

DOTY CABIN

ON AUGUST 31, 1835, James D. Doty purchased, from the Federal Government, land totaling 100 acres for the sum of \$600 (on the Island, "Doty Island"). The purchase of this land was possible because the Island and land on the Menasha side of the Fox River was not a part of the Indian Reservation. Neenah, or the land south of the south branch of the Fox River, remained a part of the Menominee Indian Reserve, and was not open to settlement until after the Treaty of the Cedars in 1836, or to purchase until after 1846.

The original site for the cabin was selected because of its view and accessibility to the lake. Built in 1845, the cabin was a realization of a dream long held by Doty, to provide a rustic place for retirement. Mrs. Doty named the cabin the "Grand Loggery." Here the family lived until in 1860, when Lincoln appointed Doty to the Superintendency of Indian affairs in the Utah territory, which office he held until his appointment to the Governorship of the same territory in 1863. His death occurred in 1865, and he is buried at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City.

Mrs. Doty returned to this region and lived with a daughter, Mrs. Fitzgerald, in Oshkosh.

Mrs. Gleason, whose husband was a partner in the Wilde and Gleason Drug Store, was born in this building. Because there was no suitable home for the doctor to work, Governor Doty took her into his home.

The land and the Loggery were purchased by Hugh H. Ernsting on January 28, 1868, from Mrs. J. D. Doty.

In 1875, John Roberts purchased the site and Loggery from Mr. Ernsting for the purpose of erecting a resort, which was opened to the public on May 30, 1877. The Cabin served as an annex to the resort, serving as housing space for the help, and also accommodated pool tables and card tables on the first floor. John Roberts sold the property to Strange, and the Cabin lay abandoned until 1926, when the D.A.R. became interested, and under its influence it was moved to Doty Park and opened to the public.

In 1937 a regular summer program of days and hours was established, and the Cabin has been open from June to September each year since that date. Differing from most old homes, Doty Cabin is open to all, free of charge, and has become an accepted part of the park program.

Throughout the years before being moved to Doty Park, the Cabin had suffered much from neglect. In 1948 it was felt advisable to replace the original cabin with a replica, using such original materials as advisable. This project was completed, and, with care, the building will stand for many years to extend to future generations some of the true history of the past.

It has ever been the interest of the local D.A.R., Neenah Historical Society, and others, to furnish the Cabin with original Doty material. So far there has been secured: a piano; a mahogany table sent by Mrs. Frank Gregory, of Pomona, California; a settee and two chairs from R. H. Wise, of Billings, Montana, a relative of Mrs. Doty; a sideboard and silverware, presented by Mr. McMann, of Oshkosh; small dishes, glasses, table silver, presented by Mrs. C. B. Clark, of Neenah.

Where original furnishings are not available, materials of the 1800 to 1850 period are used to furnish the Cabin.

The average year sees between five and six thousand visitors at the Cabin, representing 200 to 250 cities, 20 to 30 states, and as many as fifteen foreign areas of the world.

With interest in old and historic homes obviously growing, Neenah will do well to maintain this historic site.

Compiled by Harvey R. Leaman

ADDENDUM: It is a matter of historic interest that all of Doty Park was once owned by the man whose name it carries.

In 1905, John Roberts' heirs sold the property to Mr. and Mrs. John Strange. They kept the cabin on its original site until 1926, when Mrs. John Strange gave the cabin to the city.

C. B. Clark inherited from his father most of the property now in the park. Mr. Clark's gift of his holdings was augmented by purchases of additional parcels by interested citizens. The land facing Lincoln Street, on which the cabin stands, was part of such gifts.