WHEN Rev. Jedediah Morse, father of the inventor of the telegraph, visited Wisconsin for eastern missionary societies over a century ago he found its streams so abundantly supplied with fish, its bayous and lakes such a feeding and nesting place for wild fowl, its forests tracked with so many species of wild animals, including deer; its soil so rich awaiting only a clearing to atune it into a harvest, that he recommended to John C. Calhoun, then secretary of war, that the confines of the present state should be set aside for a great Indian empire. Here nature was so lavish with its life and products that a livelihood was to be had for the taking.

But the dream of an Indian commonwealth was never realized. True, remnants of a few Indian tribes from New York,—the Stockbridges, Oneidas, Brothertowns and the Munsees—were moved in 1822 to the fertile Fox River valley below Green Bay, where they prospered and might today well be pointed to as an example of a humane and intelligent experiment in the development and civilizing of the Indian races. But the country was already being marked for a more marvelous development. Historically and socially, Wisconsin possesses an individuality which cannot be compassed by any geographer’s boundary lines. Only by a fuller understanding of the broad background upon which the generations in Wisconsin have worked out their destiny, will the story of how these people guard their resources and preserve their scenery for the future appear the definite outline.
Long before the recorded history of man great things were doing in Wisconsin. A glacial ice sheet nosed down from the north, moved over the greater part of the state, retreated, advanced, retreated and yet advanced again before the moderating climate forced its retirement to the Arctic regions. When the glacier had receded the surface of the state was left much as it is today. By some strange freak, which guides the forces of nature, the southwestern part of the state was entirely missed by the ice flow. Wherever the glacier moved it scooped out numerous lakes, as it did within its path in northern Wisconsin; it dug kettle holes of earth, which have given variety to the undulating scenery between Fond du Lac and Sheboygan, and it left a fertile subsoil, which has aided in making the state so prosperous for farming. Over the glacier plowed area grew a coniferous forest, which in ages after became known as "the pineries."

How different is the area of southwestern Wisconsin untilled by the ice plows! Here the plain and plateau have been deeply eroded, forming level-floored valleys with towering hills and rugged embankments. A natural system
of drainage, with tree-like branches spreads through this section. There are no lakes, or fields strewn with round glacier-rolled boulders. The hillsides are covered with hardwoods. Indeed, the whole scenery is a marked contrast when compared with the lake-dimpled region of the glaciated area. But the warmth that melted the ice to water also brought forth vegetation to cover the nakedness of the land, the forests grew and “man came upon the scene.”

Sitting in his rude castle on the hills of Quebec, overlooking the haze of purple and blue mist which transcended the great St. Lawrence valley, Samuel de Champlain, the first governor of New France (1608–1635) learned from the Indians who came down the rivers with canoes laden with furs of a “strange people” and a wonderful country “beyond the seas.” Their stories stirred his imagination. He wanted the inland explored. Little did he dream that the far-away lands from which all these many tales of plenty came was the heart of a continent,—a land since known as Wisconsin. It was in 1634, that Jean Nicolet, trader and adventurer, was directed to explore westward. He was to find the way. He came up to Ottawa, Lakes Huron and Michigan and entered Wisconsin’s confines landing at Red Banks, on the eastern shore, a few miles north of Green Bay. This spot has since been marked by a bronze tablet and on a large historical bounder, in commemoration of the visit of this first Wisconsin pilgrim.

The stories of John Smith, Pocahontas, or the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers on the dreary shores of Massachusetts but fourteen years previous, are not more thrilling than the coming of this first stranger. He was to give us an historical ancestry older than that cherished by many Atlantic coast settlements about which so much is written to the neglect of more deserving communities.

Nicolet came on a trade mission, confident in the belief that the water route would lead to China. Garbed in a brilliantly colored Chinese damask robe, with seven Huron Indians around him, discharging thunder and lightning from pistols in both hands, he ascended the picturesque embankments of the Green Bay shore to be met by a délegation from the Winnebago Indian village. Their gardens of
squash and Indian corn and their smoking tepees crowned the ramparts, but even in those distant days, Wisconsin was noted for her resources and hospitality. A great feast, at which one hundred and twenty beaver were eaten, was immediately arranged.

Soon others were to hear of this rich and beautiful inland empire. Twenty years after, Raddison and Grossilliers, roving fur traders came, spending months on their trip. Longing to visit “far countries” they lingered around the castled shores of Lake Superior becoming the first tourists to drink in the wild scenery and enchanting beauty of northern Wisconsin.

Following the traders came zealous Jesuit priests to work among the Indians. They built their log chapels close to streams, where all who should engage in trade and commerce must pass. Only the songs of birds and the soughing of wind through the forests, made music for their devotions. These religious centers have since become cities. Scores of these old mission sites as at Green Bay, De Pere, Oshkosh, Manitowoc, Milwaukee and many others, have been located. Some have been appropriately marked because of their historic significance. Thus did the whole story of early Wisconsin teem with romantic and colorful history.

These early traders and priests were possessed of adventurous natures. They were always seeking information of lands and people who lived beyond the horizon rim of their immediate knowledge. Finally in 1673, Louis Jolliet joined with Father James Marquette in a canoe voyage up the Fox River, across the land divide, where the present city of Portage now stands, and then down the Wisconsin to make on June 17, the discovery of the Mississippi River. After days of travel on the Father of Waters amid some of the most majestic scenery in the nation even today, they became satisfied that the river did not span the continent, but emptied into the Gulf of Mexico. So they turned their canoes on a journey homeward. Seven years later Duluth explored another water-course across the confines of the present state—the Boise Brule-St. Croix route, in the Lake Superior region, which also emptied into the Mississippi. These twin discoveries were of great significance.
Within the next two hundred years these two water-routes were to serve as the arteries of commerce for an expanding fur trade. There were no roads and the operations of the traders and voyagers centered around canoe travel. One other gigantic transportation experiment was tried and failed. For a time, the intrepid La Salle had a monopoly from the French King for the western fur trade. His sailing vessel, The “Griffon”, the first to appear on the lakes, built at Niagara in 1679, floundered off the Green Bay shore when laden with fur and financially ruined its adventurous owner. Throughout this period the French and the British were rivals for the pelt business of Wisconsin. Green Bay and Prairie du Chien, at the opposite end of the Fox-Wisconsin waterway, became the leading French posts for trade, while a port on Chequamegon Bay gathered the fur from the Lake Superior region. It was not until the close of the war of 1812, when the British were finally removed from influence, that Wisconsin began to take on a distinctive individuality.

Oldest of Wisconsin's settlements, Green Bay has a history dating for nearly three centuries. For one hundred and fifty years the history of Green Bay is the history of Wisconsin. Trade and communities started other commu-
nities. Before Prairie du Chien became a village it was a place noted for the gathering of many Indian tribes. The humble beginnings of Portage resulted from the necessities of travelers who used the Fox—Wisconsin water route. Indeed, the genesis of many early Wisconsin cities was French as attested by the musical French names. Some others bear Indian titles, while those begun in more recent decades carry the cognomen of their pioneer founders.

Until the year 1834 the fur trade “managed by American but almost wholly manned by the French” continued the principal industry of Wisconsin. To protect this trade along the Fox—Wisconsin water course, military forts were erected at Green Bay (Ft. Howard); at Prairie du Chien (Ft. Crawford) and at Portage (Ft. Winnebago). Many distinguished personages were stationed at these establishments. Zachary Taylor, later president of the United States, had charge of Ft. Crawford; and Jefferson Davis, later president of the southern confederacy, was a lieutenant at Ft. Winnebago. But before the land was formally opened to settlement lead mining in southern Wisconsin began to attract immigration.

With the opening of land offices at Green Bay and Mineral Point in 1834, settlers began to pour in through the port at Milwaukee, by way of Chicago and up the Mississippi and overland from Illinois, Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky. Two years before, the last Indian war east of the Mississippi was fought in Wisconsin, when the Sac Indian Chief, Black Hawk, pursued by a division of troops, of which Abraham Lincoln was a volunteer, followed the retreating Indians through Ft. Atkinson, Cottage Grove, Madison, resulting in a real Indian battle at Wisconsin Heights, a mile south of the present Sauk City. With the aid of a government gunboat and the land troops, the Indian band was later annihilated at Battle Island, near the present village of Victory on the Mississippi River. This dramatic Indian foray gave Wisconsin its own battle fields,—and the chroniclers of the state have made these spots historic.

But the war did more than still the threat of Indians. Soldiers in pursuit became acquainted with the richness of the land and the beauty of the country traversed. They wrote letters to their friends in the east. This free adver-
tising stimulated a real tide. So rapid were the sales to both settlers and speculators that by December 1, 1836 nearly 900,000 acres had been recorded and the territory was organized. A ten year contest for statehood had chas
tened its ideals of civic righteousness. These were times of bitter political scraps over fugitive slave laws and prin
ciples of freedom. The crucible culminated in a Ripon, Wisconsin, schoolhouse becoming the birthplace of the Re
publican Party in 1854—a shrine annually visited by thou
sands.

News of the home offerings in Wisconsin spread rapidly to foreign lands. The Swiss government financed a colony at New Glarus, which has become the center of the foreign cheese trade of the United States. German immigrants settled in Milwaukee and along the Lake Michigan shore, bringing with them their high ideals of citizenship and fru
gality. Norwegian immigrants spread over many of the southern Wisconsin counties. Scattering colonies of peo
dles from all countries came to make Wisconsin their home and to blend and mould its great progressive citizenship under the state’s motto “Forward.”

Rapidly the margin of settlement was pushed across the Fox—Wisconsin rivers toward northern Wisconsin. The dense timber country was ruthlessly invaded. As early as
1855, Increase Allen Lapham, noted state scientist, pointed out that Wisconsin's pine forests were not inexhaustible. But the thwack of the axe and the hum of the saw grew louder. By 1860 lumbering ranked second to agriculture in importance. With the rise of prices in 1863 there followed a crusade into the pineries that was likened by a Wisconsin newspaper to the Pike's Peak gold rush of 1859–60. Yet in the heyday of this great lumber harvest, the alarm note of the Wisconsin conservationists was sounded. It was not too soon. Although it was unheeded at the time, the warning to "conserve and preserve" is now meeting its full measure of consideration in the councils of the state.

The height of the Wisconsin lumber industry was reached about 1890, when over three billion feet of timber mostly pine was marketed, some eighteen thousand men being employed in the various stages of production—cutting, rafting, river-driving and manufacturing timber and shingles. Today the greater part of the original forests have been cut over, but under a policy of fire protection employed by the state a large second growth is covering the cut over lands.

Conservation work began slowly in Wisconsin fifty years ago, when the movement was started for the propagation of fish. Within the past twenty-five years there has been a great awakening. Wisconsin was the third state to take up the preserving of its forests and it was the first great lumber state to do so. A state forestry department was organized in 1901 and the first state park, adjacent to the Dells of the St. Croix River, was purchased the same year. These are the nuclei around which the present state conservation program is founded.

A centralization of these activities has recently been accomplished. The 1915 session of the legislature co-ordinated several departments and brought the propagation of fish, the supervision of the forests and the care of the parks under one commission. In 1921, the office of state conservation commissioner was created, with separate bureaus to supervise the forestry, fish and park activities. Since that time the conservation work of the state has been conducted as a rapidly developing and expanding state policy.

The comparative ease of travel with the advent of the automobile has brought all of these historic spots, places
of scenic beauty and park areas into increasing prominence
and has led the temporary annual migration of millions of
Americans, and the tourist is now on all roads and in every
nook and corner of the land.

A Monument to the Swiss Pioneers in the Public Square at New Glarus

Wisconsin is well-located and possesses the requisite ad-
vantages of climate and scenery, good roads and living
accommodations to be the natural playground for the mil-
lions to the south of us. Our thousands of forested lakes and trout streams, the scenic and historic north and east shores washed by Lake Superior and Lake Michigan, respectively, the bluffs of the Mississippi on our west, unexcelled hunting and fishing, a fall forest coloring unequalled anywhere, and a cool, invigorating summer climate are some of the attractions offered to the tourist, whether of our own or an adjoining state. But more than that there have been, and will continue to be, attractive public areas set aside at convenient places in the state, where these tourists may find good water, sanitary living conditions, and the rough comforts that one would expect on an outing. The tourists driving the Cadillac as well as the man driving a Ford will be provided for either at the regular hotels or resorts along the way or in his own tent, should he care to carry one. In this general plan the state parks will play an important part.

Other lines of conservation have also been practised by the state. Wisconsin was in the early centuries the home of many Indian tribes and later the great emporium of the fur trade. Thousands of Indian mounds are scattered over the commonwealth. The total number which formerly existed is estimated by archaeologists at 10,000, but only a part of these have been preserved and appropriately marked. The important mound centers are at Milwaukee,

![Famous Indian Mounds are Marked. This is the Intaglio Mound at Ft. Atkinson](image-url)
Racine, Waukesha, Lake Mills, Beloit, Lake Koshkonong, Lake Winnebago, Madison, Baraboo, and at different points along the water course from Green Bay to Prairie du Chien. Among the earthworks, the effigy or animal shaped mounds,—bird, turtle, bear and panther—are the most singular aboriginal structures in the United States.

Some years ago James Bryce, the famous English author and statesman, visited Wisconsin. He was taken on a drive around the capitol and the university buildings at Madison. Finally he interrupted the course.

"Show me the famous Indian mounds," he requested. "Other cities can show me buildings. I want to learn something of the earthworks of the race which inhabited this continent before it was discovered by Columbus."

Near Baraboo, the famous "Man Mound" is preserved as a public park. At Aztalan, near Lake Mills, eight large ceremonial mounds are preserved in "Aztalan Park." Nearly one hundred mounds have been restored around Madison, including some of the most unique of the animal earthworks. At several of the state parks, notably at Nelson Dewey and Devils Lake, mounds have been marked and are being preserved in their original condition. It is not likely that any other state has so many Indian mounds with such different symbolic characteristics.

Aside from these earthworks, the beautiful parks, the hours of riding over good roads through long lanes of forests, the view from the changing wonders of sunlight and shadow over the 7,000 lakes and twisting or turbulent streams in northern Wisconsin, there are other points of scenic beauty which may be passed in the going or the coming. There are the granite quarries at Berlin, Red Granite, Lohrville and Montello; there are the famous Dalles of the Wisconsin River, near Kilbourn, with the grotesque stone formations fashioned by the wind and the weather of the ages; there is the silent Monument Rock, south of Viroqua; the castle bluffs of Camp Douglas, Friendship and Mauston; St. Joseph's ridge and the blue misty valleys along the Mississippi River, out of La Crosse; the Gogebic iron range out from Hurley, where the first ore discoveries were made in 1872; the Great Dolomite bluffs near Mayville, Peebles, and Sturgeon Bay; the wave cut arches at
Squaw Bay, off the coast of Bayfield; the famous Apostle Islands, shining like argosies of green from the cliffs above Chequamagon Bay and an indescribably picturesque route along the Mississippi River on the Wisconsin side, which an imminent surgeon and naturalist of world travels, recently pronounced as the greatest scenery in America.

Wherever one may wish to go, from historic spot to beautiful scenery; from the glories of the lakes in northern Wisconsin to the brooding stillness of primeval forests; from the thrill of the wide expanses on eminences high above rivers and lakes to the geological wonders of the ages millions of years ago, there are well built federal, state and county trunk line highways all appropriately marked to lead the way. There are 10,000 miles of improved state trunk line highways alone, a portion of which has been made of cement. There are 10,000 miles of well-kept county roads. With the map furnished by the state highway department, only the blind could miss the path. And all about these roads is Wisconsin dressed in her native garb.

Because of the conservation of these great centers of interest there is scarcely a family in the state that does not take an automobile vacation—long or short—to one renowned spot or more. Out from the palm of the Mississippi valley come annually over two and a half million tourists to this national center for recreation absorbing the wonders of nature; threading the trout streams or contentedly resting at one of the several hundred resorts. Into the great lake region of northern Wisconsin all find their way, imbibing nature’s beauties in stress and repose; of lake scenery that charms; of quiet places that delight—all amid an exhilarating setting not unlike the lake regions of Canada, the mountains of Switzerland or the serenity to be found in the national parks of the Yellowstone and the Yosemite.
Tylers Forks Falls, near Meilen, Wis.