Early Days in Two Rivers, Wisconsin

CHAPTER I.

A PIONEER'S STORY.

Now that the old settlers are rapidly passing away, the events that occurred in the earlier history of this city will soon be forgotten unless some steps are taken to preserve some of the more important events that transpired years ago.

What was it that caused these pioneers of the early days to leave the more civilized centers of the east, and the older civilization of the old world, to come to this western country, an unbroken wilderness—where nature still reigned supreme, and the wandering Indians were the only inhabitants? What inducement in particular did this community hold forth? Why did the early settlers come to Two Rivers? This is what particularly interests the descendants of these early settlers or the student in his researches.

In order to get at some of these facts, and the early history of Two Rivers, the writer approached Mr. George Hallauer, of this city, who probably enjoys the distinction of being at the present time one of the oldest and earliest settlers of this city. Mr. Hallauer—although in his 84th year—bears his years well, is still hale and hearty, and his recollections of events closely associated with the early history of Two Rivers, are vivid and interesting. In speaking of the events of his life, he began by saying that he was born in Baden, Germany, March 10th, 1824, and grew to manhood there. In 1848 he enlisted his services in behalf of the revolutionists in that country under Franz Siegel (who later dis-
tungished himself in our Civil War). The defeat of the revolutionists made it necessary for those having taken part in it to flee, or take the consequences. He, therefore, decided to leave his native land at once, and hastily gathering up such belongings as he could readily carry, together with $200.00 in cash, started for the port of Antwerp, in July, 1848, where he embarked for New York on the sailing vessel, Clothilda, the fare being $100.00 without meals. Each passenger, of whom there were 250 on board, mostly immigrants, were obliged to take along enough provisions to last during the voyage, as well as the necessary cooking utensils, and bedding.

A few days after leaving Antwerp a terrific storm was encountered, and for a time the ship appeared to be unable to weather it. The masts were broken off during the gale, and the passengers were obliged to man the pumps, and assist the sailors. Fortunately assistance came in time, and they were towed to Plymouth, England. After waiting five weeks for repairs, they proceeded to New York, where they landed after an interval of 105 days since leaving Antwerp. Allowing for the five weeks, or 35 days spent in Plymouth, the ocean voyage required 70 days, or over two months. Part of the time he says they were on short rations owing to the length of the voyage.

On arriving at New York, he, with a friend by the name of John Leabinger, met an old friend of Leabinger's by the name of Charles Eigeldinger, who told them to go West. He told them of a brother of his who had settled on a farm near Two Rivers, and who had written him that the country was ideal, land good and cheap—the price being $1.25 an acre. Mr. Hallauer and his friend, Mr. Leabinger, having no relatives in America, no definite location in mind, and no means except $100.00 in funds between them, decided to take Mr. Eigeldinger's advice and come to Two Rivers, Wisconsin, as they thought they could no doubt secure employment of
some kind and later purchase a farm. Therefore in the fore-
part of December, 1848, they left New York for Albany by
boat on the Hudson River, thence by train to Buffalo, and
steamboat to Milwaukee. After tarrying in Milwaukee four
or five days—which was then a comparatively small place—
y they started for Two Rivers on foot, as there was no train
or boat line running up here. Lake navigation had closed,
the boat they came on being the last boat to make Milwaukee
for the season. From Milwaukee to Port Washington a
corduroy road had been constructed through dense woods,
mostly hardwoods. The first day they only traveled about
12 or 15 miles, and stayed over night with a fisherman who
had a small shanty near the lake. Arriving at Port Wash-
ington the next day they were obliged to follow the beach,
as there was no trail or road to take. They reached She-
boygan that night, where there was then a small settlement.
The following day they arrived at Manitowoc, and stopped
with a party by the name of George Dusold.

The trip from Milwaukee to Manitowoc was uneventful,
he says, except that all streams had to be crossed either by
swimming or wading, and as the month of December was
well advanced, the water was rather chilly. No Indians were
met on the way, although several tribes were still living in
this section.

The following day he and his friend made their way to
Two Rivers, and beheld for the first time the locality that
was to be the home of Mr. Hallauer for the balance of his
life. He secured lodgings with Sebastian Boldus, who con-
ducted a hotel on the site where Mr. Jno. Schrade now resides,
on Main Street, and obtained employment at once as a wood
chopper with H. H. Smith & Co.

The above narrative relating the experience of one of the
early settlers here was written up solely for the reason that
the experiences and method of making the journey, impres-
sions and incidents en route, were a type of what a journey in those days to this country was, and is typical of what the first settlers who came from over the seas experienced from the time they left their native land until they arrived here and became some of the first settlers.