The History of Edgar

In the year 1889, the Milwaukee Lake Shore and Western Railroad Company staked out a road to be built between Wausau and Marshfield. Most of the land was owned by the railroad at this time.

First came the choppers, sawyers and swampers to chop out the right of way that had previously been staked out by the surveyors. They saved the heaviest timber for ties while the rest was burned. Next, the crew with scrapers pulled by teams of oxen and horses cut down the elevations and filled in the depressions. They were assisted by men with shovels. An engine pulling the necessary supplies slowly followed the workers up over the new roads.

Another train carrying gravel from Rib River followed, depositing its contents along each side of the road while a crew filled in the roadbed. Lastly, the ties were laid down and the rails of steel were hammered down.

“The forest through which this railroad was built was very dense timber of every description; inhabited only by wild animals.” In the midst of this forest about 17 miles from Wausau was a little stream called Scotch Creek. Along the Scotch Creek, animal tracks of every size and formation were found plentiful on the muddy banks. There were wildcats, lynx, bears, fox, deer and even wolves, besides a number of smaller animals. One of the men employed at setting stakes for the railroad, spoke of his opinion that this spot would be a nice place to start a little village. “It would be near the railroad and about halfway between two large cities.” (Wausau and Marshfield). The rest agreed with him and immediately called the place Edgar in honor of him who first suggested the plan and so began the Village of Edgar.

Is this really how it all began? The earliest documentation on Edgar is from the year 1855. In that year Private Moses Downey was granted a 160 acre plot of land for services performed. It was given to him for service in Captain Gibson's Company, Maine Militia, North Eastern Frontier Disturbance. Private Downey assigned this land to a Mr. Isaac Sweetzer. The reason for this transaction is unknown. Mr. Sweetzer of Boston, Massachusetts, died August 15, 1887. His heirs, all from Boston, sold the land to Samuel Quaw for $1,000. This land became part of the Quaw Lumber Company and was sold to Alfred Carey in 1891. Carey employed a surveyor who mapped out the “Original Plat of Edgar,” dated July 25, 1891. Carey had a good friend by the name of Charles Edgar of the Mortenson and Edgar Lumber Company, Wausau. He is said to have named his plat after his good friend Charles Edgar.

Another version is that Edgar is in the wrong place. It was originally meant to be at the old railroad crossing on County Highway N, in the area where Tom Mroczenski now resides (W224 Hwy N). The Quaw Lumber Company drew business from the farmers clearing land to homestead so the village sprouted around the sawmill. Yet another scenario says Edgar was named after an official of the M.L. and W. Railroad Company named William Edgar. Is it possible there were several people by the name of Edgar in the area at the time? This is highly unlikely, but in all fairness, it seems right to print all the versions of the beginning of the Village of Edgar. In any small community facts and stories intermingle to form the legends that are also a part of our history.

A lumbering crew under the leadership of a man named Sam Quaw was looking for a place to build a sawmill in order to cut up timber for the larger concerns in Wausau.
Above: About 1905-08. Anton (Tony) Stencil, 1891 - , and Peter Wagner, 1872-1953, on water hauling tank used to make ice logging roads. Closing sale was on at the Philip Meyer store and harness shop. Now the site of the Leppia Bldg. occupied and owned by Reynold Linder. Building to the right was the Pivernitz Wagon and Sleigh making ship, now the site of the Berg's Garage. Below: About 1910, railroad cars loaded with pulp wood at Edgar. Mike Schill was the buyer and shipper. Man on left is Peter Pestien. Man to right is unknown. The four Pestien girls with the dog are: Meta (Patterson), Emma, Nellie (Boder) and Irma.
Above: An unidentified teamster with a load of milled boards stopped in front of the William Krueger Saloon, 1895-97, now Shimmel’s Tavern. Center: Edgar’s second railroad depot, 1895-99. (First depot was only a small shack). This building was destroyed by fire in 1920-21, when the last Edgar Depot was built. The water tower was moved about halfway between Edgar and Marathon. Below: This was one of a few hand made bricks, made either by the Wilhelm Schmidt brick yard or by the J. D. Pradt brick yard. The latter was situated west of Edgar’s Main Street. This brick is now owned by the Shortner family.
and other cities. He and George Gumaer came from Wausau in 1889 to build a sawmill in Edgar.

When they arrived, the railroad had been staked out but the rails had not been laid down this far. Upon their arrival, they discovered an old logging camp. It had been run by a man named Henry Gablein who logged down all the pine in the area the previous year (1888). He logged for a man named Bob Freeman. They proceeded to build a sawmill near the camp using the old camp as a boarding house for several years. This was the first building to be erected in Edgar.

In February 1890, they commenced operations in the new mill, having brought most of their men along from Wausau. This mill was located on the south side of Redwood Street where the Edgar IGA and ConAgra building stand today.

This was now the second industry in Edgar, the first being a stave factory. The stave factory began operations in the deep woods in 1885. It was located on a tributary of Scotch Creek where Mike and Mary's tavern is today. They operated in the woods (no buildings) making barrel staves which were shipped to Wausau by teams of horses.

“A brick yard (just a one horse affair)” was in operation about 1888. Its buildings were only a few blocks from the mill, but it belonged to the Town of Cassel until the annexation in 1898. Bill Schmidt was the owner of it. Later, Thomas Hill became the
owner, and it operated until 1913. At one time, about 1910, the brick factory employed 15 men and produced about 2 million bricks per year. The Corner Mart is now located at that site, just north of the bridge.

A small depot (actually a boxcar!) was erected in 1890. The first train came through Edgar on September 11, 1891. Jay Anderson was the first agent. "He had his sleeping quarters in the depot and took his meals at the Lumber Company’s boarding house." He served as the agent for many years.

The days were often long for the depot agent and sometimes not very busy. Upon several occasions his friends would drop in, bringing beer along and they would pass the time away drinking. It was against company policy to have intoxicating liquors on the premises. They should have been forbidden by the agent, but he sometimes did have a few beers with them.

The railroad company usually had detectives working continually from one end of the line to the other. Often, they came in disguise. "One day three tramps arrived in Edgar and loitered around the depot all day. They got some beer and sat around eating, drinking, smoking and talking until it finally got on Mr. Anderson's nerves. He told the tramps to move along, but they did not listen."

In the evening, he called the marshal and asked him to lock them up for the night. When their supper was brought to them, one of the men asked the marshal what they were run in for. The marshal said he did not really know, but the depot agent didn't want them loitering around anymore. He had ordered the marshal to lock them up. The man told the marshal the depot agent had to apologize or he would be sorry. He then produced a star and revealed his true identity as a railroad detective sent to check out the depot. He also saw the agent get beer into the depot that afternoon.

The marshal relayed the message to Mr. Anderson, but he would not listen. He said he would never humble himself to apologize to a low-down tramp. Again the marshal warned him that one of the tramps was a railroad detective.

The next morning, after breakfast, the three tramps were brought before Judge Barrett who imposed a fine. Either pay $25, spend 30 days in jail, or leave town within 15 minutes. They chose the final option. The marshal walked with them toward the depot. He again appealed to the agent to apologize. The agent still refused. As the three tramps walked up the tracks the one turned and said "Good-bye Mr. Anderson, I don't think we'll meet here again."

The next day, two well-dressed men arrived with the train. One carried a bunch of keys. He went right up to the office and unlocked the door. He looked over the rows of tickets, asked for the express money and told Mr. Anderson he was released for 90 days and this man will take your place. Anderson was excited and ran over to the saloon to tell everyone about the great injustice done him. The marshal, also there, and said he had been warned several times but refused to listen. Under these circumstances our first depot agent left town.

Fred Schulz (the first railroad section boss) built the first house in the spring of the year 1891.

The first grocery store was also built that year by a young man named Rufus Manson. He had previously been a Marathon County Sheriff. "Mr. Manson roomed right in his store, climbing up a ladder at the side of his building to the attic which served as his sleeping quarters. He sold this store to a man named Cardinal. A small part of it was arranged to be used as the first Post Office. Mr. Gumaer was its first postmaster, but Cardinal was the clerk who did all the business in connection with his store."

In the early days, the Post Office jumped all over town. Postmasters were appointed and whoever was in the good graces of the newly elected officials at the time got the
job. Another interesting note is that envelopes were stamped on the front with the date, time and city in which they were posted. Upon arrival at their destination they were stamped on the back with the city and date of arrival.

This store was located on the northeast corner of 4th Avenue and Redwood Street. For many years Ottoway and Paeske had a hardware store here. Later it became Schmidt’s Plumbing and Heating. In 1976 the Edgar Lanes were built at this location.

That fall, the first saloon was also built. Christ Schneider was the proprietor of it. The place later became August Dargee’s Tavern, then it became known as Farmer’s Home and was owned by Charles Rifleman. It is now known as the Ringle Apartments.

Among the laborers at the new mill was a young man named Henri Petri. Petri bought a lot one block north of the mill. “Whenever pay day came, he took his wages out in lumber and built up a small house.” This was the second house in Edgar. In October 1891, he brought his wife to their new home in the wilderness. This was the first family to reside in Edgar. Their daughter, Bertha was the first white baby, with the only other children being part of the Indian families that occasionally migrated through the area.

That same year, Henry Petri became the constable and was also appointed night watch, an office he held for the next ten years. Whether he was elected at a town meeting or was appointed by Marathon County or the Lumber Company is unclear, as there are no village board records before the year 1898.

Fires were a great threat to the growing village and many of the early buildings were replaced by the brick structures we see today.

In 1892, August Tegge built a saloon and boarding house. It was called Edgar House or Tegge Hotel. The original building was replaced by a brick structure in 1901. There was a large dance hall on the second floor complete with a stage for live performances. This building also contained living quarters and a Fair Store run by Shepman and Buntman. This is the present location of our village hall on the corner of 3rd and Redwood streets.

Mr. Winter built a dry goods store and Julius Marquardt erected a blacksmith shop the same year.

The first school house was built in 1893 at a cost of $500. Paul G. Miller taught the first six month term in 1894. By 1898 the little school house was too small to accommodate Edgar and the surrounding community because the town was growing so fast. An old town hall was purchased from Town of Cassel and moved here. The buildings were connected by an enclosed hallway. Myra Rivers became the first principal and Libbie Pivernetz taught the primary grades. Surrounding the school house was still dense forest. The children had a favorite windfall that served as a teeter-totter.

The first school house is now the home of George Fergot (119 N 4th Ave.). The
Above: Edgar's first saloon and boarding house built in 1891. It was operated by Christ Schneider, brother of Gust. In 1894 it was run by Mr. H. Brehm, and later by Charles Rifeiman who named it the "Farmers Home." This building was later owned and used by Ervin Ringle for apartments. Below: Picture taken about 1897 by Anton J. Cherney, teacher. Edgar's first school building (later the George Fergot residence) on Fourth Avenue. The first class was started in 1893. Only a few can still be recognized, namely: 1 Ella Zepp, 2 Mrs. Rivers (teacher), 3 Bertha Zepp, 4 Edna DeLong, 10 Fred Luedtke, 12 Fred Lierman, 13 Frank Kratohvil (with drum), 20 Emma Helm, 29 Otto Tegge, 30 August Petri, 32 Ray Best, 33 Joe Strasser, 38 William Lierman, 41 Anna Lierman (Drengler), 42 Pauline Weinkauf and 44 Gustie Zepp.
addition was moved north several blocks and converted to a home by Paul Speigel. Today the Russ Berens family resides there (327 N 4th Ave.).

St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church was built in 1893 on the corner of 2nd and Maple near our present school garage. The congregation met every two weeks to hear the gospel and sermon delivered by Rev. Karl Schmitz from Town of Wien. Their cemetery was located in the area of the present EHS east gymnasium. This was the first church in Edgar.

The Acorn House was built by August Martin in 1893. By 1899 this building was on its fourth owner, Mike Schill. Next to the building to the north was a meat market and livery stable. Under Schill’s management the first bowling alley was added on the north side where the meat market had been. It became known as the Northwestern Hotel. Other owners were William Krueger, John Socho, Herman Pelatzie and then Albert (Shimmel) Pelatzie. Under Shimmel’s management some of the best hamburgers in Marathon County were served. Today it is DJ’s Place owned by Ed and Jill Mielke.

The Modern Woodmen of America erected a hall early in this decade. At this time they held a dance every Friday night. Some of the early picnics were held there. According to Village Board minutes, “C.D. Rifleman procured permission from the Village Board to have his saloon license moved to the M.W. Park from 9 am - 5 pm on July 4, 1899.” Early annexation meetings between Edgar and the Townships of Cassel and Wien were also held there.

During 1917 this hall and other nearby land was purchased by the village. A large brick structure known as “The Old Village Hall” replaced it. This structure was sold to Edward Wong in 1993 for $8.00 with the stipulation it retain its historical looks and atmosphere. It also must be renovated by one year from the purchase date. His intention was to manufacture ginseng liquor on the first floor with living quarters above. Things didn’t work out so the village pursued and got the property back. In 1995 Susan Weinschenk obtained the property for the outstanding debts. The lower level has been extensively renovated and is now the home of Weinschenk Consulting Group.

About 1893, The Menasha Wooden Ware Company expanded the old stave factory in
the woods. This business operated in Edgar for many years. Once a month a Mr. Bellvue came from Menasha with the payroll. On one trip he noticed piles of staves that hadn't been shipped. He reported this to his superintendent. The next day an agent arrived to check out the situation. He discovered Mr. Kandler, the foreman, was attending more business in the nearby saloon than in the factory. By noon, railroad cars arrived and all the staves and equipment were hauled out. So ended Edgar's first industry.

1894-96 brought a rash of building in Edgar. John Vollenweider came from Wausau and built the first meat market on the corner of 4th and Beech Street. They had two children, so young Bertha (now age 3) had her first playmates. Business was slow so Mrs. Vollenweider tended the shop and Mr. Vollenweider worked in the mill.

A hardware store was built by A.W. Puchner on the northwest corner of Beech and 3rd Avenue with living quarters above. In the mid-forties a child could Christmas shop there with a dollar and still have change. A box of metal icicles in pink, blue, green and gold was 49 cents. A puzzle for the family cost 29 cents. Puchner's started the first car dealership here (Ford) in 1913. After Puchner retired in the fifties Bob Schoeder took over the dealership. The Ford garage was behind Berg Company in what later became the Joe Newman garage. Larry Thompson had his Plumbing and Heating business here for many years. The original building was razed in 1972 and now is the site of the Edgar Fire Department.
A thriving village needs a doctor and one arrived in 1896. Dr. Zepp had his office and his wife and daughter ran a millinery shop where B.S.'s Bar and Grill is today. The original building burned down and for many years Keefe's Tavern was located there. Along with a doctor, an undertaker was needed in the new settlement. Casper Wagner and Sons came from New Holstein in 1896. They built a large structure on the south west corner of Beech and 3rd Avenue.

Casper sold musical instruments, furniture and household items; plus, he did undertaking. His building also contained Hileson Bros. store and poolroom run by Mike Bowe. Upstairs were apartments and living quarters for his family.

This building, at one time, housed a watch shop, canteen for young people, a beauty parlor, post office, funeral home, and bus depot among other things. Today this site is a Hardware Hank store with living quarters above, owned by Milton Weller.

About the same time, C. C. DeLong and S.B. Roberts bought out the Winter Dry Goods Store. At first, Mr. Roberts ran the store while Mr. DeLong finished his term as city clerk in Three Lakes. This business sold dry goods, groceries, flour and feed. In 1900 they built a new brick store that still stands today. It is Starks Floral on Redwood Street. Previously, it had been the Co-op Grocery and Locker Plant and the Barrett and Ramaker Grocery. It once contained locker bins you could rent for frozen food before the era of home freezers.

There was also another sawmill erected about 1894 owned by a Mr. Hoennis. Later, the Wausau Lumber Company bought it. After operating for several years in Edgar, it
was moved to Rib Falls. Its location was to the east of Redwood Street.

The old box car was replaced by a new depot in 1895. This building was destroyed by fire and another depot replaced it in 1920.

On the north east corner of 3rd and Beech Street, Philip Meyer built a home and general store. He also ran a shoe repair and harness shop there. Later a Mr. Rose operated a saloon on the corner of this building.

Julius Werner learned the harness trade under Philip Meyer's direction and then started his own harness shop on the north east corner of Maple and Third.

With the rapid growth of the village, C.C. Barrett, C.C. DeLong, John Kandler, Thomas Hill, Julius Marquardt, Philip Meyer, A.C. Wagner and A.W. Puchner started in motion the process of incorporation for the village of Edgar. They were represented by attorney Wm. N. Allen.

Main Street was the dividing line between the townships of Cassel and Wien. A survey and map had to be drawn of the area.

Above: DeLong & Roberts Store, circa 1910, Jack Kress, manager. Below: The A.C. Wagner Building, circa 1900, to the left is the Hilesen Bros. store & pool room, Mike Boue operator. Signs read Doughnuts, Buns, Cookies, Cigars & Candy. Right side has six clocks on display in the window, also a poster advertising "Uncle Tom's Cabin".
Mail sacks are ready for delivery. At the time Edgar had eight passenger trains daily.

Village of Edgar
Seal

to be incorporated in the village. A census was also taken with a population total of 348. This information was included in the original application dated April 29, 1898. After this was accomplished, a notice of election had to be placed in four prominent places in the area concerned. These notices were posted at the post office, railroad depot, C.C. Delong Store and the A.W. Puchner Hardware Store. The posting was from May 7 until June 17, 1898 and included the census and a map of the territory to be annexed.

The election took place July 26, 1898. A total of 77 people voted, with 57 for and 20 against incorporation. The official decree of incorporation took place in Marathon County Court. W.C. Silverthorn was the presiding judge. The incorporation was recorded by Edw. C. Krillow, Register of Deeds, July 29, 1898 at 10:00 am.

This is a very simplified form of the incorporation process. Each step had to be accompanied by the sworn statements of the individuals involved in the process. This included the survey, census, posting of election notices, actual election and results of the election.

The next big step for the founding fathers was establishing the village government. C.C. Delong became the first president. Other board members included A.W. Puchner, Peter Gappa, Phillip Meyer, Julius Marquardt, John Kandler, Mike Bowe and Dan Weinkauf. C.C. Barrett became the Justice of the Peace. Frank Kraus, the assessor and Wm Zimmerman became Marshal and Street Commissioner.

The first recorded minutes on record date back to September 23, 1898. The board established the rules by which it would be governed, appointed commissions and set about drafting village ordinances.

The first village ordinance drafted, established the village seal which is still in use today. Other ordinances included keeping law and order; the penning of all cattle, sheep, goats, mules, horses, etc.; establishing fees for peddler, circus and other traveling entertainment groups; and taking care of the poor in the village. It is also rather interesting to note Ordinance #9 established that saloons were to be closed between the hours of 11:00 pm to 4:00 am unless they received special permission from the board of trustees. Today this ordinance might raise a few eyebrows but it was very practical back then. The saloons were also boarding houses and some of the mills ran two shifts. In order for the workers to be able to obtain their meals the 4:00 am to 11:00 pm hours were necessary.

Another big item on their agenda was to reach a settlement with the townships of Cassel and Wien for the land acquired by the
village. These settlements included tax levies, road maintenance agreements and school districts. Part of the settlement between Wien and Edgar included a road grader.

Reading through the early minutes and ordinances, it soon becomes apparent what a struggle it was to maintain a healthy, clean and safe environment and to maintain law and order in the growing village. All areas adjacent to streets were required to build sidewalks at their own expense or if the village built them, the cost was added to their tax levy. This was for safety as the streets were dirt and turned to a soupy mire in any heavy rainfall.

Anyone who gets nostalgic for the “good old days” when they see the first snowfall, should keep in mind that the village made the sidewalk resolution on January 10, 1900. The only difference in the resolution of then and now was if the marshal didn’t get the village sidewalks clean, the cost of such was deducted from his wages. Back then there were plank boardwalks and light-weight shovels and snow blowers were nonexistent. Those were the “good old days”!

Another interesting resolution concerned the children of Edgar. Ordinance #29 stated that no boy or girl could be abroad the streets of Edgar after 8:00 pm in winter and 9:00 pm in summer. For the first offense they received a warning and were delivered to their parents. For the second offense they could receive a $1.00 fine and be put in jail for up to ten days. The fire bell was rung as a curfew at these hours. The marshal received $2.00 per month to ring the curfew and enforce this law. The exception to the rule was if they were with someone of legal age or were on an errand for their parents, guardian or employer. Although today this seems harsh, the ordinance was probably enacted more for the protection of the children than for disciplinary reasons.

Two other ordinances were enacted just previous to the curfew. Ordinance #25 was a very lengthy and precisely worded morality resolution dealing with some very bawdy and seedy street life in the village during this era. Ordinance #26 dealt with transient groups that passed through town such as peddlers, gypsy caravans, medicine and entertainment shows. Many of these groups were fronts for more lucrative and interesting entertainment.

Another interesting resolution (#10, January 1900) set the fine for breaking a village ordinance at $5.00. Any citizen who swore out a warrant for such and the person was convicted received half the fine. This apparently became a lucrative business for some. Less than five months later a new ordinance (#15, April 1900) reduced the reward to one quarter of the fine.

According to old diary accounts, court cases were many and a great source of entertainment for those free to attend. The trials were held in the brickyard.

There was a Mr. O. back then who was a bit of a town character. He let his pigs run free and they managed to get into a farmer’s grain field destroying a large portion of it. The farmer set his dogs after the pigs. One was quite badly injured having been bitten on the ear and on its back near the tail. Mr. O. sued the farmer for molesting his pigs. When the lawyer asked “where the pigs were bitten,” he replied, “on the ‘ohr’ and behind the tail.” Mr. O. lost the case because his pigs should have been penned.

Another case involved two men who were always at cross-purposes. They sued each other at least once a week, sometimes more often. Their wives even got into the act and occasionally sued each other. Then Gentleman A noticed his fine was always $10.00 whereas Gentleman B only paid $5.00. He asked the constable about it and was told since he would plead “not guilty” the cost of witnesses brought the fee up to $10.00. The
next time he was in court every time the judge asked him a question he said "guilty, will pay $5.00." When the case was over he said he'd sue until Gentleman B went bankrupt. Well, it seems Gentleman A got into a cattle deal that cost him several hundred dollars. When the case was finished he told the constable, "now I must quit or I'll go bankrupt." He never had another lawsuit after that.

There was also a law from before incorporation stating that no person could walk on the street from the Northwestern Hotel (Cassel) to the Tegge Hotel (Wien) or vice versa. Both saloon keepers were in agreement with this law. The reasons for it are anyone's guess.

It seems Mr. O's son was caught breaking this law. He was kicked in the pants back across the street. The next day there was a lawsuit and the kicker paid the $5.00 fine.

There is another old tale involving this law. A Mr. H. took bets at Tegge Hotel that he could get to the Northwestern without walking on the street. This seemed like a sure-fire bet and he collected lots of money. After collecting the bets he climbed up to the telegraph pole and wire-walked across the street. Technically he had not walked on the street. The best part was that no one could follow and help him spend his winnings!

Occasionally there were serious criminals apprehended in Edgar. This caused a real hardship on the constable's family. If they needed to be kept overnight they were housed and fed at the constable's residence. Sometimes they tried to escape, which added to the fear and danger. A jail was definitely needed in the village. May 1899 saw the purchase of a lot to build a village hall and lock-up. Its location was Lot 8 Block 10 east of Berg Company on Beech Street. This building was 20 x 28 and included two jail cells. The new village hall was furnished with one dozen chairs, two tables and one lamp.

A special meeting was called by the village board on September 23, 1899 regarding fire protection. They voted to purchase a gasoline fire engine, a hose cart and 500 feet of hose. In September, they voted to build an engine house onto the new village hall. By the October 31st meeting the engine had arrived from Wateron Engine Works Co., was inspected, tested and accepted. The total cost of $1,175.02. They paid $200.00 down and the balance was to be paid in three yearly installments with a 6% interest rate. This money was to be taken from the saloon license fund or if
they were short the balance was to be added to the property taxes. On January 20, 1900 a special meeting was called at which all agreed to purchase a fire bell for $18.00. This is the same bell that rang for curfew. Today, it has a special place of honor outside the Fire Hall. The constitution and by-laws of the Edgar Volunteer Fire Department were accepted and approved on March 31, 1900.

Edgar was still growing at a rapid pace. William Kraus, who owned a 157 acre farm north of Maple Street, donated an acre of land for a Catholic Church. St. John the Baptist Church was built in 1899 at the intersection of 4th and Maple. Later, Mr. Kraus sold his farm to Breutzer and Rosenberry Real Estate of Wausau. They wanted to extend 4th Avenue to the north and lay out lots to expand the village. They agreed to donate an acre of land in exchange for opening the street. The church was then moved to its present site.

St. Paul's German Evangelical Church was built in 1900. After the congregation disbanded it was purchased by the First Presbyterian Church which held services there for many years. Now it is known as Sanctimonious Glenn's Antique and Toy Shop on 3rd Avenue.

The First Presbyterian Church was built in 1901 north of the school house on 4th Avenue. When the congregation moved to 3rd Avenue, the old church was relocated on Thomas Hill Road and used as a village garage.

Shortly after the church was built on the north, the south side of the school house was cleared. A small grocery store was built by Lutz and Classen. Several years later Ed Phrang bought out Lutz's share and later Classen's share. He operated his store on the north east corner of 4th Avenue and Beech Street until his death. This building is still standing and is a rental apartment.

A cemetery was acquired in July 1890 when the board voted to purchase two acres of land from William Welsh for $175. It was south of and adjacent to the Catholic Cemetery. Lots sold for $5.00. The earliest date of birth of anyone to be buried in the Edgar Cemetery is believed to be Mrs. Carolina Paul, born 1815, died 1901. Her pioneer spirit lives on in the genes of her great granddaughter and family, Mrs. Jan Lipinski (206 East Redwood). A Mrs. Simon age 89 was the first person buried in the Catholic Cemetery. Her son was the local carpenter. She died May 9, 1901.

The earliest recorded death in the Edgar Cemetery was Bridget Bowe 1842-1887. She was originally buried in Birnamwood and was moved here by her family after the cemetery was established.

Anna Shortner was a World War I nurse who believed in good nutrition and clean living. Her goal in life was to reach 100 years of age and still be mentally alert. On her 100th birthday (May 31, 1986) she began to plan her funeral. She died on December 6, 1986, having reached her goal.

As amazing as Anna's story may be, there is one spry little lady who reached the age of 106. Josephine Hall enjoyed putting puzzles together and was still crocheting until she was 105. Until the day of her death, June 28, 1996, she could read a clock across the room without the aid of her glasses. She is believed to have had the greatest longevity of anyone buried in the Edgar Cemetery.

A franchise was granted to Marathon County Telephone Company in October 1900 to maintain and operate a telephone system in Edgar. This was the first exchange between Wausau and Marshfield, long before telephones were established in the surrounding communities. The exchange was located in the William Bier home. Mrs. Sophia Bier managed the exchange for 45 years. Her husband William was the first barber in Edgar and also had his shop in their home. According to Mrs. Bier, phone calls were mostly of a social nature in the first 10-15 years. Later they became primarily business calls and much briefer in length. At that time, their home was surrounded by woods. Today it is rental prop-
shoemaking shop and an excelsior plant. There was also a notice that Edgar could have free rural mail delivery whenever they were ready for it. When Rural Free Delivery was inaugurated in 1896 many farmers regarded the mailman as a federal interloper and complained he deprived them of an excuse for going to town. It took until 1902 before Allie Zimmerman became the first rural mail carrier for the Edgar area.

In the summer of 1901, Edgar built a brick schoolhouse at a cost of $8,000.00. By 1908, they added a two room addition and in 1909 they were licensed to establish a four year free high school course. There were eight members in the first graduating class of 1911. Some students from outside the district paid tuition and boarded in Edgar during the school term. It was considered one of the best schools in Marathon County. Two school principals left this system to become County Supervisor of Schools. The total school enrollment at this time was 250 students in K-12 (yes folks—there was a kindergarten back then, according to the "History of Marathon County" by Judge Marchetti.)

W.W. Albers, of Wausau, owned the first pharmacy in Edgar (1900). Wm. Schmidt operated the business for him until Frank Tomkiewicz bought it in 1902. Its location was the Cherney building on Third Avenue.

September 1903 bought the first big disaster to the village. It rained steadily all evening. When A.C. Wagner and the Lutheran minister got off the late train, they were surprised to step into water that
reached their knees. Toward morning there was a cloudburst west of the depot. It was so intense it washed out the railroad bed and moved some of the tracks. Gust Fiend, the tallest man in town (over six feet) was tending the fire in the brick kiln. As the water reached the tops of his boots, he looked out the window and heard a big crash. The main bridge had turned and washed downstream. He fled for his life!

Most of the people north of the creek were unaware of the disaster until they awoke to the cries for help coming from the creek area. They quickly built rafts and rescued the people whose homes were flooded.

The lumber company had some pigs in a pen by their boarding house. They floated over the top of the fence. Mr. Beits, the proprietor, saw them swimming by and grabbed them by the ears. Not knowing what to do with them, he locked them in the pantry. There were also some cattle in the stockyards by the depot unable to swim over the fence. A raft was made by lashing some ties together and the cattle were released and chased to higher ground. The water extended for several blocks and most of the homes south of the creek were flooded.

It was after this flood that the bridge abutments were raised and the iron bridge was built. There were serious floods in 1914 and 1922, but the bridge held.

In those days, all businesses were on the north side of Scotch Creek. There was a Mr. Herman Fleishman, who lived on the south side of town. Everyday he crossed the creek to do his business. He liked to imibe quite heavily at times. One day on his return home as he gazed at the creek he accidentally toppled in. Being wet already he swam to the other side. Apparently some of the Lumber Company employees saw this event happen. The next day when they asked him about it, he replied, “I fell in the creek in Edgar and came out in Brooklyn.” The name has remained ever since.

There were two special park areas in the early days. One was across from the cemetery on land owned by John Andrews. This was known as PicNic Grounds. The other area, then called “the grove,” was purchased...
The new Brooklyn Bridge.

by the village in 1903. They spent $500 for five acres of land that we now call Oak Street Park. In 1910, $1,200 was allocated by the board to build a 50 x 60 foot pavilion to be used for dances, entertainment, socials, sewing circles or any other outside gathering or celebration. Later a stage was built and a refreshment stand added. None of these original structures remain today.

What was life like back then? According to newspaper accounts by C.C. DeLong and A.W. Puchner: in the early days when the forests were still here, deer and wild game roamed through the streets of town. The streets were a quagmire in spring and the wet seasons. There were sinkholes and stumps 4.5 feet across in the middle of the streets. These had to be blasted out before the streets were paved.

Most of Edgar was a swamp. Jules Werner recalled, whenever you crossed the block from Maple to Birch, you ran the risk of being in muck up to your knees if you fell off a clump.

C.C. DeLong also recalled an acute shortage of cash. You took your pay in butter, eggs and forest products. Cash settlements were made usually once a year in the late fall before taxes were due.

The family larder was often supplemented by wild game and fish. There were few hunting or fishing regulations then.

The saloon-boarding houses were the domain of the men. They met there to eat, conduct business and socialize. Often this led to pranks being played on each other. In one instance, Tom Hill over-imbibed and passed out. His friends laid him out in his brick yard office. Mr. Wagner got the bier candles and placed them around him. When Tom began to wake up, they lit the candles, sang hymns and pretended a wake was in progress. In a similar instance involving the night foreman of the Lumber Company, they pretended he had slept and missed work for three days.

In another instance, Phillip Meyer fed the Teggee doves some peas soaked in whiskey. Mrs. Teggee caught him laughing at the poor birds toppling over as they tried to fly. She became angry and yelled at him but he couldn’t stop laughing. Then she grabbed the broom and chased him down the street. He tripped on a wagon tongue and fell in the mire. It was then her turn to laugh, her anger forgotten.

While the men were conducting their business, the women were busy with church and sewing circles. They held socials and bake sales. There was a Lyceum Society to which both men and women belonged. This group bought entertainment and current topic lectures to town. Dances were held at the Modern Woodmen Hall, Teggee’s, and for a short time Forest Heights Dance Hall.

Woodmen with a team of oxen in the town of Emmet, l-r, Jim Handrick, F.W. Kurtzweil, unknown, George Drake with saw, unknown, Bill Freeman, Frank Kafka Sr., Robert Freeman, John Harrington with snowshoes, unknown, unknown, George Kurtzweil, Frank Schnoefuss, Ernest Holtman, Joe Schara.
and Saloon on the north end of town across from The Bank of Edgar. The women sometimes did the shopping but the men paid the bills at the end of each month, or whenever.

After the Catholic church was built on Maple Street. Children were allowed to roam alone between the church, the foot bridge, and dam at the end of 4th Avenue. Wild animals were no longer a threat to their safety. They spent their summers gathering wood and weeding the garden. They picked raspberries behind the church, and elderberries by the creek. They spent many hours playing in the schoolyard and by the creek bank catching minnows. In winter they had their regular chores of hauling in wood and water, plus their schoolwork. Often they went sleigh riding down 4th Avenue and on some moonlit nights their fathers took them skating on the pond. Skating was usually a family affair. Often the pond was so crowded on Sunday there was no room to pass. Many parties involving friends or family often involved an overnight stay or an early morning moonlight walk home.

Edgar expanded rapidly, according to an August 11, 1905, village map, the population grew from 346 to 783 in seven years. The village gained many new businesses. The Blozinski Bros. built on the northwest corner of Maple and 3rd Avenue. For a short time it was a saloon then the Farmers Store. Old timers remember it as Moll’s. This landmark building is now the Edgar Cafe and rental units. Dick Luckey had his barber shop there. It also housed the post office for many years and various restaurants. Will’s Radio and T.V. occupied the former Post Office when the new building was erected.

“To the farmers surrounding Edgar belong much of the credit for the growth and progress of the village. The rural popu-

ation is composed largely of Germans and Poles, although one occasionally finds an Irish family and here and there a Bohemian. These farmers have cleared the forests and made fields of verdure. It took hard work, thrift, economy, courage and hardships to accomplish this but it has been done in less than a generation. Coming from their native countries these sturdy men and women faced the privations of the pioneer, drove the wild animals from their lairs and brought forth a great transformation. To this class of citizens belongs the credit of putting Marathon County well up in the list of agricultural counties of Wisconsin.”

The above paragraph is an excerpt from an article which appeared in the Wausau
Daily Herald on October 6, 1913 entitled "Edgar, A Thriving Village."

It was the farmer's winter logging operations that kept the sawmills running. It was their lumber, produce and stock that utilized the direct railroad line to Milwaukee, Chicago and all points between. They were the primary patrons of the blacksmiths, harness makers, sleigh and wagon maker, hardware stores and general stores. Through the farmers the need for cattle dealers, horse traders and auctioneers arose. Their needs caused the population to explode from 346 at incorporation in 1898 to 1,000 within the next 15 years.

They were active in the Edgar Advance ment Association. It was through the initial interest and investment of two farmers, August Baeseman and Gustave Herman, that a veneer factory was built to utilize the lumber in the area. Unfortunately, upon completion of the plant, they found from other manufacturers the veneer prices had dropped. They sold their building and equipment to Albert and Eugene Eary and Fred Hartig of Racine. On January 1, 1913, this company began operations producing baskets and cheese boxes. In full production they employed 75 people. They supplied 70 cheese factories with boxes and their baskets found a ready market in Chicago and other large cities. Through all the ups and downs over the years, this business has been innovative enough to survive the hard times that have beset it. Today it manufactures doll and baby furniture and houseware items and are known nation-wide as Badger Basket Company, Division of Standard Container Company.

It was also through the efforts of farmers that the Edgar Cooperative was formed in 1924 under the name of Edgar Equity Produce Company. Today, this business has combined with the Marathon Co-op to become the Rib River Valley Co-op. During the depression and dust bowl era the possibility of some lay-offs arose. The employees agreed on January 6, 1931 to take a 10 per cent pay reduction in order to ensure none of their co-workers would be jobless and without an income during those hard times. These two businesses are still in operation today as a direct result of farmers then and now.

1913 seemed to be a pinnacle in the early history of Edgar. With the rapid development of the rich agricultural land in the area, the chance of Edgar becoming a shipping point of some importance was a possibility. The former Quaw Lumber Co., now
owned by Ringle and Schill, was operating at a peak as was the Tom Hill Brick and Tile Works. Factories were needed to utilize the vast amount of hardwood in the area. Justin Means began the excelsior factory and the veneer factory had been built.

The pride of the people of the village is apparent in an old newspaper article dated October 6, 1915. Here are some excerpts from it: "Ten blocks of cement sidewalk have been laid and the main street with curb and gutter. The painters have been liberal in their application of paint and the residences and businesses are spic and span in new dresses of neatness. Many of the businesses and residences are of brick. The residence section which is not confined to any one portion of the village is well supplied with shade trees and well kept lawns, fat babies and neat and attractive housewives.

"There is a spirit of hustle to the people of Edgar. There's not a 'knocker' in town—not a drone in the hills. Such people cannot live there, as the atmosphere does not agree with them. Every man, woman and child seems to be imbued with this spirit of hustle. They realize that this is the age of progress and that in order to accomplish anything in the line of improvement they must be up and doing.

"There is a good train service on the Northwestern, there being four trains to and from Wausau daily.

"The Edgar Advancement Association has recently been organized. The membership of the society is not confined to any class of citizens but all the boosters belong to it. It has a large membership. On August 29 and 30 of this year the association had a celebration and fair—a street carnival and all that goes with it. The directors did not stop at expense, what they wanted was a good time for everybody and they had it. Cone's Military band of 20 pieces came up from Wausau and furnished the melody for the occasion. The farmers dropped their work and hitched up and took their families to the village and joined with the merchants and others in a proper celebration. They bought loads of farm produce and exhibited them in the town hall and all had a time which will be talked about for years to come. In speaking with the live wire president of the association of the event he said, "We went $250. in the hole, but, Gee Whiz! Think of the fun we had"....

"Just at present the new band has the center of the stage at Edgar. The band will have 50 pieces when it is filled out. Prof. G. D. Vincent is the director. ...A dance was given for the benefit of the new band on the evening of September 26 and the treasury was swelled by an addition of nearly one hundred dollars. Everybody was at the dance—the high school graduate was there and so was the professional man of sixty-
five; the hardware merchant and the grocer; the butcher and the blacksmith; the shoemaker and the editor; the barber and the banker; the liveryman and the hotelkeeper; the baker and the harnessmaker—everybody (the clergy excepted) turned out and gave the band a boost. Every man who had a wife had his own and there was an old-fashioned good time. The music was furnished by the brass band of Granton....

"A well equipped opera house is owned by August Tegge. The building is of brick and has ample sitting capacity...."

"...At the annual school meeting in July 1912, the voters decided to build another addition in order to obtain a suitable high school assembly room and sufficient room for grades.

"The building is now worth at least $20,000. It is a substantial, well heated, well ventilated, well lighted structure, and stands as a monument to the school spirit of the citizens of Edgar.

"Mr. J. G. Giessel has been the superintendent and principal since 1908. It has been through his efforts that the school has been placed on the accredited list of the state university. Last year there was an attendance of nearly 300 pupils, 55 of whom attended the high school and from which a class of 15 graduated last June. .... When the Edgar school board realized they needed a principal with the highest qualifications Mr. Giessel was selected from a score of applications. He has been no disappointment. With a feeling of just pride the people of Edgar refer to their public school, and it has been through the untiring efforts, the real hard grind of Mr. Giessel that the school has been brought up to its present standing—the largest in Marathon County outside the city of Wausau.

"The bank of Edgar was chartered in 1903...the bank building is owned by the stockholders and they are interested in other real estate in and around Edgar. Wm. Seim, the cashier, is a product of Wausau and through his careful management the bank has been built up so that it is recognized as one of the solid institution of that kind in Marathon County. The business men and farmers have found Mr. Seim an agreeable, accommodating and honorable business man, and he has a high standing with the people of Edgar.

"A busy place is the excelsior mill of Justin Means.... This industry gives employment to fifteen men and the mill is kept busy twelve months in the year supplying orders for excelsior, of which three kinds are
made, packing stock, wood wool and mattress stock. The timber for the mill is purchased from the farmers, and the supply is almost unlimited....

"In April 1913, Joseph Zeier and family came to Edgar...He bought the stock and fixtures of Michael Bowe. The present stock consists of a reliable line of groceries, notions and furnishing goods. Mr. Zeier has already got the Edgar spirit and is boosting for the village everyday of the week.

"A model bakery is conducted by Wm. Preuss. He came from lower Michigan....and grasping the opportunity went into business in Edgar. His shop is modern and sanitary and the appetizing morsels contained therein are tempting to those who hunger.

"F. J. Tomkiewiz is the village druggist and owns and manages one of the finest stores of that nature one could wish to see. It is fitted up in metropolitan style and the manager has a fine line of drugs with which to combat the ills and aches of the citizens. A modern soda fountain adorns a prominent portion of the store around which Cupid casts his darts at the young men and pretty girls with which the village is liberally supplied....

"The meat market of Bartell and Company is a model of neatness. The present firm bought out the business of John Kohl...and since that time have made a number of improvements to the property. They buy livestock from the farmers and also handle Chicago meats.

"A good telephone service is given by the local company....there are about 75 tele-

Above: Justin Means erected this mill in 1916. It was called the Edgar Excelsior Factory and shredded basswood logs into excelsior packing material. Later became the site of the sawmill operated by the Badger Basket Co.

Below: Frank Bauer in his machine shop on Beech St. East, circa 1912. Living quarters were on the second floor.
crats of the village will assume the responsibilities of the office. The patrons of the office will all agree in the statement that Mr. Wagner has been a competent official and has given good service.

"There is no need of going around Edgar with a lingering thirst—If you have the price. Liquor licenses are held by August Tegge, John Warosh, M. Majeski, Carl Olm, Hubert Bergs, C.D. Rifleman, John Kaas and C. H. Pelatzke.

"There are four hotels in Edgar which cater to the wants of the traveling public, be they wayfarer prince or peasant. The Forest House is conducted by C. D. Rifleman, the Northwestern by C. H. Pelatzke, The White Front by John Kaas and the Hoenisch House by Mrs. Hoenisch. The latter has no bar.

"The Northwestern Railroad Co. has an efficient agent in Charles Sharpe...Mr. Sharpe has been in the employ of the company for the past ten years. On account of the heavy shipments of farm produce, cattle, and products of factories the agent is a pretty busy man.

"Fifteen years ago E. W. Phrang...became a resident of Edgar. He is engaged in the general merchandise business, has a stock of goods that satisfies his large number of customers. He is also a town booster and feels that there is nothing too good for Edgar. Mr. Phrang is...a desirable citizen and worthy of the confidence the people place in him as a business man and a hustler.

"Of emporiums where tonsorial artists wield the blades and shears Edgar has three, one conducted by Fred Paszek, one by Frank Schroeder and one by William Bier. All are professors of the art and there is a scarcity of safety razors in a patriotic village like
Edgar. Mr. Paszek has a pool room in connection with his shop and a corner wherein he dispenses justice to unlucky ones caught in the net of Marshal Zell. In other words Fred is police justice and holds court when he has to.

"The general store formerly conducted by the Edgar Store Company is now under the management of L. H. Moll who came from Rosholt...and took over the business of the defunct company. Although a comparative stranger in Edgar Mr. Moll is getting his share of the trade and has his large store well filled with goods which appeal to the wearers of good clothes or the fancier of delicacies for the inner man.

"Dr. J. H. Koehler, veterinary surgeon and practical auctioneer, is a mighty handy man to have in a village like Edgar. He is kept about as busy as one man ought to be and have good health. When not administering to the cattle, horses, or other livestock he is looking up the latest phases in the line of auctioneering....

"Robert Werner has a dry line and he is kept from having any spare time for recreation by merchants and others who have work to be done in the way of hustling freight and other material.

"Any rags, any bottles." F. Holkowitz & Son buy anything worth buying in the line of scrap iron, hides, rubbers, etc.

"Dr. A. B. Crawford, dentist, occupies a comfortable office in the Deprato building. He came from Grand Rapids....and finds Edgar a fine place in which to practice his profession. For a number of years the doctor was captain of the Grand Rapids W.N.G. which accounts for that military bearing and reputation of being a gentleman and a soldier.

“The latest creations in millinery can be found in the establishment of Mrs. Zepp. For 17 years Mrs. Zepp has trimmed the bonnets of the ladies of Edgar. She has an able assistant in her daughter, Miss Freda.

“Dr. Harry A. Vedder is a graduate of Northwestern University Chicago. His former home was Marshfield, but he’s out hustling in a wide-awake way, coat off and sleeves up for Edgar and vicinity. He has a fine practice and is a young man of ability.

“Dr. H. H. Zaun came to Edgar from Richfield, he has been practicing since...1891. He has a lucrative practice in Edgar and vicinity. His patients speak highly of him.

“Frank J. Shortner is justice of peace, notary public, dealer in real estate and writes insurance...He is a progressive young man and is deservedly popular. He is not

married at present.

“Fred Neese has a little store near the Forest House where he sells notions and carries many useful articles. He asks no more than 25 cents for any article in his stock and sells some as low as a nickel...

“Wm. L. Wolf is casting about for a suitable building in which to open a paint shop. When he gets going his line will be carriage and automobile painting, although he has already cinched a few nice contracts for interior and exterior house work.

“Fred Passehl is the village shoemaker and he makes a speciality of hand work of the better grade.

“The Edgar Bottling Works is where Charles Tess holds forth and where he is kept busy making all grades of soft drinks. Mr. Tess has a good trade in Edgar and also does considerable business in the villages along the line.

“Frank J. Jonas has a cigar factory in Edgar and the product Cheroot finds a ready sale throughout the county and particularly in Edgar. Leading brands are the Juan Amigo, 10 cents, and Town Boost, 5 cent....

“Alfred W. Puchner, the pioneer hardware merchant, is one of the most progressive citizens within the boundary lines of the village of Edgar. Mr. Puchner has been in the hardware business for the past nineteen years. He carries a well selected stock of hardware on the shelf and heavy variety and always has what the farmers need in the line of implements. He has a fine business and has the confidence of the people with whom he has been intimately associated these many years. He is president of the Bank of Edgar, Clerk of the School Board, President of the Advancement Association and is right in the swim socially and every other way. Mr. Puchner is an Edgar booster all the way up and down and is up to snuff on the leading questions of the day and is always ready to discuss the latest, whether it be the currency question, Harry Thau’s sanity or the tango dance. He is a highly respected citizen, not only of Edgar but of Marathon County.

“The harness shop of Julius Werner is well stocked with hand and machine made harness, from a pacers’ outfit to a heavy lumber harness. He also has a well selected line of fur robes, whips, trunks, and traveling bags. Mr. Werner is a harness maker as well as a dealer having put in a number of years at the bench. He has been in his present location for the past twelve years,
having purchased the business from Philip Meyer for whom he formerly worked. He is enjoying a good trade in his line.

"The firm of Ringle and Schill owns the principal saw mill in the village. The mill was owned by the Quaw Lumber Company and has been in operation for twenty years. It has a capacity of 40,000 feet daily. The mill is not operated in the summer months as the owners have to depend on the farmers owning timber for logs. During the winter season the firm employs about fifty men and the mill is run to capacity. Mr. Ringle is the son of Mayor Ringle of Wausau and is the manager of the business. Mr. Schill is a prominent stock buyer and makes heavy shipments of cattle and hogs to the Chicago markets.

"Earl B. Crawford is the editor and publisher of the Edgar News, a weekly newspaper devoted to the interest of Edgar and the people of the surrounding country. Mr. Crawford has been sliding the lead over the copy for about two years and he is deeply interested in the welfare of the village, socially, morally and somewhat financially. He has never had any practical knowledge of the newspaper business prior to the present venture and he is apparently one who was born for the sacrifice. Mr. Crawford is bound to keep the pace in Edgar. He has just installed a gasoline engine for power purposes, has a good country newspaper press, and a Washington hand press, which now occupies a secluded place in a corner—a reminder of days of muscle development and heartaches. The editor is a strong advocate of village improvements and can always be relied upon to give forth his best efforts for the welfare of the people. He is married, has a comfortable home, a congenial wife and a high standing in the community.

"To mention Edgar and not mention Charles C. Barrett would be like leaving the dressing out of a Thanksgiving turkey. For years Mr. Barrett has been identified with the ups and downs of the village. He came to Edgar expecting to remain about two months, but by that time he had got accustomed to the pure blood, the congenial citizens and the peaceable surroundings and his months grew into years. He is engaged in the real estate business with the Edgar Land Company and also is agent for a number of insurance companies. He has been the justice of the peace for years, and has held other offices which he has always filled in an acceptable manner. Early and late he has a good word for Edgar, it’s progressive citizens, and the farmers surrounding.

"Joseph and Frank Mraz own a trim little sawmill within the village limits. They do custom sawing for the farmers and have been kept busy during the winter months. They are preparing for a good run of business the coming winter.

"Martin Keefe came over from Halder...and is now the owner and manager of the Edgar livery stables. He has sixteen good driving horses and an automobile with which to meet the demands of the public. He owns up to being Irish and wouldn’t be anything else if he could. He has a good business and is enjoying life.

"Louis Lamberg is the resident agent for the Ruder Brewing Company of Wausau. He
Buntman... A general line of merchandise is carried and the firm considers the investment in Edgar a fortunate one. Mr. Buntman came to Edgar from Marinette where he was engaged in the clothing business. Mr. Slepman is a resident of Chicago where he has a retail clothing and dry goods store.

"The hardware firm of Ottaway & Paeske, which has been in business about two years, is doing a nice business with the farmers and others who need the goods they carry. The business is managed by Arthur R. Paeske, the junior member of the firm. He has had considerable experience in the hardware business and is a young man of ability and integrity. G. D. Ottaway, his partner, is employed by the Westinghouse Electrical Company of Pittsburgh, having a responsible position with that company for a number of year.

"August Darge and Henry McCrossen are the proprietors of the Edgar Sales stable. They deal extensively in farm and draft horses.

"W. L. Becker operates a creamery and cheese factory one mile south of Edgar. He also manufactures ice cream during the summer months and his products are always in demand. At the Marshfield fair he walked off with the first prize for factory butter and there was a large field of competitors. He is rushed with orders and his factories are running to their fullest capacity.

"For a number of years a brick and tile works has been operated in Edgar where material of the finest quality is found in abundance. Thomas Hill has charge of the works and he has been very successful in the operations, as high as two million bricks.
having been made and shipped one season. Employment is given to fifteen men.

"Michael Bowe, formerly in the merchandise business but now taking life easy, has been one of the main hustlers of Edgar. He came to Edgar many years ago and has been closely identified with the general interests ever since he has claimed a residence in the village where hustling is a habit."

Edgar was a fun-loving and sports-oriented village. Besides the village band being organized, there was a Lierbranz Singing Society, a German Bank, Wagner Band, Zimmerman Band, and other local musical groups. On a large men’s group photo outside the Northwestern, Tom Hill, Jr. Made this notation: "Sonderfest Association of Bar Flys." Actually, it was a Moose and Eagle Lodge Gathering.

The first Edgar baseball team was organized in 1907. Games were played in an empty lot across from Oak Street Park. They must have been practicing for a long time. Ordinance #18, dated April 5, 1902 stated, "the batting up of balls on Beech, Redwood and Third Avenue, was prohibited."

The 1908 addition to the school contained tennis courts and playground equipment for the children. The girls and boys had their first high school basketball teams in 1910-11. Their colors were purple and gold. There was also an Edgar curling team organized in 1916.

Edgar was still progressing. A Catholic School was built in 1914. Four sisters of Charity were employed as teachers. All 8 grades were taught plus religious instruction.

A community hall of brick was constructed in 1917. It served as a fire hall, opera house, had a counsel room and jail. There was also a kitchen and serving hall. Wedding receptions, church dinners, club meetings and parties were held there. The school used the hall for basketball, dances, school programs and entertainment of all kinds.

Electricity came to Edgar in 1918. Old statements (August 1921) from the Wisconsin Valley Electric Company showed a cost of installing fixtures and lamps at $49.90 and installing wiring and switches at $91.95 for a total of $141.85. These were installed in the Barrett house, now owned by Delphine Trawicki (203 S. 4th Avenue). An electricity bill dated February 28, 1922 shows $5.79 with a 25 cent discount if paid before March 15th.

April 6, 1917 the United States entered World War I. Patriotism ran high across the nation. The conscription (draft as we now know it) was enacted. Approximately 49 young men from the village were called into service. The 18 months of war brought huge changes which had a profound effect on the nation and eventually the village. The end of

Left: About 1912
The Ruder Brewing Co. of Wausau,
Edgar Branch Office. l-r, Stan Paszek; Frank Zastrow, mgr; Peter Wagner.
Right: Ruder’s Edgar driver, Stan Paszek.
the war left the country with huge debts and vast unemployment. Farm prices dropped and hard times were coming.

Edgar began to change. Automobiles, then tractors, were slowly replacing the horses. Gas stations and garages were replacing the blacksmith shops and livery stables.

A few new businesses started in the village. Clover Leaf Lumber Company was started by S.E. Hutchins and three other stockholders in 1919. Mr. Hutchins took over the stock in 1922. A one-horse delivery was used for goods and he employed one man. The first motorized dray line operated in Edgar from 1919 through 1921.

A dam was built east of the bridge and a large portion near the creek was dredged. Frank Kurtzweil built Frolic Gardens there in 1920. It was built as a resort and consisted of a dance hall, bowling alley, diving area and a boat house. Along with Frolic Gardens came the Prohibition (January 1920). More than one family in the area supplemented their income with a brewery in the basement or a still in the woods. From all accounts, the real action at Frolic Gardens occurred in the parking lot outside the dance hall. Some husband and wife teams attended the dances. It was the job of the wives to dance with the young men and let them know there was something stronger than water available in the parking lot outside.
Dances were held every Friday evening. A special area outside the dance hall was referred to as the “bull pen.” Times were tough so the young men stood around outside the dance hall (bull pen) and watched the young gals arrive.

If they thought the young ladies were worth the 25 cents admission they bought a ticket. Otherwise they stayed in the parking lot where the real action was. Their quarter could buy two shots with a nickel left over.

A flood in 1922 broke the dam and destroyed the operation. Being a natural disaster, it was probably prayed up by the current Catholic priest. He was a letter-of-the-law man who had no use for such goings-on among his parishioners.

A.W. Puchner began a Ford dealership in 1914. Ben Straub became the Chevy dealer in 1920. Oscar Berg opened an electric shop where the old Pivernetz sleigh and wagon maker business had been. A.F. Baeseman began a hardware business in the old bank building. A.P. Hoffman took over the shoe store in 1921. Some remember all Tony’s shoes were made of “wary fine ledder.”

The changes that came about during this period after World War I can best be seen in the following list of advertisers taken from the Saturday, December 10, 1926 issue of the Edgar News, Clara Guinan, Publisher.

Left: Weber’s Electric Shop, about 1919. Later the Frank and Emma Schroeder grocery store, it was located across from the village hall, l-r Oscar Berg; Reinhold Weber, prop; Agnes Wagner-Krueger. Right: The Ben Strub Garage was Edgar’s first Chevrolet dealer. It was in the west half of the August Tegge building, next door to the Tegge Saloon. Standing, Joe Kroll. Building to the rear was Edgar’s first bank, later Baeseman’s Hardware and Implement.

Otto Schmidt’s “Highway Garage” about 1928, now the site of Strong’s AG Store. l-r Emil Schmidt, Otto Schmidt. Located on Edgar’s Main Street.
Right: A busy day at the Cloverleaf Lumber Co., S.E. Hutchins, prop. in 1922. Horses, horses and no trucks or cars. Notice the old horse barn and other outbuildings to the rear of the Pelatzke Tavern. Also the steeple on the old Saint Stephen's Lutheran church also the "Bell Tower" on Edgar's old fire station and jail.

Center: Edgar Frolic Garden dance hall, about 1920. Frank Kurtzweil, builder and owner, located about two blocks east of Main St.

Below: Dance hall, diving platform and boathouse. l-r on shore, unknown, Adeline Wettrave Schroeder, Marie Wagner-Nievoly, In boat, Rose Kurtzweil Reding, Donald Marcell, Helen Kurtzweil McMahon, Alvina Kurtzweil Johnson.
Advertisers in the December 10, 1926 *Edgar News*

A.F. Baeseman: Hardware and barn equipment

Oscar Berg Electric Shop: Atwater-Kent Radios

Mrs. Hubert Bergs: Bergs Groceries, Cream Loaf Flour

A.J. Cherney: Lath, lime, cement hay, grain, paints, sewer pipe, etc.

Clover Leaf Lumber: S.E. Hutchins, President/Manager, Building materials

C.C. DeLong: DeLongs Store dry goods, groceries, feed, salt, etc.

Edgar Basket Mfg.: Fred Hartig & Albert Erny owners cheese boxes, etc.

Edgar Cash Store: J.F. Loschky, Mgr. Edgar Amusement Parlors, flour


Edgar Bottling Works: Peter Mathiesen, owner, pop and Eskimo Pies

Edgar Machine Shop: A.F. Draeger, Prop. repairs to cars and machinery

Edgar Sales Stable: A.W. Darge, Mgr. horses, wagons and manure spreaders

Highway Garage: Otto Schmidt, Prop. gasoline, oil, tires, tubes, etc.

Hahn Service Station: Charles Hahn, owner We-No-Nah gasoline, oils, greases

Hotel Edgar: Frank Lemanski, Prop. Sunday chicken dinners-50 cents

City Bakery: Theresa Knetter, Prop, groceries, bread, ham and bacon

Lambert Meat Market: Art and Herbert Lambert, owners, meats, sausage, etc.

Millinery: Mrs. Bertha Zepp, scarfs and Phoenix underwear

Edgar's First Motorized Dray. Robert Werner owner/operator, about 1920.

The Hoffman Shoe Store, formally the Philip Meyer Shoe Store, about 1921. L-r, Joe Hoffman and Anton Hoffman.
Martin Keefe: Auto and Horse Livery, phone number 15
Leo Niewolny: Confectionery, candies, tobacco, sardines, soup, etc.
Ottaway & Paeske: Hardware, implements and DeLaval milkers
Pfrang’s Store: Edw. Pfrang, owner groceries, gents furnishings
Puchner Hardware: Alfred W. Puchner, hardware, implements, Ford cars
Purity Shop: Frank Sacho & Oscar Berg, Prop. groceries, meats, etc.
Schroeders Store: Frank Schroeder, Sr. groceries, school supplies, etc.
Schmids Gift Shop: Mrs. Otto Schmidt, Prop. located in Highway Garage
Shortner Real Estate: Frank Shortner real estate and insurance

Straub’s Garage: Ben Straub, owner, Chevrolet cars, parts and accessories
F.J. Tomkiewicz: drugs, Kodaks, film, ice cream, candies, etc.
John Warosh’s Place: service to smokers, snuff, light lunch, canned goods
C.Wagner and Son: Casper Wagner and son Albert furniture and undertakings
Julius Werner: Harness Shop, repairs to auto tops and side curtains
J.B. Winestorfer: Auctioneer
Dr. F.E. Collins: Physician and Surgeon, upstairs Drug Store Building
Dr. J.J. Malcolm: Physician and Surgeon, upstairs Meyer Building
Dr. W.A. Richardson: Dentist Upstairs Drug Store Building
Dr. H.M. Leppla: Dentist, Upstairs Leppla Building
Rev. A.L. Olbert: Priest at St. John’s Catholic Church (no advertising)
Rev. H.C. Ramsey: Pastor at First Presbyterian Church (no advertising)
Rev. Karl F. Schmidt: Pastor at St. Stephen’s Evangelical Lutheran Church (no adv.)

Although times were changing, little did anyone know worst times were still to come. The 1929 stock market crash, combined with the poor farm economy bought disaster across the nation. The Bank of Edgar froze their assets, managing to survive the crash despite hard times. For Edgar another, more immediate, disaster loomed over the village.
On May 4, 1931 Edgar experienced its greatest physical disaster in the form of a fire, which nearly destroyed the town.

A man was taking a short cut through the Schill (formerly Quaw) mill yard, when he noticed a small blaze beside one of the buildings. He ran to call the Fire Department. By the time enough men got together and started the fire engine, the fire in the mill was beyond control. The mill, barn, drying shed and planing mill were all ablaze. Then a terrible wind arose scattering hot embers over the entire village. Fire departments were called from Wausau, Marshfield and Marathon to help and through their prompt response the village was saved. At the worst point twenty buildings were all on fire at once.

The roof of the school caught fire and stories abound about the boy who loved his school so much he climbed out the upstairs office window, then up onto the roof where he began beating the flames out with his cap. Other high school boys followed his quick action and through their efforts the school was saved. It is ironic to note the boy who loved his school so much never got to graduate. Circumstances were such back then that he had to quit school and go to work before completing his high school education.

Mr. Schill (the mill owner) had been confined to bed due to a recent heart attack. The doctor warned the family not to tell him about the loss of the mill until he was better. Several days later he inquired about the fire because he thought he had heard more than one fire engine operating in the village. When he heard about the loss of the mill, he suffered another heart attack which ended his life.

This was only the beginning of an era known as “hard times.” A period of time when people had to “make due with what you had, or do without.” Times when recycling was not an option but a necessity born of destitution and desperation. Clothing was passed on to others. Coats were ripped apart and the usable fabric was resown into smaller coats or skirts and jumpers. Nothing was thrown away until it was totally beyond use, even for a patchwork quilt. Even then, the rags were bagged and sent on to the rag man.

The Schill sawmill was gone as was the excelsior factory. The basket factory was the only industry that hung on. Then came the worst of the drought.
pursued funding for a sewage treatment plant and waterworks for the village. Finally, after two bonding issues were passed by the voters, the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works approved the grant. Work began September 6, 1938. A breakdown of funding held by the Bank of Edgar for this project is as follows:

1) government grant $31,566.00
2) obligation bonds 24,000.00
3) revenue bonds 20,000.00
4) cash/general fund 4,999.00
5) balance/general fund 1,132.00

TOTAL $81,697.00

A breakdown of the hourly pay schedule for this project is as follows:

- Unskilled labor: 40 cents per hour
- Semi-skilled labor: 45-60 cents per hour
- Skilled laborers such as a dynamite man, bricklayer or iron worker: 60-85 cents per hour
- Large equipment operators such as well drillers, trenchers, and clamshell operators: $1.00 per hour
- Job foreman: $30.00 per week

As meager as these wages sound today, this project in all probability was responsible for the survival of our village.

Although these times were lean, the village board still managed to allocate $175 per year to the Edgar Village Band. A picnic and parade was still held on the 4th of July and the people could still laugh at a silly but timely joke such as: “A lady was so poor she didn’t even have any patches to mend her husband’s overalls. Finally, she applied for relief to buy a new pair of overalls so she could patch the old ones.”

Although the sawmills, excelsior factory and brickyard were all gone by the mid-thirties, farm-related businesses were still prevalent. The Pauly and Pauly Cheese Warehouse, which began here about 1918, was still in operation. The Bootzin Company of Abbotson, a farm feed and food distribution center, began operating here in 1937 under the management of Otto Untiedt. Later, Otto and Hattie purchased the business and it became O & H Feed & Food. Both Bero Company and Baeseman Hardware had expanded their businesses to include farm machinery.

The Brooklyn Hotel (1922) and Farmer’s Home still took in boarders as did the White Front Tavern on Redwood Street. The rate at the Brooklyn Hotel was $1.00 per day, which included meals. The owner, Mrs. Zimmerman, preferred the girls from the Basket Factory to male boarders. They helped with the work and didn’t expect a steak dinner every night.

In 1940, the Edgar Packing Plant opened in Edgar. E.S. Grosskreutz was vice president and manager of the plant. They were capable of butchering fifty calves an hour and had a full-time government meat inspector. There were a dozen ads in the Edgar paper congratulating the new business and wishing them success, but this ad from the Edgar Drug Store was quite unique.

---

**Congratulations**

WE CONGRATULATE THE EDGAR PACKING COMPANY ON THEIR FINE, MODERN BUILDING IN EDGAR AND WISH THEM EVERY SUCCESS.

AND FARMERS, WHEN YOU BRING IN YOUR LIVESTOCK TO THE EDGAR PACKING COMPANY STOP AND SHOP AT THE EDGAR DRUG STORE FOR QUALITY DRUGS AND FRIENDLY SERVICE.

BELOW ARE A FEW DRUG VALUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WILDROOT HAIR TONIC</th>
<th>Colgate’s Cashmere Bouquet HAND LOTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One $1.00 size Hair Tonic and one 75c Hair Brush</td>
<td>One 35c size &amp; one 20c size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Only</td>
<td>Both For</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79c</td>
<td>36c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ALKA SELTZER, 60c size       | 49c                                    |
| PINEX, Makes a Pint of Cough Medicine | 59c                                    |
| EDGO COUGH REMEDY, Checks Coughs | 50c                                    |
| HEAVY MINERAL OIL, Pints 39c Quarts 69c |                                        |
| BURMA SHAVE, 1 - 35c size, 1 - 10c size & 2 Blades 29c |                                        |
| CUE, Colgate’s New Liquid Tooth Cleaner, 2 for | 26c |
| STAR BLADES, 14 Blades for only | 25c |
| Blue Jay Thin DOUBLE EDGE BLADES, 10 for | 25c |

**EDGAR DRUG STORE**
Along Redwood Street to be shipped out for the war effort. Some country schools took a day off to collect milkweed silk which was used as insulation for aviators. Many of the young boys carried a ball of silver in their pockets. These were made of foil carefully peeled from gum wrappers and cigarette packages. This was their contribution to recycling metal for the war effort.

Despite the apprehension over the war, life went on in Edgar. The Edgar Chamber of Commerce became very active during the 1940's. Many residents recalled a large production called "The Womanless Wedding" that was put on by the Chamber of Commerce in 1941.

Through the joint efforts of the Catholic priest, Father Knauf, and the village board a skating rink was installed on the west end of the Catholic School grounds in 1943. The village donated the old W.P.A. shack as a warming house and also the water and men to flood the rink and the playground hill. The next year the village erected a warming house 12 x 36 feet and the rink was extended to 100 x 150 feet. The parish installed lights and a speaker for an old juke box in the church basement. Volunteers took turns tending the fire and supervising the skaters.

The general feeling throughout the town during and at the close of the war is best expressed in this personal diary account of Bertha Koenig: "Rumors are around about the war ceasing and everybody was excited about it, only hoping and praying that it would be true. In May the Germans surrendered and all churches held services of thanks that so much was conquered, but the worst enemy, the Japanese, were still fighting hard and our losses were heavy. ..."

"It had been announced in all churches that if we heard the bells ringing and whistles blowing, we would know that victory was won, and if possible we would scrap collected during World War II. All stores closed for the collection."
have services that very night to give our thanks to God, for he alone can make wars to cease.

"August 14, 1945—was the great victory day. I was up in our field picking wild raspberries: had plenty of time, no meals to prepare . . . as George was still in Wausau. The Catholic Church bell began ringing for 6:00 o'clock then all three bells rang, still I did not think anything about it, because they had a holiday the next day, and would have services.

"But then our bell started ringing (Lutheran), then the Presbyterian, and last of all the siren blew as though the whole town was on fire, one continuous long blow. Then I knew what it meant. I set my pail down, went down on my knees right there in the brush and cried and prayed. I was so happy to be there all by myself just with God, I could pray undisturbed.

"Just then, the sun peaked out, beneath a heavy cloud, shone full upon my face, as though to say, 'dry your tears, all is well, it's over.' It was such a comfort to me. Then I went home and got ready to go to church. Services were at 8:00 o'clock. There sure was a large attendance. The sermon was . . . well chosen for the occasion. 'He maketh wars to cease, unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear asunder, He burneth the chariot in fire.' Psalm 46, v. 9."

Only two men from the village lost their lives during World War II. First Lt. Clifford Lierman, an infantry company commander was killed in action in France in 1943. Second Lt. Howard Drum lost his life in action over Burma. He was a Mitchell bomber pilot and had flown 25 successful missions.

The end of the war brought about expansion and improvements for the village. In 1946 a direct dial telephone system was installed. This replaced the old telephone exchange that had often been run by high school girls after Mrs. Bier's retirement. This had been a huge responsibility for the 16-18 year old girls who stayed in pairs at the exchange overnight and had to handle all emergencies.

The same year the old iron bridge across Scotch Creek was replaced.

New businesses were also beginning. Krebsbach Service Station started in 1941. Wirkus Groceries in 1945, Jim's Red Owl in 1946. Ed and John Krause built a Cities Service Station in 1947 which was sold to Don Johnson in 1952.

The village also began several improvement projects. In April of 1947 showers and toilets were installed in the Village Hall. The school used this facility for Physical Education classes and ball games until the West Gym was built in 1956-57. The school paid $300 per month or $2,700 per school term. A huge replacement and new sidewalk project was also started in 1947.

Some real excitement occurred in Edgar the Friday after Thanksgiving 1947. Two young men in their early 20s robbed The Bank of Edgar and made off with $3,222. Cashiers at the time were Lucy Shortner, Esther Schmidt and Donna Uekert. The men were later apprehended.

The year 1948 marked the Golden Jubilee of Edgar. Under the leadership of Otto Untiedt, the Edgar Chamber of Commerce planned a gala celebration. Main Street was closed from Maple to Redwood as were parts of Beech Street. The Dusty Rhodes carnival was brought into town for the occasion. These rides were very exciting for the young people in the community. A square dance was held on Friday night and a baseball benefit street dance was held on Saturday evening. Special free entertainment was held on a stage erected on the east side of the Locker Plant. Special prizes and awards were also given. A new baseball diamond was dedicated during the celebration and Edgar hosted Halder for the first game. The celebration was held July 15, 16 and 17, 1948 and an annual Homecoming Celebration has continued to be held each year since.

A sawmill returned to Edgar in the late forties. Paul Jagodzinski ran the mill on 5th Avenue in the previous location of the
excelsior factory. This mill was later run by Al Brzezinski after Paul’s death. Uekert’s took over the tavern previously run by Paul and operated it for many years. Now it is known as Louie’s.

The Edgar Theatre was built in 1950-51. Its location was the present GTE building on Third Avenue. The theatre had a marquee with flashing lights and a snack bar where young people often met for a Coke. This was a real hit in Edgar. Often the line for a good Sunday matinee extended for a full block or more. In October of 1951, Edgar was visited by its first and only “movie star.” All the schools let out so the students could line the streets and wave to Dennis Morgan. It is ironic to note most people don’t recall Dennis Morgan, the movie star, but the young political candidate who was a Wisconsin Representative at the time, is now known internationally as former U.S. Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird.

Although there were not many large employers in Edgar, people were beginning to realize it was a nice place to raise a family. The availability of cars, inexpensive gas and better paved roads allowed people to travel to Wausau or other nearby towns for employment. Gradually the empty lots on 3rd and 4th Avenues and other areas were being filled with new homes or older homes moved in from the country.

In 1954 the first major residential area was begun north of the public school. It was called Highland Park Addition. This addition also contained the first two apartment buildings in Edgar. Wilmer Tuscher built a six unit apartment on 1st Avenue in the late 1950’s and the Beidel Apartments were built on Oak Street in 1971. This residential expansion has continued to the present time with the Wagner, West, and Krause additions being added in the 1960’s and 70’s. Not only has the residential area expanded but the rental units and apartments have also increased dramatically. There are approximately 20 housing rental properties in the village including seven apartment buildings that contain five or more units. The village also has two trailer courts, containing approximately 50 mobile homes.

The 50’s and 60’s brought about other changes in Edgar. The Lions Club was chartered in 1951 and a home economics class was added to the school curriculum. The Schueller Company became incorporated in 1956 and Clarence Berens took over Berg Company in 1957. The Fire Department got its first ambulance on May 9, 1957 and made its first run on May 10, taking Butch Schueller to the hospital. The old blacksmith shop was torn down in 1955 and a new building housing the Edgar Drug Store and Jim’s Red Owl replaced it. This building now contains the Edgar Clinic. Rennie Lindner bought the Leplla building and began Lindner’s Delaval in 1961. The same year Ken Strong bought out the Red Owl Store and began the A.G. Market. A small portion of the Lindner building was rented to Aggie’s Snack Bar, fondly remembered by the teens of that era. The Girl Scouts were organized in 1956 under the sponsorship of the Edgar Women’s Club.

In 1963 the Lambert Meat Market was replaced by a new Post Office, Beauty Parlor and the first and only laundromat in Edgar. Marathon County decided to widen County Highway H in 1966. This meant moving power and sewer lines on Third Avenue so the village began replacing the old street lights with mercury vapor lighting at this time. A new disposal plant was built in 1968. At this time the village also purchased its first street sweeper.

In November of 1968, the Engineering Department of General Telephone set about assigning a number to each dwelling and business place in Edgar. This was the beginning of a nightmare for every UPS and delivery truck that came to the village and has continued since that time. The only given as far as the numbering system is concerned is that a 400 block is a 400 block, but the number sequence contained within that block may jump from 402 to 438 between next door neighbors or a corner.
house may face one street and have an address for the street on the side of the house.

With the gradual increase in the village population a municipal code was established in April of 1960. Wisconsin Fuel and Light Company was granted a franchise to install natural gas in the village in December 1966. In December of 1968, Lloyd Brothers of Rib Mountain was contracted for garbage disposal in the village.

The late 60's also brought the addition of the Log Cabin to the Oak Street Park.

The bicentennial year (1976) brought more destruction of the old and construction of the new to Edgar. The old bowling alley on 3rd Avenue and the Puchner's Hardware Store were razed to build the new Fire Hall. The old Ottoway and Paeske Hardware became the site of the new Edgar Lanes. Wirkus IGA and Strong's AG Store combined and built a new grocery store where the old Cherney Warehouse had been. The A.C. Wagner building and the Deprato building were razed to build a large Hardware Hank Store.

The village board applied for and received a Federal Small Communities Block Grant in 1984. This was a real bonus and helped to renovate many of the older homes on 4th and 5th Avenues. A total of 34 united were improved by this grant.

What is Edgar like today? Strangers coming to Edgar from the north from Highway 29 or south off County Highway N describe Edgar in one word — beautiful! The main street, which we call Third Avenue or County Highway H is clean, straight and tree-lined as it crests a hill on either side of the town and drops into the valley called Edgar. There is a definite feeling of peacefulness and of the pride the home and business owners take in their village.

A survey was taken of the residents of the village in the fall of 1997. Although the survey involved only 63% of the population, it did include older residences, apartment buildings, new housing developments and the mobile home courts—a good cross section of our community.

Some things haven't changed much over the past 100 years. The largest ethnic groups in the village are still the Germans and Polish. Other ethnic backgrounds include English, Swedish, French, Hmong and Native American. It is interesting to note that one Irishman (Keefe) mentioned in the 1913 newspaper article has now become 30 Irishmen although on St. Patrick's Day there seem to be many more Irish than any other nationality!

According to the survey, 71% of the population were adults and 29% children. Of the adult population, 20% work in the Wausau area, 19% in Edgar and 12% are retirees.

Of the residents surveyed, 22% were born in Edgar or nearby townships and villages. Except for 3%, all were born in Wisconsin. The religious affiliation of the community is still predominantly Roman Catholic and Lutheran although there were 18 other affiliations mentioned and 27 respondents who did not choose to list a particular faith.

Those surveyed liked the quiet, friendly small town atmosphere and low crime rate in Edgar. They also liked the school system. What Edgar lacked was shopping opportunities, industry and jobs, teen activities and a good supper club. They also felt taxes and water bills were a bit high.

Some of the major employers in the village are: Badger Basket with 150 people employed, and the Edgar School District with 78 employees.

Edgar now has a population of 1,422 and is known as a Village of Parks. The four parks feature basketball, volleyball, horse shoes, baseball, ice skating in the winter, and swimming in the summer. The Minnow Ponds park includes several small fishing ponds. Most are equipped with grills and shelter houses. Edgar is also a village of runners and walkers comprised of all ages. They are most often seen in the early morning or evening hours. It is an interesting bit of trivia to note that the last names of Edgar residents begin with every letter of the alphabet except "Q."

Much of the activity in the community centers around school activities such as music, drama and sporting events. In 1997, the school district enacted a policy outlining the use of the facilities by civic organizations. This allows civic groups to use the school for activities when not being used for school related purposes. Among the activities held there are Boy and Girl Scout meetings, karate classes, Jaycee bingo, and Family Resource Center classes. Open gyms are held for adults and families on Wednesday evenings and Saturdays. The school system also has approximately two miles of wide, chipped trails in their school forest, east of Kaiser Avenue. Along these trails are identifying plaques for many plants and
trees. There are also tennis courts on the school grounds available for public use.

Edgar has both a major and minor little league softball program, an Old-Timer's League and other softball teams sponsored by various businesses. The Marathon County Nutrition Program provides senior citizen dinners at the Village Hall Monday through Friday. Other groups and organizations in the village include Youth Futures, Circle of Joy, Lions, Jaycees, Women's Club, Edgar Area Business Association, Football and FFA Alumni Clubs, VFW and Auxiliary, men's and women's bowling leagues, pool leagues and various church-related organizations.

Edgar has two major summer attractions. The Annual Homecoming Celebration is sponsored by the Edgar Volunteer Fire Department. The event features carnival rides, live entertainment, raffle drawing, a parade and fire department contests. High school class reunions are often planned around this celebration.

The Edgar Antique Steam and Gas Engine Club has an annual show in August at the Kurt Ummus, Jr. farm. It is a step back in time with antique equipment in operation, a parade, live entertainment, buckwheat pancake breakfasts, hayrides, a huge flea market and an airport for antique airplanes. This event provides an interesting and fun look into the past that draws thousands of people each year.

Another unique specialty to the Edgar area is a geological marker in the township of Rietbrock, near Poniatowski. This marker designates the exact center of the northern half of the western hemisphere.

Edgar's future long range plan, according to current village administrator, Dennis Weix, includes continued modest residential growth. There is hope for some industry, perhaps a smaller, cleaner beef operation. Also, with the completion of the new four lane State Highway 29, there are expectations for more light industry and commercial growth in the village.

No previous generation has seen the technological advances that have come about in the past 100 years. We have come from an age of horses, outdoor plumbing and manual labor on the farm and in the lumber industry to the age of industrialization and technology. We've come from clearing the land to homestead to seeking new horizons in outer space. Yet, the one constant in this community has always been the land and those who care for it. No matter how far the new pioneers advance in technology in the 21st century, it will always be the land and those who care deeply about it that will make the ultimate difference in our survival as a community, a nation and a planet.

Whatever the future may hold for Edgar, our hope is that it will remain the clean, friendly community that always welcomes home our own and extends a welcome to those passing through or deciding to settle here in the future.
Past Presidents

Village of Edgar

C.C. DeLong

A.W. Puchner

Mike Schill

Justin Means

Ed Pfrang

Fred Hartig

F.J. Shortner

C.W. Symons

A.C. Rundle

A.J. Cherney

Dr. H. A. Schulz

A.P. Haffman

Herbert Gottschalk

D. Rasmussen

H.A. Schulz, Jr.

Harold Guenther