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WABASHA COUNTY TOWNSHIPS

Greenfield

Pepin

Watopa

Wabasha

Minneiska

Mount Pleasant

Chester

Plainview

Oakwood

Gillford

Highland

Mazeppa

Glasgow

West Albany

Zumbro

Elgin

Lake

Hyde Park

Townships of Wabasha County Minnesota

GREENFIELD:- Greenfield township is on the eastern border of the county, with the Mississippi River as its eastern boundary. It occupies the territory of township 110 N., R. 10 W. except sections 4, 5 and 6 which belong to Wabasha, and the fractional township 110 N., R. 9 W., mostly overflow lands of the Mississippi.

It takes its name from the beautiful green fields, meadows and pastures of its broad valleys, where its fertile moist soil responds readily to the warming suns of early spring.

Natural boundaries divide Greenfield into five well defined sections, varying in contour, soil and vegetation. In the eastern part, between the mouth branches of the Zumbro River and the bottom lands of the Mississippi, lies the "Grand Encampment," Sand Prairie; to the northwest is Greenfield Hill, a bluff table land; to the southwest is Cooks Valley, a lower table land, and between and separating them are the lower lands along the Zumbro which, in its original course, crosses the township from west to east and branches to the north and the south before entering the Mississippi through its three widely divergent mouths; and Gorman Hill, a bluff section embodying most of sections 32, 33 and 34 on the southern border.

Its fertile soil is as varied as its topography. That of Sand Prairie, as the name indicates, is sandy. In the greater part, however, it has a clay mixture that adds much to its fertility; Greenfield hill is yellow clay with limestone subsoil; Cooks Valley is clay over sand or gravel; while the richer bottom lands of the Zumbro are alluvial black loam with red clay or sandy subsoil; Gorman Hill section is mostly yellow clay with frequent rocky places.

*Greenfield trap*

The rivers of the township are the Zumbro and Cooks Valley Creek, which in its lower part is known as Dadys Creek. The creek has been used for power to drive mills in the northwestern part of Section 24 and the northeastern part of section 28. Though the actual water acreage is not large, its lakes and rivers are fertile breeding ground for fish and game. Robinsons Lake and bayous of the Zumbro River in the northern part, McCartys Lake in the southern part, Petersons Lake, Schmokers Lake, Clear Lake, Hirschberger Lake and several bayous of the Mississippi River pool in the eastern part are widely known hunting and fishing grounds.

Greenfield may be said to be well wooded and its vegetation embodies a great variety of trees, shrubs, ferns, vines, wild flowers and grasses. Nature, here pours forth beauty in endless profusion in bud, leaf and blossom from the coming of the anemone in the early spring to the shedding of the sear brown leaves of late autumn, furnishing a continuous panorama of color. The red oak, white oak, black oak, scarlet oak, bur oak, jack oak, and swamp white oak are found here. The various varieties of maple, ash, cottonwood, elm, birch, poplar, willow, box elder, basswood and sumacs, though much depleted by the woodman's ax, are found in considerable number throughout the Zumbro section. Here and there are small groves of hickory, walnut and butternut. There are a few clusters of pine.

Most of the lands along the Mississippi River are in the upper Mississippi Wild Life Refuge - destined as the greatest breeding grounds of fish and wild game in America.

The greater part of the township was in the Sioux Half-Breed Tract and before the coming of white settlement was the favorite camping and hunting place of the Wabasha band of the Sioux or Dakotah tribe of Indians.

*Greenfield Twp*

The first white settlement in <sup>the</sup> township was made in Cooks Valley in 1854 and the township was organized in 1858. Post offices were established in Cooks Valley and Tepeeotah in 1859 and at Pauselim in 1862. The Village of Kellogg, laid out in 1870 and incorporated in 1877, is the only business place in the township and also the only post office at this time.

see Pauselim +  
Cooks Valley  
see  
Kellogg

The Territorial Roads - from Prairie Du Chien to Mendota and from Wabasha to Rochester crossed the township, Isaac Cole having established a ferry over the Zumbro at the site of Kellogg in 1854. Mr. Cole also conducted a hotel there.

see  
Kellogg

The Cooks Valley Cemetery Association was organized on November 9, 1868. The association established the Greenfield Cemetery south of the Zumbro in section 20 in the same year. An earlier cemetery had been established on Sand Prairie and some burials made there. St. Agnes, a Catholic cemetery, is at Kellogg.

The chief industry is dairying and stock raising, though considerable amount of grain, cabbage, melons, seeds, eggs and poultry are produced.

All available agricultural lands are occupied and operated. The farms for the most part are from 160 to 200 acres - only a few being over 320 acres.

Schools have been established and are accessible to all parts of the township. There are schools in Cooks Valley, Sand Prairie, Greenfield Hill, Midland Junction and at Kellogg.

There is a Methodist church and a Catholic church at Kellogg. The people living north of the Zumbro, mostly affiliate with the various church organizations at Wabasha.

The early settlers came from various states in the East, Ireland and the various provinces of Germany. The present inhabitants are mainly their decendents and nearly all are American born. The Sioux Indians, once here

*Greenfield Twp*

in great numbers, are gone, though a few decedents of the mixed-bloods remain.

The Tepeeotah War; The Doings of the Dresser Gang; The Establishment of the Half-Breed Tract; The Building of the Midland Railroad; and the Highwater of 1880 are highlights in the history of the township.

There are many evidences of the works of the Mound Builders in the township, the most outstanding of which are in the vicinity of Tepeeotah - a point supposed to have been visited by Jonathan Carver on November 1, 1766.

Pepin Township is bounded by the southern part of Lake Pepin and the Mississippi River on the North; the city of Wabasha on the East; Glasgow and Lake twp. on the west. township on the south/ It is a fractional township consisting of sixteen full sections in the southern half of Township 111 N. of R. 11 W. and fractional sections along its northern border adjoining the Lake and River. It is named from Lake Pepin.

The contour is made up of A rolling table land with precipitate bluff-sides on the North and East and a more gradual decent towards the Zumbro in Glasgow. There is an abrupt cooley drained by ~~Wabasha~~ Creek, with an outlet at Kings Cooley and another, Smith's Cooley, leading southeasterly and draining into Brewery Creek, formerly Smith Creek. The main table land, known as Pepin Hill, is about 500 feet above the level of the Lake.

The entire township, with the exception of Smith Cooley and King's Cooley ravines, was covered by scrub oak which had to be grubbed away before the rich sandy yellow clay lands were available for cultivation. This, connected with unavailability of securing water on account of its altitude, caused its treasure of rich soil to remain untouched until all the available valley lands of surrounding townships had been taken up. But a very few acres were under cultivation before 1860. Henry Schmaus and Benedict Lager who settled on lands in section 30 and 28 in 1859 were the

*Pepin*

first farmers on Pepin Hill. The same reasons that retarded settlement there, caused the first settlers to devote their attention to grain rather than dairying and live stock so popular in most of the earlier settlements.

The soil was exceedingly rich in grain fertility and aided by the modifying influences of Lake Pepin produced large crops of fine quality grains. It has been said to produce the finest malting barley produced in America. Due to the altitude and warming influence of the lake, there is no discoloration from dews so prevalent in barley produced in other sections.

During early settlement, water was hauled from distant springs located mostly in the valleys. Deep wells, some of which are more than 600 feet in depth, have been drilled on every farm and ponds have been made on many of them. The watering problem being thus solved, the raising of hogs and dairying has supplanted much of the attention previously given to grain farming. Considerable attention has been given to horticulture and nearly every farm has orchards of apples and berries.

Though Pepin Hill was not settled until the sixties, the township had settlers along the Lake and Mississippi much earlier. In 1841 Oliver Raccicot was living at Lacopolis at the foot of Lake Pepin and two miles above Reads Landing. - The present site of "Camp Lacopolis." He was a government blacksmith sent here to attend the wants of the Red Wing band of Indians. Charles R. Read settled at Reads Landing in 1847. From that time, until the village of Reads took shape in 1858 and until 1868 when it incorporated and separated from the township, its history belongs to that of Pepin and was as its capital. Chas. R. Read was the first officer of the township having been appointed Justice of the Peace by Gov. Alexander Ramsey in 1850.

King's Cooley, a station point on the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad in Section 17, the site of grain elevators and a loading place for a number of years has been abandoned and Reads is the only business place in the township. A school there and another at Pepin Hill serves the school

*Pepin Twp*

purposes and that of social centers for the township.

The majority of the inhabitants are of German origin of the Catholic faith and are communicants of St. Felix parish at Wabasha of which Pepin forms a part. A Methodist church was built at Reads in 1868. A cemetery was established in the northeast quarter of section 23.

Charles Leslin established a frame brewery on Brewery Creek in 1856 and a few years later, Michael Ulmer erected a pretentious three-story, solid stone structure, 40 X 100 feet for a like purpose. The breweries were taken over by Burkhardt Brothers after the Civil War and became known as the Burkhardt Breweries. Coincident with running the brewery the Burkhardts incorporated a brass band. It was mostly a family affair and rated high among the musical organizations of the state. The brewery buildings have been destroyed and the large storage vaults, built back into the bluff side, remains as a monument to a once thriving business and scenes of gaiety of its well patronized beer gardens. A brick yard nearby, another flourishing business that produced most of the brick used in the vicinity, is likewise gone. There was a large lime kiln a short distance above Reads but that, too, is only a landmark now. There is much new development in camping sites at Reads, Lacupolis and other points on the lake.

The principal industry is still agriculture. The farmers of Pepin, by energy and thrift, prospered and made of it one of the best built up farming sections in southern Minnesota.

Time and constant production has left its imprint on the township and sapped its fertility. Erosion has taken its toll from many farms and conservation work, now aggressively carried on, may, if persisted in, make of Pepin again what it once was in richness. Conservation here, is a debt to the pioneers, who, with the grubber's ax, stone-boat and ox plow, wrought fertile fields from a wooded prairie and rocky hillsides, that must be repaid

*Pepin Twp*

by posterity, if Pepin is to retain its high standing as a farming section.

Several of the early settlers became large land owners. Knud Johnson had the largest farm, about 600 acres. F. J. Schmaus, Henry Kreye, Roemer Brothers, Mathias Marx, Benedict Lager and F. Meyer operated outstanding farms in this thickly settled area.

Watopa Township: John Gage, born of New England stock at Enfield, New Hampshire February 10, 1825, became the pioneer settler of Watopa, when he took a claim in section 36 in the Whitewater valley in the fall of 1855.

He was a man of little school education but well schooled in the experience of handling men in railroad construction in New York and with work in the woods in the Alleghany mountains. Qualities and experiences outstanding in him and many of the early settlers, much needed to subdue the wooded bluffs, cliffs and brush-covered valleys, that, in the face of Indians, stood out as a challenge to the courage and strength of the pioneers in Watopa.

The name Watopa is taken from the Sioux or Dakotah language meaning "To paddle a canoe." It was adopted by the people at their first election, May 11, 1858.

Watopa is a full township and embodies the 36 sections of township 109 N., Range 10 W. Its contour is so varied, that to give a true word picture of it, must be divided and subdivided, as it has been by nature, into specific districts.

First, it is separated into two nearly equal parts by the eastern Half-breed line which begins at the northwest corner of section 2 and runs diagonally across the township to the middle of the south line of the southeast quarter of section 31. All west of this line is rolling bluff lands, mostly a continuation of Gorman Hill, originating in southern Greenfield to the north of Watopa. This section is devoid of creeks and rivers, except a drain towards Indian Creek in section 31. Most of this

*Watopa Twp*

area was heavily wooded with oak timber that required a generation of time to remove and make the lands ready for cultivation. Some of the lands were open, fertile prairie.

East of the Half-breed line are the valleys of the Zumbro River, Snake Creek, Indian Creek, and the Whitewater, separated by bluffs or ridges. Hoosier Ridge, a narrow bluff, divides the Indian Creek Valley from that of the Whitewater. The dividing line between Indian Creek and Snake Creek is irregular and less well defined while that of the Zumbro stretches out to the northeast from the foot of the bluffs. Here the highways follow the direction of the streams from east to west and connect with U. S. Highway No. 61 along the western border of the Zumbro Walley. Much wood and easy access to water invited the early settlers to build their homes here. The log houses here, owing to easy access to timber, were more spacious than the cabins found in less favored communities and some are still standing.

Though Watopa is a township much broken up and has much rough land, its soil is varied and exceedingly fertile and the rugged pioneers, with ax and ox team, carved fine farms and comfortable homes for themselves here.

Many nationalities contributed to make up the early inhabitants, Yankees from eastern states settled on the Whitewater and Hoosier Ridge, Sweedes made a small settlement in upper Indian Creek; while families of nationality significant names, such as Haines, Hitchcock, Gow, White, Wood, Putnam, Paine, Donahoe, Enright, Abbott, Judd, Jacoby, Johnson and Pratt mingled in lower Indian Creek and other places. The Irish were the most numerous and occupied Snake Creek and the north half of the township. There was a German settlement in the southwestern part of the town. A large per cent of the present population is German.

They were a church-going people of many denominations and, though

*Watopa Twp*

occasional religious services were held, there never was erected a church of any denomination, in the township. Though it once had a post office and a blacksmith shop was operated in Indian Creek and the Highcocks had a mill on the <sup>Indian Creek</sup> Whitewater, it has no villages or places of business of any kind. The question of licensing a saloon or tavern has never been submitted to the people. Agriculture is, here, an exclusive industry. Wood, hogs, cattle as well as grain makes up the annual income.

The chief market and trading places were Wabasha, Minneiska and Plainview with Kellogg and Weaver enjoying the major share after the building of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad in 1870.

Watopa was well supplied with schools which were organized quickly, as the different districts were occupied. They are: the Snake Creek, the Indian Creek, the Gage, the Hoosier Ridge, the Lydon and the Shilling school, giving all the people easy access and an opportunity to secure a common school education for their children. Aside from that furnished in the schoolhouses, there are no dance halls or other places of amusement within the township. The Whitewater furnishes considerable hook and line fishing and the Indian Creek is rated as one of the best trout streams of the county. Much of the Zumbro River section is a hunting and trapping area.

The recorded history of Watopa is meager and chronicles little of unusual or exciting interest and few, who took part in its early trials, joys and sorrows, are left to tell the story. However, here, "neighbor" meant much and hospitality reigned with liberality.

Watopa twp

WABASHA

The city of Wabasha, the county seat of Wabasha county, Minnesota, is one of the early places established in the State of Minnesota. It is situated on the Mississippi river about two miles below Lake Pepin and the mouth of the Chippewa river. It is seventy miles below St. Paul.

It derives its name from the <sup>Second</sup> ~~third~~ Sioux Indian Chief Wapasha [Wapashaw] who lived with his band at Wapasha Prairie now Winona. His hunting grounds were at The Grand Encampment now known as Sand Prairie, and the vicinity of Wabasha where he was a familiar figure to the traders and early white settlers.

It is said that at times, perhaps two hundred tepees could be seen here and canoes would line the Mississippi bank for a mile. Wabasha was the scene of many battles between the Sioux and their mortal enemy, the Chippewa who occupied the territory adjacent to the Chippewa river and across the Mississippi from Wabasha.

It was here, that Nicholas Perrot, a Canadian, established the first trading post west of the Mississippi in 1683. The post was called Fort Perrot and was located on the present site of St. Elizabeth's hospital and the Catholic orphanage in that part of the city known as the West Side.

Augustin Rocque, a nephew of chief Wapashaw, established a trading post on the site of Fort Perrot in 1833 and the place became known as "Rocques Landing." In 1838 Oliver Cratte, an Englishman, came and erected a blacksmith shop and dwelling on the levee of the present business part of the city, becoming the first white resident. He was a government blacksmith and his shop was the first business establishment, aside from fur trading, set up in the place. It became known as "Cratte's Landing."

City of Wabasha — 2 & top ?

Duncan Graham, Joseph Buisson, LaBathe followed Cratte in the erection of homes nearby and Alexis P. Bailly, who was to figure much in the future history of the place, came in 1841. No other places were built until the coming of Philo Stone in 1850. He purchased 4 acres of Oliver Cratte and built a neat home on the levee.

Governor Sibley makes mention in his memoranda of his first coming to Minnesota, as follows: "Some idea can be formed of the great changes which have occurred since 1834, when I state that when I performed the journey from Prairie Du Chien to St. Peters, now Mendota, in the autumn of that year, a distance of nearly three hundred miles, there was but one house between these points, and that was a log cabin, occupied by a trader named Rocque, situated below Lake Pepin, near the present town of Wabasha."

The actual naming of the place occurred in 1843. The ceremony consisted of Duncan Graham's sealing of some accounts of early happenings and experiences from his diary in a bottle and burying it at a point near Crattes Landing. A post was then set up with a board at its top with the name Wabashaw on it. A post office was established in 1850 with ~~Alexis~~ Bailly as first postmaster. The main part of the city was platted in 1854 and South Wabasha in 1855. It was incorporated as the city of Wabashaw in 1858 by an act of the legislature. Its charter was amended in 1869 when the final W was dropped and the place became "Wabasha." It now operates under a Home Rule Charter adopted by the voters in 1920.

The first county election was held at the home of Augustine Rocque in 1853. It was designated as the county seat in 1854. The first Court House - a stone structure, on the site of the present one was occupied in the fall of 1860. In 1850 the government built a federal road from

City of Wabasha - ? top ?

Wabasha to Mendota at a cost of \$5,000. A spacious government building was dedicated in February 1938 and houses the Post Office, Agricultural Extension and Soil Conservation Departments. In addition to the county and government buildings, it has fine public and parochial schools, churches, hospital, tuberculosis sanitorium, orphanage, water and sewerage disposal plants, city maintained bathing beach, skating and hockey rink, illuminated athletic field, tourist camps, beautiful parks and playgrounds, amusement pavilion, live stock sales pavilion and is well known as the "Home of the Small-Mouth Bass." It is outstanding for boating, fishing and hunting, with inviting cafes and hotels. An inter-state bridge, costing \$560,000, spans the Mississippi, forming a junction of Minnesota highways, No. 60 and No. 61 with Wisconsin highways No. 25 and No. 35.

Among its commercial and cultural organizations are, The Junior Chamber of Commerce, The Wabasha Woman's Club, The Wabasha Neuman Club, Wabasha Post No. 50 American Legion and Ladies Auxiliary, The League Of Women Voters, The Wabasha Theatre, The Wabasha Public Library, established in 1868, The Wabasha Golf Club, The Wabasha Kitten Ball League, and an annual Red Cross Swimming School.

Among its industries are the Big Jo Mills, The Dill Elevator and Seed Plant, The Marine Ways, The Boat Building Works, Creamery, Pasteurizing plants, The Wabasha Dairies, The Noll Transfer Company, The Bottling Works, auto repair and storage garages and commercial gravel pits.

The city is set amid beautiful scenery, glorious sunsets, wild flowers of every kind and trees with gorgeous verdure. An early history of 1870 says:

"The sunset, from Wabasha, is one of the most enchanting that ever greeted human vision. Just at the outlet of the lake, the river makes a bend which, from this standpoint, seems to bring the bluffs of Wisconsin

city of Wabasha - ? trip?

and Minnesota very near together, leaving just space enough to see the sun in all its glory, as it sinks beneath the placid waters of the lake, and as its last rays rest on the bluffs on either side, lighting them up with a golden radiance, the heart is filled with rapture at the glorious prospect: the scene is beautiful beyond the power of pen to describe. It is worth a journey to visit Wabasha in the month of June to have just one look at this enchanting sunset."

City of Wabasha - ? temp ?

A stranger who visited Wabasha in 1858 gives the following account of his impressions of the place in an article signed "Ohio" and published in Wabasha Journal June 15, 18<sup>5</sup>98.

Mr. Editor:

Since being in your city, my first impressions of the beauty of its location have been strongly confirmed. Its ample streets, capacious hotels, stores, mills et cetera, are evidences of energy and spirit. The many beautiful residences, and the humble unpretentious cottages dotting the plain and looking out from amid nature's shrubbery are pleasing features to me, as the homes of free men and women who are to build up institutions here, political, educational and moral, that as a great center are to send forth influence through all the land.

The Sunday schools of the place, as far as I visited, I have been pleased to see in so prosperous a state. I doubt not but they are already exerting a powerful influence in favor of morals and good order in this community \* \* \* .

Having looked out a little at the surroundings of your city, I find it no pent up "Utica" , but that you have room enough for a "Cincinnati" without marring the beautiful prairie stretching eastward between the first table land from the river and that at the base of the hills, and the grand Prairie bordering on the Zumbro and extending from the hills to the river at Tepeeotah. These prairies should be "claimed" by the city as a common domain for the common benefit, and the man who would attempt to mar their beauty by fence or cabin should receive a notice to leave. What a beautiful park for a large city, surrounded and intersected by fine roads, besides being pasture for thousands of cows and horse.

I have seen nothing more beautiful, East or West, than this valley. It needs only a murmuring rivelet to make it the very "Vale of Temple" for beauty. "

City of Wabasha - ? trip ?

Minneiska: Minneiska township borders on the Mississippi River in the southeast corner of Wabasha County. Cut off by the river, it is little more than half a township. It embraces the western half of township 109 N. Range 9 W. The lands are nearly all low with several lakes and bayous, marshes and river flood lands.

The Zumbro River and the Whitewater River cross the southern half of the township, while the various West Newton lakes and bayous of the Mississippi occupy much of the area of the eastern part. The Pool formed above Government Lock and Dam No. 5 at Whitman has materially increased the natural water area and, conversely, reduced the available farm lands. The farm lands, now, are limited to lower Sand Prairie in the northern part and a strip along the bluffs in the western part.

The township, originally, was covered in the greater part, with forests of oak, elm, cottonwood, ash and many other varieties of softwoods. Great elms and cottonwood trees, ten to twelve feet in circumference and seventy-five to one hundred feet in height, were commonplace.

The United States Government removed all the trees in the area of the Whitman Dam pool and, now, where much of this timber stood is a black, unbroken body of water. Thus nature bowed to navigation. Though the beauty of the forest has been sacrificed, it is better to have it removed than left to stand dead in the water, a fate more unsightly as well as a future menace to navigation.

The name, Minneiska, is taken from the Sioux Indian language. "Minne" meaning white and "iska," water. Minneiska - whitewater.

Minneiska lays claim to early settlement. Michael Agnes, the first white settler came from St Louis in 1851. He was soon joined by Louis Krutely at what is, now, Minneiska Village. Chas. R. Reed of Reads Landing secured a claim at West Newton, four miles above, also in 1851. He was joined the next year by B. C. Baldwin, Abner Tibbits, B. H. Reppe and

*Minneiska Twp*

Joseph Schurb; all of whom took claims on the river lands. Joseph Schurb was near the present village.

In 1852, the steamboat "West Newton" sank near the claims of Reed, Baldwin and Tibbets, leaving but the pilot house with the name in large letters on it above the surface of the water.

The settlers did not, at once, turn their attention to farming but devoted themselves to getting out wood for sale to the steamboats plying up and down the Mississippi. The boats needed the wood for fuel and this became the main source of the settlers livelihood. Game and fish were plentiful but the winters were long and they suffered for want of flour and groceries before the coming of the boats in the spring.

Read, Tibbits, Baldwin and Reppe laid out a town on their claims and began building in 1853. The town plat was drawn on a large scale, embellished with streets, avenues, public squares, parks and public buildings. They called it "West Neston" after the wrecked steamboat. Reed built a store and a hotel in 1853 and a post office with William Runnell as postmaster was opened. Reppe built a store in 1854. A road to Rochester was laid out. With a big "build up" lots had been placed on sale with speculators in Chicago and New York and many of them were sold. Some bought and built homes and others for speculation and all were doomed to disappointment. The town was built on low unstable lands and was washed away by the waves, taking the town with it. The owners moved to higher land but the town was never rebuilt. Investors lost all and the promoters were dubbed "land gulls." During its short existence, 1853 to 1857, many settlers came, by way of West Newton, to the lands nearby, which were rapidly settling up and, though, "It was a house built upon the sands" the name "West Newton" still stands out in the minds of many and is familiar to hunters and campers

*Minnesota Trip*

throughout the northwest. Lumber companies established an immense rafting works for logs coming down the Chippewa River at West Newton bay in 1892 and millions of feet of logs were rafted there annually for a number of years. It gave direct employment to upwards of 1,000 men, but, with the exhaustion of lumbering adjacent to the Chippewa, the rafting works folded up and no evidence is apparent to bear witness to the existence of either the town or the great camps teeming with men arrayed in calked boots and fed flannels. It may be said to be a "ghost town" without even a ghost.

Michael Agnes and Louis Krutely laid out and named the village of Minneiska in 1854. Krutely was drowned accidentally soon after, in Buffalo Slough, but Mr. Agnes lived to see the modest landing place of 1854 grow rapidly as a commercial village of importance and <sup>become</sup> one of the great wheat markets of the Northwest in a few years. The place flourished until the building of the Chicago, Milwaukee Railroad in 1870 and then declined. It is still an important village center but visions of its greatness, now, exists only in the memory of its older inhabitants.

Weaver, a village, three miles to the west of Minneiska Village, was platted by William Weaver and a Mr. Rodgers in 1871. The railroad had just been built and the place sprang into being as an important grain and stock shipping place and trading center.

Schools were established at Weaver, Minneiska and on Sand Prairie and churches at Weaver and Minneiska. There are Post offices with Rural routes at Minneiska and Weaver.

Agriculture, dairying and stock raising are its principal occupations though its fishing and hunting are important elements in the life of the people. The West Newton area has been the hunting grounds of various organizations who have held much of the lands under lease or purchase.

*Minneiska trap*

Among them, are the Wabasha Sportsmens Association and the Winona Sports-  
mens Association. Many have had private cottages for summer camping also.

The low lands teem with mink and muskrats and hundreds of them are  
taken during the open season. Sheehan, Maloney and Pritchard lakes are a  
mecca for hunters, and the hook and line fishing about Minneiska Village  
attract anglers from near and far. There is an important cooperative  
creamery at Weaver which is the only manufacturing business enterprise  
of any importance now in the township.

There are two well maintained cemeteries, side by side, in the foothills  
of the bluff in the center of Section 33. One a Catholic and the other a  
Protestant cemetery. They are adorned by beautiful evergreen trees and  
shrubs and many fine monuments.

The settlers of Minneiska township are from many lands as the following  
names indicate: Agnes, Nepper, Sheehan, Lamey, Maloney, Montgomery,  
Donahoe, Olson, Putnam, Adams, Pritchard, Cripinski, Peshon, Torwick,  
Hitchcock, Mogren, Schrub, Drake, etc. Minneiska is traversed from North  
to South by U. S. Highway No. 61 which serves most of the township. This,  
with a few miles of road to and on Sand Prairie and short stretches on  
Weaver hill and the Whitewater constitute the entire highway system of the  
township.

*Minneiska Twp*

MOUNT PLEASANT: Mount Pleasant township is in the northwestern part of Wabasha County. It is bounded on the west and north by Goodhue county, on the east by Lake township and on the south by Gillford. It is a full township of 36 sections embracing township 111 N., Range 13W.

It is, in the main, an undulating prairie with an elevation of 1,100 feet above sea level. There is a lone mound and a ridge of mounds about 1,200 feet in elevation in the west central part. An early history, speaking on the naming of the township, has this to say of these mounds. "The appropriate name was suggested by the magnificent view presented to an observer from the tops of some of these elevations, in the south central part, and from the summit of Lone Mound, the sight is truly grand. For miles, in all directions, stretches the expanse of prairie, whose fertility is attested by the neat and commodious buildings everywhere present; neat churches and school houses add to the effect, while to the northeast, the eye catches the river hills of the Wisconsin side and a glimpse of the blue waters of Lake Pepin \* \* \*."

The name of township was agreed upon at a meeting held at the residence of E. H. Palmer in the spring of 1858. It was officially adopted at the first township election, May 11, 1858.

The soil is fertile and has a base of lime and sandstone covered with sand, yellow and blue clay with much rich loam. There is but a small amount of timber, mostly oak and that namely in the ravines and valleys. The northern part is drained by Gilbert Valley and Sugar-loaf Creeks, and Collins Creek, <sup>draws</sup> that to the East and Boston Cooley.

The first settlement was made in 1854, in the northwest quarter of section 1 by O. A. Warren. He came, with his family, from Illinois and

*Mt Pleasant Twp*

was a native of New York state, from which many of its early residents also came. Isaac Horton, William Bean came also in 1854 and in the spring of 1855 William Walters and Alfred Hannings. Later they were joined by Milo Bull, Joel Clark and Sanford Gilbert. They settled in Gilbert Valley in the northeastern part of the township. The valley taking its name from Mr. Gilbert. In 1856, Wm. Mann, Benj. Taylor, E. P. C. Fowler, S. B. Clark, George Clark, E. H. Palmer, William Lewis, Jacob Rinus and Alfred Betterly took claims on the prairie in the southeastern part. Most of the first settlers were Yankees from the eastern states but as immigration increased, many Germans and Irish joined the settlement. A large percentage of the population now, is protestant or Lutheran German. The early settlers, who gave their exclusive attention to grain farming, suffered much privation in the bad times of 1856 and 1857 but their perseverance was rewarded with prosperity as the years went by and abundant crops brought good prices. Much attention is now given to dairying and stockraising and some of the finest dairy herds in the county are found here.

The township has eight school houses and several churches but no places of business of any kind. Lake City and Red Wing are its main trading centers. A territorial road from Lake City to Mazeppa crosses the township, diagonally, leading out through Boston Cooley. This was one of the most heavily travelled roads in southern Minnesota before the building of the railroad across the county in 1878. For the accomodation of those travelling this highway, the Boston House, a large country hotel or inn was built on Section 23 by Sydney Cross in 1858 and became well known and enjoyed much patronage until the building of the railroad in 1878. Then it closed its doors and became just another "Landmark"

*Mt Pleasant Twp*

to the passing of primitive transportation. A post office was conducted by Dr. Veeder at his residence for several years-from 1859-1868. Civil War.

Several large farms were built up in the township. P. H. Rahilly, who p<sup>E</sup>empted a quarter section in section 22 in 1858 built it up to a 1,200 acre farm, with practically every acre under cultivation. This was the largest farm in Wabasha County and perhaps the largest of its time in southern part of the state. This farm and several others of large acreage, have been broken up into smaller farms where intensive farming and dairying are carried on.

Mount Pleasant has always been a peaceable agricultural community. There was a strong temperance movement in evidence and no partisanship in its local elections. There was rarely ever competition for town offices many officials being elected year after year.

Good roads were maintained and a stretch of macadam was built through Boston Couley on the Lake City-Mazeppa road when that road was a much travelled highway. It has been a prosperous agricultural place where many amassed a competence early in life.

There are no lakes or rivers in Mount Pleasant but its creeks in the eastern part are set amid beautiful valleys and hills that, in addition to its fine farms, give color and life to the township.

Gilbert Creek, especially, is a fine trout stream and has several fine fishing locations.

*Mt Pleasant Twp*

Chester: Situated on the western border of Wabasha County, township 110 N., Range 14 W. It is an undulating prairie with numerous valleys with drainage toward the Zumbro River that flows through both the southwest and southeast corners of the township. It has a rich loam soil making the township most suitable for agriculture and stock raising. The township was first known as Bear Valley but was changed to Chester January 3, 1860 by the County Board. Sixty-six of the residents of the township presenting a petition asking for said change.

While Chester is mostly prairie, some fine groves are found in the southeast part and Bear Valley which extends from northeast in a southwest direction across the township. These together with beautiful spots bordering Trout Creek and Cold Brook give color and life to the landscape.

The township has several caves, the most prominent of which is in section 12. It has numerous apartments of considerable size. The cave's opening is low and is hard of access. Many peculiar formations are found in the township. A piece of solid wood was found at a depth of sixty-four feet, in a well dug in section 8.

Chester was one of the early townships settled. It appears that James M. Kimble with others on a hunting and trapping trip came to Trout Creek in the winter of 1854-55 and in February 1856, Mr. Kimble returned by way of Red Wing and established a claim in section 30. It was in this section also where Skillman Brothers' mill was established on Trout Creek in 1875.

In May 1856, Joseph Caswell and a party, which contained his four sons, arrived in Bear Valley and took up claims.

Bear Valley post office was established August 24, 1857 with Joseph Caswell as first postmaster. A stage line previously established from Wabasha to Faribault supplied the office until the Lake City-Mazeppa stage line was established. The office was discontinued in December 6, 1902.

*Chester Twp*

The postmaster at one time operated a small store in connection with the office. West Chester post office was established in August 30, 1867 with Chas. S. Hodson as postmaster. It was discontinued September 29, 1870.

The settlers of Bear Valley were mostly Yankees from the eastern states. They lost no time in setting up a school and church. Meetings were first held at the home of Joseph Caswell and school was taught there by Sidney Cross in 1856-57. Bear Valley school house was built in 1858. It served as a Methodist church as well as school. Bear Valley church and school is German Lutheran now. Bear Valley cemetery was established in 1864.

The northern half of the township's settlers were mostly German with many from Luxemburg and Belgium. A great many of these embraced the Catholic faith and in 1865 their organization purchased forty acres of land in Belvidere township of Goodhue County adjoining Belle Chester. They built a frame church which afterward became the parish school administered by the Sisters of Notre Dame. Business began to center around the church and by 1877 Belle Chester was a thriving place. It was platted and the plat filed in 1879. Belle Chester post office, with Anthony Casper as postmaster, was established on April 30, 1879. It was discontinued February 28, 1903.

In January 1875, St. John's German Evangelical Lutheran church was formed and later built St. John's Church on section 12 where Frederick Winters had donated a site. It was dedicated September 29, 1878. St. John's cemetery is nearby.

Rev. Frederick Hill, a Baptist clergyman held meetings in Chester in 1856 and 1857, but there is no record of a Baptist church being established.

Clarks mill was established on the Zumbro River at Zumbro Falls in the southeast corner of the township in 1866. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1882.

*Chester Truf*

Mazeppa Village, Zumbro Falls, Red Wing and Lake City are the main trade centers for Chester with its large production of grain, live stock, dairy and poultry products.

The people of Chester, an agricultural township, have been enterprising and thrifty, and have built up many fine farms. It is one of the substantial sections of southern Minnesota.

Plainview Township: Occupies the full congressional township 108 N., Range 11 W. It is bounded by Oakwood and Highland on the north, Winona County on the east, Olmsted County on the south and Elgin township on the west.

The greater part of the township is in Greenwood Prairie and the north-east part including the site of Greenville, its first village, was included in the "Half-Breed Tract." The following taken from Wabasha County History of 1884 portrays well the true picture of the township.

"The first settlements in this township were made in 1854 by two families of Norwegians, named respectively Halgerson and Olson. These people occupied dugouts on the claims which they made in the northeastern part of the township. The Halgersons are still residents of the township while the Nelsons [Olsons] now own farms in the adjoining town of Highland, all highly esteemed and well-to-do farmers. Early the spring following, there came several enterprising Yankees, and located claims near the central part of the township. The leading spirit of the new comers were G. A. T. Sharp, E. B. Eddy, William Boatman, William Geising, Mr. Todd, Mr. Lock, A. P. Foster and Benjamin Lawrence. The first five named gentlemen were founders of the short-lived town of Greenville. When the first pioneers arrived upon Greenwood Prairie they found themselves in the very heart of a veritable paradise of luxuriant verdure, carpeting a gently undulating prairie soil, dotted here and there by small groves of oak, and all spread out beneath a clear sky and a

Plainview Trust

dry invigorating atmosphere. Is it any wonder that they were charmed with the scene which gave assurance that the dreams of their ante-pioneer days were about to be realized? They were content to pitch their tents here and begin the work of building homes and carving out fortunes. How well they have succeeded a ride over Greenwood Prairie today will enable you to judge, - beautiful farms of many broad acres stretch away on every hand, pleasant and commodious farm buildings are found, frequently sequestered by groves of stately trees, and a cheerful greeting meets you whithersoever you turn. A thrifty town stands in the midst of all this world of agricultural wealth, good feeling pervades the entire community and the combined effect of all this will convince the most skeptical that the lives of the old pioneers of Plainview were cast in pleasant places and success has attended their labors.

The spring of 1856 saw a large number of new families establishing themselves in various parts of the township. In the southeast settled the Smiths, Hiram and Milton; the Sylvesters, George, Charles and Caleb; George S. Evans; Solomn Fox; Jonathan Ingalls; Hiram Linsey; Isaac Bancroft; Senica Cornwell and Edwin Ball. The summer of 1860 Woodland post office was established at the house of George Sylvester on the S. E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 25 with Mr. Sylvester as postmaster.

In northeast Plainview we find the Mellendies, Thomas Smith, the Carpenters; in the vicinity of Plainview the Halls, Thompsons, Smiths, Browns, T. A. Thompson, Wilson, Blackwell, Rittenhouse, Chapman, Wiley, Yale, Ackley, Bigham, Ormsby and farther south where S. L. McCarty settled in 1855, there located in the spring of 1856, John Hitchcock, Samuel Bowen, Rueben Brooks, Mr. Griffin, T. Mills, Husluck Struck, Timm, Ames, Weather, Brown, Churchill and Perry. These gentlemen were chiefly from the eastern states, a few from Wisconsin, and one or two from Iowa.

Plainview trip

They were all restless pale faces, with good true Yankee blood flowing in their veins. \* \* \* "

The soil for the most part is very rich and free from stone, is very productive and easy to till. Natural growth of oaks along upper Beaver Creek and in the vicinity of the Whitewater furnished fuel and materials for early homes.

Centerville now Plainview is the center of activities of the 100 township. A post office was established at Greenville July 2, 1856 with Rodman Burchard postmaster. Plainview postoffice was established July 30, 1857. "Independence " post office was established at the home of General Seth McCarty on Nov. 2, 1856 and discontinued Feb. 19, 1862 when General McCarty who had been Major of the Minnesota State Militia took part in the Indian outbreak. "Old Abe" post office with James McHetch as postmaster was established Mar. 14, 1864 and discontinued Oct. 5, 1868.

Plainview township is the center of Greenwood Praire and its school and occupational history are as one.

Oakwood Township: Situated in the south central part of Wabasha County is township 109 N., Range 12 W., Oakwood.

The Wabasha County History of 1884 contains a vivid picture of the varied features of the township that makes a beautiful story of this almost 'Fairy Land.'

It says: "Lying in the south part of the county, surrounded by West Albany, Highland, Plainview, Elgin Zumbro and Hyde Park townships, is a township which on account of the necessity for a name rather than to show some prominent feature, has been called Oakwood. A rolling prairie bordering on Greenwood's prairie, it is cut by the rocky Zumbro valley, separating the several northwestern sections from the

*Oakwood Twp*

main part by the Middle Creek ravine, separating the several Northeastern sections; and lastly, by the Long Creek ravine, which winds through the center from south to north and opens into the Zumbro valley not far from the opening of Middle Creek, along the route smaller valleys and ravines open into these. The Zumbro valley, with its rocky cliffs varying from two hundred to three hundred seventy feet in height, overhanging and winding its rocky and wooded sides about in a bewildering manner, affords some very picturesque and romantic scenery. The rocky headlands protrude as if the elements in their attempt to cover the once limestone surface of this region with clay, sand and loam, had failed to bring enough, while the northern part of the township is chiefly clay, the southern is more black loam and clay mixed, making a fine soil. The oak, hazel, and other underbrush that once covered the prairie more or less, is now confined to the bluffs, valleys, and ravines. In the northern part of the township, in the coulees, there is more timber - oak, elm, cottonwood, and maple. Along the Zumbro River valley are river terraces about half way up the bluffs, some of the larger of which, are of sufficient size for a village.

The valleys and ravines on quiet days are cooler than the prairies above, but in winter the valleys are much warmer than the uplands, making fine places to winter stock. The limestone cliffs furnish material for limekilns; a few ruins of which ornament the sides of the valley, but are seldom worked at present. The large fall of the Zumbro river, with its narrowness, makes fine sites for waterpower, which, so far, have not been occupied. With the excellent facilities for water in the township Oakwood makes a fine place for stock. Some excellent springs burst out along the base of the cliffs. One of which near Ole Fremo's is said to be among the best.

Oakwood Twp

Let Father Time tell us how Oakwood fared before civilization began to rear it - the kidnapped child of barbarism. Here was the underbrush ~~on the~~ on the prairie, through which the cunning fox and the lank grey wolf prowled. Wigwams dotted the valley, numerous fleet deer roamed the gorges and prairies, ever wary, often in vain, of the stealthy Sioux Indians of Wabasha's band, who came to camp and hunt in Zumbro's beautiful valley. The Beaver made his home in the waters. The snow, the wind and rain were as wild as the country and its dusky sons. Over the encrusted snow, four feet a not uncommon depth, the Keoxa braves chased on snowshoes the deer until the breaking crust exhausted it. The heavy rains, falling on the tough, unbroken soil, quickly reached the Zumbro, swelling its floods to heights unknown at present. The annual rise of the river, not noticed now, was called the "June raise."

The settlers vanguard arrived in June 1856. Mathew Kinsella and son, David and James Tobey, Patrick and Lawrence Tracey and William Tope set up bachelor quarters on the lands of Mr. Kinsella. They had five yoke of oxen and all worked together for three years, grubbing, breaking, sowing and harvesting. They worked in the spirit of "one for all and all for one." Other groups settled at various places in the township.

The township first was known as the Town of Pell, in honor of John Pell who became State Senator. The Legislature of 1868 changed the name to Sherman but as there was a township of that name in Minnesota, was not approved. The people then turned to Oakwood for their town's name.

Road building was a serious problem, cut up as it is, by rivers, creeks and bluffs. But few of the roads ran on section lines on this account.

James Chapman built a saw mill about 1860 in the northeast part of section 22 and Samuel Irish built a gristmill on Middle Creek in 1868.

Oakwood township

Henry Powell had opened a blacksmith shop as early as 1856. The first post office was called the Millville post office and was established in 1864.

John Behr<sup>N</sup>s started a store and hotel at Bremen in 1864.

Situated at a long distance from the river the question of markets was another obstacle to the rapid development of the township.

No towns or local market sprang up until the building of the Wabasha Division of the Milwaukee was built in 1878. Marketing and shipping places were at once opened up at Millville, Lakey and <sup>Keegan</sup>King, and life in the township was entirely revitalized in a few years and farm development took on a speed that soon placed the township among the top ranks of the townships of the county. Oakwood still much of a wilderness in 1865 was a well developed community in 1885.

Father Felix Tissot, a Catholic missionary, was holding services in the township as early as 1858. In 1866 the Oakwood church was built where the Oakwood Catholic cemetery stands. The church was enlarged in 1878. It has since been destroyed by fire.

A great part of the township was in the "Half Breed Tract," and this too had held up development in the earlier days of the township.

That part of Oakwood north of the Zumbro settled by Irish is known as Irish Ridge, that south of the river Norwegian Hill while the Germans were at the southwest at Bremen. Many of the streams contain trout and many varieties of fish furnish angling in the Zumbro. Truck lines have become the main agency for transportation formerly handled by the railroad before its abandonment in the township. The Zumbro Parkway furnishes a scenic drive along the Zumbro from Millville to Keegan.

The people of Oakwood have always taken a deep interest in county and state government and have furnished many of the county and legislative officers. James Hayes of Oakwood was the first county superintendent of schools elected by the people.

*Oakwood township*

GILLFORD TOWNSHIP: Some of the early settlers had arrived in the township in May 1855. Among them were William McLeod, George and Seymour Fanning. That summer Joseph Fuller and his brother-in-law Mr. Gill also took claims. Mr. Fuller had a claim in Mazeppa but gave it up because of a heavy frost in June. He was about to return to Illinois when Mr. Gill arrived with the news that there were also frosts in that state so Fuller decided to stay.

Mr. Gill returned to Illinois in the fall intending to spend the winter there and return with his family in the spring, but fate would have it otherwise. He took sick and died. Mrs. Gill came on and settled in the township, and on account of her amiable character the township was named Gillford as a compliment to her.

In the spring of 1856, E. M. Hoyt, E. F. Hoyt, W. F. Green, and F. Lamb came and took claims in the vicinity of Oak Center in the northwestern part of the township.

The greater part of the township is rolling prairie with short valley slopes toward the Zumbro River into which most of the lands are drained. Most of the township is 1000 feet above sea level. The soil is rich and there is considerable oak timber. The early settlers devoted much of their fields to wheat and barley but it prospers now as a well-farmed, diversified farming section with much attention given to stockraising and dairying.

The early settlers were mostly from New England and other eastern states, but later a large number of Irish took claims in the southeastern part. Large numbers came here direct from Germany, and now largely predominate the township.

The Catholics of the eastern part were affiliated with the church at West Albany village. The Methodists centered about Oak Center where the first Sunday school in the township was held. The Episcopalian Methodists had a church and cemetery at Lincoln which has become a German Lutheran

*Gillford Twp*

center. There is also a German Lutheran church at Jacksonville.

There has been a strong temperance movement in Gillford, and it has never had saloons for the sale of hard liquors. There were no drafts from the township during the Civil War. A sufficient number enlisted to fill the township quotas.

The people of Gillford are, and always have been, strong for education, and the township has always maintained good schools. The first school was taught by Lizzie Green in a small claim shanty near Oak Center in the summer of 1858.

Though the township had a post office at Jacksonville, established January 5, 1859, Lincoln established September 25, 1861, and Oak Center established December 31, 1874, and nearly all had country stores in connection at times, there is only one incorporated village in Gillford. Zumbro Falls in the southwest corner of Oak Center was for a time a thriving hamlet with store, shop, creamery, church, and school. There are well-kept cemeteries at Jacksonville, Lincoln and Zumbro Falls.

Gillford township 110 N., Range 13 W., is a township with finely built up farms. State Highways No. 53 and No. 60 cross the township, and it has a network of good county roads.

Highland Township: It is bounded on the north by Glasgow, on the east by Watopa, on the south by Plainview and on the west by Oakwood. It is a table-land of about 1100 feet above sea level with no low lands and from this evidently derived its name. It is township 109 N., Range 11 W. The township was organized in 1858, taking its name Smithfield, that being the name given the first post office established on September 16, 1858. The name was soon changed to Highland.

Patrick McDonough who erected a log cabin in section 1 in 1855 was the first settler in northern Highland. During 1856 and 1857 a large number of Irish and Germans took up lands. There were also a good sprinkling of Yankees

*Highland Twp*

throughout the township. Lyon Post Office was established at Watkins, later Apples Mill, May 9, 1862, and another at Conception on June 12, 1894.

The soil is black loam with clay subsoil. The lands are rich and much suited to grain farming. The most of the township is rolling and is broken in north and east. It has several small streams among them West Indian Creek which drain into the Zumbro. West Indian Creek has possibilities for much power, and was the force supplying Apple's and Hampe's mills which once did a flourishing business as grist mills but are just old landmarks now. Apples Mill was a hamlet and for many years had a store and post office. Smithfield had stores, blacksmith shop, hotel and post office, too, but dropped out of the picture as a business place as Plainview developed.

The people were of many different denominations and showed much zeal in organizing churches in the township. A Catholic mission was established at Conception where a church and Catholic cemetery have been maintained constantly to the present day. This is the only church now within the township. The organizations of Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Lutherans have disbanded or affiliated with like denominational churches at Theilman and Plainview.

The township is a part of the Sioux Half Breed Tract and this fact gave rise to uncertainty as to land titles that hampered the early settlement.

The first road laid out in the township was from Canfield Spring to Apples Mill, built in 1858. It now has many fine gravelled roads, and State Highway 42 crosses the southeastern part.

Grain is still produced in considerable quantities, but dairying and live stock forms most of their income.

Good schools have always been maintained, and every section of the township has accessible school houses.

The township owns no public buildings, and the township government centers around Murphy's hall at Conception. Township meetings and elections

Highland trip

are held at the hall and it is also a public meeting and amusement place. Conrad Reil who had a store at Conception was appointed postmaster June 12, 1894. The office was discontinued November 29, 1902, and mail service for the township is supplied from rural routes.

Highland's main marketing places are Plainview, Kellogg and Theilman. It is strictly an agricultural township, and as such has prospered. Its farms are well equipped with fine homes and barns, and the silo and hog house are much in evidence. Corn and hogs make up for much of the farm income.

Mazeppa Township: Situated on the western border of Wabasha County. It contains but little more than half of township 109 N., Range 14 W. It is bounded on the north by Chester township, on the east by the Zumbro River, on the south by Olmsted County and on the west by Goodhue County.

It is one of the early settled townships of the county, and Mazzeppa is its only village. Mazzeppa was for years one of the outstanding flour milling towns of Minnesota. Its natural resources consisted of a fertile soil, much oak timber and an abundance of available water power.

Among the early settlers, who came in 1854 and 1855, were Ira O. Seeley, Enoch Young, Joseph Fuller, G. C. Sleeper, Joseph Ford and his son Orville, John E. Hyde, Turner Preble, Isaac Nichols, George Bailey and George Duncan.

Most of the township was covered with timber, and a saw mill erected on the Zumbro at the present site of Mazeppa village was the first business venture in the township. Other mills were built further down the Zumbro and Trout Brook, and lumbering was a thriving business during 1856 and 1857. The settlers soon began to demand pine lumber and the saw mill business declined.

The lands in the southwest or southern end of the township are rolling, and having been sheared of timber became fine farming lands. There is still considerable timber along the Zumbro where the lands are varied with steep hillsides.

*Mazzeppa Twp*

In 1856 a grist mill was erected at Mazeppa by Amsbey and Barber. It did a good business and finally came into the hands of Forest Mills and Mazeppa Milling Company who developed it as a commercial mill with extensive business, much of their product being exported to England and Scotland. Steam power was added to that produced by water power, and the capacity stepped up to six hundred and fifty barrels per day. Large elevators or wheat storehouses were erected, and Mazeppa Village became one of the largest wheat marketing places in southern Minnesota.

Grain farming and stockraising went hand in hand in Mazeppa township for a number of years, but a gradual change has made the township outstanding in dairying and hog raising, and the milling business has become a story of early days.

In addition to the high and graded schools at Mazeppa there are several district schools in the township accessible to all residents. Many of the early settlers were from the eastern states, and, though many decedents of the early settlers may be found about Mazeppa village, much of the population is now German and Luxumberger.

The township was much agitated by the discovery of gold in 1856, and the story of its 'Gold Diggings' makes an interesting chapter in Hills History of Wabasha and Winona Counties.

#### Gold Mining

The famous "Gold Diggings" that caused so much excitement along the Zumbro in 1858-59 were located in town. The base of operations was at Oronoco, in Olmsted County, where a mining company was formed. In 1856, gold was discovered on the river bank by Holden Whipple, who lived near the junction of the North Branch with the main stream. Search showed the existence of minute particles of the precious metal all along the stream, and a considerable quantity was found to exist in the village of Oronoco.

In the <sup>FALL</sup> field of 1858, a company was organized for the purpose of

*Mazeppa dup*

systematic mining, and sluices were erected on section 22. Here was found a large deposit of clay in the narrow river valley, which yielded a good percentage of "shot gold." By the time the works were ready for operation winter closed in, and a long period of impatient waiting was imposed on the sanguine miners. But their patience was destined to be still more highly taxed, for the melting of the snow in the spring following raised the river very high, and their handiwork was swept away by the remorseless Zumbro. Their courage was, however, unshaken, and the company was reorganized with additions to its membership and capital. More extensive improvements were at once planned and begun, and by the end of June were ready for business. Everything was completed on a certain Friday night, and most of the proprietors retired to Oronoco to rest and prepare for pushing the work the following Monday. A few of the most enthusiastic or industrious remained over Saturday to set the work going. That night the sluices were cleaned up, and something over twenty dollars' worth of gold was taken out. Alas! how unstable are earthly things!

"The best laid plans of mice and men gang aft a-glee."

On Monday morning the memorable flood of July 3, 1859 had arrived, and the works of the "Oronoco Mining Company" were swept entirely away. The courage and resources of most of the miners having been exhausted, the work was abandoned, and has thus since rested. There is no doubt that a large deposit of gold exists somewhere on the Zumbro River, and could its original hiding place be found, a fortune could be secured by the lucky discoverer. It is quite certain that fair compensation could be wrung from the auiferous earth of Mazeppa township by concerted labor with proper appliances."

Incidents connected with the "Gold Diggings," "Hog Hollow," "The Red Bridge," "Milling At Mazeppa," "The Mazeppa Cave," "Horse Thieving," "The

*Mazeppa Twp*

fate of Alexander Sommers of Drinkwaller and Sommers' sawmill," to the developments of the Zumbro power by the erection of the Rochester Power Dam in section 27 gives color as well as scenery for a dramatic history of the township. "It takes all kinds of people to make a world," and Mazeppa township had them. The first township meeting was held in the village of Mazeppa May 11, 1858.

Glasgow Township: Township 110 N., R 11 W., lies to the southwest of Wabasha and is separated from it by the high bluffs which form the north-eastern part of Glasgow north of the Zumbro River. These bluffs reach an elevation of 1,100 to 1,200 feet above the sea and 300 to 400 feet above the level of the city of Wabasha and that of the beautiful Trout Brook Valley that opened its arms in 1855 to welcome the first settlers of Glasgow, the McGowans, Foremans, Cochranes, McCrackens, Bernhardtts, Stowmans, Smiths, Raymonds, Seafers and Scotts.

Glawgow is separated into two nearly equal sections by the Zumbro which crosses the township in a winding course from west to east. Trout Brook Valley drained by Trout Brook, a north tributary of the Zumbro, occupies much of the north half of the township. The valley is hemmed in by bluffs on the north, east, and west and joins the Zumbro valley on the south. Trout Brook fed by springs and drainage from the surrounding bluffs is a source of much power that never has been utilized to any extent and has a fine history as a trout stream. Unchecked, it and its branches have wrought havoc to much of its fertile lands by erosion. Much of the rich bottom lands along the Zumbro, though subject to overflow, brings rich crops of grass, hay, and corn that gives strength to the township's reputation for a wealthy production of hogs and cattle. William McCracken planted the first crop in Glasgow township in June 1855. It was a corn crop and a success. Corn has ever since been a leading crop, though Glasgow has ever had a wide diversity of bountiful yields in both grains and vegetables. The territory north of the Zumbro has little

*Glasgow Twp*

contact with that on the south, though there is a bridge over the river in section 22 at a location known as Funke's Ford. The contour is such as to make contacts somewhat unapproachable and the boundary lines of many of the farms are the irregular course of the river rather than along section lines.

Glasgow is distinctly an agricultural town with no incorporated villages. A post office was established in the northern part of the township on Feb. 3, 1863, with Andrew Lansing as postmaster, and at Dumfries on July 9, 1894, with Russel Parsons as postmaster. They have both been discontinued, and Dumfries, once a prominent shopping point, has been reduced to a hamlet and a township center with a store and hall. The Wabasha division of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific RR. built across the township in 1878 giving rise to Dumfries and McCracken station has been abandoned, and the trade of the township is with Wabasha, Lake City, Theilman or Kellogg depending on which is the more accessible by highway. State Highway No. 60 crosses the township from east to west. There are no regular church services in the township but its population who are very largely regular church attendants are affiliated with the various denominational churches of surrounding towns.

Glasgow has always taken a deep interest in education, and has fine common schools easily accessible in the various localities. The first school house was completed in 1858, and taught by Mary Cosgrove.

Many of the early pioneers were Scotch and that accounts for the name taken from that of Glasgow, Scotland. But few of the many Irish among the pioneers have decedents remaining in the township. Germans occupy most of the farms. Some of the most productive and highly cultivated farms in Wabasha County are in Glasgow.

The Indians were plentiful here in the early days, and had an Indian field, part of which was a cemetery, on Trout Brook.

*Glasgow Twp*

West Albany: Township 110 N., Range 12 W., is a typical American town. He who wrote the following spoke knowingly of the physical features that made it what it is. We quote:

"West Albany township lies nearly in the center of the county, being a full congressional township, and consisting of fine rolling prairie, considerably broken in the southern part by crowded valleys and gorges. The streams all lie at a depth of one to two hundred feet below the surrounding country, affording perfect drainage, and swamps are unknown. Through sections 34, 27, 26, 25 and 36 in the southeastern part, winds the picturesque Zumbro, with its limestone cliffs, wooded banks and fertile bottoms, receiving the united waters of several smaller streams, which take their rise in the central, western and southern parts. These deep valleys or canons, which are the result of ages of erosion, appear to have been at one time considerably deeper than at present. The rich strata, which consists of Potsdam limestone, lie an undiscovered depth below the streams, overlaid by a deposit of sand, clay and loam, which is rapidly increasing, and which indicates a long reversal of the process of erosion. The drift, which on the prairies overlies the rock at a depth of from five to fifty feet, consists of clay, topped by a layer of rich clay loam, which years ago nourished a thick growth of buffalo grass and grubs now supplanted by the products of intelligent husbandry.

Nature here spreads riches for the artist and poet, as well as broad acres for the practical husbandman. The picturesque valleys, bounded by perpendicular, moss-grown, walls and steep hillsides broken by glen and gorge and covered with blooms, shrubs, oaks and conifers, and the winding streams which flow by mill and meadow, hemmed in by vine clung elms and willows, challenge the admiration of lovers of nature, and invite the artist's pencil \* \* \* .

West Albany Trip

In June, 1855, the hitherto undisturbed reign of nature and the Indian, what is now West Albany township, was broken by the appearance of Samuel Ba Brink, who erected on the southwest quarter of section 21 a two-story log hotel 24 X 46 feet. A few weeks later John McCollom settled in section 28, accompanied by Dr. Spafford who left shortly after the death of Mrs. McCollom in August of that year \* \* \*. In the summer of that year came also Abram Lyons, followed early in the fall by Leroy, Eugene, and Cornelius McCollom \* \* \*. The summer of 1856 brought several newcomers whose names were as follows: Wm. Wright of England; Frederick Jacobs, of Hanover; Andrew Hook, of Baden; Charles Wise of Baden; John M. Welsh of Ireland, and Patrick Cronin of Ireland \* \* \* .

In the spring of 1857, Lawrence Tracey, of Irish nativity, who had previously settled in what is now Oakwood, moved to West Albany. In the same year came William Appelgarth of Canada; Henry Schnurser, of Holstein, William Funke, and some others. In 1858 began the establishment of the Scotch settlement in the northeastern part of the township. In this year came Geo. and Wm. Wilson, William Duffus, Henry Glaschen, Geo. and Wm. Perry, Charles Forrest, Alexander Thoirs, William Sterling, David Munro, and William Corry \* \* \* .

Thus we see the early establishment of three nationalities in this township - German, Irish and Scotch \* \* \*. Like the early pioneer of every part of the country, the first settlers of West Albany saw their share of hardship and privation, and here as elsewhere, bitter cups were often sweetened, and brooding clouds lighted by merry meetings which a varied life of toil, and a generous spirit of equality and neighborly kindness, over the departure of which many an old settler will be seen to shake his head regretfully. Money was scarce, and settlers were sometimes in actual want of food or reduced to a diet of johnny cake or potatoes. The abundance of game was

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often of great advantage, and the numerous flocks of prairie chickens and grouse, and the occasional deer that haunted the valleys frequently increased an otherwise slim bill of fare.

Sometimes the men would devote a day to ball or "shinny" and breaking and hauling bees were quite common, often being a necessity, as teams were rather scarce. In the winter sleigh rides, singing schools, lyceums, spelling schools, donations, et cetera varied the monotony \* \* \*.

An Indian trail from Wabasha to Blue Earth passed through this township, over which the Indians often passed. Frequently stopping along West Albany Creek to fish for the brook trout that haunted its depths. Winter sometimes saw them camped in the valleys, generally along the Zumbro, and though they often visited the settlers, to beg or bring in a little game, they gave no serious annoyance \* \* \*."

The township was organized in May 1858. A post office was established at West Albany September 2, 1857; Gopher Prairie post office Aug. 26, 1860; Theilman post office Nov. 29, 1877, and Lakey June 28, 1881. Theilman is now the only existing village and has the only post office in the township.

Minnesota State Highway No. 60 crosses the township and good gravelled state and county highways form a network throughout the township. Diversified agriculture and stock raising flourishes on the many fine farms of the township.

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Hyde Park: Township 109 N., Range 13 W. was originally called Concord Township, and included what is now Hyde Park Township and that part of Zumbro Township included in Range ~~X~~13. <sup>W</sup>

Settlers took claims in Concord both in the part now Hyde Park and that south of the Zumbro river in 1855. Paris Devitt and Samuel Parker being the first to settle north of the river.

The township of Concord was organized in May 1858. The Zumbro River which separated the township into northern and southern parts was often unfordable and as there were no bridges intercourse between those of the north and those of the south could not be close and especially at election time made attendance thereat uncertain. The greater part of the population was south of the Zumbro and the elections were usually held there. These conditions were not satisfactory to the people. At the election in 1858, the people voted to change the name to Troy. There was already a township named Troy in Minnesota and the legislature rejected their choice of Troy. At the spring election in 1862, it was voted to divide the town into two townships. That south of the river to be called Zumbro and that north of the river Hyde Park. Thus Hyde Park township is but about one-half of the township 109 N., Range 13 W. and its southern and western boundaries are very irregular as they follow the course of the Zumbro.

Hyde Park, though the lands adjacent to the river are rough and hilly, while the greater part is rolling prairie, is exceedingly fertile and had much fine timber. Wheat raising flourished here for many years but that was supplanted largely by corn and barley in crops of abundance. Sheep, hogs and cattle are now the main source of income on its well built up farms.

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The township contributed to the building of the Wabasha Division of the Chicago Milwaukee railroad in 1878 and its building revitalized the township. In 1878 Kimball and Kitzman built a water power mill on the Zumbro at Jarretts which, with its elevator, made a local market for the township. The village of Hammond, platted in 1877, took on new life with the coming of the railroad and that and the village of Jarretts became enterprising business places, where a large volume of business was transacted. The abandonment of the railroad at Hammond and Jarretts has been compensated for in a measure by the developement of Minnesota Highway No. 60 and the building of the Zumbro Parkway both of which connect with the railroad at Zumbro Falls.

The first school house in the township was built in Section No. 3 and is No. 45. The first teacher was Mary Shaw. Schools were started in district No. 46 in 1857 and No. 84 in 1859. District No. 47 built up with Jarretts Village.

A post office was established at Hyde Park Corners July 6, 1857 with William Parker as postmaster. He had a store in connection. The office continued until July 19, 1880. Post offices were opened in Hammond September 16, 1878 and at Jarretts September 12, 1879.

Religious services in the township began in 1856. Services of various denominations were held at farm homes and school houses. A large percentage of the early settlers were Catholic who affiliated with the church at West Albany until the church was built at Hammond in 1881.

Many of the settlers were members of the Hyde Park Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows who held meetings at the Grange Hall at Hyde Park Corners in Gillford. Parker, Devitt, Fanning, Baker, Kelly, Riley, Murray, Kinney, Ritter, Shaw, Foster, Disney, LaMont, Warren, Robertson, O'Hara and Roberts were well known names of Hyde Park.

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Zumbro Township: Much of the history of Zumbro is entwined with that of Hyde Park both of which were originally embodied in the township of Corcord - township 109 N, R. 13 W. The township had its beginning as Zumbro in 1861 when Hyde Park was separated from it. Zumbro, in addition to containing all the lands south of the river of Township 109 N., R. 13 W contains all east and south of the Zumbro River in Township 109 N., Range 14 W.

The first settlers of Zumbro were Thomas George and Andrew Bailey who came in 1855 and the Jenkins family who came in 1856. They settled near Dale Corners and the settlement became known as Pleasant Prairie. Pleasant Prairie post office was established December 2, 1857 with Francis Burdett as first postmaster. It was discontinued November 25, 1864. The first school in the township was taught in a claim shanty by Nellie Walker in 1859. There was another early settlement in southern Zumbro called South Troy where South Troy post office was established September 16, 1858 with John M. Jones as postmaster. The South Troy school district was organized in 1861 and the Red School House built in 1864. Hattie Rueber was the first to teach in it. A store opened in 1866 by John Ralton was about the only business place in the township until the village of Hammond was laid out in 1877. It is an agricultural town where diversified farming and stock raising flourish. It has some of the finest farms in Wabasha County. There is still considerable wild rough land along the Zumbro, and much of this has considerable wood. Most of this wood is oak. The Rochester Power Dam and Ryans Bay are in the southwest corner of the township. Bremen Corners church and school are in the southeast corner, while to the north of the town are Wyatt or North Zumbro school, the Red Bridge school, the Dale and the Welke schools. Hammond has a growing semi-graded school. The people of the township exhibit a strong educational spirit well reflected in well provided schools.

There has ever been a strong religious sentiment. The Wesley<sup>an</sup> and Methodist have a well attended church at South Troy. The German Methodists at Bremen

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and there is a Catholic church at Hammond. Sunday schools have been held at Pleasant Prairie and some of the other school houses. There are cemeteries at South Troy, Pleasant Prairie and at Hammond and Bremen. A strong temperance sentiment has always been manifested in the township.

Dales, Andersons, Rogers, Robinsons, Ryans, Everetts, Funke, Welke, Berhms, Pencils, Wyatts, Perkins, Howard were prominent names in Zumbro.

While Zumbro specialized in grain and stock raising much attention was given to fruit raising and some very fine orchards of considerable size grace the township.

Zumbro connects with Rochester via Minnesota Highway No. 63 which traverses the township making connections with the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific RR. and Minnesota Highway No. 60 at Zumbro Falls and connects with the Zumbro Parkway at Zumbro Falls, Jarretts and Hammond.

Hammond Village is the only place of business in the township but it is surrounded with accessible cities and villages. Mazeppa, Zumbro Falls, Jarretts, Millville, Rochester, Elgin and Plainview. Fine roads lead out in all directions forming scenic drives through well kept farms and hills and dales and along creeks and rivers, hung with trees and vines. Nature was generous with the township of Zumbro. Some townships have one thing and others something else, but nature seems to have given Zumbro some of everything. She has rich and varied soil, hills, valleys, creeks and rivers, pastures, meadows, fields, orchards, bays, woods and even wild places where the voice echoes back from the woods and hills. The Zumbro alone gives the township nearly sixteen miles of water frontage much of which has falls and rapids.

Elgin Township: This is township 108 N., Range 12 W. Elgin is bounded on the north by Zumbro and Oakwood, on the east by Plainview and on the south and west by Olmsted County.

The entire township, with the exception of a section of woodland near

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the center, is a rolling prairie with a deep rich soil. The northern part drains toward the Zumbro while the Whitewater with its tributaries drain and water the southern part. It forms a prominent part of Greenwood Prairie. The early settlers were so impressed with its beauty and richness that they at first called the place "Paradise." The township was named Elgin by a nearly unanimous vote of the voters at the first town meeting held May 11, 1858.

The first settlers were George Bryant, Henry H. Atherton, Curtis Bryant and George Farrar who came from Vermont in April 1855 and took claims in the vicinity of Elgin Village. The first building in the township was a log house erected on the claim of Henry Atherton. It was shingled with elm bark. It housed all the first settlers for a time and afterward was a welcoming place for settlers that followed. By the year 1856 the settlement contained thirty persons. Among those who arrived in 1855 and 1856, were Conard Laird, E. L. Clapp, Byron A. Glines, Henry H. Stanfield, Carlos B. Emerson, William D. Woodward, John Bryant, Orvis V. Rollins and Irving W. Rollins. The settlement grew rapidly and by May 11, 1858 when the organization meeting was held 54 votes were cast.

Early steps were taken to provide for education, and early in 1858 a claim shanty was moved onto the present village school grounds and school begun with Almeria C. Gould as teacher. This was soon replaced by a more spacious building where a school of ever increasing advantages has culminated in one of the finest high schools in Minnesota. It serves the village and provides an opportunity for higher education for the common schools of the township.

With lands rich and highly productive the early settlers produced much fine quality wheat. By 1872, Elgin was said to have produced more wheat in a single year than any other township in the world. A flouring mill was built on the Whitewater by Parrand Ellis in 1860. It was discontinued in 1866 because of insufficient water power. There were no grain markets in

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Elgin until 1877 and farmers hauled their wheat long distances to Rochester, Minneiska and even to Winona. During 1877 Bryant Brothers and Johnson began buying grain in Elgin and that year purchased one hundred sixty-five thousand bushels of wheat and hauled it to Eyota for shipment. In 1878 the railroad was built to Elgin and Plainview, and Elgin grew into a large grain market. The farmers were soon raising other grains producing much barley. It is now a well diversified farming section with much attention to dairying, hogs and cattle. Fruit growing and the production of vegetables is given much attention. There is a flourishing cooperative creamery in Elgin and corn and peas are produced for the canning factory in Plainview Village.

A post office was established at Elgin June 29, 1857 with George Bryant as postmaster. Forest Mound post office in the northern part of the township was established September 4, 1858. It was discontinued September 10, 1874.

Elgin village is the only incorporated village in the township and this was but a small place until the building of the railroad. It is now one of the thriving villages of the state.

July 21, 1883 the township was visited by a most disastrous cyclone completely wrecking the village of Elgin and many of the buildings on the farms of the community. Loss of life and personal injuries were small, but the property losses suffered were a hard blow to the community.

Though many of the early settlers were from New England the population has become largely German of the Lutheran faith.

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Lake Township: Lake contains all the lands in township 111 N., Range 12 W., except that included in the incorporation of the city of Lake City. The township was originally named Lake City by a vote of the people of the township. When Lake City was incorporated by an act of the Legislature in 1872 provision was made in the act giving the name Lake to the township.

Lake is bounded on the north by Goodhue County and Lake City, on the east by Lake Pepin and Pepin township, on the south by West Albany and on the west by Mt. Pleasant.

The original township consisted of Sugar Loaf valley and Lake City prairie in the north. Boston and Hazlett <sup>counties</sup> to the south and west of Lake City and fine level or slightly rolling table lands occupying the south half of the township.

The settlement had its beginning when Jacob Boodie took a claim on the Lake City prairie in 1853. What is now Collins Creek took the name Boodie Creek in the early days of settlement. Abner Dwelle, Samuel Doughty and Abner Tibbits settled nearby - Boodie in 1854 - and the city of Lake City was platted by them in 1856 on Mr. Dwelle's claim. Doughty was given a share in the city for his services in helping to promote the town. He was a good talker and proved an efficient salesman in getting the town started.

The early settlers were nearly all Yankees from the eastern states. They were followed by many from Ireland and Germany. Many from Sweden had arrived in Lake City by 1870.

Seth Skinner who arrived in 1854, brought a stock of goods with him and opened the first store in Lake City the only business place in the township. Dwelle and Baldwin erected the first store building in 1856 and F. Williamson began a store in it that year. A post office was established Oct. 4, 1856 with Mr. Williamson as postmaster. Gopher Prairie post office established Aug. 29, 1860 in northeast West Albany township was later moved

LAKE township (Lake City township)

to southern part of Lake and continued until Dec. 2, 1872.

Silas Hazlet opened a school in 1856 and Lake City female seminary with Mrs. C. W. Hackett as principal was opened July 6, 1857. These were private or subscription schools and by 1862 the Lake City Leader was carrying ads for Mr. Gibbs School, a select school by Miss H. E. *Butler*, a private school by Miss Arnold, and a parish school with Rev. C. P. Dorcet, principal. The first public school building in Lake City was built in 1862. The Kileen, the Harney and the Failing schools supplied the wants of the township outside of Lake City.

The soil of Lake is very fertile and many large grain and stock farms are operated. Like the other townships, much wheat was produced but now diversified farming and stock raising are followed.

The assessor's books for 1873 gives production as follows: wheat 60,407 bushels, oats 23,760, corn 16,960, barley 5,205, buckwheat 425, potatoes 1,215 and beans 60. The township had 5,987 bearing apple trees and a production of 6,000 quarts of strawberries was shown. The township had 77 farms with 358 horses, 22 mules and 253 cows, 22 sheep and 176 hogs.

Lake City is the market place of the township and most of the people of the township are affiliated with the churches there. The Jewel Nursery established in 1868 and the Lake City Nursery of more recent date occupy lands in the northern part of the township. The township is exclusively agricultural.

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(Lake City twp)*