VERONA.

BY DONALD MACDONALD AND J. T. HAWES.

THIS township lies in the southwestern portion of the county, nine miles southwest of Madison, and is known as town six north, of range eight east. The town is well watered by Sugar river, which rises in the town of Cross Plains, and has also two branches rising on section 7 in this town, flowing southeast and passing out on section thirty-four; there is also a tributary, called Badger Mill creek, rising on section thirteen and emptying into Sugar river on section twenty-eight. On the banks of the streams there are excellent marsh and meadow lands. The land is oak opening interspersed with prairie.

The town was organized on February 17, 1847.

The first settlers were two Scotchmen, named James Young and Thomas Stewart, who came to the town in 1837. They were engaged in the butcher business in Galena, and afterward were employed by Edward Campbell, of Cross Plains, who formerly kept the relay house for the stages between Madison and Mineral Point.

Early one Sunday morning, in the summer of 1840, a party of ten or twelve, among whom were George and William Vroman, James Young, Thomas Stewart and Wakefield Brothers, started out in a wagon from Edward Campbell's house (now James Bonner's) to explore the upper valley of the Sugar river. After wending their way down the valley for about three miles they came suddenly upon the north end of an elevated prairie, and following the dividing ridge about a mile, came to ten mounds, nine of which were circular, while one had the

form of a mammoth.* From this place they had a splendid view of the surrounding country, the mounds being quite prominent and about the center of the prairie. After agreeing to call this beautiful spot Nine Mound Prairie, (section 8), they continued their journey in a southeast direction, and came to what is now called the Badger Mill creek, which they crossed. On either side of the creek they found a beautiful flat or level piece of land, containing several hundred acres without stones or obstructions of any kind, and covered with a luxuriant growth of grass, while the soil was of the richest. This tract is divided by Badger Mill creek, with Sugar river coursing the west side, and nearly surrounded by groves of hard wood suitable for building and fencing purposes. "What more," they exclaimed, "could be desired as a building site — here we have it?"

On the left bank of the creek a promontory with an elevation of from thirty to forty feet extending out about one-fourth of a mile, covered with timber, and commanding an extensive view of the flats, was the spot where the two hardy Scots resolved to make their future home.

The party, proceeding toward the southern extremity of the prairie, found a number of prominent mounds which they examined; christened the place "Mound Prairie," and crossing to the west side of Sugar River, made their way back to their starting point.

A week afterwards, the two Scots, James Young and Thos. Stewart, returned to take possession of their home, and after locating on the south side of the creek, on secs. 27 and 28, they made an excavation into the side of the ridge six by eight feet, and then roofed it with poles

* One of these mounds was opened by Dr. Waterbury and others. in 1847, when a portion of a human skeleton was found that must have belonged to a person not less than six feet six inches in height.

and grass. Thus prepared—being both bachelors—they stored away such cooking utensils and household goods as they had brought with them, and returned to bring the remainder of their goods and chattels, with the intention of keeping "batch," in their new and first habitation built by white men in the township of Verona. During their absence, a heavy thunderstorm came on during the night, and on their return the following day from Edward Campbell's, they found the creek had become swollen into a river, whose waters they did not dare to cross. Waiting until it subsided, they passed over without difficulty, but only to find the contents of their new abode washed away by the flood. After some searching they found the most of the missing articles where the water had left them. With even this experience, they concluded to build again, but this time above high water mark. Moving to the top of the promontory, from which they had the commanding view of the flats, on their first visit, they commenced digging in a horizontal position into an Indian mound, making an excavation ten by fourteen feet. During the digging, they came across the skull and bones of a human being, which they supposed must belong to one of the race of the mound builders; but dreading more the dangers of floods than the dry bones of past mortality, they continued their work, and then roofed the excavation with logs, and poles, thatching it with grass from the creek, leaving a suitable place for a chimney at the end of the domicile, and supplying the entrance with a door, the panels of which were of grass, while the frame was made with an axe and augur, as lumber and nails were a luxury they could not then dream of possessing. This hastily constructed home, made out of a tomb, was a comfortable abode against wind and rain. But while supposing themselves to be the peaceful possessors of their home,

it was matter of astonishment to them to find that they were not the only occupants of the knoll. A large and full grown lynx was occupying an adjacent portion of the tomb, and was concealed from them by the underbrush, within a few paces of their door. For a time they concluded not to disturb him, and so passed and repassed him every day, until they discovered that he liked domestic fowl better than the wild, so they determined to make him move his quarters elsewhere. Thomas armed himself with a club, while James brought forth "Nicodemus" and discharged its contents into his lynxship. Wounded, but not disabled, the ferocious brute sprang from his lair and gave them battle. Thomas charged on him with his club, and by a well directed blow "extinguished the varmint," and thus gave them peaceful possession of their home and the riddance of a bad tenant.

By the way, "Nicodemus" was a favorite fowling piece upon which the owner had bestowed the above sobriquet, and was a musket of no ordinary capacity. It had a barrel something less than six feet and a bore that could swallow a Springfield rifle. When fully loaded and discharged the report would shake the ground and reverberate among the hills and woods for miles around. Game that once heard its thunder never cared to come within its range again. In after years, the writer had ample opportunity of testing its good qualities, but it was always a matter of doubt with him whether it was the load or the concussion that brought down the game. One thing he has a convincing recollection of, however, that its recoil often brought him to *terra firma*.

Trusting the reader will pardon our digression, we will now return to where we left our pioneers fairly located in their new home. After breaking some land, planting corn and potatoes, they found their provisions

had given out, and they had eaten their last morsel for breakfast. A supply could not be had nearer than Galena, about ninety miles distant, so Thomas hitched the team to the wagon and started for that place. While the horses stood drinking in the stream it occurred to him that long absence from civilization had not improved his toilet, or personal appearance, and that the old saying of blackened boots and a clean shirt was the twin sister of "cleanliness and next to Godliness," so to appear before the fair maids of Galena in commendable style he pulled the shirt from his back and washed it in the creek, then returned it to its legitimate place on his back and drove on, trusting to an iron constitution and his team to carry him to where he could get something to eat, though there was no road to follow, and still less no bridges to cross, but a wild, uninhabited country to pass through.

In the meantime, James, more accustomed to work than hunt, started as usual to the fields, accompanied by "Nicodemus," and trusting to Providence for his dinner. Noon came, but no game had crossed his path, and as it was useless to return home, there being nothing to eat, he kept on working in hopes of driving hunger away, and so continued in the field until the sun was disappearing in the west and it was time to return. On arriving at the house a flock of black birds flew past and lighting in a large burr oak tree, within a few rods of the door, "Nicodemus" was instantly brought to its proper elevation and immediately the ground shook as by an earthquake, the hills and woods gave back the echo, while the denizens of the field and forest fled in dismay. Of the blackbirds, nine were the mutilated victims, but speedily gathering them up James plucked and prepared them for a supper and breakfast, feeling, however, it was but a scant supply for a robust

man. The following day a prairie hen, hatching in the vicinity, and appearing to be the only living bird that had not been frightened out of reach or existence made its appearance, when "Nicodemus" was once more brought to the horizontal, and the luckless hen fell dead bereft of both life and most of her feathers. Thankful to a bountiful Providence for even this scanty supply, he was thus able to eke out enough until his partner returned from Galena with plenty of provisions.

This coveted spot of earth, where the ancient mound builders laid their noted dead, and heaped the earth upon them for an everlasting monument; where the ferocious lynx made his den and the pioneers their abode, is now occupied by the modern and comfortable residence of Donald Stewart, brother to the pioneer. Thos. went to California many years ago, where he acquired a fortune, but very mysteriously and suddenly dying, while his partner in business equally suddenly disappearing, nothing satisfactory was ever known about his estate. James Young is at present a resident of Madison, but in feeble health, though still delighting to recount all the privations of his early pioneer life.

Samuel Taylor was the next settler. He built the first log house in the town, and which still does good service on the farm now owned by William Ogilvie. Afterwards came Patrick Davidson, and in September, 1841, Wm. Reoch, Peter White, Peter Martin and family. Mrs. Martin was here two years before she saw the face of another woman. Among the next settlers were Matthew Hawes, Andrew Patton, William Collins, and Magnus Leslie, with their families. Settlers now began to come in quick succession.

Badger Mills was built by Wm. A. Wheeler and Geo. Vroman, in 1843-4, and sold to Taylor & Weston. On the completion of the mill a grand ball was given in

honor of the first grist mill in the county, and the music for the occasion was furnished by Pritchard's band. A few years afterwards, the mill became the property of Samuel Taylor.

The first threshing machine brought into the county was imported from Scotland by Patrick Davidson, living on section 33; but being stationary it was used only, for a few years, when it gave place to the portable machines, of American make.

Whisky was first made from malt by John, a younger brother of Thos. Stewart, in 1843–4, on section 28, out of an imported copper still, the size of a tea kettle. It was used for many years in distilling a good quality of Scotch whisky, whose praise, as well as the liberality of the manufacturer, was lauded far and near over the sparsely settled country. The days that brewing was going on, it was surprising to see with what instinct the wounded bucks would head for the still; at least the hunters always claimed they had lost the trail at this spot or very near it, and would give up the chase for the day. Tired and thirsty, these hunters would drop in to see how Scotch whisky was made, when John would refresh them with draughts of the double strong, fresh from the still, which he freely dealt out in a quaigh,* and many a hunter started home fully convinced that the "Scotch" was all it was said to be, and perhaps a little more. The kiln for drying the malt was made after the pattern of a hundred years ago, and was a circular pit dug in the ground, covered with a conical shaped roof and a hole in the center to allow the smoke to pass out. The drying floor was made of poles laid close together

* Pronounced *Kwâ*, a small drinking cup, made either of wood, the horn of an animal, or silver. The horn was used by hunters for convenience against breaking, but on festival occasions in Scotland, during fuedal times, the silver cup was used.

and covered with straw. On this the malt was spread to dry, with a fire underneath. The process needed constant attention night and day.

An incident connected with the drying is related of three young Scotchmen who volunteered to sit up all night and dry the malt. The generous freedom granted to all who came to visit the still did not prevent the young men from smuggling a "stoup" of Scotch to keep up their spirits. Not aware of this fact, John furnished them with a liberal supply, that the weary hours might pass more cheerie. Weary hours, forsooth!

> Three blither hearts that lee-lang night
> Ye wad na find in Christendie,

and along thro' the "wee sma' hours" these "drouthy neebors" would pass around the stoup, until one of the party was often heard to say: "I dinna like the *toddy;* I like my whisky *dry.*" The supply giving out, and concluding that the malt was as dry as themselves now were, they resolved to start for home; but to make sure that the work was complete, made up one more fire and then left for the house, half a mile distant. Arriving there they turned round, and looking in the direction from which they had come, beheld a bright glow in the southeast. While they stood wondering at the sight, one of them involuntarily sang —

> "It is the moon, I ken her horn,
> That's blinking in the lift sae hie,
> She shines sae bright to wyle us hame,
> But by my sooth she'll wait a wee."

Morning, however, revealed to them the fact that the mysterious glow in the southeast was the flames of the malt and kiln, that having caught fire, had burned to ashes.

The first public house in town was kept by Cheney Luce,

and called the "Traveler's Home." Joseph Flick was the first blacksmith and postmaster; Dr. Spencer the first physician, who was followed by Dr. Waterbury. R. Dunlap opened the first store, on section 21; and the first school house was built on the west side of what is now the Dane County Poor Farm, and was known as the Badger Prairie school house, and the first teacher Amy Thornton.

The town received its name from Geo. and Wm. Vroman, after their native township in New York. The first post office also retained the name of the town. In 1854, the county purchased of Wm. A. Wheeler, his farm on section 14, for county poor purposes, and built a brick house 40 by 60 feet, with basement, and two stories and a half high, since which other buildings have been added.

The physical character of the town is something well worthy of note. The outline is distinctly marked by a ridge of boulders and gravel, which, during the glacial period on our planet, had been pushed forward by a dense body of ice. This ridge intersects the north line of the township on sec. 5, and extends diagonally across the south line on sec. 36. Nowhere south or west of the foot of this ridge are there any boulders or gravel to be found, except where the water may have forced passages through. This can be seen best on sections 5, 16 and 22. On the first section, where the waters have forced a passage through the ridge, immense boulders have been carried down the water-course a distance of half a mile; on sec. 16 an opposing bluff crowds the water close to the foot of the ridge, forming a deep and narrow gulch, where the lime rock can be seen projecting from the bluff on the right, and boulders and gravel on the left. Here, also, large boulders have been carried along half a mile or more. Again, on sec. 22, at

Badger Mills, we find another gap in the ridge. Here the water has strewn boulders down the creek three-fourths of a mile, the smaller ones being carried farthest down.

Among the other curiosities to be seen are the "sink holes" on secs. 17 and 18, as well as other places in the west part of the township. The holes are pits or depressions in the ground, some of which are twenty-five feet deep and thirty-five feet across the mouth. Although there is no apparent opening at the bottom, all the water that flows into them is drained off as fast as it runs in. These holes have evidently been formed by the action of the water, percolating through into subterranean channels, and washing the loose soil along with it.

Many of the early settlers recollect seeing the "blue rings" on the prairies; but the plow has now obliterated most of them. Two, however, are still to be seen on the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of sec. 17, where the husbandman has not yet intruded. These circles are about forty-two feet in diameter, with an opening at one side of about three feet, reminding one of a circus ring. The belt itself is about two feet wide, and as near a circle as can be. There is nothing to show that there had ever been an elevation or depression of the soil; but it shows a darker color. The grass does not differ from that on either side, except that it starts earlier in spring; grows faster and shows a deep blue color, hence the name given to the ring. Stock of all kind crop this grass close to the ground, while that on either side will remain untouched. We have seen many of those circles, and they all look alike, but can give no explanation. Who can?

Game, in the way of bears, wild turkeys, etc., were

very plenty for a number of years after the first settlers came, but neither of the former are now to be found. The curlew was also a frequenter of this section, but has disappeared for many years.

There are six district and joint district schools; three churches, one Presbyterian, one Baptist, and one Methodist. There is also a large number of Indian mounds scattered throughout the town. Patrick Davidson lived for many years in one of these mounds, on his land on section 33, and it was remarkable for its warmth in winter and general comfort in summer.

There are now but few of the old settlers remaining, but, nevertheless, many of the youths of those times, now grown to maturity can recall the glad glee with which they hailed the social gatherings that came year after year, when Willie Reoch would "skirl his pipes," or "scrape his fiddle," and they could dance the "hieland fling." William is still as nimble in the heel or hand as ever, and bids fair to play either pipe or violin, at many gatherings yet to come. Patrick Davidson is also still among us, and whose reputation as the best pibroch player in the county still remains undisputed.

On section 5, in the northern part of the town, on the farm of D. Richardson, there is a cave that has not yet received the proper attention of either the savans of science or the local interest of the citizens, and it is hoped that at some day near at hand, an effort will be made to open the mouth of this singular natural curiosity.* We cannot better describe this cave than to

*A mystery hangs round the cave, which has perhaps been intensified by the recollection of an adventure that occurred to two of our citizens when in it, and though it might have proved fatal, it could not possibly have occurred had a little more care been taken in providing enough lights to carry with them. The mouth of the cave is under a ledge of rocks that hangs over a small valley of which it is the terminus. Before the rains had washed so much debris as now exists around its entrance, there was a large enough opening

quote from the article by Maj. H. A. Tenney, in Durrie's "Four Lake Country."

"About 11 miles distant, and a little southwest of Madison, near the crest of the dividing ridge which separates the lake region from the valley of Sugar river, there exists the basin of an ancient pond

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for any person to pass in and out conveniently. Mr. Jas. Waddell and a Mr. Goodrich, started one morning on horseback to examine the cave, providing themselves with candles, entered and proceeded to investigate the interior, previously tying their horses outside. The fascination of desiring to continue their search farther than they had provided lights for, led them so far that their last candle was nearly exhausted ere they thought it prudent to return. Unable to retrace their steps, however, before it gave out entirely, one of them, taking off his shirt, tore it into strips, and lighting them, made some progress in the direction from which they had come. The cotton strips becoming exhausted, they were left in the solitude of the unknown cave, and sitting down, felt themselves worse than lost—buried alive. Meanwhile, one of the animals that had been tied to the trees broke loose, and coming home, created considerable anxiety to the wife and brothers of Mr. Waddell. The two brothers, John and Walter, knowing that James had gone to the cave, immediately supplied themselves with a rope and candle, and proceeded in search of him, dreading that some choke damp had destroyed his life. Arriving at the cave they cautiously entered, and lighting their candle, one stood near the mouth and held the rope, while the other took one end of it, and with the light started further in, calling his brother by name. Repeated shouting brought no answer, until mental anxiety getting the better of both, they dispensed with the rope and proceeded together further in, repeatedly calling as they went. At length a faint response was heard in a distant part of the cave, and as each hurried to the other, the sound grew more distinct, and finally brought the two lost men to their side, overjoyed at their fortunate escape from a living tomb. The four men now endeavored to return, but it seemed evident for some time that it was impossible. The intricate passages on every side of them seemed to baffle every effort to retrace their steps, while their nearly exhausted candle gave them but little hope. Seeking for the outlet, Walter discovered on a number of the pillars supporting the arches, a portion of the rock assuming the shape of a spear > or arrow head, and always pointing one way. Concluding to follow these marks, they finally found them point toward the mouth of the cave, where they soon arrived in safety about twelve o'clock in the evening. With deep gratitude for their fortunate deliverance and second escape, they made all possible haste to relieve the anxiety of those at home, feeling satisfied that the deep and intricate passages of the cave were no longer a myth to them.

It is supposed by some that the marks on the pillars were caused by the action of the water as it rushes through the passages during the heavy rain-falls; but these men were of the impression

or lake covering about four thousand acres, whose waters have long since departed, and whose drainage is directly into the face of a bluff. This inlet, a quarter of a century ago, was penetrated to a depth of nearly two thousand feet, and yet has never been fully explored, or its mysterious depths examined by mortal eye. It is about five hundred feet above the level of the four Lakes, and the openings apparently tend to the west. Sugar river is about one and a half miles distant, but no evidence has ever been discovered to warrant the belief that these waters anywhere enter or make a part of that stream. All indications, indeed, point to the certainty that it is an entrance to that vast subterranean river system known to permeate the lead region at a great depth, and whose unknown outlet may be hundreds of miles away. Early explorers always halted from fatigue or lack of adequate preparation to proceed, and not because the way was not open; but nothing like an end has ever been reached.

"The deposit in which this immense grotto exists, is the cliff or upper magnesian limestone, which at this point is known to be underlaid by a sandstone formation, whose thickness is probably forty or fifty feet. That the channel has been cut down to this more friable material, at some point of its course, is not doubted, and hence it is naturally concluded that, if followed to the line of junction, the dimensions of the cave would swell to collossal proportions. As it exists at present, there are four narrow entrances, badly choked by the *debris* fallen at the mouth, or material carried in by currents. The two most southern openings unite at the distance of some fifty or sixty feet, from whence cavern succeeds cavern, so far as known, for thousands of feet. Once within this rocky chamber, there was formerly no serious obstacles to progress; but the present

that they gave evidence of having been cut by human hands, perhaps by Indians, and that at one time the cave was known to them in all its intricate windings by these marks.

The first white man known to have entered the cave, was John MacDonald, jr., who in 1845 went in about eight in the morning and losing his way, was unable to make his escape until far on in the afternoon of the same day. His intention was to go no farther than he could observe the rays of light reflected from the mouth, and which he endeavored to keep steadily watching, by walking in a half-turned position from the mouth to the interior. Finally thinking he had lost the light, he started back, and was only able to extricate himself as above stated. His case would have been a hopeless one, had he been unable to find his way out, as none of his friends knew of his intention; indeed, it was only a thought of the moment with himself.

difficulty of entrance has kept thousands from the spot. It has also had the effect of keeping the walls of the interior openings in a much damper condition than they otherwise would be, by preventing the draft of outer air, which passes steadily through the whole known extent of the cavern. The far inner rooms have all the usual characteristics of the most noted caves in the country. Pendent stalactite has its corresponding stalagmite, at present much discolored by the newly added sediment. The walls are worn into strange and fantastic shapes, and everywhere exhibit the erosive power of rushing water. Long corridors and halls, whose smooth, rocky sides would seem to bid defiance to any power, connect the numerous vestibules and chambers, some of which are from twenty to thirty feet in height, and of great and almost unknown depth.

"That the cave consists of several stories is evident from numerous indications, both exterior and interior. It is proved by the sound of voices when large parties are exploring the numerous ramifications; by variations in level; and more particularly by a whirlpool in seasons of flood, outside the entrance, which proves that the ancient channel has been choked by fallen rocks, and underlies the whole cavern thus far examined. It is still further proved by the clean cut bank of the outside water course, whose bottom is several feet below the present entrance — an impossible achievement if they were the natural inlet. Still further, no pond or water ever remains in front of the cave, in the basin below the existing entrance level, which would be impossible if it did not have a subterranean escape. Once cleared of accumulated *debris*, and instead of one or more, there would probably be found a cave of several stories, the lower of which would amply suffice to drain the region, leaving the others ordinarily dry and intact. Until this is done, the full extent and beauty of this mighty freak of nature will never be fully known or appreciated. Parties living close at hand give wonderful accounts of the phenomena witnessed after great and sudden floods, when the waters, dammed back by the choked entrance, rise ten or fifteen feet against the face of the cavern, compressing the inner air, which escapes through small fissures, to the crest of the hill, with a hiss and a roar somewhat akin to the shriek of a steam whistle. At one spot, indeed, the conversation of parties deep in the cave can be heard directly overhead, showing that if extra ventilation was ever needed it could be easily provided for. Anything like floods, in this elevated basin, however, are extremely rare, and could only occur after long continued rains, or the sudden melting of great and heavy bodies of snow. No rainfall from May to November has

ever been known large enough to send any water into the opening, nor does any enter during the months of winter.

Rev. Matthew Fox, for many years in the early settlement of the town, preached with great zeal and earnestness to attentive audiences, and though ministerial labors were but poorly compensated, says he was gratified to know that the poor had the gospel preached to them. He says:

Mr. George Robinson opened his house at the Badger Mills for religious services, and early on Sunday mornings would arrange seats for the congregation, which two rooms generally accommodated. Not having a pulpit or substitute for one, I took position as convenience dictated. On one occasion I was in one room and the gentleman who undertook to lead the singing in the other, and out of my view. After my reading a hymn, the precentor for the time being, raised his voice to start the tune, but made a failure; he made another effort — it was desperate — but, alas, it also proved a failure. Then the cry of despondency came, "I can't make it go." So it remained for me to remove the difficulty the best way I could.

After some time a log school house was built on the west side of Sugar river, near the residence of Andrew Patton. This served as our place of worship for years.

Mr. Peter Martin was the first elder of the church. In him I found a wise counselor, a pleasant companion, a warm friend and a sincere Christian. He and his excellent wife have long since passed to their heavenly home. I gave place to the Rev. Jas. M'Donald, from Scotland, who labored there with much success. He, also, is deceased. The congregation have now a neat church and manse, quite in contrast with the old school house, where, after riding ten miles on cold winter mornings, I would find the people gathered round the stove. Despairing of getting warm from it, I used to proceed with the services, hoping by speaking to become warm, having first taken the precaution to place my hat against a broken pane of the window at my back. Yet in that wretched cabin I had precious hours, as I told the old, old, story, or administered the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or engaged in the sweet old psalms that are so rich in precious memories to the children of the covenanters, that lead one back to the days of Cargill and Cameron, and to the triumphs of truth and freedom in that noble land where God's testimony has never wanted a confessor since their witness for Jesus.

ADDITIONS BY J. T. HAWES.

My father and mother and three children moved into the town of Verona on the 7th day of March, 1843. It was a very cold day, with deep snow, which lay on the ground until April, when men went to the town meeting in sleighs. It was a remarkably long and hard winter, and many cattle starved to death. I well remember instances of men coming fifteen miles to get a load of straw, when we would give them the load and keep them over night. We had moved on to Mr. Samuel Taylor's farm, so had plenty of feed. At this time there was only one other family in the town, Peter Martin's, one mile from us. The next nearest was Joseph Vroman, five miles east, Ed. Campbell seven miles north, and McFadden, seven miles south. We living on the road from Janesville to Mineral Point, and as it was the only house for a long distance each way, having a good barn, something very scarce in those days, it was a regular stopping place for all travelers. Among the notables who used to frequent our house was Judge Irvin, Hons. Moses M. and Marshal M. Strong, Ebenezer Brigham, of Blue Mounds, George Delaplaine, etc. J. G. Knapp and E. M. Williamson, of Madison, used to make it their home while acting as surveyors in that part of the county. Judge Irvin was always accompanied by his famous horse Pedro, and dog York. My father one winter boarded old Pedro for the judge. If my memory serves me right, the first child born in the town was Ebenezer Collins. He was born in the evening. My mother was present, and early the next morning she was called to attend the birth of Olive Wheeler, a daughter of William A. Wheeler, who lived at the Badger Mills.

The first religious services in the town were held at our

house, by the Rev. Salmon Stebbins. He was followed soon after by a Methodist missionary by the name of Bennett, who afterwards took up the less honorable calling of office seeking. About this time we had occasional preaching by the Rev. Matthew Fox, of Fitchburg, a Presbyterian minister; also by his father, who was a Methodist preacher. He was known all over the country as Father Fox, or, as he sometimes styled himself in his jocular way, "Ould Daddy Fox."

In the summer of 1845 the settlers built a log school house on the northwest quarter of section 22, but when they had got the body up, they decided it was not located in the proper place, and so sold it to my father, who took it down and moved it on his farm, on section 13, which he was just beginning to open. The next year they erected a log school house on the west edge of what is now known as the Dane county poor farm. The first school was taught by Amy Thornton, in the winter of 1846-7, and I was one of her scholars. It was the custom in those days for the teacher to board around, and the big boys to take turns in building the fires. My turn came every Monday morning, and I remember getting a frozen ear on one of those occasions. The first summer school was taught by Miss Noyes, and the second winter term by Dr. Waterbury. He being the only physician in that part of the country, was frequently called away on professional duties, and at such times he placed the school in charge of some one of the big boys, quite a number of whom were men grown. One of the number, an Englishman by the name of Baker, who was sometimes called upon to preside, caused a good deal of merriment one day by telling some one in a class of spelling, who had left out the letter *n* in a word, that "there was a *hen* in there somewheres."

In 1843 my father was elected the first justice of the

peace in the town, and my brother, Harvey L. Hawes, the first constable. The same year my father was elected a supervisor of the town. Among his duties were the laying out and repairing of roads. This office he held for many years. In 1846 we moved on our own farm, and entertained many travelers in our little log house. A sign over our door with the word BEER in large letters, caused considerable attraction, as it was, for many miles around, the only thing of the kind outside of Madison. As the town has filled up fast with settlers, it will be difficult to follow its history further.

VERMONT.

THE town of Vermont lies in the western part of the county between the towns of Black Earth and Blue Mounds, and known as town 7 north, of range 6 east.

The town is well watered by Black Earth and Blue Mounds creeks, with their tributaries. The surface is very uneven, and along all the streams are bluffs or ridges; indeed, the face of the country is rough and hilly, yet there is very much desirable land suitable for all agricultural purposes. The land is covered with oak openings and no prairie. There are no villages in the town.

The town of Vermont was named by one of the settlers after his native state. The first settler was a German, named Joshua Harmony, who located here in 1846. I. C. Steele, who located on section 7, and S. Batty, on section 6, were among the early settlers. The town was organized in 1855. The first officers were Whalen Hasbrook, Isaac C. Steele and Jno. Caldwell; Aaron Dana, clerk. The first sermon was preached in 1849, by H. Mainard, of the Methodist church. The first school district was organized in 1850; A. Campbell first teacher.