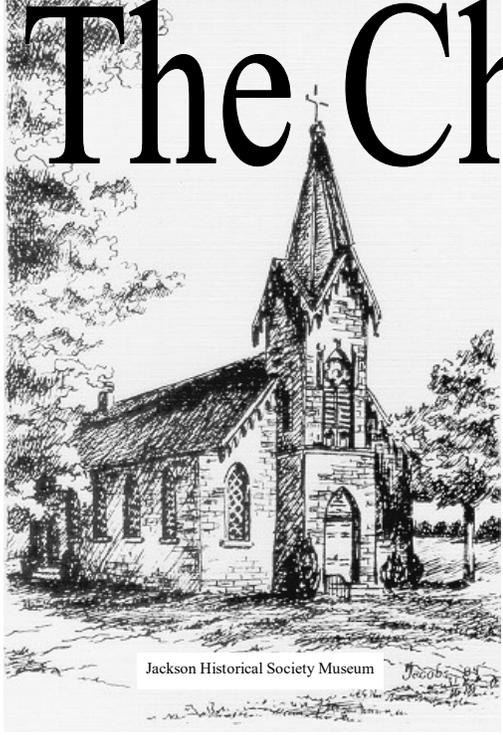


The Church Mouse



Volume 28 Issue 3 Jackson Historical Society November 2020

POLITICAL SHENANIGANS IN HISTORIC WISCONSIN

After Wisconsin became a territory in 1836 and a State in 1848, development continued in earnest. The state had functioned for a number of years with a kind of split personality. The southwest part of the state was industrialized around lead mining, with people arriving up the Mississippi River from the south, seeking their fortune. Cornish immigrants arrived to work the underground lead mines, giving the state its future nickname, Badger.

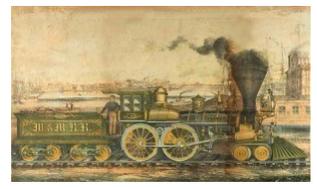
Meanwhile, immigrants arriving in the Wisconsin Territory by ship often settled around the various Lake Michigan ports as that was where commerce was concentrated and many of the jobs were.

In the mid 1800's the state continued to fill up with Yankees, often 2nd generation Americans from the eastern states, immigrants from England, Ireland, and throughout Europe looking to make their way in this new state. Land was cheap and opportunities great, with the freedom to succeed.

Many arriving Yankees were successful or almost successful businessmen looking for another chance to make or increase their fortunes. Many were speculators, looking for cheap land to buy and resell. Farmers and tradesmen arrived with their families looking for inexpensive land and the freedom to establish their farms and businesses. The emigration continued during the 1800's, from Wisconsin as a territory in 1836, to statehood in 1848, and beyond.

As the state grew, so did communities within it. Businesses within the communities and surrounding farms, all had a need for a transportation link to supporting markets. Indian trails became roads which led to plank and toll roads. Ox and horse drawn wagons served for a while, but were slow and subject to changes in the weather. Water transportation on rivers and purpose built canals carried commerce as well. As transportation hubs developed along Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River, Wisconsin was well served by these corridors of commerce. However, a need lay in making these transportation hubs more economically efficient and accessible from within the state. Enter the railroads.

Because America as a nation was developing from east westward, railroads did too. Territorial Wisconsin had a flurry of interest in railroads with charters being requested and issued by the territorial government, but no railroads constructed. All was generally quiet for a few years.



Then, in the mid 1800's, interest in railroads grew again, when many interests wanted to build a railroad to connect east with west, Lake

(Shenanigans continued on page 2)

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Your annual **\$15** dues cover a calendar year starting in **January**. The current year for your membership is shown on The Church Mouse address label to the right of the zip code.

Your dues include a subscription to the Church Mouse and help us preserve Jackson history.

JHS MEETINGS TIMES

The Jackson Historical Society meets the 3rd Monday of every other month, Jan/Mar/May/Jul/Sep/Nov, at 7:00pm.

JHS meetings are held at 1860 Mill Road, Jackson, in our restored, Karl Groth log home. Visitors are welcome.

JHS OFFICERS

- Russ Hanson—President
- Jerry Prochnow—Vice President
- Lenore Kloehn—Treasurer
- Nancy Ebeling—Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS

- JHS Officers, Elmer Kloehn,
- Gordon Ziemann, Clifford Koeller



(Shenanigans continued from page 1)

Michigan with the Mississippi River. As Wisconsin statehood approached, additional charters were issued, including one for the Milwaukee, Waukesha, and Mississippi Railroad, with construction begun in 1849, the first railroad to lay tracks in the new state of Wisconsin. The time seemed right for railroads.

However, to build a railroad takes more than an idea for a good route. It requires a major investment of cash and a government charter with permission to issue and sell shares to raise the necessary money. Whether territorial or state government, the politicians picked the winners and losers in the rush to build a railroad. So, to obtain a railroad charter, elected representatives within the government had to be convinced of the railroad's need and probable success. Under the table cash or a promise of railroad stock often expedited the issuance of the charter. After the charter was issued, and the railroad company gained permission to sell shares to pay for the venture, ready cash and shares became available to influence legislators votes. In the mid 1850's, financial shenanigans infected Wisconsin poli-

William Barstow
term, he was involved in
printing contracts, and



tics all the way to the Governor's election in 1855. was elected Secretary of State in 1849. During Secretary of State, Barstow's scandals connected to corruption of federal land grants, state government the state treasury. In 1851, he lost in his bid to be reelected.

As fall became winter in 1853 "Monks Hall" the headquarters for a push to obtain favorable legislation for construction of the Rock River Valley Union Railroad became active. A newspaper editor referred to the group as "Barstow and the Forty Thieves" as the railroad's lobbyists included soon to be Governor William Barstow. The group wined and dined legislators until the legislature passed the bill proposed by the lobbyists, and the members were rewarded financially. Barstow continued to advance politically, becoming Wisconsin's third Governor in 1854. In 1855, after his term as Governor, his misdeeds came to light, including a rigged bid to build the Insane Asylum and improper sales of school lands. In 1855, the Democrats nominated him for reelection.

His opponent was State Senator Coles Bashford, moved to Oshkosh in the 1850's. Bashford was a member of the new Republican Party, created the previous year around a national issue of abolition and with the Barstow administration.



a lawyer and New York native, who had member of the new Republican Party, created the local issues of graft and patronage associated

Politicking began in earnest in the fall of 1855, with Bashford's campaign capitalizing on Barstow's suspected corruption and portraying Republican Bashford as a reformer.

The election was held in November and when all the votes were tallied, Barstow had won reelection by 157 votes out of the 72,598 votes cast. Bashford and fellow Republicans did not accept the election results claiming corruption of the vote.

In January of 1856, Barstow was sworn in as governor by a Supreme Court justice, in a garish ceremony in the state senate attended by thousands of his supporters. Meanwhile, Bashford was being sworn in by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in a quiet ceremony. Wisconsin now technically had two governors. Three days later, Bashford demanded Barstow's resignation. Barstow refused and indicated that he would not be above using armed force to remain in office. The justices of the Wisconsin Supreme Court began their own investigation into election irregularities.

On March 20th, the investigation was ended with the decision that canvassers had doctored ballots. Investigators found that in a town of 200 citizens, 612 votes had been recorded. Uninhabited northern townships sent in votes for Barstow. In areas favoring Bashford, polls were not opened and votes were left uncounted. The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that Bashford was the rightful winner of the election and should be governor.

However, Barstow, rather than being forced to vacate the governor's office, resigned, and the office was turned over to Lieutenant Governor, entered the Governor's office and government.



Arthur McArthur Sr. on March 21st. On March 25, Bashford informed McArthur that he was there to take charge of state

From the swearing in of the governor's. William Barstow served until March 25th, and Coles Bashford from then to the end of the term. End of shenanigans? Not quite!

Governor in January through March 25th, Wisconsin had three from January to March 21st, Arthur McArthur Sr. for 5 days until

(Shenanigans continued on page 5)



20th Annual RASPBERRY FESTIVAL

Sunday, September 13, 2020, 12-4
 JACKSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY—100 MILL RD.

Driving , at round-about take Division Rd. SOUTH off Hwy. 60 to Mill Rd. turn WEST to festival site. Or, take Maple Rd. SOUTH off Hwy. 60 to Mill Rd.- turn EAST to festival site. Parking area in rear.

SERVING OUR EXCELLENT AMISH MADE RASPBERRY PIE



HONEY GROVE ICE CREAM

FARM FRESH PRODUCE

BUTTERED SWEET CORN



HOT DOGS & BRATS



FRESH RASPBERRY PIE

CRAFT VENDORS

MANY VENDORS

HISTORICAL DEMONSTRATIONS

THE BARN BAND



HISTORICAL RE-enactment

VINTAGE CARS ON DISPLAY

POETIMERSCHE TANZDEEL FREISTADT PERFORMING

PICTURE AUCTION 12:30 - 3:30PM

TOUR OUR RESTORED 1850'S KARL GROTH LOG HOME AND VISIT OUR MUSEUM OF JACKSON HISTORY

ATTEND A CLASS IN SESSION IN OUR ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE

PLAN TO JOIN US FOR THIS ANNUAL EVENT OF THE JACKSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



2020

This year has not been kind to the Jackson Historical Society. With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, uncertainty reigned supreme. The first casualties were our bi-monthly business meetings we use to discuss historical society needs and plan our events.

Jessica Michna and her friend, former First Lady Dolley Madison, had planned to visit us for our Free Spring Program in early April of this year but had to cancel due to the virus. Perhaps Jessica will bring Dolley in for a visit in April of 2021 for our next Free Program. We think she'd enjoy it!

Our real victim of the virus this year was the 20th annual Raspberry Festival scheduled for the 13th of September. JHS remained hopeful that we could hold it as planned, but the virus did not cooperate and we had to cancel it. We lost our chance to hold the 20th annual Raspberry Festival in 2020! The stars were aligned! Now the 20th annual fest will be held in 2021. Not the same! In any case, please mark your calendar. The 20th Raspberry Festival will be held on Sunday, 12 September 2021.

CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19

BYRON KILBOURN - A STEP TOO FAR



In 1856, in an attempt to bribe legislators to secure a land grant for his LaCrosse and Milwaukee Railroad, Byron Kilbourn ruined an otherwise illustrious career. The railroad itself failed in the aftermath of the scandal.

Byron Kilbourn came to Wisconsin, landing in Green Bay in 1834. He had emigrated from Ohio where he was a surveyor and state engineer. He took a job in Wisconsin as a government surveyor. Looking for an investment, he bought land near the Milwaukee River and in 1837 founded Kilbourntown, later West Town, in competition with Solomon Juneau's Juneautown, later East Town, and George Walker's Walker's Point. Kilbourn and Juneau got into a squabble over where river bridges should be located that culminated in the Milwaukee Bridge War, an interesting story by itself and whose aftermath can be viewed today. In 1846 the three combined and formed the City of Milwaukee. Kilbourn served in the Territorial House of Representatives in 1845 and was a member of the Wisconsin Constitutional Convention in 1847. He was a Milwaukee alderman and two term Mayor of Milwaukee.

(Kilbourn continued on page 4)



**Due to Covid-19, Gordon Ziemann's LOST CEMETERIES article will not appear in the November Church Mouse. Look for Gordy's article in the next issue of the Church Mouse..

WISCONSIN'S RAILROADS From Territory to State and Beyond

The westward expansion and continuing development of the United States arrived in Wisconsin in the early 1800's. First the French were pushed out by the British who were, in turn, asked to leave after the war of 1812 by the Americans. Lead mining in the SW corner of what was to become the Territory, then State of Wisconsin was where the commercial action was located. Immigrants arrived in the mid 1800's and the Territory of Wisconsin was established in 1836, the State of Wisconsin following in 1848.

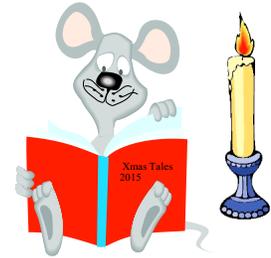
Although some immigrants arrived in the lead mining area of Wisconsin by boat up the Mississippi, more immigrants arrived in Wisconsin from the east by ship via the Great Lakes or overland by wagons. As the immigrants settled in Wisconsin and began farming or built businesses, transportation to, from, and within the future state, became important.

Lead destined for eastern United States inefficiently travelled by ox-train on mud roads to Lake Michigan ports or by boat down the Mississippi and then by ship to east coast consumers. As Wisconsin became the major producer of wheat in the United States, it had to be shipped to consumers elsewhere for use or consumption. Simply remaking mud roads into wooden plank roads or toll roads, or including river transportation did not provide the improvements needed. What was needed was an all weather, large capacity, inexpensive, dependable transportation system. It was time for railroads to enter the picture.

The eastern states already had a history of developing railroads and putting them successfully to use. As immigrants created additional territories then states to be added to the union, railroads followed. Wisconsin's time came with the establishment of a territorial government in 1836. During this period a number of charters were issued by the territorial government, but no track was laid. Railroads would have to wait a bit.

Railroads require land and money to be built. The process is very competitive, generally lengthy and sometimes corrupt, with railroad promoters and government decision makers necessarily involved in the process. Huge amounts of money can be lost, spent or made, businesses and reputations can be created or destroyed, all to the advantage or disad-

(Wisconsin's Railroads continued on page 5)



'Twas the night before Christmas when all through the house not a creature was stirring not even my uncle Fritz, who was asleep in front of the warm fireplace!

Merry Christmas 2020

(Kilbourn continued from page 3)

As a highway commissioner for the Territorial legislature, he included a rest stop half way along the new highway from Milwaukee to Fond du lac. The rest stop became the City of West Bend, which he is considered as founding. In 1857 he also founded Kilbourn City which became Wisconsin Dells.

Kilbourn first became involved in the railroad industry as president of the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad for three years, but was fired for mismanagement and fraud. An omen? He then started the LaCrosse & Milwaukee Railroad as a competitor. However, Kilbourn's choosing the expeditious path of bribery to promote his railroad's success, ruined his public career.

After the scandal. Kilbourn retired to Florida for health reasons, died in 1870, and was buried there. In late 1998, Kilbourn's remains were returned to Milwaukee for interment, because he was the only one of the three Milwaukee founders not buried here. His monument can be viewed in Forest Home Cemetery.

Material for this article excerpted from Wikipedia and other internet sources.



(Shenanigans continued from page 2)

In September thru October 1856, Milwaukee co-founder and businessman Byron Kilbourn launched a scheme to obtain a land grant to build his LaCrosse and Milwaukee Railroad. In return for favorable legislation, he offered 13 senators \$175,000, 59 members of the Assembly \$355,000, and 26 "opinion leaders" \$281,000, including the lieutenant governor, the governor's private secretary, the chief clerk, and the assistant clerk of the Assembly. Governor Bashford received \$50,000 for signing the bill.

In the 1857 Gubernatorial election, Republican Alexander Randall defeated Bashford by 119 votes out of roughly 90,000 cast. He served three terms.



Material for this article was excerpted from internet sources, including "The Most Corrupt Election in Wisconsin's History" an article by Adam J. Schrage; "Legislative Scandal: Barton vs. Bashford" an article in Historic Madison, Inc. of Wisconsin; "Barton-Bashford Affair" of 1856" an article in the Dictionary of Wisconsin History; and the Wisconsin Historical Society.

(Wisconsin's Railroads continued from page 4)
vantage of the people involved.

What should be kept in mind is the reason for railroads is to provide faster, more dependable, economical, large volume transportation of product and people to desired destinations.

It took some time, but in the end, railroads helped move the building of the State of Wisconsin more rapidly FORWARD!



ROBBERY AT LEMKE'S TAVERN & STORE IN SALTER

On the 8th of November, 1956, a masked strong-arm robbery was committed at Lemke's General Store and Tavern in Salter. Armed robbers entered the store early in the evening and announced, "this is a Stick-up." The robbers got away with approximately \$1400. The headline in the West Bend News on the 13th of November read **Bind Three in Theft At Lemke's Corners - Tavernkeeper, Girl and Neighbor Women Tied Up; Boy is Unharmed.** The article goes on to describe the robbery. A copy of the West Bend News is on hand on microfilm at the West Bend Library. That it was committed at all in the quiet community of Salter is odd. Salter has a normal history of development and growth and has had a general store reaching back into the late 1800's.

The community of Salter began with the purchase of 480 acres of land by the Irish Salter brothers, Frank and Robert, each buying 240 acres around the crossroads of Pleasant Valley Rd and Country Aire Dr. in the spring of 1846. Other Irish settlers also bought land in the area. In 1863, St. Mary's Catholic Church was built. In 1866, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church was founded and a log church was built. That same year, a cheese factory was built. A small community had begun in the area.

The property on the southeast corner of the intersection has had many owners. Early owners included Charles Detmering who bought 160 acres from the state and built a two-room farm house, a shed, and later a barn. Others followed until Charles Stauske bought the property in 1882. Three additions were added to the farm house and a general store was started and the area became



known as Stauske's Corners. In 1884, a post office was established in Stauske's store. Son Henry Stauske followed his parents and ran it until Arnold Hafemann took over. Later it was sold to Henry and Margaret Lemke, and the area around Lemke's Country Store and Tavern became known as Lemke's Corners. The oldest structure on the property today is the Jailhouse Restaurant.



After the robbery on November 8th,, the search was on for the robbers and it didn't take long to catch them. Apparently they had been committing strong-arm robberies in the area.

On November 15th, a headline in the West Bend News read **Took Over \$1,700 in Theft; Admit Others. Arrests Solve Series of Robberies In County; Lemke Holdup Admitted.** The masked group of gunmen who have been robbing and terrorizing Washington County residents for approximately five months, struck again Monday night when they robbed

(Robbery continued on page 6)

AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES EVENTS

RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY Currently, all Richfield Historical Society events are canceled due to COVID-19. Please Contact www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org for more information.

GERMANTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY Please contact the Germantown Historical Society at germantownhistoricalsociety.org, for information on future events.

POMMERSCHER VEREIN FREISTADT For activities and information, please contact Pommerscher.org.

THE HISTORY CENTER Paranormal Tours 2020 at The Tower Heritage Center, Oct. 28th, 7:00pm & Oct. 31st, 9:30pm. The History Center, 320 S. 5th Ave., West Bend, WI 53095. Contact www.historyisfun.com for more information.



The Editor welcomes comments on the newsletter. Please mail all suggestions for articles, etc., to The Church Mouse, 1921 State Road 60, Jackson, WI 53037, or phone (262) 677-3888, or e-mail jhsheritage@sbcglobal.net. Russ Hanson, Editor

JACKSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE CLASS VISIT IN 2021

For many years, school was taught in one-room schoolhouses throughout Washington County.

Let your students experience a class as it was for their grandparents and great-grandparents.

Arrange a class visit to the Jackson Historical Society's, fully restored, one-room schoolhouse.

Please contact the Jackson Historical Society* at jhsheritage@sbcglobal.net or Doris Koeller @ (262) 677-3457 or clifdoris@att.net

***Jackson Historical Society, 1860 Mill Road—on the Hwy. 60 round-about at Division Road (G), go south to Mill Road, turn west to the JHS site.**

LAWN MOWING & TRIMMING AT JHS



Although the mowing season is over and the equipment packed away, the lawn still looks great.

Jack Reis and Elmer Kloehn took on the task of keeping the lawn and cemetery looking good, and the results speak for themselves. Our historic site has never looked better.

So, enjoy the holidays, and thank you for a job well done. Thanks, guys.

HELP!

I am looking for information about a public beach on Hasmer Lake. When did it open? When did it close? Was there a sandy beach area next to the lake? Does anyone have Hasmer Lake Beach pictures they'd be willing to share?

If you can help, please call or send an e-mail and let me know

Russ Hanson, Church Mouse Editor
jhsheritage@sbcglobal.net or 262-677-3888

(Robbery continued from page 5)

the Frank Millers of Barton of \$1,722.26 in Cash. But the holdup led to their capture when they were picked up the same night when they returned to Kenosha where they were now staying.

So now the quiet community of Salter, or Lemke's Corners, can return to "business as usual" and enjoy knowing that the robbers will be spending quite a bit of time in jail.

This event was brought to my attention by Susan Robbins, Head of Reference at the West Bend Library. Susan was asked for the information by Janean Shirley of Vicksburg, MS who was preparing a historical report on the robbery for her family. Janean, daughter of Ada and Reuben Gauger, grew up in Jackson.

If you wish to see the complete West Bend News articles on the robbery of Lemke's General Store and Tavern, stop by the reference desk at the West Bend Community Memorial Library, 630 Popular St, West Bend, 53095 and ask to view the microfilm copies of the event.