

# Menasha

**Menasha**—(an Indian word meaning “thorn” or “island”), a city of Winnebago county, Wisconsin, U. S. A., 88 miles north of Milwaukee and 14 miles north of Oshkosh, situated on the extreme northern extremity of Lake Winnebago, at its outlet into the Fox river. Menasha is served by the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie, the Chicago and Northwestern, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul and the Wisconsin and Northern Railways, and by an inter-urban electric railway system. Doty Island, at the mouth of the Fox river, is a popular and picturesque summer resort. Menasha has excellent water power which is utilized in the manufacture of paper and sulphite pulp, lumber, woodenware and cooperage products, woolen and knit goods, leather, boats, bricks, pulleys, trucks, tractors, paper cartons, paper specialties and machinery. The first white man to visit the site of Menasha was probably Jean Nicolet, who seems to have come in the winter of 1634-1635 and to have found here villages of Fox and Winnebago Indians. Subsequently there were French and English trading posts here. The city was settled permanently in 1848, and was chartered in 1847.

A rapidly growing industry of Menasha represents an important step in the evolution of the wood-using industries of the Fox River Valley. Wood is the raw material for the paper mills, and paper is the raw material for such plants as the Menasha Printing and Carton Company; its specialty is the printing of great quantities of soap wrappers, gum wrappers, and bread wrappers and the manufacture of practically 90% of the ice cream and butter cartons used in the United States. A half million and a million soap wrappers a day and single orders for billions of wrappers are indicative of the output of this one plant. The operation of a paper mill by this company illustrates a principle of expansion of an industry, namely, the advantage gained by controlling its own supply of raw material.

The largest manufacturing concern in the Fox River Valley is the Menasha Wooden Ware Company, whose buildings, yards, side-tracks, etc., cover 65 acres bordering the Fox river. It uses over fifty buildings besides the drying houses. The industry began practically with the founding of Menasha and has grown to be the largest wooden ware plant in the world. The founder of the company (Mr. E. D. Smith) commenced with a single lathe, made his own tubs and pails and peddled them with a one-horse wagon. Now the plant uses yearly six thousand cars of material, including 300 to 400 cars of wire and hoop iron; 75 per cent of the wood used is basswood cut from the company's own tract of 125,000 acres in Northern Wisconsin. All of the logs are now received by rail. The following partial list of items indicates the magnitude of the operations. Its shipments aggregate a train load a week. The plant uses 25,000,000 feet of timber annually. Each year it makes:

- Enough candy pails to hold 120,000,000 lbs. of candy.
- Enough fish pails to hold 12,000,000 lbs. of fish.
- Enough pickle kits to hold 1,800,000 gallons of pickles.
- Enough tierces to hold 50,000,000 lbs. of lard.
- Enough lard half barrels to hold 30,000,000 lbs. of lard.
- Enough lard pails to hold 60,000,000 lbs. of lard.

# Historic Sites In the City of Menasha and Near by Region

By Publius V. Lawson, LL. B.

In the city of Menasha, a statue bronze tablet 18x22, bolted to a Winnebago Manitou boulder, set on the top of a concrete monument, twelve feet high, to commemorate the coming of Jean Nicolet, the first white man in Wisconsin. Located at the park on Doty Island, near the site of the Winnebago village that Nicolet came to visit. The inscription reads: "Near this spot landed 1634, first white man in Wisconsin, Jean Nicolet, met the Winnebago tribe, held earliest white council with 5,000 savages. Erected by City of Menasha and Women's Clubs of Menasha, 1906." Unveiled September 3, 1906, at the Assembly of the Wisconsin Archaeological Society.

Old Ben, the revolutionary cannon, was one of those captured from the British, either from Burgoyne or Cornwallis, and carried to Detroit, where the British recaptured them in 1812. Retaken the same war by Gen. Harrison. Carried to Mackinac Island and thence in 1816 to Fort Howard. When the fort was abandoned in 1854, the cannon was given to the village of Menasha. It is the only revolutionary cannon remaining in the West.

The historic bell on the St. Mary's Church premises, was purchased in England in 1859, by the Congregational people, carried all the distance to the village of Menasha by water. After the church was sold to St. Mary's Society and burned, the bell was raised out of the cinders in the basement and set up on a frame in the yard. Constant contact of the hammer at one point on the bell, cracked it. The bell is 61 years old.

The old homes of Col. Geo. B. Goodwin, Capt. Joseph Keyes, Rev. O. P. Clinton, Judge John Bryan, Maj. Charles Doty, Col. Samuel Ryan, Hon. John Potter, Hon. Curtis Reed, are all standing.

The battle of the Raven, 1730, was fought near Washington street. The Fox Fort stood on Hewitt's Hill. The Winnebago Fort was on Dendo Island. The separating stream is now Garfield street. The battle between these two nations lasted six weeks, until the French Capt. Sier Marin arrived and took sides with the Winnebagos. One morning a raven was seen to enter the Fox Fort, by which sign Marin knew the Foxes had fled in the night.

The stone lighthouse built by the federal government, 1856, at the mouth of the river, was torn down by the ice floes on Lake Winnebago in 1880.

United States government land office located here from 1856 to 1884, disposed of half the state.

Three panther mounds in the public park.

Ancient Winnebago village site on Doty Island in rear of Lyall Pinkerton home. The oldest Indian village in the United States. This was the village of Glory of the Morning, where she married Capt. Sabrevoir de Carrie, 1729-1760. Sires of the Decorah Chiefs. This was also the home of Four Legs Winnebago Village, 1754 to 1832. It was the name of this village "Menasha," that named the city.

The Loggery, the log home of Gov. James D. Doty, 1845 to 1865, still stands on Doty Island, on the premises of Ex-Lieut. Gov. John Strange.