INDIAN MOUND EXPLORED

Manitowoc County derives its name from the Indian word "mundoowk", which has two meanings, "home of the good spirit" and "the devil's den." Several tribes inhabited the county at some time or other, tribes staying here for the summer only, and moving to central Wisconsin for the winter months.

It is unknown which tribes visited the Town of Centerville. One Indian summer campsite is rumored to have been located on land now owned by Wally Freis. Mr. Freis stated that he has found close to one hundred spear heads and arrow heads on his land.

Further east on Fischer Creek flood plain, approximately a quarter of a mile from Lake Michigan, on section 15 of the Town of Centerville, a solitary Indian burial mound was found on the John Mill farm. The mound was built entirely of yellow sand and was seven feet high and forty-five feet in circumference. When it was explored, seven skeletons were found, all in a sitting position at depths of one and one-half feet to about five feet. A wedge-shaped copper ax and a slate gorget were found in the mound. The bones were re-interred, but subsequently carried off by unknown parties.

THE INDIAN SCARE

On September 2, 1862, the residents of northeastern Wisconsin were rudely awakened by cries that the Indians were coming. Messengers from all parts of the county announced that the Indians were burning and murdering everything in their path.

For the next two days, the roads were crowded with ox carts pulling wagons full of women and children, fleeing to Manitowoc and Sheboygan for safety. The residents of the Town of Centerville barricaded the women and children on one of the piers at Hika Bay. Common sense prevailed however, as they considered the fact that the Indians might set fire to the approach and the women and children would find themselves between the "devil and the deep sea." They were then taken to Sheboygan for safety.

After several days without any sign of the Indians, everyone returned to their homes. Later it was decided that the rumor of the Indian raid was the work of Copperheads, or southern sympathizers, to prevent enlistment at a time when they were sorely needed. The entire alarm was really unfounded, for at that time there were only a few hundred peaceable Indians left in this part of Wisconsin.