Leg.*, 51st Sess., *Senate Journal*, 1113; *Assembly Journal*, 1634.

of the Progressive leaders such as Thomas J. Mahon, secretary of the Wisconsin Branch of the Progressive Republican League, Fred L. Holmes, business manager of *La Follette's Weekly*, and the Reverend A. E. Frederick, a Methodist minister active in many reform movements.⁵⁶ On July 30, Governor Francis E. McGovern signed the bill into law. The last Progressive-controlled legislature and the last Progressive governor had adopted sterilization as public policy in the state.⁵⁷

FROM this history of the eugenics movement in Wisconsin it is evident that sterilization *was* a Progressive measure. It was taken up and agitated by reform groups and organizations; it was advocated by Progressive leaders and publications; and it was enacted by a Progressive legislature and administration. Yet the question remains: Why were the Progressives so receptive to eugenic ideas?

Although the eugenic assumption of the primacy of heredity in determining the quality of human beings ran counter to the Progressive thesis that improved social conditions produced better persons, the "nature-nurture" conundrum did not appear to trouble the average Progressive. Eclectic and pragmatic, he could combine eugenic and environmental reforms without fretting over logical inconsistency. Galton had his true believers in Wisconsin, such as Dr. Drake, who would have suppressed all philanthropic and reform efforts not in accord with eugenic principles. Such doctrinaires were few, however; most Wisconsin Progressives were of a mind with Professor Ross that tenement-housing codes, labor legislation, and sterilization each had its place in the reform program.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Wis. Leg., 51st Sess., *Senate Journal*, 1113; *Assembly Journal*, 1634. In the combined vote of both houses, 49 Republicans, 8 Democrats, and 4 Social Democrats voted "aye," while 14 Republicans, 25 Democrats, and one Social Democrat voted "no."

⁵⁷ R. S. Maxwell, *La Follette and the Rise of the Progressives in Wisconsin* (Madison, 1956), 149. In this history of Wisconsin Progressivism, Maxwell fails to mention the eugenic agitation.

⁵⁸ Although Ross endorsed sterilization, he found the source of many cases of dependency not in defective human nature but in "adverse social conditions." It was the task of the reformer, he added, to do away with these conditions. "The Relation of the Social Worker and the Reformer," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1912*, 60-61.

As an intellectual creed, eugenics appealed to the progressive-minded as modern and challenging. It was endowed with the glamour which Darwin had lent to the science of biology. Galton and his followers couched their arguments in the terminology of evolution, and in their numerous studies of family histories the principle of hereditary transmission of social virtues and vices did indeed appear to be an incontestably established biological fact. Eugenics further suited the contemporary temper, with its naturalistic image of man as animal inextricably involved in the cosmic drama of evolution, yet able, by taking thought, to control the direction of his own development. The Progressive reformer with his faith in "Science" as the means to his humanitarian ends found the eugenic teachings convincing and congenial, particularly since he was preoccupied with the purpose of preventing social problems. Eugenics promised to dam the flow of crime, poverty, and vice at its headwaters. And, as Dr. Wilmarth asked, what could be more humane than preventing the birth of a child condemned by defective heredity to a life of squalor, ignorance, evil, and idiocy?⁵⁹

Yet this eugenic reasoning led the Progressives to espouse policies which normally would have been considered brutal and inhuman. Life imprisonment, denial of the rights of marriage and mating, surgical interference with the reproductive organs—all were accepted as legitimate ways of dealing with the feeble-minded, the epileptic, the insane, the minor delinquent as well as the hardened criminal. The acceptance of these harsh measures reflected something of the deep anxiety aroused by the fear of racial degeneracy. It also expressed the tough-mindedness of the Progressives who believed that to bring about the good society one must follow the dictates of science, not of the heart. Time and again, the advocates of sterilization warned that "maudlin senti-

⁵⁹ Home for the Feeble-Minded, *Seventh Biennial Report*, 243. The editor of the *Wisconsin Humane Herald*, Kate Clark Greene, found this reasoning persuasive. The *Herald* supported the sterilization measure and other eugenic policies. See I:3 (August, 1913).

ment" must not be allowed to obstruct the application of eugenic principles.⁶⁰

Eugenics was also in agreement with the Progressive outlook in its collectivist emphasis. Eugenist and Progressive agreed that *laissez faire* would result in disaster and that the interests of the individual must be subordinate to the welfare of society. Both were willing to restrict personal liberty in behalf of the corporate good, and both turned to the State as the instrument of reform. The eugenic proposal that the most intimate of human relationships be subjected to public regulation went far beyond the Progressive's demands for anti-trust and labor legislation. Yet the reformer's assumption that individualism must be curbed in industry and politics facilitated his acceptance of the same principle in the sphere of human breeding.⁶¹

Eugenics further appealed to the middle and upper-class Progressives because it offered a reform program which sanctioned rather than condemned the existing social order. According to Galton social position was a fairly accurate index to hereditary quality. It was reassuring to the well-to-do to think that their place in the class structure rested on biological laws, not on social advantage. Yet the status insecurity engendered by the fluidity of American society was revealed by the anxiety voiced over the failure of business and professional families to have as many children as did working-class families. These class differences in the birth rate were interpreted as

constituting a racial crisis which rendered imperative the enactment of eugenic policies.⁶²

The eugenics movement, of course, had a basis in social reality. The emergence of a complex urban industrial society greatly increased the number of the socially inadequate, while a heightened social conscience made the public more aware of their unfortunate brethren. To many it did appear that crime, poverty, and disease were about to inundate the country. The raw cities, their slums teeming with recent immigrants, appeared to be breeding places for all social diseases. The social distance which separated the "old stock," upper-class Progressives from the tenement-dwellers must have made plausible the eugenic explanation of urban misery in terms of defective heredity. The eugenic remedies, promising to eradicate social evils while at the same time reducing the tax burden, must have been particularly attractive to reform-minded but property-owning citizens. Therefore it is no wonder that support for eugenic measures in Wisconsin came primarily from those whom the Reverend Daniel Woodward described as "our best people."⁶³

It was these qualities of eugenics, then, which serve to explain the readiness with which it was embraced by Wisconsin Progressives; the congruity between the eugenic doctrines and certain aspects of the Progressive mentality; and the suitability of eugenics in a reform movement basically middle class in leadership and outlook.

⁶⁰ As Dr. Richard C. Cabot, professor at the Harvard Medical College and critic of eugenics, distastefully described this tough-minded attitude: "Eugenics, the teaching of sex facts, and the surgical removal of organs, all those are supposed to represent what is typically 'scientific' as against that which was supposed to represent sentiment, consideration of people's feelings, human shrinking and pity." See "Positive and Negative Elements in Medico-Social Reform," in *Proceedings of the Wisconsin Conference for 1911*, 183.

⁶¹ President Van Hise gave voice to this collectivist ethic: "Each should desire only what is right, and right must be defined as that which is best for the future of the race. In short, the period in which individualism was patriotism in this country has passed by; and the time has come when individualism must become subordinate to responsibility to the many." *Op. cit.*, 377.

⁶² Dr. Gorst, for instance, found in this differential fecundity a threat to the continued domination of the world by the white race. He warned that unless severe measures were taken ". . . a stronger, more virile race will take the place of the white man in leading the races of the world." See *Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Trustees and Superintendents of the County Asylums of Wisconsin, 1913*, 23-24. The Rev. Daniel Woodward, warden of the Wisconsin State Prison, thought this failure of "good" parents to have large families while the "defectives" spawned, the most alarming condition confronting the nation. He was particularly incensed with those women who kept "a poodle dog or a teddy bear out on the streets, in the automobile or on pleasure trips in place of two, three, four and five trained children." See "Wisconsin's Dependents, Defectives and Delinquents," *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Meeting, 1914*, 32.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

DISEASE AND SICKNESS ON THE WISCONSIN

FRONTIER: CHOLERA

By PETER T. HARSTAD

AMONG the many maladies afflicting the settlers of early Wisconsin, the two most troublesome and generally feared were malaria and cholera. Both produced disturbing effects on a populace ignorant of their causes; yet each disease was peculiar in its inception and duration. On the one hand, all that was needed for malaria to spread was that an anopholes mosquito carry a minute organism from one human to another, a process as easily accomplished in an isolated cabin as in a military garrison or a frontier town. Although malaria seldom brought a high mortality rate, it often left its victims ill for months or even years.

On the other hand, cholera, which was spread mainly through the consumption of infected food or water, thrived in a dense population and left a high mortality in its wake even though a victim, if he survived the first few days of an attack, could usually expect a full recovery. What made cholera so terrifying was the swiftness and decisiveness with which it struck. One evening in July, 1852, the editor of a Madison newspaper saw Edward Fisher, one of the town's leading citizens, walking down the street in his usual robust health; the next day he reported Fisher's death in his paper. In Milwaukee, two gentlemen stood on a street corner discussing the progress of cholera in the city. Within two hours one was dead and his body on the way to the cemetery. In Galena, during August of 1850, fifty persons who were in complete health on a Sunday morning were in their graves Tuesday evening.¹ The unlimited stories of horrid death that circulated during the cholera years caused frightening thoughts in the minds of everyone.

Throughout the centuries cholera has been regarded as a mysterious and dangerous disease—an attitude shared by the pioneer residents of Wisconsin who generally attributed its indirect cause to "Providence," a word which appeared often in the newspapers when the plague approached. An Indian agent during the Black Hawk War called it "The Scourging hand of an Almighty Providence." Reverend John H. Ragatz, a circuit-riding minister in the western part of the state, prayed God during the epidemic of 1849 to have mercy on the nation "although we have deserved punishment, for one must fear that thousands die as a result of the plague without being prepared for it. When we see the godlessness which is in vogue everywhere, we must not be surprised if God manifests his judgment and destroys whole nations through war, hunger, and pestilence."²

THE SYMPTOMS of the disease were graphically described in a pamphlet, *The Cholera Beacon*, written by Dr. Elam Stimson, a Dartmouth graduate, and circulated in America after the epidemic of 1832. In it Stimson stated that prior to the outbreak of an epi-

¹ *Daily Argus and Democrat*, Madison, July 28, 1852; Frank A. Flower, *History of Milwaukee, Wisconsin* (Chicago, 1881), 400; *Prairie du Chien Patriot*, September 4, 1850. For a general account of the cholera epidemics of the United States see J. S. Chambers, *The Conquest of Cholera* (New York, 1938).

² "Papers of Indian Agent Boyd—1832," in *Wisconsin State Historical Society Collections*, 12:278 (Madison, 1892); Lowell F. Ragatz, trans., "A Circuit Rider in the Old Northwest: Letters of the Reverend John H. Ragatz," in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 7:98 (Madison, 1923).

demic in any particular community "unusual morbid sensations are experienced by many persons . . . which have commonly been called 'premonitory symptoms.'"

More tangible symptoms, as Stimson explained them, were a faint fluttering sensation in the heart, dizziness, headaches, cramps in the legs, indigestion, a sense of creeping coldness over the surface of the body, and sometimes hot flashes of fever. As the disease progressed, "cholic-like pains" wandered through the body, vomiting became severe, and the bowels uncontrollable. The inside of the mouth was of a darker hue than natural and the patient commonly had an insatiable thirst. Stimson believed that these symptoms varied greatly in different patients, "some cases terminate fatally within two or three days after they are thought to be seriously ill—others linger eight or ten days and often recover."

Stimson went on to describe the last or "bilious attack" phase of cholera. "As this stage approaches, all the symptoms become greatly aggravated and still greater uniformity exists in different cases. The pulse grow small, thready and tremulous, and are soon imperceptible. Spasms are more severe, attacking the legs, thighs and body. The fingers and toes are reduced in size, being shrivelled and purple or black. The veins in the arm are only flat and black lines—a cold, clammy sweat covers the whole surface, and to the feel the skin is like a cold, wet hide. The spasms increase and some patients utter the most piercing cries—the thirst is more and more intense, and of a peculiar kind, the patient often supplicates his friends and physician with the most pitiful tones for 'cold drink' as the last, greatest and only favor in their power to bestow. The eyes are sunken in their sockets and surrounded by a blue or black circle. The voice fails, is dry, hoarse, or only a whisper. . . . After having suffered more than horrible martyrdom, the patient has commonly a great alleviation of suffering before death, being less purging, vomiting and spasms, and he often expresses himself better—or lies in a sort of apopleptic stertor . . . indifferent and unconscious of his fate, and expires with but little additional suffering."³ Such was the death of several thousand Wisconsin residents during the epidemic years 1832, 1834 and 1849-1854.

THE CAUSE of cholera was indeed baffling to people of the first half of the nineteenth century. The theory commonly accepted by the medical profession—the one found in the *Cholera Beacon*—was an attempt at a scientific explanation: "We believe the remote cause of Cholera to be some atmospheric impurity, and the proximate cause an imperfection of the lungs." The *Beacon* went on to explain this proximate cause. "The lungs performing the double function of decomposing atmospheric air, and robbing it of its impure and noxious matter—hydrogen and carbon—but the blood not being fully decarbonized in the lungs, has an adjuvent or supplementary organ in the liver, which extracts another portion of this impurity in the form of bile—to be like the manure of the farmer, converted to a useful and important purpose. And last, the kidneys, like a wastewear to the system, clear the blood of such superfluous matter as is of no further use. . . . In whatever the atmosphere impurity consists, the effect of it when inhaled is to incapacitate the lungs from fully performing their excretory function."⁴

This theory, carried over from the 1832 epidemic, was generally accepted during the epidemic years from 1849 to 1854. Moreover, there were further attempts to justify it. In June 13, 1849, a column appeared in the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, reporting that a Cincinnati chemist had difficulty making sulphuric acid for a number of days. He blamed the unusual atmospheric conditions, claiming that "the air underwent a change a few weeks ago, (about the time Cholera commenced,) . . . There was less oxygen than common, and more carbonic acid gas, which produced the effect referred to [his inability to make sulphuric acid] but that, within a day or two, the proportions have again changed, (the Cholera has sensibly abated) and a healthy condition now exists." The inference was that the same atmospheric abnormalities that made it impossible to produce the acid, also caused the cholera. Thus, with the sanction of the medical profession, backed in this case by a chemist, this theory

³Elam Stimson, M.D., *The Cholera Beacon*, (Dundas, 1835), reprinted in *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Historical Society*, Part 15, (1937), 13-21.

⁴*Ibid.*, 24-25.

was widely proclaimed through Wisconsin and the nation.

Since the medical profession accepted this theory of causation, it followed logically that cholera was not contagious. The *Cholera Beacon* proclaimed it noncontagious, but added that excretions and filth in the sick room rendered the air more unfit for respiration and thus aided cholera's spread. Newspapers which represented the commercial interests repeated this doctrine often, since cholera had the effect of keeping the country people away from the larger trading centers such as Milwaukee when an epidemic raged. Therefore the Milwaukee *Sentinel* printed many authoritative claims that cholera was not contagious.⁵ Apparently the medical profession sincerely believed in the noncommunicable nature of the disease. The St. Louis Medical Society debated the question and in good democratic manner put the question to a vote, twenty-six doctors voting that it was not contagious and ten that it was.⁶

But on this point the general public did not agree with the medical profession. There is much evidence to show that people tended to flee cholera-infested places, as was the case in the village of Wingville. When fifteen cases of cholera broke out there in the summer of 1850, the "greatest consternation prevailed," and the village, containing 100 inhabitants, was entirely deserted.⁷

The very fact that people fled from cholera helped in its spread, and Wisconsin pioneers have left a number of anecdotes concerning the outbreak of the disease in traveling vehicles. Isaac Stephenson of lumbering renown and "Grandmother" Gratiot of lead region fame, to cite examples, were both stricken while traveling; the former recovered but the latter did not. Brought into close contact in boats, trains, and stage coaches, and undoubtedly using a common source of contaminated drinking water, travelers did much to spread the disease from one locality to another. There is a record of seventy-five cholera fatalities on a Missis-

sippi steamer carrying 600 passengers, and it is very likely that the survivors carried the disease elsewhere.⁸ Perhaps a group of Mineral Point residents hit upon the best solution when, instead of fleeing the locality altogether, they left their homes to camp upon a hillside during the worst cholera days.

For a time Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha served as havens of refuge for the wealthier Chicago citizens escaping the plague. In July of 1854 Racine reportedly received a hundred such refugees in a single day. Because the early 1850's were years of intense rivalry between Milwaukee and Chicago for supremacy in the West, the fleeing Chicagoans took considerable ribbing from their neighbors to the north. In defending his move one man said, "I like Chicago, generally speaking. I enjoy living there, but it is not just pleasant to see black crape on seventeen doors within a block from your home."⁹

Pitiful are the stories of sick and dead being abandoned by panic-stricken friends and relatives. As Frank Flower put it, "Life, happiness, and self-preservation were the motive powers. And though happiness was left behind, self-preservation held sway. Families even locked up the dead in their houses and fled." Flower cited an instance of a sickening odor emanating from a closely shut house on the south side of Milwaukee. "The authorities were notified. An officer was sent to break into the house. He did so. In the middle of the room lay the body of an old man, badly decomposed, his cramped body covered with fat, eager, Summer flies." One early Milwaukee resident recalled seeing seven bodies in a single house on Lisbon Avenue when he stopped to water his horse.¹⁰

IN addition to the orthodox medical theory of the cause of cholera, there were several others. Daniel Drake, one of the leading physicians of the West, believed that a quarantine was useless "as well as embarrassing to commerce." Drake, however, differed from his

⁵ One such claim appeared in the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, July 25, 1850.

⁶ *Prairie Du Chien Patriot*, August 13, 1851. It is significant, however, that this same group of physicians also voted to continue the quarantine of cholera patients in St. Louis.

⁷ *Ibid.*, July 10, 1850.

⁸ Ragatz, "Letters of the Reverend John H. Ragatz," 99.

⁹ *Racine Advocate*, quoted in Milwaukee *Sentinel*, July 13, 1854; Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, 398.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 400-401; Louis F. Frank, *Medical History of Milwaukee* (Milwaukee, 1915), 181.

contemporaries by accepting the animalculae hypothesis, which is a rather close approach to the later germ theory of the origin of cholera and other diseases.¹¹

Increase A. Lapham, an early Wisconsin geologist and scientist, took an entirely different view. In his correspondence with Charles T. Jackson, a prominent Boston scientist, Lapham wrote in August of 1849, "Your suggestion that there is a greater amount of cholera in limestone districts, than in those based on granite and other primary rocks, is now receiving melancholy proof and confirmation at Sandusky City, Ohio." Jackson wrote back that he had tested his hypothesis by studying the 1832-1833 epidemic in Europe. "I collected maps giving the track of the cholera from India to Vienna while in Europe, and I collected also all the works I could find published on the subject in Austria, Russia, Poland, Bosnia and France. It was obvious that the disease followed the river valleys but it did not follow the current of the water, but came up the Danube and it took its abode chiefly in the basins of Vienna and Paris—both of which are calcareous and in both these cities the waters of the wells and rivers are almost saturated with carbonate of lime." Jackson's studies convinced him that his theory was also confirmed in America during the epidemic of 1832-1833. Jackson and Lapham were certain that they had founded a new discipline, "Medical Geology," which would attract future scientific investigations.¹²

Still another theory concerning the cause of cholera was that it was brought on primarily by fear. During the Black Hawk War, William Beaumont, medical officer at Fort Crawford, contended that "The greater proportional numbers of deaths in the cholera epidemics are . . . caused more by fright and presentiment of death than from the fatal tendency or violence of the disease." During the 1849 to 1854 epidemics, local newspapers often printed something on this subject, though not usually in as extreme form as the advice given by a Madi-

son paper in 1849: "DON'T BE ALARMED.—Keep cool, take it easy, beware of excitement, and keep the spirits up, not by pouring spirits down, but by being lively, cheerful, and friendly. Don't put on that long face every time a funeral meets your eye, or the tho't of the dread scourge comes over you, but 'away with dull care;' send drooping melancholly about her business, jump, laugh, shout, play, dance and sing; any thing in fact, but down-heartedness in cholera times."¹³

In attempting to determine the cause of cholera mid-nineteenth century investigators were frequently confronted with baffling evidence. Sometimes cholera appeared simultaneously at widely distant points with no apparent connection, as, for example, near the end of 1848, when it broke out in New York and New Orleans at practically the same time. Since within the time limitation there was no possibility that the disease could have been carried from one city to the other, people were convinced, as their forebears had been for centuries, that an epidemic was due to some atmospheric or terrestrial influence far beyond the control of man.

It has since been determined, however, that the outbreak which occurred in these two geographically separated cities actually had the same source—two immigrant ships both of which sailed from the European port of Le Havre, one bound for New York, the other for New Orleans. Especially baffling in this case was the fact that there was no cholera at Le Havre at the time of departure, and that cases developed simultaneously in both ships when they were a thousand miles apart on the open sea. The explanation is that the passengers were from a cholera-infected district of Germany, and that the cholera germ can live for at least a week in a water or food supply.¹⁴

In studying the cholera epidemics of the first half of the nineteenth century, it must be kept in mind that bacteriology was then an unborn science. Sanitation, if it could be said that it existed at all, was rudimentary. Shallow wells

¹¹Madge E. Pickard and R. Carlyle Buley, *The Midwest Pioneer, His Ills, Cures, and Doctors* (Crawfordsville, Indiana, 1945), 28.

¹²H. H. Voje, M.D., "Two letters Concerning the Cause of Cholera as Understood in 1849," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, 13:365-367 (Milwaukee, 1915).

¹³Deborah B. Martin, "Doctor William Beaumont: His Life in Mackinac and Wisconsin, 1820-1834," in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 4:278 (1920-1921); *Wisconsin Express*, Madison, July 24, 1849.

¹⁴Knut Gjerset and Ludvig Hektoen, "Health Conditions Among Early Norwegian Settlers," in *Publications of Norwegian-American Historical Association, Studies and Records*, 1:14 (Minneapolis, 1926).

from which water was raised by bucket and rope were easily polluted, and open streams from which soldiers obtained their water during the Black Hawk War were even more easily contaminated.

Characteristics of the disease were conducive to its dissemination, and made sanitation difficult. The fact that cholera victims suffered extreme thirst was an important factor in the spread of the disease. Since few homes in mid-nineteenth century Wisconsin had indoor piping, the bucket and dipper method was used, making it almost inevitable that if one member of a household came down with cholera the others would also be exposed to the germ. Add to this the fact that victims suffered from acute diarrhea, and that during one stage of the disease vomiting was almost incessant. Furthermore, methods of disposing of human wastes were of the crudest; some of the newly settled communities did not even have privies. Cholera struck during the hot summer months of July and August when it was necessary to keep windows and doors open. Since there was no screening, flies and other insects could easily find their way from infected human waste in one house to the dinner table in another. Even in the larger cities hogs roamed the streets freely and performed the service of disposing of garbage.

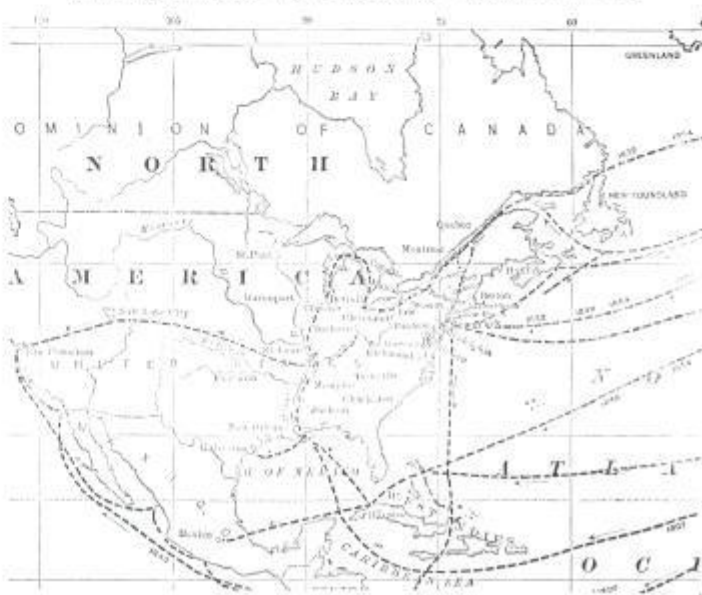
CHOLERA first reached America in the spring of 1832, brought here according to the best accounts, by immigrants to Quebec and Montreal. It spread to the shores of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, and thence to Lake Champlain and Albany. In July it arrived at New York; from there it spread south and west over the continent. In all likelihood the disease would never have become serious in Wisconsin had not a group of Sauk and Fox Indians under the leadership of one of their minor chiefs, Black Hawk, returned to the lands of their fathers in the Rock River Valley to grow corn. By the middle of July, 1832, the frontiersmen, fearing a general invasion, raised a force of almost 4,500 to push the Indians back across the Mississippi. More than once Black Hawk and his "host" of 1,000 tribesmen (numbering in their ranks 600 women and children), tried to surrender but the army pursued them until only 150 remained alive, and these were taken prisoners. The War Department, appar-

ently fearing a general uprising of the frontier Indians, sent General Winfield Scott west, by way of the Great Lakes, with nine companies of federal troops. By the time Scott reached Detroit cholera broke out on the troop transports. The close quarters and central water supply of the ships were evidently conducive to the spread of cholera, for by the time the convoy reached Chicago in the second week of July, scores of men were ill and many died. Fort Dearborn at Chicago became a hospital and the main body of Scott's men were not dispatched to the scene of action until the heaviest fighting was over.¹⁵

Indian Agent Boyd at Prairie du Chien protested on July 21 that it would be unwise for Scott's diseased troops to be brought into contact with General Atkinson's healthy volunteers for it would not only encourage desertion, but what was more serious, might also lead to greater trouble with the Indians. "Is it not within human probability," Boyd asked, "that Indian Tribes, at present luke warm & indifferent as to the fate of this War (such as the Pottawattamies & Winnebagoes,) both partially allied to the hostile Indians by intermarriage—may not, by Witnessing the ravages made by disease among our troops—

¹⁵ J. S. Chambers, in *The Conquest of Cholera*, 85-102, gives a detailed account of the introduction of cholera to Scott's troops on their way to Chicago and the progress of the disease after their arrival. *Niles' Weekly Register*, July 28, 1832, contains a contemporary account of the havoc and confusion which cholera generated among these men.

Map showing the cholera routes to the Americas, beginning with 1832. Adapted from *Cholera*, by Alfred Stillé (1885)



at once, and to a man, join the Sacs & Foxes, and raise the Tomahawk against us?"¹⁶

General Scott, hastening to take part in the campaign, proceeded with a few men to Prairie du Chien where, as Boyd had feared, cholera broke out among the volunteers and also among the federal troops garrisoned at Fort Crawford. According to a soldier, John H. Fonda, a hundred men died at Prairie du Chien within two weeks and were buried in a common grave south of the dragoon stable at Fort Crawford. The healthy portion of the army then proceeded to Rock Island where they arrived on August 9. About the 20th of August more of Scott's men arrived from Chicago and a week later there was another outbreak of cholera. Captain Henry Smith recalled that cholera raged for several days among the troops at Rock Island. Even though General Scott enforced the "Strictest sanitary regulations . . . four officers and upwards of fifty rank and file, out of about three hundred infantry, became its victims." Cholera also broke out in other detachments; men were buried in the wilderness in unmarked graves. Moses Strong estimated that by the close of the "Cholera Campaign" 400 of Scott's men had fallen victim to the disease. In addition to these must be numbered the inestimable fatalities among the volunteers. It is probably a safe estimate that cholera fatalities among the troops at least equalled the approximately 850 Indian fatalities in the Battle of Bad Axe and elsewhere.¹⁷ At any rate, in the course of the Black Hawk War cholera proved more fatal to the whites than did the scalping knife.

Cholera also affected the civilians in the river towns of Wisconsin and Illinois. At Galena and Prairie du Chien there were sev-

eral fatalities. In her reminiscences, Mrs. Elizabeth Baird stated that each day when her husband rode off to Menomineeville to attend his law practice she wondered if she would ever see him again, "the cholera threatening on one hand, the Indians on the other."

There is some indication that cholera also visited Wisconsin two years later. Mrs. Baird mentioned the "fearful cholera visitation in 1834." At Menomineeville, according to another source, hardly a household was spared from the scourge. Father VandenBroek, in charge of the mission there, reported that "It often happened that while I was attending the sick, sometimes even while confessing them, they died at my side, so that we could not get enough people to dig the graves. We had to bury four or five in one grave. We could not even find people enough to prepare the bodies for burial and I had to bury them myself, assisted by two Sisters of the Order of St. Clare." Another reference to cholera in 1834 appears in the *Memoirs* of Father Mazzuchelli, missionary to the settlers and Indians of western Wisconsin. He reported that when some superstitious Winnebagoes heard that cholera had caused deaths at Prairie du Chien, a hundred miles west of their encampment, they shot off their guns towards the west at sunset in order to "kill the cholera." "Their warlike fusillade against the setting sun was kept up for more than half an hour."¹⁸

CHOLERA did not reach Wisconsin again until 1849, by which time the former territory was a rapidly growing state of nearly 300,000 inhabitants, with new immigrants flocking in by the thousands. Some conception of the rate of immigration can be gotten from the passenger lists of steamboats arriving in Milwaukee. During the week ending June, 18, 1849, six steamers brought a total of 1,240 English, German, and American passengers.¹⁹ With such an influx of new arrivals, Milwaukee had by 1849 surpassed in population the

¹⁶ "Papers of Indian Agent Boyd—1832," 278-279.

¹⁷ John H. Fonda, "Early Wisconsin," in *Wisconsin State Historical Society Collections*, 5:259 (Madison, 1868 Reprint); Henry Smith, "Indian Campaign of 1832," in *ibid.*, 10:165 (Madison, 1888 Reprint); Moses M. Strong, "The Indian Wars of Wisconsin," in *ibid.*, 8:285 (Madison, 1879 Reprint); Paul F. Craneheld, in his article "Cholera in Wisconsin, 1832-1834," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, 49:509 (Madison, 1950), quotes one estimate that the epidemic cost "thousands of lives" among the soldiers. Still another estimate, that of Edmund Wendt in his book *A Treatise On Asiatic Cholera* (New York, 1885), 72, is that seven of Scott's companies (probably containing about 125 men each) were reduced by cholera and desertion to a total of but sixty-eight men.

¹⁸ Elizabeth Therese Baird, "Reminiscences of Life in Territorial Wisconsin," in *Wisconsin State Historical Society Collections*, 15:238 (Madison, 1900); VandenBroek is quoted in T. J. Oliver, "History of Medicine in Brown County," in the Wisconsin State Historical Society Manuscripts Section, 3-4; Father Mazzuchelli, *Memoirs* (Chicago, 1915), 136.

¹⁹ Milwaukee *Sentinel*, June 18, 1849.

mining towns of southwestern Wisconsin and also its rivals on Lake Michigan. With its 18,000 inhabitants Milwaukee was the largest town in the young state, and it is not surprising that during the epidemic years 1849 to 1854, a period of continuing growth, cholera presented a serious problem. And since Milwaukee's health problems were on a larger scale than elsewhere in the state, attempts were made to handle them in a systematic manner.

In 1840, nine years before cholera entered the community, the Milwaukee County Medical Society was founded. Concerning the practice of medicine the Society's charter read: "No person shall be permitted to be examined as a candidate for a diploma, and membership of this Society, unless he shall have arrived at the age of twenty one years, has at least a good English education, has studied medicine at least three years with some respectable practitioner, and can produce satisfactory evidence of good moral character." Thus, to practice medicine in the state's largest town, one did not have to attend a medical school, though many did. In 1852 the standards were raised, so that in addition to the existing requirements "the applicant shall produce evidence that his preliminary education is at least sufficient to entitle him to admission to the sophomore class in the academic department of our State University."²⁰ With the payment of a \$10 fee any man who qualified under these provisions could receive a license to minister to the sick in Milwaukee. During the years 1849 to 1854 the epidemic that plagued the city was not once mentioned in the records of the Society; the main concern was the collection of dues and \$3 fines for not attending annual meetings. Several of the leading doctors seemed to be more interested in land, timber, and politics than in their profession. It can be concluded that the doctors of Milwaukee and elsewhere in the state were

of little help in efforts to control the disease and to treat cholera patients. But even had they been well versed in the medical knowledge of their time, it is doubtful if they would have been of much more assistance.

Late in 1848 the cholera which had been brought from Germany aboard the two previously described immigrant ships, appeared simultaneously in New York and New Orleans. The next spring it spread steadily to the interior of the country. From New York it spread to Philadelphia and other places on the Atlantic coast; from New Orleans it spread through the Mississippi Valley and was carried to California by the forty-niners. Soon it reached St. Louis, then Cincinnati, and by the beginning of July, Chicago. The Milwaukee *Sentinel*, under the exciting title, "Telegraphic Sparks," carefully reported the disease's progress. City officials, vainly hoping to escape an epidemic, took measures to reduce the amount of cholera-producing "miasma" in the air by giving the city a much-needed cleaning. One thousand loads of dirt and filth were carted away, and it was estimated that there were 4,000 more loads in plain sight which would cost \$3,000 to remove. Streets were cleaned, dirty lots were declared nuisances, and legal action was taken if nothing was done to bring about abatement. Concerning the mass clean-up Frank Flower wrote that "A luckless cat or dog could not breathe his last and be at rest five minutes ere twenty citizens would rush breathless to the flying Board of Health and street inspectors. A slimy puddle, a rotting stick, were pounced upon as the children of the terrible pestilence." Aldermen were authorized to purchase lime and use it in "noxious" places.²¹

The Board of Health which Flower mentioned was organized June 30, 1849, and was made up of physicians. The legislative body of Milwaukee, together with this Board, set up several strict rules to avert the plague.

²⁰ Milwaukee County Medical Society Minute Book, Wisconsin State Historical Society Manuscripts Section, entries for December 2, 1840, and November 9, 1852. William S. Middleton reports that only twelve of sixty physicians in the western part of the state (Iowa, Grant, and Lafayette Counties) were graduates of medical schools at this time. William S. Middleton "Cholera Epidemics of Iowa County Wisconsin," in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, 37:394 (Milwaukee, 1938).

²¹ Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, 397. Many Wisconsin newspapers carried ads of lime for sale during the cholera years. In both Madison and Milwaukee lime was available to the public free of charge for sprinkling on bad parts of streets, lots, or filthy cellars. The following notice appeared in the *Daily Argus and Democrat*, Madison, July 29, 1852: "The Village Board has ordered a large quantity of lime which will be distributed on application, for purifying the streets."

The mayor was to charge circuses a license of not less than \$500 a day, and theatres \$150. A strict quarantine of immigrants was enacted and physicians were ordered under penalty of \$50 or thirty days in jail to report every case of cholera to the Board of Health. The Board had absolute authority to abate all nuisances.

During June, the Milwaukee papers found that they had a new type of public relations on their hands. Notices in the *Sentinel* appeared frequently under the title "No Cholera Yet!" The object was to assure the country folk that "we have as yet had no cases of Cholera in Milwaukee; and it is necessary to make that assertion, for reports are rife in the country, of the ravages of the fell disease, and if the press are silent, it is said at once that there is some concealment."²²

By the beginning of July the public was uneasy. Scores of people fled cholera-infected Chicago for Milwaukee, and immigrants continued to pour in. The Council passed an ordinance to erect a bathing house on the lake shore so that arriving immigrants could cleanse themselves. While there had been some sickness in the city, the press insisted it was not cholera. Conceding that the law requiring cases of cholera to be reported to the Board of Health was necessary, the *Sentinel* nevertheless hoped that none of the city physicians would be guilty of "such contemptible conduct, as to report an aggravated case of diarrhoea, or something else of that sort, as *Cholera*, in order that they may gain a fictitious notoriety for successful treatment of the disease," a trick which was not above the morality of the profession at the time. The main point that the editor of the *Sentinel* wished to make was that "nothing should be done to create needless alarm and injure our trade with the country." The *Sentinel* advised, "Let our citizens continue to use lime freely, our street inspectors to attend faithfully to their duties, and the same sanitary measures be practiced as heretofore, and we shall probably be spared from a visitation of this dreaded scourge."²³

The records of the Board of Health show that it took cognizance of the first case of

cholera on July 1. However, its first public report came on July 17. In good journalistic form, the editor of the *Sentinel* chose this day to launch an attack on the Board. His charge that it was "inoperative and inefficient" reveals a rift in the medical profession of the time. The charge proceeded in a milder tone: "Now we are not alarmists, and do not desire to do anything that would have an injurious effect upon the business of the city. But we cannot disguise the fact that the cholera exists here, and that many people endeavor to suppress its extent. For every case thus kept from the public, rumor will make ten, if our neighbors find that we do not give full and truthful reports." Then the editor arrived at the crux of the matter. "Now, gentlemen, we propose to tell you the reason why cholera cases are suppressed. Our city physicians, as you know are Homeopaths; hence the Allopaths²⁴ feel a reluctance to report to what they call 'quacks'—if the case was reversed; and the city physicians were Allopaths, the Homeopaths would probably pursue a similar course and assign a similar reason. . . ." The editor believed that the solution was to remove all physicians from the Board of Health and make it a citizens' body.²⁵

FOR the next two months cholera raged in Milwaukee. Even the anecdotes and short stories in the newspapers had cholera as their themes. On August 3rd the Milwaukee *Sentinel* summarized the progress of the epidemic to that date. The number of cases up until noon of August 2 was 104, with forty-five deaths. "The great majority of the cases, four-fifths, we should think, have been among new comers; though a few residents have been attacked." In comparison, Chicago had 434 cholera fatalities, but the epidemic had begun earlier there.²⁶

By the beginning of August it was evident that the rules adopted earlier in the season were inoperative. The *Sentinel* charged that

²⁴ The former believed that diseases were cured by administering very small doses of drugs which, if given in large doses to a healthy person, would produce symptoms similar to those of the diseased patient; the latter believed the exact opposite, and used remedies which produced symptoms different from those of the disease under treatment.

²⁵ Milwaukee *Sentinel*, July 17, 1849.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, August 3, 1849.

²² Milwaukee *Sentinel*, June 16, 1849.

²³ Frank, *Medical History of Milwaukee*, 180; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, July 10, 1849.

neither the circus that visited the city nor the theatres had paid the required fees. A Dr. Hoard was brought into police court for not reporting a case of cholera as the law demanded. Hoard was able to escape the fine or imprisonment by resting his defense on the technicality that his patient was afflicted with "Cholera Morbus," and not "Asiatic Cholera." Justice Walworth claimed that the rule requiring physicians to report every case of cholera to the Board of Health would have to be reworded if it was to be enforced. According to Frank Flower, the system of handling immigrants also broke down. If cholera broke out in the quarantine buildings, which held as many as 125 at a time, there was no other choice but to release the healthy immigrants or they would perish. There was neither adequate housing nor personnel to make the quarantine work. By this time there was a provision that the indigent sick should have medical care at public expense. An ordinance was passed "providing that any regular physician in the city should be paid by the city for attendance on the poor, including those in the Alms House, but not more than \$150 could be allowed these physicians for each quarter of the fiscal year."²⁷

Because of the nation-wide plague, President Taylor set aside the first Friday in August as a day of "fasting, humiliation and prayer," during a season when the "PROVIDENCE OF GOD has manifested in the visitation of a fearful pestilence" which spread its ravages throughout the land. The *Sentinel* reported after the "National Fast" that it was generally observed in Milwaukee. "The Churches were all opened for service, morning, noon and evening, and the attendance was large. Our merchants and business men, with scarce an

exception, closed their stores and offices, and abstained from secular occupations. Our citizens of all denominations united cordially, and, we doubt not, sincerely, in the due observance of the day."²⁸ It is entirely possible that the very bringing of these people together contributed to the violent outbreak that was soon to come.

By August 14 fatalities became more numerous. A summary for the previous four days revealed that there were twenty-nine cases and eighteen deaths, "half of these in one party of German emigrants who landed here last week, and were crowded into one or two small rooms in a building on West Water Street." The City Marshal cleared the house and separated the inmates but "the poison had already seized upon them, and nine of the party died."

In general the Milwaukee papers used the immigrants as scapegoats. Quarters in which immigrants often crowded were viewed with suspicion. The Board of Health strongly condemned "the practice of certain persons, in filling their houses to their utmost capacity with newly arrived immigrants and their baggage, before their clothing has been washed and ventilated—especially at such a time as this—as the Cholera is . . . sure to commence its ravages." When the Board learned of overcrowded hotels or homes it proceeded to disperse the inhabitants. Even crowded boarding houses were invaded and the tenants dispersed, "the proprietors themselves being ready to admit that in such an emergency the most extreme measures were justifiable."²⁹

Describing the immigrants Flower wrote that they "came up in boats by scores, landing at the Huron, Detroit and Erie street piers. Reduced in bodily strength and often sadly scant of means, they were fit subjects for the ravages of the disease. Wandering around, as they did, in search of lodging and food, these poor unfortunates became dangerous bearers of the plague, and were looked upon with loathing."³⁰ Without a doubt the immigrants were often carriers of the disease, but in all

²⁷ Milwaukee *Sentinel*, July 25, 1849; Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, 397-398. Rules established early in the summer of 1849 stipulated that a health officer inspect all immigrants landing at the Milwaukee piers. The city had a quarantine building, but in July of 1854 the authorities took over the government buildings at the harbor to be used as additional space to house sick immigrants. See the July 13, 1854 issue of the Milwaukee *Sentinel*. All in all, the attempts to inspect immigrants and to quarantine those suspected of carrying cholera were not successful. The regulations were simply not enforced. Except for the fears which kept people from cholera-infected homes, there seems to have been no attempt to quarantine cholera patients in Wisconsin other than at Milwaukee.

²⁸ The text of the proclamation appeared in the August 1, 1849, issue of the Milwaukee *Sentinel*; *ibid.*, August 6, 1849.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, August 14, 1849; Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, 401.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 398.

fairness the refugeeing Chicagoans should also have been suspected.

Throughout the remainder of August cholera continued to rage. Reminiscent of the plagues of the middle ages, rough carts, sometimes containing four or five corpses at once, rumbled through the streets to the Poor House burying grounds "while the remains of many in better circumstances were borne along to other resting places more gently in appropriate vehicles."²¹

In this, as in all of the epidemics between 1849 and 1855, disposal of the bodies of cholera victims presented a real problem. In Milwaukee a group of men working under the City Marshal was hired expressly for the purpose. One of the Sisters of Charity recalled that they were rough men who reeked with the smell of alcohol and who prided themselves on their strength to resist cholera. Their job was to pick up bodies, put them in rude carts, and haul them to the cemetery where on one morning the City Marshal counted eighteen bodies awaiting burial. Often there were no church funerals. At Muskego, where whole families sometimes succumbed to the disease, funerals were not possible. "The dead were wrapped in white garments, put in ordinary boxes, driven at night by ox teams to the churchyard and buried in sand trenches." John L. Dyer, a Methodist Episcopal itinerant, wrote that the people thought bodies could not be disposed of soon enough after death, "and it was doubtful if some were not buried alive." He reported that when an entire family died of cholera at Wiota, the neighbors got together and "burnt the house with the bodies in it."²²

Milwaukee papers carried accounts of travelers who died while visiting the city. Notices of their deaths were accompanied by orders for the appropriate exchanges to reprint them so that relatives and friends could be informed. One such account, from the *Milwaukee Sentinel* of July 30, 1849, reads, "The death reported yesterday proves to be a man by the name of Charles Campbell, late from Canada,

a Scotchman by birth, about 50 years of age. He stated, before his death, that he had a wife in Canada, a son at Toronto; also one in St. Louis, and one or two more in Cincinnati, Toronto, Cincinnati, and St. Louis papers, please copy." In the confusion it inevitably happened that persons who were very much alive were reported to be dead. The *Galena Jeffersonian* carried a story to the effect that "John Kenedy, (known in the Mines as 'Kentuck,') died of Cholera, in Galena, a few days since." Several days later the *Grant County Herald* carried this notice: "Kentuck says he isn't dead nor ha'nt been."²³

On August 31, 1849, the *Milwaukee Sentinel* printed the statistics of mortality for the past season. Actually, cholera claimed a few victims after this date, but it is likely that the editor wished to create an illusion of finality so that the country folk would think it safe to come into the city to do their trading. The published report enumerated 209 cases of cholera, of which 105 proved fatal. The week of the greatest number was that ending August 15 in which there were 41 cases and 23 fatalities. The *Sentinel* concluded its report with the refrain, "The disease has been confined mostly to certain localities, and almost exclusively to the newly arrived emigrants. Nearly one-half of the fatal cases were among newly arrived emigrants or unacclimated persons, and many of the other cases are traced directly to some gross imprudence in article of diet, drink, &c." However, the day-by-day reports of the Board of Health do not bear this out. There were cholera fatalities in all wards of the city, and in the reports that give names and addresses of victims, many more natives than immigrants are listed.

THE epidemic of 1850 closed in on Milwaukee in much the same manner as that of the previous year, but it came earlier, lasted longer, and was more severe. The wish of the *Sentinel* became reality, and the Board of Health was reconstituted as a salaried body whose four lay members received an aggregate compensation of \$500. The reasoning behind this rearrangement was probably that it was easier to color the reports of the Board if it

²¹ Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, 399.

²² Albert O. Barton, "Muskego: The Most Historical Norwegian Colony," in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 21:132 (Madison, 1937); John L. Dyer, *The Snow-Shoe Itinerant* (Cincinnati, 1890), 53.

²³ Quoted in *Milwaukee Sentinel*, July 27, 1849.

was made up of citizens, especially if they were business men. At any rate the reports issued during 1850 are not as complete as those of 1849. Many of the 1849 reports reveal the identity of the victims, whether they were immigrants or natives, and often gave their age, but reports of 1850 give only statistics. Later in the season the *Sentinel* was forced to admit that the reports were inaccurate.

Concerning the epidemic of 1850, Louis Frank in his *Medical History of Milwaukee* wrote: "The first case broke out in the beginning of July, on Broadway. For three months similar scenes as the year previous were enacted, men, women and children falling and dying in the streets, patients deserted by family and friends, corpses piled into rough wagons and buried in ditches in pauper ground. Spectators of these sights one day would fall victims the next."³⁴

It was not until late August that the epidemic reached its peak. The August 26 report of the Board of Health listed more deaths in a short period than either of the last two seasons. "The Board of Health met at the Council Room at the usual hour to-day, and report 20 deaths from Cholera within the last 48 hours, to wit:—1 in the 1st Ward, 4 in the 2nd Ward, 6 in the 3d Ward, 2 in the 4th Ward, and 7 in the 5th Ward."³⁵ The fact that the fatalities were spread over the city indicates that they did not occur solely among closely cramped, "loathsome" immigrants.

During the same month the Chicago journalists charged Milwaukee with falsifying its cholera reports so as not to disturb the commerce of the city. From August 15 to the month's end Milwaukee suffered more severely than ever before, the Board of Health reporting an average of seven deaths a day. Meanwhile the Chicago press became suspicious because the reports stopped carrying the number of new cases and simply stated the daily mortality. Under the heading, "Dreadful Mortality in Milwaukee," the *Chicago Democrat* of Monday, August 27, informed its readers that "several despatches" from Milwaukee of the previous Saturday reported 109 burials in the city on Friday and Saturday. The *Chicago Tribune* carried the same report under the

heading, "Terrible Mortality." The dispatches attributed the startling mortality to "bilious dysentery," but both the *Democrat* and the *Tribune* suspected that the real cause was cholera.³⁶ This led to a series of charges and countercharges between the Milwaukee and Chicago papers which seem irrelevant and unimportant today but which in their setting were very important. The early 1850's were years of railroad construction, canal building, and laying of plank roads. Any factor that might serve to tip the balance to Chicago in the race to become the "Queen City of the West" was viewed with alarm by Milwaukeeans. Therefore it was all important that Milwaukee defend herself against reports of "Dreadful Mortality."

The *Sentinel* countercharged, "Had we followed the course taken by our Chicago friends, and published the 'rumors' that reached us from day to day in relation to sickness there, instead of simply copying the official reports of their Board of Health, we should have treated our readers to a daily dish of very much such stories as the *Democrat* and *Tribune* served up to their readers on Monday." The *Sentinel* gave ground, however, and admitted that "in addition to the deaths reported by the Board of Health, there have undoubtedly been many others, from cholera, and others from the disease incident to the season. . . ." By the latter the *Sentinel* more than likely meant malaria; however it would not admit that mortality reached anything like the numbers reported by the Chicago press. According to Frank Flower, Timothy O'Brien who was City Marshal and also chairman of the Board of Health during 1850, told tales years later, that "really over-step the 'fabrications' of any press." The *Chicago Argus* joined the attack by stating that on Thursday, August 22, the sexton of Milwaukee recorded 59 interments; "on Friday, 23d, 47; on Saturday, 24, 62. Total for three days, 168." The *Sentinel* sloughed this off as "another specimen of this Chicago Bogus."³⁷ Very likely the mortality was not as high as claimed by the Chicago press nor as low as reported by the Board of Health and the Milwaukee *Sentinel*.

³⁴ Frank, *Medical History of Milwaukee*, 181.

³⁵ *Milwaukee Sentinel*, August 27, 1850.

³⁶ Quoted in *Milwaukee Sentinel*, August 28, 1850.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, August 28, 1850; Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, 399; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, August 31, 1850.



This picture from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, January 12, 1856, shows the congestion aboard an emigrant ship departing for the United States.

The 1850 epidemic spent its force in Milwaukee by the middle of September, having lasted fully two weeks longer than that of the previous year and having taken more lives. The Milwaukee papers learned from the experience of the previous year that it was not wise to print a recapitulation of cholera mortality, for it would be picked up by the exchange papers throughout the country. Frank Flower stated that the Board of Health "took cognizance of fully 300 deaths . . . and it is doubtless true that nearly as many more escaped the record, the bodies being buried secretly."³⁸

During the years 1851, 1852, and 1853 cholera was severe elsewhere in the state but does not seem to have been serious in Milwaukee. No Board of Health reports were issued but from time to time the *Sentinel* had to defend Milwaukee against "false reports." "Travelers from the north say that reports are

prevalent there that the cholera is raging terribly in this city, and deaths occurring at the rate of 40 or 50 a day. They are all lies, without the shadow of a foundation, Milwaukee has never been healthier. We know of but one case of Cholera this season, and that was the case of a man landed here from a boat, sick, a month since, and who died at the Hospital. Flower reported that there were only a few cases in Milwaukee in 1851, 1852, and 1853."³⁹

In 1854 there were several violent outbreaks of cholera in Milwaukee, but since the Board of Health published no reports it is difficult to know just how serious the epidemic was. The *Sentinel* of August 23, 1854, reported an outbreak of cholera in the city jail. Forty-two men were crowded into a space where there was only room for twenty. Sickness broke out and two men died, a larcenist and a man named Steffinger who was serving time for robbing a body at the poor house. The jailer

³⁸ Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, 401. If this mortality rate is projected on a yearly basis it gives the startling rate of 1,440 deaths in a city of 18,000.

³⁹ *Milwaukee Sentinel*, August 21, 1851; Flower, *History of Milwaukee*, 401.

turned loose fifteen men before their terms expired and took some of the sick men to the jury rooms of the court house. Later, several others of the inmates died. Another record of a violent outbreak in 1854 is found in a letter from a German doctor, Carl Feld. "I was called to treat a young child in a loghouse . . . [near Milwaukee] in which there was also a cholera patient. The following morning instead of one cholera case there were four, all vigorous men; these four were followed by three men, so that within a few days seven persons died in the house of the plague." According to Dr. Louis Frank, 1854 was the last year in which a cholera epidemic occurred in Milwaukee.⁴⁰

THERE will be no attempt here to give a year-by-year account of cholera in other Wisconsin towns and villages during the epidemic years 1849 to 1854, though for many this would be possible. However, a few of the more striking incidents, and a number of the different ways of handling the problem of cholera will be brought into focus.

In the towns and villages along Lake Michigan and in those in the eastern part of the state the progress of cholera was quite similar to what it was in Milwaukee and brought with it the same problems, but on a smaller scale. In Kenosha, Michael Frank who served as Poor-master and chief of the Board of Health during the summer of 1850, recorded the cholera fatalities of that city in his diary.⁴¹ His entry of August 26, reads, "Cholera seems to have disappeared. The actual number of cases . . . this season has been about 32 fatal."⁴²

Among the Norwegian settlers of Muskego, cholera was particularly devastating. John Molee stated that 1849 was the worst summer he experienced in his life: "By this time there

were a great number of our people in Muskego. When the epidemic cholera struck our settlement, there were at one time, only seven families, all well, so that they could get away to help their neighbors. From three to four persons died every day. Hans Tveito and myself had all we could do, to carry the dead out of the houses and haul them to the grave with our oxen, while others dug the graves. No ceremony took place, and there were no glittering coffins with silver knobs and handles. We simply rolled a white sheet around the dead, unwashed and unshaved; and then we placed him or her into a rough board box, unplanned and unpainted, and hauled them to a spot selected for a graveyard, called 'the Indian hill' (Indiehaugen); there we laid them to rest. It was the best we could do, God knows. We cared for them best we could, while living, but when dead, they did not need more care." Because of the severe malaria and cholera epidemics at Muskego it became known as the "region of death," and those that were spared generally went to other settlements.⁴³

No doubt most of the physicians of southeastern Wisconsin were as busy as Thomas Steel, an Englishman who lived on a small farm near Waukesha. Dr. Steel wrote his father back in London in the fall of 1850: "There has been a good deal of sickness this last six weeks, in fact a great deal more business than I could attend to, though had it not been for the great distances between the parties I could easily have attended to all—probably after riding 30 miles, no bad days work, I had only been able to visit five or six patients." Steel hoped he would get paid for some of his trouble, "but we have now in this locality at least had three years of bad harvests so that the means of paying doctors or any one else is of course very small."⁴⁴

Cholera also prevailed north of Milwaukee. In the village of Twin Rivers, for example,

⁴⁰ Dr. Feld's letter is found in Frank, *Medical History of Milwaukee*, 30; *ibid.*, 181-182. There were cholera epidemics elsewhere in the United States in 1866, 1867, and 1873.

⁴¹ The larger Wisconsin towns including Milwaukee, Madison, Mineral Point, Racine, and Kenosha had boards of health, and very likely some of the other towns and villages had them also. Some communities held mass meetings to consider health problems. See *Wisconsin Tribune*, July 12, 1850.

⁴² Michael Frank, "Diary," August 26, 1850, in State Historical Society of Wisconsin Manuscripts Section. Also see "Autobiography of Michael Frank," in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 30:470 (June, 1947).

⁴³ Rasmus B. Anderson, *The First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration* (Madison, 1906), 321. For an account of the severity of malaria at Muskego see Peter T. Harstad, "Sickness and Disease on the Wisconsin Frontier: Malaria, 1820-1850," in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 43:89-90 (Winter, 1959-1960).

⁴⁴ Dr. Thomas Steel to Father, October 8, 1850, in the Steel Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin Manuscripts Section. Steel often took goods or services as payment.

during the first weeks of August, 1850, there were thirteen deaths from cholera. "One American, one Frenchman, three Germans, and eight Indians. It first broke out among the latter," according to a correspondent of the *Sheboygan Democrat*.⁴⁵

The Wisconsin pineries seem to have escaped the disease. In the first place there were few men in the pineries during the cholera months, and in the second place those who were there were fairly well isolated. Isaac Stephenson, who acted as doctor to the men in his lumber camps, reported that sickness was rare among the lumbermen; the most serious problem was wounds inflicted from glancing axes as the men worked with frozen timber.⁴⁶

In northeastern Wisconsin cholera was ravensome among the Belgian immigrants of Brown, Kewaunee, and Door counties. In addition to economic hardship, according to Xavier Martin, the Belgians met a worse fate; cholera attacked nearly every family. "Not a few families lost as many as five of their members in a single week; most of them were buried on their own land, and in great haste." There were 15,000 Belgians in these three counties by 1855, but when the cholera news reached the Fatherland, according to Martin, immigration was checked, "and for the next five years very few families came over."⁴⁷

Nor did the inhabitants of central Wisconsin escape cholera. The newspapers of Watertown, Madison, Beloit, and the smaller villages all carried cholera reports, especially in the years 1849, 1850, and 1854. Since there was a steady stream of German immigrants to Watertown, it was rarely free from the malady during July and August of these years.

Sanitary conditions in the mining communities of western Wisconsin made them susceptible to cholera. In a letter dated September 17, 1849, a resident of Mineral Point revealed that although his own family was healthy "We have had the cholera in this village for the last two or three months and perhaps some thirty or more have died with it. There were four or

five deaths from it, I think, last week. We have had it here so long that it has almost ceased to be a subject of conversation or alarm."⁴⁸ In 1849 several public meetings were held in Mineral Point on the subject of cleaning the town to make it less susceptible to cholera, and in 1850 a Board of Health was formed.

In the lead region, the epidemic of 1850 was more devastating than that of 1849. It was in July, 1850, that the plague-ridden village of Wingville was abandoned by its surviving inhabitants who fled to Franklin and Dodgeville where subsequently the cholera broke out dreadfully. The *Wisconsin Tribune* of July 26 reported the deaths at Franklin to number about fifty, "a great mortality for a place the size of Franklin." Later estimates ran as high as sixty-nine. Victims in Galena on two days, the 19th and 20th of August, numbered fifty persons. "Out of a population of 7,000, one in every hundred has been followed to his grave within a week," reported the *Galena Jeffersonian*.⁴⁹ There were many cholera deaths in the lead region in both July and August. The *Green County Union*, for example, furnished a list of twenty-two persons who died of cholera at the "New Diggings."⁵⁰

During 1851 and 1852 Mineral Point was troubled with "false rumors" of cholera; actually the disease was present in the village, but its toll did not reach the proportions of 1850 there or elsewhere in the lead region. In 1854 there were a few violent outbreaks of cholera in places other than Milwaukee, such as at Lamar's Stage Station, a few miles west of Shullsburg, where "Mrs. Lamar and four children, two servant girls, two stage drivers, the bar keeper, and a man employed in making coffins," all died of cholera within four days.⁵¹

It would be impossible to estimate the number of deaths from cholera in Wisconsin during the years 1849 to 1854. In many cases newspapers reported the fatalities, but there is good reason to believe that scores of deaths were not reported. At this time, the state had no system of vital statistics; in fact, one of the

⁴⁵ Milwaukee *Sentinel*, August 24, 1850.

⁴⁶ Isaac Stephenson, *Recollections of a Long Life, 1829-1915* (Chicago, 1915), 130.

⁴⁷ Xavier Martin, "The Belgians of Northeast Wisconsin," in *Wisconsin State Historical Society Collections*, 13:379-380 (Madison, 1895).

⁴⁸ Quoted in Middleton, "Cholera Epidemics of Iowa County Wisconsin," 895.

⁴⁹ Quoted in *Prairie Du Chien Patriot*, September 4, 1850.

⁵⁰ Milwaukee *Sentinel*, August 24, 1850.

⁵¹ *Mineral Point Tribune*, August 2, 1854.

main objectives of the Medical Society in the mid-1850's was provision for the registration of births, marriages, and deaths. It is certain however, that cholera deaths numbered in the thousands.

Although the cholera years were a period of much immigration to Wisconsin, they were also a period of emigration, especially from the southwestern countries. After 1849 the "California fever" exerted a strong pull on the lead miners whose labors were becoming increasingly unprofitable while their skills—or so they believed—would make them rich in the gold fields of California. Among the adventurers who trekked their way across the continent there was considerable mortality, with cholera being the main killer. The deaths of many Wisconsin men, including that of William S. Hamilton (son of Alexander Hamilton), were announced in Wisconsin newspapers. A Plattville doctor, James Claibourne Campbell, augmented his income by putting up little packages of "California Medicine."⁵²

MEDICAL knowledge of the mid-nineteenth century was of little value in the prevention and treatment of cholera. Preventive advice usually consisted of the admonition: eat moderately, don't over work, and don't become frightened. "Cholera Advice" appeared in all Wisconsin newspapers prior to the arrival of the disease.⁵³

Dietary care was deemed especially important. Fresh vegetables were frequently believed to be the cause of cholera. One contemporary doctor was suspicious of "indigestible vegetables, ardent spirits, beer, ale, and wine; pork, lobsters, and crabs; green corn, clams, and oysters; watermelons, cucumbers, strawberries, peaches, and pears; cabbage and greens; cheese . . ." and a few other foods. Occasionally the Milwaukee Board of Health cautioned people against the consumption of specific foods. On August 20, 1849, the Board warned against the use of green vegetables, "especially green corn, cabbage and cucumbers, as some of the recent cases are directly traceable to

such imprudence." Some dietary measures were reportedly beneficial even after a person contracted a case of cholera. For the "Best Cholera Medicine Known," one paper instructed its readers to "Parch half a pint of rice until it is brown; then boil it as rice is usually done. Eat slowly, and it will stop the most alarming case of diarrhoea."⁵⁴

Alcohol was viewed as both a preventive and a cure, though in an age of a strong temperance movement there were divergent views on the matter. *A Helping Hand*, a curious volume by Lyman C. Draper and William A. Croffut, includes about a dozen remedies for cholera, the main ingredients of most being "Best French brandy, one pint," "Old cognac," rum, and the like. The concluding directions for one such cure are, "If the medicine thus administered promote signs of intoxication, this is to be regarded as a favorable sign of recovery. . . ." Apparently, according to the local press, some of the boys in Lancaster, Grant County, carried their medications to extremes. "Thus far we have escaped the Cholera, but how much longer can we hope to if men are allowed to lay around our streets, perfectly saturated with whiskey [?] If men who do not live in town believe whiskey to be a preventive, we do not object, but let them get their medicine and go home and use it. One intoxicated man, by exposure, might bring disease upon a whole community." An exchange item in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* estimated that "the practice of drinking brandy, during the past seasons of Cholera, made more drunkards than would have been produced in ten years of health. . . ." Undoubtedly the epidemics raised havoc among the converts of Father Matthew, a popular leader of the temperance movement.⁵⁵

Perhaps the following popular verse reflected the spirit of the cholera years:

*Now fill your glasses to the brim,
And drink with steady eyes.
Here's to those already dead
And here's to the next who dies!*

⁵²Pickard and Buley, *The Midwest Pioneer*, 28; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, August 21, 1849; *Madison Daily Argus and Democrat*, July 31, 1852.

⁵³Lyman C. Draper and William A. Croffut, *A Helping Hand* (Cincinnati, 1870), 727; *Grant County Herald*, quoted in *Milwaukee Sentinel*, July 25, 1850; *ibid.*, July 20, 1854.

⁵⁴Dr. James Claibourne Campbell, "Journal," in State Historical Society of Wisconsin Manuscripts Section, entry for April 13, 1852.

⁵⁵For examples of "Cholera Advice" see *Milwaukee Sentinel*, July 17, 28, 1849.

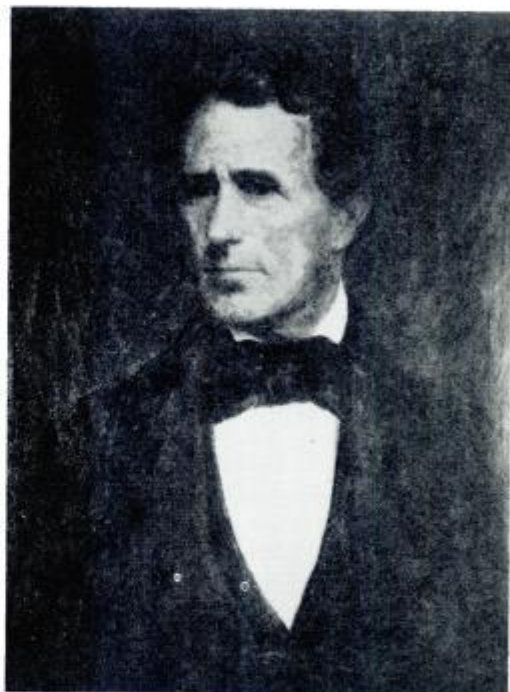
PATENT MEDICINES quickly adjusted to cholera and so added another disease to the list of ailments which they "infallibly cured." Dr. Townsend's Sarsaparilla was perhaps the most thoroughly advertised patent medicine during the late forties and early fifties, but there was a furious war raging between the "Old Doctor" and the "Young Doctor" as to which was the genuine Townsend's Sarsaparilla. New medicines also sprang into existence to take advantage of a new situation. There was an "Anti Cholera Syrup" agent in Milwaukee before the disease arrived. A newspaper advertisement stated that a Chicago doctor used the syrup and lost only three cases out of a hundred. "This remedy may be had at one dollar per bottle at the United States hotel. . . . Those who are not able to procure the remedy will be treated gratuitous."⁵⁶

There was a more ingenious way of making money off the cholera scare. Prompted by "pure philanthropy," an agent appeared in Milwaukee in 1854 selling "cholera conductors." This gimmick was based on the conventional theory that cholera was caused by "impurities in the air, which affect the human frame." The agent appealed to the authority of a Prussian physician who "proved the possibility of attracting these impurities by chemically prepared metal, (which if worn about the person, acts against them in a similar manner as a lightning conductor does against lightning,) by receiving the impurities of the atmosphere, and thereby protecting the human body from their injurious influence." The agent backed up his product with highly successful claims of its use in Europe, charged 50c for each conductor, and accepted country orders accompanied by payment.⁵⁷

A farmer in Iowa County advocated steaming cholera patients, his reason probably being the fact that a cholera sufferer's skin felt like "a cold, wet hide." According to one authority, this method gained some local repute.⁵⁸

Drugs believed by the medical profession to have value in the treatment of cholera were: calomel (mercury), laudanum (opium), mor-

phine, turpentine, and sulphur. The object of their use was "to restore the vital functions of the body," as the doctors often said. In 1849 there was much excitement about the use of sulphur as a cholera cure. It was supposedly determined that "cholera never prevailed in the vicinity of sulphur springs, or in situations where this substance abounds, hence the conclusion that sulphur might be and properly was the antidote for cholera." The editor of



Society's Iconographic Collection

Dr. Daniel Drake, from a portrait painted in the 1830's.

the *North Western Medical and Surgical Journal* was convinced of its value. It was suggested that "a combination of powdered charcoal, one part to four of sulphur," made the remedy more efficient. However, the editor of the *Wisconsin Herald* warned against the use of such powerful medicines as preventives, saying that it was as absurd as to "blow your nose with gunpowder, for fear of a general conflagration."⁵⁹

⁵⁶ *Milwaukee Sentinel*, July 31, 1849.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, July 13, 1854.

⁵⁸ Middleton, "Cholera Epidemics of Iowa County Wisconsin," 896.

⁵⁹ *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 31, 1849; *Lancaster Wisconsin Herald*, September 26, 1846. In contrast to other Wisconsin newspapers, advertisements for patent medicines were conspicuously absent from the *Herald*.

Orthodox doctors resorted to bleeding as the primary treatment of cholera patients. Even Daniel Drake, despite the modernity of his views regarding the animalculae theory of cholera's origin, resorted to this old standby. Writing in the *Western Journal* he said, "To bleed a patient who cannot be raised from his pillow without fainting, whose pulse is nearly imperceptible, whose skin is cold, and extremities shrunk up to half their ordinary size, would at first view, seem rash and unwarrantable," he wrote in the *Western Journal*. "But experience, which in medicine can grant warrants for any procedure, has sanctioned the use of the lancet even when all other symptoms of extreme prostration, are present. . . ."⁶⁰

Bleeding was justified by the *Cholera Beacon* on the grounds that cholera was caused by polluted air. The object then, was to diminish the circulating blood so that the heart could with greater facility move a blood supply to the cleansing organs—lungs, liver, and kidneys. "The principle is plain," explained the *Beacon*. "By diminishing the body to be moved the relative power of the mover is increased. It is apparent, then that bleeding is necessary. . . . It is true the aged and infirm, the debilitated emigrant will not bear—neither do they require so large bleedings as patients of an opposite description. But the principle . . . is the same, which should be borne in mind and abstract such a quantity as will enable us to excite a more vigorous action of the heart . . . and thus the congested vessels will be unloaded."⁶¹ One wonders if this entire theory was rationalized in order to justify "scientifically" the time-honored practice of bleeding.

SINCE the middle of the last century rapid advances in sanitation have made cholera relatively easy to control. Nowadays when the modern doctor is called upon to treat a case of the disease he advocates the administration of large amounts of hypertonic salt solutions in order to counteract the extreme dehydration, and "it should be emphasized that large

amounts means quarts and gallons, not pints." This is in sharp contrast to the practices of early physicians who too often were inclined to believe with *The Helping Hand* that "in this disease the thirst is often uncontrollable, but if the patient drink water he will die." However, not all cholera sufferers abided by this theory. Dr. Middleton, in his study of cholera in Iowa County, cites several incidents in which patients took water in spite of their doctor's orders and therefore recovered. Joseph Schafer, former superintendent of the State Historical Society, recalled that his mother, stricken with cholera in Mineral Point, was ordered by her doctor not to drink water. One day when the lady who cared for her left the room, Mrs. Schafer noticed a large dipper of water on a chair, "sprang out of bed, seized the dipper, and drained it to the last drop. Then she got well."⁶²

From incidents such as these it can be concluded that the cures offered cholera victims by mid-nineteenth century physicians were of little or no benefit. Rather, by denying the patient water or depleting him through bleeding, the physician was robbing the patient of the very fluids necessary to the restoration of health.

At least one Wisconsin physician exhibited a wholesome attitude towards his profession's ignorance of the cause of cholera and inability to give adequate care to its victims. In a speech before the Wisconsin State Medical Society in early January of 1855, Dr. Alfred L. Castleman stated that the pestilence of the last seasons "presented to us so pointedly the fact of our inability in many instances to wrestle successfully with the mysteries of disease. . . . We have seen the pestilence seize upon our friends—we have in many instances found ourselves wholly incapable of arresting the progress of the disease—we have seen Death snatch his victim from us as uninterruptedly in his progress as though we had not been there to interpose. I hope that no member of this Society in such cases allowed himself to be satisfied with the reflection that the result was one of God's

⁶⁰ *Western Journal*, 5:612 (1832), quoted in Pickard and Buley, *Midwest Pioneer*, 29. Drake's letters reveal that he had not changed his ideas by 1849.

⁶¹ Stimson, *Cholera Beacon*, 32.

⁶² Harold W. Jones, M.D., "Cholera," in *Encyclopedia Americana*, 6:586 (New York, 1954); Draper and Croft, *A Helping Hand*, 727; Middleton, "Cholera Epidemics of Iowa County Wisconsin," 896.

providences, but that he more properly attributed it to his own ignorance of the nature and character of the pestilence, and that he determined not to be satisfied till he had fully unravelled the mystery."⁶³

Castleman did not realize it, but at the very time he spoke a way had been discovered to check the spread of cholera, though the mystery was not as yet "fully unravelled." It was a simple remedy discovered by John Snow, a successful and fashionable London anesthetist. Using the process of elimination, Snow concluded that the disease was spread by drinking water. After his famous order to remove the handle from the Broad Street pump, cholera practically disappeared from London and a means was known for controlling cholera epidemics in the civilized world.⁶⁴

AT the outbreak of the 1849 epidemic there was only one hospital in the state, St. John's Infirmary in Milwaukee (later known as St. Mary's Hospital), which opened its doors November 12, 1848. When residents of Wisconsin were stricken with cholera they generally remained in their homes, but immigrants often had no place to go. During the 1849-1854 epidemics there were three havens of refuge for immigrants and indigent sick in Milwaukee, the alms house, the pest house, and St. Mary's Hospital.⁶⁵

Some of the smaller communities improvised to take care of the sick and dying. In Muskego, for example, where there were many newly arrived immigrants, a large barn on the shores of Big Muskego Lake was used as a hospital in 1849. Two years later when the plague raged with frightful violence and fatality, "a log house near the town line in Norway was then an improvised hospital, and graves were dug and kept open for expected corpses."

⁶³ *Wisconsin State Medical Society Proceedings*, 1855, 34. At this time there were fifty-one members in the Society.

⁶⁴ Although Snow was convinced that cholera was water-borne, recognition of his theory came slowly. The epidemics which occurred in the United States in 1866, 1867, and 1873 do not seem to have reached Wisconsin. With Koch's identification of the cholera bacillus in 1884, the miasmatic theory gave way to the germ theory, and medical scientists had the knowledge they needed to eliminate cholera.

⁶⁵ In the Milwaukee *Sentinel* of August 4, 1854, St. John's Infirmary was charged with spreading disease by accepting cholera patients.

In Luther Valley, near Beloit, the home of Gullik Springen was used to care for the sick. "One can well understand the conditions," wrote Springen, "when 18 corpses were carried from our house that summer [1854] my parents and one brother included." It is probable that many family homes served as local hospitals during the cholera years.⁶⁶

Cholera left in its wake scores of orphaned children. In Milwaukee the problem was especially acute because of the influx of immigrants. Before the cholera epidemics there was apparently no need for an organization to care for orphans, but in January of 1850 the Milwaukee Orphan Association, supported mainly by the Protestant churches, was founded. Its aim was to place the unfortunate children in private homes as soon as possible. By 1853, sixty-nine children were received by the Asylum; four years later 201 had entered, though all but thirty-nine had been placed in homes. The Asylum was supported by gifts of food, boxes of clothing, cords of wood, and occasionally cash from the citizens of Milwaukee.⁶⁷ In rural areas and small communities orphans were no doubt taken into the homes of relatives and friends.

Thus it is seen that despite the cost in lives and human suffering, the cholera epidemics which swept Wisconsin in the first half of the last century brought about certain social benefits. Because of cholera public sanitation became a matter of communal action and concern; hospitals sprang up in communities where none had previously existed; and orphanages were established.

⁶⁶ Anderson, *The First Chapter of Norwegian Immigration*, 275-276; Blaine Hansen, "The Norwegians of Luther Valley," in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 28:429 (June, 1945).

⁶⁷ *Annual Reports of the Milwaukee Orphan Association, 1850-1857* (Milwaukee). In his budgetary request to his superior in Vienna for the year 1851 the Catholic Bishop of Milwaukee wrote of the need for orphanages in Milwaukee. "To all this must be added the building of two orphan asylums—one for boys and the other for girls—which I must build, since even now fifty-three orphans were left homeless by the cholera last summer; and I must not expose the little ones to dangers of being drawn away by Protestants. Besides, I fear much from the epidemic mentioned above, and also dysentery, which has robbed several children of their parents—especially at Westpoint, the most unsanitary ward of the city." "Letters of the Right Reverend John Martin Henni and the Reverend Anthony Urbank," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 10:81-82 (March, 1926).

readers' choice



State Street Books: The Society's New Paperback Series

Crosier on the Frontier: A Life of John Martin Henni. By PETER LEO JOHNSON. (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, 1959. Pp. xiii, 240. Paper, \$3.95.)

This volume combines biography and history in the proper proportions. It deals with a noted Wisconsin historical figure who labored for more than fifty years in the vineyards of the Lord, first as a priest in Ohio and then as bishop and archbishop in Milwaukee. Born in the Swiss canton of Graubünden, John Martin Henni was educated in Switzerland and in Rome. He was assigned for missionary work in the Cincinnati diocese in 1828. He won recognition for his work among the German Catholics of Cincinnati and environs. Then he was named the first bishop of the new diocese of Milwaukee when it was created in 1843. In 1875, Milwaukee was created a metropolitan see and Henni was elevated to the archepiscopacy. From 1843 until his death in 1881, the life of Henni was closely linked to the history of Milwaukee and to the growth of the Catholic Church in the Wisconsin area. The first quarter of the book deals with Henni's life before he came to Milwaukee; the last three-fourths has a Wisconsin setting.

This book is a must for anyone interested in such subjects as the Americanization of the German immigrants, Midwestern Catholicism in the 1828-1881 era, and the early history of Milwaukee in particular and Wisconsin in general. Details and facts substantiate the generalizations and interpretations. The author calls a spade a spade. The chapter which includes material on Catholic missionary activity among the Menominees exposes the machinations of some Indian traders. The chapter entitled "Wisconsin Kulturkampf" scrapes some of the gilt off the Forty-eighters.

Monsignor Johnson's biography of Henni blends scholarship and readability. It is based,

practically in entirety, upon primary sources. The Milwaukee archdiocesan archives and the records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs exemplify the manuscript sources used. The Milwaukee *Seebote*, the Cincinnati *Wahrheitsfreund*, and the Milwaukee *Sentinel* typify newspapers utilized. Although the text is heavily documented (twelve chapters, nearly sixty footnotes each), the story is well told and interesting. *Crosier on the Frontier* will appeal to both the exacting scholar and to the casual reader of history.

The Most Reverend William E. Cousins, Archbishop of Milwaukee, has contributed a brief but excellent foreword. The appendix includes the notes to the text, an impressive bibliography, and an adequate index.

This volume marks the inauguration of a paperback series, the "State Street Books," by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. The series will be of a scholarly nature, including original works (like the Henni book) as well as worth-while reprints. The purpose of the series is to make good books available at popular prices. Monsignor Johnson's worthy volume gets this series off to an auspicious start.

FRANK L. KLEMENT

Marquette University



Used for many years as the emblem of the Society, the "Old Seal" has been revived as the publisher's colophon of the Society and as the trademark of its STATE STREET BOOKS, the first two titles of which are here reviewed.

Edward G. Ryan, Lion of the Law. By ALFONS J. BEITZINGER. (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, 1960. Pp. vi, 214. Paper, \$3.95.)

Recent State Historical Society publications have strengthened our Wisconsin biography shelf—Carpenter, Doty, Draper, Henni, LaFollette, Philipp, Sawyer, Moses M. Strong, Vilas, and Woodman. Beitzinger's *Edward G. Ryan* offers not only another subject but a new dimension as well. For Ryan was more than a lawyer and a jurist: he was a craftsman of the law, and as such the author justifies his full-length study.

The Irish-born Ryan migrated to America in 1830 in order to relieve his father of the burden of his extravagance. Already a college graduate, his six years in New York added training in law, zeal for politics and the economic ideas of William Leggett, and U.S. citizenship. The following six years were spent in Chicago in the practice of law, a brief excursion into newspaper publishing, an occasionally brawling participation in local politics, and the pursuit of a wife. In 1842 he moved his law practice and political interests to Racine, and in 1848 to Milwaukee. An account of his later career becomes a commentary on Wisconsin's politics, its bar, and its bench.

Ryan's role in the framing of the state's constitution expressed his *loco foco* principles (the outgrowth of his absorption of Leggett) on such matters as banks, state debt, internal improvements, and corporate charters. But his conservatism led him to oppose an elective judiciary, homestead exemption, and property rights for married women. In defense of a constitution not entirely to his liking, he wrote for the *Racine Advocate* ten articles which Beitzinger characterizes "from the standpoint of literary quality, cogency of argument, and scholarship, [as] the ablest political essays in Wisconsin's early literature."

Between 1848 and 1863 Ryan immersed himself in law and Democratic politics. He participated in the Radcliff murder trial, the Hubbell impeachment, the Barstow-Bashford contest, the La Crosse railroad foreclosure, and the Booth cases. Most importantly Ryan felt impelled to express himself fully on the political situation at the Democratic state convention in Milwaukee on September 3, 1862. Beitzinger, judiciously tempering his Ryan sympathies, here perceives Ryan's senatorial ambitions as well as a determination to justify his party as the loyal opposition. What contemporary observers labeled a "Bible of Copper-

headism" can now be viewed as a temperate if somewhat myopic address. Ryan soon found the voters of 1863 solidly aligned against his party and his viewpoint.

For eleven years Ryan wandered in the wilderness, beset by family trouble, financial setbacks, and political impotence. In mid-June 1874, however, Democratic Governor Taylor appointed the sixty-four-year-old Ryan Chief Justice of the state, and three months later he read his famous decision upholding the constitutionality of the Potter law. Ryan's first was also his greatest opinion, the vindication by an old *loco foco* of the power of the state against the corporation. But for six more years he presided over a court often torn by dissension partly of his making, but distinguished by his guidance and the powerful reasoning and lucidity of his opinions.

Beitzinger concludes that Ryan was "a man of great ability," possessing "a keen intellect, profound learning, high principles, and great moral courage," and that his public life was, on balance, a success despite "his violent temper, his emotional instability and intolerance of error and mediocrity in others."

Beitzinger's Ryan is the second of the Society's new paper-bound series, State Street Books, following Monsignor Johnson's *Crosier on the Frontier*. Future titles will include, we are told, "reprints of enduring worth," but the series must at present be judged on its two original biographies. The beginning has been impressive. Both volumes carry full documentation, a bibliography, and an index. Type face, paper quality, cover, and illustrations set a high standard for the paperback format (this reviewer is puzzled, however, by the duplication of a Ryan portrait in slightly different form on cover and in frontispiece). In these days of steadily mounting book prices, only the omission of cloth binding seems to have permitted pricing a quality product below \$4.

Yet several questions persist in this reviewer's mind. Wherein does the Society draw a distinction between its SSB originals on Henni and Ryan and its concurrently published cloth-bound titles such as Maxwell's *Philipp*? Moreover, if the sale is predominantly to libraries, how long will a paper cover stand up, and if, to avoid deterioration, stiff covers are added, how much saving will result? But if the pricing and popularity of paperbacks encourages the wide readership *Edward G. Ryan, Lion of the Law* deserves, especially among lawyers and historians, the format will be justified.

FREDERICK I. OLSON

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

GENERAL HISTORY

Money, Class, and Party; An Economic Study of Civil War and Reconstruction. By ROBERT P. SHARKEY. (The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1959. Pp. 346. \$5.50.)

The desire for simplicity on the part of textbook writers and college lecturers has led to a fundamental misunderstanding of the early Republican party. Supposedly it was business-oriented, favored a high tariff, sound money, and a general conservative financial philosophy (these terms are seldom defined). When examined by the monolithic economic determinists, the party becomes the representative of Eastern capitalism versus Western and Southern agrarianism.

In *Money, Class, and Party*, Robert P. Sharkey, administrative assistant to the president of The Johns Hopkins University, has outlined some of the dangers inherent in such an approach. Although he limits himself to an examination of a very few of the various factions that made up the Republican party, Mr. Sharkey has shown that there were wide divergencies within the party over every financial question. He vigorously takes issue with the Beards (*The Rise of American Civilization*) for having "failed to recognize the cleavages which existed within the capitalist group itself on various questions of economic policy," and with Howard K. Beale (*The Critical Year*) who assumed that "the Radical Republicans represented a cohesive group of politicians possessing well-defined aims."

Mr. Sharkey has found that the Radicals tended to split into three coherent, recognizable, and divergent groups on the questions of money and the tariff. The first group, headed by such men as William P. Fessenden, Justin Morrill, James Garfield, and Roscoe Conkling advocated sound finance, which to them meant a hard money policy and free trade, or at least a low tariff. It may be significant (Sharkey does not explore the possibility) that members of the group can be characterized as late-comers to the party and included almost none of the old abolitionists. These followers of the Manchester school were opposed by a faction within the party led by Thad Stevens, William Kelley, Ben Butler, Ben Wade, and William Sprague, all of whom favored soft money and a protective tariff. Between these two wings a

group of political opportunists maneuvered with the shifting currents of public opinion. Represented by such men as John Sherman, Robert Schenck, John A. Logan, and George Boutwell, this group held the balance of power and accounted for the violent shifts in Republican financial policy during the period.

In general (and this is an oversimplification) the Stevens group represented the industrialists of the country while the Fessenden wing spoke for the interests of the financiers. The bankers had few ties with the factory owners. Thus when Johnson's Secretary of the Treasury Hugh McCulloch proposed a contraction of the greenbacks, a Philadelphian wrote to changeable John Sherman that "McCulloch's whole aim appears to be to reduce the industry of the country at the feet of Banking Capital." He meant that the industrialists favored inflation and were antagonistic to banks. Therefore to say, as the Beards did, that the Republican Party supported "sound money" is to distort history.

Most labor leaders supported the arch-Radicals of the Stevens faction because of their easy money and high tariff views. Edward Kellogg had provided the theoretical base for labor's position on the money and protection issues, just as Henry Carey had done for industrialists. Carey and Kellogg were both economic nationalists and in a sense disciples of Henry Clay; they were both convinced that industrial progress was stifled by the high rates of interest the financiers charged and believed escape lay in cheap money or a controlled low interest rate (Kellogg wanted to abolish private banks altogether and substitute a nationalized monetary system). In their systems, as in Clay's, a harmony of interest between labor, agriculture, and factory could be found within the confines of a high tariff and cheap-money system. In response to these arguments, organized labor leaders gave explicit and enthusiastic support to Stevens, Butler, and other Radicals.

The financiers opposed the Carey-Kellogg "harmony of interests" which tended towards an economic nationalism and might result in the end of the export-import trade in which they were so deeply involved. They also fought the Stevens Radicals on other issues. Edward Atkinson, in a letter to McCulloch, summarized their position: "I am endeavoring in connection with some others who are known as extreme radicals to give such direction to the reorganization of the south as shall prevent the creation of an exclusive black men's party and

also to kill the scheme of confiscation. I also hope we may be able to secure the election of a southern delegation who shall not be under Thad Stevens' lead on tariff and currency questions, but of this I am not hopeful."

Mr. Sharkey has diverse other new viewpoints to offer (for example, due to European crop failures the farmers were enjoying high prices in the period and took no interest in the greenback question; therefore "the prosperity of the farmer was one of the decisive reasons why the Republicans managed to retain political power in 1868," since the farmers ignored the Democratic Pendleton Plan), but space prevents mention here of all the author's points of view.

Money, Class, and Party is one of the few highly original and genuinely important books on the Civil War to appear in the last decade. Stylistically it is only fair and the organization is hopeless, but the research is excellent and the conclusions noteworthy.

STEPHEN E. AMBROSE

University of Wisconsin

Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America. By TIMOTHY L. SMITH. (Abingdon Press, New York and Nashville, 1957. Pp. 253. \$4.00.)

This monograph—"an evangelical explanation of the origins of the social gospel"—is an important contribution to the recent renaissance of interest in mid-nineteenth century religion and the roots of the social gospel. The author's thesis is that revivalism and perfectionist aspiration flourished increasingly among all denominations and especially in the cities between 1840 and 1865. The evangelists, particularly Methodists and Baptists, he holds, played a far more significant role in the growing warfare against "slavery, poverty, and greed" than has been realized, and therefore they "helped to prepare the way both in theory and practice for what later became known as the social gospel."

Holding that "the beliefs and practices of the mass of ordinary men are most important," Smith did his research largely in popular religious literature. He contends that by the 1840's "the vital center of American Protestantism was in the cities rather than in the rural West," and he takes to task those church historians who are still absorbed with the frontier. In the middle period, "revival measures were as proper in Boston as in Kentucky," and the currents of religious fervor that swept

back and forth across the Atlantic were more important than anything that took place on the frontier.

By describing the widespread development of holiness preaching and the popular dissemination of the Methodist doctrine of perfection, Smith not only presents a useful corrective to previous analyses but also makes a unique contribution to our knowledge of this fascinating period, pointing out as he does that "only their evangelical trust in divine grace to supplement human efforts and their retention of the historic 'heavenly hope' of the faith set these pioneers apart from the Christian social reformers of a later age." For example, he declares that the doctrine of immanence that underlay the social gospel was but "a tepid restatement" of liberal revivalist preaching. The idea of the Kingdom of God on earth as prophesied by the Christian Labor Union or by Rauschenbusch rested upon earlier proclamations by Oberlin perfectionists, revivalistic Calvinists, and "Methodists great and small"—all ardent postmillennialists bent on preparing a kingdom for their King.

The book is unfortunately marred by occasional slips, such as the declaration that American religion after 1865 was characterized by a growing concern with "purely social issues." It is to be doubted that any object of social-gospel concern was ever a mere social issue to any of the great leaders of that movement which, of course, never became a majority affair. Smith does not always make it clear that there was a fundamental difference between those who believed that all that was needed to accomplish a desired reform was "more and purer piety" and those other revivalists like Finney and later Moody who demanded that their converts evidence their change of heart with good social work. Certain of the author's contentions are proper correctives, yet this reviewer is not convinced that other historians of the social gospel neglected the Baptists and Methodists as he claims: these came into the movement later than did Episcopalians and Congregationalists but made their own unique and powerful contributions. Like Rauschenbusch himself, they required an additional generation to bridge the gap between traditional piety and the new demands of the times. It is gratifying to find in this book a competent description of the great urban revivals of 1858 in proper perspective of both Y.M.C.A. and the churches.

C. HOWARD HOPKINS

Westminster Choir College

Lewis Henry Morgan: The Indian Journals, 1859-1862. Edited and with an introduction by LESLIE A. WHITE. Illustrations selected and edited by CLYDE WALTON. (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1959. Pp. 229, \$17.50.)

This splendid volume is the first edition of four journals kept by Lewis Henry Morgan during visits to Kansas and Nebraska in 1859 and again in 1860, to Pembina and Fort Gary on the Red River of the North in 1861, and to Fort Benton on the upper Missouri in 1862. A pioneer in the scientific study of the American Indian, Morgan was a lawyer and business man who managed to accumulate a comfortable fortune while indulging his scholarly interests. Although he established a reputation as a thorough and meticulous researcher, subsequent workers in the field have demolished some of his theories.

Concluding early that kinship patterns determined a society's institutions, Morgan undertook the trips recorded in the journals to collect data to document his theory. The results of these visits together with other research are incorporated in his monumental *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*.

The journals, which are housed in the library of the University of Rochester, were first brought to the attention of scholars by a long-time student of Morgan's career, anthropologist Leslie A. White. A difficult task confronted White when he decided to edit the journals. They are of primary interest to the historian and the anthropologist, but the expensive format featuring numerous illustrations, including sixteen color plates, indicates an intention to appeal to a wider audience. White has omitted such material as vocabulary lists, extensive observations on the beaver, and Morgan's digressions on Pueblo construction and the culture of Indians not visited. The manuscript might have been further pruned for the benefit of the general reader who is likely to find the discussions of kinship systems and the tabular statements of dances rather heavy going. However, scholars could have used a more complete index. Both will appreciate the excellent selection of pictures.

There is ample information on a wealth of topics, making the book a rewarding experience for anyone interested in the American Indian or life on the frontier. Morgan had a wide range of interests and was a careful observer. He normally cites the source of his in-

formation and the editor has done a thorough job of further identifying people and places. Among the subjects covered are buffalo hunting, the preparation of pemmican, tribal mythology, annuity payment day at an Indian agency, mission schools, steamboating on the Missouri, and our Indian policy.

Morgan's sympathy with the Indians is patent. In New York he had labored to protect the red man from the rapacity of his civilized white brethren, and he was frequently appalled by what he saw in Kansas and Nebraska among the reservation Indians. Like most reformers Morgan considered the agency system corrupt and incapable of civilizing the Indian. Like his contemporaries he advocated severalty, the one policy frontiersmen and reformers were able to agree upon. The ultimate solution he felt to be amalgamation, which would be of both physical and intellectual benefit to the dominant whites. Morgan's prediction that Kansas would be the scene of the "first honest and regular experiment" of this type reminded this reviewer of a sign he once saw in a Topeka cafe, "Indians and Negroes served Only in Sacks."

WILLIAM T. HAGAN

North Texas State College

The United States Navy in the Pacific, 1897-1909. By WILLIAM R. BRAISTED. (University of Texas Press, Austin, 1958. Pp. xii, 282. \$5.00.)

In the stirring days of founding the American Empire at the turn of the century, the anti-imperialists shook an accusing finger at the Navy and its leaders—but historians have been slow to investigate the accusation. True, the contribution of Admiral Mahan and the other naval exponents of the "large policy" of 1898 has long been recognized. But what of the operational commanders, the Admirals and Captains on the Pacific Station, the masters of those little stub-nose, white battle cruisers whose design was so hesitantly naval that they looked more like armed pleasure craft and symbols of national bumptiousness than instruments of imperial power. What was their role in shaping, establishing, and maintaining the new imperial policy in an area of primary application? They were so far removed from Washington as to be respected as policy experts and to be trusted with discretion to implement policy that was only vaguely defined. Therefore, in a very practical sense, the United States Navy in the Pacific was both an impetus

and agent of American imperialism there. Basing his work on an extensive study of naval and diplomatic records in the National Archives, Professor Braisted has demonstrated how foreign policy was made and implemented by Captains on quarterdecks in Asiatic waters—but always with the moral and political support of Presidents in Washington. The volume is a first-rate monograph on the imperial phase of American diplomacy and an excellent case study of the influence of the military mind upon the determination of civilian policy.

As the Spanish-American War approached in the spring of 1898, the Naval Establishment in Washington consisted of a humdrum Secretary (John D. Long) and an effervescent Assistant Secretary (Theodore Roosevelt), the terror of mossback senior officers and the hero of the younger disciples of the broader view. The influence of the Assistant Secretary extended far beyond taking advantage of weekend absences of the Secretary to send directions to fleet commanders to prepare for offensive operations in the Philippines when war with Spain should be declared. Under Roosevelt's direction and leadership, war plans for general operations in the Pacific were drawn and the Navy prepared to implement them. While Spain was being overcome, the real enemies, Japan and Germany, were to be checkmated, and Great Britain was relied upon to provide the 'make weight.' Until a national emergency or imperial pride might force Congress to appropriate funds for a two-ocean Navy, the motley collection of vessels available was to be deployed for maximum effectiveness. That mobilization, the rippling thrill of being in the van of large events, and the selection of younger, more aggressive officers for the critical commands in the Far East had the desired effect upon the American fleet, preparing it for its role in imperial diplomacy. The new commanders were not the sort who retire to corporation directorships, but proudly serve in a cause of destiny.

Following the celebrated engagement at Manila Bay, the commander of the Asiatic Squadron then turned to foiling any attempted aggrandizement by other nations (especially Germany, whose threat to the Philippines Dewey seems to have exaggerated) and to repressing the aspirations of the Filipinos (whose independence Dewey implied in his despatches if he did not promise to Aguinaldo). After the relief of the Commodore for his triumphal return to America, the primary attention of the fleet shifted to the Boxer Rebellion. In protecting American property, lives, and honor,

Admirals George C. Remy and Louis Kempff seemed to exhibit, if anything, too much caution and regard for the niceties of international law to suit their superiors in Washington. Largely through their influence and cautiousness, American intervention in China was limited to an abstemious participation in international action, under circumstances precluding the claim or exercise of any political or territorial preference. They were probably responsible in large measure for keeping the American foot out of the Open Door.

A subsequent shuffle in operating and administrative commands brought the aggressive Admirals Frederick Rodgers and Robley D. ("Fighting Bob") Evans to the Far East and Admiral Henry C. Taylor to head the Bureau of Navigation in Washington. Ties of dedication to expansionism, family, and friendship drew this circle, with their protégés, into an effective force to strengthen the Pacific fleet, secure a major naval base in China, and lay the foundation of American power in the Far East. The group continued to press their policy until an advance base in China became diplomatically embarrassing to the State Department and until American businessmen became disenchanted with the commercial opportunities in the Far East. Their grander schemes of imperial might having floundered, the navalists were forced to the routine of parading the nation's naval might to cower the Japanese into postponing for a generation the conflict for the domination of the Far East.

It seems clear from the interpretation by Professor Braisted that the Navy did, indeed, influence policy in the Far East during the imperial decade, but not as a naval cabal as might be suspected. It was alternately expansionist in dealing with the Philippines, internationalist in repressing the Boxers, imperialist in seeking a Chinese operating base, and petulantly defensive in checking the Japanese. The shifts in its influence upon national policy were largely the reflection of varying personalities and changing circumstances. Notwithstanding Theodore Roosevelt's pronouncement to the contrary, the diplomat rather than the sailor retained control of foreign policy even in the years when navalism and expansionism were the prominent aspects of that policy. Thus were the sound precedents laid upon which to construct the more intricate relationships between national power and policy in America.

O. LAWRENCE BURNETTE, JR.

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin

The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby. Edited by CHARLES WELLS RUSSELL. (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1959. Pp. 414. \$5.00.)

Had John Singleton Mosby met a hero's death in battle he would have perhaps earned a measure of the immortality that the Confederacy bestowed on his *beau ideal*, Major General James Ewell Broun (Jeb) Stuart, who was mortally wounded at Yellow Tavern in May, 1864, nearly a year before Appomattox.

But Colonel Mosby, commanding officer of the Forty-third Virginia Cavalry Battalion, known as "Mosby's Rangers," survived the war and lived well into the present century, and almost outlived the praise heaped on him both North and South for his fabulous exploits as a guerilla commander operating behind the Federal lines.

Time did not dim the luster of his incredible activities in the area near Washington, which became known as "Mosby's Confederacy," but he disillusioned many of his compatriots by endorsing and voting for Grant in 1872.

When he died in 1916, the famed cavalry leader was penniless and almost forgotten, but it was his poverty that forced him, with the editorial assistance of his brother-in-law Charles Wells Russell, to write an account of his long and colorful career.

Now, with the centennial anniversary of the Civil War less than a year away, Indiana University Press, as part of its distinguished Civil War Centennial Series, has reprinted *The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby*.

Mosby did not begin to write this account until long after many other distinguished soldiers both Union and Confederate had told their stories, and perhaps its chief value is the spirited defense it contains of Jeb Stuart's controversial role in the Gettysburg campaign.

We have always had a sentimental spot in our heart for Mosby, because one of his rangers and a principal in many of Mosby's exploits was Sergeant William Lyle Hunter, our great-uncle. Hunter was one of the handful of men who accompanied Mosby on his daring raid on Fairfax that netted him Union General Stoughton, and fame on both sides of the Mason Dixon.

Hunter was later captured in an attack on an outpost near Hunter's Mills, Va., and spent the rest of the war in a Federal prison stockade. In his memoirs, Mosby recounts the thrilling story of the Stoughton capture, and many others.

In this book, Mosby denounces Lee's staff officers, and Lieutenant General James Longstreet for charging that Stuart disobeyed Lee's instructions to march on his flank into Pennsylvania and stay between the Army of Northern Virginia and the enemy.

Mosby went to great lengths to document his contention that Lee's instructions were carried out by Stuart, and that if Stuart's absence from Gettysburg was fatal to the Confederates, it was because of the nature of Lee's orders and not Stuart's dereliction.

Mosby, however, does a disservice to his own reputation and that of Stuart's by his biased defense of Jeb's absence from Gettysburg when the great battle opened on July 1, 1863.

Even writing long after the passions had cooled, Mosby makes this almost ridiculous claim for his flamboyant hero: "Stuart's march of a column of cavalry around the Union Army will be regarded in the light of the record, as one of the greatest achievements of the war, viewed either as an independent operation or raid, or in its strategic relation to the campaign."

Despite this flaw in Mosby's logic, the new edition of his memoirs is a welcome addition to the literature of the Civil War—a conflict in which Mosby played such a valiant role.

JOHN PATRICK HUNTER

Madison, Wisconsin

George Croghan: Wilderness Diplomat. By NICHOLAS B. WAINWRIGHT. (Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1959. Pp. 334. \$6.00.)

In a well-footnoted book Nicholas Wainwright tells a story of intrigue, double-dealing, and misrepresentation that was a part of the British colonial policy in dealing with the Indians. George Croghan was a major cog in the poorly conceived and poorly maintained machine that was to pacify the Indians.

This book is an extension of Albert T. Volwiler's *George Croghan and the Westward Movement*. Wainwright concentrates on the individual and relegates the westward movement to a minor position. Using Croghan's correspondence, diaries, and receipted bills found among the Cadwallader papers, the author tells a story of an opportunist who parlayed his ability to deal with the Indians into a comfortable life—frequently at the expense of his creditors.

There is little doubt that Croghan's knowledge of Indians aided the British and con-

founded the French. One is undeniably led to the conclusion that Croghan, while working for his personal interests, tried to aid the Indians. In Pennsylvania he found himself caught in the controversy between the Quakers and the Colonial government in dealing with the Indians. At times only one side trusted Croghan and at other times neither side trusted him, but he managed the Indian meetings in such a manner that many colonial leaders kept faith in him until the defeat of General Braddock. It is some time later that Croghan's influence with Indians is called for again, and then he is involved in virtually every major Indian meeting until the Revolutionary War.

Only Croghan's constant and endless problems with creditors ("Croghan could not play the game straight") tarnished his reputation and kept him from assuming a more prominent position among the colonial leaders.

Wisconsin readers will be a little disappointed in Wainwright's failure to mention Charles de Langlade at Braddock's defeat, but if the book has a shortcoming it is the author's failure to make the story interesting. This reviewer could visualize the author turning the pages of his notebook as he wrote each paragraph. In each of Croghan's peace-making ventures are found all the elements essential for a dramatic presentation, but the author neglects these elements in presenting the facts.

It may be true that a biography does not have to read like a romantic historical novel, but there is every reason to believe that if history books were flavored with the spice of a few adjectives and descriptive scenes there would be more people who would develop an appetite for history.

THURMAN FOX

*State Historical Society
of Wisconsin*

The Adams-Jefferson Letters; the Complete Correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and Abigail and John Adams: Vol. I, 1777-1804; Vol. II, 1812-1826. Edited by LESTER J. CAPPON. (Published by the University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Chapel Hill, 1959. Pp. 638. \$12.50.)

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson first met in 1775 when both were members of the Second Continental Congress and served on the committee to draft the Declaration of Independence. Both died within a few hours of each other on the fiftieth anniversary of American independence. In the intervening half-century Adams contributed materially to the estab-

lishment of state government in Massachusetts, helped negotiate the treaty that ended the American Revolution, served as United States Minister to the Netherlands and Great Britain, became Vice-President and then President of the United States, and finally retired to Quincy, his public career over except for a brief appearance in the Massachusetts constitutional convention of 1820. Jefferson in the same years served Virginia as legislator and Revolutionary governor, succeeded Benjamin Franklin as United States Minister to France, became Secretary of State under Washington and Vice-President during the administration of John Adams, climaxed his political career with eight years in the Presidency, and with undisguised relief retired to Monticello.

For most of the fifty years they were acquainted, Jefferson and Adams were warm friends, exchanging letters on public and personal affairs as inclination and necessity dictated. Unpleasant incidents accompanying the divergence of their political paths in the 1790's caused a cooling of their relationship and an interruption in their correspondence, but they resumed writing in 1812 and continued with increased affection for the remainder of their lives.

Scholars have long been aware of the extraordinary character of the Adams-Jefferson correspondence, for it has been available to them in manuscript collections at the Library of Congress and the Massachusetts Historical Society. Many of the letters have been somewhat more available to the public in various printed collections, but the complete exchange has never before this time been published. Lester Cappon and the Institute of Early American History and Culture have now remedied this unfortunate oversight.

In addition to 329 letters exchanged by John Adams and Jefferson, the present collection includes fifty-one letters between Jefferson and Adams' remarkable and devoted wife, Abigail. The arrangement of the letters is chronological, but the editor has broken the entire span into thirteen periods or chapters. Each chapter is preceded by a brief essay providing background information and interpretation helpful to fuller appreciation of the letters themselves. In a fine general introduction, Cappon touches on some of the outstanding characteristics of each correspondent. He notes, for example, that Jefferson was more reserved than Adams, who had a keen sense of humor and a hot temper. Adams' intellectual interests lay in moral philosophy, law and government, theology and religion, and the

classics. Jefferson, on the other hand, was more interested in natural science and philosophy and the practical applications of ideas. Adams was the more profound thinker, but Jefferson's universal interests made him more typical of the Age of Enlightenment.

The first volume contains letters dating from 1777 to 1804, most of them written while Adams was minister to Great Britain and Jefferson minister to France between 1784 and 1788. Filled with the problems of diplomatic negotiations, these letters reveal the frustrations suffered by two sensitive representatives of a government too weak and bankrupt to command respect at home or abroad. Many of these letters contain so much unfamiliar and minute detail that they are of little interest to any but the specialist in diplomatic history, to whom they have long been available elsewhere.

Volume two extends from the reconciliation of Adams and Jefferson in 1812 to within a few months of their deaths in 1826. In this time Adams wrote two letters for every one he received from Jefferson, whose time was occupied with the management of his plantations, planning the University of Virginia, and the burdens of an extensive correspondence. Perhaps because Adams had more time for reading, he seems more often to have initiated the subjects discussed in their letters. Free of the harassments and harangues of public office, both men found these to be ripe and golden years, and their correspondence is a rich ranging over natural, moral, and political philosophy, religion, education, history (particularly of the Revolutionary era in Europe and America), and such contemporary occurrences as they thought important or interesting. The intellectual content and quality of these letters is justly famous and the reader can not doubt the greatness of the minds that produced them. But they are more than intellectual exercises, for they are filled with warmth and humanity, and the emotions are stirred by the grace, serenity, and quiet humor with which these two old friends accepted the infirmities of old age and anticipated their ultimate end.

The editor's introductory essays, informative footnotes, and translations of French, Greek, and Latin quotations are a genuine help to the reader, and the index is adequate. In his preface Dr. Cappon states that the edition is intended primarily for the "general reader," whoever that may be. If the latter individual can make it through the first volume, he will find the second much more rewarding. I suspect that many readers, both general and more

specialized, will be content to read the general and chapter introductions and scan a few of the letters in volume one, then examine volume two with more care. At any rate, the professional historian will appreciate these two volumes at least as much as the general reader, for reading the entire correspondence in sequence increases its impact and reveals many facets that might otherwise be overlooked.

RICHARD A. ERNEY

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

The Urban Frontier: The Rise of Western Cities, 1790-1830. By RICHARD C. WADE. (Harvard University Press, 1959. Pp. 360. Bibliography, index. \$6.00.)

This is an interesting and useful book. It seeks, in the words of the author, "to tell the story of the first decades of the urban West." In doing this Professor Wade presents an account of the rise of five trans-Appalachian towns—St. Louis, Louisville, Lexington, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh—from their founding to 1830. The book consists of ten chapters, the first is a general introduction, four chapters are then devoted to the period 1790-1815, another four to the period between 1815 and 1830, and the study is concluded with an essay on what the author calls the urban dimension of Western life. The work is based on extensive and thoughtful research. It describes in considerable detail the numerous problems encountered in the rapid, largely unplanned growth of these centers of population, and the solutions that were worked out. It also deals perceptively with political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of these rising Western cities.

We learn a great deal from Professor Wade when he describes the growing pains of the Western cities, but he is less helpful when he seeks to persuade us that there was something called an "urban frontier" and an "urban movement" in the early West. The opening sentence of the book, "The towns were the spearheads of the frontier," impresses this reviewer as being a striking but quite empty piece of rhetoric as is the declaration that a "wedge of urbanism" had been driven into the "backwoods" (p. 35) or "Western life" (p. 341). To say that by 1830 "the West had produced two types of society, one rural and one urban," and that "the West was large enough to contain both movements comfortably," is, in the context of the discussion, both to oversimplify and to suggest fundamental differences

in attitudes and aspirations which, to the extent they existed, were not based exclusively on population density. But the author probably does not take himself too seriously in this regard. He recognizes that town and country were closely interrelated and that the cities were called into existence to serve their respective communities, just as the exploitation of the resources of the countryside reflected in part the demands of the urban centers. In emphasizing that the trans-Appalachian cities, towns, and villages were as much a part of the westward movement as fur traders and farmers, the author has performed a useful service.

VERNON CARSTENSEN

University of Wisconsin

A Ticket to the Circus. By CHARLES PHILIP FOX. (Superior Publishing Company, Seattle, 1959. Pp. 184. \$10.00.)

In one sense, Mr. Fox's generic title is belied by the specifically limiting scope of his latest contribution to the literature of the circus. The subtitle, however, pointedly informs the reader that this is a photobiography of those "busy brothers of Baraboo," the Ringlings. In another interpretation the title rings as true as the tent stake squarely smitten by the sledge, for the intimate story of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth is indeed, by extended example, an introduction to the whole subject of the circus.

The author, with avocational penchants for photography and writing—and for the circus—and with management experience from an early career in commerce and industry, has realized the fulfillment of every boy's dream to "run away with the circus." Recently retired from the business world, Mr. Fox has undertaken the full-time direction and management of the Circus World Museum at Baraboo, Wisconsin, where the circus of history and the living circus are happily espoused.

This is indeed a pictorial work, for two-thirds of the book graphically record the history and the daily life of the "Big One," the circus created by the Ringling brothers. Drawing upon some fifty sources for graphic materials, Mr. Fox has provided a singular service in distillative collation to present a warm and spirited picture of the lives and works of the Ringlings, and hence, of the life and work of the circus itself. The large contributions from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's holdings of historical photoprints and from its several special resources, such as

the Howland and the Atwell collections, point up the value and utility of a centralized archive of circus historical materials. Fine photographs detailing circus logistics—transportation, quartering, and supplies—come mostly from Mr. Fox's own camera.

Picture book notwithstanding, *A Ticket to the Circus* offers an appreciatively solid text of 55,000 words, thirty per cent of which appear as quotations, but for cogent reasons. "Mr. John" Ringling's 1919 article in the *American Magazine* on the philosophy and spirit behind his show, and a 1947 *Fortune* article on circus logistics are both lengthily reprinted, a fact that may be excused on the grounds that both articles say very well what could only with considerable difficulty be better expressed in condensation or paraphrase. Another 10,000 words testify to the indefatigable foot-work and door-bell ringing of Mr. Fox in running down and interviewing some forty-odd performers and circus workmen, three of whom were nonagenarians who had taken part in Ringling's first performance in 1884.

It appears from this book, as well as from most works on the subject, that there are—like Oliver Wendell Holmes' three Johns and three Thomases—three circuses. There is the circus of circus people themselves. There is the circus of the spectator, to whom the actual performance in its totality of impressions to the senses, is the circus, and who knows little or nothing, nor cares, about the other twenty-odd hours that make up the circus day. Then there is the circus of Mr. Fox and of all other circus buffs, whether historians, fans, model builders, miniature circus owners, or even such unusual students as the representatives of Kaiser Wilhelm's Army high command who visited America to observe how to move, quarter, and feed the force of regimental strength that was the great itinerant tented circus of the past. To most of these devotees all *but* the actual performance is the circus. Their fare is management, advertising, transportation, parades, tent poles and canvas, the working and performing stock animals, equipment, and what goes on in winter quarters. This book then, in a way, may be the proper complement to the spectator's circus of the three-hour performance: here are accounted the hours of the remainder of the day in the life of the circus. Mr. Fox makes no bones about it. He admittedly glosses over that phase of the story of the circus dealing with the performance and the artists, pointing out that these matters are covered elsewhere in a voluminous literature, albeit widely scattered

and difficult of location.

This relatively slim volume, of big-book format (8¼ x 10½ in.), is adequately if somewhat loosely bound, colorfully jacketed, and well proofed, with but few typographical errors. Among the latter, of course, is the perennially ubiquitous matter of the spelling of the name of the circus family Parson (no ultimate "s"), contemporaries of the Ringlings, whose story will be revealed one day by Wisconsin's own "Mr. Circus," John M. Kelley of Baraboo.

Mr. Fox's style is pellucid, vigorous, easy to read; his title is appropriate; his book is wonderfully informative. We shall look forward to his next effort, *A Pictorial History of Performing Horses*, scheduled for release by this same publisher at mid-year.

JOHN W. WINN

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin

The American Way of Life in Stark County, Ohio, 1917-1959. By EDWARD THORNTON HEALD. (*The Stark County Story*, Vol. IV, Part III, Stark County Historical Society, Canton, Ohio, 1959. Pp. xvi, 1065. \$11.00.)

This volume is one of an impressive series concerned with the history of Stark County, Ohio. The county is not an unusual one in any particular respect. It has evolved into a balanced mixture of industry and agriculture, urban-suburban and rural living. But its history speaks well for the nation, since the pages

of this book and the earlier ones reveal at the local level the fortitude and frustrations of individuals who literally made one small segment of the United States.

Edward T. Heald is a former YMCA executive who turned to history with serious diligence after his retirement. He went back to college for additional training and a Master's degree in history. As Stark County historian and a leading light in the county historical society, he has turned a county's attention to its history as few men in the country have been able to do.

One of the methods which Mr. Heald used was a weekly radio program dealing with important historical events in the county. What started out as a small but interesting idea ended up as a large and significant project—463 scripts turned into seven books of county history. As volume IV, Part III, this is the final book in the series, bringing the story up to date and scanning the recent life of the county in all its facets. Encyclopedic in content and comprehensive in scope, it can be read as history and used as encyclopedia. It is a fine tribute to the county it pictures and an enduring monument to its author who had the vision and the strength to let others see the wonderful things in the history of Stark County.

LESLIE H. FISHEL, JR.

*State Historical Society
of Wisconsin*

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ACCESSIONS

Manuscripts

Services for microfilming and photostating all but certain restricted items in its manuscripts collections are provided by the Society. For details write Dr. Josephine L. Harper, Head, Maps and Manuscripts Section.

An important addition to the Society's holdings are the records of the Wisconsin Department of the American Legion which have recently been arranged, inventoried, and cataloged. Mr. Robert Wilkie, Department Adjutant, acting on behalf of the Legion, agreed to the importance of preserving these records and extended the organization's fullest co-operation to Society staff members who surveyed and selected those files of greatest historical importance. In addition to the files placed in the Society's care, Mr. Wilkie made arrangements for the Society to be placed on the Legion's mailing list so that all important announcements, programs, and records of activities are received periodically; in addition, provisions were also made for the microfilming of records of historical importance which the American Legion feels must remain at its headquarters in Milwaukee.

The American Legion Papers currently consist of fifty-two boxes. The subject groupings of the original files were maintained while the records themselves were placed in chronological order within these groupings. A wide range of interests and activities is reflected in the files, and a wealth of material bearing on the Legion's attitudes and actions concerning social, civic, and political developments in Wisconsin and the nation will be preserved for future scholars and historians. The subject heading of each file group with a brief description of their content is as follows:

General Files, 1919, 1924-1956. Correspondence, telegrams, mimeographed material concerning service and child welfare, naturalization, immigration, political questions, universal military training, veteran assistance, national defense, and other miscellaneous subjects of interest to the Legion.

Post Department Files, 1919-1956. Correspondence, reports, telegrams relative to the establishment of posts, transfers of membership, delegates to state conventions, national defense, sports, and religious programs.

Pensions and Compensation File, 1944-1946. Ledger consisting of names of veterans, addresses, designation whether World War I or II veteran, class of pension or compensation, and amount of pension or compensation given to veteran.

Public Relations Files, 1941-1955. Correspondence pertaining mostly to the American Legion organ, the *Badger Legionnaire*, also on Camp American Legion and the Grand Army Home; mimeographed copies of speeches on national defense and radio scripts on assistance to veterans, Armistice day, and universal military training; mimeographed reports on the Junior Baseball Program, minutes of the Public Relations Commission, and the Children's Heritage Program. These files also contain material on subversive activities (*Monthly Summary of Trends and Developments* and mimeographed speeches). See also: *Subversive Files*.

Camp American Legion File, 1924-1955. Correspondence and mimeographed reports concerning the lease of the camp land from the state, purchase and inventory of equipment, establishment of the Recreation Camp and other aspects of this program.

Badger Boys State File, 1939-1954. Correspondence and mimeographed material pertaining to the annual organization of Boys State including attendance rosters, reports of annual meetings, reports of audits and rosters of officers and staffs.

Special Projects File, 1925-1956. The greater part of these papers relates to the Recreation Camp established adjacent to Camp American Legion.

Permanent Home File, 1948-1952. Correspondence and telegrams regarding lease of department office space, necessity for finding a permanent home for the Legion, investigation of sites in Appleton, Portage, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Beaver Dam, Oshkosh, and Madison; temporary lease in Milwaukee; and purchase of a permanent site in Milwaukee.

Senators and Representatives File, 1943-1954. Correspondence and telegrams to and from congressional senators and representatives regarding universal military training, appropriations for Veterans Employment Service, Mundt Bill to combat communism, National Defense act, Nixon banquet honoring his fight against communism, and other political issues.

Veterans Organizations File, 1925-1954. Correspondence to and from other veterans organizations concerning mutual interests and activities.

Other Organizations File, 1938, 1940-1943, 1945-1954. Correspondence from and to other organizations seeking co-operation of the American Legion in community service projects, fund-raising drives, and other activities.

Subversive File, 1936-1939, 1941, 1944-1945. Correspondence, telegrams, and mimeographed material relative to subversive activities; correspondence regarding reported communistic activities; mimeographed and printed speeches distributed by the National Department of the American Legion; mimeographed reports of the Anti-Subversive Committee, Americanism Committee, and other miscellaneous pamphlets and materials.

Wisconsin Veterans Council, 1943-1953. The Wisconsin Veterans Council is made up of a representative from each of the following veterans organizations: United Spanish War Veterans, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, the Army and Navy Union, and Military Order of the Purple Heart, and was created for the purpose of co-ordinating veterans' activities. The papers consist of general correspondence and telegrams, mimeographed minutes of Council Meetings, roster of members and constitution and by-laws. The files pertain mainly to the securing of benefits for veterans.

In addition to the above manuscripts, microfilm copies of the proceedings of the annual conventions, 1920-1959, and numerous committee meetings are available.

Of particular interest to both local historians and students of national politics is the accessioning of the papers of Charles E. Broughton, widely known editor of the *Sheboygan Press*. Broughton's newspaper career extended over a period of forty-four years, and his papers reflect a Wisconsin liberal editor's stand upon a great variety of issues and debates that include, to mention only a few, his opposition to prohibition and his public debates with the Reverend Robert Gordon, 1929-1933; the problems of the Wisconsin cheese market and hearings on charges of price fixing in connection with the Farmers Call Board of Plymouth, 1931-1933; his role in the development of the Horicon Marsh and Sheboygan Marsh; and the fight over pollution in the state, 1930-1949.

Locally Broughton was an important influence on his community. He was responsible for the founding of the Sheboygan's Kiddies Camp for underprivileged children, the Y.M.C.A. and the Safe Riders Club. He financed conservation awards to 4-H club members and Boy Scouts, opposed stream pollution, and supported the development of Horicon Marsh for public use.

Politically his influence extended beyond his own community. An active Democrat, he

was National Committeeman from Wisconsin from 1932-1941 and several times was mentioned as a possible candidate for governor or senator. His correspondence includes letters from many prominent personalities and politicians including Franklin D. Roosevelt, Eugene Debs, Cordell Hull, Averill Harriman, and many others. The collection, which was donated by Mr. Broughton, consists of fourteen boxes and fourteen volumes of scrapbooks and covers the years 1916-1953.

Other accessions include the papers, ca. 1825-1957, of George Chindahl, circus hobbyist, including correspondence, 1942-1957, clippings, 1825-1957, circus route books, notes for and manuscript of *History of the Circus in America*, and other materials pertaining to the circus, presented by Reverend and Mrs. George Greene, Pass-a-Grille, Florida; papers, 1763-1884, of Nathaniel Cushing, Penbrooke, Massachusetts manufacturer and merchant, consisting of correspondence with family members and businessmen relative to his business interests, receipts, accounts, deeds, wills, and other miscellaneous materials, presented by David Clark Everest, Wausau; manuscript letter dated July 29, 1859, from Abraham Lincoln to N.B. Dodson in which Lincoln declines an invitation to deliver an address at Morris, Illinois, presented by Mrs. Foreman LeBold, Chicago; manuscript railroad timetable dated May 6, 1904, listing train schedules, engineers, conductors, and other miscellaneous information relative to the Southern Division of the Wisconsin Central Railway, presented by Roy L. Martin, Rock Island, Illinois; record of wedding guests and gifts received by Florence Durand Patton of Milwaukee, November 8, 1899, presented by W. Norman Fitzgerald, Milwaukee; miscellaneous papers, 1916-1926, of Thorstein Velben, economist, including correspondence, manuscript poem in Norwegian, bills, receipts, and other materials, presented by Mrs. Henry Koyer, Fisher, Illinois; document, April 8, 1861, appointing H. A. Youmans to represent the State Medical Society of Wisconsin at the annual meeting of the American Medical Society in Chicago, deposited by John B. Youmans, Washington, D.C.

M.P.

Museum

Accessions to the Museum seem to follow a cyclical pattern, marked by the observably large proportion of one type of material donated during a given period. Often this phenomenon is related to a specific activity such as the opening of a new installation—the Circus World Museum, for example—or a Women's Auxiliary exhibit. More frequently there is no discernible reason for the influx of many donations in a particular category from various sources. Thus the last accessions period is featured by the donation of many uniforms and other articles of military interest.

From Mrs. C. Maxwell Dieffenbach, Glendale, Ohio, we have received a number of WWII uniforms worn by her father, General Carl R. Gray, as a colonel and general in the Military Railway Corps. Also donated were a pair of military telephones, a field desk, a Mauser automatic pistol, ten identification models of American naval vessels, and a collection of American medals and decorations. Non-military items in the donation include a sizeable collection of railroad memorabilia designated for the proposed National Railroad Museum, a group of costume uniforms, and a desk and chair.

From Mr. Phillip La Follette, Madison, former Governor of Wisconsin, the Museum has received a number of WWI and WWII uniforms, an 1873 Springfield rifle, and a WWI German saber. In addition, Mr. La Follette donated a sofa and a soup tureen from the La Follette homestead, and banners of the National Progressive Party.

Mr. James Naysmith, Evansville, donated the WWII uniforms of his son, Lt. Commander Stanley Naysmith. Mrs. Earl Brassington, Madison, is the donor of a WWI uniform as well as a pair of bearskin mittens. From the Flint Estate, Madison, we received a complete YMCA woman worker's uniform of WWI date, a collection of U. S. Army cap insignia, shoulder sleeve insignia, insignia of grade and service, and uniform buttons.

From Miss Laura B. Borwell, Madison, the Museum received a woman worker's cape and hat, worn during WWI, and Mr. H. J. Hermann, Rockford, Illinois, donated cap insignia of the same period. Mr. Thomas J. Kingsley, Tacoma, Washington, gave a complete Marine's dress uniform of 1905, consisting of a blouse, trousers, coat, cape, and cap, all in excellent condition.

Circus memorabilia ranked second in num-

ber of acquisitions, many of which are now on display at the Circus World Museum at Baraboo. Mr. Charles P. Fox, Oconomowoc, and Mr. John M. Kelley, Baraboo, are the donors of carved and gilded side panels from a circus cage wagon. Mr. Fox also donated a *Mother Goose* float, formerly with the Barnum & Bailey Circus. Another fairy-tale float, the *Old Woman in the Shoe*, also from Barnum & Bailey, was given by Roland K. Wilde, Milwaukee. From Mr. Ed. Alexander, Baraboo, we received a Forepaugh & Sells baggage wagon.

Mr. George W. Christy, South Houston, Texas, is the donor of a cage wagon from the Christy Brothers Circus. Miss Mary N. Roebuck is the donor of a rare Tom Thumb souvenir medal. Circus performers' properties have been donated by the following individuals: a balancing globe, Walter Jennier, Peru, Indiana; two teeterboards and other acrobats' props, W. G. Schultz, Madison; aerialists' shoes and rigging, Mr. James Bernardis, Baraboo, Wisconsin; a lion-tamer's chair, Mr. Eddie Kunz, Cristiana Brothers Circus; dog and pony show equipment, Mrs. Albert Sigsbee, Milwaukee; a circus cowboy costume worn by Fred "Cap" Collier, Mrs. Rose Collier, Janesville; and juggling props used and donated by Mr. Art Ahrensmeyer, Madison.

Of special interest, also, are a number of items received in commemoration of the opening of the Circus World Museum. Mr. Peter H. Lindemann, Sheboygan, onetime circus performer and owner-manager of the Seils-Sterling Circus, out of Sheboygan, presented an exact scale model of the well-known band wagon featured during the final years of the show's existence.

Among the circus performers appearing in Baraboo for the occasion of the opening were Los Larabees (Lucky and Joni), Schiller Park, Illinois, who not only contributed their talents during the celebration, but also donated a fine example of the Argentine bullwhip used in their act. Mr. and Mrs. Walter E. Dick, Waukesha, marked the opening with the gift of a selection of the famous "Humpty-Dumpty" articulated toy circus figures. Mr. M. G. Gorrow, Appleton, memorialized the annual convention of the Circus Historical Society at Baraboo last summer with the donation of the uniform cap worn by bandmaster Merle Evans on the Ringling Show during the 1943 season.

Mrs. R. T. Connable, Madison, has donated women's clothing and various items of needlework. Miss Eloise Cooley, Madison, gave three dresses, fans, tapestry pieces, and a napkin

ring. From Mrs. A. J. Gafke, Ft. Atkinson, we received men's and women's clothing and a pair of wooden shoes. Miss Louise Elser, Beaver Dam, gave an 1892 man's wedding suit. Miss Dorothy Park, of the State Historical Society staff, gave a clown masquerade costume. Another clown costume, a camera, and men's clothing were received from the C. M. Jansky Estate, Madison. Mrs. O. H. Wonn, Verona, gave a dress. Other donations include: a pair of brass English candlesticks, Mr. A. T. Weaver, Madison; a plaque in commemoration of the seventy-fifth birthday of ex-President Harry S. Truman, Governor Gaylord Nelson; a hand-carved miniature elephant, Miss Marie Bliss, Madison; a doll buggy, Miss Agnes Melentine, Madison; a bearskin carriage robe, Mrs. Robert E. Friend, Hartland; a scale-model locomotive and tender, Gerald Holtzman, Fond du Lac; a 1924 portable typewriter, Mrs. Hattie Davis, Madison; a kerosene magic lantern, Mrs. Agnes Hole, Madison; a silk quilt and a hand-woven bedspread, the Misses Anne and Elizabeth Young, Claremont, California; a souvenir gavel, Frederic March, New York City; a hand-made door lock and key, dating from about 1845, Dr. A. H. Collip, Portage.

From the Electrical Engineering Department of the University of Wisconsin we have received six electric and gas street lamps used on the campus about 1900. Professor Glenn Sonnedecker, Madison, donated three pairs of spectacles. Mr. and Mrs. John Northey, Sr., Sullivan, have donated an early mechanical vacuum cleaner. Mr. Fred Thompson, Ellsworth, gave a trapper's hide-scrapers, and Mr. H. R. Blomberg, Prentice, donated two animal traps. Mrs. H. Scudder McKeel, Madison, is the donor of two fine oil portraits, an ironstone platter, and a costume dress and shoes. Mrs. Max Gene Nohl, Milwaukee, gave a woman's dress. Miss Laura E. Burmeister, Pasadena, California, donated a bone-handled knife, fork, and spoon, women's clothing, men's hats, children's games, and a British and Canadian flag. From Mrs. Paul Hammersmith, Milwaukee, the Museum acquired a horn egg spoon, a bone brooch, a baby carrier, and equipment for fancywork. The C. A. Devine Estate, Madison, is the donor of 42 and 45 star United States flags and numerous items of women's and children's clothing of the 1850's-1860's.

Mr. John Kraus, Cleveland, has donated an interesting cure-all device known as the "Oxygenator." Dr. Helen Belknap, Pewaukee, gave a surveyor's compass made in 1790. Mr. Rich-

ard W. Ruche, Madison, donated a Nazi youth dagger.

From Mrs. A. L. May, Madison, the Museum received a pillow of about 1875. Mrs. O. S. Syftestad, Madison, has presented two young lady's fans of about 1910, a pen, and a button-hole scissors. A guitar, dating from 1865, used by Julius Shadauer, has been presented by his daughter, Miss Rose Shadauer, Madison. The Misses Elizabeth and Josephine King, Madison, have donated a hooked rug, a flannel slip, and a baby dress, all dating from the 1860's.

From Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence E. Norem of Hubbard Woods, Illinois, the Museum has received a watch chain, a Notary Public seal, and a badge of the Christian Commission, 1865; and from the same donors, two trunks full of clothing of the 1860-1870 and 1890 periods, totaling some 120 individual items, all from the prominent Wisconsin families of Pettibone and Peabody.

Mrs. Harold A. Engle, Madison, has donated a doll trunk, a chamber-pot cover, a pillow cover, and a child's sadiron. From Mrs. D. C. Roberts, Madison, we have received a woman's blouse. Mr. Warren Bach, Manitowoc, president of the Isaac Walton League of America, has donated two Charles E. Broughton Award Medals, presented by the League to individuals for outstanding work in the field of conservation. Mrs. George F. Sieker, Madison, has given a MacArthur plate. From Mrs. Ralph Jacobs, Verona, the Museum has received a sewing kit or "housewife" used by the late H. H. Jacobs of Milwaukee when he was Chaplain of the 4th Wisconsin Regiment during the Spanish-American War.

In response to advertisement for an item needed to complete the Society's new Twentieth Century Gallery, Mrs. Mary LaFlash, Madison, has donated a player piano and bench. From Miss Irene Vick, Madison, we have received an 1875 period lady's pen and case. Miss Dorothy Jane Cooley, Madison, has donated a white sheer wool dress belonging to her mother. Mrs. Ruth Esser has given a pair of skates and a book.

Supplementary articles of military interest received have been a complete US Marine uniform and a Naval hospital blanket from Mr. Thomas J. Kingsley of Tacoma, Washington, and an additional gift from Mr. Philip La Follette, Madison, of a WWII US Army field desk and chair.

Contributors...



EARL W. HAYTER was born in Ohio and reared in North Dakota on a homestead. He received his B.A. from the University of Nebraska, his M.A. from the University of North Dakota, and his Ph.D. from Northwestern University. Since 1936 he has been professor of history at Northern Illinois University in De Kalb. His field of research has been mainly in agricultural history from 1850-1890, especially in the problems which contributed to the many protest movements which arose during this period. In the past twenty-five years he has published a number of studies in the state historical journals of Iowa, Illinois, Ohio, and Michigan, as well as in *Agricultural History* and the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*. During the summer of 1959, Mr. Hayter was co-ordinator of an eleven-week European Seminar, four weeks of which were spent at Oxford and the remainder in touring the Continent. Recently he donated to the Archives of the University of Wyoming an important collection of sources amassed in the course of an extended study of the rise and development of the barbed wire industry.



EDWARD P. ALEXANDER, a former director of the Society and editor of this magazine from 1941 to 1946, needs no introduction to Wisconsinites. Born in Keokuk, Iowa, and raised in Centerville, Iowa, where he was graduated from the public schools, Mr. Alexander received the A.B. degree in 1928 from Drake University and thereafter taught history in Corning, Iowa, and Faribault, Minnesota, while earning his M.A. from the University of Iowa. He was then awarded a Lydia Roberts Fellowship at Columbia University where in 1938 he received his Ph.D. in American History. In 1934 he was named Director of the New York Historical Association at Ticonderoga and soon served also as State Supervisor of the Historical Records Survey of New York State. In 1938 he moved to Cooperstown to establish a new central quarters museum for the Association. In 1941 he became Director of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin where he remained until 1946 when he was appointed Director of Interpretation (and then Vice President) of Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia where he now makes his home. A leader in the movement to teach history by the use of three-dimensional materials, Mr. Alexander has served as President of the American Association for State and Local History and as a member of its Council helped develop the magazine *American Heritage*. Since 1957 he has been President of the

American Association of Museums, is a Fellow of the Rochester Museum of Fine Arts, and in 1958 delivered the Lewis Cass Lecture at the Detroit Historical Museum. The Alexanders have three children: Alice Anne is teaching in Scotland while completing her work at the University of Edinburgh; John Thorndike is a junior at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut; and Mary Sheron is a ninth grader at James Blair High School, Williamsburg.



PAXTON HART, a resident of Illinois, did his undergraduate work at Allegheny College (B.A., 1954), and his graduate work at Colgate University from which he obtained his Master's degree in 1956. He taught English at Colgate and in several branches of the Chicago City Junior College before joining the editorial staff of Scott, Foresman and Company, the Chicago textbook publishing firm. A Quaker, Mr. Hart shares the Friends' traditional concern for American Indians. His article in this issue, giving the background of the establishment of the state's newest county, has grown out of his experiences as chairman of a Menominee Indian Study Committee cosponsored by the Chicago offices of the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Committee on National Legislation. Mr. Hart reviews books on Indian affairs for *The Chicago Jewish Forum* and devotes most of his spare time to studying the American Indians, particularly those of Wisconsin.



RUDOLPH J. VECOLI, born and raised in Wallingford, describes himself as a Connecticut Yankee of the latter-day variety. After service in the Navy he attended the University of Connecticut (B.A., 1950), and the following year received his M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania. For several years he was connected with the Department of State in Washington before deciding to return to graduate study at the University of Wisconsin. He has been an instructor in history at Ohio State University and in the coming autumn will become a member of the history faculty of Pennsylvania State College. At present Mr. Vecoli holds a Social Science Research Fellowship for the completion of his dissertation, a study of Italian immigrants in Chicago.

For biographical information on PETER T. HARSTAD see the Winter, 1959-1960, issue of the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*.



Villa Louis



Old Wade House



Stonefield



Circus World Museum

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VILLA LOUIS—the "House on the Mound," home of Hercules Dousman, Wisconsin's first millionaire and early fur trader, site of Old Fort Crawford. A beautiful Victorian mansion furnished with fine antiques and art objects, surrounded by spacious grounds, auxiliary buildings, remains of military fort, and fascinating museum. Located on Mississippi River at Prairie du Chien. Open to November 1, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. daily. Picnic tables available.

STONEFIELD FARM AND CRAFT MUSEUM—the home, estate, and farm buildings of Nelson Dewey, Wisconsin's first governor. The restored home tells the story of the life of a pioneer lawyer and plantation owner. The buildings include wine cellar, smoke house, stone barn. Farm and craft museum depicts development of mechanized agriculture. In construction is "Village of 1890's." In Nelson Dewey State Park just north of Cassville. Open to November 1, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. daily.

OLD WADE HOUSE—Historic stagecoach inn of the early nineteenth century, on old plank road between Sheboygan and Fond du Lac. One of Wisconsin's architectural gems, Old Wade House and its companion, Butternut House, contain much of their original furniture and furnishings. Picnic tables available. Located at the head of Kettle Moraine State Park in Greenbush. Open to November 1, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. daily.

CIRCUS WORLD MUSEUM—in buildings and grounds once used by Ringling Brothers as winter quarters. Gorgeous collection of circus wagons, memorabilia of daredevil acts of great circus performers, a five-car circus train, world's largest miniature circus, trained animals and wild animal menagerie, replica of sideshow of nineteenth century, free show daily. At Baraboo, Wisconsin. Open through October 16, 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. daily; to 9:00 P.M. Saturday and Sunday in July and August.

Operated By

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Admission, adults 75¢; children under 12, 15¢

Members and Junior Historians free



*The Purpose
of this
Society shall be*

To promote a wider appreciation
of the American heritage
with particular emphasis on the
collection, advancement,
and dissemination of knowledge
of the history of Wisconsin
and of the Middle West.