CHAPTER IV

Two Rivers in 1850

Three Cities

If you look at the story of Two Rivers you will in effect see three cities. Each of the three will be distinctly different from the other two. The Two Rivers of 1850 was completely different from the Two Rivers of 1905 or the Two Rivers of 1969. Changes such as board sidewalks and dirt streets to concrete walks and paved streets have taken place. The frame houses and shanties of 1850 soon outlived their usefulness and were torn down to be replaced by more permanent buildings of more durable materials. Pioneer settlers who often made a contribution to the betterment of our community sometimes moved on to other parts of the state or nation only to be replaced by new migrations. Such is the story of change that has produced the “three cities” and it is to the Two Rivers of the year 1850 that we turn first.

The Community About 1850

The period of 1848-50 was one of large emigrations from Europe to America. It was one that saw the Irish potato famine and the German political upheaval. The effect of the German Revolution against the forces of the Emperor was to make it necessary for large numbers of Germans to leave their homeland while time permitted. Wisconsin was an area of the new world where the Germans could easily acclimate themselves. The terrain, the rainfall, the temperatures of Wisconsin were not unlike those of their homeland. Two Rivers received a large number of German immigrants around 1850 and they added their industry and talents to those of the New Englanders and French Canadians who had earlier come to our village.
In 1848, Two Rivers was a village of some 200 souls. In 1850, the population had risen to 924 people.

The county population of 1850 was only 3,702 and was distributed as follows: Two Rivers 924, Manitowoc 756, Manitowoc Rapids 1,092, Newton 497, Meeme 210, and Centerville 223. Of the 3,702 people, 409 were born in Wisconsin, 376 in New York, 366 in other states of the Union, 1,378 in Germany, 246 in Norway, 175 in Ireland, 129 in Great Britain, 265 in French Canada, and 255 in other foreign states.

The year 1848 was an eventful one for the people of Two Rivers. Not only were they joined by the industry and personality of immigrant peoples; they also celebrated Wisconsin statehood that year.

Events were taking place with rapidity for the villagers. They recalled the death of Chief Mexico in 1844. Busy with managing a living they hardly had time to reflect on the recent war between the United States and Mexico. Even at this time the men who were to supply the organization to local industry were sifting into the community from the East.

It became evident that the central portion of the town would spill over to form a substantial Eastside and Southside. For this reason a bridge was constructed in 1849 across the Mishicot River to the Eastside of town. The bridge was built at the 16th street rather than the 17th street site.

"Like Caesar’s Gaul, Two Rivers, my home town, was divided into three parts. This division was not only geographical but also social. Geographically it was divided into three parts by the two rivers from which it derived its name.

As the city is located on a point that extends into the lake, a narrow strip of land between the east river and the lake was in the early days inhabited mostly by Canadian French people and was known as the French side. The bridge that connected the French Side with that part of the town located between the two rivers was known as the French Bridge. These Canadian French people were either fishermen or rivermen for the lumber company and sawmill.

In that portion of the town between the two rivers was, and still is, the main factory and business district. To the north of this area the wealthier and business people had their homes. In the early days it was frequently referred to as Yankee Hill. This was due to the fact that most of the early lumbermen and sawmill owners were New Englanders.

That portion of the town south of the West Twin or Shoto
river for some obscure reason was known as the Mexico Side and its residents as Mexicaners. Most of the folks who lived there were poor German immigrants of peasant stock and their families. German and Low German were the languages spoken there. My father's parents were among those German immigrants and spoke Low German. The bridge that connected this part of the town with the central portion of the city was known as the Chair Factory Bridge, as in those days a chair factory with its warehouse and paint shop was located at the south end of the bridge. The chair factory ceased operating during the Cleveland panic in 1893 and never reopened. The chair factory site is now occupied by one of the plants of the Aluminum Goods Mfg. Co.

Another bridge crossed the West Twin River. This was at the extreme south end of the main business street now known as Washington Street. This bridge was known as the Mill Bridge, as a grist mill was located at the south end of the bridge.”

Around 1850 farming began to make its initial impact felt in the Community. William Johannes and D. Dicke were known to have established farms at this time. Soon they were joined by Felix Walsh and in 1854 Ed Stollberg, Henry Riesland, Charles Stehmesser and Fred Riesland were engaged in farming in this area. By 1855 Charles Stueck, G. Volck, A. Wurster, William Glass, J. Sechrist, and J. E. Wilke were added to the growing list of people engaged in agriculture. By 1857 Herman Goedjen and A. Rutz had built farms and they were followed by farmers such as John Fay, Frank Wachtel Sr., and F. Stadler.

Oxen were more common in the village of 1850 than were horses. As more settlers came in they swelled the demands for business and civic improvements. Roads had to be built to allow the oxen to pull the wagons that would connect Two Rivers with outlying cities. Much of the impetus for road improvements would have to come from the local government of the period. It is to the government of the period that we now turn.

The assessed valuation of Two Rivers township in 1849 was $50,701.34. One can readily see that only a small amount of revenue could then be raised through taxation. It is to be noted that Manitowoc County had been divided into four

1 Charles F. Matthies, Autobiography and History, 1966., p. 1
"towns" in 1849, namely; Two Rivers, Manitowoc, Manitowoc Rapids, and Meeme. The first township election was held on April 3, 1849 with a total of 106 votes cast. The results of this early election for town offices follows:

Chairman: Andrew J. Vieu
Supervisors: Ben F. Seas and William B. Honey
Clerk: H. C. Hamilton
Treasurer: Hugh M. Ritter
Assessor: Albert Borcherdt
Superintendent of Schools: Hezekiah H. Smith
Overseers of highways for District #1: John Glass
" " " " District #2: Charles Ottman
Justice of the Peace: Lawrence Peterson, James Sprague, Mason Young, Charles B. Daggart
Sealer of Weights and Measures: Andrew J. Vieu
Fence Viewers: Adolph Lamere, Fredick Hanson, and Fredick Miller

The town moved on the poverty problem on April 9, 1849 when clerk H. C. Hamilton noted, "It was moved and seconded that one hundred dollars be raised by a tax on real estate for the support of the poor in this town, which motion was carried. The officers also agreed to spend $100 for roads and bridges and $5 for the clerk's books and stationery."

At a later meeting on June 1, 1859 the record reads: "Resolved that Adolph Moncan be and hereby is appointed a committee of one to lay out a road from Mishicot to intersect the Green Bay Road at Joseph Allies farm in section 1, town 21, range 22 east, and is hereby authorized to engage Nahum Daniels as surveyor and such other help as he may deem necessary. And later: "Resolved that Adolph Moncan be appointed a committee of one to lay out a road from Mishicot east to Lake Michigan.

Not all of the local improvement in facilities in 1850 was the result of governmental action. H. H. Smith built a log dock out into Lake Michigan to accomodate the schooners of the period. Also in 1850 another sawmill was erected in the area of the present coal docks. Issac Taylor of Racine was the enterprizer who erected the new sawmill and he also built a second pier out into lake Michigan. Isaac Taylor and H. H. Smith

2 L. Falge, A History of Manitowoc County Vol. I, p. 414
then built a bridge, at their own expense, from Jefferson Street to the area of the present coal docks.

The citizens of the small community began to construct those dwellings and places of business that seemed notable to the Two Riverites of the time. In 1850 a man named Gebhardt erected a house where the Waverly Hotel now stands and used it as tailor shop. Three saloons dotted the town and were owned by men named Boldus, LaMere, and Mattel. Mattel's establishment also contained a bowling alley. H. H. Smith and a Borcherdt family lived in a log house that stood where the Congregational Church is located today.

In 1850 the first area newspaper, the Manitowoc Herald, was brought into being by its editor, C. W. Fitch. The advent of a weekly newspaper, frequent calls by schooners, and the rave talk about proposed new roads were a part of the bold new world.

In 1850 the northern part of the County was added to with the acquisition of parts or all of Cooperstown, Gibson, Mishicot, and Two Creeks townships. These areas were acquired from an oversized Brown County.

The Cholera Epidemic of 1850

Cholera, a dread disease of the age, struck our village in 1850 and before the epidemic ended twenty-two people were dead. Two Rivers is said to have suffered more deaths in proportion to its population than any town in the nation.

The epidemic began on Sunday, August 5, 1850 while the Indians were holding a big celebration in the village. Six people died the next day and many were ill with the "Asiatic Plague." The County toll for the week was fifty. When the schooner finally arrived in port there was a stampede to its decks and a general exodus for Sheboygan.

One can readily see the importance of the German immigrant to Two Rivers and Manitowoc county if he will but look around him. The Germans continued to emigrate here in the later 1840's and 50's and formed the largest single national group in the Two Rivers population. The story of one of Two River's earliest German pioneers is an interesting one and will serve to illustrate what the life of an immigrant was like. George Hallauer was such an immigrant. He was born in Baden, Germany on March 10, 1824, and grew to manhood there. In 1848, he enlisted his services in behalf of the
revolutionary cause led by Franz Siegel. Hallauer had to flee the country or face the consequences of a hostile emperor. George gathered his belongings and $200 in cash and started for the port of Antwerp, Belgium, in July of 1848. He sailed for New York on board the vessel "Cothilda" the fare being $100 without meals. Each of the 250 immigrant passengers had to take provisions and bedding to last for the voyage. Here is George Hallauer's account of his experience:

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

"On arriving at New York, he, with a friend by the name
of John Leabinger, met an old friend of Leabinger’s by the name of Charles Eigeldinger, who told them to go west. He told them of a brother of his who had settled on a farm near Two Rivers, and who had written him that the country was ideal, land good and cheap, the price being $1.25 per acre. Mr. Hallauer and his friend Mr. Leabinger, having no relatives in America, no definite location in mind, and no means except $100 in funds between them, decided to take Mr. Eigeldinger’s advice and come to Two Rivers, Wisconsin, as they thought they could no doubt secure employment of some kind and later purchase a farm. Therefore, in the forepart of December, 1848, they left New York for Albany by boat on the Hudson river, thence by train to Buffalo, and steamboat to Milwaukee. After tarrying in Milwaukee four or five days, which was then a comparatively small place, they started for Two Rivers on foot, as there was no train or boat line running up here. Lake navigation had closed, the boat they came on being the last to make Milwaukee for the season. From Milwaukee to Port Washington, a corduroy road had been constructed through dense woods, mostly hardwoods. The first day they only traveled about twelve or fifteen miles, and stayed over night with a fisherman who had a small shanty near the lake. Arriving at Port Washington the next day, they were obliged to follow the beach, as there was no trail or road to take. They reached Sheboygan that night, where there was then a small settlement. The following day they arrived at Manitowoc and stopped with a party by the name of George Dusold.

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

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

Another German immigrant of the period was Andrew Baetz who came to Two Rivers in 1852 and soon became prominent in local business and civic affairs. Baetz was a carriage maker by trade. He built a home on the corner of 16th and Monroe Streets and was later married there. Andrew Baetz held a number of public offices including the mayor’s office from 1870-1872 and 1882-1883. His son Conrad was mayor from 1909-1912. Another son, Arthur Baetz, founded the Reporter Newspaper in 1913.

Two Rivers was a village in transition in the 1850’s. Many of the original New Yorkers and New Englanders moved on to opportunities in other areas as time passed.

Dr. Franz Simon, a refugee from the revolution of ’48, came to Two Rivers from Germany in 1851. It was “western fever” which brought him out to Two Rivers and it was a reoccurrence of said fever that compelled him to leave Two Rivers for the gold fields of Colorado in 1859. After a stint in the Pike’s Peak region as a 59er, Dr. Simon returned to our area and took up the practice of medicine in Manitowoc.

A Memorable 4th.

“The 4th of July in the year 1852 which, owing to the 4th occurring on Sunday, was celebrated on the 5th, is one that will never be forgotten by many of the earlier settlers.

In order that the nation’s anniversary might be duly celebrated, a committee of villagers had made arrangements for a parade and picnic at which a luncheon and refreshments of all kinds were to be served without charge. Hosea Allen was in charge of the arrangements and invitations had been sent to the residents of Manitowoc, Sheboygan and Milwaukee to participate in the festivities.

Accordingly friends in Milwaukee arranged an excursion to Two Rivers on the side-wheeler steamer “Planet” which left Milwaukee on Sunday afternoon, July 4th, at about 6 o’clock for Two Rivers, stopping at Sheboygan and Manitowoc on route to take on additional excursionists. The steamer with a large number of excursionists on board arrived at the pier here about 9 o’clock Monday morning and was met by practically all the villagers who accorded them an enthusiastic and noisy welcome, in true western style.

A line of march was then formed with Hosea Allen at the head and Ed. Boutin as marshal of the day, followed by the
band and the crowd. After a short parade in honor of the occasion, they were escorted to a grove of tall pine trees, which occupied the site where Mr. Kessman resided for many years. Here tables and benches had been erected and the visitors and others were treated to an elaborate dinner which was to be followed by a program of speech-making, games and a general jollification.

In order that the celebration might be duly ushered in, an old cannon which had formerly constituted a part of the defenses of Fort Howard, near Green Bay, and which had been brought here sometime previous, was brought into service.

The committee on arrangements had procured six 50-lb. kegs of powder and engaged Ed. LaPoint, a veteran of the Mexican War, to fire the salutes. The cannon was planted on a knoll or hill which occupied a site approximately on the northwest corner of the public school grounds. The knoll was surmounted by a flag pole 175 feet high. For convenience in handling and loading the cannon, the powder from five kegs had been sewed up in flannel bags containing one pound of powder each, each bag constituting one charge. The other keg was opened and left in this condition, the powder being used in priming the cannon. All of the powder both in the bags and keg was placed conveniently near at hand.

Promptly at four o'clock in the morning the first salute was fired and continued at regular intervals up to ten o'clock in the morning, when a disaster occurred that caused sorrowing and suffering to many and turned the day of joy and pleasure into sorrow and suffering.

It seems that some of the younger element were engaged in shooting fire crackers and began throwing them promiscuously about. Suddenly one of the lighted fire crackers was thrown into the keg containing the loose powder which had been used for priming the cannon. Instantly a sheet of flame shot forth igniting the other powder contained in the bags, which, igniting all at once, exploded and flames and powder were shot out in every direction for a distance of 100 feet or more. When the smoke had cleared away it was found that 36 people had been more or less severely injured, the clothes catching fire in many instances, adding to the horror.

Of those most severely injured were the following: Henry Decker, Henry Rife, Albert Jackson, Oliver Pilon and Moses Bunker. Friends immediately offered every assistance, private homes were thrown open, notably that of Mr. Gotlieb Berger
at that time residing near the Washington House, where the injured and badly burned were wrapped in cotton and sweet oil.

Of the victims Albert Jackson was so severely injured by the force of the explosion, besides receiving burns, that he died within a few hours after the accident. Of the others all recovered but many were sadly disfigured and will retain the scars the balance of their lives. Moses Bunker was probably, next to Jackson, the most badly injured, and although only eight years of age at the time, and badly burned, he finally recovered and still lives to recite the history of that day.

The steamer "Planet" with such of the injured and others of the excursionists immediately left for Milwaukee to procure more sweet oil and cotton and other medical supplies as might be needed and returned the following day in record breaking time with the much needed supplies.

The old cannon used on that occasion did service for nearly 50 years on similar occasions after that, and finally came to a glorious end by bursting while firing a salute on the occasion of Schley's victory at Santiago, July 4, 1898. Fortunately no one was injured when she burst. The victory was evidently too great for the limited capacity of the cannon to properly give vent to its pent up feelings, so with a supreme effort it burst."

The small community developed a pioneer musical society that typically gave Saturday night concerts in the area. An article in the Manitowoc pilot of Dec. 16, 1859 remarked that the Two Rivers Musical Society "is an honor to the village".

One of the more gruesome activities of the area concerned the Indian burial mounds at Two Rivers. Such a burial ground was to be found in the area presently occupied by St. Lukes' Church. Doctors of the area "secured their skeletons for anatomical study and office use" by opening these graves.

The residents of the village were in constant contact with Indian life. The Manitowoc Herald of July 4, 1857 relates the following happening. "Two Rivers was the scene of an exciting happening last Tuesday. The Indians were making merry according to their annual custom and sang, and danced,

4 A. H. Lohman, Early Days in Two Rivers, p. 43
5 L. Falge, A History of Manitowoc County, Vol. 1, p. 414
6 Ibid
and yelled, with commendable energy. "Old Quitos" who says he has been drunk so much he has forgotten his age, seemed to have renewed the vigor of youth and joined in the festivities with infinite satisfaction. He was the observed of all observers (there were about 100) and when some boy put on a brimless hat upon his head, his satisfaction seemed complete. Two Rivers has the start on us in being selected for this distinguished Indian event, but as they have no fire engine to help get up excitement, we will not be jealous."

The few stores in the village of the 1850's carried the more common food items of the period. We have had over a century to inflate the prices of the food we eat. Still, it might be interesting to look at prices that might amaze a homemaker of the 1960's. Here are some of the market prices in the stores of Two Rivers in 1859.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>.09¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>.08¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown sugar</td>
<td>.06¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Coffee</td>
<td>.12¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Java Coffee</td>
<td>.18¢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common lumber</td>
<td>$6.00 to 6.50 (per thousand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitefish</td>
<td>$5.00 (per barrel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trout</td>
<td>$5.00 (per barrel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>.50¢ (per bushel)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two Rivers may properly be thought of as a port in the 1850's since the commerce was basically seaborne. A look into the economic picture of the port revealed the following exports for the quarter ending June 30, 1855.

"Steamboats cleared, 79; sailboats cleared, 41; lumber, 5,100,000 feet; lath, 2,000,000; shingles, 3,000,000; shingle bolts, 22 chords; cedar posts, 4,000; wood, 120 cords; bark, 71 cords; shade trees, 2,000; sole leather, 32,458 pounds; belting leather, 8,569 pounds; harness and upper leather, 100,401 pounds; hair, 492 pounds; glue scraps, 22,289 pounds; switches, 12 barrels; wool, 6,783 pounds. Aggregate value of all exports, $143,859.99."

It was evident to villagers of the period that roads connecting Two Rivers to other area towns would be necessary. Spirited citizens such as H. H. Smith pushed road construction both in the private and public spheres. Bridges were in-

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8 Ibid
cluded in the improvement plans of the pioneer as a necessary link in the roadways.

On January 17, 1848 the County Board agreed to the proposal for a Two Rivers bridge at the Washington Street site. Two years earlier a sawmill road to Mishicot had been approved. The Two Rivers and Green Bay Plank Road Company was incorporated on February 9, 1850 by H.H. Smith, John F. Meade, Daniel Smith, Morgan L. Martin, Henry Baird, James Sprague, Lorenz Peterson, Henry Hamilton, and Charlis B. Eggert with a capital stock of $100,000 to build a plank or Charcoal road from Two Rivers to Green Bay.

In 1851 the Manitowoc and Mississippi Railroad Company was incorporated. It was hoped that this firm would bring the railroad to reality in Two Rivers in a relatively short time. Hope was soon shattered when internal dissension ripped the company and work was retarded until 1872 when the road’s successor, the Milwaukee Lakeshore & Western Railroad completed a line from Appleton to Manitowoc.

In 1874 Two Rivers finally got her outlet by rail to the important cities of Wisconsin and the nation. H.H. Smith did much of the work in getting out the city’s bonds in the amount of $25,000. The rail link was to be 6½ miles long and a new station was to be built. Today the line is a part of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway. In 1856 the Manitowoc, Two Rivers, and Mishicot Plank Road Company was incorporated. The capital stock of the company was $30,000. Work proceeded on the popular “period” type road.

Pioneer settlers coming from the old world to Two Rivers were naturally concerned with transportation costs. When a pioneer landed in New York he found that a single fare to Albany by steamboat was fifty cents. By this time in history he would no longer have to book fare on the Erie Canal to Buffalo as the advent of the railroad had already taken place. The New York Central was to charge him $5.00 fare for the swift ride from Albany to Buffalo. At Buffalo a pioneer would have to shift to boat travel and make the slow passage of Lakes Erie, Huron, and Michigan to Two Rivers or Manitowoc. This last leg of the journey cost an additional $3.00 to $4.00.

The Manitowoc Herald in October of 1854 recorded that “Rapid progress was being made by Taylor and Pendleton on a pier at Two Rivers, several hundred feet of pile driving being completed.”

In 1856 the mails were put on a daily schedule to Two
Rivers. The Goodrich steamer Huron held the mail and delivered it daily on its run from Milwaukee to Two Rivers. Transportation was only one aspect of the working world of the 1850's. There was a lot to be done and ambitious pioneers put in some amazing amounts of time in their mills, farms, fisheries, and factories.

Steam was gradually replacing sail on Lake Michigan as well as in the flour and saw mills of the period. The Manitowoc Herald in 1856 reported that "In Manitowoc County we have 12 steam sawmills, 22 sawmills driven by water power and 5 flouring mills."

The County's first Brewery was established at Two Rivers about the mid 1850's. Follantine Kauffman and Edward Mueller were the malters who ran the brewery and had their products transported to Manitowoc twice a week by rowboat. By the same means their barrels of beer arrived at Neshoto and Mishicot.

In 1854 a second Cholera epidemic hit the village. This epidemic was fortunately less severe than that of 1850.

With the growth in village population came a corresponding growth in religious organizations. The first Protestant church services held in the village were conducted by the Methodists, as was mentioned earlier. The large incoming German population were primarily Lutheran and Catholic in their religious inheritance. The Methodist, Lutheran, Congregational, and Catholic churches became the common centers of religious activity of the people of the 1850's.

In the year 1851 a Congregational Church was begun with H.H. Smith and J. Fischer as deacons.

On July 16, 1851 St. Lukes Mission was founded on a plot given by Robert Eberts to Bishop Henni of Green Bay.

The first Lutheran services were held in a building where the Old Tannery School later stood and were conducted by Missionary Koehler. Rev. Koehler was a circuit missionary and arrived here about once a month.

The first Baptist Church was built in Shoto in the early 1850's.

About ½ mile north of Shoto village the Sisters of Charity conducted a popular school which was attended by children of several religious denominations.

During the early years the postal service in the village was non-official. The government actually had no appointed official to handle the limited need for postal service. The fed-
eral government finally caught up with our village and appointed Henry A. Tefft, our first postmaster in 1848. Earlier our unofficial postmasters had included Andrew Vieau, H.H. Smith, Joe Fisher, and Charles Daggart. Henry Tefft carried the mail in his pockets and the village postal receipts for the first year totaled less than $50.00. The early postoffice known to villagers of the 1850's stood where Boetger's Store was later located.

The local governments of the area were undergoing marked changes during this period. In 1850 the townships of Mishicot, Gibson, and Two Creeks were added to Two Rivers Township.

In 1842 the 3 above mentioned towns were set off again as separate townships. At this time Kossuth Township was also taken out of the Town of Two Rivers. From 1852 to 1858 the township and village of Two Rivers were governed as one.

In 1853 our county seat was shifted from Manitowoc Rapids to Manitowoc.

On March 31, 1858 Two Rivers was incorporated as a village and H.C. Hamilton was chosen the first village president. It wasn't until 1878 that the city received its’ City Charter. The village of that day was divided into three wards. The 1st was on the eastside and downtown area adjacent to the Mishicot River. The second ward began at Jefferson Street and consumed the remainder of the downtown area. The third ward was on the southside.

The pioneer villager of the period depended on outside newspapers if he wanted to stay abreast of the events that were current in his day. The mid-1850's saw two Manitowoc weeklies circulating in our village. Perhaps the more important was the widely read Manitowoc Herald. The other was a German language newspaper called the Wisconsin Demokrat. The county board minutes (by resolution) had to be printed in German as well as English.

On April 25, 1854 the Manitowoc Tribune was founded by S.W. Smith and was also read in the village.

In 1859 the Manitowoc Pilot was established by Jere Crowley, a fiery Irishman whose opponents nearly ruined his printshop in response to his views on Civil War issues.

The County began its politics with a majority of Democratic opinion. The people nevertheless tended to shift some sentiment toward the Republican side in the Civil War years.
The Copperheads or anti-war Democrats, were a force in our village just as they were elsewhere in the North. A tally of the County Presidential vote of 1860 showed Lincoln with 2,041 votes and Douglas with 1,947 votes.

The First Schools

A “dame” school was the first recorded enterprise in the field of education in our Community. Miss Diantha Smith taught some eighteen students in that school year of 1845. Miss Smith was later to become the mother of the Hamilton boys, J. E. and H. P.

In 1849 the first governmentally sponsored school was organized in an old log shanty later occupied by the William Nash residence. A young pedagogue by the name of Nahum Daniels became the school’s first master. Only nine pupils attended school that first winter, among them were a La Mere child, two of deacon Smith’s children, two boys, and William Johannes, age fifteen, who had migrated from Germany in that year.

In 1850 a larger schoolhouse was built on a site later occupied by the residence of Mrs. N. Niller. The teacher was a Mr. Canright.

In 1862 a public school was taught by a Miss Honey at the corner of Main and River Streets. Miss Honey taught English in the upstairs of the building while a German school was in session on the first floor.

Land sold for $1.25 per acre in 1850 and the village’s buildings were so few and scattered that the public square in front of Today’s Community House was covered with trees and brush. It was into this type of setting that the important tannery business now came to Two Rivers.