

BIG SPRING

by Archie R. Crothers

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I, Archie R. Crothers, being nearly 78 years old, and being, I am sure, of sound mind and memory, will here commence to set down in writing some of the events remembered by me personally, and various other facts, pertaining to the local history of New Haven Township and of the old village of Big Spring.

Prior to the explorations of Father Marquette and his French associates, it is not known that any other white men had ever visited this region. After the French and Indian trading post was established at Portage, a few white traders and trappers began to appear. Among the most notable of these were De Couray at Portage, and Walsworth of our area.. These men were apparently both, what was then known as squaw-men, both having Indian wives. De Couray was the ancestor of the Indian family of Big Spring; afterward called De Corrah by the local white people. Some of these I remember well; in particular the one we called Big Bill De Corrah. Walsworth's Tavern and Trading Post was a log building, located upon what is now the Harold Storandt farm, in Sec. 28 of New Haven Township, Adams County, Wisconsin, and it is known that he always kept several Indian families in the close vicinity of his trading post, and that the squaws had their Indian-style gardens a little farther to the southwest, on the farm now owned by Loris Jermier, in Sec. 32 of New Haven Township.

Sometime in the early 1840's, the U.S. Government entered into an agreement with the Winnebago Indians, whereby the Indians apparently turned over to the Government an extensive tract of land located north and west of Portage, between the Fox and Wisconsin rivers. When report of this reached the white settlements farther southeast, some of the more adventurous of these pioneers began to come to this area, in search of land, or whatever opportunities these new lands might have to offer. Most of these first settlers of Big Spring came, originally, from states on, or near, the eastern seaboard. Included among them were such names as Ward, Rose, Phillipps, Ramsey, Morse, Landt, Winchell, Pierce, and Stowell.

Some of these people had started west with their parents, while still very young

and, as at that time no schools existed in the wilderness, a few of them had not learned to read. While these were handicapped in this respect, this is not to say they were not intelligent, for many of them were very able people and managed their affairs in such a way they became persons of substantial financial worth, according to the standards of that time. These people, having in the course of their migration become good judges of soil and other natural resources, took note of such features as water-drainage, timber, and the possibilities for water power, determined to settle along the Big Spring Creek, and on the best of the land in the valley adjacent to it.

Early in the history of the area, Henry Landt built a dam and constructed a sawmill, where he sawed lumber from the great white oak logs; white oak timber, in that day, being most plentiful throughout the valley.

It was here, close to this sawmill, Big Spring settlement began, and expanded to a village. Later on, this sawmill was converted to a flour and feed mill, and for many years a considerable amount of flour was produced by this mill. This flour was made by grinding wheat through a device termed a stone-mill, consisting of a stationary stone, laid flat and dressed, or roughened, on the upper side, and a movable stone, turned by the great water-wheel, which was dressed, or roughened, on the lower side in such a manner that when the wheat entered the mill, through a hole cut through the middle of the upper stone, it came out from between the stones in the form of flour, having been ground by the turning of the upper stone. It was then channeled to a device, termed a bolt; this being a long cylindrical frame, covered with silk cloth, which was turned slowly by water-power, in such a way that the fine flour was sifted out through the silk. This process removed the bran and middlings used for livestock feed.

This mill was operated for some years by a Mr. Irons; later by Evelyn Ward. It was then acquired by a man named Holmes, and rented from him by Emery Lapp. The mill eventually was completely destroyed by fire. Sheppard Pierce next settled here and built a small store near the east end of the mill dam, which he conducted for some years, until ill health and age compelled him to retire. I believe it was at about that time the son-in-law of Sheppard Pierce, P. J. Hindes, assumed management of the store. Mr. and Mrs. Hindes were Big Spring's storekeepers for many years.

A family named Wilbur, from Albany, New York, came here and built a store on the north side of the street, at the west end of the dam, which they operated for

some years. This establishment finally burned and was never rebuilt. After the Wilbur store burned, John Russell conducted a small store at the corner of Hill and Wilbur Streets, which he later moved to the west end of the mill dam. This, combined store and Post Office, was operated by Mr. Russell for many years. At that time the mail was brought to Big Spring from Portage by stage.

About the year of 1866, Wlilliam Vliet, a blacksmith, came here from New Jersey and built a shop at the west end of the dam, which he operated until his death. Later, his son, Luke Vliet, had a blacksmith shop, opposite from the Hindes Store, at the east end of the dam. Evidence of this one time active place of business still stands in this year of 1965.

After the old Ward Mill burned, the powersite and the Ward residence, located farther west on Hill Street (now called Golden Court) was acquired by Preston Tucker, and he, being a mechanic, constructed a small shop west of the old Ward residence, and continues in business to this day. The Ward residence burned some years ago and has been replaced by a new house on the site of the old one.

Steven Sweet lived in the house now owned by Dr. Thompson, Big Spring's dentist. The next house to the west, now the property of Nina Larson, was once the residence of a Mr. Russell. This was many years ago. Later, a man named Hotchkiss operated a blacksmith shop for a few years on a part of that property, where Don Henderson's house now stands. Hobart and Nina Larson conducted a grocery business at their place of residence for a period of some years.

On the north side of what is now Golden Court, about opposite to the Thompson and Larson properties, a blind man, Ingelbert Armson, once had a small building, in which he conducted a business for a period of some years in the nature of a tobacco shop and sweet shop.

The New Haven Town Hall now stands on the west portion of the Ingelbert Armson property. Further west, on this road once lived the Oscar Powers' family, the Sargent's, and the Wheeler's. Next to the west of the Sargent's was the Edwin Pierce home, and another store and cobbler's shop of the old days, and opposite, on the south side of Golden Court, stood a Methodist church. On a small hill between this church and the Congregational church, was established in the early 18600s, The Big Spring Cemetery, where most of these early residents of the area now rest from their toil in their last long sleep. The Congregational Church was originally built by the Baptist and Congregational denominations as a united church, but

later became Big Spring's Congregational Church, when the Baptists built another church at Dell Prairie. The Congregational Church is a most substantial building, with an unusually tall steeple, and is still in use at the corner of Golden Court and County Highway Trunk G.

I marveled for many years at the way this church, with its tall steeple, withstood the high winds which occur in this locality from time to time, but finally I learned that the land had been given for the church by John Stowell and the actual construction had been largely done by three brothers, who came from Maine; Dan, David, and Steven Clough. The latter was a stone mason, and built the foundation. The other two were highly skilled carpenters. A parsonage was built for a resident minister, on the west side of what is now County Highway G, and on the same parcel of land, was a shed nearly eighty feet in length, where the people tied their horses during church services. In those days there were no automobiles. This land is now occupied by The Big Spring Store and Locker Plant, and the Armson Implement Company.

Farther north, along Highway G, is another small powersite and dam. Near this dam, a man by the name of G. M. Marshall once built and operated a small foundry and machine shop, where he fabricated an extensive variety of farm tools and utilities; one time constructing a threshing machine of the old type, operated by horse-propulsion. A large circular gear, with five or six heavy wooden sweeps extending from it, in such a manner that a team of horses could be hitched to the outer end of each sweep. Each team was secured to the sweep ahead and, accordingly, when in motion, they proceeded in a circle, causing the great gear to revolve counter-clockwise. This gear drove a smaller one, which turned a shaft at near ground-level, which, in turn, transferred the power to the threshing machine. My father, J. M. Crothers, purchased this machine from Mr. Marshall, and threshed grain with it for several years. To the best of my recollection, Marshall's shop conducted its business as The Variety Works. Subsequently Mr. Marshall moved to Kilbourn, the present day Wisconsin Dells, and there built the first pressure system of water supply in that city.

At about that time, a small carding mill was being operated by water-power. This also, may have been a Marshall enterprise. Considerable wool was produced throughout this area in those days. Later on, a building was moved to this dam, and a feed and buckwheat flour mill established and operated by various men over a considerable period of years, the last of these being Jason Tibbitts and his stepson, Frank Spike. Spike was an unusual character, and known in all the countryside about for his eccentricities.

At about the location where Marshall's shops had been, Herman Phillipps operated a repair shop sometime later, which was eventually purchased by Moses Simpson, a man from Nova Scotia, and together with his brother, Henry Simpson, the shop continued in operation for some period of time.

Eventually this building was sold and torn down. <missing a few words here> building was erected, a short distance farther south, and has housed the Lapp Brothers Machine Shop.

In the 1880's, or '90's, a man by the name of Freeman Richardson, or Richeson, had a sorghum mill and a small cheese factory on the little stream where Paul Ebert now lives. This was the first commercial dairy plant in the Big Spring area, and the farmers for miles around were much concerned and affected when this plant closed down and the cheesemaker moved away, cutting off, as it did, what had been for some period of time their steady source of cash income.

About 1896, I believe, Mr. Bert Jenks came to this locality from New York and, with help from the farmers, bought land on Sneak Street, now Golden Avenue, and built a cheese factory, which incorporated within the building itself, an artesian well. Jenks operated this cheese factory for some period of years, eventually-selling out to Merle Hindes, who continued the manufacture of cheese over a period of years, finally selling the cheese factory to a Mr. Roessler, under whose operation the business expanded to the point where he could no longer carry on the superintending of the cheese-making and the required business management efficiently, resulting in the closing down of the cheese factory through bankruptcy.

During this same period, a Mr. Wolcott of Sharon, Wisconsin, came to Big Spring and built a creamery on what is now County Highway G, close to the big spring from which the village derives its name. Butter was manufactured here in huge quantity for many years, until competition from oleo margarine brought about the near-destruction of the butter market, compelling the creamery to close.

To the reader this may sound like a history of failure? Such is not the case! It is to be kept in mind that this account covers a period of well over a century of time.

During this period our country passed through four major wars. The Civil War took a heavy toll from this area. So many of the young men were killed, or permanently disabled, the area never regained a population equal to that attained prior to that war.

The Spanish-American War also took a number of young men from here, and World Wars I and II, each drew many of the younger men of our area, some of whom lost their lives on land and sea, and in the sky, in various parts of the world.

The effects of such upheavals were, in my opinion, much more keenly felt in a community, such as Big Spring, than in the larger centers of population.

Very early in the history of Big Spring and the surrounding countryside of the Town of New Haven, a family by the name of Ramsey came here from Indiana, or Ohio, and settled upon a tract of good land about a mile to the north of the village. The patriarch of these people was James Ramsey; known to the young people of the area as Uncle Jimmy. Mrs. Ramsey's maiden name was Best. Their son, Robert Ramsey, was a large man of great force of character, and ambition. He owned a large herd of cattle, among which were always several yoke of oxen. I, personally, remember having seen him, with his big, wooden beamed breaking plow, with ten yoke of oxen hitched to it for power, plowing up virgin soil, and turning under brush and small trees in the process! This man, by reason of his ambition, and great physical strength, had a profound influence upon the early life of this community. His grandson, Robert Ramsey, the second, still owns most of the original Ramsey land, and continues to farm it to this day.

About the same time the Ramseys came to Wisconsin, several families by the name of Best arrived and settled in this area. These were people of some education, and high intelligence, and one of them named La Courage, or Lycurgas, was the "founding father" of the very first school of any kind. This school was launched and conducted in a log building, on Section 21, Town of New Haven, on the west side of what is now known as County Highway G, on land now the property of Carl Huefher, in this year of 1965. The Bests were active in organizing the township and, in my belief, were the people who gave it the name, New Haven.

Most of these Bests, being essentially pioneering people, moved on, to the northwest and later established a township in Dunn County, Wisconsin; also giving it the name, New Haven. Descendants of these pioneers still reside in each of these areas of the State of Wisconsin, although most of them continued the western migration, brought to a stop eventually only by the Pacific Ocean.

Contemporary with the Ramseys and Bests were the Landt families, and the Ward's

and Edwards families. These families too, were in some degree related through marriage, and came from the State of New York; a portion of them from a place in New York called Friendship. I feel quite certain, it was through this fact that Friendship, the county seat of Adams County, Wisconsin, derived its name.

These families were all outstanding citizens of this area for many years, and were active in all the affairs of the community, including the establishment of the first public schools, and of the Protestant churches.

Another family, the Churchills, lived on Section 28, Town of New Haven; their land now being the property of Gordon Ginther. These people, both Mr. Harrison Churchill, and his wife, Mary, were teachers, and taught the children of the elementary grades, in each of the local schools of the area, for many years. Later, they moved to Endeavor, where they taught for a period of some years in a Congregational Academy; a preparatory school for Ripon College. Their son, H. G. Churchill, was also a teacher for some years; later operating a bank at Endeavor. Other families active in the community at that period were the Wells' family, the Walker's, the Ottman's, and the Seward's, as I recall. These were the sort of citizens who developed America.

Along with them, of course, came a few who were of a different caliber, some individuals falling distinctly in the category of undesirables.

For some time after the settlers arrived, there were no public institutions for the care of the insane, or mentally handicapped, and these persons, of whom there were several, were kept in the homes of the families of which they were members. The harmless ones were permitted to run at large and conduct themselves very much as they pleased. This brought about some very remarkable occurrences at times. Some such happenings were serious and pathetic, while others were mainly laughable.

One such tale was told of a boy named Louis Ellis, a somewhat limited fellow, who used to roam about seeking something which might be of interest to him, usually something good to eat, as he was said to have had a perfectly satisfactory appetite. One day, in the springtime, his travels took him about three miles from home, to the farm of an old fellow by the name of Tim Bresnahan who, like most of the old-time farmers, kept a few sheep. On this particular morning in the springtime, Mr. Bresnahan was quite distraught because he had a sick lamb. This lamb would not nurse and the old man could do nothing for it, so when Lou Ellis happened to come

along, he gave the lamb to Lou, with the thought that Lou, having plenty of time, would be able to feed the lamb and nurse it back to health. Lou carried the lamb away in his arms, and slowly made his homeward way, but as will sometimes happen in the affairs of men, the lamb died after a distance of a mile or two had been traveled, and Lou, not wanting to part with it, continued on his way with the dead lamb in his arms.

Now at this time there lived, in a log house next door to Lou's folks, a fine old farmer named Tom Tangney, who also kept a flock of sheep, and it so happened on this day an old ewe had a pair of twin lambs, in a corner of the old rail fence beside the road. Lou, taking notice of this, carefully placed his dead lamb in the fence corner, and picking up one of the live lambs, continued on his way home. The next morning Lou went to call on his neighbor, Mr. Tangney, and found him in some distress because, as he said, one of his old sheep, which always raised twins, had the misfortune to have one of them die, and as a result was bleating her heart out. Lou told Mr. Tangney that he had a lamb which Mr. Bresnahan had given him, and that for the sum of one dollar he might be induced to part with it. Mr. Tangney then said that if his old sheep would own the lamb, he would be glad to buy it from Lou on that basis. So Lou went home and was soon back with the lamb and restored it to its mother. The old ewe, of course, was delighted to get her own lamb back: safe and sound, and soon settled down to raise her twin lambs, after the manner of old sheep from time immemorial. Lou was paid his dollar, and everyone was happy, including Mr. Tangney until he learned of the slick trick Lou had played on him. Later on, poor Lou was killed by the accidental discharge of a shotgun, with which he had intended to shoot passenger pigeons. These were a wild pigeon, abounding in countless numbers, which came to this area during the 1870's and are now believed to be completely extinct. They were said to fly in such great flocks as to blot out the sunlight, and to have caused tremendous damage to crops. Thousands of these pigeons were killed at night with clubs, as they roosted in the low-hanging limbs of trees and brush.

Pigeon-buyers came to this locality from the east and the dead birds were shipped from Old Kilbourn by the carload.

Sometime in the late 1850's, it was found that hops could be grown successfully in this part of Wisconsin. Hops seemed to grow especially well on the heavy clay soil of the Big Spring area. Great quantities of hops were used in the manufacture of beer and yeast, and there was, accordingly an active market in the big cities of our eastern states. As a result, within a few years nearly every farm in our area had a

"hop yard", as the fields of hops were termed. Drying kilns were built, here and there, throughout the area, where the hops were dried over sulphur fires, baled, and weighed for shipment . One of these buildings still exists on section 15, Town of New Haven; now being in use for hay storage. The great hop boom brought about inflationary land values. Farms were bought and sold for as high as \$1,000 per acre for whatever acreage of hops were growing on the farm at the time of its sale. The remaining acreage of the farm received no price consideration, but was quite generally included in the deal, without any payment applying thereto.

The great hop boom continued until 1868, when suddenly the eastern hop market collapsed, and hops could not be sold in New York for a sufficient price to offset shipping costs; with no profit for the grower. As a result, many of the growers were financially wrecked and the whole economy of the area was so seriously upset, that many years elapsed in the process of recovery. As a matter of fact, I believe the economy recovered only with the coming of the dairy industry, which brought sufficient money to the area to re-establish the economy once more.

About the year 1875, a man who had left here to go southwest in search of free land, which was said to be easily acquired in Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma, returned after an absence of more than twenty years. During this time the Civil War racked the country, and the period following the war was one of much lawlessness throughout those western territories. When this man returned, he had a bullet-hole in one cheek, and his jaws had been broken in a way that made him a most fearsome-looking fellow. A while after his return he married a mentally-limited woman, who had been an inmate of the County's Home for the Homeless. This woman had a daughter of less than her own mental caliber, who lived with them in a small house, which stood on the west side of what is now Highway G, at a point directly opposite to the Big Spring itself, which is in reality a collection of many springs, some very large, and some of smaller size. These people, having no well, it became the duty of this very mentally-limited girl, whose name was Elva, to carry water for the household from one of these fine springs

where the clear water gushed forth from a gravel bed, and this became known locally as Elva's Spring.

At that time my father, J. M. Crothers, owned a very large team of white horses with which he hauled big loads of grain to the mill at the village. While there, he would pick up the mail, and perhaps some groceries, at the old-time Post Office and Store, and he never failed to buy a small sack of old-fashioned stick candy for this unfortunate child. Elva soon learned to know the big white team, and always, when she saw them coming back from the store, she would grab her waterpail as an excuse to be close to the old wagon road, with a look of joyous anticipation in her eyes with the certainty she would not miss receiving her candy.

In this area too, there once lived a family named Hatch. Mr. Hatch was one of the early school-teachers of the neighborhood. He was a school-master of the old type, who was a strong believer in the efficacy of the hickory-stick method of instilling knowledge in the minds of the young. Judging by the results, I feel he used it with success. This man accumulated considerable money and was, therefore, cordially hated by certain people. However, I always enjoyed meeting him when I was a boy and he was an old man because he never failed to have something <some missing>

The Coming of the Irish People

It must have been in the late 1850's, at the time when the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad was under construction and a large part of that work was being done by hand labor, that some contractor brought in a sizable group (some 60 families) of Irish immigrants to perform a part of this work on the section of track between Kilbourn (now Wisconsin Dells) and Portage, in the Townships of Newport and Lewiston in Columbia County, immediately across the county line from New Haven. These people had seen very hard times, and endured many privations in their homeland, and had consequently set forth for America in the

hope of finding better times and more opportunities for themselves and their children. I feel certain nearly all succeeded beyond their wildest dreams. Many of them became quite well-to-do, according to the standards of those days.

When the railroad grade was finished, these people began to look about for free or low-priced land, where they might settle down and establish permanent homes. Upon hearing of there being land available in New Haven Township, only a short distance to the north, a considerable number of them acquired parcels of this land. Some of this land may have been, and quite likely was acquired directly from the U.S. Government, and some by purchase from previous settlers, many of whom were pioneers wanting to migrate farther west.

These people were, for the most part, good workers and used to primitive ways of living. They accordingly set to work building log houses and stables, and clearing the land of brush and trees, and in the course of time they became thoroughly self-sufficient, raising wheat for home use as flour, and other grain and hay for their livestock.

As better markets developed for potatoes, grain, and livestock, many of them began raising large quantities of such farm produce to be sold, and in this way brought their standard of living to a point equal to, and in some cases exceeding that of their neighbors. Among them were the Baggotts, O'Connells, O'Neals, Bresnahans, Costello's, Tangneys, O'Bryans, Cusacks, Buckleys, Donahues, Kanes, and others, whose names escape me for the moment, but all of whom were very much a part of the community and contributed much to its development.

One characteristic, which nearly all of the Irish people seemed to share; love of farm animals, and it naturally followed that their livestock thrived, and represented an important source of their annual income.

Most of the men were especially good horsemen, and as rapidly as they were able obtained horses and commenced raising colts for their own use, and to sell to others. Many were the "foine" teams they had. I do not recall ever seeing these people driving poor ill kept horses; most of their horses being fat, slick and lazy,

except in the event of a horse race, when they displayed plenty of "get up and go" and would run like demons.

I remember most of these original immigrants very well, and can remember many incidents of those old days and these "old country" people.

Like all groups of people, there were a few among them whose memory is not cherished, but after living among them for a lifetime I can say they were mostly good neighbors all, and valued friends. I recall my mother, Julia M. Crothers, always spoke with great respect and esteem of two of her neighbor women; Mrs. Kane, who for many years lived just east of our home, and Mrs. Prindible, a sister of Mrs. Kane, who lived a little way to the west of us. These two women were widely known in the area for their kindness of heart and never-failing friendship, and many are the stories I have heard of Grandma Prindible and Mrs Kane .

On the extreme east side of the township, and partially separated from the western part of the township by a large marsh area, were the homes of several additional Irish families, among whom were the Sloweys, O 'Connors , Clarks, Gaffneys, Keoughs, Goldens, and Maroneys, and there were others of the Irish, all of whom, in their own way, contributed much to the life and progress of the entire community.

Another group of North Ireland Irish came in about the year 1865, named Crothers. There were three families of these people. The first to come to New Haven was James M. Crothers, a well-known farmer and a man of great force and many interests. Robert B. Crothers, another farmer, and William A. Crothers, a farmer and livestock: buyer, who served for some years as Chairman of the County Board of Adams, County.

The Norwegians and Germans.

Sometime in the early history of New Haven, a numerous group of Norwegian people settled in the Township of Newport, Columbia County, which adjoins New Haven on the south, and some of these Norwegian families settled in the extreme southern part of the Township of New Haven. Among them were Petersons, Johnsons, Larsons, Olesons, Armsons, Thompsons, Julsons, and some others.

These people, like all Scandinavian people in other parts of America, were industrious and hardworking farmers, and prospered in their new homeland

Some of these farmers were engaged in raising tobacco; a crop which seemed to do very well for them on the loam soil of their farms. They were likable fun loving folks and enjoyed a good joke, especially if the joke was on the other fellow, but it sometimes happened that someone would turn the tables on them. One such incident happened at the time when the first farm telephone co-operative was in process of being organized.

One evening a meeting was held at the old Badger Schoolhouse for the purpose of hearing a discussion of the merits of telephones on the farm, and a number of old fellows, who had never seen a telephone, came to hear the discussion. A speaker from outside the area told them, at some length, of the merits of Mr. Bell's invention. He assured them that with a telephone, one could talk with a neighbor, even though the neighbor might live a mile or more down the road! All of this interested them greatly but, of course, some questions remained to be answered.

After the meeting a group of them were talking the matter over and one said, "We forgot to ask him whether you can talk Norse on this machine?" Another said, "There is Vet Clough, he will know, we will ask him", and so they posed their question to Vet, who told them, "No! For Norwegian you have to use a machine equipped with hollow wires."

This joke delayed the formation of the "co-op" for several weeks, and it was necessary to hold several more meetings to clarify the issue.

Some years after the coming of the Norwegians, a few families of German people followed. They were from a part of Germany now in the Soviet zone. These people apparently had brought money with them, for they were obliged to buy their farmland because, by that time, no more Government land was available. Among them were the Storandts, Richters, Buckholtz, Neumeisters and Huefners. There were others too, whose names, at this time, do not come to my mind.

These were all good people, mainly Lutherans, and without exception proved to be staunch and loyal Americans, some of whose descendants still live in the area, as farmers, teachers, mechanics, and in all other lines of endeavor which the area, and the times, provides.

In concluding this part of the record of the early history of old Big Springs and the New Haven area, I will say I have deliberately made record of only the good deeds of these various peoples. If there were any deeds which cannot be considered good, such deeds need not be recorded, for we know, "the evil men do lives after them while the good they do is oft' interred with their bones."

The Indians.

I find, in recording the activities of the early settlers of Big Spring, much consideration should also be given to the Winnebago Indians, who were living in the area when the first white man arrived.

These people had no written language, but their history was kept alive by legend, and passed along from generation to generation by word of mouth. They had lived here for so long that none knew from whence they came, nor by what means they had arrived here. This area was well suited to the Indian way of life. In addition to an abundance of water and wood, the streams provided fish, and in the open spaces among the great white oak trees were many deer, and smaller animals and birds were always to be found. It was therefore possible for the Indian to obtain his required food, the deer skins with which to cover his lodge, and wood to supply heat in the wintertime. One of these men recently told me that he had been raised in one of these lodges, and that it was always kept warm, even in severe cold weather.

The head man of this local branch of the Winnebagos was one Chief Prettyman, who at the time when I remember him was, or appeared to be, an extremely aged man. Chief Prettyman had two sons, one of whom I can remember. Their English names were Hank and Jake. Hank died quite early in life, but Jake lived to marry an Indian woman of another tribe. She was said to have been Chippewa-Sioux. They had a baby son, and it happened when the babe was about one year old, its father Jake Prettyman, died very suddenly of pneumonia. This disease had been brought to the Indians by the white settlers and, at the time, they had not developed any resistance to it, with the result that many succumbed to the disease.

After Jake's death, life was apparently made most unpleasant for his Sioux squaw, who, it seems was not much loved by the Winnebago women, and as a result the Sioux squaw longed to return to her-own people. The Winnebagos told her to go, "the sooner the better!!", but she must leave her baby because upon the death of old Chief Prettyman, this baby was to be their tribal chief and, therefore, they could

not permit her to take him away. The Sioux squaw finally ran away with the baby on her back in a blanket. I remember how I, in company with several of my childhood school-mates, saw her coming up the old clay road which passed our school. She was running and seemed nearly exhausted at that point. Shortly after she had passed us, she disappeared into the brush which bordered the road, climbed through a fence and hid in a pile of leaves which had gathered there. A few minutes later we saw the Winnebagos coming in pursuit. It seemed the whole tribe must have been engaged, along with their ponies and dogs. The road was filled with them. Just why these dogs did not find her, I do not know to this day, but they passed right on by, and disappeared over a ridge to the north. The squaw then made her way through the woods and hedge-rows to a small tamarack swamp where she hid for a time, until the hue and cry died down, and where she was found by a kind hearted man named Hayes, who gave her food until such time as she could get away and rejoin her own people. This Indian baby, if still living, would now be a man of 70 years of age!

I have never been able to draw the Winnebagos into any conversation in regard to this episode, probably because of what they considered to have been their "loss of face"?

In later years, the children of these Indians have attended our public schools, and now are considered as practically one with the rest of the people of the community. In particular, I recall a girl, Josephine White Eagle, who played a violin in the local high school orchestra. This girl, now a very fine lady, is a social worker in Duluth, Minnesota.

Mr. Green Deer of the Winnebagos now drives one of our local school buses, bringing my little granddaughter Marie home from kindergarten every day at noon.

Most of these people now live in the vicinity of the Dells, and assist in the Indian Ceremonial at Stand Rock Amphitheatre, a widely known entertainment and attraction conducted annually throughout the summer season, on the Wisconsin River, in the Upper Dells.

At the time of the Civil War, when all of the able-bodied white men were in the Army, and no one but old men and boys were left at home, over all our northern states, the Indians, especially the Sioux and tribes affiliated with them, became extremely restive, some of them feeling an opportunity was now presented to exterminate the white settlers. These warlike Indians, to the west of the Mississippi River, fell upon the group of German settlers at New Ulm, Minnesota,

and killed most of them, after which they sent runners to all the tribes of Indians living in the northwestern part of the country, urging them to join with them and go on the warpath against all of the white settlements. Some of these runners were known to have infiltrated the Winnebago tribes in Wisconsin. As a result of this, the settlers at Big Spring became alarmed, and formed a military company of boys and old men, which drilled at the village, under the supervision of wounded convalescent soldiers, who had been sent home from the southern battle fronts. With their muskets, and fife and drum, they created a great deal of noise in an effort in which they intended and hoped might overawe the Indians.

A few of our Indians had already been with the Sioux in the New Ulm massacre and had been killed or wounded there. One of the wounded was afterward around Big Spring for many years. This brave had been shot in the heel and was, for the remainder of his lifetime very lame, and for this reason we called him Limpy Jim.

I remember this fellow very well because of an incident which happened when I was only 3 or 4 years of age and still too young to attend school. This Indian perhaps inspired by firewater, or lemon extract, stopped and tying his pony to a post in front of our old house; and knowing my father operated the local threshing machine at the time of the year probably reasoned that father would not be at home, he came limping up to the door, and came in. I had seen him coming, and being very much afraid of him, had told my mother he was coming. He drew his knife and told mother he wanted bread. "Me hungry", he said, and moved toward my mother with his knife. Now it so happened there had been a shower the night before, and my father had not gone threshing that day. Instead, he had just stepped out of the back door and stopped to light his pipe. He heard the Indian and came back in the house and kicked the Indian half way to the road. The Indian then scrambled back on his pony and made a hurried departure.

Going back again to the Indian scare, at the time of the Civil War, some of the old men, including Ira Ward, thought it might be a good idea for some of them to go and pow-wow with Chief Prettyman. Accordingly, a group of them went up to Prettyman's camp on Indian Hill and held a council with him. Chief Prettyman, who had always been friendly toward the people of the community, was persuaded to keep his braves at home, and at peace. It is my belief, in return, the Chief was told he could count on the continued friendship of the white settlers.

In 1854, Adams County consisted of four townships: Jackson, Quincy, Adams and Monroe. In November, 1854, the County Board divided each of these towns into smaller civil townships. Jackson then became Jackson Township, Springville Township, Dell Prairie Township and Big Spring Township. The west row of sections in the Town of Big Spring were allocated to Dell Prairie to increase Dell Prairie's valuation. In April, 1855, the first annual town meeting of the new Town of Big Spring was held, officers were elected, and the name of the town was changed to New Haven.

The following people have served as town chairmen:

1. James Ramsey 1855, 1862, 1864, 1866
2. Amplus Chamberlain 1856, 1857
3. David Hatch 1858
4. John Kershaw 1859
5. William Kershaw 1860
6. Uri Morse 1861, 1870
7. Richard B. Rose 1863, 1869, 1871, 1872, 1876
8. Jared Walsworth 1865
9. A.B. Holbrook 1867
10. Rufus Montgomery 1868
11. George M. Marshall 1873
12. A.S. Snyder 1874, 1875
13. Ira C. Ward 1877
14. D.L. McConick 1878-79, 1881-83
15. Hugh Phillips 1880
16. Peter Andrews 1884-85, 1886-91, 1893-94
17. William Vleit 1886
18. George Ager 1892, 1899
19. C.F. Heberlein 1895-97, 1900-01, 1906-07, 1912-13
20. William Bidwell 1898
21. Henrey A. Hayes 1902-03
22. John Baggot 1904-05
23. Clarence Russell 1908-09, 1910-11
24. William Crothers 1914-18, 1923-25
25. Lawrence Buckley 1919-20, 1926-34
26. Harrison Mylrea 1921-22
27. Leo Baggot 1935-46
28. Stanley Crothers 1947

29. Darwin McClyman 1948-66, 1969-77 ??
30. Orvel Evans 1967-68
31. Marshall Coon 1977-83
32. Ivan Lapp 1983-89
33. Edward Coon 1989-

At the first town meeting the following officers were elected in addition to the chairman: Curtis Ellis, Supervisor; John Best, Supervisor; Seth Mills, town school Superintendant; Harvey Phillips, Assessor; David M. Hatch, Clerk; Henrey Phillips, Treasurer; Seth Cole and Lycurgus Best, Justices of the Peace; Josiah Sweet, Jeremiah Landt and Peter Barringer, Constables; Samuael Ward, Sealer of Weights and Measures.

Also at that meeting \$75.00 were raised for town purposes and \$50.00 for schools.

At the first board meeting in May, Wm. Kershaw, Josiah Sweet, Moody Pike, James Winchell, Almon Woodford and James Peterson were appointed overseers of the six road districts within the town.