

HISTORY OF UNION TOWNSHIP

By Ruth Ann Montgomery

SETTLEMENT - 1839 TO 1849

Union Township is located in the northwest corner of Rock County. There is evidence that Native Americans had often used the banks of Allen's Creek for camping spot. In the first years of settlement, the newcomers from the east reported visits from Little Thunder and other unnamed members of his group. Surveyors in the 1830s had found two abandoned villages in Rock County, one near Beloit and the other near Milton.

In 1928, skeletal remains of two individuals, assumed to be pre-settlement hunters, were found buried on a hill near the gravel pit in Evansville's Lake Leota park. Workmen were excavating gravel to fix the spillways on the dam when the discovery was made. The two individuals were buried side by side. There was speculation that the spot might have been a burial ground, but the reporter for the Review said, "It is more likely, however, that at one time this was a camping place and that these people were buried close to where they died."

Teamsters transporting lead from Mineral Point to Milwaukee also favored Allen's Creek for a camp site. The lead wagons were hitched to oxen to haul the lead over the trails that served as roads.

The first permanent settlers in Union township were immigrants from the eastern United States. They were second, third and fourth generation Americans, who already knew the hardships of settling a new land. Some had settled in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois before moving on to Union Township. Some traveled alone, but most were in groups.

The early histories of the area differ as to the names of these pioneers and the exact month and day that they arrived. Some of the early settlers may have kept diaries, that have since disappeared. Most were probably too busy working to survive, to keep daily records.

The published accounts of settlement were printed many years later. All accounts agree that the year of settlement was 1839 with a larger immigration of people, in the spring of 1840.

Another explanation for the variation in the accounting of names of the settlers is that the boundaries of Union township changed. Although surveyors had finished laying out sections of land in the 1830s, the present boundaries of Rock County were established in 1839. The population of the entire county was given as 480 in 1839. The following year, the census listed 1,701 people in Rock County.

Union township was established by the Wisconsin Legislature on February 17, 1842. The township boundaries in 1842 included what is now Porter and the north half of Center and Magnolia townships. The present boundaries of Union, Porter, Center, and Magnolia townships were established by a Legislative act on February 2, 1846.

Trying to establish the names of the first settlers from land records is often deceptive because some of the land in Union Township was purchased by speculators, who never intended to establish residence and some never set foot on the property.

George W. Allen, of La Porte Indiana, sent Christopher McClure to look over the land and purchase property with timber and prairie. Allen then advertised and sold the land for sale to La Porte residents who came to Wisconsin to build homes and farm the land.

Many abstracts for Union township land name Solomon Juneau as the first property owner. Although he played a large part in the settlement of Milwaukee, there is no evidence that he ever lived in Union township. Land speculators in Indiana and states further east also speculated by purchasing land at \$1.25, with the hopes it could be sold at a higher price.

Land records indicate the Amos Kirkpatrick purchased land in May 29, 1839 and many historical accounts report

his double-log cabin as one of the first built in what is today Evansville. Boyd Phelps and Jacob West purchased their land in July 1939.

The earliest published account of settlement was printed in the 1873 Combination Atlas Map of Rock County by Everets, Baskin and Stewart, of Chicago, Ill. Although the author of this account is unknown, the first settlers are listed as Ira Jones, Stephen Jones, Boyd Phelps, Charles McMillen, Hiram Griffith, John Sayles, Erastus Quivey, Washington Higday, Samuel Lewis, Jacob West, John F. Baker, Levi Leonard and Willis T. Bunton settlers. By his own account, Levi Leonard did not arrive until 1840.

Four years later, Levi Leonard, Daniel Johnson, and Jacob West authored a short history of Union township in "History of Madison: Dane County and Surroundings." In this 1877 account, Leonard and the others listed the 1839 settlers as Boyd Phelps and Stephen Jones, both Methodist ministers. Jones claimed to have preached the first Methodist sermon "this side of the Rock River."

The 1877 account goes on to say that Phelps and Jones were followed by Charles McMillen, John Rhinehart, Samuel Lewis and Erastus Quivey, all married with families. In the spring of 1840, Rev. John Griffith, Ira Jones, Jacob West, John T. Baker, I. W. Haseltine, Levi Leonard, David Johnson, Daniel Johnson, John Cook, John Adams, Washington Higday, Hamilton Higday and John Sale.

Another account says that party of young bachelors arrived in the fall of 1839, Allen McMichael, Alanson, Smith, James Empey, Captain Turner and John Palmer. They all stayed through the winter of 1839-40 near the area that later became the Village of Union.

Another account in the 1879 History of Rock County added the name of Willis T. Bunton, to the list given in other accounts. The term "settler" was later given to anyone who arrived within the first twenty years or so after the first permanent residents came to the area. Many obituaries in the late 1800s include the term "early settler" for people who did not until the 1860s.

The early arrivals expected to farm the land and looked for locations with water, timber and tillable land. Most of Union Township had these attributes according to a description from McCabe's Gazateer of Wisconsin. The Gazateer was quoted in the June 13, 1846 Janesville Gazette. "About one fourth of the land in the township is high and dry and rolling prairie and the remainder is covered with delightful groves of excellent lumber composed chiefly of burr oak. The surface of the soil is rich black loam impregnated with sand measuring about 8 to 18 inches in depth, yielding 30 bushes of wheat and 40 bushes of corn."

With a team of horses or oxen and a plow a farmer could cultivate a few acres at a time. The rich loam soil had a depth of 18 inches in some locations. Wheat was the principle crop, but it was subject to rust, insects, and other diseases. Every farmer hoped for a crop that produced surplus grains to sell at Milwaukee's Lake Michigan port.

Livestock holdings of the early settlers were primarily used by the family. A milk cow, horses or oxen, sheep or a few pigs would provide transportation and food. Sheep provided wool for clothing and perhaps some to send to market.

Many settlers relied on the plentiful hunting for feeding their families. The prairies and woods had an abundance of deer, otter, wolves, raccoons, and partridges. Deer tallow was used to make candles.

There were wild strawberries and blackberries gathered in the summer. Gardens provided pumpkins that were stewed in vinegar to serve as substitutes for apples. Pickles were cured in whiskey. Corn oil was used in glass lamps.

An early settler described her garden, "Father came first in the winter of 1839. The family came in April 1840. Water and fire to commence house keeping were brought from the house of our nearest neighbor, Stephen Jones, 3 miles away. Our nearest neighbors were 3 miles north, 3 miles east, twenty miles south and twelve miles west.

Our early garden was made three miles from home on the first land broken in the township. Late vegetables did well on the newly broken sod and winter found the root house filled.”

Persistence and community bonds held the small group of men and their families together. Those who had cabins opened their homes to new arrivals. A sense of neighborliness and cooperation sustained the early settlers. As a community they helped each other in building homes, cultivating the land, and forming governing bodies to operate schools, roads and other provisions for the common good. The settlers organized religious and fraternal organizations.

Over half of the heads of the early families were born in Ohio and their parents had pioneered the Ohio and Indiana territories. Some had settled in Illinois and other parts of Wisconsin before moving to Union township. Most men expected to own and operate farms.

The first census taker for Union Township finished his recordings on July 18, 1840 and said that he had “made actual inquiry at every dwelling house or a personal inquire of the head of every family.” When the first census was taken in the summer of 1840 there were 16 families living in the Township. There were seventy-nine people ranging in age from infants to 70 years old.

Only the names of the male head-of household were listed in the census. Others were accounted for by a hash mark as to whether they were male or female and within an age range.

The census taker also noted the general occupation of the adult males. The twenty-four men reporting employment said that they were farmers.

Although the first settlers had usually built one-room cabins to house their families, there were large numbers of people living in each household. Stephen Jones and John Baker each had nine people in their household.

Stephen Jones, a farmer and Methodist minister was born in Ohio. Jones was said to have settled on the land that served as the first camp for the earlier settlers. The farm was later known as the Butts farm, west of Evansville. A man with a plow followed the wagon tracks of the group and offered to plow a small piece of land. Potatoes from the group’s provisions were planted on the newly tilled garden. Jones was one of those early settlers who needed the challenge of a new frontier. He left Union township in 1855 for a new settlement in Chatfield, Minnesota.

John T. Baker, a native of Ohio had also farmed in Illinois and Green County, Wisconsin before buying land and settling in Union township. One of his sons, Alan S. Baker, an inventor and entrepreneur, was one of the men responsible for starting Baker Manufacturing Company, the longest continuously operated business in Union township.

In the 1840 census, Erastus Quivey listed eight members in his household. Accounts say that Quivey and his family lived in a tent that first winter, while their cabin was under construction. The log cabin was a small structure, 16 x 18 feet. The first winter was very harsh and Quivey’s infant child died, and was the first burial in a cemetery established in the township. The first religious service was held in Quivey’s home.

Wilbur Potter and Charles McMillan each had seven people living in their newly built log cabins. Charles McMillan came to Union township in the fall of 1839 with his family. He settled in section 15 and built a double log cabin. It was said to be the first permanent structure in the township and the log structure was the McMillan family home for many years. In 1852, McMillan moved to northern Wisconsin to work in the lumber industry in the pineries.

Boyd Phelps, a farmer and Methodist minister had one of the smaller families. Four people were listed in the household, Phelps, his wife and two small boys. Phelps moved from Ohio to La Porte, Indiana, and then to Union Township in 1839. Long after he had moved from the area his farm was known as the Phelps place.

Ira Jones, who arrived in Union Township in 1840 was a native of Ohio and had farmed in Winnebago Co., Illinois before purchasing land in section 32 of Union township. By 1850, Jones had a farm of 378 acres and kept 311 sheep.

Jacob West, another farmer reported only four members in his household. He purchased land in Union township in 1839 and brought his family to the area the following year. Like many of the other early settlers, West had several different occupations. He was a farmer, merchant and the first brick maker in the township. He also served as a Justice of the Peace, Union Town Clerk, member of the Board of Health and assessor for the Township and the federal government.

Samuel Lewis established a home in what later became the Village of Union, arriving in September 1839. He reported six people living in his home in July 1840. Lewis operated a hotel (sometimes called a tavern) and the stage coach between Janesville and Madison that traveled the Territorial Road stopped at Lewis' to deliver mail.

David Johnson and his family arrived on the 25th of June 1840. The Johnson's stayed at the log cabin of Samuel Lewis. On the first night of their stay, 24 people lodged in Lewis' small building. Lewis later built a frame two-story building that served as the hotel and post office.

Johnson recalled in later years that on the 2nd of July all of the men living west of the Catfish River and east of the Sugar River gathered to build a log cabin for his family. The Johnsons moved in the following day, just in time to be recorded in the 1840 census. The little log cabin was used as a church, a school that Mrs. Johnson taught, and a shelter for others who needed a place to stay.

Union Township's first school was built in 1841 on the north side of the road known as the Janesville and Sugar River Road. The school was located west of Evansville's current city limits and was built of logs. Erastus Quivey, Ira Jones, John Griffith, John A. Griffith, Hiram Griffith, Boyd Phelps, Stephen Jones and John T. Baker joined in "raising" the school, with each family providing some of the materials, including logs and white oak shakes cut from nearby groves of trees. The first teacher was a young lady from east of the Rock River, Mary Jane True.

The second school was built near Union village and the third in a small settlement, known unofficially as "The Grove" and later named Evansville in 1842. The Grove school served as both a church and school. Levi Leonard was the first teacher in this school.

Except for the schools, there were few government services offered to the residents of Union township. The postal service was one of the first and sometimes the only national government service provided. Most Union township residents received their mail at the Union post office.

Residents of the eastern part of the township used the Osborn post office at the Ball Tavern in Porter township. There were daily stages from Janesville and a four-horse stagecoach made the trip between Beloit and Madison three times a week with stops at the hotel in Union and the Ball Tavern.

Once a week, Jacob West and his sons rode on horseback to pick up the mail at the Lewis' tavern in Union and deliver it to those living in the southern and western part of the Township.

The first marriage took place on March 28, 1841. Peter Aller married Eleanor Temple before a Justice of the Peace. Eleanor died in 1860, leaving Aller with two daughters to raise. He later married another Union township resident, Nancy M. Smith. Aller went on to hold many government positions, including Rock County Board Chairman and Superintendent of the County Poor Farm.

Families who arrived in the area were often related by blood or marriage. Thomas Wardell came to Union shortly in 1843 and settled on a farm three quarters of a mile northwest of Union on the Madison road. Thomas came from Indiana with his brother, Charles Wardell, who took the adjoining quarter section, just west of his Thomas'

land.

Thomas Wardell was born August 9, 1815. After he settled on government land he purchased near Union, Rock County, Wis. He was elected as the first county superintendent of schools. In September, 1854, he sold out and moved away. His first wife was Esther Aller, daughter of William Aller, Sr., of Union and Evansville. She died in 1850 and Wardell married to Martha Thomas, the daughter of Frances Thomas of Cooksville. Seven of Mr. Wardell's thirteen children were born at Union.

Near the village of Union, there was a large settlement of Wardell relatives, by blood or marriage. The relatives included William Aller, Sr., Jesse, Peter, John, William, Jr., and David Aller, James Moore, Josiah Cummings and four sons, and the families of Temple, Miner, Courtier, and Johnson.

The first organization for a township government took place in 1842 at the home of Charles McMillan. According to an account by David Johnson, who attended the meeting, it was at McMillan's house that the town was named Union "from the fact of the entire unanimity of sentiment and action."

Once a township government was established, there were annual elections for Town officers. The candidates were chosen at a caucus. According to the Wisconsin State Constitution, only white males, 21 years of age, who were citizens of the United States could vote.

Notices were published to call the men together to select three supervisors, a town clerk, treasurer, highway commissioners, justices of the peace, constables, road masters, and a weights and measures sealer. Union township elected a "fence viewer" although earlier settlers had little time to put up fences and animals often wandered from farm to farm.

The men followed the patterns established for town organizations in the east and they did not shirk their duty to serve. Those who had arrived in 1839 worked alongside the later arrivals to perform the duties of the offices. The men were devoted to establishing good government, churches and school organizations. The names of the early office holders appeared over and over again as the years went by.

The first officers elected at the 1842 meeting included Supervisors, Ira Jones, David R. Bent, and Allen Miner; Clerk, John T. Baker; Assessors, John F. Sale, David Johnson and David R. Bent; Commissioners of Highway were William Webb, Isaac Andrus and Washington Higday; School Commissioners were Levi Leonard, Isaac Andrus and Lemuel Warren. John Griffith served as Treasurer and collectors included Hamilton Higday and Adam W. Uline. Elected to the "Fence Viewers" office were Ira Jones, David R. Bent and Allen Miner. Sealer of Weights and Measures was Joseph Osborn and Overseer of Road was Charles McMillan.

Rapid growth characterized the new territory. The Federal Census of 1840 listed 16 families. Just five years later, the Wisconsin territorial census recorded 127 families, an increase of 100 families within five years.

Public transportation was by stagecoach from Janesville and Madison. The coaches brought people and mail into Union township in the early days. There was a daily stage (except Sunday) from Janesville to Madison. The stage stopped at the village of Union, before heading north into Dane County and the next stop, Rutland.

Farmers had to depend on wagons that they owned or borrowed from a neighbor to deliver their produce to market. Transporting goods to market was a great hardship for the early settlers.

Landowners were expected to repair the roads adjacent to their property, but there was no machinery to smooth and repair the roads. Poor weather and heavy traffic on the dirt roads kept them in constant need of repair.

When Dr. John M. Evans arrived at what was called the Grove in 1845, there was one frame house, one double log cabin and a school that was also used for a church and other public gatherings. Other settlers were scattered throughout the township.

Living quarters were in short supply and since there were no other rooms available, the Spencers invited Evans to live in their home, located on the top of the hill on the south side of Mill Street. Spencer was a land speculator and he had built the first frame house in Evansville in 1845. The Spencer's allowed Evans to use the upstairs of their home as an office.

A doctor was treasured in the new settlements. Epidemics were great problems for early settlers. They had few medicines and home remedies were most often used to cure the “ague” and other illnesses. Ague was most often described as an illness with alternative periods of chills, fever, and sweating. Most thought that the ague was caused by organisms that were introduced into the air when the prairie soil was plowed.

Evans had arrived at an opportune time, as many people were sick. Evans rode his horse from homestead to homestead to take care of those who were ill. Dr. Evans' supply of medicine was purchased on credit from pharmacists in La Porte, Indiana. He ran out of quinine, the medicine he used most often to cure the ague.

Country doctors were often paid in goods rather than cash. In the early years, Dr. Evans was often in debt to the medical suppliers in Chicago and La Porte. It was not easy for a young man to come into a new territory and make a living as a physician. Most people used the barter method to get goods and service, or purchased on credit until crops or animals could be sold.

Whatever these first settlers in Union township endured, they did it as neighbors and friends. There were few reports of swindlers. There were no reports of people who refused to help their neighbors in the difficult work of building homes and working the land.

Not everyone was suited to the pioneer life and some sold their land and moved back to the east. Others were drawn to the promise of new territory and kept moving west into Iowa, Minnesota, and other western states as they opened for settlement. For those who stayed in Union township, the wealth was in the land.

A Wisconsin Territorial census was taken in 1846 and Union Township's statistics were recorded by Orrin Guernsey. The Janesville Gazette reported the results of the census in their July 22, 1846 issue. Union township had 817 residents. This included 127 households, 465 males and 352 female residents. Many families were still living in log cabins.

There were not many advances in implements for planting and harvesting in the first decade of settlement. Breaking plows were still being used to turn the prairie into fields. An early settler, F. A. Ames, described the process of making tillable land: “A breaking plow was used that would turn a furrow 2 feet wide, sufficiently strong to stand the combined pull of from 5 to 10 yoke of oxen. These plows were so well balanced that one man could control it and cut a grub (a small tree) 2 or three inches through.” Ames also described the harvesting of the grain, “Our first crop consisting of one eighth of an acre of oats was harvested with a hand sickle.”

In March 1848, the voters of Union Township were asked to decide on the whether Wisconsin should become a state and to adopt the State Constitution. Union voters were eager to join the movement towards statehood. An article in the March 16, 1848 Janesville Gazette said the Union township men who cast their ballots passed the measure with a majority of 70 votes.

THE 1850s

Within a few years of settlement, Union township had attracted many new families. When the census taker tallied the residents in 1850, Union township had 1,056 people. No longer was everyone listed as engaged in agriculture. The diversity of occupations indicated a stronger economic base. There were 212 farmers, eight blacksmiths, one shoemaker, three wagon makers, a tailor, mechanic, two stage coach drivers, a hotel keeper, one merchant and one store clerk.

The average wage paid to a farm hand was \$1.20 per month, plus room and board. A day laborer earned \$1 per month with board or \$1.25 without. Carpenters earned \$1.50 a day.

Evander Quivey was operating the only saw mill in the township near Allen's Creek in Evansville. Threshing machines were available at Phil Cadwallader's shop, but he could only produce four in a year. There were no paupers or criminals recorded in the 1850 census in Union township.

Women reported receiving \$1 a week for work as domestics. No other occupations of women were recorded. However, this did not mean that women were lacking in the ability to earn money. One early pioneer woman reported owning a few sheep and spinning the wool into yarn. Susan Pratt Washburn reported in a memoir of pioneer life in Union township, that after she spun her wool into stocking yarn, she sold it for seventy-five cents a pound. Women worked as teachers and earned a small wage and their room and board with families in their school district.

There were 500 children under the age of ten and more than 200 between the ages of eleven and twenty. Five school districts were operating in Union township with 161 pupils in attendance during the 1849-50 school year. All public schools were run by local boards, under the state school laws. Women usually taught the summer sessions and men the winter sessions.

Union, the first village platted in the Township, was a much larger settlement than The Grove. The streets, blocks and lots, of the village of Union were platted in 1848.

Thomas Wardell, an early settler, recalled the stores in Union Village. "Dan Pond kept the tavern, Mr. Smith the grocery store, Vaughn's a dry goods and general store. By 1850, Newman and Sutherland had a good general store in operation. George Cummings had a wagon shop and Ellis a shoe shop. Two blacksmith shops and a furniture store helped to liven business. Two churches looked after our morals."

There was a Baptist Church organized in 1844, with the church built in 1851. There was also a Methodist church in Union. The Union Village Methodist church building was later moved to Brooklyn. Evansville had a Methodist church on the south side of the first block of East Main.

Water power was important for early industries and Evansville had a stream that provided water for a saw mill operated with water-powered machinery. The village of Union had no water power.

The Evansville post office was established in 1849 and named for Dr. John M. Evans. This gave Union township residents in the southern and western sections of the township access to better postal service.

A farm of 120 acres with a log cabin and some cleared land was selling for \$700 in the early 1850s. Years after the first settlement, roads were little more than trails and this hampered the safe delivery of grain and animals to market. A report of an early snow in the November 9, 1848 Janesville Gazette said, "Many people who were taking produce to the Lake have been obliged to leave their loads on the way and return home with their teams."

Union township farmers joined the Rock county Agricultural Society and Mechanics Institute. The group organized in 1851 to publish a monthly journal about new farm methods and technology. The Society tried cooperative selling of farm product by organizing market days in Janesville and Beloit, but the markets paying the best were in Milwaukee.

Once the produce reached Milwaukee markets, steamships carried it across Lake Michigan to Michigan at New Buffalo, where there was a connection with the Michigan Central Railroad to Detroit. Many of the goods then traveled by boat and rail to markets in New York, a four day journey from Milwaukee, provided there was good weather for crossing the Great Lakes.

These hazardous transportation routes to the markets along Lake Michigan and further East caused farmers to invest in road improvement schemes. In the late 1840s and early 1850s, the Janesville Gazette printed many articles about transportation improvement plans. Promoters held meetings in Janesville to encourage investors to put money into railroads, a canal in the Rock River Valley; a "McAdamized" road (a stone paving technique

invented by a Scotsman, John Loudon McAdam) and a Sugar River Plank Road that would have run south of Evansville through Decatur, Spring Valley, Plymouth, Albany and Monroe.

The Janesville Gazette transposed the words in the name of the company building the road from Illinois into Rock County. In December 1848, the Gazette news item said that the Madison and Beloit Railroad company was opening its books for subscriptions. There was \$30,000 of stock available to purchase at \$100 per share.

In July 1849, the Gazette again reported that the company had surveyors in Rock County, platting 3 potential lines for the Beloit-Madison Railroad (later taken over by the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad.) Farmers in Rock County were urged to invest in this venture.

The Beloit-Madison road would connect with the Chicago-Galena Railroad and the Illinois road was completed to Belvidere in the fall of 1849. There was great excitement about the transportation and the railroads found investors willing to donate land and buy shares in the company.

The Milwaukee-Mississippi railroad reached Milton in 1852 and the rails were under construction to Janesville. The trip from Janesville to Milwaukee took 7 ½ hours and was a much faster and safer trip for people, crops, and animals than the old wagon trails.

The village of Evansville was growing, but in the early 1850s there was little commerce. LeRoy Springer arrived in 1852 and several years later described the village as he remembered it on his arrival. “There was only one store in Evansville at the time. The ground on which the Central House now stands (northwest corner of Madison and Main) was covered with giant oaks. There were no frame houses east of the creek. Henry Spencer lived in one on the rise of ground at the rear of Lee’s harness shop, that was the only one between the center of the village and the bridge. Dr. Evan’s old red brick had been built about two years before. Hiram Spencer was living on the corner where Cummings and Clark now have their store (southwest corner of Main and Madison.)

“There were only two small houses on South Madison Street. West of Dr. Evan’s residence, there was I think only two small houses, one of them in the old house on Mr. Hawley’s lot. (southeast corner of West Main and Third.) The old town hall was the village school house, where the Congregational society held its services. The old Methodist church stood at the rear of Libby and Wolfe’s market.” An 1858 map of Evansville shows the Methodist Church in the first block of East Main, on the south side of the street. It is sandwiched between two stores.

Springer continued with his description of transportation, “In ’52 most of the produce had to be hauled to Milwaukee with teams. Both horses and oxen were used. Ox teams went through the cheapest in the summer as they were turned loose at night and needed no other food. The teamster cooked his own meals and slept in his wagon. In the winter of ’53 the cars got as far as Janesville. Then we thought we had a market at our own door.”

The rivalry for a market between Janesville and Evansville had begun. Evansville merchants and farmers still wanted the village to attract the attention of the railroad owners. Giving the downtown the appearance that it was an up-and-coming business district was one of the incentives promoters presented to railroad decision makers. Moving the village cemetery out of the way of the new railroad and commercial development was a necessity.

Union township farmers and businessmen were more interested in the Beloit and Madison line. The railroad was expected to bring prosperity to farmers and merchants.

By 1855, Union township had two villages that were platted for land sales, although the Town Board of supervisors and other officers was the only governing body. The village of Evansville was surveyed and platted in 1855 in hopes that the Beloit-Madison railroad would pass through.

The railroad reached Footville and there was great debate about the plans to extend it to Madison. Would it pass through the village Evansville or Union? There was some talk that the depot was to be built between the village

of Union and the village of Evansville.

The village of Union was by-passed in the earliest surveys of the Beloit-Madison railroad giving the village of Evansville the greatest commercial advantage and the Townships only a depot. The rails were not completed to Evansville until 1863 and the route proposed and shown on an 1858 map of the township traveled a slightly different route when it was actually constructed. On the 1858 map, the "B & M R R" was designated by dashes. The route cut through township diagonally from southeast to northwest. The 1858 route started in section 34 of the township, through the Village of Evansville, and then in a northwestern direction, 2 ½ miles west of Union. The next stop on the railroad line was the Village of Brooklyn in Dane County.

When the road was built it started further east, in section 35, then went diagonally northwest through Evansville. North from Evansville the rails went through Union township sections, 22, 21, 16, 8, and 6, exiting the northwest corner of the township into Dane County.

In both the early version of the railroad route in the 1850s and in during the construction period in the 1860s, Union township farmers generously donated land along the route. Deeding the property to the railroad company for \$1 and buying stock in the company.

David L. Mills, who later became an Evansville lawyer worked as a stock agent for the Beloit-Madison railroad in the early 1850s. He also served as a director of the Milwaukee-Mississippi Railroad.

Mills was also a land speculator and urged Evansville businessmen and promoters to not wait for the railroad to begin improving the area around the much hoped for depot. The soon-to-be Evansville resident purchased land on the far west edge of the village and donated 2 acres so the Methodists could build the Evansville Seminary.

Many of the land speculators that arrived after settlement became permanent residents. Another land speculator, Almeron Eager arrived in Union township in 1854 and bought 80 acres of land that he farmed for a short while and then purchased 200 acres.

In 1855, Evansville residents agreed to move the village's original cemetery from the south side of the first block of East Main Street. The interred bodies were removed from the cemetery and placed in the new cemetery, nearly a mile to the east. This cemetery was later named Maple Hill. Besides this cemetery in Evansville, there were two other cemeteries in the Township, the Old Baptist Church cemetery in the village of Union and a small cemetery north of the village of Union in section 10.

The immigration of people from the Eastern United States continued well into the 1850s. As in the earlier years, groups of people, families related by blood and marriage, made the journey together. A family of carpenters, the Libby family came to Evansville in the early 1850s, with their brother-in-law William Campbell, a saw mill operator, they began building large frame structures for business and residential use.

Nathaniel Libby came with his entire family, including his son William, a talented carpenter and his son Caleb, just 9 years old. Years later, Caleb became the editor of the Enterprise and Tribune newspapers in Evansville.

In a series of articles in the 1890s, Caleb described his father's choice of home between the two villages of Union and Evansville. "Union was first settled and much the largest and most important place; but my father proved a true prophet for once at least, for upon landing in this place and comparing the situation of Union and Evansville, he said that this was sure to be the largest and most prominent in the near future, basing his decision principally upon the beautiful water power then here and none at Union, which proved very true and still more so when the railroad came here instead of through Union as first designed and surveyed, and a greater part of the inhabitants and some of the buildings there have been moved to this place and Brooklyn."

"Although but a small boy 9 years of age I remember well upon our arrival we left the cars at Footville, then the terminus of the railroad, where father met us and we came in an old fashioned stage coach to this place, and the

only living place that could be procured for our family was in part of what was called the old Prairie House, long ago burned, located where Rev. J. E. Coleman now resides, which had been used as a hotel on that road known as the old government road, there being no roads fenced in those days everybody was privileged to drive across the country in any direction they chose. But this road had been traveled as a government road for some time and was the only familiar thing to be seen in that vicinity resembling civilization, and oh, how homesick we all were, never having been in a new country before and not far from some great eastern city all of our lives. Evansville itself was then cut off from mail communications, the stages from Janesville and Beloit turning north two miles east making their first stopping point at Union.”

Henry Spencer built Evansville first hotel in 1855, a three story building, one story higher than the one in Union Village. The structure was built by Nathaniel Libby and his sons, with lumber sawed at William Campbell’s mill. The Spencer House was on the northwest corner of Main and Madison Streets.

Caleb Libby described some of the early building construction in Evansville. “My brother Henry, now deceased, engaged at once with Mr. Henry Spencer, who then resided in what was then termed a handsome residence located on the rise of ground back or north of where the opera house now stands, while William and Mr. Miles was at once engaged in working at their trade of carpenter and joiners, the first building erected by them in this city being a wagon shop for Mr. Hiram Spencer now occupied by Mr. H. Fellows in his machinery business.

This same spring of 1855 my father and next younger brother Harrison came to Evansville and a little later in July my mother, sister now Mrs. B. Campbell, youngest brother Nathaniel and self followed when the full complement of the family were located here. This same summer father and brother William built the residence now occupied by Mr. Geo. F. Spencer and his daughter Hattie's art gallery; the Central House and store occupied by Messrs, Cummings & Clark were built the same season by Sumner Preston and his two sons Lorenzo and Josiah, as well as several other buildings both log and frame for there was great need of living room for the fast increasing population.”

Spencer also speculated in land. His sales from 1848 to 1855 earned him nearly \$5,000. Since there were no banks, Spencer held the mortgages on the properties he sold. The Rock County Register of Deeds recorded nearly \$4,000 in mortgages that Spencer held on the land. There was little risk in these land ventures. As Union township continued to grow, the land values increased and if Spencer, or other land speculators did not receive payment and foreclosed, the land could be sold at a higher price.

The township government continued to operate into the 1850s with many of the same people who had served in offices in the 1840s. The town officers for 1854, were Supervisors: Ira Jones, Chairman, Daniel Johnson and Peter Aller. The town clerk was P. D. Vaughan. Hiram Burdick served as assessor. Allen Miner, Treasurer and R. S. Kingman, Superintendent. Jacob West, John Dawson and W. C. Lovejoy were the Justices of the Peace.

The following year, 1855, Jones, Johnson and Aller continued to serve as Supervisors. H. L. Smith took the Town Clerk’s position. Stillman Bullard and John Dawson acted as the township assessors. E. B. Harvey was the Superintendent and Asa Pierce was added to the list of Justices of the Peace.

The state of Wisconsin took its own census in 1855. Union township continued to grow, with a total of 1,377 people reported. There were 720 males, 655 females. A small percentage of the total, 86 people, reported that they were “foreign born.” Most of the residents had immigrated from the eastern United States.

The 1855 census taker reported that the average price per acre in Union township was \$4.09. There were no 12 school districts in the township with 598 students. The State of Wisconsin had supplemented the local taxes with a payment of \$413.00 to Union township schools.

The number of farms increased rapidly and an 1858 book describing Rock County listed 185 farms in Union Township. Wheat was the principal crop grown by Union township farmers. The pioneer farmers had been able to put only a few acres into production and the fields were heavily cropped, wearing out the soil. Wheat crops

failed in the 1850s and corn and oats became the favored crops.

By 1858, the village of Union had two dry good stores, one hotel or tavern, one physician, 1 district school with 45 pupils, a Baptist minister, 1 blacksmith shop, 1 tailor's shop, a shoemaker's shop, 1 cabinet shop, 3 joiners, 1 painter, 1 wagon maker and 2 masons. There is no doubt that the village of Union would have continued to grow, if the railroad had not bypassed Union in the early 1860s.

The map of the township published in 1858 shows a township well populated with farms and homes. Small squares represent the houses with every section showing three or more residences.

The following year in 1859, the tax assessor for Union township reported there were 22,909 acres valued at \$441,471. The average value for an acre of land was \$19.27, more than 4 times the value recorded just four years earlier when the Wisconsin census was taken.

The transportation problems had not been solved by the end of the decade of the 1850s, but conditions for farmers seemed to be improving and land values were rising. More land was cultivated and despite low prices and high transportation costs, farm income was improving.

Union township was moving beyond the settlement period. Two villages were platted, although the entire township remained under the governance of the Union Township Board.

The area was becoming self-sufficient with a greater variety of goods sold at the stores. The township now could boast of hotels, post offices, saw mill and grist mill, and blacksmith shops. There were doctors, lawyers, teachers, wagons makers, carpenters, and masons. Churches and schools provided education, religious, and social opportunities.

THE 1860s

The 1860s brought prosperous times to Union Township. Although many struggled through the early years of the decade, those who persevered and stayed on the land saw property values increase and farm products become more valuable.

Transportation had improved in Rock County and trains ran daily from Janesville to Milwaukee and Chicago. In the first years of the decade, the price of grain dropped so that farmers were struggling to add acreage and store grain until prices improved. What helped improve conditions for the farmers was the increased land under cultivation.

In the twenty years following the arrival of the first settlers in Union township, farming methods had improved. The crops were more diversified and some farmers were beginning to specialize in raising sheep and dairy cows to increase their income.

When the census of agricultural production was taken in 1860, the amount of wheat, corn and oats harvested had increased 2 to 3 times. Reports of crops in the census were based the prior year's crop.

The production of oats increased from 24,163 bushels in the 1850 census to 56,585 bushels in 1860. Production of corn increased more than 3 times, from 11,240 bushels to 38,960 bushels and wheat production doubled from 34,207 bushels to 62,276 bushels.

At the beginning of the 1860s, there were few commercial enterprises in the township. William Campbell had his grist mill operating in Evansville. Campbell reported to the 1860 census taker that in the last 12 month period, he had processed 10,000 bushels of corn and oats with a 12 horse-powered steam operated mill. Most of the grain produced in Union township was taken to Janesville for sale and shipment by rail to Chicago markets.

Cinch bugs and weather damaged crops in 1861 and 1863. In a crop report in the July 26, 1861 Janesville

Gazette, the farmers in Union township had started to cut their wheat. However, the crop was “generally light and is somewhat damaged by the cinch bug.”

Between the spring and fall of 1861, the wheat prices dropped from a high of 90 cents a bushel, to a low of 55 cents per bushel. When the crop came to market in Janesville in August 1861, the buyers reported that the berries were small and shrunken.

The farmers reported to the Gazette that they were getting only about 12 bushels per acre and they were offered low prices. “Taking the light yield and the low price, together makes farmers complain considerably,” the Gazette reported.

Union township farmers found a ready market for wool. Union township farmers produced 3,424 pounds of wool in the year ending June 1, 1860. Peter Aller, a Union township farmer and Rock County Board supervisor, reported to the census taker that he had 300 sheep on his farm.

Despite some complaining about the low prices of farm products, the Janesville Gazette’s issue of November 13, 1861 reported that farmers in Rock County were enjoying prosperity. The newspaper reporter said that Union township had thirty new homes under construction in the early winter of 1861. “Many of these are of a commodious and substantial character, on solid foundations, raising their heads with beauty of design and enduring solidity.”

In the early 1860s, making butter and cheese was a home industry. What the farmers did not consume in their own household was used for barter with village merchants. To increase the market for their excess milk, farmers in Union township formed a cooperative cheese factory in 1866.

They pledged the milk from 350 cows for the production of cheese and elected officers to manage the company. The farmers had been feeding the unused milk to pigs. Some were persuaded to begin feeding corn to the pigs in order to save the milk to sell to the cheese company.

Most farmers did not milk during the winter months. The cheese factory was located in Evansville and operated during the spring, summer and early fall. The machinery was operated by a steam engine.

The cheese factory produced 55-60 pound cheese and 13 cheeses were made each day according to Charles Wilder, the cheese maker. Most were sold in the Chicago markets. When the cheese factory quit its first year of operation in October 1866, Wilder had manufactured 100,000 pounds of cheese.

Union township also had a smaller cheese factory operated by Edward Devereaux. This factory produced about 4,800 lbs of cheese each year.

In the 1860s, many of the successful farms were operated by children of the first settlers. The father’s had increased the acreage from their initial purchases in the 1840s. When the census of 1860 was recorded, it showed that some of the early settlers in Union township owned farms of nearly 400 acres.

One of the most successful early settlers, Daniel Johnson, farmed 380 acres in the northeastern part of Union township. Johnson had cleared and improved 320 acres of the farm. In 1863, he had turned the farm over to his sons, William and David, and moved into the village of Evansville. The Johnson farms remained in the family for more than 50 years. Daniel’s brother, Rueben opened a livestock selling business in Evansville in that same year.

Education of their children and grandchildren continued to be important to the residents of Union township. Between 1850 and 1860, the number of schools reported in Union township had doubled.

Ten public schools and a private school, the Evansville Seminary operated in Union township in 1860. The

Evansville public school, located in a building on the northwest corner of Madison & Church Street (the current location of the City Hall) reported 139 pupils and 2 teachers.

There was a school in Union village; another in section 5, section 17, section 18, section 20, section 32, section 26; section 13; and another in section 11. Each school in the township reported 1 teacher and the number of pupils varied from 34 to 80.

The Seminary, a private school operated by the Methodist church had the only high school and college preparatory school in the township. The Seminary had 12 teachers and 155 pupils.

There were still two post offices operating in the township, one at Union and the other in the village of Evansville.

National problems interrupted the lives of many Union township families in the 1860s. At the beginning of the Civil War, Union township men rallied to support the Northern cause.

The Janesville newspapers printed Wisconsin Governor Alexander W. Randall's proclamation calling for companies of men to "be in readiness to be mustered into service immediately." Several young men from Union township arrived in Madison too late to join the 1st Regiment.

Theodore Sutphen, William McRea, and Allen S. Baker volunteered for the 2nd Wisconsin Regiment. McRea was wounded in the first battle of Bull Run. The 2nd Regiment also participated in the Battles of Gettysburg, Gainesville, Antietam, and Fredricksburg. Sutphen was killed at Gainesville, Virginia and Baker was wounded in the second Battle of Bull Run.

The war demanded more recruits for the Union army and in the summer and fall of 1861, the Wisconsin 13th Regiment was formed in Janesville. This Regiment drew the largest contingent of Union township men into the war.

A war committee from Union township reported to the Janesville Gazette that they had enlisted 25 men by early September 1861. Dr. John M. Evans became the 13th Regiment's surgeon. Company D was known as the Union Guards, a popular name in the North's Regiments.

When there were not enough volunteers for the Union army, drafts were held. The list for the 1863 draft enrollment list of the 26th Sub-District, Town of Union, Rock County, included approximately 150 names. From this list, eighteen men were chosen for the first draft in October 1863. The 1863 list was also to be used for a second draft to take place on March 10, 1864, a third on July 18, 1864, and a fourth draft on Dec. 19, 1864.

A special town meeting was called on December 23, 1863 to vote on whether the township would pay a bounty to men who enlisted, and helped to fill the Union township quota. When the votes were cast, 166 favored the bounty and 50 were against.

A second meeting was called and the township voters approved an appropriation of \$3,600 to pay each volunteer \$200. Men could escape the draft by paying \$300 cash to the government. This money was used to buy substitutes.

The increased enlistments and drafts gave the Union army sufficient resources to end the "great war of the rebellion" and the Civil War ended. Union Township troops returned in the early months of 1866.

During the war, Union township was prospering. The Beloit Madison railroad reached Union Township in 1863 and a depot was built at Evansville. This transportation link with Chicago markets made Evansville the primary business and agricultural shipping point for Union Township residents.

This was a great benefit to farmers who could use railroad transportation to sell their farm products in Chicago and the Eastern markets. The railroad had bypassed the Village of Union and this small town began to fall behind the growth of Evansville.

The village of Union lost residents and businesses. The village had once had two churches, a Baptist and a Methodist. In 1866, the Methodist Church in Union was moved to the village of Brooklyn, another railroad town with a growing population.

Two years later, in 1868, the Welch Society at Union Village advertised their “meeting house” for sale. “The building is strong and substantial and can be moved without any inconvenience or material injury.” Potential buyers were asked to contact John Williams at Union or E. A. Thomas at Cooksville.

Transportation through the villages of Union, and Cooksville to Stoughton was by stage coach. There was also a stage to Janesville that left Evansville three days a week, since there was no direct railroad connection with Janesville

An observer in the early 1870s said: “Union has grown old. The stores, where once trade flourished, were desolate, and the windows and doors were closely boarded up; some of them were used for tobacco houses. The houses were denuded of paint, but Main Street looked natural, and even more pleasant than I had ever seen it before.”

Evansville’s first newspaper, the Citizen began publication in January 1866. The editor, Isaac Hoxie was able to secure many advertisers. These demonstrated the variety of goods and services available to Union township residents.

The diversity of manufactured items was due to the railroad and the availability of products from Chicago and other eastern markets. Evansville’s commercial district had many new stores providing diverse products that had in the early years of settlement only been available in Milwaukee.

The hardware store of Parker & Snashall opened in 1864. The Evansville Citizen had advertisements from two drug stores, one owned by three physicians, Dr. John M. Evans, Dr. William Quivey, and Dr. C. M. Smith.

Another physician, Dr. L. G. Murphy had an office in his home. There was a veterinarian operating a livery stable, a photographer, grocers, dry goods merchants, two hotels, a jeweler, blacksmiths, boot and shoemakers, a stationery store, meat markets, a furniture and coffin manufacturer, a carpenter’s shop that made doors and trim materials for homes, wagon makers and harness makers.

The railroad service was essential to moving goods in and out of Union Township and several new businesses operated near the Evansville’s railroad depot. In the late 1860s there were six trains a day leaving the Evansville depot. Three trains were northbound and three southbound.

In 1867, two lumber yards opened. The first livestock and produce dealers, Reuben Johnson, David Stevens and Samuel Norton built a warehouse near the railroad tracks in 1867.

The following year, grain merchants, James Norton and Shively, operated the Evansville Market. Wheat was selling as high as \$2 a bushel. The grain merchants also bought eggs, hay, butter, lard, tallow, hides, potatoes and wool. The markets and good prices had come to Union township farmers. Selling farm products no longer required long and hazardous travel, the grain merchants and livestock dealers had come to Union township.

Town supervisors and other officers were elected for one year terms. Caucuses were held in late March to determine the names of those who would appear on the ballot. Elections were held the first Tuesday in April. The town clerk kept the record of registered voters and a Board of Registry was appointed to register voters and see that they met the residence requirements.

In the 1866 election Daniel Johnson, who had served for many years as a Town supervisor was re-elected and served as chairman. William B. Patterson and Samuel Cadwallader also were elected as supervisors. Jacob West was elected Town Clerk; Elijah Robinson, treasurer; Jacob West, Daniel M. Rowley and A. S. Ordway, justices of the peace; Reuben Winston, assessor; Thomas S. Peck, Sumner Frost and Reuben Winston, constables. Caleb Snashall was elected sealer of weights and measures; and Lucian Craig, the pound keeper. The pound keeper was expected to hold stray animals, including cows and horses, and advertise in the local newspaper in hopes that they would be returned to the owner.

Until 1867, the entire township was governed by the Union township board. Then the village of Evansville residents voted to form their own government. A special election was held on March 19, 1867 to choose the first Village of Evansville Board. The boundaries of the village included the entire area of section 27, the east half of section 28, and the west half of section 26.

Although they were two separate governing bodies, some Evansville residents were allowed to vote in Township elections. Evansville Village Board members also held offices on the Union Town Board.

In 1867, Daniel Johnson was elected to the office of Village Board President and he also held the position of Chairman of the Town Board.

Village board trustees included Isaac M. Bennett, Lathrup York, Elijah Robinson and Henry C. Millspaugh. Nelson Winston was elected the Evansville treasurer and David Mills the clerk.

Some of the same names appear on the report of the caucus and election of Town Officers held on April 2, 1867. Daniel Johnson, Alonzo Richardson and Peter Aller were supervisors. Jacob West and Elijah Robertson were re-elected to terms as clerk and treasurer. Jacob West, E. B. Harvey, and Argalus Ballard were elected Justices of the Peace. Harrison Hayward, Boyd Jones, and J. B. Wiley were elected constables and I. M. Norton, sealer of weights and measurers. The following year, in 1868, the same officers were elected to the Union township board.

Justice of the Peace, Jacob West, was a trusted public servant and also served as the United States tax collector. In this roll, West was officially called, the Assistant U. S. Assessor, 2d Div. 4th Dist. He collected tax for income, carriages, gold watches, gold and silver plate, and a special tax for doing business.

In the late 1860s, some residents of the Village of Evansville had plans to expand the village boundaries into Union township. Although it does not appear as an officially platted addition to Evansville, the local newspaper reported that one of Evansville's citizens had divided his farm into 75 to 100 building lots. Andrew Pettigrew lived on West Church Street and his farmland extended south and west.

Farms were increasing in value. In 1866 C. B. Little advertised his 160-acre farm, northeast of Evansville for sale. According to Little's ad, it was one half prairie, with 30 acres of timber and 30 acres of tame grass. There was good "plow land." The farm also had a "good frame house 18 by 22, well finished." There were still remnants of the settlement period, as Little had not yet taken down the 16 by 32 log house. The log house was included in the purchase price.

Although no price was listed for Little's farm, three years later, when the 1870 census taker arrived on June 3, to record information from Union township farmers, he was required to list the value of the real estate held by the head of house. The census taker visited the farm of Hiram Bullard. Bullard listed the value of his real estate at \$10,000. He owned 160 acres in Section 14, a substantial brick house and impressive barns. A drawing of the farm appeared in the 1873 Rock County Atlas. Other farmers in the area reported similar values for similar acreage.

THE 1870s

The 1870 census reported 2,145 people and 224 farms in Union township. Most workers reported occupations related to agriculture. There were as many dairy cows as horses and only four oxen were counted in the 1870

census.

During the decade of the 1870s, farmers increased production of crops, livestock, and milk. There were three cheese factories in Union township. "There are several farmers knowing that there is profit in the dairy business, are starting up neighborhood factories," the Evansville Review noted in its May 25, 1870 issue.

The Emery Brothers opened a cheese factory on their farm west of Evansville in May 1870. Another small cheese factory was owned by Edward Devereaux and located on his Devereaux farm.

The largest cheese factory, the Wilder Cheese factory in Evansville, reopened in the spring of 1870 and Charles Wilder made cheese for 5 ½ months. In 1870, the factory manufactured 96,796 lbs of cheese.

Farms with milking cows were called dairies. Wilder provided statistics about the dairy industry to Review readers. In the June 8, 1870 issue, Wilder said that cheese production "took 9 lbs of milk to make one pound of cheese. Dairies were producing 30 to 35 lbs of milk per cow per day. During the first week of June 4,568 lbs. of cheese were made."

Milk was delivered to the cheese factories by wagon. Some wagons carried 2,000 pound of milk at a time. Enterprising men started milk wagon routes to the cheese factory, collecting from farms along their routes. The milk routes businesses allowed the farmer to work with crops and livestock.

Sheep continued to be an important farm animal. Over 3,500 sheep were held on farms in Union township in 1870. The census taker recorded 15,769 pounds of wool marketed.

Wool buyers from Janesville Woolen Factory advertised in the Review that they would pay the highest prices for wool. The Woolen Factory also carded, spun and wove the wool into cloth, easing the work of the housewife. Relieved of the cloth making, she had more time to produce butter and raise egg-laying chickens so that she had goods to barter with the local merchants.

Other buyers came from Boston and other Eastern markets to purchase goods for the Eastern woolen mills. Wool buyers from Boston arrived in July 1874 to make purchases in the Evansville area. Wool sold for 40 cents a pound, with inferior and unwashed wool selling for less. This encouraged Union Township farmers to increase their holdings in sheep.

The increased holdings in livestock made the windmills manufactured at the Baker Manufacturing Company an important farm structure and a status symbol of prosperity. The windmills manufactured at the Baker manufacturing company helped provide sufficient water to the livestock and an important supply of water for the household.

There were risks to raising livestock. Natural enemies of domesticated animals roamed Rock County. County officials offered a bounty for wolves and other predators. Farmers sometimes became hunters to protect their investments and gladly collected the bounties. Elmer Bullard trapped three wolves in the summer of 1874 and the county paid him \$15 each.

Union township farmers increased their production of grain so they could feed livestock and have surplus grain to sell. After the Civil War, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Colorado and Montana began to attract pioneers. Railroads expanded north and west of Evansville. From 1865 to 1880 there was a steady migration of settlers into the western territories.

As the Great Plains was settled, Evansville farmers also found new markets for livestock. Some farmers not only shipped livestock, but also purchased land for farms and ranches. In 1873 the Review reported that Evansville businessman, Isaac M. Bennett, purchased 400 sheep and 100 lambs from area farmers and shipped them to his ranch in Colorado. Before they were shipped, he had the wool sheared for sale to local buyers.

Evansville's location on one of the major lines to the west and to the Chicago market meant that local farmers benefited by a two-way market system. Livestock and grain could be shipped east and west. Rail transportation to the Chicago grain elevators and Union Stockyards gave farmers in Union township immediate access to national markets for their livestock and grain.

Farmers relied on livestock buyers to sell their products, rather than taking their own goods to Chicago markets. The livestock buyers acted as middlemen between the farmer and the stockyards in Chicago. Farmers delivered their animals to the Evansville stockyards located near the depot, sold it to the livestock buyers who then loaded and shipped the livestock to the Chicago stockyards.

The 1870 census listed four stock dealers in Evansville, David Stevens, age 30; William Stevens, age 28; Reuben Johnson, age 33; and John C. Andrews, age 52. Andrews was retired, but had been a livestock dealer in Argyle.

In December 1873, the Review reported 15 carloads of hogs shipped in one day from Evansville. Johnson and Stevens paid out \$3,000 to the farmers who sold the hogs.

Although the Johnson & Stevens company seemed to have a corner on the livestock market in Evansville, the railroads provided competition and quick transportation for buyers from outside the area. They also purchased grain. The company increased their storage space in the 1870s to handle the large amounts of grain coming to market.

Grain prices from the Chicago markets were posted weekly in the Review. Grain buyers from other areas also came to the Evansville depot to purchase the grains, which now were predominately oats, corn, rye, and barley. Less wheat was being grown as the developing areas in the Great Plains, the Dakotas, and Nebraska became the bread basket of the nation.

Tobacco became an important cash crop for Union township farmers. This provided a supplement to farm income but was very labor intensive work. Only a small amount of land could be planted and harvested.

Hiram Bullard put in five acres of tobacco in 1871 and harvested a crop of 10,640 pounds. His crop brought \$1,100 and Bullard was determined to add acreage for more tobacco. Tobacco warehouses were built near the railroad depot in Evansville. Buyers shipped the tobacco to Eastern markets.

Although there was rail transportation to Chicago and Madison, in the 1870s travel to other communities was limited. Union township travelers had to go by stage, to Janesville, Albany, Union, Cooksville, Stoughton, and Dunkirk.

There was hope that railroads would build a direct connection between Evansville and Janesville. This would allow farmers to choose whether they wanted to send products to Chicago or Milwaukee. Without a direct connection, the Union township farmers were limited to the Chicago markets.

While the railroads were a great benefit in transporting people and goods, the railroad companies began to realize their power in the market place and increased shipping rates. This increased the price of goods in the business communities and decreased the farmer's profit on grains and livestock shipped to markets.

Farmers protested by forming a new organization, the Patrons of Husbandry, more often called "The Grange." The Grange wanted to reduce the high cost of goods, form cooperatives for selling farm products, and educate members about better farming techniques. The national Grange organization also tested farm machinery for safety and efficiency, and informed its members about the best machines to buy.

Women were encouraged to join and participate in the Grange. Union township farmers organized a Grange in 1872 and within a year, there were 60 members. This number gave the organization enough funds to form a cooperative to buy and sell merchandise exclusively to its members. Farmers bought shares in the new venture.

The new business was officially named the Evansville Mercantile Association and was more commonly known as the Grange. Within the first few months of business, the Grange was a success. By 1874, the Grange had stores in Evansville and Brooklyn. After taking inventory in September 1874, the Evansville store manager added more merchandise. Plows, other farm equipment, lumber, clothing, food and other merchandise was sold to Grange members at an average of 10% above the cost.

The 1875 Wisconsin State Census gave the population of Union Township as 2025 inhabitants, a loss of 120 people. In nearly every township in Rock County, the townships were losing residents and the villages and cities were gaining.

Although the population of the farms was diminishing, farmers continued to bring more land into production. They built larger barns and storage sheds for their livestock and surplus grains.

One of the largest barns was built on the farm of Jedediah & Mary Hubbard in July 1875. More than 50 neighbors and friends came to help with the barn raising. In appreciation for their work, Mary Hubbard served a meal that included two bushels of biscuits, forty pies, and ten large cakes.

Hubbard's was one of five barns built in Union township in the summer of 1875. Daniel Johnson put up a 42' x 62' barn; David Rowley built a 30' x 40' barn and Stillman Bullard made a 28' x 40' addition to an existing barn.

The increased investment in farm buildings, animals, and crops increased the risk of loss by fire. To protect their homes and farm building, Union township farmers joined neighboring townships and in 1874 organized the Farmers Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Union. The first loss by fire occurred within the first year of business.

The Union Anti-Thief Society covered losses by theft. The organization boasted nearly 50 new members at its 1873 annual meeting. Officers included James Carle, President; Wm. Drummond, vice President; and Ed. Blakeley, Secretary. John S. McMillan, William H. H. Johnson and Washington Higday served on the Vigilant Committee.

Corn replaced wheat as the largest grain crop. The Evansville Review surveyed farmers in the spring of 1875 and reported that very little wheat was sown, as farmers were afraid of another invasion of the cinch bug.

The shift from wheat to other grains was confirmed when tax assessor Jacob West submitted his property and farm products reports at the end of the 1870s. During the production year between July 1, 1878 to June 30, 1879, Union township farmers planted 4,574 acres of corn and harvested 161,035 bushels. The farmer reported 149,380 bushels of oats, grown on 3,464 acres.

Hops, tobacco, apples, potatoes, clover, timothy and other cultivated grasses, and grapes were also produced on farms. There was 229 acres devoted to the production of tobacco, with 105,750 pounds harvested. Dairy production increased dramatically in the 1870s. Union township factories made 283,071 pounds of cheese during the tax assessment year ending June 30, 1879.

In 1876 a pickle and sauce factory was proposed for Union township farmers. The majority of farmers attending a meeting to learn about the factory did not want to invest money in a cooperative venture. They preferred to have a businessman fund and operate the business. Committees were appointed to appeal to farmers who had not attended the meeting to join the enterprise but the idea faded due to lack of interest.

New transportation routes were proposed in 1870. To help farmers gain better access to markets, the Wisconsin Legislature granted two new charters for railroads from Evansville, one to the Illinois border that would connect with the Illinois Central and one to Janesville. "This with what we now have will give us three good lines of rail communication; either line of which can add commercial wealth and importance to our place," the Review reported.

When neither line materialized, the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad made arrangements to use the St. Paul Road rails to connect their line from Hanover into Janesville.

The newspaper editor counted 26 trains in 24 hours passing through Evansville in late 1875. The heavy railroad traffic forced the railroad to build a side track east of the depot to accommodate trains that met in Evansville. Special cars were added to the trains for passengers going to the state fair or summer excursions to the lakes near Madison. The railroads also offered trips to the west for those interested in settling in one of the new territories.

In the 1870s, most candidates for political office had been elected many times in the past and the elections “passed off with no very unusual noise or disturbance.” The Review listed the qualities most desired by the voters, “We want a chairman who knows his duty and fearlessly, without favor or reward does it. We want an absolutely, unequivocally, temperance board.”

Peter Aller, Henry Johnson and Argalus Ballard were elected Supervisors in 1870. Aller was elected Chairman. James Hoskins was elected clerk and maintained that position for several years. M. W. Sheafe, Jr. was elected treasurer. J. W. Haseltine was elected assessor in 1870, briefly replacing Jacob West. James Hoskins and James Rowley were justices of the peace, Charles Hunter, Henry Hubbard and O. Purinton served as constables. Alex Hoskins served as sealer of weights and measurers and Harrison Hayward, a meat market owner, served as pound Master.

In 1874, Daniel Johnson replaced Aller as chairman and Aller became a justice of the peace. Johnson owned land in Union township, but he had been an Evansville resident since 1863. He was re-elected in 1875 and also served as the township’s supervisor on the Rock County Board.

In 1874, William H. Taggart and H. L. Blackman, served as township supervisors; James. H. Hoskins, clerk; Homer Potter, treasurer; Jacob West, assessor; J. H. Hoskins and William Wilson, justices of the peace; Aller, Martin. R. Case, and S. Childs; constables. Reuben W. Johnson took two offices, Sealer and Pound Master. Johnson was part owner of the livestock yard near the depot, a handy spot for holding wandering animals.

Union township and the Village of Evansville shared an old school house building at the corner northwest corner of Madison and Church Street. The building was used meetings and a polling place for voting. Village elections were held in early March and Union township elections were held in early April.

Many wanted a larger building and in 1874, Jacob West made a motion at the Union township meeting that township board and Evansville village board lease another building or room. The Review reported the sentiment of the majority, “We want a building suitably large for all public gatherings and have it accessible to all parties, creeds and sex.” No suitable place was found and the Village and the Town boards continued to meet in the Evansville Village Hall.

It was not unusual for men to serve in several different offices. Peter Aller became the chairman of the Union township board in 1877 and was re-elected in 1878 and 1879. E. F. Ellis and John Tullar served as supervisors in 1877 and 1878. Ellis was re-elected and C. M. Tuttle replaced Tullar in 1879. Perry C. Wilder was elected town clerk and served from 1877-1879. David L. Mills served as treasurer in 1877 and 1878. Homer Potter became treasurer in 1879. Jacob West retained the assessor’s post and also served as a justice of the peace. Martin R. Case, John S. McMillan and Theodore F. Shurrum served as constables in 1877. Henry Hubbard and W. H. Hamilton were elected constables in 1879.

Road masters were appointed to do road maintenance. Weather was a significant factor in the condition of the roads. During winter freezing and thawing, people could often be seen “bouncing, bumping and rolling along in their lumber wagons,” according to one newspaper report. If there was snow, those with sleighs had an easier ride.

There were so many roads and so much work that the board needed 25 road masters to keep the roads in good

repair. Each road master was responsible for a section of land. The Village of Evansville was responsible for maintenance of its own roads.

Temperance and women's suffrage were hot political issues in Union Township during the last quarter of the 19th century. According to Wisconsin law, women could vote in school district elections, but could not vote in the general elections. Women made several failed attempts to vote for officers at Union township elections. Separate ballot boxes for women were offered at the polls whenever school board elections were held with the general elections.

By 1875 the town clerk, James Hoskins reported that there were 13 school districts in the township and \$5,044.37 had been collected for their budgets.

Schools faced increasing challenges as they tried to improve facilities. When Union Village raised \$30 to repair the schoolhouse and build new outhouses, one protestor commented that he had "got his education in a log house and the schoolhouse was good enough without laying out money for repairs."

1880s

Ambitious men, with the strength of youth, took up farming in Union Township in the 1880s. Encouraged by the success of the previous generation, the new farmers placed great emphasis on agricultural education, improved farming methods, special breeds of livestock, new machinery and farm buildings.

The hard fought battle to get rail transportation was past, and there was little evidence of the settlement period in buildings, or farming methods. Caleb Libby, the editor of the Evansville Enterprise newspaper rode into the countryside in Union township in May 1883 and saw many new houses being built. Libby reported that "log houses are almost things of the past, their sites are now occupied by more sightly structures. Straw stables and sheds have been superseded by frame barns."

When the 1880 census taker, Homer Potter, reported his statistics for the Town of Union and the Village of Evansville, the numbers revealed a dramatic shift from rural to village life. Potter recorded 1,012 people living on farms and 1,067 in the village of Evansville.

The number of farms also declined, as the number of acres held by a farmer increased. There were 221 family farms recorded in 1880, three less than a decade before. Farmers needed more land for producing livestock and crops for profit.

Though Union township had fewer people, agriculture still dominated the economy of both the rural area and the village. Farm implement dealers, wagon makers, grain and livestock dealers, clothing merchants, grocers, and other Evansville businesses depended on the farmers of Union township for their survival.

There were Evansville residents who moved to Union township farms, some with great success. John Robinson, the son of an Evansville Methodist minister, started farming at the age of nineteen, after residing most of his life in a small house at 340 West Main Street in Evansville.

John married Mary Emery in January 1880 and they lived most of their adult life on a farm in Union township. Four generations of the Robinsons called the farm home.

When Census taker Potter visited the Robinson farm in 1880, he recorded the 120-acre farm as valued at \$4,500, or about \$37 an acre. Robinson had six dairy cows, twenty-one other cattle, ten calves and thirty hogs. Robinson had 65 acres under cultivation and an orchard of apples. He had 45 acres of oats, twenty acres of corn and one acre of apple trees.

Other 1880s farm census records show that cows, horses, pigs, and sheep were held in larger numbers than in the previous decade. Farmers took pride in their pure-bred Merino sheep, Jersey cattle, and Poland China hogs.

Some began to advertise that they were holding stock just for breeding purposes

Farmers were advised to pen their animals to fatten them for the livestock market. The *Prairie Farmer*, a popular farm journal, advised farmers to pasture their sheep and let them graze until about six weeks before taken to market. The farm journal writer said, "It is my practice to yard them closely for about six weeks, supplying everything, even water, within the enclosure." Farmers were advised to watch the markets and extend or curtail the period of grazing, according to the market.

Jedediah Hubbard's farm on the Brooklyn-Evansville road west of Evansville was operated by son Benjamin. Benjamin began buying large quantities of sheep. He fed them for a few months, then sold them to the local livestock buyers. In the fall of 1880 Hubbard purchased 1,000 sheep and sold them the following spring to the Stevens brothers. Feedlots for young cattle and sheep were a growing farm industry in Union township.

Hubbard's brother-in-law Elmer Bullard, invested in pure bred Poland China hogs and Merino Sheep. Bullard also raised pure bred horses and when he lost a young colt that was from the "Banks" stock. It was a heavy financial loss, as Bullard said he had been offered \$50 for the animal.

Elmer Bullard also grew oats, rye and winter wheat. When the crop was harvested in the fall of 1880, he had 30 acres of oats, 14 acres of rye and 2 ½ acres of winter wheat. The sound of the threshing machines was a familiar sound at harvest time.

Neighbors of Bullard and Robinson, the Butts brothers, put in 60 acres of corn in the spring of 1880. The Butts brothers were still in the fields, harvesting corn, in early December. Their corn cribs were full for feeding their hogs through the winter.

There were so many animals to bring to market, that there were not enough wagons to hold the numbers that were brought to market. The Butts Brothers walked and herded their pigs into town. The pigs were sold on the hoof at the railroad stock yards to livestock dealer David Stevens. Stevens paid the Butts brothers \$7.55 a hundred for the twenty "nice porkers" in August 1882.

The increased production was made possible because new and more efficient machines were available for planting and harvesting. Plows, threshers and binders were manufactured for farmers. Those who owned the machines and had excess time, did their neighbor's work, for a charge. Charley Richardson owned a Dennett Binder and cut 20 acres of oats for his neighbor, John Devereaux. This allowed Devereaux to spend his time making cheese.

According to the 1880 census, Union township ranked second in Rock County in corn production and the township was also second in the number of cows. Farmers had diversified their crops and increased the number of animals held.

Demand for feed was high and when the local farmer's crop did not keep up with the demand, corn, hay and other grains were imported by rail from the western prairies. There was no longer enough wheat grown in Union township and the mill in Evansville imported wheat from Minnesota.

Farmers dug ditches to drain the marshes so that farmers could put more land under cultivation. With better farming methods, the land became more productive and farmers diversified their crops.

Tobacco production increased and tobacco warehouses in Evansville gave the Union township growers the market incentive to increase the acreage. When the 1880 crop of tobacco was harvested, the farmers were working every day of the week to bring in the crop.

There was also a great demand for carpenters and lumber for building tobacco sheds and the lumber yards in Evansville were bringing in railroad cars of lumber as fast as they could get it. C. H. Wilder had long since

abandoned his cheese factory for the more lucrative lumberyard business.

By 1880 there were 1,067 milk cows in Union township. Most dairy products were being used to make cheese. Over 200,000 pound of cheese was produced in Union township in 1879.

The Devereaux cheese factory operated in the early part of the decade of the 1880s. The firm also had factories in Edgerton and Albany. In 1880, the firm sold two railroad cars filled with 700 boxes of cheese to a New York firm. It had taken Devereaux less than one month to manufacture the cheese.

By 1882, the Devereaux factory had competition from the Davis and Lamb Creamery Co., a butter manufacturing firm. The company built a factory on the southeast side of Evansville and installed churns run by a steam engine. They also supplied the milk cans for the farmers.

The milk was hauled to the creamery by the wagon load from local dairy farms. The Evansville Creamery management announced that they had been promised the milk from over two thousand cows, almost double the number of milk cows reported in Union township in the 1880s census. The company expected to start up business on 20th of April.

The Davis Creamery invited the farm wives to visit the factory, so that they could witness the manufacture of butter. Each lady visiting the factory was given a small pail of buttermilk. The Davis firm hoped to convince the women to abandon their churns and persuade their husbands send milk to the Creamery.

A Mr. Simms, the manager of the creamery, led the tour of the creamery and told the farm women, "The old system of butter making must be numbered with the things of the past. The old fashioned milk pan and churn must go to the garret to keep company with the spinning wheel and the loom."

The women were persuaded and so were their husbands. The Jersey cow, that furnished a larger quantity of cream than other breeds, became a favored dairy breed.

The success of the dairy industry persuaded a local shoe maker to turn inventor. William Wood applied for a patent on a milk can cooler "that promises to excel anything yet brought to the market."

Davis and Lamb bought out the Devereaux Cheese factory in Union township. By eliminating the cheese factory, Davis and Lamb forced farmers to bring their milk to the creamery for sale. Milk was a very perishable product and farmers lacked adequate transportation and refrigeration to attempt to sell the milk in distant markets.

The Davis & Lamb Creamery owners could not make the business profitable and they closed in the late 1880s. Some creamery management left without paying farmers for the milk they had brought to the creamery. Some of the farmers doubted whether they should stay in the dairy business.

Another farm product that was received much attention in the 1880s was tobacco. Processing tobacco provided employment in the winter when many farm laborers needed work. In January 1883, the Review noted that "all growers and almost everyone that can be employed is busily engaged in stripping, sorting and casing" tobacco.

During the 1880s, the westward movement into the Dakotas, Iowa, Nebraska, and Minnesota reached its peak. Several Union township families moved to the new territory. Walter Pierce sold his 160 acre farm to William Gillies in 1883 and moved to the Dakota Territory. Shortly before purchasing the Pierce farm, Gillies had bought a flock of sheep from a Magnolia farmer and the Review had described Gillies as "one of the big sheep men of these parts."

Almeron Eager took advantage of the frequent visits he made to Minnesota and the Dakota Territory to visit relatives and took young cattle and horses to sell. According to a Review article in September 1882, he "had no trouble in finding ready market for the young stock he took out."

Farmers in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas depended on these shipments of animals to stock their farms. Another livestock dealer, William Nelms shipped 144 calves to Marysville, Missouri in September 1882. It was important that the stock dealers travel with the livestock. The animals needed to be watered and fed, to keep them in marketable condition once they reached their destination.

Progressive farming methods were being taught at programs sponsored by the Grange, Wisconsin State Horticulture Society and the Wisconsin Agricultural Society. Local farmers were eager to take advantage of the education offered.

The Farmer's Institutes were opportunities for farmers to exchange ideas and listen to speakers describe new methods of cultivation, planting, harvesting and rotation of crops. Lecturers spoke about the use of pure bred sires in breeding horses and cattle, offered ideas on building silos, dehorning cattle, and the use of time. An 1888 Evansville Institute speaker proposed the length of the work day and the use of leisure time, "Ten hours a day is all a man ought to work on the farm, then he has time to read books and papers."

The farmer and the industry An 1883 Birds Eye View of Evansville shows a well developed rail system near the depot. The Chicago and North Western Railroad considered Evansville one of the best stock shipping points on their rails. In 1885, the company built extra sheds and chutes to the west track near the depot to accommodate the increase livestock shipping business. Rail transportation improved in the 1880s with the building of the "cutoff" that gave Evansville a direct line to Janesville – a 20-year dream-come-true.

Tobacco warehouses were built near the railroad yards. The cheese factory of C. H. Wilder was dismantled and moved near the railroad for a tobacco warehouse.

Sidney Smith and Almeron Eager also turned a building they owned into a tobacco warehouse. They traveled the countryside in March 1882 to purchase tobacco and announced in local newspapers that they were paying eight cents a pound for the 1880 crop that farmers had been holding for sale.

Smith and Eager were soon joined by Elliott Barnard and his son, Sat. By 1885, the Barnard and Son warehouse was under construction near the railroad tracks in Evansville.

The size of Union township diminished as the increased need for housing in the village of Evansville led to the annexation of several pieces of land into the village. Property owners turned land into money. Subdivisions and residential housing developed on former agricultural land. The value of farmland increased quickly when it was subdivided for residential building. In 1884, the farmland valued at \$40 an acre was divided into village lots valued at \$110 to \$200.

The men responsible for the new subdivisions were former farmers, Evansville merchants, bankers, and Evansville's first doctor. Agricultural land owned by Albert Babcock, George Spencer, Dr. John M. Evans, Peter Spencer and Samuel Hunt, Charles F. P. Pullen and Matthew McEwen, Levi Leonard and Lansing Mygatt was annexed as Village of Evansville property in the 1880s. These early annexations began a trend that continues to the present.

There was wealth in land and the farmland of the past became the village of the future. Many who owned farmland in the new subdivisions handled their own sales, but real estate agents and bankers were also advertising property for sale.

The village population registered in the 1885 Wisconsin state census was 1,512 and the township, 1066, a slight increase in the rural population over the 1880 federal census.

In the early years of the 1880s, Union township's governing board still had some of the earliest settlers serving as officers. Evansville Village residents could vote and hold office in the Township elections.

Supervisor Peter Aller still held the office of chairman in 1882. Jacob West was elected as the treasurer and a Justice of the Peace. Other officers elected that year were: Supervisors, E. L. Jordan, and H. L. Blackman. Clerk, C. H. Spencer; Assessor, W. H. H. Johnson; Justices of the Peace, Almeron Eager, E. Tolles. Constables, Ray Gilman, Chas. Powles, John Devereaux, Sumner Frost. Jacob West and Almeron Eager owned land in the township, but were village of Evansville residents.

In 1884, Aller once again was elected to the chairmanship of the town supervisors. Jordan was reelected and William Gillies replaced Blackman who had moved to Iowa. James Powles was elected assessor; Almeron Eager, Treasurer, and S. Purrington, H. Hamilton and J. S. McMillan constables. According to the newspaper report of the election, 410 votes were cast.

Women's suffrage and a new town hall were political issues in the late 1880s. The attempt to get a new town hall was put to a vote in 1880s. In April 1884, the voters were asked to approve a \$10,000 hall that would serve both units of government.

The voters approved the plan by 70 votes, but the Town and Village Boards did not act and the proposed building was not built. "There is no doubt it would be a good thing, but the burden of taxes deterred many from doing what the interest of the town seemed to demand." the Review noted following the election.

The fight for women's suffrage continued. Union township women once again tried to vote in the general election in 1887, but were turned away after a decision of Wisconsin's Attorney General Estabrook was read at the opening of the polls.

Estabrook had determined that Wisconsin's suffrage law meant that women could vote only on school matters, in school districts for school boards and budgets and for county and state school superintendents, but not in town elections. "That settled the question so far as women are concerned in town elections," the Review noted in its report of the election.

In 1887, Peter Aller was no longer running for township office. William W. Gillies was elected Chairman, Isaac H. Brink and John Tullar served with Gillies as Supervisors. James Ludington became the town clerk. William H. H. Johnson was elected assessor and also served as a Justice of the Peace. Fred Baker beat Almeron Eager in the election for the position of treasurer. Martin Dixon served as a Justice of the Peace. Constables were W. H. Hamilton, J. S. McMillan and Benjamin W. Hubbard. Charles Wood served as sealer of weights and measurers.

Village elections were held separate from the township elections and Evansville men had been allowed to vote in both elections. Caucuses to choose candidates for the ballot were held a few weeks prior to the actual election of Town officers. At the 1888 Town of Union caucus, Almeron Eager, a Village resident, made a motion that Village residents not be allowed to vote for candidates for Township office. The motion failed on a show of hands, but the issue did not go away.

State Attorney General C. E. Estabrook was asked to give an opinion on whether Evansville men could vote in the Town of Union elections, based on a new law passed in 1887. This law allowed the separation of village and townships that were within or adjacent to one another. However, the Village Board had not taken the legal steps to make the separation.

Estabrook determined that the village men could vote in Union township elections, as long as the Village had not taken steps to separate the town and village. In a letter to William W. Gillies dated April 2, 1888, Estabrook advised Union township "I do not think that it is your duty to reject the votes of the people residing in the village until some steps have been taken to have a separation. In my judgment your duty at this spring election would be to receive the votes of all legal voters residing within the town or village."

A week after the election there was a dispute between the town and village about the taxes paid for roads and bridges that were jointly owned and maintained. Each claimed they had paid more than their fair share of the

costs. The Village Clerk and the Town Clerk submitted their financial accounts of road and other expenses to be printed in the Review.

Roads and issues of ownership of the town hall were so contentious that the Town and Village officially separated in 1889. Once separated, the law provided that if there was real estate jointly owned by the two governing bodies, it must be sold. The two Boards met but could not agree on a price for the property.

The Village officials claimed that the town hall land had “a worthless building upon it, the building’s principal value, if any being from the repairs put upon it by the village.” A county judge appointed a committee to end the dispute.

The Committee met in July 1889 and ordered the Village to pay the Town Board, \$532.98 for their interest in the property. The Village gained control of the land and building and in the early 1890s tore down the old Village/Township hall and built a substantial building on the site that is still used today as the Evansville City Hall.

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1890 - 1894

The Town of Union had to find another place for voting and meeting purposes. The following March, town clerk Campbell placed a notice in the Evansville Review that a caucus of legal voters of the township of Union was to be held at Homer Potter & Sons store on March 29, 1890 and again in 1891.

Town officers elected in 1890 were Samuel Cadwallader, chairman; Martin Dixon and Lyman Johnson supervisors. Henry Campbell took the job of Town Clerk; B. W. Hubbard, Assessor; B. B. Boynton, Treasurer; Clinton Scofield and Gilman Searles, Justices of the Peace and W. F. Little and Thomas Steele, Constables.

In 1892, B. W. Hubbard was named chairman of the Supervisors, with Ira Jones and W. F. Little also serving as supervisors. J. C. Brown was named Clerk; Isaac H. Brink, Assessor; John Tullar, Treasurer; S. H. Frost and Dempster Van Patten, Justices of the Peace and S. Parrington and Chris Jorgensen, Constables.

Little took over as chairman in 1893 with Jones being a repeat office holder as supervisor and David M. Johnson, also serving as Supervisor. Brown, Brink and Tullar kept their office in 1893, as did S. H. Frost. A. D. Bullard replaced Van Patten as Justice of the Peace and John McMillan and George Bullock were voted in as Constables.

Little, Jones and Johnson were confirmed by the voters to serve as Supervisors in April 1895. J. E. Coleman became the Clerk, with Tullar and Brink keeping their posts. Frost served as Justice of the Peace and Christ Jorgenson received the votes for the Constable position.

The trend of declining population in Union township, first recorded in the 1880 census, was demonstrated once

again in the reports of the 1890 census. Alonzo Gray and William H. H. Johnson were the census takers and statistics were released to the press in November 1890. The population of Evansville was 1,523 and the population of Union township 950.

By the 1890s, farmers had most of the tillable land under cultivation and some were hungry for more. Many farmers had purchased tiles and drained marshes on their property and there was a demand for a large ditch in the townships of Union, Center, Magnolia, Porter and Janesville.

The ditch would drain the marsh from the southeast corner of Union township near Evansville, and follow the marsh eastward to Marsh Creek into Janesville township. The east end of the ditch would drain into Four Mile Creek near Janesville.

The Marsh Creek Drain proposal was made to the Rock County Board of Supervisors in 1890 and the property owners were asked to bear the cost of the project. "It should be understood that the expense of this improvement, if consummated, is to be paid wholly by the property holders whom it will benefit and it will undoubtedly require a great deal of persuasion to get some of them to join in the enterprise," the Evansville Tribune reported in its October 7, 1890 issue.

The planners expected that three to six thousand acres of crop land would be recovered by draining the marsh. A committee of township representatives was appointed by the County Board. Samuel Cadwallader, a Union Township Board supervisor was invited to be a member of the committee. Cadwallader and others interviewed farmers, and decide if the ditch should be built.

There were fifty-five property owners who needed to be convinced that the project was worthwhile. "Don't Want the Ditch" was the observation of the committee after interviewing all of the property owners. Some feared that the expense to drain the land would exceed the value of the reclaimed property. Some also believed that there was quick sand quick sand in the marsh that would make digging the ditch impossible.

The first proposal did not define who would be responsible for maintaining the ditch. Farmers along the route of the ditch worried about high maintenance costs for the ditch and wanted assurances that the Rock County Board of Supervisors and taxpayers of Rock County would be responsible for the keeping the ditch open.

Weather played a part in the property owners' support for the drain project. In the spring of 1891 there were heavy rains that caused flooding. Some of the farmers, once reluctant to support the Marsh Creek Drain, could not get into their fields because of the flooding. They reversed their original decision and signed a petition to drain the entire length of the proposed Ditch.

Rock County Board of Supervisors received five bids for the project. E. J. Seaver of Edgerton had the winning bid and a contract was given to Seaver for \$3,000 to build the nine-mile ditch.

According to the plans outlined in the Evansville newspapers, the proposed ditch would be dredged to a depth of three and one half feet and a width of 8 feet at the top and four feet at the bottom of the ditch. The western part of the ditch would be dug parallel with the railroad tracks in the southeast corner of Union township to drain land that all hoped would be used for warehouses and other commercial Enterprises.

The project was brought to a halt when one Magnolia farmer filed a lawsuit against Rock County for failure to follow state laws in laying the groundwork for the proposed project. Rock County Judge Bennett heard the case and agreed with the farmer. The judge said the contract with Seaver was voided and the project proceedings had not been done in accordance with the laws. "New proceedings will be necessary by the property owners along the proposed improvement, as well as by the county board of supervisors," the judge decided.

Marshy areas were also a problem for road maintenance. In 1892, Union township ordered tile drains to be used as culverts on the township roads. "The town of Union has inaugurated a good scheme for improving her roads,"

said a reporter for the Review.

Some farmers did not consider the culverts to be an improvement and complained that some of the tiles were placed so that the water drained into their fields. The editor of the Review called for the Town of Union pathmasters to remove the culverts because of the damage to cropland. The editor suggested that the pathmaster point the culverts in a different direction, or the township should compensate the farmer for damages.

All roads in the township were still dirt covered and rough. Inclement weather and lack of road maintenance equipment caused “pitch” holes in the roads. The wagons and buggies that hit these holes were pitched from side to side, and people and produce had a rough ride. Extra horses were sometimes needed to haul heavy loads along the muddy roads.

There were demands for gravel roads. Caleb Libby, the editor of the Enterprise newspaper, was impressed with a gravel road built near Milwaukee and explained that the gravel surface, if maintained formed a very hard surface, similar to concrete. “Such roads can be made and maintained at less cost than is at present entailed by our ruinous and futile attempts at road making and repairing. This township has been settled fifty years and what of the roads? A little plowing and a little scraping, year after year, what have we gained? Some low places have been graded up, but with earth only, ready to make more mud as the first rains come,” Libby said.

The farmer also faced perpetual problems from weather and insects. There was a heavy infestation of the cinch bugs in the summer of 1891. The insects that destroyed wheat and barley, also attack the crop crops. In early August 1891, area farmers put cholera- infected cinch bugs in the corn fields. Cinch bugs died by the thousands according to one report.

Government agencies became more active in aiding the farmer in the 1890s. The United States Department of Agriculture delivered weekly weather and crop reports that were printed in the Evansville newspapers and the University of Wisconsin Agriculture department was aggressive in reaching out to educate the farm community.

Professors at the University of Wisconsin Agricultural Experimental Station in Madison encouraged farmers to diversify their crops. The University offered free sugar beet seed to farmers and hoped this would also be the start of a new Wisconsin industry. As there was no local market, Union township farmers showed very little interest in the sugar beet project at the time it was first introduced.

However they did accept free seed from George Dibble, a local sorghum maker who had a mill in Evansville. Each spring, Dibble left the free seed at the Evansville Post Office and farmers grew the sorghum. In the fall Dibble processed the sorghum into syrup.

Educators at the University of Wisconsin – Extension took their programs directly to the farmer in the 1890s. Farm, home, education, and society were principal themes of the Institutes. The University, the State legislature, and local businesses and farm groups sponsored Farmer’s Institutes and communities competed for the opportunity to host the programs by submitting applications to the Farm Committee of the University Board of Regents.

The applications had to be signed by “ten or fifteen farmers or business men,” according to the instructions printed in the Evansville newspapers. The University’s Board of Regents met in June and chose the successful applicants for the Institutes to be held the following winter.

Union township and Evansville wrote and signed several successful applications in the 1890s. The Magee Theater in Evansville was the site of several successful Farmer’s Institutes. The programs, usually held in late January or early February, were widely attended by Union township farmers and their wives.

A very successful Farm Institute was held in Evansville in 1893. Benjamin Hoxie, an officer in the State Horticulture Society, was the principal organizer of the institute. The theme of the program was “Better Farming,

Better Homes, Better Schools and a Broader Social Life.”

Many of the speakers were successful farmers who agreed to share their knowledge with others. The lectures were similar to those given in the 1880s, and included How to Buy Profitable Cows, Rotation of Crops, Revitalizing the Fertility of the Soil, Small Fruit and Orchard Production, Parental Responsibility, Schools and Patriotism.

The Institute programs encouraged farms to continue raising sheep and cows. The emphasis was on good breeding and purchasing animals for production and sale. Farmers were urged to buy and breed for meat production or dairy production. The all-purpose cow was a thing of the past, according to the speakers.

One of the outcomes of the 1893 institute was a weekly sale to market livestock. Evansville residents Benjamin Hoxie, Perry Wilder and C. A. Libby joined with township farmers L. C. Brewer, W. W. Gillies, Henry Campbell, Griffith Jehu and Henry Gardner to organize and promote livestock and horse auctions on Saturdays, a day many farmers came into the village to shop. The sales were widely advertised and an auctioneer managed the sales. Evansville businessmen encouraged these events that brought farmers into the village.

The farm institute also provided the opportunity for farmers to see new machinery that promised to make their farms more productive, with less physical labor. At the 1893 program, the University of Wisconsin staff demonstrated the Babcock tester, a recently invented machine that tested the butterfat content of milk.

Farmers were encouraged to display their products including grain, butter, cheese, vegetables, and fruit. Corn fodder was recommended for fattening cattle and other livestock. Speakers suggested a four-year rotation of crops, to maintain the fertility of the soil. The suggested rotation was clover to corn or another grain.

Though tobacco was a significant cash crop in Union township, the institute organizer Benjamin Hoxie was a strong temperance and prohibition advocate. At the 1893 institute there were no programs about tobacco or growing hops at the institute.

The Wisconsin Tobacco Association organized separate institutes and one was held in Evansville in 1893. The increase in the number of the tobacco warehouses in Evansville in the 1890s indicated the strong impact that tobacco growing had in the surrounding farm community.

The John Brand Company of Elmira, New York built a warehouse near the railroad tracks in 1892. The company shipped tobacco to markets in Canada and the eastern United States. Ed Smith built a warehouse in 1897 and by the end of the 1890s there were five warehouses operating in Evansville. Other tobacco warehouses were operated by Pete Smith, George H. Rumrill, Ollie Colony, Shasta Barnard and Perry Wilder.

The dairy business that had existed for several decades had a momentary setback in the early 1890s. The Davis & Lamb Creamery owners could not make the butter manufacturing business profitable and they closed. This prompted the organization of a farmers' cooperative called the Evansville Butter and Cheese Manufacturing Association.

The new creamery group took over the operation of the creamery in 1890 and hired Ed Devereaux, an experienced Union township cheese maker to manage the creamery. The farmers wanted to operate their farms, not the butter manufacturing business.

They did not have long to wait for expert help. In 1891, the D. E. Wood Butter Company, of Elgin Illinois, agreed to manage the creamery and signed a 4- year contract with the local Butter and Cheese Association.

Immediately after signing the contract with the local farmer's cooperative, the D. E. Wood Butter Co. began enlarging the plant. They also put a separator. This reduced the dairy farmer's work by eliminating the need to separate the cream from the milk on the farm.

The D. E. Wood Butter Co. was founded in 1868 in Elgin, Illinois and owned several creameries in Wisconsin and Illinois. The trade name of the company's butter was "Cold Spring." Charles Pearsall a nephew of the owner managed the company and hired Devereaux to assist them in operating the business. Ed Devereaux's son-in-law, Albert Dixon, was also worked for the company.

The local market for milk allowed farmers to increase their dairy herds. By July 1891, the company was producing 1,000 pounds of butter each day. It was shipped by rail to the Chicago markets. This Elgin, Illinois company went quietly about their business and proved to be a stable market for the milk produced on the dairy farmers in Union township.

In 1897, the D. E. Wood Butter Company sold their old creamery, at the east end of Walker Street, and purchased an old tack manufacturing building on Enterprise Street. The new building was expanded many times over the years that it served as the home of the D. E. Wood Butter Company.

The 1890s were generally prosperous times for Union township farmers. The national panic of 1893 had little effect on Union township farmers. Most Evansville merchants survived the crash and the community's only financial institution, the Bank of Evansville was sound.

Several businesses enlarged their operations and introduced new products. The Grange Store, organized in the 1870s to help farmers purchase goods cooperatively had was no longer dependent on the Patrons of Husbandry members. The former Grange had so few members that the charter of the store was changed so that stock could be sold to non-members of the Grange.

The Baker Manufacturing Company was growing rapidly and just before the World's Fair of 1893, the company introduced a steel windmill and continued to manufacture windmills made from wood. The new windmill was introduced to the nation and the world at the Chicago Columbian Exposition, the 1893 World's Fair.

Local newspapers described the many exotic exhibits to be seen at the Exposition and the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad provided easy transportation. The trip took only a few hours and many Union township farmers and their families visited the World's Fair in Chicago.

Fair visitors usually stayed in Chicago for a week in order to see as much of the Columbia Exposition as possible. For 50 cents daily admission, visitors were introduced to many wonders of the world. Mrs. O. E. Little and her son Orange, Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Franklin, Henry Campbell and his daughter, Pearl, and other Union township residents were recorded in the Evansville newspapers as visitors at the Fair during the summer and fall of 1893.

Union township farm products and an Evansville manufacturing company were introduced to those attending the World's Fair. Benjamin Hoxie was manager of the Wisconsin Horticultural Society's exhibit. His niece, Vie Campbell, a Union township farm wife and treasurer of the Wisconsin State Horticulture Society, served as superintendent of the exhibit when Hoxie was unavailable. George Dibble's sorghum was one of the farm products on exhibit at the Fair.

1895 - 1899

In the middle of the decade of the 1890s, the State of Wisconsin took a census and the count showed that the population of Evansville continued to grow as Union township's population declined. In 1895, the Wisconsin census taker found 1,716 living in the Village and 922 living in the township.

There was no separate tally for Union Village as it was included in the township figures. The exodus of people from the farm to the village continued. Evansville gained 193 people from 1890 to 1895 and Union township lost 28 residents.

One of the reasons farmers moved to Evansville was the opportunity for their children to pursue a high school education. The Evansville Seminary, a private school operated by the Free Methodist Church, offered high school and college level courses and the Evansville School district built a new high school in 1896.

The farmers living outside the Evansville School # 6 District boundaries had to pay tuition for their children to go to school. Some realized that their children's education would be less expensive and more convenient if they bought a house and lived in Evansville.

William W. Gillies was one of the farmers who wanted his children to have access to Evansville's educational opportunities. He bought a home in Evansville and the family moved into the city.

Gillies was still in his 40s and too young to retire when he moved to Evansville in 1898. He continued to operate his farm of 560 acres. Gillies was one of the largest landowners in the township in the late 1890s.

Despite the decline in population, the voters showed no dissatisfaction with the governing officers of the township. There was very little mention of any competition for the offices and voters were often apathetic about voting. Less than 60 voters were counted at the election for township officers in 1898.

If the names of the Union township officers sounded familiar, it was because some of the Union board members of the 1890s were children and grandchildren of the early settlers. In April 1895, W. F. Little was elected Chairman of the Town Board; Ira Jones and David M. Johnson, Supervisors; J. E. Coleman, Clerk; John Tullar, treasurer; I. H. Brink, Assessor; S. H. Frost, Justice of the Peace; and Chris Jorgenson, Constable.

In 1896, the Town of Union caucus was held at C. E. Lee's harness shop and the selection of the caucus was approved by the voters at the general election. Jones retained his job as Chairman of the Board. Arthur G. Franklin and W. R. Patterson were voted in as Supervisors. William W. Gilles took J. E. Coleman's place as Clerk and John Tullar retained the position of Treasurer. Elmer Bullard was elected Justice of the Peace and Chris Jorgenson, Constable.

In 1897, W. F. Little was elected Chairman, with David M. Johnson and Ira Jones as Supervisors. J. E. Coleman once again got the Town Clerk job. John Tullar remained Treasurer and Isaac Brink was named Assessor.

The Union township voters, in the spring of 1898, met at John Lemmel's harness shop in Evansville and elected Ira Jones as Chairman and two new Supervisors, Arthur G. Franklin and W. R. Patterson; William W. Gillies, Town Clerk; John M. Tuller, Treasurer; Leo Campbell, Justice of the Peace; and Chris F. Jorgenson, Constable

The town treasurer was required to keep office hours in Evansville during late December and early January of each year. The 1897 taxes were collected at Calkin's Grocery Store. When the required number of hours at the Evansville location was met, the treasurer moved the tax collection office to his residence.

At the April 1899 election, the same supervisors were reelected. A newcomer, George Grism was named Clerk; V. C. Holmes replaced Tullar as Treasurer. Isaac Brink retained the job of Assessor; S. H. Frost was elected Justice of the Peace and Chris Jorgensen retained the office of Constable.

The economy of Union township improved in the 1890s. This was a great benefit to Evansville businesses and to the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad services operating out of Evansville.

Farmers increased their land holdings, buying up additional farmland as it became available. Arthur Franklin added forty acres to his farm in the early months of 1894 by purchasing the Bushnell farm.

John Devereaux had been a Union township resident since 1850 when he and his parents came from New York to Wisconsin. Devereaux operated the cheese factory that his father, Ed, had run for many years. In March 1896, just before his factory opened for the spring and summer operation, Devereaux went to Chicago and purchased a

new engine and other machinery.

The 1898 biographical sketch of John Devereaux in the 1898 Union Township Directory praised his farming methods. “Anyone interested in agriculture and the value of thorough and careful farming will be impressed. His barns are full of modern machinery, the cheese and butter factory is a picture of cleanliness and altogether the farm is a credit to Devereaux.”

Another successful farmer, Alfred C. Fish came to Wisconsin in 1842, purchased land and farmed for three years before returning to Ohio. His farm was just north of Evansville on the “Madison” road and Fish had a substantial red brick home that he shared with his wife Phoebe and daughter, Delia. Alfred and Phoebe had two sons who died early in life and their daughter Delia inherited the farm and operated it for many years. Fish’s 79-acre farm was small by comparison with the other successful farms.

The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad transported animals to market. Animals were also shipped into the Evansville depot for the growing number of feed lots on Union township farms.

The Review reported in October 1898, that William W. Gillies brought in 500 head of sheep to feed during the winter and again in November 1899, he purchased “a fine lot” of sheep in Reedsburg. Gillies fattened the sheep in the winter to sell in the spring of the following year. In the spring, the newspapers reported that market-bound shipments of animals departed from the Evansville depot every evening.

Snow storms, wrecks and railroad strikes were a serious problem for farmers. A railroad strike occurred in 1894 and the railroads shut down the transportation routes. The Pullman Strike in July 1894 shut down all incoming and outgoing trains. The famous strike had also shut down the Chicago stockyards, packing houses for meat and produce.

A severe snow storm in February 1898 stopped train traffic for several days. The weekend storm began on a Saturday and lasted until Monday. The Enterprise reported that no train traffic from the south could get through during the storm. However, the farmers were happy to see the snow, and hoped that it would thaw slowly and seep into the ground to give moisture to their crops.

Wrecks also shut down the railroads and the crossroads where wagon road crossed the rails were very dangerous. Buggy vs. train wrecks were common. The railroad companies kept communities from extending new roads across existing rails. Evansville had tried to extend Church Street and Water Street so that residence on the east side could have better access to the business community.

When Evansville planned to extend Water Street across the rails in 1898, the superintendent of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Company would not reply to their pleas for a meeting. The depot agent, E. P. Colton told Councilmen that “it was impracticable to lay such street, and that if the county persisted in doing so, the company would fight the effort in the courts.”

Rail traffic from Chicago through Evansville and north was so important and the rails so well traveled that the Chicago and Northwestern RR Co. started to build a double track in 1897. The work in the Evansville area was finished in the fall of 1898. More than 200 construction workers were reported working on the rails in the Evansville area in the summer of 1898. Lindle Apfel, a former local resident and Milwaukee newspaper photographer, documented the machinery and some of the workers with his camera.

The double track increased the capacity of the railroad for commercial and passenger traffic and eliminated delays. In earlier days, a single track had been sufficient. The rail traffic had increased dramatically and rails extended to the west coast. Trains headed in opposite directions met and were side tracked until one or the other passed.

Side tracking a train was costly and delays an inconvenience. The double track allowed trains to pass one another

more efficiently. When it was finished, the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad expected to have a double track between Harvard, Illinois and Baraboo, Wisconsin.

Good transportation provided better opportunities for adults in the farming community to continue their education. The Union township farmer took advantage of the opportunities offered by the Farmers' Institutes and experts from the University of Wisconsin came by rail to teach and oversee the programs. The 1897 Institute was led by University of Wisconsin, College of Agriculture instructor H. C. Taylor.

For the first time, the 1897 Evansville Farmers' Institute offered a special series of programs for women. Vie Campbell was a local expert who had received recognition throughout Wisconsin as a speaker on horticulture, parliamentary procedure, temperance, and women's suffrage. Vie organized a Ladies' Auxiliary for the 1897 Evansville Farmers' Institute that was held in Evansville's Magee Theater on February 28th and 29th.

Vie Campbell told a local newspaper reporter that she believed that Evansville's separate Farmers' Institute meeting for women was a first for Wisconsin. "If this is the case other towns may profit by our example," the Tribune reported. The programs for women emphasized the women's roles in child rearing and household chores.

The speeches included a talk by Evansville's first woman physician Mary Lloyd Ewing. She addressed the audience on issues of "house sanitation." The woman's role in the farm's financial success was also addressed. Mrs. Mary Brigham gave a talk on "My experience in poultry raising."

Several other local women also gave speeches, including: Mrs. Rissa Tullar, Mrs. William H. Doolittle, Mrs. Mary Brigham, and Mrs. Hattie J. Boyd. The women chose topics about health, education, and the importance of reading to children.

Farmers exhibited grain, butter, cheese, vegetables, fruit and other farm produce at the 1897 Institute. Milk testing, apple growing, potatoes, agricultural education, reclaiming wasteland, and sugar beet cultivation were included in the talks given by local farm experts.

J. E. Coleman, head of the Evansville Seminary; Prof. H. F. Kling, the principal of the Evansville schools, and Benjamin Hoxie, a leader in the field of horticulture spoke at the institute. The institute emphasized the importance of education for the farmer and his children. "The Farmer and Teacher" and "Mothers and their relation to Common Schools," were two of the themes of speeches given to men and women attending the institute.

The institutes were annual events in the late 1890s and another institute was held in 1898. Although the roads were describe as "deplorable," many farm families came to the Institute.

At the institutes and in local newspapers, the University of Wisconsin – College of Agriculture advertised their short-course for young men who were interested in pursuing careers in agriculture. The classes lasted a few weeks and in the late 1890s the courses included judging, feeding and managing livestock, animal diseases and their treatment, dairying, horticulture, grafting, blacksmithing, farm carpentering, and bookkeeping for farms. Some of the students of the College of Agriculture wanted to manage farms and others specialized in the study of creameries and cheese factories.

In 1895, the College of Agriculture had introduced pasteurization of milk and cream as a new course of instruction at the University of Wisconsin Agricultural School. The course was intended to teach farmers how to "take charge of dairies that can furnish these pasteurized products to their customers."

William A. Henry was the major force behind the short courses. "Our agricultural college is the only institution in the state which combines hand training and head training and sends its pupils back to the great industry of mankind—agriculture." Henry wrote in an advertisement for the program that was printed in state newspapers.

The value of the University programs to Union township farmers increased over the years, as they wanted an education for themselves and their children who would inherit the farms.

The Universities dairy studies helped farmers produce more milk by improved feeding of the herds and deliver a better quality product for the local market. The demand for milk and cream grew as the local butter factory expanded its operation. The D. E. Wood Butter Company outgrew its facilities at the creamery on Walker Street and in 1897 purchased land and buildings on Enterprise Street. An older building on the new site, once used by a defunct tack factory, was incorporated into the new buildings of the butter-making factory.

Union township farmers and Evansville businessmen met at the February 1899 Farmers Institute held in Evansville. The program was expanded to include many exhibits and a new title, "Midwinter Fair." The events include a cooking school held at the City Hall and sponsored by the women of the Afternoon Club.

The farm and home improvement exhibits were held at the John Evans Wagon Shop and Warehouse on East Main Street. There was plenty of room for the display of farm products and Evansville businesses offered prizes for the best grains, vegetables, fruit, carriage teams, chickens, needlework, and art. There was also a "Prettiest Baby" contest.

The Farmer's Institutes gave Union township farmers the courage to try a new venture. They benefited by the misfortune of the stock holders in the bankrupt Rock County Fair that for many years was held in Janesville. The Janesville's Rock County Fair stockholders declared bankruptcy in 1898.

Although management of a county fair was new to Union township farmers, many had exhibited animals and produce at the Janesville fair and at the Wisconsin State Fair. Some had experience in managing fair exhibits.

In 1899, shares of stock in the Rock County Fair were sold and this gave ownership and responsibility to Union township farmers, as well as Evansville businessmen and promoters.

By April 1899, the stockholders had elected officers of the Fair Association. The President was W. E. Campbell; Vice President, H. L. Austin; Secretary Fred Springer; and Treasurer, George L. Pullen. The officers felt confident enough to rent the McEwen farm the Rock County Fair to be held the first week in September.

The McEwen farm, was at the southwestern edge of Evansville and had a race track. Horse races were an essential event in a successful fair, as they drew crowds of people. There was excellent rail service for those from outside the area who wanted to bring in horses and sulkies, as well as the farm animals and produce to exhibit.

Many of the superintendents of the various departments of the fair had worked on the Farmers Institutes and The Wisconsin State Fair and Chicago's Columbian Exposition. Vie Campbell's experience at the Chicago World's fair and the Wisconsin State Fair made her an easy choice to supervise the women's department of the 1899 Rock County Fair. The various departments for women's work included china painting, needlework and cooking. Her uncle, Benjamin S. Hoxie, a horticulture expert at state and national fairs, was in charge of the fruit and flowers department.

Henry Austin was superintendent of the farm produce; C. S. Doolittle, superintendent of the horses, John C. Devereaux, superintendent of the swine department; Matt L. Ellis, superintendent of the poultry; Elmer Bullard, superintendent of the sheep. The University of Wisconsin, College of Agriculture Experimental Station provided judges for the farm animals.

Circus acts and a hot-air balloon ascension was provided by Union township's circus owner, Col. George "Popcorn" Hall. There were speeches by politicians, including Wisconsin's Governor Scofield and Attorney General Hicks.

The fair was well advertised and anyone with farm produce or animals was invited to enter the competition. "If

your potatoes are the largest this year that you have ever raised, take them to the Fair, if they do not win a prize, they are worth seeing and it will encourage your neighbors to make a display.” To encourage many exhibits, there was no entry fee the first year of the fair.

Union township farmers had many entries in the fair. John Robinson showed Polled Angus, short horn cattle, and sheep. Elmer Bullard brought Herefords and Jersey milk cows. The livestock judging took place on Thursday.

The fair was a success. On the first day, people began arriving at five o'clock in the morning. Women brought their best flowers, fancy goods, vegetables and baking to be judged. Evansville businesses closed in the afternoon of the day so that their employees could attend the events.

The farmers were justly proud of their animals and farm produce shown at the Rock County Fair. The event was a gala ending to the nineteenth century's progress and many were predicting that the 20th century would be even more prosperous for the Town of Union.

In 1899, a “good” farm in Union township was advertised at \$90 per acre, nearly four times the price of the land at settlement. If a farm was sold or changed hands because a new renter was taking over, there was generally an auction of the livestock, machinery, and other equipment. Dan Finnane, William Dooley and John Ryan were favored auctioneers. They were never shy about telling the newspaper reporters about their activities. In the spring, the auctioneers reported daily sales on the area farms.

The village of Union still functioned as a small business center for farm families living in that area. At the turn of the century, Union had a post office, a store, a church, a school, and a blacksmith shop. The Baptist Church at Union had celebrated its 50th anniversary on January 24, 1894 and as the new century began, was nearing sixty years of service.

The Union village post office was operated by Mrs. E. P. Coggin, and she also operated the village general store. She served as postmistress for 15 years. In 1899 she turned the post office and store over to a Mrs. Patterson, who moved to Union from Dodge County.

A new blacksmith opened a shop in Union in 1899. The November 4, 1899 Badger announced that H. H. Berry and his son had moved from Attica to Union and opened a blacksmith shop.

The hotel at Union, known as the "Old Tavern" had been a landmark for many years. It was torn down in 1902. Before it was demolished, the Union Baptist young people held a fund raising party in the old hotel.

The schools were important educational and social institutions in the townships. The Tupper school was taught by Miss Myrtle Green in the fall and spring of 1900. The school board gave her high praise at the close of the year. “Miss Myrtle Green closed a very successful year, Friday, as teacher in the Tupper district with a picnic for the children. The district board are very pleased with Miss Green's work and recommend her very highly.”

Lulu Weaver taught in the Tullar school in the 1899-1900 school year. The Tullar school sponsored a basket social with proceeds to go to the school's library.

The Pleasant Prairie school, often called the Robinson school, had Margaret Walker as a teacher in 1899-1900 school year. Emma Holt was teaching in the Butts Corner school.

1900 - 1904

Union township's 1900 census followed the trend of the previous records and showed a declining number of people on the farms, from 1,012 people in 1880, to 950 people in 1890 and 945 people in 1900.

Many of the young men and women were leaving the farm for jobs in the cities. In the spring of the year, farmers began searching for help for the growing season and the good wages ranged from \$20 to \$30 a month. “Takers

are few," the newspaper reported.

This was a concern to the farmers who needed workers and to the Agricultural College at the University of Wisconsin. The professors at the Agricultural College promoted their short course whenever they had an opportunity to encourage young men to become better farmers and improve the farm income. The University sponsored special visiting days for parents and students at the University and arranged for special rates on the railroads.

Visitors at the programs were given tours of the dairy barns, stock judging building, horse barn, veterinary building, green houses, laboratories, and the classrooms. The University set up exhibits of the various breeds of livestock and crops that were grown on the campus. The Dairy School building, Horticulture grounds, Agriculture Hall, Science Hall, Machine Shops and the campus Geological, Biological, and Historical museums were on the tour. "Professors and assistants will be in attendance to welcome visitors and point out and explain the various objects of interest in the several departments of the College of Agriculture."

Union township farmers encouraged their sons to attend the Short Course offered in the winter. The first three students from Union township to attend the short course were Hugh Robinson, Lyman Gillies, and John Higday. The young men were the sons of successful farmers and in the 1900-01 fall and winter session, they were members of the Short Course class. They were the first of many Union township young men to benefit from the educational opportunity offered by the University.

The Evansville Farmers' Institute committee also began encouraging young men in their farming pursuits. In February 1903, the Farm Institute Committee purchased a bushel of seed corn. The corn was distributed free to Union township boys.

The conditions of the gift were that the boys had to live in Union township and they had to do the "entire work" of planting, cultivating and harvesting the corn. The young men also had to prepare an exhibit of twelve ears of corn from their crop and a paper about their project for the 1904 Farmer's Institute. The committee promised prizes to the top three exhibitors, ranging from \$2 for the best display to \$1 for the third best. All of the participants were promised at least 25 cents if they completed the project.

There were many new opportunities for Union Township farmers in the first few years of the new century. The Rock County Fair became an established institution in Evansville and a great amount of effort was put into making it one of the best in Wisconsin.

Farmers also received door-to-door mail delivery from the U. S. Post Office. The telephone lines were extended into the rural areas, bringing better communication. There were new experiments in crops and a new invention, the automobile made its first appearance in the township.

Following the first year's success, the 1900 Rock County Fair committee made a tour of several potential sites for the fair. The committee decided that the 1899 site, the McEwen farm, was the best. The receipts from the 1899 fair had totaled \$3,403.36 and the committee for the second year, William E. Campbell, Henry L. Austin, Fred Springer and George Pullen were encouraged to try again.

The largest share of revenues came from fair receipts and about \$700 in support from the state. Each county could have only one state franchise and receive funds for the county fair. Evansville's fair was granted the franchise.

The second fair to be held in Evansville was heavily advertised and attracted thousands of people. Exhibitors came from Union Township and the rest of Rock County, Green County and Dane County. Schools did not open until after the fair was over.

John Robinson exhibited fourteen head of Hereford cattle. Stock buyer David Stevens showed Aberdeen Angus

cattle; William E. Hatfield showed Polled Angus; Eugene Blakeley showed Jerseys; and George Higday and George Emery exhibited short horn cattle. Robinson, John C. Ellis, George Emery and George Bramham also specialized in Shropshire sheep.

Two Eastern manufacturers demonstrated a new invention, the automobile, at the 1900 fair. The value of the strange machines had yet to be discovered and no one seemed to find the vehicles superior to the teams of horses that powered their wagons, buggies, sleds and machinery.

In 1901, the Rock County Fair Association stockholders met in April and elected directors, William E. Campbell, George L. Pullen, William W. Gillies, William Stevens, Isaac Brink, William H. H. Johnson, John Robinson, Arthur G. Franklin, Arthur Spencer, George Higday, Ed Griffith, V. C. Holmes, George Howard, Chester Miller and Dan Finnane.

The directors made plans for a more permanent arrangement of the McEwen site. The committee signed a five-year rental agreement for the land at \$150 a year. At the end of the five years, the fair committee had an option to purchase the land.

The site already had a small grandstand for watching horse races and other events. In 1901, the committee, William Campbell, William H. H. Johnson, William W. Gillies, George Pullen and William Stevens received permission to build sheds, barns, and halls to accommodate the exhibits.

To pay for the construction and the rent, the fair committee issued \$5,000 in stock and they had no problem in selling the stock to local farmers and businessmen. The stock company was officially known as the Evansville Rock Co. Agricultural Society. William W. Gillies served as Chairman of the Committee.

The stock was offered for sale at \$10 a share. If buyers could not afford to pay the full price, they could pay 25% at time of purchase, and 25% each year until the stock was paid in full. At meetings of the Fair owners, stockholders got one vote for every share owned. No individual or corporation was allowed to own more than 100 shares. People were encouraged to own one to ten shares of the fair stock.

The proposed buildings and construction costs were printed in the March 19, 1901, Tribune, were a fine arts building at \$375; an addition to the grand stand, \$200; cattle, sheep and hog pens, \$200; an agricultural building, \$125; box stalls for the race horses, \$100.

More than 12,000 people attended the September 1901 fair. Exhibitors brought in 102 cattle, 152 sheep and 107 hogs and according to newspaper reports there was "rare needlework creations, choice culinary concoctions, musical instruments, curios, sewing machines and other fine exhibits." Evansville merchants demonstrated farm machinery and displayed windmills, carriages and furniture.

The fair committee had some years when the revenues were less than the expenditures. At their January 1904 meeting, the directors voted to levy an assessment of 25 cents per share against each shareholder to meet a debt of \$300 from the 1903 fair. The shareholders willingly complied and the fair continued.

The Evansville fair and Farmers' Institutes were positive advertisements for the livestock raised by Union township farmers. Some wanted more recognition and exhibited their livestock in state and national shows.

The Chicago International Live Stock Exposition, or Fat Stock Show was held at the Union Stockyards and John Robinson and George Emery were the first Union township farmers to take stock to exhibit at this show in 1900. One newspaper editor noted: "The best farmers are those who are the most interested in their work and like to exhibit the results of their labor."

The stock shows and fairs were an opportunity for Robinson and other Union township farmers to meet other breeders and to improve their livestock by purchasing from the finest lines of the breeds that they had chosen to

raise. The animals that were shown at the International Live Stock Exposition were winners from the fairs held in the United States and Europe.

Farmers were also going farther away to get feeder stock. In 1902, Arthur Franklin took the train to Omaha, Nebraska to purchase 500 head of cattle for winter feeding. That same year, other Union township farmers, George Bramham, W. W. Gillies, Will King and Tom Steele, brought in rail cars filled with cattle and sheep.

David Stevens, a stock buyer who had been in business since 1864 purchased 19 carloads of cattle in November 1903 to put on his farms. Stevens operated several farms in the area and distributed the animals on the farms for feeding. Unfortunately, he died in December 1903, ending an era for Union township farmers who had trusted him to buy and sell livestock for them.

Within a month after Stevens' death, a group of farmers organized to buy and sell livestock and produce. The company was called the Evansville Produce Company. The officers and directors of the company included prominent Union township farmers and Evansville businessmen, Chester Miller, Frank Hyne, John C. Gillies, Ernest Miller, Leo Campbell, John Wall, Virgil Hopkins and Elmer Rosa.

Stock in the Evansville Produce Company sold for \$25 each. The company had \$3,000 in stock to sell. They built a two-story warehouse near the railroad tracks and made weekly shipments of livestock and farm produce to Chicago. They also announced that they kept a supply of feed and coal for farmers to purchase.

Communications improved in the early 1900s. A new mail service was started in 1901. The federal post office department provided a service called Rural Free Delivery (RFD). The Tribune and Enterprise editor, Caleb A. Libby, urged businessmen and farmers to apply for rural mail service. "Why not have rural delivery mail service for Evansville," Libby asked. "Other parts of the state have such service. The delivery of mail daily to the farmers means a great deal to them."

From early settlement, Union township farm residents had picked up their mail at the two post offices in the township. Evansville and Union post offices were both in operation when the U. S. Post Office announced a rural mail route from the Evansville post office to Porter township and south to Magnolia.

The Janesville Gazette announced in its January 19, 1901 issue: "A government inspector of rural routes was in the city recently and the proposed route was inspected and a carrier and assistant appointed." The writer speculated that there would soon be a second route.

The U. S. Post Office supplied the mail boxes for the farm residents and shortly before the new service began the Evansville post office received a shipment of the new boxes. Swindlers, always on the look-out for a new scam, went to farms, identifying themselves as postal inspectors. After looking over the mail box situation, they demanded \$5 rental fee from the farmers. Evansville newspapers warned readers about the scheme.

Herbert G. Hungerford, a milk route owner, was appointed as the first rural route carrier out of Evansville. Hungerford started the first RFD route on April 15, 1901 and covered an area of forty square miles. The postal service estimated that 675 people would be served by the route. The route included the Magnolia area and the Magnolia Post Office was discontinued. All mail that had been sent to and delivered at the Magnolia Post Office was sent to Evansville.

The second mail route out of Evansville was started on October 1, 1901 and delivered by Mrs. Margery Munger. Rural Free Delivery route No. 2, covered the farms in the area bounded by the Evansville City limits and "after $\frac{3}{4}$ mile turned north west by Butts Corners to the County line then south." The length of route was 25 miles.

The Tribune announced Mrs. Munger as the new carrier on rural route No. 2, "She looks very neat in her carrier's uniform, and is said to be very expeditious in her work." Margery traveled the route with a team of white ponies. The carriers' wagons were painted white and Evansville's wagon maker, J. W. Morgan, advertised that the

wagons were sold at his shop.

By 1903, six RFD routes from the Evansville post office were proposed by the United States Post Office. Every farm in Union township would have free door-to-door delivery. The Union village post office closed. It was an irritation to some of Evansville's residents that they did not have door to door mail delivery, while their rural neighbors did.

Farmers were warned that they had to take some responsibility for the delivery of their mail, or the carrier would not provide services. The post office issued warnings that the mail boxes had to be high enough so that the mail carrier did not have to get out of his wagon to put the mail in the box. Farmers were also required to keep the roads cleared of snow and make a path to their mail boxes during heavy snow storms.

Notices to the farmers warned, "The rural carriers are not obliged to leave their wagons to put the mail in the box. The post office authorities make it a condition that the roads shall be kept good where rural delivery is established or it will be discontinued." Some praised the forcefulness of the post office and hoped that it would provide an inducement for those in authority to build better roads in the rural areas.

The spring ritual of the caucuses to choose township, city and village offices became the subject of state-wide controversy in the early 1900s. The Wisconsin State Legislature was considering changing the voting laws so that there would be primary elections, rather than caucuses to choose candidates. Governor Robert M. LaFollette, a former student of the Evansville Seminary, supported primary elections.

The Legislature debated this issue for many years and Union township continued to choose candidates at the spring caucus. Town officers for 1900 were elected in early April and included Supervisors Ira Jones, Arthur G. Franklin and G. A. Higday. The Clerk was Virgil Hopkins; Treasurer, V. C. Holmes; Assessor, Isaac H. Brink; Justice of the Peace, Leo Campbell and Constable S. Purinton.

Town officers for 1901 were Ira Jones, Chairman; Leo Campbell and George Higday, supervisors; Clerk, Virgil Hopkins; Assessors Isaac Brink; Treasurer V. C. Holmes; Justice of the Peace Sumner Frost; and Constable, Chas. Fryer.

At the April 1902 election, 123 votes were cast. Leo Campbell, was elected Chairman; J. C. Ellis and Thomas Steele, Supervisors; Virgil Hopkins, Clerk; Isaac Brink, Assessor; Treasurer, V. C. Holmes; Justice of the Peace, William E. Reese; and Constable, Frank Hyne.

The 1903 Town of Union Officers were Arthur G. Franklin, reelected as a supervisor and named Chairman. J. C. Ellis and Thomas Steele were re-elected supervisors. The Assessor, Clerk, and Treasurer, were the same as in 1902. A new Justice of the Peace, S. H. Frost was elected and C. F. Jorgensen was elected Constable. Seventy one votes were cast in the spring election of 1903.

The early years of the 20th century were filled with planning and experimentation in farming and road building. Farmers were feeling prosperous in the early 1900s. Droughts and poor harvests, financial panics and depressed farm prices of the 1890s were only a memory. With prosperity came demands for public improvements.

Good roads and regular maintenance of the highways could not longer be satisfied with the old system of path masters. A road tax and administration of the major roads by the county or state administration were under consideration and discussed at the Farmer's Institutes. Few opposed a new tax to maintain roads that could handle the heavy machinery for harvesting, the wagons loaded with stock and produce, and the wagons used for rural mail services.

The officials with the State Geological Survey sought help from the R.F.D. mail carriers to collect information about road conditions. In a 1906 news release the Geological Survey staff said, "There are no persons who travel

the roads as faithfully every day at all seasons of the year as the Rural Delivery Carriers and none who are better qualified to tell of them. They know every rut and bad spot and every broken culvert, as well as the good places.”

The State Geological Survey staff was also following closely the road building plan in place in other states and offered to assist local officials who wanted to learn about road building. In other states, trained engineers were responsible for planning and supervising the roads and the state and county supported the country roads with tax dollars.

1905 - 1909

Critics of the road building system noted that by 1905, three million dollars was spent every year in Wisconsin for road maintenance and yet the road conditions did not improve. “The money has literally been dropped into the holes in our roads,” one editor wrote, and then suggested that Wisconsin follow Iowa’s example of having a “road school” for those responsible for building and maintaining roads. .

Ira Jones, who had served on the Union Township Board for many years, was a charter member of the Good Roads Association of Rock County that organized in October 1906. John H. Fisher, P. C. Wilder and Charles E. Moore also were members of the association. Moore, a Magnolia Township resident, later became an expert in road building and maintenance and was hired as the Rock County Highway Commissioner.

The charter members were asked to go back to their communities to get others to join the Good Roads Association. Little was accomplished until 1908 when John Tullar, chairman of the Union township board, and a Rock County Board Supervisor went to Janesville to see a demonstration of two steam road rollers. The County Board was discussing the purchase of road machinery and invited two road machinery manufacturing companies to show the kind of work their machines could do.

A road building plan was adopted by the County Board and in the summer of 1908, a road building company was putting down gravel roads and using a steam roller to smooth them. By November 1908, there were several paved sections in various parts of Rock County in lengths from ¼ mile to two miles.

Where there was paving, it was described as “hard as a rock and smooth as a board.” The editor of the Evansville Enterprise predicted, “In a few years it will be so that people can travel all over the county and have good roads all the way.” No longer would the wheels of wagons and buggies sink into the mud up to the hub caps of the vehicles. No longer would threshing machines break through bridges that were poorly made for the load they were expected to carry.

One of the experimental pavements was put down on the hill running past the Hubbard Farms, on the “Madison” road. (Today this would be Highway 14 north of Evansville.) The steam roller was used to smooth and level the paving.

Union township continued to experiment with the new road surfacing. In June 1909, John Tullar supervised a crew of workmen making a gravel road. This strip of road went from the “Munger’s corner, north past the Shiveley farm,” (Today this is the intersection of C at Brooklyn-Evansville Road, then north about ¼ mile past Emery Road.) The new pavement would be “much pleasanter for driving and automobiling.”

The road was described as “splendid” as it was being built. However, road building was not without its critics. Byron Campbell, an Evansville resident, wrote his observations of the second season’s work, “This was done by another company; it was accepted by the commissioners, I am told, but why, I do not understand. It was not rolled with a steam roller, as the other was, to smooth and level it down; it is just as the engine left it—not a stone picked up or raked off. I would not consider it finished in a workmanlike manner. We are in need of good roads and I think they should be built in the best possible manner.” The road experiments would continue for many years.

There were also new experiments with farm crops, alfalfa and sugar beets. The University of Wisconsin printed farm bulletins and shipped articles to the newspapers in Evansville about new farming methods. Information and drawings of plans for new barns, silos, machine sheds, and pig pens were available to the farmer who wanted to be well-informed about the latest in farm building and technology.

In Union township, the sugar beet was the new farm product of the 1900s. The crop, first introduced to farmers in the 1890s by the University of Wisconsin Agricultural Department, had gained favor. In the early 1900s, the University of Wisconsin continued to experiment with sugar beets and ways to improve the soils with new types of fertilizers for increased yields and urged farmers to try a few acres on their land.

Henry A. Austin represented the United State Sugar Beet Company of Madison. Farmers signed contracts with the sugar beet processing company and the company provided seed. The farmer signed contracts agreeing to plant and harvest the beets and deliver them to the factory. In the early spring, the seed was delivered to a warehouse in Evansville and Austin distributed it to the farmers who had signed contracts.

In the late fall, the beets were harvested and hauled to the Madison processing plant. The empty wagons were loaded with beet pulp that was discarded after the sugar processing. Sugar beet pulp was used as livestock feed.

Another market for the sugar beets, the Rock County Sugar Company opened its processing plant in Janesville in October 1904. In December, the Rock County Sugar Company in Janesville invited farmers to a barbecue to talk about the beet industry and thank the ones who had supplied beets in 1904.

In its invitation to sugar beet growers, the Rock County Sugar Company called the cash crop a success. "The beet industry, this season has helped the farmer in getting ready money for taxes and for holiday presents. The usual realization of funds from the tobacco crop for this purpose has proven a failure and prospects are fair that it will still hang in the shed till the usual January thaw arrives. As an all-round profitable crop, the farmer will have to let the beets have priority of success."

Union township farmers shipped beets by rail to the Janesville plant. J. Tomlin, Eugene Butts, James Johnson and A. Fursett were area farmers with sugar beet crops they delivered at the Evansville Depot in November 1905.

A great debate within the farming community was whether to raise tobacco or sugar beets. In the early 1900s, bad weather and low prices made tobacco crops a disappointment to some farmers. A bad storm in May 1908, destroyed two tobacco sheds on the John Wall farm, the tobacco warehouse of Peter Smith and a tobacco shed on the George W. Hall farm.

The tobacco market was a gamble for the farmer. In the early years of the 1900s, the prices were low and the costs of labor to produce the crop were high, compared to the price offered by the tobacco buyers.

The advantages of the sugar beet crop were praised in the Evansville newspapers, along with the disadvantages of the tobacco crop. "Beets are a sure crop rain or shine. No blight, no bugs, no worms, no danger from early frosts. Adds to crop rotation, easy on the land, sells before planting, returns \$75 per acre," Evansville's Enterprise newspaper said in April 1907

Another advantage of the sugar beet crop was that, if the sugar beet prices dropped and the farmer decided not to sell, he could still use the beets as feed for his livestock. Some used the beet tops as feed. Jay Emery exhibited a sample of sugar beet tops at a grocery store in Evansville and a local newspaper reporter said that "Mr. Emery prefers the dried beet tops to the best quality of hay. He has placed in the barn tops from three acres, which he cured out in good condition and is still keeping well."

The tobacco had to be cased and held until the farmer could get the price he wanted. In some cases the tobacco spoiled before it could be sold. Sugar beets did not require the labor associated with tobacco and one farmer predicted, "Many acres devoted to tobacco will be turned over to sugar beets in the next few years." When

tobacco prices rose in 1905 and again in 1906 reaching fifteen and sixteen cents a pound, the farmer had a dilemma about whether to use the land for tobacco or beets.

Experiments with feeding alfalfa to dairy cows were reported by the University of Wisconsin. In a February 1908 bulletin issued to Wisconsin newspapers, the University staff recommended that alfalfa be substituted for at least half of the grain fed to dairy cows. Alfalfa was considered to be cheaper to feed than grain and it would help produce more milk. The University staff estimated that dairy farmers could increase their dairy yields by as much as 75 percent, if they fed alfalfa to their dairy herds.

The dairy industry was very important to the financial success of Union township farmers. The D. E. Wood Butter Company was still the primary consumer for the milk and cream from the dairy farms in Union township. In 1900 the creamery shipped 3 million pounds of butter out of Evansville, sending out one railroad car filled with butter each working day.

The creamery had 23 employees and by 1903, seven more people had been added to the factory, for a total of thirty employees. The creamery earned a state-wide reputation for excellence and in 1903 the Evansville creamery butter took third place at the Wisconsin State Fair.

The company's three-story building housed a manufacturing operation that was very important to Evansville's industry and second only to the Baker Manufacturing Company. The creamery was in the process of building a new addition in May 1906 when a major fire threatened to destroy the operation. The Evansville and Janesville fire departments and the company employees put out the fire before it could damage the entire building.

Reconstruction began immediately and there were only a few days when the plant was not in operation and the farmers could not deliver milk. At the end of 1906, the D. E. Wood Butter company reported payments to area farmers of \$4,302.14 for milk delivered to their plant. And they had made 243,830 lbs of butter in their factory.

The creamery, livestock and crops brought plenty of money to the Evansville area farmers. Elmer Bullard was still the principal wool buyer in Union township. The statistics reported by the railroad in 1906 were 519 loads of stock shipped out of Evansville, with an average of price paid to the farmer of \$800 per carload. Farmers and shippers had been paid \$415,000 for livestock shipped from the depot in 1906.

Prices for farm land continued to increase. George Brigham purchased 68 acres of land ½ mile north of Evansville in 1907. The farm was known as the "Old Rube Johnson place" and had been owned for many years by Reuben Johnson, a stock buyer. Brigham paid \$109 per acre for the farm.

The farmers wanted new ways to make every acre of their farm profitable. There was planning and conversation about starting a canning factory. Whether to have a farmer's cooperative or to let a private firm build and manage a vegetable canning operation was debated for many years.

In 1901, Evansville businessmen and farmers visited the Cooperative Canning Factory in Sun Prairie to learn more about how the factory worked. George Higday, Thomas Lloyd and John Tullar represented the Union township farm community on the committee. While many favored the project, and realized it would have long lasting benefits to the farmers and the city residents, no action was taken to form a company.

Again in 1906, one Evansville newspaper said that an "Eastern firm" was planning to build a canning factory and asked farmers to be ready to tell the company how much acreage they would be willing to plant in sweet corn, tomatoes, peas, and cucumbers. However, no canning factory opened in the Evansville area until a few years later.

The industries in the city were a boon to the farmer, as a consumer of the farm products, but they were also an attraction to young men who wanted to leave the farm. Farmers began feeling a squeeze from laborers who were demanding higher wages. Figures quoted in the newspaper for farm workers were from twenty to thirty dollars a

month, including room and board. The days were long and the work was strenuous and some young men and women preferred a shorter workday, vacations and less physical labor.

Rural mail carriers earned \$720 a year in 1904, \$60 a month. They were given several holidays during the year and could take vacations when a substitute was available. The wages for men at the Baker Manufacturing plant between 1905 and 1909 averaged \$500 a year and there was a profit sharing plan.

Young men also saw opportunities to migrate to the west. In the early 1900s, new and inexpensive land opened on the Shoshone reservation and the Redbud Sioux Reservation in the West. Some young men saw the advertisements and newspaper articles about the abundant wheat harvests on the prairies of Canada and became land speculators and settlers in the Canadian wheat lands.

Farm institute programs and the University of Wisconsin Agricultural programs urged young men to stay on the farms. The University of Wisconsin told students that they did not have enough graduates to fill the requests for well trained agricultural workers. The University said that they received inquiries from owners of 100-cow dairy farms, creameries and cheese factories, and a stock farm owned by wealthy Chicago merchants, asking for graduates from the University courses to fill vacancies. "Some of the openings have been for students of only one or two years training," University staff reported.

Union township residents were among the four hundred and ten farmers enrolled in the University course for the winter of 1905-06. There were five Evansville area students enrolled in the agricultural school short course, J. G. Babcock, John H. Fisher, Edgar C. Fish and Wayne E. Shaw.

Evansville newspapers printed articles urging adult farmers to make it easier for boys to stay on the farm. "Too many boys leave the farm where they would have made substantial and good citizens, and go to the city where only one in a thousand succeed in life's battle. There are farmers who fairly drive their boys away. There is no excuse for this. The farmer boy is entitled to his vacations, to several relaxations, his visits to the city, good books, magazines, and his home paper."

There was a brief reprieve for farmers in 1908 when some factories shut down or reduced the number of employees. Married men were given priority for the remaining factory work. The financial panic lasted only a brief time, but during that spring and summer, the unemployed city workers were drawn back to the farm.

The long hours and heavy physical labor sometimes convinced older farmers to move away from the rural life. Progressive farmers looked for ways to make the farm life easier so that their land was more productive, while they worked shorter hours.

The telephone company issued a new directory in 1905 and listed one hundred farmers with telephones. By 1906, telephone poles and lines had been extended as far as Butt's Corners in the western part of Union township. The farmer could receive weather forecasts by calling the telephone company and communicate with the stock buyers to determine the best time to sell their livestock.

The field work was still done with teams of horses pulling small plows, corn planters, manure spreaders, and drags. Threshing machines and corn binders were also powered with horses. Tractors promised to make the planting and harvesting an easier task but they were not readily available in the early 1900s. Baker Manufacturing Company began experimenting with tractors in 1907.

Baker's also built small engines to power feed grinders and other small farm machinery. The two, three and four cylinder gasoline engines were readily available. Along with other implement and wagon dealers, Baker's exhibited at the Rock County Fair in Evansville during the first week of September.

Thousands of people viewed the farm exhibits at the fair. The first few years had been so successful that the fair committee purchased the fairgrounds and made improvements to the fairgrounds buildings.

John Robinson and his son, Hugh, were established fair exhibitors of the white-face Herefords. John Robinson was also superintendent of the cattle exhibit at Evansville Rock County Fair. From the Evansville fair, the Robinson's went to the Wisconsin State Fair in Milwaukee. The State Fair was generally held the week following the Evansville fair. Robinsons also exhibited at the Elkhorn Fair and the Interstate Fair at La Crosse. In 1906, the Robinsons entered seven Hereford cattle in the International Stock Show in Chicago.

Only the best animals were exhibited in the Chicago show. Visitors to the show were promised that the drawings they had seen of the well bred stock were only "feeble reproductions of the perfection exhibited by many of the animals shown at this great fair."

In 1908, one of Robinson's Hereford bulls won the championship in his class at the Chicago show. It was the first of many prizes the Robinson herd would receive. "It is a great credit to Mr. Robinson and to Rock County to have a first prize winner at the International," the Evansville Enterprise told its readers.

The University of Wisconsin recognized the high quality of the Robinson herd and in February 1909 asked John Robinson to loan a two-year-old Hereford bull to the Agricultural Experimental Station to use in stock judging during a Farmer's Institute held in Madison. Arthur Broughton, another Union township farmer loaned a Clydesdale stallion for judging at the same program.

The reports of sales of animals from the Herefords on the Robinson farm began to spread to other farms in Wisconsin and eventually to an international market.

1905 Town of Union officers: Ira Jones, J. C. Ellis and Thomas Steele, supervisors; Clerk, C. E. Brooke; Treasurer; V. C. Holmes; Assessor; I. H. Brink; Justice of the Peace, Samuel H. Frost; Constable, W. E. Steele.

1906 Town of Union officers: John Tullar, Frank Hynes, Thomas Steele, supervisors; Charles Brooks, Clerk; John Wall, assessor; and V. C. Holmes Treasurer.

1907 Town of Union officers: Officers of the 1906 Board were re-elected with no competition.

1910 - 1914

Livestock health problems concerned many farmers and those people interested in the "Pure Food" laws that were enacted by the federal government in the early 1900s. Tuberculosis in dairy cattle was a special concern of Union township farmers. Inspections of milk and the dairy cows were recommended by University of Wisconsin professors specializing in the study of bovine tuberculosis and its spread to humans.

Dr. David Roberts, the Wisconsin State Veterinarian, warned farmers that they must take responsibility for testing their herds, as there were not enough State inspectors employed to reach all of the herds.

Roberts' news releases suggested that farmers build barns with good ventilation, a cement floor with good drainage, and plenty of windows to give sunlight to the cows. The barn where the animals were kept in the winter was to "imitate what nature provides in summer."

The farmer was also supposed to select animals for the dairy herd that were free of disease. Rather than choose a particular breed of cattle, Roberts suggested that the farmer "should first consider the animal from the standpoint of health, certaining as to whether or not it is free from tuberculosis and under no condition should an animal be introduced that is not in a perfectly healthy condition."

Another health concern was hoof and mouth disease. In November 1914, the disease was already spreading to Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Iowa and Miller had unfortunately received some of the infected animals. The Union Stock Yards in Chicago was closed for a few days, then placed under limited quarantine.

Before the quarantine was in place, Union township farmer, Chester F. Miller received a shipment of two carloads, sixty head of feeder cattle, from the Chicago Union Stockyards. When they were driven to the Miller farm, it was discovered that four or five of the animals were sick.

Miller immediately notified the State Veterinarian. The new State Veterinarian, O. H. Eliason, inspected the animals and determined that the animals had hoof and mouth disease. Eliason notified the U. S. Agriculture Inspector, Dr. R. J. Digman of Milwaukee, and within days the Inspector and two assistants were at Miller's farm, killing the cattle and sheep. Miller lost 101 head of cattle and 300 sheep. The agents dug a deep trench, covered the dead animals with quick lime, and buried them beneath five feet of dirt. The farm was quarantined.

Only Miller's farm dog and the chickens survived and they had to be dipped in disinfectant and confined to the farm. To prevent the spread of the hoof and mouth disease, the yards around the barn and the house, the pastures and the fields had to be plowed. The barns were thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. "Every corner of the farm is supposed to be thoroughly gone over to eradicate all possible traces of the trouble, in order to safe-guard neighboring herds."

This was a serious loss for Miller. However, the State and Federal government had promised to cover the cost of the animals killed. The regulations for quarantine and prevention also effected other farmers in the area.

There was fear of spreading the disease, in the season when feeding stock was purchased for winter feeding and driven, on the hoof, over the roads from the railroad stockyards to the farms. The new regulations forced farmers to load the livestock onto wagons, limiting the number of animals that could be brought to Union township or sold.

The U. S. government required that all railroad cars carrying stock be disinfected and each car inspected by a Federal agent before it could be put back into service. The State Veterinarian also issued an order restricting the movement of livestock in Wisconsin.

Although diseases caused special losses to farmers, there were also chicken thieves working in Union township. In November 1909, Charles Altemas had 200 young white Plymouth Rock chickens stolen. Altemas offered \$50 for any information leading to the arrest and conviction of the thief and the Union Anti-Thief Society also offered \$50.

Raising poultry was the special interest of several area farmers. In December 1910, the Grange Store, a major buyer of eggs from Union township farms, reported that in the past year, they paid area farmers \$21,545 for 119,940 dozen eggs.

The poultry exhibit at the Rock County Fair in Evansville had grown so large, that new sheds were built to accommodate the poultry. The building was 20 by 100 feet and the sides were covered with canvas, for good ventilation.

The University of Wisconsin-Extension had included poultry raising workshops in their course offerings. The University continued to attract Union township residents to its courses.

The school began offering classes to young boys between the ages of 10 and 16, and scholarships were offered to those who had been prize winners in the grain contests held at the Farmers' Institutes and county fairs.

The classes for the youngsters included illustrated talks, laboratory experiments on barley, oats and corn. The boys were taught techniques for preparing the soil, planting, harvesting and selecting samples for entry in the grain contests. If the young fair contestants won local contests they were allowed to enter the state fair competitions. Winners of the State Fair contests were entered in contests sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture and were offered recognition and prizes.

By starting the classes for younger boys, the University hoped to prepare them for future study in the field of agriculture. In promoting the classes, the University issued reports to local newspapers that said modern farming methods demanded that the farmer and his sons keep improving their knowledge about the latest technology.

One such release to the Evansville Review said, "Scientific agriculture has become a matter of wide interest to all progressive farmers, and the agricultural colleges are teaching farmers' boys how to win success on the farm by methods both modern and practical."

Older teens and those in their early twenties were encouraged to take the 14-week short courses. Classes in repairing and maintaining gas engines were added to the offerings for adults. "Special attention will be given to gas engine ignition, carburetion, general troubles, babbiting boxes, engine repairs and the actual operation of farm tractors and automobiles." The men were advised to come in their overalls because they were going to be working on engines, not listening to lectures about them.

Adult farmers, their wives and daughters were also offered courses during Farm Family Week on the campus in Madison.

Evansville farmers continued to gain national recognition for their livestock. Every year, John Robinson and his son, Hugh were exhibitors at the Livestock Show in Chicago, sometimes called the Fat Stock Show.

His reputation for prime Hereford livestock led to sales to a Montiveideo, Uruguay rancher. In the spring of 1912, Anselmo Marge, the Uruguay rancher, traveled throughout the United States looking for the best Herefords to take to his ranch in Uruguay. He came to Union township and purchased cattle from Robinson.

Robinson also encouraged others to take livestock to Chicago for showing. William Miles and Robinson's brother-in-law, George Emery took three carloads of sheep to the International Livestock Show in Chicago in 1912.

Warren Reese and Arthur Broughton, a Magnolia township farmer, joined the group the following year and the Evansville Review reported in its December 11, 1913 issue that the men had brought back "more premiums at the great international show than those residing in any other similar section of the country. The herds and flocks of this vicinity have attracted attention to the entire state of Wisconsin."

Miles and Reese had won prizes on an exhibit of lambs. Arthur Broughton and Son also took pure bred Shropshire sheep and they won first for a yearling ram. Robinsons also took prizes and sold eight head of cattle at an average price of \$886 each. The highest price paid to the Robinsons for a single animal was for a two-year old bull that sold for \$2,100.

The following year, in 1913, Robinson joined other Wisconsin livestock breeders and organized the Wisconsin All-Breed Live Stock Show in Madison. The show demonstrated the fine livestock including cattle, sheep and swine raised on Wisconsin farms. Hugh Robinson was also a well-known judge of beef cattle. He was invited to judge exhibits at the Nebraska State Fair.

Farmers growing crops also received a boost when the canning factory finally became a reality for Union township farmers in 1910. The Evansville Commercial Club had advocated for new industries and a stock company was formed to purchase land and build a facility for canning vegetables. There were investors living in Evansville, as well as in Union township. In promoting investment in the factory, the Enterprise told its readers, "A canning factory would put many hundreds of dollars into the hands of the farmers contiguous to Evansville and it is well known to all that whatever is a benefit to the surrounding country is a benefit to the city.

By April 20, 1910, \$6,500 in stock had been sold and the organizers could proceed with the new building. The stockholders hired A. R. Adams to be superintendent of the factory. Adams was an investor in the operation and he had previously opened five canning factories, the most recent one in Albany.

Groundbreaking for the new building was on May 18, 1910. The machinery for the canning factory was purchased from Chicago and Indianapolis manufacturers. In September the factory opened.

Free seed for sweet corn and tomatoes were offered to farmers who contracted to sell the vegetables to the factory. Farmers promised 115 acres of corn and 15 acres of tomatoes in the first year of operation. When the season ended, the farmers got \$10 a ton for tomatoes and \$6 a ton for corn.

The factory canned 6,000 cans of tomatoes on its first day of operation. By October, 60,000 cans of corn and 20,000 cans of tomatoes had been processed. Shipments of Evansville's vegetables went to Chicago and Houston, Texas in the first year of operation. The Evansville review said there were "hopes of making it a year round operation by canning beans, cabbages and beets."

The following year, when the canning factory investors met to elect officers and plan for the 1911 crops, the stockholders added a new crop to the assembly line. An 18 x 20 ft. addition, 12 foot high, was made to the east end of the factory and new equipment for processing peas was installed. Again free seed was offered to those who wanted to produce crops for the factory.

Farmers immediately contracted to plant 100 acres of peas and since the peas could withstand frost, the first 60 acres were planted before the first of May, 1911. By June the company had plans to process 200,000 cans of peas. The company had an immediate market for their product and within a month had shipped the first 1,000 cases. The canning of corn and tomatoes followed later in the summer.

In their second year of operation, the company paid stockholders a cash dividend and had funds to build a silo and a storage warehouse. Although some had considered the factory to be a risky investment and refused to buy stock, it was now considered a success. "This is one of our profitable industries," the Review reporter told readers in the February 22, 1912 issue.

There was great diversity in the crops that farmers planted and some predicted that the returns on the tobacco, vegetables and grain crops were so good that farmers might give up raising livestock.

The dairy farm continued to provide farms in Union township with an excellent source of income. In the March 1910 issues of the local newspapers, the Review and the Enterprise and Tribune carried articles about George Keylock, a Union township dairy farmer. Keylock had a herd of nine dairy cows. None of the animals were pure bred, and yet he had sold 65,034 lbs of milk, testing at 4% butterfat. The D. E. Wood Butter Co. had paid Keylock \$960.44, an average of \$106.71 per cow. He was one of the top producers of milk sold at the Evansville creamery.

The D. E. Wood Butter Company was relying heavily on the Union township and Evansville area farmers for milk products. "The farmers are beginning to realize more fully the advantages of dairy farming. It not only means a steady and dependable cash income that is very satisfactory, but it also means the enrichment of the soil, thus increasing the value of the farm itself. As this class of farming increases the wealth of the entire community will multiply." In the month of June 1913, the company had paid \$18,168.19 in cash to area farmers for their cream and milk.

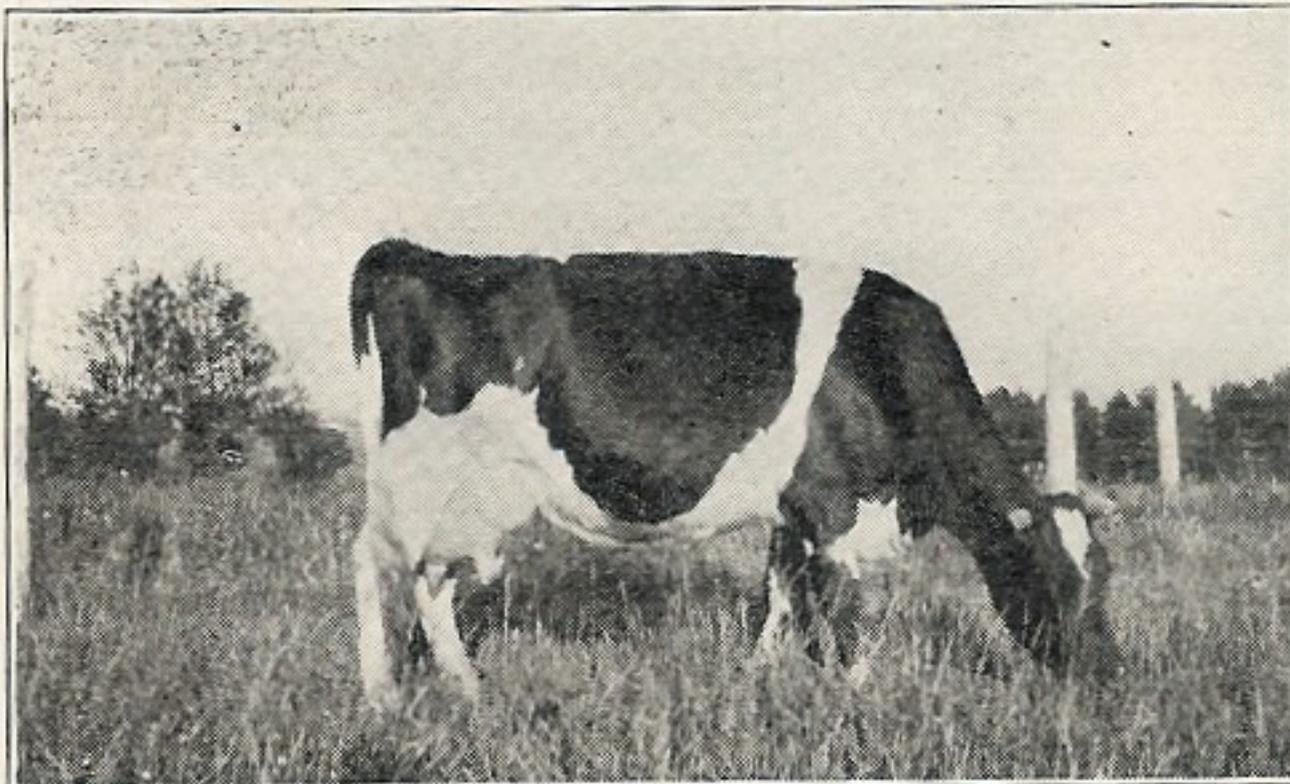
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The dairy farmers began to put up silos to store the shredded corn that was fed to their animals in the winter. Silos and Silage was a popular topic at the Farmers' Institutes. By 1914, Wisconsin led the nation in the number of silos and there were more being built.

The earliest silos were constructed with a concrete foundation and wood frames. Silos were later constructed with brick and concrete. The Paulson Lumber Company in Evansville carried the lumber and other materials needed to build the silos. Baker Manufacturing Company built engines with special equipment for loading the silage into the silos.

Farmers worked into the late fall shredding the corn for feed. Some experts advocated that farmers continue to feed the silage in the early Spring, when the cows were turned out to pasture, and before the best grass was ready.

Frank Hyne, the local Buick dealer was asked to speak at the Evansville Farmer's Institute, about the automobile. Area farmers, the Miller brothers, Chester, Ernest and Willis; Virgin Hopkins, Arthur Franklin and John C. Robinson, were the first Union township residents to purchase automobiles. The Millers, Hopkins and Franklin favored the Ford, while Robinson purchased Ramblers.

The automobiles indicated prosperity. In 1912, twenty-five automobiles traveled to eleven communities to advertise Evansville's Rock County Fair.

The automobile was as irritating to some as it was intriguing to others. Joy riders in the new vehicles frightened and killed chickens that gathered in the country roads. The flocks of birds had little to fear from the horse drawn

vehicles, but the new machines were deadly.

The carcasses of the birds were usually left lying in the road as the happy travelers drove on to their destination. Only the most conscientious drivers compensated the farmer for his loss.

Tom Steele was also the first Union township farmer to report a theft of an automobile. In 1914, Steele purchased a new Ford and used his barn as a garage. One Sunday night a thief took the car from the barn and the following morning, Steele discovered his loss.

Steele was a member of the Union Anti-Thief Society and the organization offered a reward of fifty dollars for the return of the auto and the capture and conviction of the thief. Tom Steele also offered a \$50 reward. The car thieves were caught and the automobile was recovered near Portage, Wisconsin.

Some farmers preferred the horse-drawn wagon or buggy to the automobile. The early automobiles were not very dependable and most had to be stored in the winter, or taken to the manufacturer for repairs and service.

Whether the automobile or the horse-drawn vehicle was the preferred mode of transportation, most farmers realized that good roads added value to their real estate. Some estimates said that a well-built road added at least \$25 per acre to the value of the farm.

Union township farmers were aided by the State and the County in their pursuit of good roads. Wisconsin established a State Highway Commission in 1911. One of the missions of the new department was to help counties build better roads. The State Legislature passed laws to force counties to establish county road commissioners and to tax residents for roads in order to be eligible to receive state aid for highways.

In 1912, the State Highway Commission offered the first road school. The featured speaker was an expert road builder from Ottumwa, Iowa. The road schools were held annually for those who wanted to learn about road building techniques.

Charles Moore, a Rock County Board Supervisor from Magnolia township, was appointed Rock County Road Commissioner. Moore was the strongest advocate for good roads in Rock County for many years. He frequently spoke to the Good Roads Association and at Farmers' Institutes to try to get support from taxpayers to build and maintain good roads.

Rock County was a leader in establishing a countywide system of road construction under the supervision of the road commissioner. Under Moore's leadership, new road machinery was purchased and the main roads were paved with stone and gravel, and eventually with concrete. In the summer of 1914, he had a crew of men putting in a stone and gravel-paved road from Janesville to Evansville.

The crew began working in Union township, just east of Evansville's city limits, replacing a stone road that had not been properly finished. Travelers were advised to use the Magnolia Road, since the Union township road to Janesville was under construction. Warnings were issued in the Evansville Review that fines would be levied on people who traveled the construction route and damaged the road.

Rock County purchased a new rock crusher and steamroller manufactured by the Good Road Machinery Co., of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Moore's crew used the new equipment to crush the stone taken out of Leo Campbell's stone quarry east of Evansville.

The new road was built with course-crushed rock as the bottom layer. After this layer was rolled with a steamroller, the top layer of a finer crushed rock was compacted with the steamroller.

Union township paid for the two miles of construction to Porter township line. The new three-mile stretch of road through Union and Porter townships connected with a gravel road in the town of Center.

By July 1914, the County Highway Commissioner had four steamrollers working on the road construction projects in Rock County. "Our greatest handicap is not enough rollers," Moore told a Review reporter.

Moore described the value of the new equipment. The four rock crushing units were able to crush stone that would otherwise have been of little value. The crushers could handle 150 cubic yards of material each day. The crushed rock was mixed with clay and water to form a surface called macadam.

Moore warned that the road surfaces were not permanent and needed to be maintained. "The worst enemy of a smooth hard surfaced roads is the rapid pace of automobiles sweeping away the dust cushion."

The Rock County Board of Supervisors road committee inspected the construction to watch the operation of the new steamroller and rock crusher. If the experiments on the Union township road were successful, the Board would consider the purchase of more equipment. Tom Steele, a Union township farmer and Rock County Board Supervisor, served on the road committee.

1915-1919

More funding for roads was approved by Union township voters in the 1915 election. The voters were asked to approve a bond issue of \$1,600 for good roads and vote for Union township officers. The election was held on April 3. Because of a mistake in advertising, the "call for caucus" was not legal, and the printed ballots were destroyed.

The voters had to write in the names of the men they wanted elected to office. Thomas Steele was elected chairman; Lyman Gillies and J. C. Ellis, Supervisors; Charles Thomas, Clerk; Leo Campbell, Treasurer; and Ira Jones, assessor. Arthur G. Franklin and Henry Porter were elected as Justices of the Peace. August Kleinsmith and John Milton were elected Constables.

The Town of Union voters also approved \$1,600 for roads. The affirmative vote allowed the Town of Union to receive \$1,600 from the Wisconsin Road Commission for building more stone and gravel roads. At the May 1915 meeting of the Township officers, the board agreed to use the funds to build about two more miles of road in the town of Union.

The dirt roads considered to be the most troublesome to maintain were usually the first to be chosen for improvement. This piece-meal solution meant that the new roads were done in small sections, leaving most of the roads in their original condition.

The roads scheduled for 1915 were in one-half mile and three-quarter mile sections and were located "one-half mile on the Union road, north of this city, over the hill; a little over half a mile on the Attica road, near the Jones farm; and three quarters of a mile on the Albany road that runs past the Arthur and Lewis Spencer farms." The Union Road is today's Highway 14. The Jones Farms were located in section 19 and 30 at the western edge of Union township, today's County Highway C. The Arthur and Lewis Spencer farms were in sections 3 and 4 of Magnolia Township, bordering Union township on the road known today as Old Highway 92.

The new roads did not relieve the farmers of the burden of clearing the roads after a snowstorm. To keep the roads open for mail and milk routes, the farmers were still expected to find ways to clear the snow from the roads that fronted on their property.

Other improvements were taking place for Union township and area farmers. The Rock County Fair in Evansville had been so successful that the fair stockholders voted to buy four acres of land from V. C. Holmes to add to the grounds. They also voted to build several new buildings. This put the organization into debt, but the organization expected the added benefits would make the investment worthwhile.

A storm that wiped out several buildings on the grounds also persuaded the fair stockholders to build a new

grandstand, two new sheep sheds, and a floral building. The capital stock of the fair was increased to \$10,000 and assessments were made on the stockholders to pay for the new additions. Men volunteered their time to assist in the construction of the new facilities.

When the United States declared War on Germany in April 1917, the farm community immediately responded with increased production of crops and livestock. The Rock County Fair was considered to be an important part of the war effort.

However, no fair was held in 1917, although there were several attempts by stockholders to organize one. Some feared financial failure because farmers were too busy producing farm products for the war to take time to organize and attend the fair.

The following year, the fair was held, and the Rock County Fair Stockholders considered it their patriotic duty to make the fair as successful as possible. They wanted the fair to demonstrate the war effort of the farmers. The promoters noted in the August 22, 1918 advertising for the fair: “the successful raising of grain and stock is at present the hope and salvation of the country, and this can best be achieved when the farmers can get together in these agricultural competitions and show the products of their skill, tell each other of their methods of production, where they obtain the seed for new varieties, etc.”

Many farmers were still adding silos to their buildings. Farmers who did not have silos were urged to build one to store feed and to raise more cattle to increase the food available for the massive army that the United States was organizing. The Farm Emergency Bureau offered to help farmer improve their efficiency and mobilize their resources for increased production.

The Review noted the importance of the farmer in the war effort. “The farmers who stay at home and raise bumper crops are rendering equally as patriotic service as those who enlist in the army or navy and go into battle.”

Businessmen were also supporting the farmers’ war effort. Banks offered to loan money to farmers who wanted to build silos, purchase more livestock, or buy new machines to improve their efficiency.



The Ford Motor Company’s mass production of the Fordson tractor during the war brought a new era to the Union township farmer. The tractors were Henry Ford’s war plan to increase food production in the United States. The Evansville Fordson tractor dealers, Chester Miller and Albert Winn, gave demonstrations on the farm

to show the efficiency of the new machines and offered the tractors to farmers at factory prices..

The early tractors used gasoline to get then engine running and used kerosene for fuel, once they were started. The demonstrations showed that the new machines operated more efficiently than horses. The Evansville Review reporter told readers in the June 13, 1918 issue, "The farmers say that in ten hours they expect to plow eight acres and by crowding them a little on fair length rounds, an acre an hour can be plowed with them."

Another new machine, the milking machine, helped dairy farmers. Orrie Steele was the salesman for the Hinman machine and he sold machines to Union township farmer, Earl Allen, in the spring of 1917. Evansville farm implement dealers Baird & Hatfield sold the Success milking machine.

So that more land could be planted in crops, dairy cows were pastured along the roadside and children were sent out to watch the cows and keep them from wandering into the road. The youngsters were told that watching cows was one of the ways they could help win the war.

Boys living in the city were also asked to join the Boys' Working Reserve to do farm work after school and during the summer. J. F. Waddell, the Evansville School Superintendent, was the recruiter for Union township. Young men, aged 16 to 21 were enrolled. The school agreed to teach the recruits to perform simple chores and the school delayed the start of school until September 17 in 1917, so that the boys could work on the farms through the harvest season.

The Rotary Club of Milwaukee also organized boys from the city to work on farms. Boys fourteen years old would work for \$6 to \$8 a month, while sixteen-year-old boys was expected to earn \$8 to \$12 a month, including room and board. Older boys were expected to earn \$15 to \$25 a month.

Evansville factory workers also went into the farm fields of Union township to help shock oats and harvest other grains. Those that worked on the farm of Lloyd Hubbard were commended in the Review for donating half of their farm pay to the Red Cross Fund.

The need for grain and meat during the war helped farmers establish a strong market for their products and raised farm prices to new levels. Wheat was a crop that had lost favor with farmers, but during the war was once again grown on Union township fields. In the summer of 1918, a railroad car filled with wheat from local farms was shipped to Milwaukee. At the lakeshore, the wheat was to be put on a ship to Europe and the wheat was used to feed soldiers and the residents of the countries that were allies of the United States. Local grain buyers said it was the first carload of wheat to be shipped out of Evansville in 35 years.

Farmers had other good reasons to put some acreage into wheat. Farmers who grew wheat were allowed to take wheat to the mill and have eight pounds of wheat ground into flour for each member of his family. Farmers were also urged to save some wheat seeds to plant next year's crop.

Seed corn was also scarce. Rock County had the most acreage in corn of any county in the state and the local farmers were urged to buy seed corm early in spring before prices went up. The Rock County farm agent L. A. Markham offered advice to farmers about cultivating to remove the weeds as early as possible in order to get the best yields from their corn fields. "This year Rock county will have a shortage of labor when it comes time for hoeing corn. If the weeds are allowed to grow, it will very materially interfere with the yield."

Potatoes were also a much-needed commodity and the Defense Council of the State of Wisconsin furnished seed potatoes for farmers who were interested in growing a crop. The potatoes were Wisconsin grown and free of disease. Fisher Grain & Feed Co. in Evansville handled the potatoes for the Defense Council.

Purchasing purebred livestock was also encouraged as part of the war effort by farmers. Bankers were willing to loan money to farmers and to establish strong and more productive herds in order to maintain the meat supply for

the troops.

Dairy farmers in Union township favored the Guernsey, Holstein-Friesian, and Jersey cattle. Advertisements for the sales stressed the registered names of the animals and their production records.

Orrie Steele, advertised his “Champion Milk Producer of Rock County” Helen Johanna DeKal, 2d. According to his ad, the cow had produced 675 lbs of milk in 7 days, and this was manufactured into 25.75 lbs of butter.

One of the ways that farmers improved their herds was by learning about the breed. Another was by buy and selling pure bred stock at auction sales. Several organizations were formed to help sheep, hog, and dairy farmers improve their livestock.

“Better Bulls” became the theme of many of the farmers who took great pride in their cattle. The Holstein Breeders Association soon became the Tri-County Holstein Breeders’ Association and included breeders from Dane, Green and Rock County.

The Association held their first annual Tri-County Holstein Breeders Association sale in Evansville in June 1918. The Review Printing office made catalogs for the association, advertising the cattle that were for sale. Orrie Steele and others from Union township brought animals to the sale. Buyers came from all over Wisconsin to purchase the animals and the sale became an annual event.

Hog breeders also specialized in purebred stock. Walter George had a herd of Chester Whites, and his best boar was named Rainy Day. George’s hogs were featured in the farm news publication, Wisconsin Fieldman, in 1917 after one of their writers, T. P. Shreve visited the farm.

There was also an active Duroc-Jersey Breeders Association in Rock County that offered pigs from their farms to boys and girls who were interested in raising swine. Other farmers specialized in the Poland China breed of hogs.

Boys and Girls Calf Clubs were formed to encourage young people to raise purebred stock. Those who received animals in this program were to raise the animals, keep records of their feeding and care and show them in the Rock County Fair in the late summer. If the young people did not have the cash to purchase the animals, the Grange Bank in Evansville offered loans that could be repaid when the animals were sold.

The Holstein Breeders Association promised to purchase the animals, at a profit, from the Boys and Girls Club members who finished their projects.

The sheep breeders offered to start boys and girls in the sheep breeding business in December 1917. John C. Robinson was best known for his beef cattle, but also participated in the sheep breeding clubs. In the sheep club, the young people were put into teams of six or seven and required to raise and care for the sheep, and keep records of their feeding and care. Robinson headed a team that included William Knapp, Fred Rechen, Donald Campbell, Lawrence Rosa and Alden Porter.

William Miles specialized in the Shropshire, Hampshire and Southdown sheep. He advertised “The best of Blood from England’s and America’s Leading Flocks.” E. J. Ellis, Dan Finnane, and Orville Jones, specialized in the Shropshire breed.

A new organization hoped to improve milk prices for the dairy farmer. The Milk Producers Association organized in 1917 to compete with the D. E. Wood Butter Company for the dairy farmer’s cream and milk. About 150 dairymen attended the first meeting in March 1917 and 60 signed the membership agreement.

Dan Finnane, the farmer-auctioneer was chairman of the corporation. Arthur G. Franklin, Leo Campbell, Elmer Rosa, Edward Hyne, and Fred Rodd, all Union township farmers were the principal stockholders. The

organization agreed that an after price of \$2.12 per 100 pounds of milk would be the asking sum. When they approached the D. E. Wood Butter Company with their offer, the company declined. Charles Pearsall, the D. E. Wood manager told the association that they could not afford to pay that price for milk.

Leo Campbell, the secretary of the Milk Producer's Association, countered rumors that the group was only trying to raise prices and increase the cost of living for consumers. Campbell said that the price the farmer received for the milk was not keeping up with the cost of production.

Some even said that the group was in violation of the Sherman anti-trust act. "Such is not the case," Campbell said in an editorial to the Review. "When the Evansville price for milk was twenty-five per cent less than it was a few years ago, and it cost the producer more than double to produce it, many did not consider it a fair deal and organized to secure a better market for their product." Campbell urged dairy farmers and businessmen to join their organization.

Representatives from the Milk Producers' Association tried other firms in Janesville and Footville, but could not find anyone to meet their price. They decided to form their own receiving plant. In September 1917, the association opened the Farmers' Milk Company. The Association purchased a warehouse near the depot. The building once housed the Grange Warehouse and later the Frost Engine Company.

The stockholders had little interest in operating the company and as soon as possible, they found a buyer. In June 1918, the plant was sold to the A. S. Kolstacos Company of Chicago and the name was changed to the Evansville Creamery. New machinery was installed for pasteurizing milk and making butter.

Their competitors, the D. E. Wood Butter Company, employed more than 30 people and took in milk from 400 patrons, paying out an average of \$20,000 a month. It was considered one of the largest butter producing plants in the United States.

Although they were much larger than the Evansville Creamery, D. E. Wood Company needed to compete with the new market for milk and they decided to diversify their product lines. In 1918, D. E. Wood began manufacturing oleomargarine. They also advertised that the company would handle eggs and poultry.

Another Evansville business buying local farm produce was the canning factory. In 1915, 15 people were employed and the factory opened in late June to can peas. A. R. Adams, the superintendent of the factory, reported that there about 35,000 cans of peas being shelled and packed each day that the factory was open. Adams said that the peas were not touched by hands, "from the time they leave the wagons, at the shellers, until they are in the cans." Local printers did the labels for the cans.

The following year, the factory was idle. Then a buyer was found for the factory in 1917. George Cram, a Randolph, Wisconsin farmer, formerly with the Beaver Canning factory in Beaver Dam, purchased the business. Cram's son, Lloyd, took over the operation, just as the demand for canned vegetables for consumption by the U. S. Army was at its peak.

The new company was called the Garden Canning Company. The Crams remodeled the cannery was to be remodeled and built a \$20,000, three-story 50 x 100 foot warehouse. A steam whistle was placed on their boiler. The new whistle was used to call the workers to their shift.

The Crams had also ordered \$8,000 worth of seeds to be distributed to the local farmers. "With the reopening of the cannery, which has closed for some time a new market will open for our farmers," the Review said in its March 15, 1917 issued.

Cram employed more than 75 people, working three shifts, during the 1917 season. The company canned peas, corn and tomatoes. The following year, Cram had to bring peas, beans and other products in from the Beaver Dam area because so much of the Union township land had been put into wheat and other grains that were being

purchased by the federal government.

In 1918, so many men were in the service or were needed for farm or factory work, that for the first time, the cannery employed women in the warehouse. Women also worked in several other positions that had previously been open only to men.

1920 - 1924

A 1923 Evansville Review editorial summarized the advances that had taken place in Union township since the settlement period. The editorial noted that by the 1920s, communications, transportation, education, professional farm advisors, and community activities had improved dramatically for the rural resident.

The editorial acknowledged that keeping young people on the farm was a major concern for many farm families. The farmer and his wife and children wanted a modern home with the conveniences of the city home. Day-to-day drudgery, once associated with farming, was no longer acceptable. Farm families reported weekends at lake resorts and vacations that took them away from home for several weeks at a time.

Modern conveniences on the farm included electrical service. It was estimated that in 1920 less than 6% of Wisconsin farms had electric lighting. Farm families living nearest Evansville were first asked to show their interest in having electricity on their farms in 1920. A meeting was held at the Pleasant Prairie school house so that farmers could hear the proposal for the line running north and northwest out of Evansville. However, the area did not get electrical lines until 1927.

Keeping the farm economy strong required cooperation and two powerful organizations were active in Union township in the 1920s, the Farm Bureau and the Milk Producers Association. Their purpose was similar to the Grange Movement of the 1870s, to improve the economy for farmers, to provide education and to improve productivity on the farm.

In the winter of 1919-1920, the milk prices were very low and creameries offered to purchase the farmers milk, separate the cream, and sell the skimmed milk back to the farmer. The Milk Producers Association organized in Evansville in 1917 had not been as effective as the farmers had hoped.

The Rock County Agricultural Agent, R. T. Glassco and a representative of the American Farm Bureau Association held a meeting in the Evansville City Hall to organize a Union Township branch of the Farm Bureau in 1920. Membership in the organization was \$10. New members were told, "You will reap the benefits of its advice and that will be from some of the biggest men in the United States in the Agriculture Department."

Many of the same farmers who belonged to the Milk Producers Association also joined the Farm Bureau and the Bureau organizers immediately gave farmers improved services. The organization hired a milk tester from the University of Wisconsin and the butterfat content of the top producers was reported to the newspapers. Orrie Steele, Wade Woodworth, Theodore Wolff and John Golz had Holstein herds that received acclaim for their cream production.

The Farm Bureau also purchased a crusher to work in the limestone quarries in and near Union township. Glassco, the County Agent, had organized schools to test and analyze the soil. There were demonstrations on the Union township farms of Orrie Steele and Theodore Wolff to show the benefits of adding limestone to the soil to improve the production of alfalfa.

Steele had made a test by having lime added to a strip in the middle of the field of alfalfa, while the land on both sides did not have the lime additive. The test showed an excellent strip of alfalfa on the limed soil, while both sides had a poorer quality crop. Experiments with the new lime additive to the soil proved successful and the improved feed meant more milk production for the dairy farms.

Farmers were also encouraged to place cement floors in the barns and sheds, for sanitation and easy clean-up.

When lobbying for farm interests was needed, the Farm Bureau members acted in behalf of their members. In the early 1920s the Rock County Board of Supervisors wanted to eliminate the position of the County Agent. The Farm Bureau and its members formed a delegation to speak at the County Board meeting to save the position.

The lobby was so effective that the County Agent's position was restored. The County Agent offered individual service to the farmer. When a problem was too difficult for the farmer to handle, he could pick up the telephone and contact the county agent for assistance.

The modern farmer had daily mail delivery of newspapers and mail and a telephone. The cost of a phone was raised to \$2 a month in the 1920, with much protesting from the Farm Bureau lobbyists. The Wisconsin Bell Telephone, the local provider, argued that they had improved the services. Rural residents had a separate switchboard and an operator assigned to the switchboard. Nearly every Union township farmer had a telephone on the "Farmers Line."

A new communication tool, the radio, was owned by the Evansville High School and one of the highlights of the radio programs was the market reports from the Chicago grain and livestock buyers.

The radio reports of the Chicago markets could be heard within an hour after the market closed. Few farmers had radios, but the Evansville Review reporter was allowed to listen to the farm market broadcasts. Beginning with the November 1921 issues, the Evansville Review added a new column, "Markets by Wireless." That included prices for cattle, hogs, butter, potatoes, eggs, and grains that were quoted at the Chicago Markets on the Wednesday afternoon before the Review's Thursday issue went to press.

By July 1920, there was a stock shipping association formed by the Farm Bureau. Chauncy Miles was named a director with Fred W. Rodd, an experienced livestock buyer. The first shipment was made from the Evansville depot in late July.

There were great improvements in the 80 years since settlement farmers hauled their goods to markets in Milwaukee with ox teams. Travel time to livestock and grain markets had been whittled down from several days to hours. A Review editor noted that a "farmer can eat breakfast at home, dinner in Chicago and be home in time for supper, thanks to train service and his automobile."

The railroad was the most dependable transportation for large shipments of animals. William W. Gillies traveled to Montana and purchased 8,000 sheep for a group of farmers. Leo Campbell and William G. Patterson were listed among the Union township farmers that held feedlots of sheep. In September 1922, Gillies, Lloyd Hubbard and Victor Tullis boarded a train for Montana and returned to the Evansville depot with the sheep that were delivered to their own farms and the Center township farms of John Collins and the Fellows brothers.

A few months later, the fattened sheep were loaded onto railroad cars and shipped to the Chicago stockyards, usually yielding a nice profit for the farmer. The sheep had increased in weight by 10 to 30 pounds and the animals that had been purchased for 10 cents per pound in Montana, sold for 15 ¼ cents per pound in Chicago.

William Miles also brought in a shipment of 9,000 sheep from Montana to the Evansville depot. It was the first of several shipments that Miles had arranged for area farmers. Evansville farms continued to serve as feedlots for sheep and cattle from the West for many years and the railroads provided the necessary transportation from the western ranches, to the feedlots, and finally to the market.

To avoid the high cost of transporting animals to the Chicago market, farmers held local sales in Evansville, sometimes in connection with the Rock County Fair. George Morrison, owner of "Clover Leaf Farm" in section 29 of Union township and Clifford Ellis, on section 7, sold Duroc Jerseys. Veterinarian, Dr. Charles Ware favored the Chester White breed of hogs.

For some, the railroad transportation was a vehicle for advertising livestock. In the 1920s, John & Hugh Robinson's herd of Hereford cattle, were already well known at the fairs in Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Chicago International show. Robinson also took their animals to the Kansas City American Royal Cattle Show and sales. When there was more than one fair or livestock show going on at the same time, John and Hugh would separate their animals into two groups.

To insure the maximum amount of exposure of their animals to the widest possible audience and judging, John took a group to one fair and Hugh took the second group to another. John Robinson's daughters, Madge and Olive, also attended some of the fairs.

At the Wisconsin State Fair in Milwaukee in 1921, the Robinsons exhibited seven groups of Herefords and won 90 ribbons and \$1,751 in prize money. Their top breeding bulls were Maple Lad 97 and Bonnie Brae 8th.

Harvey Knapp and his sons, Walter, Wilbur and Raymond operated the "Meadow Brook Farm" on Union township section 21. They raised registered Holstein cows and operated a dairy. At the 1920 State Fair, the Knapps' Holsteins were prize winners.

The Holstein breeders also had sales, with Union township farmers, Clarence Franklin, Harvey Knapp, Orrie Steele, and farmers from other townships participating. At the 1921 annual sale at the Rock County Fairgrounds in Evansville, a buyer from Newton, Kansas paid \$305 for one of the animals.

Union Township sheep raiser, William G. Miles transported two rail carloads of sheep to the International Livestock Show in Chicago in 1921. He had been winning prizes at the show for his Shropshires and Southdown sheep since 1916. He usually exhibited the animals as "fat lambs" and sold them at the auctions associated with the International Show.

When Robinsons and Miles sold animals at the Show, the cattle and sheep brought "fancy" prices from packers who specialized in selling meat from prize winning animals. Robinson sold a bull to a stock farm in California at the 1921 show. Miles sold sheep to breeders in Tennessee.

The International Stock Show was no longer just for the exhibitor of fine animals. In the 1920s the Show became a gigantic farmers' institute, with Grain and Hay shows sponsored by the Chicago Board of Trade, exhibits by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and Domestic Science demonstrations.

The Show also included entertainment and entire families went to visit the show. Visitors from Union township in 1920 were Mr. and Mrs. Peter Templeton, Thomas Templeton and Viggo Nielsen.



Peter and Elizabeth Naismith Templeton

Members of the Boys and Girls Clubs for Corn, Calf, Pig, Baby Beef and Sheep were encouraged to attend the show. Some Union township members of the clubs were invited to exhibit or attend the Show. At the 1922 show, Lloyd Hubbard won a chance to exhibit 10 ears of corn in the Hay and Grain division of the show.

The clubs for young men and women were organized by the Farm Bureau, the Y.M.C.A., and the Milk Producers Association. There was a strong desire on the part of the farm families to encourage young people to stay on the farm and not go to the cities for work. The clubs were to educate the young people in good livestock raising methods and demonstrate the satisfaction of raising animals for show and prizes.

Union township was well represented at the Junior Livestock Show in Madison and in the early 1920s, for the first time, girl's names appeared as winners at the Show. R. W. Higday came in second in the Ton-litter contest. His litter of hogs was a close second to the winning litter that weighed 4,570 pounds. At the same show, William Ware and Ruth Campbell had winning Chester White hogs and R. W. Higday had the Best Barrow contest at the Show.

Walter Templeton's father did not raise sheep, so for his sheep club work Walter had purchased three Shropshire grade lambs from his neighbor, George Emery. At the 1923 Show, Templeton won first for the best fat lamb and first for the best pen of fat lambs. The young man took away prizes of a silver cup, a blanket and \$77 in cash. Walter Templeton also won a trip to the International Livestock Show in Chicago.

Farmers once were alone in their battle against crop and animal diseases. The early settlers tested new crops and animals suited to their land and struggled to make a living in times of poor markets. Their only allies were other farmers, horticulture societies, the Granges, and the farm journals. Although some had become experts by close study of their farms, the majority had little formal education in the field of agriculture.



John C. Robinson, Hugh Robinson, (back row)

Harold & Phil Robinson (front row)

In the 1920s, farmers had assistance from the County Agent and the University of Wisconsin Extension. These agencies offered soil analysis to tell which crops would grow best on which fields, expert assistance in the diagnosis of diseases of plants and animals and suggested cures for animal diseases.

The University Agricultural School developed a drought resistant corn and they offered 63 different blue prints for farm buildings. Professors and students were studying problems that confronted the farmer.

Union township farmers in turn helped the University of Wisconsin agriculture teachers. The University of Wisconsin – Extension Agricultural classes started coming to the John Robinson farm west of Evansville in the 1920s. The students learned to judge good beef by studying the Robinson’s prize winning Herefords. The University of Wisconsin – Extension Agricultural classes continued to attract Union Township young men. The 1920-21 winter class included Daniel F. Finnane, Jr. and Walter Knapp.

The modern farmer was praised in the Evansville Review, for his interest in his son’s education. “Today farmers and their sons work together, he sends his son to Agricultural courses at the University where the son learns that farming is the greatest profession and comes back from the University proud of his knowledge and he makes over the old farm, -- makes it pay and the father is glad that he raised his boy according to modern farming, instead of according to the style of the ‘good old days’.”

The new farmer demanded good roads and the city businessman knew that the push for good roads benefited the businessman as well as the farmer. In the spring of 1919, Rock County voters were allowed to have their say on a road building bond issue that would provide the funds for cement roads in the county. The Town of Union voters approved a Rock County bond issue for concrete roads by a vote of 84 to 50.

When the state announced that Highway 10 was to be built through Rock County, Evansville businessmen wanted the road to come through Evansville and on to Madison. However, they were in competition with Edgerton.

The Evansville businessmen pleaded with the farmers to attend a Rock County Board Meeting in November 1921. “If Evansville and the farmers want the road built this way next summer, they will have to be there to present and push their claims, as the County Board is likely to let the road to the community showing the greatest interest and producing the best arguments.”

The plans for the new highway extended the road from the state border at Beloit to the vacation areas in Northern Wisconsin. “No. 10 to the vacation grounds at the Northern Lakes has more real travel than any other road of similar length. Truck travel between the south and Madison and northern points on this line exceed that of any other road.”

The supporters also emphasized the military use of the road. National Guard troops, the Army and other military units used the road to travel from camps in Illinois to the base at Sparta and Fort Snelling in Minnesota.

The road was completed to Evansville in 1923 and a celebration was held in September. Counts of license plates from different states were made during a ten hour period, on a Sunday in September 1,350 automobiles went through Evansville on Hwy. 10 and included automobiles from as far away as the state of Washington and Saskatchewan Canada.

Good roads made travel for business and social activities much easier. In the 1920s there was special emphasis on neighborhood groups that served as social organizations and fund raisers for schools and churches.

New women’s groups were formed in each school district and through these groups, entire families were brought into the social activities. The community clubs were organized to help the “young people of the country homes independent of the cities and takes away from them that dissatisfaction with country life that has for generations been the bane of country life.”

The Pleasant Prairie School had one of the most active community clubs. The group acted as a support system for the school. They gathered at member’s homes for food and games. The homes of Robert Higday, Earl Allen, George Emery, Henry Porter, and Lloyd Miles served as meeting places for the club. Officers of the 1922-23 Pleasant Prairie Community club were Mrs. James Kile, president; Mrs. W. Bone, Vice President; Mrs. Floyd Miles, secretary and Mrs. John C. Robinson, treasurer.

The Community Club also held basket socials and quilt raffles at the school to earn money for special projects. The women and girls brought baskets of food, with an entire meal for the buyer. A self-proclaimed auctioneer, usually Orrie Steele, sold the basket to the man who was the highest bidder. The high bidder, then shared the meal with the woman or girl who made the basket of food.

At the 1920 Halloween party, sponsored by the club, one young man bought six boxes “and thereby enjoyed his lunch with six ladies.” The quilt, sewn and tied by the women in the club, brought \$17.50 from the sale of tickets at 10 cents each. The entire proceeds of the evening were \$110 and the new teacher, Grace Leary, was pleased with the earnings. Through their fund raisers, the club hoped to purchase a “Victrola” for the school.

A similar program at the Butt’s Corner School a few weeks later, earned their community organization \$70. Tupper School, Union Ladies Aid and Mother’s Club, and the other community organizations, sometimes gathered for picnics. The school organizations went by various names, Community Clubs or Woman’s Farm Community Clubs. They participated in meetings of the Farm Bureau and special programs developed by the Home Economics Extension agents.

People in the town of Union suggested that the township should build a Town Hall to house a community room for events organized by the community clubs, as well as the official home of the Township Board.

At their annual town meeting in April 1921, the Town of Union discussed building a Town Hall. “Tendency of the times is toward Community work it is not improbable that a building suitable for community work will be built, where there will be rest rooms for the women and children of the town and a place where their young folks may be welcome to hold their social affairs, as well as a place of public gathering.” A community building was never built, and the township continued to rent space in Evansville businesses in order to conduct their business and have a voting place.

Wisconsin women had voting privileges at school elections in the late 1800s, but were barred from voting in the general elections until the fall of 1920. Following the passage of the Wisconsin Women’s Suffrage legislation, the Union Township Board encouraged the participation of women in their business meetings and elections.

In April 1922, the town of Union elected the following officers: Supervisor, George Emery; Clerk, H. S. Spooner; Treasurer, Leo Campbell; Assessor, W. A. Bourbeau; Justice of the Peace, Elmer Rosa; and Constables, Orrie Steel and W. E. Reese.

Union Township Treasurer, Leo Campbell, died in November 1924 and his wife, Minnie, was chosen as his successor. Minnie Peterson Campbell was the first woman to hold office in the Town of Union. Unfortunately, her service to Union township was short, as she died in August 1925.

Once they were allowed to vote, the Union township women took an active part in the election process. In the 1920s, women voted at the elections and worked at the polls. In the fall of 1925, at the primary election, Mrs. Potter Porter and Madge Robinson were ballot clerks for the Town of Union primary election.

In 1926, Potter Porter was elected chairman of the town of Union. Supervisors were Wade Woodworth and George Emery. Clerk was Harry S. Spooner; Treasurer, Oscar Brunsell; Assessor, Ernest Ringhand; Justice of the Peace, Lyman Gillies and Constable, Arthur Jones.

In 1928, Potter Porter won re-election as Chairman and Emery and Woodworth as supervisors. Harry S. Spooner, was re-elected Clerk; Oscar Brunsell, Treasurer; Charles Weary, Assessor; Justices of the Peace, Lyman Gillies and Sherman Hubbard and Constables, Art Devereaux, Ben Disch and W. E. Reese.

In 1929, Potter Porter returned as Town Chairman. John Brunsell and M. F. Moore defeated Woodworth and Emery for the Supervisors positions. Spooner was reelected Clerk; Brunsell, Treasurer and Charles Weary, Assessor. W. E. Reese and John Zwickey became Justices of the Peace. Ben Disch and E. L. Rosa were elected

constables.

Although the farming community appeared to be politically and economically dominated by the men, in the early 1920s, women played an important role in the home and the rural community clubs. Women began to lobby the Rock County Board of Supervisors for a County Extension Agent that would instruct and support women's work, the same as the County Agricultural Agent did for the men's endeavors.

In 1924, the women in the community clubs organized a fund raising project, with each woman providing a live chicken to sell to support the wages of a Home Economics Agent in Rock County. Mrs. Harry Spooner was head of the Union Township drive and she received \$26 that she turned over to the County fundraisers.

The total amount raised by the Rock County women was \$300, far short of the amount needed to support a new County position. However, the lobbying effort made the Rock County Board of Supervisors realize the needs of the homemakers and approved the new office. The Board hired Helene French as the County Home Demonstrator.

At Evansville's Rock County Fair in 1926, Helene French organized the first Home Economics club demonstrations. The Review described the Fair program: "Demonstrating was new work for the girls, new to their local leaders, and but for the very efficient and untiring effort of the County worker, Miss Helen French, could not have been so successfully accomplished."

Helene French described the work in a letter to another County Home Demonstrator: "splendid exhibits of cooking, canning and sewing. I thought the cooking and canning of the clubs far ahead of that in the open class. And the demonstrations! I would wish some of the people who are so opposed to this kind of work could see those little girls stand up in their spotless uniforms and tell the how and the why of what they were doing."

The Home Demonstrator attended the Community Club meetings to instruct the women in home nursing, nutrition, flower arranging, cooking, canning, sewing and drama. The women also were encouraged to display their work in the open classes at fairs and other competitions.

In 1928, the women of the Union Good Times Club and Pleasant Prairie community clubs held a drama competition. The one-act plays were performed at the Union Baptist Church in order to accommodate the large crowd that was expected. The winner in each township competed at the County contest in Janesville. The Pleasant Prairie actors won with their presentation of the play "Mere Man," but did not place in the County competition.

The following year, in 1929, the Jolly Farmers Community Club of Union and the Union Mother's Club competed against the Pleasant Prairie Community Club. More than 250 people watched the performances at the Union Baptist Church. Once again, Pleasant Prairie won the competition, with a Zona Gale play, "Neighbors." The Union township winners tied for second place in the County competition.

There were also clubs for the children and young adults. Boys and Girls clubs had high enrollment in Union township and many young men and women were encouraged to raise livestock. Many of these clubs were absorbed into the 4-H clubs that were organized in Rock County in 1925.

Union township youngsters were quick to join the 4-H movement. On a Saturday afternoon in May 1925, about 50 boys and girls from Union, Porter and Magnolia townships attended a meeting at the Evansville High School and organized the Evansville 4-H Club.

Lloyd Porter, a teacher in the Cooksville district, agreed to be the advisor for the group. Ruth Campbell, daughter of Leo and Minnie Campbell, was elected president; Lorraine Porter, vice president; Marie Hatlin, secretary and treasurer. Lloyd Hubbard, Jr. was named chairman of the program committee. The second meeting of the group was held at the Lloyd Hubbard farm. The young people were encouraged to show their skills at the fairs and

livestock shows.

A new generation of Union township showmen entered the rings at the fairs and livestock shows in the 1920s. Several members of the Junior calf, pig and lamb clubs and the Evansville 4-H were second and third generation exhibitors at the five major fairs and expositions that their fathers and grandfathers had entered, the Rock County Fair, Janesville Fair, Wisconsin State Fair, Madison Junior Livestock Exposition, and Chicago's International Livestock Exposition.

Philip Robinson, grandson of John C. Robinson and son of Hugh Robinson, showed the family's famous Herefords. The Templeton boys, Paul, Archie, Robert, Walter, and Arthur, also had prize winning livestock and the Rock County and the Junior Livestock Exposition at Madison. Rock County won the Milwaukee Association of Commerce silver cup at the Junior Livestock Exposition because of the efforts of these boys and the other exhibitors from Rock County. The Rock County team gained points for their 4 calves, 22 lambs and 22 pigs.

In the open classes, John C. Robinson & Hugh Robinson won in the Registered Herefords division. Walter George and Charles Ware were price winners in the Chester White hog show. George Morrison & Son were winners in the open classes for hogs.

In the sheep competition, William G. Miles took all of the prizes in the registered Shropsires and Cheviot classes. By the late 1920s Miles was showing his sheep and lambs in so many fairs that he divided his flock of show animals into 3 groups, each headed by a different showman. His sheep were shown throughout the West, from Texas to Canada and in the Pacific Northwest and in 1929, Miles had the grand champion Shropshire ram at the Texas State Fair.

At the State Fair in 1925, Peter Templeton took prizes for his Percheron Stallion; 2nd Percheron Stallion; Champion Wisconsin Stallions Reserve for Senior Champion and Reserve for Grand Champion. 3rd on Filly Foal and 5th on Mare. Clydesdale Stallion. Walter Templeton, son of Peter Templeton, took 1st and 5th on purebred Shropshire lambs and 4th in best pen of lambs.

At the 1926 Chicago International Fat Stock show, Walter took three Southdown lambs and won second for his pen. Walter's brother, Peter Templeton took 10th place with his steers. Arthur and Robert Templeton took Poland China hogs and fifth and seventh place in the barrow class. Robert also took Southdown sheep and got a first and fifth place in a class of twenty-one lambs.

Philip Robinson also exhibited in the Junior Division of the Fat Stock show in Chicago. He took 11th place in the fat steer contest and eighth and tenth in the Southdown lamb contest.

The Review noted their success in a front page story in the December 16, 1926 issue, headlined. "Home Boys Win At The Big Show." Wisconsin's entries had not done very well in the show that year, but the Rock County exhibits were winners. "This is a wonderful showing for our local boys considering the fact that they were showing against the best stock in the United States," the Review reporter said.

Evansville's Rock County Fairs ended in 1927. The fair had become a financial burden to its stockholders and each year the Fair Board had to make an assessment against the stockholders in order to keep the fair operating. The financial situation was so bad in 1925, that the Fair Board sued stock holders who had not paid their assessments.

The Janesville Gazette seemed to favor the Janesville Fair that was generally run the week following the Evansville fair. The Gazette called Evansville's Rock County Fair the "Pumpkin Show." Union township residents took offense at the derogatory remark and to combat the poor image, Vic Wall, a Union township artist, created a poster for the Rock County Fair in 1926. Wall's poster depicted a man sitting on top of a globe of the world and "On Top of the World" became the theme of the Fair.

The highlight of the County fairs had always been the exhibit of livestock and some of the same exhibitors that had entered the first Evansville Rock County Fair in 1899 were at the final fair in 1927.

Union township farmers topped the list of prize winners in 1927. John C. Robinson & Son took prizes in nearly every class of registered Herefords. Peter Templeton was the top prize winner in the horse division. William G. Miles kept the winning Shropshire sheep.

Although the prize winning animals were highlighted, many Union township farmers earned income from the Chicago lamb and beef markets. In 1926, a drought in the West forced many ranchers to sell lambs and feeder cattle at reduced prices. Buyers at the Chicago market predicted that farmers would make good money by the misfortune of the Western ranchers.

Union township stock buyers took advantage of this in the fall of 1926. William Gillies traveled by railroad to Montana and brought back carloads of sheep for Herman Woodstock, Carl F. Brunsell, the Hatlin brothers, and Claude De Remer.

Clarence Franklin shipped a car of fat steers to Chicago and returned with a double-deck load of Shropshire lambs for fall feeding. The Review Fieldman, J. I. Scott traveled the countryside for farm stories and noted that there were three large farms owned by Arthur Franklin & son, Joe Porter and Chris Jorgenson & Son, that specialized in feeding cattle.

Most of the livestock farmers grew corn and grain for their animals. A few farmers also had cash crops for the local cannery, tobacco warehouses, and the sugar beet factories in other cities. Ed Turner and Oliver Perry were two Union township tobacco growers in the late 1920s.

Leo Decker grew sugar beets and was advised by County Agent Glassco to experiment with different fertilizers on the sugar beet fields. In the fall of 1925, Decker and Glassco invited other farmers to watch a demonstration at beet harvest time on the Decker farm.

“There will be a surprise for many farmers as to what a wonderful crop of beets may be raised on our Rock county soil, with the proper fertilization,” Glassco said in a news release to the Review. Decker used various combinations of nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium on his fields.

Farmers were successful because they carefully watched the markets and practiced good farming techniques. Farm prices fluctuated in the 1920s, and milk prices were unstable in the early part of the decade and became more stable in the later years.

Several Union township farms had dairy routes, with Evansville customers. Others sold their milk to the D. E. Wood Butter Company and to the Evansville Creamery, a less stable market.

The dairies selling directly to the consumer advertised that their herds were free from tuberculosis. The tuberculosis tests were promoted by the County Agent, the dairy breed associations and the University of Wisconsin Extension. Bovine tuberculosis was one of the most infectious forms of the disease and was easily passed to other animals and humans. It was a common disease in cattle and if a herd was declared 100% safe, it was advertised in the dairy's Review ads and news releases.

Several dairies operated on Union township farms and in Evansville. The Ware Dairy, west of Evansville on the Brooklyn Evansville Road, was owned by Margery and Charles Ware. They proudly advertised that their herd was entirely free of tuberculosis, as none of the cows had reacted to the TB test.

The Wares had made improvements to their dairy. They installed a cement stave silo and built a new milk and cooling building. The milk was bottled and in the summer the bottles were placed in ice-filled coolers for door-to-door delivery to customers in Evansville.

The Ware operation was sold to the Jamison Dairy in 1926, and moved to a warehouse South of the Commercial Hotel on East Main Street in Evansville. Charles Ware continued to strain and bottle milk at his own dairy and also ran the milk route on West Main Street.

Harvey Knapp operated the Burnap Dairy on the Brooklyn-Evansville Road. Knapp announced his retirement in 1926, and turned the dairy over to George Mabie. Mabie sold Knapp's herd of Holsteins and purchased purebred Guernseys for the dairy farm. Within a short time, Knapp decided to come out of retirement and returned to the dairy business, with Mabie as his partner. The Burnap Dairy tested free of tuberculosis and the owners also advertised their good fortune.

A dairy on the east side of the township was owned Oliver H. Perry and his son, Stanley. The Perry's purchased the Carl Brunzell farm on Cemetery Road in March 1920. The Perry's had one of the most productive small farms in Rock County, according to County Agent Glassco. The Perry's 80-acre farm had thirty acres planted in tobacco and the remainder in corn, oats, and pasture. The farm had two silos which held nearly 130 tons of silage. The Perry dairy had a herd of 40 Jerseys, with a purebred Jersey bull named Successful Fern Lad.

The farm buying power was reported to be the highest in the history of farming in 1925, and farmers used the opportunity to improve their farms with new equipment. New technology helped the farmer improve his profit. Many farms had new cement stave silos, silage cutters, feed grinders, milking machines, individual drinking cups in the stalls, tractors, and gas engines to power the machinery. Silos were called "canned pastures."

Tractors and gas-powered machinery became so common on farms that the local gasoline companies purchased tank trucks to deliver gas and oil products to the farm. Before harvest time, farmers were urged to order the petroleum products early, so the threshing would not be interrupted.

Threshing machines were too expensive for one farmer to purchase. In 1929, a consortium of Union township farmers purchased a new Case threshing machine. All lived in the area of Butts Corners, Peter Templeton, Lloyd Hubbard, Walter Maas and James Kyle. At harvest time, it was said that the hum of the new machine could be heard throughout the neighborhood.

New electric powerlines reached the farmers living west of Evansville in 1927. Twenty-five farmers were added to the Evansville Water and Light electric lines. The farmers, who had been generating their own electricity with gas-powered engines, enjoyed the benefits of the municipal power. The following year service was extended north on the Brooklyn-Evansville road from the Knapp farm to the Lloyd J. Hubbard farm, then west on Emery Road to the Floyd George farm.

More farmers received power and the demand for new lines kept the municipal utility busy building new service. Many of the farmers owned engines built by Evansville's largest employer, Baker Manufacturing Company. The company responded quickly to the electric service and introduced products powered by electricity.

Baker advertisement said: "Electrical service on the farm, especially in Wisconsin and Iowa, has created a demand for motor driven pumps and jacks which would not only pump water for stock, but will force it to some distance either to fill high tanks or to irrigate gardens and lawns. It is thought that there will be a good demand for them."

The rural schools also benefited from the new electric service. The Community Club of the Brown School (at the corner of Highway M and Highway 14) paid for installation of electric lights when power lines were extended east from Evansville in 1929. The Community Club funded the electrical service by holding box socials and other fund raisers. The Brown School Community Club officers in 1929 were Mrs. R. C. Searles, Mrs. Wade Woodworth and Ruby Luchsinger, the teacher.

In that same year, the Brown School board enlarged the school property and purchased another acre of land. The school also received a bell from a former pupil, Mrs. Charles Weary. The donor was the oldest resident in the

district who had attended the 60-year-old school. Her son, Russell, also received his grade school education in the Brown School. Because of the improvements, the Brown School, received a prize of \$50 for having the best equipped school building in the Town of Union.

Listings of teachers in the rural schools were rare. Some names that appeared in the country news columns in the Review were Irene Loomis, who taught at the Butts Corners school in 1923. Amy Johnson taught the Union School in 1925. Mary Montgomery was teacher at the Pleasant Prairie School from the Fall of 1926 to 1929. She replaced Frances Bell who had taught at the school for three years. Ruby Luchsinger was at the Brown School, 1928 and 1929. Joyce Spencer was teacher at the Butts Corners school 1928, 1929.

School competitions became more popular in the 1920s, as automobile transportation made it easier to take pupils and families from one school to another. Schools usually closed in late May with a neighborhood picnic sponsored by the Community Club. The gatherings proved so popular, that Township Play Days were organized.

In 1925, Play Days were held for the first time in Union township. The Play Days were organized by representatives from each school district and the contests were usually sporting events, that included people of all ages and abilities. The Rock County Fairground in Evansville was the favorite location as it had the best facilities for all of the activities. Just four years after the start of the Union Township Play Days, more than 800 people attended the event.

The Play Day contests included students and families from the eight country schools operating in the township. The Holt, Union, Franklin, Tupper, Tullar, Pleasant Prairie, Brown, and Butts Corners schools participated in baseball throws, bean bag throws, sack races, relay races, horseshoe tournaments, volley ball and kitten ball games.

A picnic was served, followed by musical and dramatic programs. The school with the most points at the end of the day received a cash prize to be used to purchase play ground equipment for the school. A County-wide competition was held in Janesville and all of the rural schools were invited to participate. By 1928, nearly 1,200 people participated in the County event.

Some of the people who served as organizers in the 1920s were Lyman Gillies, Herman Woodstock, Orville Devlin, Ethel Moore, Oliver Franklin, Edward Jorgensen, Harry Spooner, Mrs. Clarence Franklin, Chauncey Jones, Ben Disch, Ed Turner, William Bone, Oliver Chapin, Mrs. Earl Allen, Etta Hubbard Smith, Will Leeder, Paul Janes, Claude DeRemer, Burton Wall, Dana Phelps, Ben Rasmussen, Ed Feldt, Mrs. Carroll Bly, and James Lamb.

There was a rhythm to the seasonal activities in Union township. The farm families were not isolated in the hard winter months in the early part of the year. Card parties, dancing to music by the Templetons, and dinners were the main events of the social meetings of club members who lived in the rural areas.

Even winter storms did not keep country residents from pursuing their activities. If the plows had not removed the snow from the country roads, farmers often drove across the frozen fields to reach their destination. When snow covered roads threatened to cause the cancellation of a Butts Corners Community Club chicken dinner at the Lloyd Hubbard farm, Willis Miller, Jr. converted his truck into a bus and gave rides to people who had no transportation.

Some celebrated the snow for the moisture it brought to the land and for the recreational opportunities. Farmers on the east side of the township built a ski jump on the Riley Searles farm. "Local lads are displaying remarkable talent in this sport," the Review noted in its February 14, 1929 issue. The Evansville Ski Club members were from the country and the city. The ski jump competitions attracted professional skiers from Stoughton and Edgerton and skiers made jumps of 60 feet and more in the first few weeks of operation.

Although the Farmers' Institutes were not held in Evansville every year, February was the favored month. At the 1929 Institute, County Agent Glassco gave an illustrated talk about the improved farm incomes and the improved standard of living for rural residents. There were presentations about dairy cattle, poultry, improved pastures for the production of feed, and mineral and chemical additives for soil improvement.

In February, Hugh Robinson took Herefords to the round-up and sale of cattle in Kansas City.

March first was the typical moving day for farmers who rented or owned new property. In 1929, The Evansville Review ran story in its March 7 issue, "Changes Made On Many Local Farms."

Twelve farms in the Evansville area had new owners or renters at the start of the 1929 planting season. Some of the changes included Union township farms. Ernest Kopp moved to the Reese farm near the Tullar school. Floyd Steele purchased the Tom Steele farm and took up residence. Merlin Reese left the Fursett farm near Cooksville and settled on the farm that Floyd Steele had been operating, the Robert Steele farm, northwest of Evansville.

Fred Janes purchased a 114-acre farm just east of the Brown School for his son, Laurence in the fall of 1929. Laurence farmed the land on the Knapp Dairy farm west of the city prior to moving to the east side of the township.

Charles Maas, a young man who later became prominent in hog and dairy cattle promotions, purchased the Devereaux farm near Butts Corners in 1929.

Spring was time for planting and the start of the poultry raising cycle. Every farm crop depended on the weather and if conditions were right, corn, oats, and other grains were planted as soon in April as the ground could be worked. Planting was completed by mid-May, in a good year.

Thorsten Hatlin's wife was one of the women who raised chickens, in the late 1920s. In 1929, she started the season in the spring with 350 young chickens, but within a few weeks, the numbers had dwindled as rats killed about 100 of the chicks.

In June the first crop of alfalfa was cut and the Town of Union Board Chairman issued weed control notices. Land owners in the township were required to destroy noxious weeds before they went to seed. The plants listed in the notice for 1931 were Canadian thistles, English Charlock (wild mustard), goatsbeard, and quack or quitch grass. The canning factory in Evansville resumed operations in late June and the farmers began hauling peas for processing at the plant.

The Evansville 4th of July parade drew entries from the local community clubs. In 1934, the Evansville 4-H club, Tullar School, Butts' Corners Community Club, Pleasant Prairie Community Club and the Waucoma Grange entered floats in the parade. Harvesting of oats and other grains began in late July or early August. 4-H members prepared for the county and state fairs.

In the fall the feeder cattle and lambs were purchased from Western ranchers. Livestock buying and selling continued to be big business for Union township farmers. Lloyd Hubbard traveled to Twin bridges, Montana in late September 1929 and spent several weeks purchasing feeder lambs. The lambs went taken to the farms of W. G. Miles, Lyman Farrell, John Wall, H. C. Miller and Center township farmer, C. A. Whitmore.

Hubbard returned to the Evansville depot with four single deck and nine double-decked railroad cars filled with Montana lambs. "Started on the green feed here and finished with corn they will probably go on the market in good shape and make their owners a nice profit," the Review reporter predicted.

Farmers like Hubbard who operated occasionally as livestock buyers also had the option of using livestock businesses operating in Union township and the surrounding area. Fred Luchsinger and George Brigham had

been in partnership in the livestock business in the 1920s. They ended their business relationship in February 1930. Luchsinger went into business with Rodd and Miles, livestock and wool buyers and George Brigham formed a partnership with Charles Maloy.

In November and December the livestock shows in Kansas City and Chicago accounted for the activities of the well known sheep and cattle men in Union township. A Hereford bull in the Robinson herd was winning prizes at the local, state, and national shows. Domino Lad was selected senior champion at the International Livestock show in Chicago in 1929. It was the highest award earned by Rock County exhibitors.



The 4-H Clubs sponsored trips to the Chicago show for the outstanding livestock exhibitors. Philip and Harold Robinson; Walter and Arthur Templeton from the Evansville 4-H were exhibitors at the Chicago show in 1929.

Some farm activities went on whatever the season. The Wisconsin Dairymen's Association encouraged farmers to join their butterfat testing program and several Union township farmers earned State honors from the organization for the consistent high averages of 300 pounds or more. O. H. Perry, Arthur Ellis, and Peter Templeton earned certificates in 1929.

Perry and his son, Stanley, made the national honor roll of dairymen for six years from 1928 to 1934. The honor roll included farmers with herds that with a butterfat record of 300 pounds or more. Because of the high butterfat record, the Perrys were awarded membership in the National Honorary Guild of Gopatis in 1934. The award was presented by the president of the National Dairy Association during Farm and Home Week at the College of Agriculture in Madison.

An organization of dairy farmers called the Evansville-Edgerton Dairy Herd Improvement Association organized in 1930. The association hired a tester and record keeper to record the butter fat content of the milk and the feed costs for each individual cow in the members' herds. In January 1931, 432 cows had been tested. The reports of the highest testing herds and their owners were printed in the Evansville Review and included the following Union township farmers: William Spanton, Laurence Janes, John Golz, the Perrys, Peter Templeton, Clifford Ellis, Charles Crocker, Arthur Ellis and Leo Decker, W. G. Patterson & Sons.

A new dairy entered the market in 1934. Clarence Croft and his sons had been providing milk for the Evansville Ice and Ice Cream Company for six years before purchasing the firm's milk route in 1934. The purchase included the bottling equipment and for a short time, the Crofts bottled the milk at the ice cream company building. The Crofts named their new business the Evansville Pure Milk company.

The Great Depression of the 1930s affected some in the farming community, but many of the farmers in Union township had stable businesses that provided a sustainable, even prosperous living.

New barns were built on several farms in the early 1930s. R. W. Higday had a new barn under construction in March 1932. The Robinsons lost a barn in a fire in October 1931 and replaced it with a 98 by 36 foot structure. In November and December working bees were held at the farm and as many as 45 farmers came to help with the barn raising. Twelve women helped to cook and serve the meals to the workers.

At the dedication of the new barn, in June 1932, John and Hugh Robinson, their wives and children hosted a celebration attended by more than 250 people. The Evansville Firemen were the guests of honor. Harry Williams, Howard Norby and the Templeton Brothers provided the music. A few days later, the Robinsons hosted a barn dance for nearly 200 members of the Evansville, Porter and Magnolia 4-H clubs.

Neighborliness, the great community builder of the settlement period, was a highly valued attribute for residents of Union township. It was just at harvest time when Lyman Farrell broke and crushed his shoulder in a 1929 farm accident. His neighbors, Lyman Gillies, Will Spanton and Bert Miller arrived on the Farrell farm with their binders to help with the harvest. The men returned with a larger crew of neighbors and helped with the threshing. Any one of the men would have found help from their neighbor in time of need.

The spirit of cooperation and community service led to the start of a new farm organization in the late 1920s. The Waucoma Grange was organized in April 1928, with a majority of members from Union township. By January 1931, there were seventy-five members.

The new group hoped to promote farm education, support 4-H activities and provide social activities for its members. The Waucoma Grange was successful in getting Evansville merchants to offer discounts to members of the grant in petroleum products, fertilizers, and binder twine. 4-H members asked that the Grange sponsor an annual achievement day and County Agent, R. T. Glassco offered to help support the Grange activities.

Waucoma Grange met in the Woodman's Hall on East Main Street, twice a month. The meetings included a business session, educational programs, and entertainment by local actors and musicians. The organization also sponsored dances and other fund raising activities. George Mabie's orchestra provided the music.

The Depression brought new interest in preventing waste of goods and materials. In the early years of the Depression, the Waucoma Grange women sponsored a Thrift Meeting and the Grange members and others who attended the program displayed rugs, and other crafts made from discarded fabric and clothing. Farm wives and

the Home Economics Agent, Mrs. McCordic, shared their knowledge of recycling and saving with anyone who wanted to attend.

The Farm Bureau remained a strong organization in Union Township. Twenty-five members attended the annual meeting of the organization in 1931 and chose Clarence Franklin as their chairman. Kenneth Gilbertson was named secretary and Harvey A. Knapp was chosen as the Bureau's delegate to the County meeting. The organization helped keep members informed about national, state and local issues related to farming.

There was some worry that the farm community would not be able to sustain so many activities. County Agent, R. T. Glassco warned that Community clubs and rural organizations had short lives. Glassco advised the rural residents that the most successful organizations had strong leaders, interesting programs, cooperative efforts with other groups, and a stable membership. The Union township clubs exhibited all of these qualities and remained active for years, supporting the schools, social and business interests, and those in need in their neighborhoods and beyond.

Leadership was a strong personal attribute of many Union township residents. One of the organizations that benefited most from strong leaders was the Evansville 4-H. The mentoring by the adult leaders helped to develop strong leaders among the younger members of the organization.

The Evansville 4-H soon grew to more than 100 members and their record for completing projects was outstanding. In the 1930s, Evansville club members consistently participated and completed their projects. In 1934, Evansville's 4-H earned the designation of a 100% club. All members had taken and completed projects.

The Evansville club also helped the new clubs get started. Shortly after the Evansville 4-H formed in 1925, a Magnolia 4-H was started. In 1931, the Porter 4-H club was organized, leaving the Evansville club with members who primarily lived in the Town of Union. At the organizational meeting of the Porter Club, the Evansville 4-H members were asked to do demonstrations to encourage the young people in Porter Township to join the 4-H movement.

Elections for the Evansville 4-H club were held in January of each year. In the early 1930s, the club officers were Elaine Thomas, President, 1930 and 1931. Arthur Templeton, Vice president in 1931, succeeded his brother Walter Templeton, who became a project leader. In 1931, Mae Jorgensen replaced Mabel Barnard as secretary and Wilva Woodworth took the job as treasurer, replacing Philip Jorgensen. Many of the young members of the club remained active for many years as leaders for 4-H projects.

The adult leaders included Mrs. Hugh Robinson, who was first elected director of the Evansville 4-H Club in 1930. She held the post for four years. Bertha Odegaard served as assistant director in 1930. Wade Woodworth took over as director in 1934 with Ed Jorgensen as assistant director. Michael Moore and Mrs. Potter Porter served as assistant directors in 1935.

Project leaders who served in the 1930s were Wade Woodworth, and John Golz in the dairy calf division. Peter Templeton was project leader in baby beef and colt; Chester Jorgensen and Walter George pigs; Walter Templeton, sheep; Hugh Robinson, baby beef; Philip Jorgensen, potatoes; Gillies Spooner and Lloyd Hubbard, Jr., corn; Mrs. Beulah Thomas, gardening; Miss Eleanor Reese, poultry; Norman Odegaard, handicraft; The Home Economics leaders were Mrs. Barbara Allen, canning; Alice Odegaard, baking and Mrs. Bert Richards, home service. Ruth Allen, Ruby Templeton, Beulah Thomas, Wilva Woodworth, Elizabeth Spooner, Mrs. Henry Porter and Maude Spooner led the clothing project.

The first Rock County 4-H Fair was organized in 1930 and the Evansville Review noted that the fair was organized "with fear and trembling, with no fair association to back them or to tell them what to do." The first fair was a success and Evansville 4-H members were enthusiastic in their participation, even though there was a financial depression and a drought had damaged some crops.

When the second Rock County 4-H Fair was held in 1931, the buildings and stalls were filled with the projects of the 4-H club members. Several members of the club won state honors for their 1931 projects. Four of the eleven Rock County winners in the State competition were from Evansville; Robert Brunsell, handicraft; Harold Robinson, sheep; Elaine Thomas, farm records; and Elizabeth Spooner, home furnishings.



1931 Winners in 4-H, Wisconsin State Fair, Wisconsin Junior Livestock Exposition and Chicago International Stock Show

First Row: Templeton, Phil Robinson, Dean George; Second row, Templeton, Lee George, Harold Robinson

The largest event organized by Union township residents was the Annual Union Play Day. Community Clubs began organizing the program in late winter, by choosing a chairman and officers. District No. 10 was added to the competition in 1929, making nine schools in all that competed in the Play Day.

Harry Spooner was chairman of the 1929 Play Day. Mrs. Clarence Franklin served as the Secretary and treasurer. Dana Phelps served as the games and contests chairman. Committees from each school district organized the events. Chauncey Jones, represented Union; Ben Disch, Holt; Ed Turner, Butt's Corners; William Bone, Tupper; Oliver Chapin, Brown; Mrs. Earl Allen, Pleasant Prairie; Mrs. Carroll Bly, Tullar; Oliver Franklin, Franklin School; and James Lamb, District No. 10.

Orville Devlin chaired the 1931 Play Day. Victor Wall, Robert Franklin, Chauncey Jones, Mrs. Ina Bly, Peter Templeton, Dana Phelps and Harry Spooner were in charge of the events. Activities for women and children included bean bag throws and relay races.

Student teams competed in kittenball and the adult teams had a separate competition. Adult men also participated in volleyball and horseshoes, with one school competing against another. With 9 schools participating, one school drew a "bye" in each team competition and did not participate.

Teachers listed in the news articles about schools in Union township were Ruby Templeton who taught the Brown School from 1926 through 1932; June Ramsey at the Pleasant Prairie school in 1932 and 1933. Miss Ruth Franklin taught at the Franklin school in 1933-34.

Beth Miller was at the Butt's Corner's school in 1934. Miss Miller resigned to teach in the Tullar school in the fall of 1935.

The graduation ceremony for the eighth graders from the rural schools of Rock County was held at Janesville. Union township students consistently took high honors at the graduation ceremonies in the 1930s. For three years, the students of Ruby Templeton at the Brown School east of Evansville received high honors at the graduation. In 1930, Kenneth Decker tied for first and in 1931, Howard Woodworth had the second highest average for Rock County rural students. Both were students of the Brown School in Union township.

Mildred Gibson was the top ranking student among the rural graduates in 1932 and Elizabeth Croak received second. Their scores were within a few decimal points with Miss Gibson's average of 97.3 and Miss Croak's an average of 96.5. Both were students of Ruby Templeton at the Brown School.

In June 1933, two Pleasant Prairie School graduates were honored as top students in the County. Alvin Golz, the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Golz, ranked first in the eighth grade graduates. Howard Brunzell, son of Mrs. Grace Brunzell, the Union Township treasurer, ranked fourth.

After completing the 8th grade in the rural schools, the students entered high school in Evansville. Many of the rural students maintain their high levels of academic achievement and graduated as top ranking members of their high school classes.

Union township residents had consistently shown interest in education and improved living conditions. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, improvements in utilities and roads were ongoing projects for Union township residents. New electric power lines were built from the Water and Light Company in Evansville. In October 1929, a meeting of eleven farmers from Union and Porter township requested an eastward extension, starting at the Wade Woodworth farm in Union Township.

In the 1930s, roads in Union township received new gravel or cement surfaces as funding allowed. In 1931, Drew and Garry, got the contracts for Union Township. The company put new gravel surfaces on 3,000 yards of the East Butts Corner Road, at a cost of 41 cents a yard for a total of \$1,230.

Some structures from the settlement period were destroyed by fire in the 1930s. The Evansville mill, used by farmers for many years in the 1800s, was destroyed by fire in July 1930. Although the mill had been used for storage of old newspapers for many years, this link to the past disappeared at the hands of an arsonist.

The old hotel in the village of Union, known as the Union Inn was destroyed in a fire in 1934. It was first located on the four corners in the village of Union. The building served as a resting place for travelers in the days when the Territorial Road connected Mineral Point and Milwaukee, and later Janesville and Madison. The old hotel, or tavern as it was known in the early days, was constructed with hand-hewn oak and was one of the last structures of the settlement period.

The structure had been dismantled and an 18 x 32 foot section was moved to the Frusher farm where it served as a granary and hog house. It had sentimental value for Mrs. Frusher's as her grandfather had stayed at the hotel in 1856.

Fire also destroyed the home of an early settler, Sumner Frost. The landmarks of long ago were disappearing.

Union township's oldest native-born resident died in February 1935. William Henry Harrison Johnson was born in 1842 and was often called upon to tell of the settlement days. His father had traveled to Milwaukee with an

oxen team to sell wheat, a trip that required five days travel.

Johnson purchased his first farm for \$40 an acre. He and his wife were married in the Baptist Church in Union and Johnson recalled that he was up at 6 a.m. the following morning, plowing his fields. His wife was busy churning butter.

Although he lived in Evansville for 56 years, Johnson kept his farm and rented to others. His last tenant was George Severson. A few months after Johnson died, his 143 acre farm went up for sale and was purchased by Charles Crocker, a Brooklyn township farmer. Crocker farmed with his parents, prior to purchasing W.H.H. Johnson's property.

Another important figure in Union township died in February 1936. William G. Miles, the sheep breeder and showman, died a few hours after he loaded double-decked carloads of sheep. He was one of several men who made Union township famous for its pure bred livestock and he had helped farmers buy thousands of feeder lambs from the west. "Mr. Miles' pure bred sheep and lambs have been consistent prize winners at county, state, and international fairs and expositions throughout the middle west and west coast," the Review noted in his obituary.

In May 1938, John C. Robinson, the founder of the J. C. Robinson & Son farm, also known as the Maples died, a few months after he and his wife celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary. John and Mary Robinson moved from the farm to a small house on West Liberty Street in Evansville. John Robinson continued to attend meetings of the Wisconsin Livestock Breeders' association and was a frequent visitor at the farm to help his son, Hugh and grandsons, Philip and Harold with the Hereford breeding operation.

Robinson remained active in Wisconsin Livestock Breeders Association and was named to the University of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture honor roll of Wisconsin and national agricultural leaders. The Hereford cattle raised on the Robinson farm and shown at fairs and livestock shows through the United States brought International recognition to Union township.

The Union township government remained stable in the late 1920s and for most of the 1930s the same people held the Town offices. The caucuses and elections for the township officers were held at the G. A. R. Hall on the second floor of the building at 1 West Main Street.

Occasionally there was competition for offices. Willis Miller, Jr. opposed Potter Porter in the 1930 election. This resulted in the re-election of Potter Porter as Chairman of the Board who had served the township in that capacity since 1926. Potter retained his position through many more elections.

Peter Templeton and Mike F. Moore received the majority of votes for supervisors, defeating Wade H. Woodworth in 1930. Templeton and Moore were also re-elected year-after-year.

Harry S. Spooner was elected clerk in 1926. Spooner had competition in 1930, narrowly defeating Stanley Perry with a close tally of 119-111. In 1931 Perry beat Spooner and Perry continued to serve on the board for more than 20 years.

Charles Weary was Assessor, from 1928 to 1933. Weary died in December 1933. He had served as Town of Union assessor for seven years. Harry Spooner took this position following the 1934 election. Lee Barnard was elected assessor in 1936 and continued to serve as assessor for many years.

In the 1930 election, Oscar Brunsell was unopposed for Treasurer, a post he had held since 1926. Oscar died in July 1930 and in the 1931 election, Oscar's wife, Grace Brunsell won the Treasurer's office. She was the first woman to hold office since Minnie Campbell was Treasurer, a position she accepted after her husband, Leo Campbell died in 1924. Mrs. Brunsell was re-elected for several terms and was the only woman serving on the township board for many years.

In the early years of the 1930s, Grace Brunsell collected taxes from an office in the Bank of Evansville. In 1935, she set up office in the Grange Store and was available to collect taxes every Thursday and Saturday in the month of January of each year. In February, the taxes were only collected on Saturdays.

There was more rotation of people in the Constable and Justice of the Peace's offices. In the 1930 election, Claude DeRemer and Elmer L. Rosa were elected for the constable positions. Daniel F. Finnane and William Reese held the Constable positions through several elections in the 1930s. Herman Smith replaced Finnane as a constable in the late 1930s.

Wallace Crocker defeated Sherman Hubbard for the Justice of the Peace office. Crocker held the position in 1931 and 1932. Sherman Hubbard won the Justice of Peace office in 1931 but was defeated by Harry Spooner in 1934. Spooner was re-elected for several terms.

The 1934 officers of the Town of Union were unopposed in the 1935 election. There was so little interest in the 1935 election that only 50 voters turned out, less than one-fourth of number who voted in the 1930 election.

A vote in the April election of 1937 created a significant change for Union township. Strong temperance leanings by the voters from the settlement period into the 1930s did not allowed the sale of beer or liquor in the township. For the first time in its history, in the spring 1937 election, Union township voters approved the sale of beer. The votes approved the sale of beer but defeated the sale of liquor in the township.

There was no opposition for the candidates running for office in 1938 and just over 50 voters selected the officers. All officers remained the same as 1937: Potter Porter, Chairman; Mike Moore and Peter Templeton supervisors; Stanley Perry, Clerk; Grace Brunsell; treasurer, Lee Barnard, Assessor; Harry Spooner, Justice of the Peace; William E. Reese and Herman Smith, Constables. The only change in 1939 was the election of Ben Disch to the Justice of the Peace office.

As the Great Depression continued through the 1930s, the local governments could not support all of the programs needed to stabilize the economy. For several years, the federal and state government tried a variety of programs to help farmers adjust to low prices and a surplus of farm products. Domestic consumption of farm products and exports to foreign markets dropped dramatically in the early 1930s.



Threshing on the Templeton Farm

To combat the surplus of farm products, one federal program tried to limit production of corn and hogs. A committee of Union township farmers, Peter Templeton, Wade Woodworth and Potter Porter, was authorized by the U. S. Department of Agriculture to offer contracts to farmers to reduce production of corn and hogs.

The program continued for several years and at the beginning of each year, the committee met with farmers at the Evansville City Hall, first to determine if there were enough farmers interested in the program. Then one Saturday a month, in the late winter and early spring, the committee met with farms to sign contracts.

In 1935, farmers agreed to the reduced corn production signed and contracts promising to limit their land in corn to 90% of their 1934 acreage. The committee encouraged farmers to reduce their crops beyond the basic requirement and take 30% of their corn acreage out of production. In return the government paid the farmers a corn adjustment payment, a subsidy for lost income.

Another federal program offered by the Federal Housing Administration insured low interest loans to farmers who wanted to build silos, barns, and fences. The program guaranteed the loans made by local banks and credit unions to farmers who needed to improve their buildings. The local Farm Bureau supported this program to help build farmers' morale and improve farms buildings that had not been maintained. Contractors in the construction business hoped that it would revive the building industry.

The state of Wisconsin set up an employment office, one day a week, in Evansville to help out-of-work men find jobs on farms. Farmers were encouraged to post jobs with the Evansville office and the service was offered free to the farmer and the worker.

Some unemployed men were given jobs crushing lime in the stone quarries in Union township. Grace Brunsell's lime stone pit was used in 1935. The lime was sold at low cost to farmers to put on their alfalfa fields.

Seasonal work in Evansville warehouses and factories also provided income to some farm laborers. The tobacco warehouse of William Smith and Son opened in January. This work gave some relief to families until the season for farm work or the canning factory. In a good year, the Smith Warehouse hired up to 80 men and women and the work lasted nearly four months.

The canning factory in Evansville offered job opportunities in the early summer, after the spring planting was finished. The Columbus Food Corporation purchased the Garden Canning Company's Evansville building and equipment in 1929 and continued to operate the plant through the 1930s.

In 1935, the factory had two shifts operating with a peak workforce of 160 during the pea canning operation. That season the factory processed 1.2 million cans of peas. The manager Earl Gibbs told the Review that the payroll for the 1935 season was \$16,000 a "large share of which sum went into homes where money was sorely needed."

The work force varied depending on the abundance and quality of vegetables produced on local farms. In 1937, 100 men and women were hired, and the following year 150. However, even though more people were employed for the 1938 season, the factory work was shut down early due to economic conditions. Only peas were canned that season. The corn canning was eliminated for one year.

Employment was also available in the summer months on road building project. The work was sponsored by Rock County and the Township. The County Highway Department was headed by Charles E. Moore, a man who encouraged the Rock County Board of Supervisors to fund road improvements. Moore strongly supported using the best available surfaces on the farm-to-market roads. "Surfacing the highways is expected to expedite shipments of farm produce to markets, Moore told a reporter." In 1937, a five-mile stretch of the Evansville-Brooklyn Road was blacktopped. The County paid \$5,500 for the project.

There were also individual farmers who pursued large building projects in the 1930s. A new barn was built on the Lloyd Hubbard farm using materials from the 1933-34 World's Fair, The Century of Progress." When the fair ended, the owners of the Century of Progress buildings and equipment sent out news releases offering to sell salvage materials, including plaster board, plywood, structural steel and lumber. The Fair owners wanted to have all of the structures would be cleared away before the end of the year 1935.

In the summer of 1935, Lloyd Hubbard enlisted the help of George Brigham's Stock buying business and rented their trucks to transport steel beams and plywood from Chicago to his farm west of Evansville. Four of the steel beams were from the fair's Hall of Science and extended eighteen feet beyond the bed of the truck. The truck driver had difficulty maneuvering through some of the cities and villages along the route from Chicago to the Hubbard farm.

The barn was 84 feet long and 36 feet wide with a cement foundation. The long steel beams and eight shorter steel beams were used as supports, so that no wood posts were needed in the barn. The plywood from the Century of Progress buildings was used for flooring in the barn. The lumber for the frame work and redwood siding were purchased from local lumberyards.

In 1937, the Hubbards remodeled the farm home, with the assistance of M. J. LaRock, an agricultural engineer, who drew the plans for the remodeling. LaRock had recommended that the Hubbards install insulation to improve heating and cooling efficiencies. The effectiveness of the insulation was tested by federal engineers. The project caught the attention of the University radio station, WHA, and Mrs. Hubbard was interviewed about the remodeled house in an April 1938 broadcast for homemakers.

Tractors had become common on farms in Union township, however, there were still many farmers who could not afford the machines, or preferred to use horses for their field work. Pure-bred horses for farm were highly prized. Fred Luchsinger held horse sales in Evansville and also held breeding stock.

In 1930, Luchsinger and Collins purchased a pure bred Percheron for breeding purposes. Peter Templeton and R. L. Ellis exhibited draft horses at the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago. Both were breeders of Percherons. Templeton organized horse shows and served as judge of the draft horses in fairs and shows throughout the area.

The social and political organizations for Union township farm families remained strong during the 1930s, helping to give moral support during the difficult years of the Depression. On the sixth anniversary of the organization of the Waucoma Grange, the members voted to rent the hall in the old Grange Store building at 19 East Main Street. Lloyd Hubbard was one of the promoters of the Grange having its own home.

In a dedication program for the new hall in March 1935, Grace Brunsell said, "Mr. Lloyd Hubbard would very seldom allow a business meeting to adjourn, without reminding everyone that it would be advantageous to our organization to secure permanent quarters."

A crew of men from the Grange began remodeling the hall and put in new plumbing, re-wiring, and adding new cupboards. To pay for the rent and upkeep of the new facility, the Grange held dances, card parties, and raffles. The new hall served as a social and educational home for the Waucoma Grange members and their supporters.

The club also sponsored speech contests. The theme of the 1935 program was financing rural schools. Mrs. Harry Spooner's speech "More State Aid for Rural Schools," received the top award and she was chosen as one of three speakers to represent Rock County at the Farm and Home week program in Madison.

The group also revitalized the adult drama competitions. In 1936, the Waucoma Grange and the Pleasant Prairie community Club competed with each other for the chance to take their play to the county competition. The plays were presented at the Magee Theater after several weeks delay due to the terrible blizzard conditions that existed in the months of January and February 1936.

The blizzards were so bad that milk trucks could not get through to farmers. County Trunk M was closed for several days in February. Some men took bob sleds and horses and crossed the fields, cutting through fences, as they made their way to Evansville to deliver their cream to Evansville. It was the first time in many years that some of the farmers had separated their own cream. As in the days before the creameries processed the milk, the farmers fed the skim milk to their hogs.

The 1936 blizzards kept rural mail carriers from getting to their farm routes. Rural schools were forced to close. The blizzards even halted a ski tournament at the ski jump on the Riley Searles farm.

Mrs. Robert Hubbard described the conditions in the western part of Union Township in the February 20, 1936 issue of the Review. "Most of the roads have been cleared by the snow plow. Cars have been unable to travel until the last of the week. Some have had to go through fields. Wednesday night the plow got through to the Austin Hunt farm where he had been hurt when fixing a pump and he was brought to town. An X-Ray showed a broken shoulder blade. Four young men who were surveying for the government were stalled near the Job Miles farm one day last week. They went to Evansville on a sled and on to Monroe by train. The annual Pleasant Prairie club dinner held Valentine's Day at the Hugh Robinson home has been cancelled due to the weather and bad roads. There has been one day of school at Pleasant Prairie since February 3rd. At Butts Corners there has been no school."

New businesses operating in Union township in the 1930s, included the Rosa sorghum mill on the Rosa farm near Union. It opened for crushing and boiling the 1935 sorghum crop in October.

After the voters approved the sale of beer in the township, a tavern opened in the village of Union, known as the Union Tavern. It was one of few businesses still operating in the village that had once rivaled Evansville for the number of stores.

A new wholesale grain buying firm, F. B. Green and Company opened in Evansville in 1934. The firm started with just one truck, shipping soy beans. F. B.'s sons, Ben and Jameson, joined the business. They purchased the Baldwin feed mill on the south side of East Main Street, near the railroad tracks. The company's fleet of trucks was housed and serviced at a building the Green Company rented at 128 East Main.

A new cooperative venture, Union Cooperative Oil Company, was proposed in February 1935. The organizing committee included many Union township farmers, Wallace Crocker, Clarence Franklin, Laurence Janes, and Lloyd Hubbard. The committee had to sell 200 shares of stock in order to meet the state requirements for a cooperative. The stock sold at \$10 a share.

The stock sold quickly and by April 1935, the Union Cooperative was in business. The shareholders were primarily farmers in Union, Porter, Magnolia, Brooklyn, and Green County. At the first official meeting, the Co-op members elected officers and agreed to purchase the bulk plant of the Wisconsin Petroleum Company on Union Street.

By the end of 1935, the Co-op had 225 members. In the midst of the Great Depression, the emerging business was successful in its first year of operation and paid members, who owned at least five shares of stock, a cash dividend in January 1936.

To accommodate the growing company and the number of people who wanted to become members, the stock was increased to \$5,000 and in 1937 to \$15,000. The cooperative had no trouble finding stockholders. Within three years, the company had nearly 300 stockholders and 400 customers.

Another Union township operation was successful, despite falling farm prizes. In the 1930s the Robinson prize-winning herd of Herefords continued as consistent winners at the Chicago and Kansas City stock shows. This was excellent advertising for the herd and by 1935, the Robinsons were making shipments to all 48 states, Hawaii, and South America. At the show in Kansas City in 1935, the Robinsons sold to buyers in Canada and Phil Robinson took 20 of their Hereford cattle to Jarvis, Ontario.

Another Union township man was gaining recognition for his song writing ability. Victor D. Wall had his first sheet music "Dancing the Last Waltz With You." Published by the Radio Music Service Company, Bingham, N. Y. in November 1935. It was first performed on Janesville's radio station, WCLO, by Paul Skinner, a "romantic tenor." Vic Wall, a singer, had also performed on WCLO and WIBA in Madison.

First 4-H cookbook was published and printed by the Antes Press, Evansville in 1934 and reprinted the following year because of demand. Many of the Union township women and 4-H members had contributed recipes for the fund raising project.

Evansville 4-H club members earned special recognition in the late 1930s. The first Rock County 4-H queen was chosen for the Janesville Centennial celebration in 1935. Mae Jorgensen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Jorgensen, was chosen as the Evansville 4-H club queen candidate.

Harold Robinson gave programs to 4-H groups throughout the county. He talked about the baby beef project that was his 4-H project for several years. Robinson graduated from the Evansville high school in 1935 and completed the short course at the Wisconsin College of Agriculture in the February 1936. In 1937, Harold was named assistant superintendent of cattle for the Rock County 4-H Fair.

Ruth Campbell, who had earned many awards as an Evansville 4-H member, was hired as the Home Economics teacher at the Evansville High School in the 1934. In 1935, Campbell left her high school teaching job to become the Rock County 4-H Club Leader. She held that position for only a few months. In October 1935, she married John Wirt and moved with her new husband to Detroit.

Two Evansville 4-H Club members represented Wisconsin at the 4-H Club congress in Chicago in 1935. The two

young people were given all-expense paid trips to the meeting. Ruth Allen was chosen to represent Wisconsin at the 4-H Club congress in Chicago. She was a district, county and state winner in judging canning. Ruth Allen was also the teacher at Butts' Corners school and had just reached the age of 20. Those reaching the age of 20 could not longer participate in 4-H as exhibitors.

Arthur Templeton was chosen to represent Wisconsin in 4-H meat production. Arthur exhibited a pen of lambs at the Chicago livestock show that had won the grand championship at the 1935 Rock County fair in Janesville, the Wisconsin State Fair at Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Junior Livestock exposition in Madison.

Arthur was a charter member of the Evansville 4-H club and earned his ten-year pin in 1935. In 1937, Arthur was named assistant superintendent of sheep at the Rock County 4-H Fair. Templeton was also a popular entertainer at 4-H club meetings and other events. He sang and played guitar and appeared on the Evansville 4-H radio broadcasts on Janesville's radio station, WCLO.

Ruth Allen received a five-year achievement pin for "meritorious effort in her past years' work from the Evansville 4-H in 1935. Ruth was named superintendent of the home economics exhibits at the 4-H Fair in 1937.

Alvin Golz was chosen as the Evansville 4-H club president in February 1936. Howard Brunsell became Vice President, Edith Brunsell secretary, Arlene Allen, treasurer and Spencer Porter, reporter. Tullar school teacher, Marian Long, agreed to be the director of the club's play for the annual county 4-H competition.

One of the school mothers' clubs reached its 25th anniversary in 1937. The We-Are-Neighbors club of the Tupper school district commemorated the anniversary at a picnic. The group was organized by Alice Milbrandt, the teacher of the Tupper school at the time. "It has always been active and has sponsored the greater part of the social activities of the Tupper district in recent years. Its aim has been to cultivate a neighborly spirit and help those in need."

In 1935, Tupper school had the largest eighth grade graduating class of any rural school in Rock County. Eight students were in the graduating class, including Beth Boode, Luanne Brunsell, Robert Bullard, Dean Colden, Daryl Leeder, Howard Norby, Robert Seils and Norman Starks. It was an unusual occurrence to have so many graduates.

There were only nine graduates in all of the rural Union township schools in 1938. Those who earned eighth grade diplomas for 1938 were John Spanton, Betty Ellis, Rolland Devlin, Alice Peace, Ethel Odegaard, Barbara McPherson, Betty Walmer, Franklin Hunt and Leonard Tronnes.

The following is a list of Union Rural School Teachers 1935 - 1939

Butts Corners, Ruth Allen 1935-38

Union School, Mrs. Chester DeRemer, 1935-36. Marion Long Holmes 1937-39.

Tupper School, Hazel Murphy 1935-39

Pleasant Prairie, Ruth Maas 1935-36; Orpah McLaughlin, 1936-38; Francis Francis 1938-39

Tullar School: Ina Bly 1934-35; Marian Long 1935-36; Madeline Bryan 1937-38; Mrs. Cordelia Tilley, 1938-39

Franklin School: Ruth Franklin 1934-1935. Gladys Peterson, 1935-39

Brown School: Mrs. Harry T. Carey, 1937-38; Inis Miller, 1938-39

Holt School and School District 10 are unreported.

The village of Union lost another landmark when the Union Baptist Church was razed in 1937. The Union Church was organized on January 24, 1844 with 13 members. The church building was built in 1852 and dedicated on July 27th of that year.

The last resident pastor of the Union Church left in the 1880s and the rural congregation shared a pastor with the Evansville First Baptist Church. Services at Union were discontinued in the building in 1931 when the Union Baptists united with the Evansville First Baptist Church.



UNION BAPTIST CHURCH

The building had been used for community events, when the school house was not large enough for the number of people expected to attend plays and other activities. By the 1930s, the building was considered unsafe for community events and the decision was made to tear down the building, rather than repair it.

The razing of the church closed another chapter in the history of the village. Only a small cemetery on the church property remained as a memorial to the rural congregation.

Two business places in the village, The Union Tavern was operated by Mark Miller and his mother, Frances Miller in 1939. There was also and a grocery store with gasoline pumps, still made the village of Union a stopping place for some. The Union school served as the village's only gathering place for school and community programs.

A new business opened in Union township in the spring of 1942. The Log Cabin Tavern on Highway 14 north of the village of Union, opened in May.

Schools and community organizations gave farm families the opportunity to work together toward common goals

and to socialize with others. Some activities were centered on the school communities. Gatherings of the community clubs were held monthly, with some special gatherings for holiday programs or special events.

The first Pleasant Prairie School Homecoming, Union School District, Number 7, was held in 1939 at Leota Park in Evansville. Former students, teachers, and Pleasant Prairie Community Club members were invited to attend. The reunion was such a success that the organizers continued the tradition. At the 1941 reunion, four generations of three families attended the picnic, the Jones, Allen and Robinson families.

The Waucoma Grange provided entertainment and educational programs. Special celebrations were held for newly married couples. A wedding dance and program was held for Chester and Winona Jorgensen when they were married in 1939. Robert Erstad and the Wall brothers provided the music. The high school orchestra and other local bands provided the music for the Grange dances held for New Year's eve and a series of dances during the winter months.

The Grange also sponsored banquets for 4-H club winners. When several members of the Evansville 4-H won prizes for their feeder lamb projects, the Grange members cooked and served the winning lambs.

The 1939 winning lambs were purchased by livestock dealers, George Brigham & Son. The price paid for the top lambs was 20 cents per pound. Evansville 4-H Club members that had participated in the project were Howard Norby, Alvin Reese and Daryl Leeder.

Many of the Grange members were supporters of the Evansville 4-H Club and the annual meetings of the club were usually held in the Grange Hall at 19 East Main Street in Evansville.

The Evansville 4-H club united farm families throughout Union township for social programs and special projects. There was continuity of leadership in the 4-H program as Harold Robinson worked with the beef project and Mrs. Potter Porter, the poultry project.

There were also new leaders who volunteered to help with the Evansville 4-H club and a new generation of the 4-H club members entered the show ring in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Several couples served as leaders, the Laurence Janes', Harold Klusmeyer's, Orville Devlin's, Fred Abey's, Ben Disch's, Leon Patterson's, The Lloyd F. Hubbard's, Kenneth Dunbar's, William Leeder's, and Ora Green's participated in the Evansville 4-H club in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Julia Williams, Helen Gransee, Hazel Murphy, Marian Brunsell, Philip Jorgensen, Rollo Brunsell, and Miss Madelene Bryan were also listed as club leaders. John Kennedy, an Evansville resident, was director of the club's one-act plays.

Ben Disch's children began showing sheep at the Green County fair in the late 1930s. Kenneth, Dorothy and Wayne "won the lion's share of the prizes" in sheep division, according to an August 1939 report. At the State Fair in Milwaukee and the Junior Livestock Show in Madison the Disch youngsters were also top prizewinners.

Harold Abey, a 12-year-old, and first-year 4-H club member earned first place in the junior bull division at the Rock County 4-H fair in 1939.

In 1941, the Evansville 4-H Club members earned a total of \$730 in Rock County Fair premiums, more than any other club in the county and more than \$300 ahead of the 1939 Fair earnings. Spencer Porter was the top winner, earning \$57.25 for prizes on his calves, pigs and sheep. Dorothy Disch was second highest and her brother Kenneth, third highest winner.

At the International Livestock Show in Chicago in 1941, Kenneth took home a silver trophy for his lambs. His sister, Dorothy, was also a prize winner at the show. The trophies and ribbons were put on display at the Evansville Review office.

Lois Klusmeyer led the home economics winners for 1941. Ruth Reese, Jeanette Reese, Alma Dunbar and Janice

Leeder were also winners in the Evansville 4-H Clubs entries in the Rock County 4-H Fair.

R. T. Glassco, the Rock County Agricultural Agent who had served farmers and 4-H members since the 1920s was on hand to give awards to 84 members of the Evansville 4-H club, at the banquet held at the Waucoma Grange. Evansville's club was the largest club in the county to report 100 percent achievement that year in 1942. Maxine Moore, Gwendolyn Bryan, Marian Brunsell and Orson Hunt graduated from the club.

Farmers in Union township were still dealing with the effects of the Great Depression in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Government and farm organizations attempted to have farmers self-regulate their production. In January 1940, the Pure Milk Association, headquartered in Chicago, warned its members in Rock County that if they did not slow production that a surplus of milk could cause a drop in prices.

Two Union township men served as officers of the Association. In 1940, Peter Templeton was president of the District 1, of the Pure Milk organization and Wade Woodworth served as vice president.

The Pure Milk Association in Chicago also sponsored a "Neatest Dairy Farm" contest and several Union Township farmers received awards. In 1938, Wade H. Woodworth was runner-up in the contest and received a silverware service for six. Robert W. Higday took third place in the district contest. Orville Devlin, Harold Klusmeyer, and Laurence Janes and received merit awards in 1938.

In 1939, the sixth annual contest of the Association, the Peter Templeton's 218-acre farm won the award for the "Neatest Dairy Farm. Templeton received several honors in the late 1930s and early 1940s.



Peter Templeton was considered one of the top twenty horse breeders in the nation in the late 1930s. Peter Templeton served as President of the Wisconsin Horse Breeders Association in 1937. Starting in 1935, he also served two terms as president of the Livestock Breeders' association.

At the first national meeting of the Percheron horse judges, held in Carmel, Indiana, in July 1939, Templeton was invited by the Percheron Horse Association of America to be part of a round-table discussion of horse judging methods. More than 300 horsemen attended the program. The meeting was a celebration of the centennial of importing the first Percheron from France to the United States. The Percheron association estimated that there about 50,000 Percherons working on American farms.

Later that year, Templeton traveled to Maryland State Fair and the Minnesota State Fair. At St. Paul, Peter Templeton gave a talk on “The Importance of Good Bone in Percherons.”

In February 1940, the University of Wisconsin recognized Peter Templeton for his leadership during the Farm and Home Week program in Madison. The citation honoring Templeton read: “Recognition is being paid Mr. Templeton because, starting from humble beginnings he has proven that opportunities may be made in farming, success may be attained, and person influence may be widened; and because of his breadth of vision, his careful judgment in farm management, his skill in livestock breeding, and his unswerving devotion to right principles, have won for him deserved distinction.”



The news release about the award noted that Templeton had purchased his 218-acre farm in 1918 and the farm “was paid for by diligent work and thrift on the part of him and his family.”

It was the second time a Union township farmer had been honored by the University for “excellence in agriculture.” John C. Robinson had earned the same recognition in the 1920s. Photographs of the two men hung in the agricultural exhibition hall at the University.

Union township farmers had for many years supported the continuing education of the adults and the education of

youth in farm techniques. In the 1930s, the University and the Department of Public Instruction encouraged Wisconsin high schools to offer agriculture classes to young men interested in farming.

Union township had its own advocates for bringing agricultural education into the curriculum at the Evansville High School. In the fall of 1931, the local businessmen's club, the Men's Community Club, invited Louis C. Sassman of the Department of Public Instruction, to talk to them about an agricultural vocational course for high school boys.

Though the Evansville High School was overcrowded, the school board and administration were intrigued by the idea that a new vocational program would keep many of the farm boys in school. They knew that many of the boys never came to high school, but went directly to farming after finishing the eighth grade in the rural schools.

Sassman stressed that an agricultural program in the high school encouraged young men to stay in school and increase their knowledge of new practices in agriculture. These young men could make the family farm become more economically viable.

Although new ideas often took several years to implement, the interest in the agriculture gave new direction to Evansville's High School curriculum. Classes in agriculture were supposed to have been added to the high school curriculum as soon as the new Evansville High School was built in 1939.

The School Board and J. C. McKenna, the superintendent delayed the implementation of the program after consultants suggested that the Board and staff study the courses offered in other schools. It was also difficult to find a suitable instructor for the courses and this was another reason to delay the start of the classes. Philip Ronnerud was hired as the first Agriculture teacher.

Although the farm economy was suffering from the Great Depression, one farm-based business was thriving. In 1940, the Union Cooperative had outgrown its facilities on Union Street and was considering building a new gas station. The Co-op was an affiliate of the Midland Oil Co-op headquartered in Minneapolis. The sales for 1939 had totaled \$94,888 and the organization wanted to expand its merchandise beyond the petroleum products. Two years after opening the new facility the company reported a 40% increase in sales.

When the lumberyard at the corner of Maple and Church Streets was offered for sale the Union Co-op purchased the land and buildings and began selling many different kinds of farm products, including fertilizers, feed, paint for barns and other outbuildings.

New gasoline pumps were installed at the Church Street site. Flooring in the former lumberyard warehouse was lowered to facilitate unloading feed from railroad cars. There was also a showroom for displaying the Co-op's new products and two offices for sales and bookkeeping. Carl Spersrud was the Co-op manager.

The farm economy changed dramatically after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941 and within a short time the federal government was calling for farmers to produce as many crops and farm products as they could.

Farmers were asked to contribute to the war effort in many ways. There were war bond drives, Red Cross Drives, increased crop, dairy and animal production, scrap iron and rubber collections, and rationing of gasoline, sugar, rubber, tin and aluminum. Women were advised to save tin cans, grease and fats, and nylon stockings to help produce military goods.

Mrs. Lloyd Hubbard served as the Union township Red Cross Chairman in 1941. The township was divided by school districts, with a representative collecting money in each district. More than \$130 was collected with Mrs. Morris Gilbertson leading the drive with \$19.15 collected. Mrs. Lee Milbrandt from the Tullar district and Mrs. Daryl Crawford from Pleasant Prairie tied for second place with collections of \$19 each.

When a similar drive was held in 1943, the Pleasant Prairie school district drive alone raised \$86.65. "The results

are most gratifying,” said Mrs. Hubbard, who once again headed the drive for Union township.

“Every American must see to it that every ounce of scrap rubber he owns gets into the war channels. This is a contribution that the American people can make to the war effort.” Farmers could also take their rubber products to filling stations and receive one-cent per pound. In August 1942, the salvage collectors in the vicinity of Evansville shipped 43,800 pounds of rubber tires and other rubber products to the Rubber Reserve Supply in Chicago.

Rural schools served as collection points for scrap metal collections. Farmers were urged to turn in their old, unused machinery and other scrap metal. Rural citizens were advised to look in fence corners and gullies where they would find “in weed-grown piles tons of junk which is not doing its part to help win the war. Just think, one old plow will make one hundred armor-piercing projectiles—an old pail will make three bayonets and an old hand corn sheller will make three one-inch shells.” “Soldiers are dying because of lack of equipment made from the metal picked up on farms and sections of cities.”

Despite the rationing of gasoline and oil products, tractors were used more often than farm horses and combines were replacing the binders and threshing machines of earlier times. Farmers with trucks were advised to keep them in good repair by having them serviced often. Trucks had become an essential vehicle for moving livestock and farm products.

New trucks were not being manufactured for private use, as the factories had been refitted to make tanks and other war machinery. Heffel Chevrolet Sales in Evansville was designated as an official service station for the U.S. Truck Conservation Corps. Heffel’s advertisement for the service said, “Your truck—all trucks—are essential to America’s war program. Let your Chevrolet dealer help you to “Keep ‘em fit.”

Every event was an occasion for selling war bonds or war savings stamps that could be turned into bonds. The adult 5-H club held a picnic in Leonard Park in Evansville and war savings stamps were sold.

In September 1943, Mrs. Bert Richards served as chairman of the 3rd war loan drive in Union township. She was assisted by Mrs. Stanley Perry, Mrs. Hugh Robinson and Mrs. Potter Porter. The volunteers had a quota for the drive of \$35,000. As the war continued, more was asked of the citizens and an advertisement for war bonds in 1944 asked citizens to “Buy At Least One Extra Hundred Dollar War Bond.”

To help the war loan drives, the Waucoma Grange, the Union Co-op, and other organizations purchased war bonds to use as door prizes at their meetings.

The Waucoma Grange also started a consignment sale so that farmers who had extra machinery and household goods could sell to others who were looking to purchase. A news release by the Grange explained the purpose of the sale, “machinery will not be idle this summer when the need for production is so great and farm labor is hard to get.”

The sale was held in the George Brigham livestock and Union Co-op lots on East Church Street. Dean George was chosen as the auctioneer for the 1943 sale that was held in March. Roy Lewis and Laurence Janes served as co-chairman.

The first sale had nine horses, 15 head of cattle, 60 pigs, farm machinery and household equipment. The Grange was happy with the proceeds and the sales were a hit with those who attended. They continued for many years.

When the 1944 sale was held a celebrity, Presidential candidate, Wendell Wilke made a train stop in Evansville and visited the sale. The photo of Wilke at the auction appeared in Life Magazine, the following week. The photo showed a crowd of Evansville residents watching the famous man hold up a horse collar to be auctioned.

The 4-H clubs were encouraged to start Victory Gardens. The clubs also gave plays and radio programs to

encourage others to have Victory Gardens.

Canning of fruits and vegetables for family use was considered a patriotic duty. Sugar rationing in the early years of the war forced many girls and women to change their canning techniques and use honey as a substitute for half of the sugar used in canning peaches and other fruits.

Farmers were asked to do their part by increasing production of food. Slogans that promoted the farmers' participation in the war effort were used by businesses selling farm products, as well as those depending on the farmer's production.

Slogans used in advertisements to farmers included: "Do Your Part In The Food for Freedom Campaign," "You Can Kill Nazis With A Plow," "Food Is Going To Win The War," and "Help Win The War by planting a Victory Farm."

The calls in the 1930s for limited production of livestock and crops had turned into pleas for as much meat, vegetables, and grains, as the land would provide. In 1942, there were record yields of grains, including oats, corn, barley, wheat and rye on Union township farms. The alfalfa crops were also unusually large in 1942.

Charles Maas was honored by Wayne Feeds for "distinguished service in the production of food for victory." Maas was interviewed on the Chicago radio station, WLS, broadcast "Victory Farmers On Parade." He also received a "Victory Farmer" plaque in recognition of his contribution to helping the U. S. Department of Agriculture meet production goals set for American farmers.

The Columbus Canning factory canned more than 600 acres of peas in 1939 and employed 125 men and women. In 1940, the company canned corn for the first time in many years. During World War II, the local company benefited from the military's demand for canned vegetables for the service men and women at home and overseas. The government also supplied food to European allies and exported large quantities of food grown in the United States.

In 1942, the canning company contracted for the largest acreage of vegetables ever grown in the Evansville area. Nine hundred acres of farmland in the vicinity of Evansville was sown with early and late peas and five hundred more in white and yellow corn. The company operated 11 viner stations in the fields, including two in Union township on the farms of Clark Osterheld and William Trickle.

To accommodate the increased production at the factory, a sixty-foot room was added to the building, and a new smokestack was built. The company also acquired twenty new rubber tired wagons to transport the vegetables from the fields to the plant.

The number of employees increased from 125 in 1941 to 150 in 1942. Following the canning of the early and late peas, the machinery was repaired and the factory was refitted for canning corn. The company expected to sell most of the canned vegetables to the federal government, for use by the armed services.

By 1943, the Columbus Food Corporation was placing quarter-page ads in the Evansville Review asking farmers to contract to produce peas and corn for the company. The canning factory promised the "price is higher than ever."

They also urged people to come to work for the company in an April 1943 advertisement. "You may think of harvesting and canning our local crops as just a job. Once it may have meant that but today every man, woman and child who helps on the food front is striking a blow for Victory. America has more land to grow food, more canning facilities than any other country. About 50 per cent of the new pack of fruits and vegetables is going to our fighting men and our allies. Our part in helping win this war is to make sure that our local crops are picked and canned. We will be frank. We are going to need help, and need it badly—need it until every pea and every ear of corn is packed and ready for delivery to our fighting men. May be never again will you have the

opportunity to be of as much vital service to your country. So let's all of us be prepared to do our part, proud that we can serve American so well. Columbus Foods Corporation."

One local soldier wrote home that he had opened a can from the Evansville canning factory. Frank Hungerford, who was stationed in Hawaii in 1943, wrote to his parents that he had opened a can of peas packed in Evansville.

The canning company was so short of help in 1944 that several German prisoners of war in camp at Truax Field air base in Madison were brought to work at the factory and guarded by U. S. soldiers from the base. The prisoners of war worked through the packing season with the 125 civilian men and women.

As the war continued there was also a severe shortage in farm workers. Philip Ronnerud, the Evansville High School agriculture teacher was the local volunteer representative for the United States Employment Service. Farmers who needed workers contacted contact Ronnerud who then recruited high school boys for farm work.

Knowing that the farmers were desperate for help in the late summer of 1943, Baker Manufacturing company employees, Carroll Bly and Walter Spratler, Jr., organized the company's workers to help on Union township farms. Forty-eight Baker employees responded to the call and helped shock grain, hoe tobacco and perform other farm duties after their workday ended at Bakers. The farmers were so grateful, they paid the workers generously and provided food and refreshments for their temporary employees.

arm families in Union township made many sacrifices during the war. They were urged to work harder to produce food for the huge army of men fighting in the European and the Pacific war operations. The farmers had less help to do the work, as men and women left the farms to work in factories and serve in the military.

The Evansville High School Superintendent, J. C. McKenna reported that in the school year of 1942-43, 31 pupils had dropped out of school. Some enlisted in the military, others went to work at home, on the farm, or in factories that were paying well.

McKenna said in his July 1943 annual report to the School Board: "Young people of high school age can obtain employment quite readily at the present time and can earn high wages. With the shortage of workers they feel that they are contributing materially to the war effort."

Throughout the war, farm families were asked to donate scrap metal, fats, silk stockings, rubber, and tin cans. By 1945, the fats saved by the farm families and others was being used to make glycerin for medicines, grease for machinery and a new propellant for the manufacture of rockets, the newest weapon in the war against Germany.

1945-1949

The war was a temporary incentive for some families to move to farms and by 1945, the number of farms in Rock County had increased slightly over the Depression years of the 1930s. Milk, livestock and grain were selling at prices higher than at any time in history, as the war was ending in 1945.

Shortages during the war gave way to surpluses after World War II ended. Farm machinery that had been used by the U. S. government, bulldozers, tractors, tractor parts, pumps, and other farm equipment, was sold at surplus property sales in Chicago and other cities.

After the war, many of the food processing companies still had big government contracts, as the military had troops in occupied countries. Oscar Mayer in Madison advertised for farmers to come to work in the winter time to supplement their farm income. Oscar Mayer advertised that the work would be very similar to the work the farmer was already doing. The ads urged farmers to talk to their neighbors and form carpools to Madison to work for the company.

It was the beginning of farmers moving away from the land and into the city to work. Once again other organizations were urging young men to stay on the farm. There was an increase in the activities of the 4-H and a new organization the Future Farmers of America (FFA) encouraging young men and women to pursue work on the farm.

The more progressive farmers looked to various organizations to help support the rural economy. They wanted good prices for their farm products and to educate themselves about making the land and their livestock more productive.

The Pure Milk Association had more than 30 members from the Evansville area. Union township dairy farmer, Laurence Janes served as Secretary-Treasurer of the organization in the late 1940s. He was also a delegate to the Association's convention in Chicago in 1949.

Laurence Janes' son, Melvin, was awarded a \$50 scholarship offered by the Pure Milk Association in the fall of 1948. The scholarship was based on an essay that Melvin wrote titled, "Trends in Modern Farming." In addition to the essay, the scholarship was based on the high school grades of the applicant. The scholarship was to be used for the agricultural short course at the University of Wisconsin.

The Holstein Breeders Association had several members in Union township. In August 1945, the group visited the Fred Abey farm, west of Evansville on County Trunk C. More than 150 people attended the program.

A judging contest and an illustrated lecture on the Holstein by Prof. Allen and of the University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture and Charles Brace, the Holstein Association fieldman were featured speakers. These tours were set up during the war to replace the Black and White shows that had been temporarily suspended due to shortages of gas and tires.

The Waucoma Grange was a very strong organization in the 1940s. Members had several meetings each month. There were parties and dances in the Grange Hall, on the third floor of the building at 19 East Main Street. The Grange also sponsored a flower show in 1945, with a judge, prizes, and demonstrations by a Stoughton florist.

The consignment sale held in February or March on the East Church Street properties of the Union Co-op and the Brigham Trucking yards, was one of the major fund raising activities of the Grange. The 1945 sale grossed \$2,500. The event was called the "Victory" sale during the war and that name continued for several years after the war ended.

They also sponsored dances several times a month and the Evansville 4-H club and the Union Co-op often used the Grange Hall for meetings in the 1940s.

A new organization was formed at the Evansville High School in the fall of 1948. Thirty-one young men attended the organizational meeting of the Future Farmers of America. The group elected officers, Gerald Easton, president; Byrl Rowley, vice president; Arthur Steindl, secretary; Clyde Hoops, treasurer; Richard Lehr, reporter. C. C. Grundahl, the agriculture teacher at the high school, served as the FFA advisor.

The Rock County Farm Bureau, with 1,031 members, was another organization that supported farmers and served as a lobby for farm programs with state and national government offices. Clarence S. Franklin served as secretary of the organization in 1947 and in 1948 was elected to head the Rock County Farm Bureau.

Evansville served as the nearest market for Union township farmers to buy and sell farm products. The Pet Milk company operated a transfer station near the depot.

Grain elevators owned by the Green Company were used to hold grains harvested in Union township. The grain

elevator on the south side of East Main Street near the Chicago & Northwestern railroad was the center of the Green's grain handling facility. In 1946, they built a truck stop on Union Street, to house and maintain their large fleet of grain trucks.

The Union Co-op operated grain elevators at its location. Officers of the Co-op included several Union township farmers. Wade Woodworth and Morris Gilbertson served as officers in the Co-op.

Trucks had replaced the railroad as transportation for livestock. Several trucking firms operated in Evansville in the 1940s. George Brigham & Son was located on East Church Street, just east of the Union Co-op facility. He also had stockyards on Highway 14, north of Evansville.

The George Brothers, Lee and Dean had a business on Walker Street. The George's usually delivered animals to the Cudahy Meat Packing Company. In October 1945, Lee George delivered a cow to the Cudahy plant for Peter Templeton. The 1,800 pound cow sold for 11 cents a pound. It was considered a good price.

Fred Luchsinger was in business in the early 1940s with Charles Maloy. They purchased and transported livestock for the Oscar Mayer Company in Madison. After the war Luchsinger operated the trucking firm with his sons, Marvin and Wilbur.

Only one tobacco warehouse was operating in Evansville by the 1940s. The William Smith and Son warehouse operated from February to mid-May.

The canning company had German prisoners of war from the Truax Field camp working during the late years of the war. Beginning in 1945, there were so few local applicants that the company imported seasonal workers from Jamaica to help with the canning of corn.

During the war years, the company canned both peas and corn, but by the end of the 1940s, corn was the only vegetable processed. In the late 1940s, the company had contracted for nearly 12,000 acres of corn.

The Columbus Foods Corporation merged with the Stokeley Foods corporation in November 1945. Less than a year later, the Dorchester Canning Company purchased the plant from the Stokeley Foods corporation. By the late 1940s, the firm was only canning corn, including whole kernel, cream style, and corn on cob.

May Brothers operated a hatchery at 26 Maple Street in Evansville and purchased the old Durner blacksmith shop on the west side of the first block of Maple Street when their business outgrew the original building. In 1945, 300,000 chicks were hatched and eighty percent of the chicks were sold to farmers in the Evansville area.

One of the largest poultry farms in operation in Union township in the 1940s was Clarence Franklin's farm, in Section 1 and 12 of Union township. Clarence had moved to Evansville and the poultry business was operated by his sons, Oliver and Horace.

Each spring, the Franklins had as many as 8,000 chicks brought to the farm. The Franklin farm had six brooder houses and the largest building had five rooms. Once the chicks were old enough to be moved, they were divided into the smaller houses that had one room each. In the spring of 1942, the Franklins were expecting to have 6,150 chicks, mostly of the Barred Rock and Leghorn breeds.

When the chickens were laying, the Franklin's gathered more than thirty dozen eggs a day. Most of the eggs were sold in Evansville stores. The Franklins also had no trouble selling the broilers and the larger chickens, once they were fattened for market.



Hugh and Mabel Robinson

Union township lost one of its most famous farmers in 1946. Hugh Robinson died suddenly. Hugh had worked with his father John C. on the family farm since the 1890s and had continued the International reputation for the Hereford cattle, passing the tradition on to his son, Harold Robinson.

Hugh's son, Philip served in the army in World War II, and at the time of his father's death was working on a ranch in Colorado. By 1949, Philip returned to the home farm and became active in the management of the Robinson Herefords.

The Robinsons had supported the Evansville 4-H program for many years and the Evansville 4-H Club was one of the most active clubs in Rock County in the 1940s. Many Evansville young people were involved in the club, as well as those who lived on farms in the surrounding area.

The club depended on the adult advisors to organize the many divisions of the work. The long list of award winners at the Rock County 4-H fair in the 1940s was a tribute to the hard work of the leaders.

Many of those who took an active part in the leadership were former 4-H members and fair competitors. Booster meetings were held at the beginning of each year to encourage new members. The rural school teachers were also asked to encourage their students to become 4-H members.

A 4-H Chorus was started in 1945, with Mrs. Pliny Wall, a teacher at the Franklin School, as the director. The Evansville club chorus competed with other Rock County 4-H clubs. In the first year, the Evansville chorus earned a blue ribbon in the County 4-H tournament. Members of the chorus were Curtis Wall, Marie Krause, Lois

and Jack Ovitz, Lois Gransee, Harriette Clark, Mildred Franklin, Phyllis Gransee, Patricia and William Ehredt, Phyllis Schrader and Frances Ellis.

The Evansville 4-H chorus was also featured on a WCLO program. Harold Abey, president of the 4-H club in 1945 was interviewed along with Pauline Ovitz, Catherine Franklin, Howard Severson, Marilyn and Lois Klusmeyer and Ruth Krause.

John Kennedy was the drama director for club's entry into the 4-H one-act play tournaments. The 1945 presentation, "Two Gentlemen of the Bench," earned the Evansville drama group a blue ribbon.

Other sections of the club were added including safety, home grounds improvement, and electricity. Alvin Helgesen was an advisor for tractor maintenance; Clark Bean, electricity; Clark Beal and Floyd Krause, safety; Rollo Brunsell, conservation and Dan Kissel, handicraft.

Mrs. Harold Klusmeyer, Mrs. Fred Abey, Mrs. Harold Gransee, Janice Leeder, Mrs. William Leeder, Mrs. Horace Franklin, served as adult home economics advisor for the club.

Fred Abey, Dr. E. W. Krueger, Harold Abey, Philip Robinson, Morris Jensen, Howard and Helmar Severson, Charles Maas, and Ben Disch, assisted with the livestock.

Mrs. John Brunsell and Oliver Franklin were poultry advisors for the 4-H. Gardens and home grounds improvement advisors were Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Dunbar, Mrs. Fred Abey, Mrs. Walter Clark, and Mrs. Melvin Reese.

The club had some state and national award winners in the 1940s. Harold Abey was chosen by Wisconsin 4-H leaders as the Achievement Boy in 1945. He was presented with the Dr. Van Kirk Award for outstanding food production. Harold had started with one calf and three pigs in 1939 and by 1945 was taking care of 45 dairy cattle and 70 swine.

Abey's was the 4-H's highest dairy production member and his dairy records were entered in the national competition. He had been named the outstanding swine raiser in Rock County 4-H for the years 1941, '42, '43, and '44. and got medals for special project work in the pig club. In June 1947, Abey went to Washington D. C. to represent Wisconsin at the National 4-H club camp.

Lois Klusmeyer was awarded the Rotary Club trophy for outstanding work in all phases of 4-H in 1945. She had been an achievement member of the Evansville 4-H for the past ten years.

Wayne Disch was the successor of his brother, Kenneth, in showing champion sheep at the fairs and International Livestock Show in Chicago. He was a consistent winner at the shows with Southdown and Shropshire sheep. He was recognized as one of the best young sheep men in the nation.

Kenneth Disch was serving in the Marines in 1945. Before entering the Marines, Kenneth had won lamb championships at the International show from 1940 to 1943. His brother Wayne, a member of the Evansville 4-H club continued the tradition.

One of Wayne Disch's winning lambs was purchased by the Cudahy Meat Packing operation in 1945. As part of his prize, the Cudahy company sent a package of 30 pounds of processed meat and the Country Gentleman magazine sent a pen and pencil set to Wayne. Kenneth, who was stationed in the Pacific, read the story of the prize winning lambs, and saw a photograph of Wayne and his lambs that was published in the Stars and Stripes military newspaper.

At the 1948 Wisconsin Junior Livestock Exposition in Madison and at the Chicago International Livestock Show

Wayne Disch once again showed the Grand Champion lamb, of the Southdown breed. He also won the grand champion sheep carcass.

By 1948, Wayne had earned the International's top sheep honor four times in five years. The Disch family won three grand champions out of five at the International show. Wayne's father, Ben won the grand champion carload of Southdown lambs at the 1948 show. The lambs brought a record price of \$3,053 for 50 Southdown lambs at the show sale.

Wayne earned \$2,000 in four years, with lamb championships from 1944 to 1949. Wayne announced his retirement from the show ring in 1949 and passed his place in the competitions to his brother Larry.

Larry Disch was 10 years old when he began showing lambs in 1948 and Wayne told a reporter that his brother Larry was "a better sheep man than I am anyway. He'll keep the family in there." Nancy Lee Rasmussen, a niece of the Wayne and Kenneth Disch, also won prizes in showmanship at the International Livestock show in the 1949.

The 1948 Evansville 4-H officers were installed in January with Catherine Franklin as president; Marilyn Klusmeyer, vice president; Ruth Krause, secretary; James Koeneman, treasurer and Joyce Ringhand reporter.

Rock County Home Agent changed several times in the 1940s. Ann Kyle was named County Home Agent in 1945. Helen Felts served that post in 1949.

In 1948, Wisconsin celebrated its centennial year of statehood. Part of the celebration was to honor farm families that had owned a farm for at least 100 years. Governor Rennebohm signed Century Farm certificates for the century farms. The certificates were presented at a program held in the Methodist Church in Plymouth township, Rock County.

Those from Union township that qualified for the century farm certificates were Lawrence Bullard on a farm in section 14, that was acquired by Stillman Bullard in 1846. Wallace and Neva Richardson Crocker's farm in section 8, was still in the same family, having been acquired by John K. Richardson in 1847.

Milo Cushman's farm in section 28 and 29, was acquired in 1842 by Washington Higday. Lloyd Hubbard was on the farm acquired in 1846 by Jedediah Hubbard, in section 16 of Union township.

Other Union township farmers gaining recognition for their work included Peter Templeton. Templeton served as a judge of Percheron horses at the International Livestock Show in Chicago in 1948. "Mr. Templeton has long been a lover of horses and has raised Percherons for many years, and is therefore well qualified to serve as a judge," the Evansville Review noted in its November 25, 1948 issue.

The Union Township government officers continued to serve in the same offices. Town Chairman, Potter Porter, held the office through the 1950s. Claude DeRemer and Lyman Farrell were members of the weed commissioners for Union township.

Each year, the Town Chairman and the weed commissioners posted a notice for the residents of Union township, to get rid of weeds that would harm farm crops.

The township also purchased a movie project that could be used by all rural schools, clubs and other organizations in Union township. Mrs. Morris Gilbertson, the Town of Union health officer was in charge of loaning out the projector.

The University of Wisconsin Extension had a library of films that could be shown to organizations. The Evansville 4-H club used films illustrating good health, animal care, and other topics. One of the most popular

films in the late 1940s was a film shown to the Grange and school community clubs about how to improve rural schools.

School programs were popular entertainment for the Grange and other organizations. Teachers prepared their students to give poetry readings, sing and do short dramatic programs.

In May 1949, the Butts Corners School gave a special program for Arbor Day. The teacher, Helen Ginner organized the students and parent helpers to plant trees, shrubs and flowers around the school building. Each family contributed plants, trees, a shrub or a perennial plant to beautify the grounds. Then the students gave a program for their mothers and guests.

Paul Maas explained the significance of Arbor Day. Robert Peach gave a speech on conservation and John Willoughby read a poem called, "The Mystery of Spring." The children sang appropriate spring songs led by their music teacher, Mrs. Oral Ferguson. Everyone sang "God Bless America." Kenneth Templeton ended the program by reading Joyce Kilmer's "Trees."

1950 - 1954

An Evansville business moved into the township in 1950. The May Brothers Hatchery outgrew their facilities on Maple Street and purchased the 30-acre farm of Carl Spersrud on the corner of Milbrandt (5th Street) and Porter Road.

May's converted a barn on the property to a 3-floor laying house to accommodate 1,000 chickens. (This barn was razed in spring of 2006.) They also built a 30 x 100 foot barn to house Hampshire Red Pullets and Delaware cockerels, two breeds that they were crossing. The result was said to be a high quality meat producing bird and the hatchery produced 5,000 to 15,000 chicks that were sold to broiler growers. In addition to their own breeding, thirty-one Evansville area farms supplied the hatchery with eggs from New Hampshire Reds, White Rocks, and White Leghorn breeds.

In the new barn, the May's used a new method called "deep litter" as a bedding for the chickens. Starting with a 6-inch layer of litter, the bedding was increased every few weeks with additional layers of oats and hydrated lime, until the bedding reached a height of 12 inches.

As the May Brothers operation was expanding, another Evansville industry closed. The canning company shut down operations in 1954. To preserve jobs in the community, a group of Evansville businessmen made plans to purchase the old factory for a poultry processing plant to be operated by the May Brothers. However, the Fall River Canning Company set the price of the building higher than the Evansville Development Corporation was willing to pay. The building was vacant and seasonal workers waited for a new opportunity for employment in a local factory.

Other Evansville businesses supporting the surrounding agricultural community were expanding their merchandise. In the fall of 1950, the Union Co-op displayed tractors for sale. This company that had originated in Evansville and was supported by Union township and other area farmers in the midst of the Great Depression was a thriving business. All types of farm products, including milking machines, milk coolers, barn cleaners, seed, fertilizer, petroleum products, paint, and feed were available at the Company's store on East Church Street in Evansville.

Carl Spersrud resigned as manager of the Co-op in 1946, and Howard Severance was hired to take his place. Leo G. Straus replaced Severance in July 1947.

The Board of Directors included farmers from Brooklyn, Magnolia, Porter, Center, and Green County. Union township farmers serving on the Union Co-op Board of Directors in the late 1940s and early 1950s were Morris Gilbertson, Dean George, Wade Woodworth, and Verne Ellis.

A new livestock buying business started in 1950. The Chicago Northwestern Railroad stockyards were purchased by the Armour Company of Chicago. Armour intended to use the stockyards as a hog buying station. "The hogs will be bought from local farmers, paid for and loaded at the yard," Joe Davis, a company representative, said in a news release.

In the early 1950s there were a number of Evansville businesses that depended on the farm community for business. The Helgesen Farm Equipment Co. had tractors, milking equipment, and trucks.

Evansville Feed and Fuel sold feed and did custom grinding of feed. Union Implement Company sold farm machinery, barn cleaners, barn stanchions, and other equipment. The S & F Feed Store sold a variety of animal feed. The Brunsell Co. also sold feed, fertilizer, Shell fuel oil and coal.

A new cheese factory opened in a building on Maple Street in 1953. Eugene Schuepp operated a Swiss cheese factory that used 11,000 pounds of milk a day, supplied by 40 farms. The factory manufactured 3,000 pounds of cheese a day. Most was sold to wholesalers and the cheese was then sold in retail shops across the United States.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s there were many government programs to support veterans and some of these programs were intended to bring the young men back to the agricultural community. A new Farm Training class was organized in Evansville. Starting in 1947, the men who were interested in learning about the best farming practices toured dairy farms and took classes at the local high school.

In July 1948, the school board announced that Clarence Grundahl had been hired to teach the agriculture classes at the high school. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, Grundahl had practical experience as a farmer. Grundahl purchased a Union township farm on Fifth Street. Grundahl and his wife served as leaders in 4-H projects. His own farm served as a model in corn production.

On his arrival in Evansville in 1948, Grundahl announced: "This year Evansville high school will offer to the rural students a full course in vocational agriculture." Grundahl proposed that the classes would be beneficial to the family farming operation as well as the students.

The students participating in the classes studied their own family farm. Each farm got a complete soil test and the students studied dairy herds, and swine production. The course included growing crops, control of insects and disease, preserving forage crops, and the use of feeds for livestock.

Grundahl offered a four-year dairy course and emphasized herd improvement and milk testing. Agriculture students also learned farm management. In addition to his 4-H activities, Grundahl also helped his students organize a Future Farmers of America chapter in Evansville.

Grundahl proposed classes for young men, up to twenty-seven years of age, who were already engaged in farming. A farm veterans organization was started and Harold Cate was hired as the veterans' instructor. Cate left the school in 1950 to become a seed, feed and petroleum salesman for the Union Co-op.

Edwin Lunde took Cate's place as the veteran agriculture instructor at the high school. Lunde served as the veterans' agriculture instructor for four years, resigning in March 1954 to take a position with a feed company in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He was replaced by Joe Polich.

Grundahl believed that farmers of all ages would be interested in learning more about good farming practices. In the winter of 1953 and '54, he organized a series of lectures called the Farm Management Course. The classes were sponsored by the Evansville Review and other area businesses. Speakers included representatives from the American Dairy Association of Wisconsin, local bankers and Baker Manufacturing representatives.

Topics covered in the series were the problem of surplus of dairy products and the effect on the price of milk,

farm machinery, credit and insurance. Grundahl estimated that 40 people attended each session of the course. Prent Eager from the Union Bank and Trust gave a presentation on the wise use of credit. Eager spoke about purchasing a farm on credit; using credit on milk orders, and using credit to purchase feed, livestock and other farm needs.

“Better Pumping Equipment” was the subject of a talk given by Vern Wagner, the vice-president of the Baker Manufacturing Company. Don Whitmore of the Union Mutual Insurance Company talked about farm safety and farm liability insurance.

The May Brothers Poultry operation sponsored a program on poultry management and speakers included Barry Hayes, head of the poultry department of the University of Wisconsin. Hayes showed slides of local poultry farm operations to illustrate the poultry industry of the future.

There was good reason for farmers to keep up to date on farm issues. New requirements for dairy farms were put in effect in the 1950s. By September 15, 1953, all dairy farms had to conform to standards that required a milk room in the barn, or milk house. The room or milk house was to be separated from the milking area in the barn and equipped with storage utensils used to strain or separate the milk and cream. The law also required cooling tanks for storage of milk and cream.

Rock County led the state in the number of cows tested for butter fat. Morris Jensen, the tester for the Dairy Herd Improvement Association was responsible for most of the cows in the Union township area. In 1954, the Evansville area had 5,400 cows tested by Jensen on 162 farms.

Several Union township dairy farmers received awards from the Dairy Herd Improvement Association for maintaining productive dairy herds in 1953. Wilbur Ehredt had the highest herd average of 49 pounds of butterfat. Eldon Klitzman, Marvin Golz, and Allison Butts were other Union township farmers who received awards.

It was Jensen’s responsibility to keep records of the butter fat content of each cow and to get information about the fee. The records were used by farmers to cull unproductive cows and maintain a herd that continued to increase its yield.

Consumption of milk dropped in the early 1950s and prices of milk were also lower. In 1954, the milk and cow prices dropped to the lowest levels since 1947, when surpluses from the war years caused a decline in revenue for farmers.

A new county agent was helping farmers in Rock County in the 1950s. Frank Campbell, replaced R. J. Glassco who had served the County and Union township farmers since the University of Wisconsin Extension program first began in the early 1900s. Campbell conducted field days for swine breeders and assisted with the 4-H Fair. Charles Maas was named superintendent of the swine department at the Wisconsin State Fair in the 1951 and continued to serve that office for several years. He was also treasurer of the Poland China Association and president of the Wisconsin Swine Breeders in the late 1940s to the early 1950s.

He retired from the National Board of Directors of the Poland China Association in 1953, after serving on the board for 15 years. Maas was credited with combining three national registries of the Poland China breed into one registry in 1946. His son, Philip showed prize winning Poland Chinas at fairs, hog shows and other expositions in the 1950s.

Maas joined the Union Mutual Insurance Agency as a partner with Don Whitmore in 1951 and for more than 20 years was responsible for the growth of that organization. In 1954, the insurance company moved its offices from a small building on East Main Street to new offices on North Madison Street.

Maas, the Evansville Lions Club and the American Legion organized the Tri-County Black and White shows in Leota Park in the 1950s. These shows were held at the same time as a popular horse show that was led by William Bone, head of the Leota School for Girls. The shows had the atmosphere of a County Fair, with judging contests, ribbons, and prizes for the winners.

Another Rock County farmer received a place on the roll of honor at the University of Wisconsin Agricultural College. Lloyd Hubbard received the award in 1951 at the University's annual Farm and Home Week banquet.

The citation presented at the banquet said that four generations of the Hubbard family had lived on the 120 acre farm. Hubbard had worked the land for 45 years and was one of the first farmers in the state to use the crushed lime fertilizers to improve the land. The farm land had become "rich and productive."

Hubbard was also given recognition for his production of seed that was sold to other farmers. The University citation noted that Hubbard had "produced and sold seed of superior varieties, improving the yields of crops over all their area."



Phil Robinson on the cover of the American Hereford Journal, March 15, 1952

The Robinson Herefords were shown at the 50th annual International Livestock Exposition at Chicago in 1949, as they had been for many years. Phil Robinson was featured on the cover of the American Hereford Journal, March 1952 issue. The photo records Robinson grooming Alpine Mixer 17th, one of the famous J. C. Robinson

& Son Herefords, for the Kansas City Roundup.

In the early 1950s, the Robinson farm was the scene of Hereford sales. The average Hereford sold at \$300 in the Robinson's best sold for more than \$1,000. A fourth generation of Robinsons entered the show ring in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Daughters of Harold Robinson, Kathryn Robinson and Ruth Ann Robinson, exhibited the family Herefords at the 1953 Junior Livestock Exposition. They carried on the family tradition of showing prize winning animals.

The neighborly spirit prevailed in the farm community in Union township. When Hans Norby, a farmer on County M, east of Evansville, broke his arm, just at tobacco harvest time, twelve neighbors and friends harvested his tobacco and women prepared food for the workers. Those on hand to have their photo taken at the harvest in August 1953 were Bob Bullard, Chris Nelson, Joe Tait, Mrs. Albert Stark and her daughter Christine, Linda Norby, Howard Norby, Chris Larson, Lawrence Julseth, Bob Larson, Robert Stark, "Red" Lawrence, and Jim Schwartzlow.

Evansville's 4-H Club entered the 1950s with an active membership and many adult leaders who had been 4-H Club members in their youth. The adult leaders were chosen by the club members. Kenneth Disch was leader of the sheep unit in the early 1950s.

Harold Abey, who also served as a director in the Rock County Holstein Breeders Association, and Dr. E. W. Krueger led the calf project. Floyd and Ruth Krause led the pig project, Phil Robinson headed the beef project; Jean Golz the home furnishings unit and Gillies Spooner, handicrafts.

1950 club officers were James Koeneman, president; Ruth Krause, vice president; Marilyn Klusmeyer, secretary; Marie Krause, treasurer, Mildred Franklin, reporter and Catharine Franklin and Joyce Ringhand, sunshine committee.

Patricia Ehredt served as president of the Evansville 4-H in 1951; Janice Abey, vice president; Kathleen Bell, secretary; Marilyn Klusmeyer, treasurer; and Jean Golz, reporter.

Several club members earned trips to Chicago and Washington D. C. The 4-H clubs served as training grounds ,members to continue their leadership activities in the community, as adults.

Marilyn Klusmeyer won state and national honors in 1950. She attended the National 4-H Congress in Chicago in 1950. Phyllis and Doris Gransee were guests of the Bowman Dairy Co. in Chicago in 1950.

Three Evansville 4-H members earned a place in the 1950 State 4-H honor roll. Howard Severson earned a place for his dairy project; Marilyn Klusmeyer for her poultry project and James Miller for his handcraft project. They were 3 of the 15 Rock County members to earn the State honor.

Evansville 4-H officers for 1952 were Janice Abey, president; Alvin Miller, vice president; Nancy Reese, secretary; Jud Spooner, treasurer, and Mildred Franklin reporter. The 1953 officers were Patty Franklin, president; Jud Spooner, vice president; Ruth Ann Robinson, secretary; Mary Ellen Heritage, treasurer; and Janet Reese, reporter. Officers for 1954 included many of the same people, but in different positions. Jean Golz was elected president; Kenneth Templeton, vice president; Janice Abey, secretary; Simon Chapin, treasurer; and Jud Spooner reporter.

State Fair honors in 1953 went to Larry Disch, Janice Abey, Patty Franklin, Jean Golz and Ardis Templeton. Disch took home 103 ribbons and had entered 42 sheep in the fair. Janice Abey took first in several home economics, calf, poultry and meat projects. Patty Franklin got ribbons in home economics project. Jean Golz won a first with her senior calf and Ardis Templeton for a home economics demonstration.

In 1954, the Evansville 4-H celebrated the 30th anniversary of its organization. In its 30 year history, only six leaders had served as chairman, Mrs. Hugh Robinson was the first chairman. She was followed by Mrs. Potter Porter, Mrs. Harold Klusmeyer, Mrs. William Leeder, Mrs. Harold Gransee and Mrs. Clarence Grundahl.

The adults serving on the 4-H Council in 1954 were Harold Abey, Horace Franklin, Harold Robinson, Mrs. Harold Klusmeyer, Mrs. Floyd Francis and Mrs. Clarence Grundahl.

Union Township officers from the 1930s were retained through annual elections in the 1940s. Town elections were held in the G.A.R. hall on the 2nd floor of the store at 1 West Main Street.

In 1945, Potter Porter, was re-elected chairman; Frank Moore and Peter Templeton supervisors; Stanley Perry, Clerk; Mrs. Grace Brunsell, treasurer; Lee Barnard, assessor; Ben Disch, Justice of the Peace; W. E. Reese and Herman Smith constables.

After 1947, all township officers were elected to serve for two years. All 1945 Union Town Board officers were re-elected in 1947.

In 1949, Carl Spersrud replaced Mrs. Grace Brunsell as treasurer. Spersrud defeated Laurence Janes for the office vacated by Mrs Brunsell on a 54-32 vote. Potter Porter remained the Chairman; Clifford Ellis was reelected and Kenneth Gilbertson replaced Peter Templeton as supervisor. Stanley Perry took the position of Constable. Barnard, and Disch retained their positions. The 1951 and 1953 elections resulted in the same officers that were elected in 1949.

The township had no permanent office, so they continued to use office space in Evansville's businesses at tax collecting time. In 1952, Spersrud collected taxes at the Hamilton Hardware Store, on East Main Street. He held office hours twice a week in January and February.

In 1955, Laurence Janes replaced Barnard as the assessor and Charles Maas was elected treasurer. This was the only change in the officers elected in 1949.

Dean George defeated Clifford Ellis for the position of supervisor in 1957. Laurence Janes did not run for assessor and a challenge between George Krajeck and Ora Green resulted in the election of Krajeck to the office of assessor. Potter Porter, Kenneth Gilbertson, Stanley Perry, Charles Maas and Ben Disch were all reelected in 1957.

For the first time in 30 years, Potter Porter did not seek re-election in the 1959 election. In addition to his work on the Union Town Board, Potter Porter had also served as a Supervisor on the Rock County Board and was Chairman of the County Highway Commission.

When Potter Porter decided not to seek re-election in 1959, Harold Robinson was elected Chairman of the Union Township Board. Dean George and Kenneth Gilbertson retained their offices of Supervisor. Charles Maas, George Krajeck, Stanley Reese and Ben Disch retained their offices.

Union Mutual Insurance Company built a new building on North Madison Street in 1954. Union township farmer, Charles Maas had joined the organization. A small meeting room in the building was intended for use by the insurance company's board as well as other local groups.

Rural schools were entering the last few years of their existence. In the late 1940s, a committee of Rock County people was meeting to establish new school districts, with new boards. Voters in the city and the rural areas had to approve the new districts and decide how many people would serve on the school board.

There could be either 5, 7, or 9 members on the board. "This board would then administer all of the affairs of the

district such as determining what school buildings are to be operated, repairing, remodeling of old buildings or the construction of new ones as time and future conditions may determine. This board would be composed of rural and city people. The county committee would have no jurisdiction over where the elementary and high schools would be located. That would be up to the people and board of the district.”

In the fall of 1950, townships were required to pay for transportation of their high school students who lived two or more miles from the school. The transportation was paid with tax dollars and free to the students. The applications for bus service were taken by the town clerk.

Town of Union Clerk, Stanley Perry asked parents of high school students to apply for the bus cards at his home on Cemetery Road. “When parents apply for the cards they must know the exact distance from their house to the schoolhouse, also the exact measured distance from their house to the school bus line.”

By 1953, Stanley Perry was calling for all parents of all students in Union township, except those in the Holt District to contact him for applications for transportation to the Evansville High School. The Holt District high school students attended Brooklyn or Oregon high schools.

School District 10, described as a doughnut shaped district in the towns of Union and Magnolia, made arrangements for its students went to attend the Evansville public schools. District 10 had a separate school board and held annual meetings and each year voted a school tax until 1953.

In 1953, a new state law required that school boards, not operating a school could not levy taxes in order to pay for tuition in other school districts. This meant that either the district had to build a school house and hire a teacher or each parent would have to pay tuition costs for their children to attend the Evansville School District, rather than spreading the cost to the taxpayers in the district. There were sixty children in District 10 attending the Evansville public school.

In August 1953, at the annual meeting of District 10, the vote was 9-2 to annex to the Evansville school district. Within two weeks of the District 10 meeting, the Evansville school board also held a meeting and invited District 10 to join Evansville. At the same time, the Evansville school district invited any other school district in the area, not operating a school to join Evansville.

Several organizations promoted goodwill and cooperative events between the rural community and the Evansville businessmen in the 1950s. The Evansville Lion’s club, the American Legion, and the Evansville Chamber of Commerce organized or assisted farm organizations with events

The Lions Club sponsored an annual event called “Farmers’ Night,” sometimes called “Gemutlichkeit” or a “night of good fellowship.” This was a fund raiser for the Lion’s Club, usually held in the early winter months in the Evansville High School.

At the 1956 program, nearly 500 people attended the event that featured local entertainment by musicians, dancers, and magicians. The program was designed to “share friendship and good will.”

Harold Abey welcomed the audience to the program and acknowledged the community spirit of the area, “Through the working together of farm folks of our trading area and the men and women of the city, we can make progress that will make for a better Evansville community.”

The keynote speaker, Donald McDowell, director of the State Department of Agriculture, also acknowledged the success of the cooperative working relationships and said that it was this good will “which has made the Evansville area one of the key agricultural sections of the state where farmers are operating as businessmen.”

The Lion’s also sponsored the Black and White Show in the summer and this event drew hundreds of people to

Evansville. One local businessman figured prominently in organizing the city-farm programs. Charles Maas, Union township farmer and Evansville insurance agent, was a member of the Lion's club and he encouraged other farmers to join the organization.

Maas was also an active member of the Tri-County Black and White Show organizers. Early in the year, the Tri-County Holstein Breeders members, Lion's Club representatives and American Legion members met to plan the event. The planning meetings were held in the Union Mutual offices on North Madison Street.

Evansville area businesses contributed cash prizes and trophies. A trophy for the best herd was offered by the Pet Milk Company. The Evansville Veterinary Hospital gave a trophy for the best cow and the Evansville Review donated a trophy for the grand champion bull. Cash prizes were offered by area businesses and the Evansville Chamber of Commerce.

Businesses in Dane and Green County offered prizes and cash donations for the show. The event was a success and so many businesses participated in the 1950s that the Lion's club had enough funds to cover expenses and a cash balance to promote the show in future years.

The Black and White Shows were held on the grounds of Lake Leota Park in July and started with a showmanship contest for young men and women. The open classes were held in the afternoon. The committee organized events to attract those who were not as interested in the dairy cattle show, including a style show, pancake supper, livestock parade, and the crowning of a Queen of the Black and White Show.

At the 1954 Black and White Show, and again in 1955, more than 200 cattle were entered. Judges from the University of Wisconsin Dairy Farm and the State Holstein Association awarded prize money totaling more than \$400.

Members of the Lion's Club in charge of the event in 1950s include Charles Maas, chairman; Robert Turner, John Wyse, Harold Robinson, and Veterinarian, Dr. E.W. Krueger. Three directors from the Holstein organizations in Dane, Rock, and Green Counties also served on each year's committee.

Promoting dairy farms was the work of a number of different organizations, the American Dairy Association, Pure Milk Association, Holstein, Brown Swiss and other dairy cattle breed organizations, and the University of Wisconsin. Most of these programs were financed by the membership dues paid by the farmers.

The dairy organizations offered many services that the individual farmer could not do alone. Membership dues paid for advertising, lobbying, testers and other specialists in the dairy field to assist farmers with problems.

One of the biggest problems for dairy farmers during the 1950s was the surplus of butter, fluid and dried milk, and cheese. Trying to find markets for the surplus dairy products became an industry in itself. There were also many new government regulations related to the sale and processing of milk.

1955-1959

Many associations gave awards to the best dairy farmers. The 1955 winners of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association awards from Union township were Gilbert Amidon, Merritt Tuttle, Eldon Klitzman, Horace Franklin, C. S. Franklin, Marvin Golz, Roy Amidon, Charles Crocker, Lloyd George, Ralph Crocker, Charles Maloy, Oliver Franklin, George Krajeck, Melvin Janes and Wilbur Ehredt. The organization's tester, Morris Jenson, his assistant Lloyd Spinhirne and acting Rock County Agriculture Agent, Hugh Alberts, made the awards.

The relationship between the farm community and the City of Evansville was strengthened by the many businesses that were supported by the Union township farmers. The former Evansville canning factory building was purchased by Clark Prudhon, owner of Pruden Products, in 1954. Prudhon moved the company from Fort

Atkinson and employed dozens of local men and women.

The company manufactured metal feeding equipment for farm animals, ventilation and drying fans, and other equipment, for farmers. Within a few months, the Pruden Company changed its focus to making metal buildings. In 1955, the Pruden Company announced it would manufacture its first metal building. The building was erected on the Bernard Crocker farm, one mile east of the village of Union and was finished in the fall of 1955.

The rigid steel frames for farm buildings manufactured by Pruden Company gained in popularity. The Laufenberg Lumber Company in Evansville advertised the “Pruden Buildings. Pruden frames are the skeleton to which you can apply material of your own choosing. The building can be completed with wood, steel or aluminum, whichever you and your lumber dealer find best. All floor space is useable in Pruden steel frame buildings because there are no obstructing posts.”

Another Pruden building was manufactured for Forrest Brigham’s livestock business. The operation was located on land just north of the Evansville City limits on Highway 14.

The Union Cooperative Association continued to be an important part of the business community. Myrland Farrell was appointed manager of the Co-op in March 1952, replacing Leo Straus. Farrell had served as assistant manager for nine months.

In March 1955, Gordon Kazda was named the manager of the Union Cooperative Association. Kazda had served three years in the military during World War II. Before accepting his new position with the Union Coop, Kazda managed the Dairymen’s Cooperative in Junction City, Wisconsin.

The Armour Company moved their livestock buying operation from the livestock pens near the railroad depot in Evansville to the Brigham yards.

The business community extended beyond the City limits of Evansville. One of the favorite vegetable stands along Highway 14 was owned by the Carl and Aurora Weaver in the village of Union. The Weavers had started the stand, known as “The Farm” in 1939 and it was believed to be one of the first rural produce stands on Highway 14 between Minneapolis and Chicago.

Within the small area of Union township were some of the finest livestock breeding farms in the Nation. The University of Wisconsin Agriculture School often used Union township farms to demonstrate farms with excellent livestock and crop raising practices.

In May 1955, The University professors organized a tour of more than 35 people to Union township farms. The visitors saw the Charles Maas hog raising operation, Ben Disch’s sheep farm, and the Maples, the Robinson beef raising farm.

Charles Maas helped reorganize the Wisconsin Livestock Breeders Association in 1956 and served as one of the directors. The University of Wisconsin and the Livestock Breeders sponsored the Junior Livestock Shows held in the fall of each year.

The J. C. Robinson and Son Hereford farm, west of Evansville on County Highway C maintained its international reputation for good livestock. The farm was operated by the third generation of Robinson’s, Phil and his brother Harold “Rusty.” Phil had worked for some of the finest ranches in the West before he joined his brother in operating the business that had been in the family since 1880.

Robinson was considered an expert on the difference in operating a livestock farm in the two regions of the United States. During the 1955 University of Wisconsin tour of the Robinson farm, Phil Robinson explained to the visitors, the problems of a Hereford operation in Wisconsin. According to a newspaper report of the event,

Phil Robinson “discussed some of the problems of raising beef animals in an era like ours where the land is cropped and productive, with none of the cheap pasturage found in the beef raising states.” It was expensive to raise beef cattle with limited pastures.

At the Disch farm, the University visitors saw the home of many champions of the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago. The Disch’s had added Cheviots and Corriedale breeds to their livestock holdings. “The Dischs’ are recognized by sheepmen everywhere as in the front rank of exhibitors of fine animals, having won top places year after year in the International and other top shows.”

In 1958, Larry Disch was named vice president of a new organization, the Wisconsin Southdown Sheep Breeder’s Association. At the Association’s meeting in Lake Leota Park, the Disch farm donated a pure bred Southdown lamb which was auctioned by Dean George. The proceeds from the sale of the lamb were used to fund the expenses of the organization.

Another Union township farm was considered a model by the National Farm Bureau. The Horace Franklin dairy farm, in Union township sections 2 and 11, was the site of a visit by 42 Australian farmers and their wives in May 1955. The Australians were touring United States farms and during a visit to Madison came to see the operation of the Franklin farm.

In 1958, the Wisconsin State Chamber of Commerce sponsored their 7th annual tour and chose Rock County as a showcase of outstanding Wisconsin farms. The tour began and ended at the Maas Insurance Agency in Evansville. Other Union township stops were at the Armour buying station at the Brigham Stockyards north of Evansville, the Robinson farm, and the Ralph Maas farm.

There were many cooperative efforts and occasionally there were conflicts between Evansville and Union township residents in the late 1950s. Rumors of the sale of the rural electric lines operated by the Evansville Water and Light Department in 1956 prompted rural users to start a petition asking the utility to continue to operate the electrical service. More than 200 users of the rural lines asked that Evansville operate the lines. There were no rural representatives on the Water and Light Commission, as the utility was an Evansville City operation. Many farmers felt they were at the mercy of the whims of the Commission members.

Union township dairy farmer, Laurence Janes, sent a letter to the Commission, asking directly, if the Commission was in negotiations with the Wisconsin Power and Light Company to sell the lines. The letter and the petition prompted Evansville’s Mayor, William E. Brown, to call a special meeting with the Evansville Water and Light Commission to allow the rural users to hear a report about the electrical service.

At the meeting it became apparent that it was more than a rumor that the lines were up for sale. The Wisconsin Power and Light Company had given the City an estimate of \$221,469 to rebuild the rural power lines and bring them up to standards. Because of the high cost to maintain and rebuild the lines, the Evansville Water and Light Commission had been negotiating with Wisconsin Power and Light.

A comparison of the rates charged by the local company and the potential buyer showed that in nearly every case, Evansville’s Water and Light prices were lower. The Evansville Review editor noted that the sale of the Water and Light rural lines, “concerns every rural customer, the community spirit and the available purchasing power of the Evansville area.”

Those who wanted to keep the local operation of the lines noted the income that Evansville would lose if the rural electrical lines were sold. The Commission ended negotiations with the potential buyer and the lines remained under local control. By the summer of 1956, the Evansville Water and Light Company was rebuilding farm lines under the supervision of the Superintendent Harold Tait.

In February 1956, there was a rare report of cooperation between the City of Evansville Justice of the Peace and

the Union township Justice of the Peace. In a case that was to be heard by the Evansville Justice of the Peace, the defendant's lawyer asked for a change of venue from Evansville's court, and Justice of the Peace, Paul Pike Pullen.

Ben Disch, the Union Justice of the Peace, agreed to hear a case of a violation of the curfew laws and street fighting in Evansville. After hearing testimony from Evansville Police Officer Richard Luers, Disch found the young man guilty of violating the Evansville curfew and dismissed a charge of street fighting. He ordered the young offender to "stay out of town."

The Evansville High School had close ties with the Union township farmers because of the agriculture programs developed after World War II. Clarence Grundahl, Union Township farmer and agriculture teacher at the Evansville High School, resigned from teaching at the Evansville High School.

Edward Zamrow was hired to replace Grundahl to teach serve as the advisor for the FFA program. Grundahl continued to farm in Union township until 1958 when he and his family moved to Monroe.

Joseph Polich was the Veteran Vocational trainer at the Evansville High School and taught the adult classes in agriculture. By the mid-1950s, the classes had developed into a twelve-week series, offered twice a year. Polich also served on the board of directors of the Wisconsin Association of Vocational Agriculture Instructors.

Both Polich and Zamrow supported better facilities for the high school and adult agriculture programs at the school. At the annual meeting in July 1957, Evansville's agriculture faculty and supporters tried to get voters and the school board to approve an addition to the 1939 high school building.

For nearly ten years, the Evansville schools had offered courses to high school students, young adult farmers, and veterans engaged in agriculture. Evansville was one of the few high schools in the state operating a vocational agriculture department without a shop.

Zamrow and Policy believed that a shop was important to an agriculture program. In shop classes high school students and adult vocational students could learn to repair farm machinery and engines. The instructors hoped to expand the curriculum to include welding. Welding classes could be offered and this would benefit students and local businesses, including the rapidly growing Pruden Products.

The proposed shop was a one-story, 40 x 100 ft. building. The shop would include a laboratory for testing seeds, soils and milk, a small office, classroom, and area to repair machinery. The instructors proposed that the old agriculture classroom be used for an industrial arts classroom and drawing room.

No decision was made at the annual meeting in 1957 despite the acknowledgement from the school board that the plan had merit. For the school board, it was a matter of financing the new shop. A special meeting was held in August to allow the agriculture instructors to present their proposal to voters. Zamrow presented the plan, but the voters defeated the proposed construction 29 to 18.

Some of the young men who participated in the high school programs followed in the footsteps of earlier generations and continued their education at the University of Wisconsin Agricultural Short Course in the 1950s. Jud Spooner was one of seven Rock County graduates of the short course in the March 1956. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Gillies Spooner and Gail and Nancy Maass attended the graduation program.

New County Agents worked with the agricultural programs in the 1950s. Hugh G. Alberts was hired in a new position as 4-H Club Agent. In 1955, Alberts replaced Frank Campbell as the County Agent and James A. Everts was hired as the 4-H Club Agent.

Everts left in 1956 and Al Finger took over as the Rock County 4-H club Agent in 1956. E. Mae Reese served as

the Home Agent, working with 4-H groups and the Homemakers or Community Clubs, as they were called in the early days of their organization.

Preparing young people for life in a rural community was also a goal of the Evansville 4-H Club. In 1954, the club chose a theme for their 50th anniversary, "To Make the Best Better."

The club members participated in learning about every phase of rural life, home economics, tractor maintenance, safety, animal husbandry, raising crops, and record keeping. The club had high participation rates by its members.

Animals donated by livestock breeders were sold to 4-H and FFA members to help improve the breeding stock. The sales sponsored by the Wisconsin Swine Breeders Association and other livestock breeder's organizations. FFA and 4-H members purchased animals, kept records of the feeding and growth of the animals that were shown at fairs and livestock shows.

In 1953, 81 club members entered more than 800 projects in the Rock County 4-H fair. All but three of the members earned prizes at the fair.

The club met in the Evansville City Hall, once a month and the project leaders called meetings of their units more frequently to help 4-H members achieve goals that were set each year. The 4-H projects helped create a strong work ethic. This was an attribute that was typical of the 4-H member according to Mrs. Clarence Grundahl, one of the Evansville club's adult council members. Mrs. Grundahl told a reporter, "You don't stay in 4-H work unless you're willing to work."



4-H Go To Church Sunday

The Evansville 4-H held an annual "Go To Church" Sunday during National 4-H Club month in May. In 1955, all members were asked to meet in front of the Eager Free Public Library and walk to the Methodist Church to attend church together. The group was photographed on the steps of the library, dressed in their Sunday best.

There was also time for sleigh-riding parties, skating and other entertainment. “The Evansville 4-H club is doing a real job to help the younger set of the community build a firm foundation for its future. Rural America can be grateful to the organization for this job.”

The drama and music programs of the Evansville 4-H were popular. Concerts and plays were given in the Evansville High School Auditorium on South First Street. Mrs. C. W. Hazlett was the director of the Evansville 4-H chorus. John Kennedy remained director of the Evansville 4-H drama. Competitions were held between the Magnolia, Center, Porter and Evansville 4-H clubs and the winners in the local competition participated in the County contest.



Evansville 4-H Chorus

Members of the 1956 Evansville 4-H Chorus were Lois Jean Sellnow, Janet Smith, Pamela Shannon, Mary Jo Polich, Trudie Lunde, Sandra Neal, Mary Ellen Heritage, Linda Grundahl, Betty Odegaard, Doris Norum, Joyce Norum, Don Spooner, Barbara Robinson, Herbert Heritage, Tom Rennels, Sharon Krause, Kathryn Robinson, Susan Grundahl, Ruth Ann Robinson, Karren Algrim, Gordon Chapman, Billy Heritage, Daryl Wood, Richard Chapman and Steve Grundahl. Mrs. Clarence Grundahl accompanied the group.

Adult groups also were interested in continuing education and social activities for those living in Union Township. The Waucoma Grange remained active. However, the group decided to move from their hall at 19 East Main Street to the Masonic Hall at the corner of Main and First Streets in August 1956.

The Grange celebrated its 25th anniversary in September 1956. Union township residents and charter members of the club who were still active in 1954 were Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Hubbard, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Turner, Mr. and Mrs. Wade Woodworth, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Spooner, and Peter Templeton.

Rock County Homemakers groups studied a program organized by a University of Wisconsin Extension specialist in family relations. The County Home Agent, Mae Reese, came to meetings of each club in Union township in 1956 and presented a program on “Understanding the Teenager.” The programs were designed to explain and provide discussion about the habits of teenagers and the importance of “wise guidance from parents, teachers, and leaders and also good examples of adult life in this bridge of years between childhood and adult life.”

Many of the women who were members of the Homemaker's clubs provided excellent models for young people. They were strong leaders in the home and in the community. These women were recognized by the University of Wisconsin – Extension and the local organizations for their work.

The Homemakers honored Mrs. Henry Porter for her work with the Pleasant Prairie Community Club. Mrs. Porter organized the club in October 1920 and she continued to be an active member for more than 30 years. She served in club offices, did book reviews, coached plays and participated in club activities to promote homemaking and support the Pleasant Prairie school.

Teachers in rural schools used radio programs for courses in music and art. The programs were produced by the University of Wisconsin Radio Station, WHA. "Let's Draw," the art show introduced students to art methods and also held contests of art work. Professor Gordon led the music program.

There were also opportunities for rural students to participate in chorus and band through the 4-H program. A Rock County 4-H band instructor gave students lessons on band instruments and the band played for parades and other events in the area.

After a brief time during World War II when there were no rural school Play Days, the Union Play Days gained in popularity. The 1955 chairman of the Union Play Day was Gillies Spooner. Tupper's school teacher, Berdette Weissphennig served as secretary. The treasurer was Mrs. Oliver Franklin; scorekeeper, Mary Robinson. Al Butts, Oliver Franklin, Eldon Klitzman, Roy Phelps, Robert Franklin, Floyd Francis, and Union School teacher, Ruth Templeton had charge of the games, races, and other sports events for children and adults.

Union township schools also participated in the Rock County Play Days. The chairmanship of the county play day was rotated among the townships. At these annual competitions between schools, crowds of 1,500 people, spectators and participants, were not uncommon. The County Play Days were held at the Rock County Fair Grounds.

