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# Artifacts

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## **THE BARN**

**From the original color painting by Andrew Fletcher**

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# *Samples of Recent Gifts*

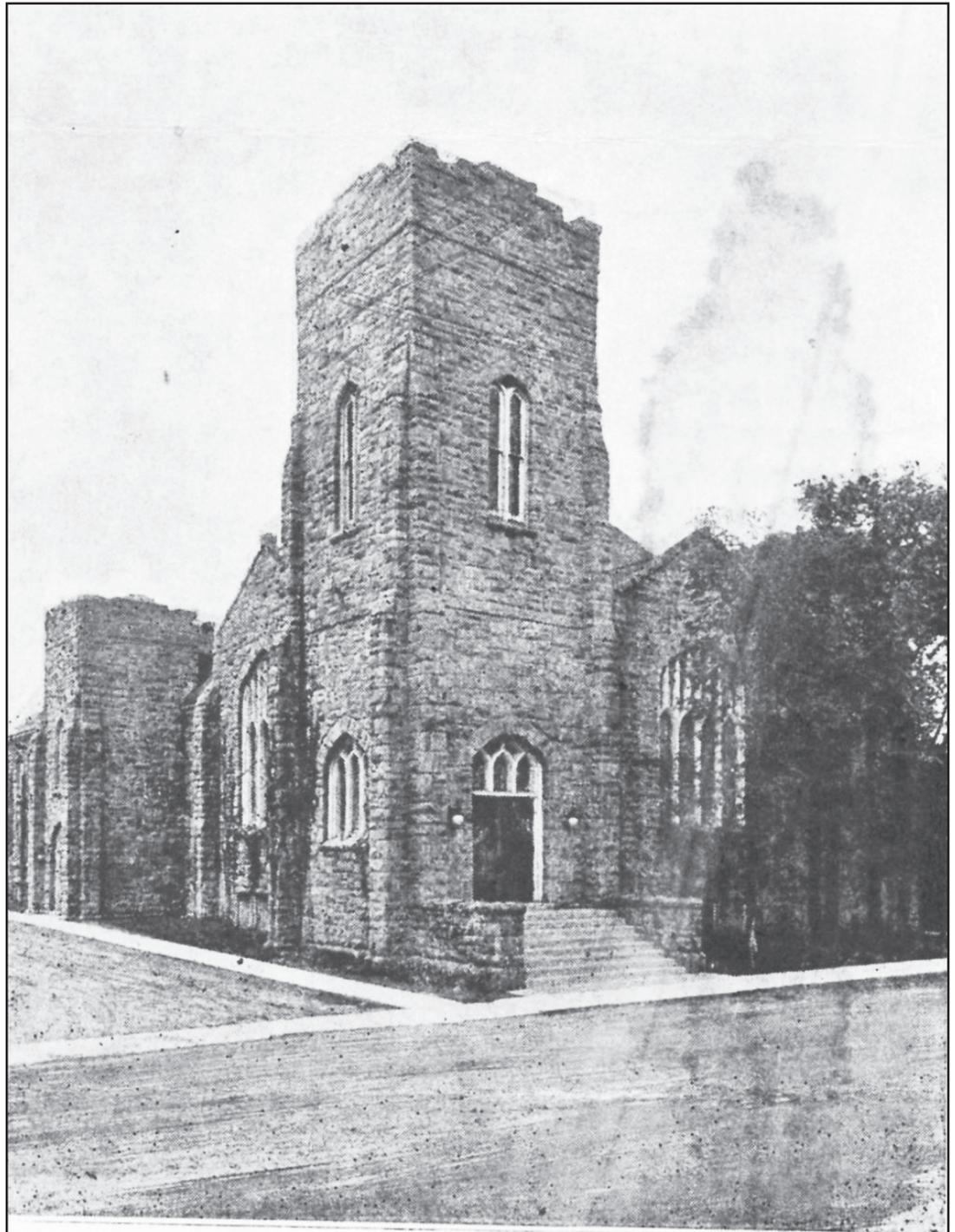
**By Lori Brost**  
Museum Administrator

We've already had a busy year at the Museum. By the start of April, we had 13 different donations and 494 items added to our collection.

Some donations have been local, others from Mosinee, Wis., Naples, Fla., and Berkeley, Cal.

In February, I received an e-mail from Lauren Lassle asking if we would be interested in a 1926 photograph of the First Congregational Church. I told her we would welcome it.

A few weeks later, it arrived. At that time, I learned that it was not a donation from Lauren directly, but rather from the United Church of Christ, California and Nevada regional records which are being accessioned by the Bancroft Library at U.C. Berkeley.



First Congregational Church  
Grand Rapids - - Wisconsin  
Rev. Noel J. Breed, Minister 26  
May 4th - 6th 1920

*1911 stone church at corner of Birch and 2nd Street South*



Some donations relate to current issues. In June of 2011, Joe Eichsteadt contacted me regarding a Don Krohn photo of road work on West Grand Avenue from around 1950 which was displayed in the alcove of the Museum's Second Floor. I forwarded a copy of the photograph and asked that Joe share documentation of the latest project. In February of this year, I received a DVD from the City of Wisconsin Rapids Engineering Department with photos, including one that resembles Don's original. In July, during the actual work on the road, Nancy Kronstedt stopped in with three bricks from the street. We cleaned them off a little and they now have a new home.



*Photo by Don Krohn, c. 1950*

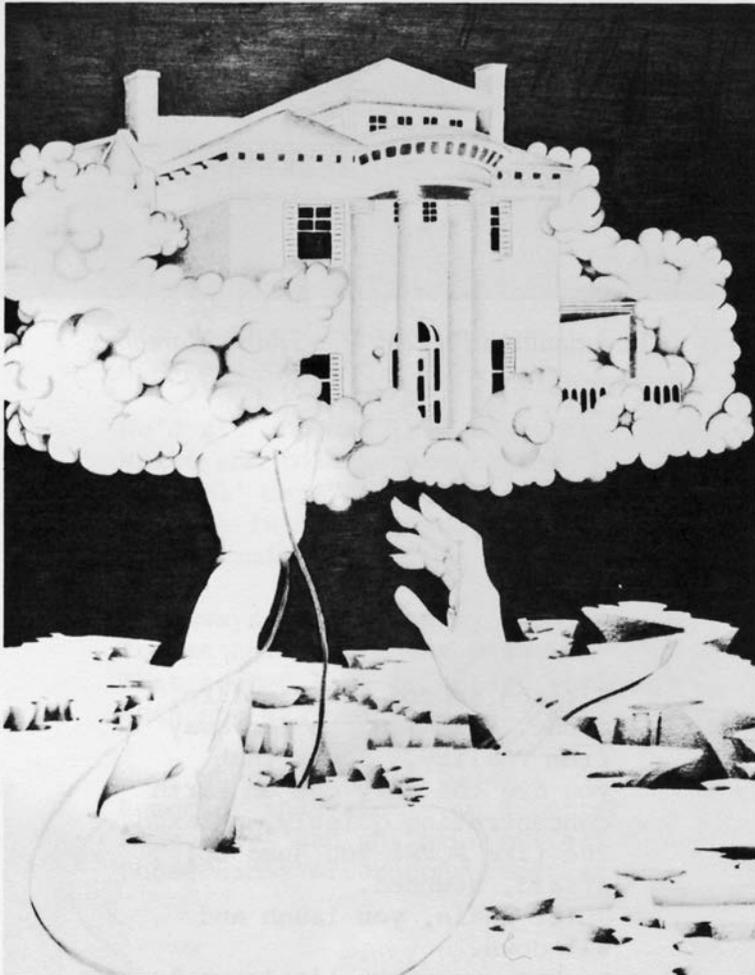
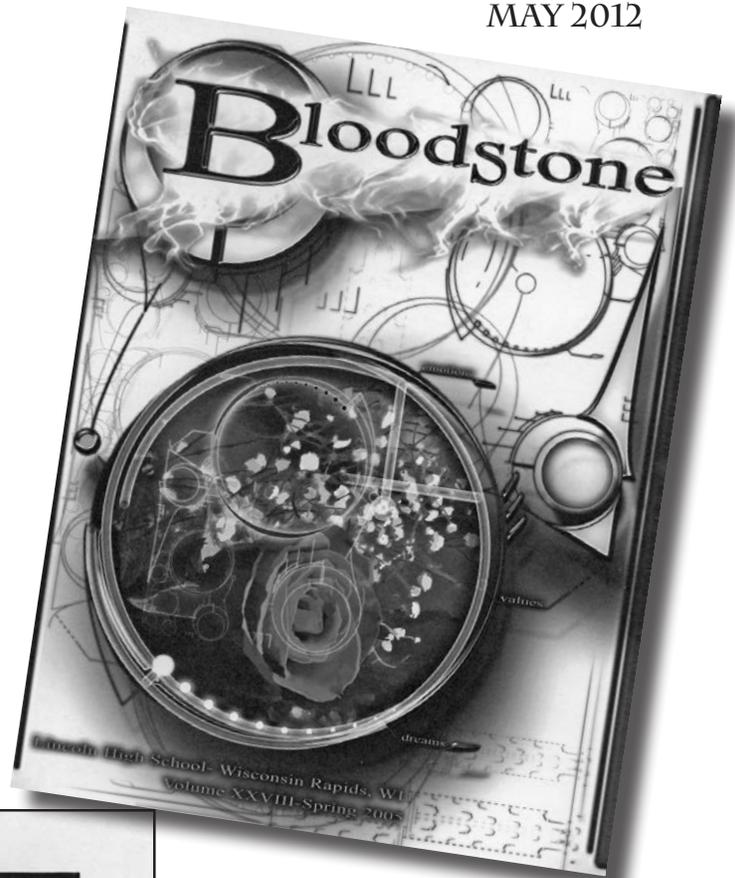
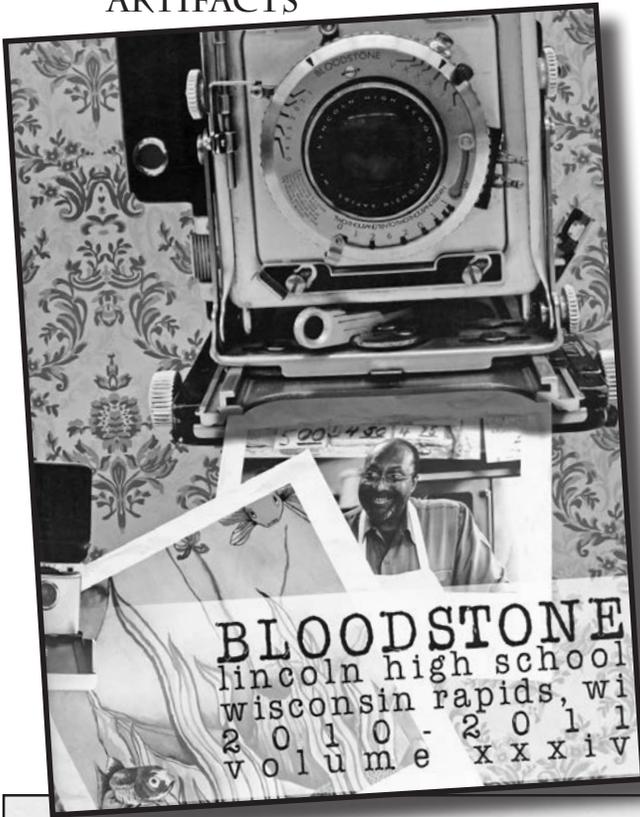


As Perry's Sport Shop is demolished, someone seems to have been rudely interrupted as he sat in an office chair.

While researching information on the Rapids Theater and trying to pin down the date when Rogers Cinema and Perry's Sport Shop became one building, I contacted former owner John Lepinski Jr. Not only did I get a date, I also got photographs, stories and way more information than I could have imagined. Luckily, that information was not limited to Perry's Sport Shop or Rogers Cinema. John came to the Museum and for almost two hours, he shared history and stories both personal and professional in nature. He outlined the family business, his personal business and his participation in the creation of Muskies Today Ltd.



Irene Lepinski, John Lepinski Sr., John Lepinski Jr. & Joan Lepinski  
*Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*, Sept. 23, 1988



*"Unreachable Fantasies" Lisa Pankratz*

Museum as an art form - *Bloodstone 1983*

Some donations show a shared interest. Jeffrey Johannes, a retired art teacher at Lincoln High School brought in a collection of the LHS publication *Bloodstone* which highlights students in art and literature. And while not the same as *Artifacts*, it does capture part of our history through writing and photographs. The award-winning magazine was started during the 1977-78 school year and still continues.

Some donations enrich our research area. President Brown brought in numerous city and county directories and phone books from his Den of Antiquities to help fill in our existing collection. We are still missing quite a few years of the city and county directories, If you have any that you would like to share, please contact me.

# *Lookout Mountain Brown*

*By SWCHC President Phil Brown*

Putting together the Shiloh exhibit at the Museum has shown that most of us have a Civil War story to tell. Mine involves my great-grandfather, Arthur Peers Brown, and ties in neatly with the Sesquicentennial we are now commemorating.

Like so many Midwestern Civil War volunteers, Arthur had actually come from a northeastern state and his life, like those of the Wakelys, Witters and Meads, followed the great western frontier. He was born in Verona, New York, April 30, 1838. The family moved to the Rockford, Ill., area where, 150 years ago this year, Arthur enlisted as a Private in Company K of the 74th Illinois Infantry Regiment. Records show he was officially mustered in on Sept. 4, 1862.

Arthur's first taste of battle was on New Year's Eve 1862 at Stones River near Murfreesboro, Tenn., south of Nashville, where several men in his company were killed. As a result of these deaths, he was promoted to corporal the following day. His next major battle was the Battle of Chattanooga, where he participated in the Union charge at Mission Ridge. After this action, he was promoted to Sergeant.

Arthur faced the enemy in many hotly-contested engagements. On June 18, 1864, at the battle of Lookout Mountain (related to the battle of Kennesaw Mountain) near Acworth, Ga., northwest of Atlanta, Arthur was severely wounded by a rifle shot to the right leg. According to records, the musket ball hit his right knee or close to it. He was so severely injured that it was necessary to amputate the leg that day in order to save his life.

Arthur was fortunate to have survived this wound and on Oct. 28, 1864, he received his Certificate of Disability for Discharge as a Sergeant from Company "K" of the 74th Illinois Infantry and returned to his home near Rockford, Ill., to recover from his wound.

Arthur married Sarah Elizabeth Warner in Harlem, Ill., on June 25, 1867. Sarah died approximately nine months later on March 14, 1868, probably while giving birth. On Jan. 27, 1870, he married Sarah's sister, Josephine Amelia Warner, in Janesville, Wis. They had five children. My grandfather, Claude Sturtevant Brown, was born in Roscoe, Ill., on Feb. 19, 1872.

Our newest exhibit at the South Wood County Historical Museum features the Civil War and its many connections with the citizens of the South Wood County area. Important to this story are numerous biographies contributed by volunteers. We are also indebted to reenactors Dave Laspa and William Parker for contributing their extensive collections of artifacts.

We hope to see you at the Museum soon to view this and our many other displays!

*Den of Antiquity*



*Arthur Peers Brown*

**Corrections**

*Errors in transcription from the Paul Gross interview last time: page 9, Randall Weaver should be Granville Weaver; page 10, Bill Yaeger should be Ben Heger.*



*Britannica Online Encyclopedia*

Gen. Ulysses S. Grant (far left) with (left to right) Gen. John Rawlins, Gen. Joseph Webster, Col. Clark Lagow, and Col. Killyer at Lookout Mountain, Tennessee, 1863

*Dedicated to my grandfather, Frank Garber, who arrived in Grand Rapids, Wis., in August 1912, to start a new life.*

## Greenberg Saga, Part I: Abe

By Earle Garber

Immigrants from France, Britain, Scandinavia and Western Europe had already populated Wisconsin and the Midwest when, near the turn of the 20th century came Poles and Russians, many of whom were Jewish. They came to practice their faith and, like other new Americans, participate in the pursuit of happiness.

Leaving Moscow, Russia, in the spring of 1889, for Centralia, Wis. were:

Joseph A. Greenberg, the former Joseph Avrum Minalow; his second wife, Goldie; and their children: Moses; Louis Sidney; Mary; Nellie; and Bertha.

Also to America came Joseph's older children by his first wife, Emma: Charles Abraham (Abe); William; Isaac Benjamin; and Etta.

Like many Jewish newcomers, Joseph was a clothing merchant, well educated for the time. He chose Centralia as a base to begin peddling his clothing line throughout Wood, Juneau and Adams County. Oldest son, Abe, would remain in Centralia.

Joseph and second-oldest son William, would also set up a store in Necedah, accompanied by the younger siblings. At the time, Necedah appeared to be the most promising settlement in the area. Newly-established railroads and a state highway through to La Crosse and the Twin Cities assured success.

The earliest city directory for Grand Rapids/Centralia at McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids, lists "Greenberg, Abraham, general merchandise" doing business at the corner of Water and Cranberry streets in Centralia and residing at the corner of Franklin and Maple streets.

In Centralia from 1891 through 1899, Abraham was moved to advertise a "Grand Closing Out Sale," noting in small print, "The hard times have caused a tremendous falling off in business, so much so, that we have no money to meet bills coming in daily. We are compelled to raise \$2,000 in 30 days; or go to the wall, all this commencing and ending Saturday Morning."

The Centralia store in the Pratt Building closed during the economic crash of 1893 even as Chicago's Columbian Exposition was organized as a sensational attempt to pull the country from the depths of a depression.

Abe's second attempt began with this 1894 advertisement: "The New Golden Eagle Store will open with a full line of goods. Be sure and call in the Daly Bros. new brick block at west end of bridge. Yours A. Greenberg - Centralia, Wisconsin."

Unfortunately, as told by the *Centralia Enterprise*, Saturday, April 07, 1894, the results were again unfortunate.

"A half year ago, [when] A. Greenberg opened the Golden Eagle clothing store in the Daly block of our city, everybody believed that he would secure a fair share of the trade and that his business prospects were bright. Such, however has not proved the case.

"Tuesday morning the citizens of the twin cities were generally surprised to learn that Mr. Greenberg made a consignment to Mr. F. H. Jackson as assignee."

Less than a year later, in late 1895, editorials began appearing in the *Centralia Enterprise*. "The Greenberg store located in the Daly block was closed by order of Wm. Greenberg of Necedah. Mr. William Greenberg was appointed by Laudauer & Co., of Milwaukee to take charge of the same at the time for forced sale."

On another front, the *New Lisbon News* titled it, "the war of the Hebrews," in an editorial in Juneau and Adams County newspapers. "Saturday was one of the liveliest days in history of Necedah. The people of Adams and Juneau Counties coming as early as 8 o'clock until it

“The *Golden Eagle* has been chosen as our sign, because, like our business place, he is the most popular bird in America which all Americans love so well. Since we started in business here, by fair dealing, honest prices and a strong desire to please, our store has become as popular as the Eagle and soars above all others and protects its customers from all competition.” *Greenberg ad*



was time for ordinary country people to think of getting to bed for a good nights rest. It was the biggest crowd that ever came to town.”

Leading store Silber & Gross hired the Big Four orchestra while William Greenberg countered with the Grand Rapids Brass. “The Gross and Silber store in Grand Rapids and we suspect in Necedah would give Mr. Greenberg a run for his money,” said the account.

After Abe’s last attempt, Grand Rapids mayor Joseph Cohen offered Abe a job in his local Chicago Cheap Store. In the fall of 1898 Abraham Greenberg took to the rails leaving Sarah and his seven children waiting. Shortly after, disaster struck.

An October 1898 *Centralia Enterprise and Tribune* reported, “Seven Children Narrowly Escape Death by Fire.” The residence of A. L. Gross, occupied by the A. Greenberg family, was totally destroyed by fire on a Saturday morning, Mrs. Greenberg and her seven children barely escaping with their lives. The home, owned by Will Gross was insured for \$600.”

In March 1899, the *Centralia Enterprise and Tribune* announced that, “Poor Commissioner Peter McCamley made an official visit to Stevens Point this week to take such course in the matter of furnishing aid to Mrs. A. Greenberg and her three, five, seven, eight, nine, ten and eleven year old children as the fact in the case might warrant.”

But Mrs. Greenberg refused to accept Mr.

McCamley’s effort and there is some ambiguity in his statement that “no charges would be entertained by the county.” Locals wanted to know what had become of Mrs. Greenberg’s money. To avoid going to the poor house, she explained she had acquired financial help from her husband and they were about to board a train for the Pacific Northwest to join Abe in Republic, Wash.

Charles Abraham Greenberg continued his career peddling in the Sierra Nevada gold fields and as far north as the Klondike. He arrived in Republic, Wash., a small community on the crest of the Okanogan National Forest in the Kettle River Range about 1900, where he set up a store on the road to the mines. He did well and brought his wife and children a few years later. He also convinced some 25 Jewish families to settle in the area but by 1920 most of them had moved out.

The Abraham Greenberg family lived out their life in Republic. Abe’s daughter, Pearl, wrote later, “In 1936 we visited my father. It is a memory of him comfortably rocking on that broad front porch overlooking the austere eastern ridge of snow capped mountains.” When Abraham died he was the last of the once numerous Jewish community of Republic.



*Republic, Wash., c. 1900*

## *McMillan Memorial Museum*

*Among the files of Dr. Leland Pomainville, longtime president of SWCHC, are letters exchanged between him and Mrs. Laertes N. Burt, better referred to as Mary McMillan Burt, of Saint Petersburg, Fla., daughter of Archie McMillan and niece of George McMillan. Mrs. Burt's original plan was to house the historical museum in the library building she was funding in memory of her family. That design was replaced by an even better one, as shown in the attached letter from Emily Mead Miller, also instrumental in supporting the projects.*

Jan. 5, 1966

### **Mary McMillan Burt to Dr. Leland Pomainville**

Yesterday I received some papers to sign which would lead to my turning over the securities I planned to give in my will for the construction of the Memorial Building, to include space for a public library and for the South Wood County Historical Society and its' proposed museum.

In these papers, it seems that it is assumed the building is for the library primarily and should be constructed under the management of the Library Board. I think the Historical Society should be in the board which manages the project. You were President of the Society a year ago, and I suppose you are now. I think it would be well for you or someone from the Historical Society to talk with Richard Brazeau. He, with Ira Boyce and John Cole are my trustees of the securities I plan to give, sometime, for the building.

I am as much interested in quarters for the museum as for the library, and both interests should be kept in mind when the building is planned.

Attention should be given to providing suitable quarters for the museum. It is not an addition in afterthought, but an integral part of the building.

### **January 10, 1966: Pomainville to Burt**

As President of our Society, I have appointed our Board of Directors to the new Museum Board. I have also appointed one of our life members, Mrs. John [Emily Mead] Miller, who is a Curator for the State Historical Society, to the board.

I have done a great deal of research on the Museum Project. I have went to over 40 different Museums in the United States. I saw



Dick Brazeau one evening and talked about our Museum. I have asked for 4200 square feet of space in the Project. We will be on the second floor and I also asked for an adequate elevator to serve our Project. In the 4200 square feet we will use 1000 square feet for storage. Also we will have 8 small rooms or settings for different displays, such as War, Lumber, Paper, Cranberries and Medicine. We will also have an office for our business section. We hope to put all this in 4200 square feet.

I have also consulted Therman Fox, head of the State Historical Museum at Madison, who will come up here anytime to help us with our project.

As you remember, when you were in the office the last time, I had been on a trip to River Falls and Rochester to view their museums and we talked about the trip at the time.

...

I will be glad to fly down to Saint Petersburg and confer with you on the Project, if you so desire, at my own expense.

January 24, 1966: **Burt to Pomainville**

Your very good letter was received. Since then, I have had consultation with my attorney here, and have heard from Dick Brazeau, and I believe everything will be arranged quite satisfactorily. I talked with Dick over the telephone. He said he would be away for a time, but I am sure we shall arrive at a satisfactory plan, and the Historical Society interests will be satisfactorily taken care of.

I am sure Emily Miller will be a valuable addition to your Museum board. I have confidence in her judgment, and her ideas are always sound.

...

The project for the Memorial Building is one that I have worked on with Mr. T.W. Brazeau over a period of years.

January 26, 1966: **Pomainville to Burt**

I do believe that whatever you wish on the museum and the library should be in writing, or there will be a dispute between the library group and the museum group on what is to be museum and what is to be library.

We will have a cranberry exhibit and have met with Geo Peltier two times and I find the McMillan family were in the Cranberry Business too. Geo has done a lot of work on Cranberry History.

February 22, 1966: **Burt to Pomainville**

My idea, rather, the idea I worked over with Mr. Theodore Brazeau over a period of years, was to provide the South Wood County Historical Society in including plans for the museum so long worked for. Then, I should think any meetings could be held in the same hall or auditorium which the library would also use. For I am sure some such meeting place for not-too-large groups would be desirable and could be used in common. Would you not agree? There should be also, a suitable office, and perhaps store rooms. I am no expert on museums and cannot advise as to details. I am sure you and your committee will be able to cooperate with the Library planners and evolve a workable plan.

I should not wish to stipulate anything definite, for I think the committee should use expert advice and work out the most feasible plan. I never believe in tying strings to a gift, bequest or otherwise. The will statement is general and those promises, if followed specifically, allow of sufficient flexibility to arrange a workable plan, I am sure.

I have not heard from Dick, and wonder about his visit to the Mayo Clinic. I hope he had a good report.

If things remain as they are, it is probably we cannot go North this year, either. Mr. Burt would not be able to go.

**From Emily Mead Miller**

Nov. 18

Dear Lee –

I have a letter from Mary Burt, most confidential, which expresses a hope that the present [T.B. Scott] library might become the South Wood County Historical Society home. She said Mugs [McCourt] & Dick know about it, and no doubt you do and approve the idea as I think we have talked of it. It would be fun to put that house back together with the big room with the fireplace redone as a meeting place.

With that in mind, I would like to add \$5,000 to the “Building Fund” started years ago in the hope that it can be done.

I know you are not President anymore, but you will know what to do with the check enclosed, with the directed wishes.

I am also enclosing my \$1.00 dues.



## Painting Wood County

By Andrew Fletcher

Wood County is really where I learned to paint. In the university system, they don't teach you how to paint from life because it is hard to get a job teaching painting if you in fact paint in the traditional way. And besides, any real artists end up teaching themselves.

Twelve years ago after I graduated from Carroll College and, before I went to UW-Milwaukee for my masters degree, I lived with my grandma, Lenora Fletcher. I don't exactly know why a 22-year-old highly-artistic kid would live in Wisconsin Rapids for a summer, with a strict old German pushing 80, but I did.

My grandma is a driven, involved, person and so we have always gotten along. At age 87, she runs circles around most people.

Growing up, I had always spent a week or so with my grandma and was interested in the place where my family came from. My grandfather had built the house, my dad (the only child) grew up there, and I even used their old tools to build the canvases I was to paint.

The first time I ever painted outside was a disaster that occurred behind her house. Artistic expression occurred in the basement, but none-the-less I felt she tried her best to understand and I have always felt comfortable there.

I painted in her basement many times in college, listening to 107.5 THE ROCK out of Neillsville. Keep in mind my Grandma grew up in rural Buena Vista township in Portage County in a strict German depression-era environment, so I am not sure if she knows who the Beatles are. Definitely not the Rolling Stones.

That summer I painted virtually every day. I was determined to express what I saw in a traditional visual way. No photos, just working from memory and life, in the way I do today.

Funny how my dad couldn't get away fast enough and my generation is still trying to get back. Let's face it, most people don't find central Wisconsin beautiful. It's flat sandy heat in the summer and blustery stinging cold in winter.

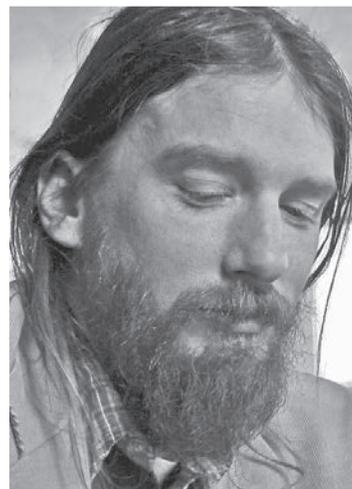
I like the flatness of the marsh, as my grandma calls it. I came to realize later the first real landscape movement in art history included paintings with the low horizons of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch lowlands.

Because central Wisconsin isn't an artistic hotbed I had to develop my own relationship with the land, formed in part with my Grandma's narrative.

I am incredibly lucky to have had this experience and opportunity. She fed me, did my laundry and treated me like I was the best thing ever. It was incredibly difficult to leave and go to grad school. Many times I wonder if I ever should have left.

In my professional career, I continue to come back and paint the area. I am drawn to the open spaces and silhouetted white pines and the old buildings.

Growing up in suburban Waukesha, many of the open spaces and farms I knew were traded in for subdivisions and strip malls. Makes you question things, like progress and where your food comes from, all the things a young man shouldn't be thinking about. So now I paint many of the places that remind me of a different time, a different narrative, and give me hope that there can be another story told someday. Some of my favorite places to paint will always be in Wood County.



*Andrew Fletcher photo by Uncle Dave*

## Barns of Wood County



Andrew Fletcher



# Fletcher



# Barns of Wood County





# Barns of Wood County

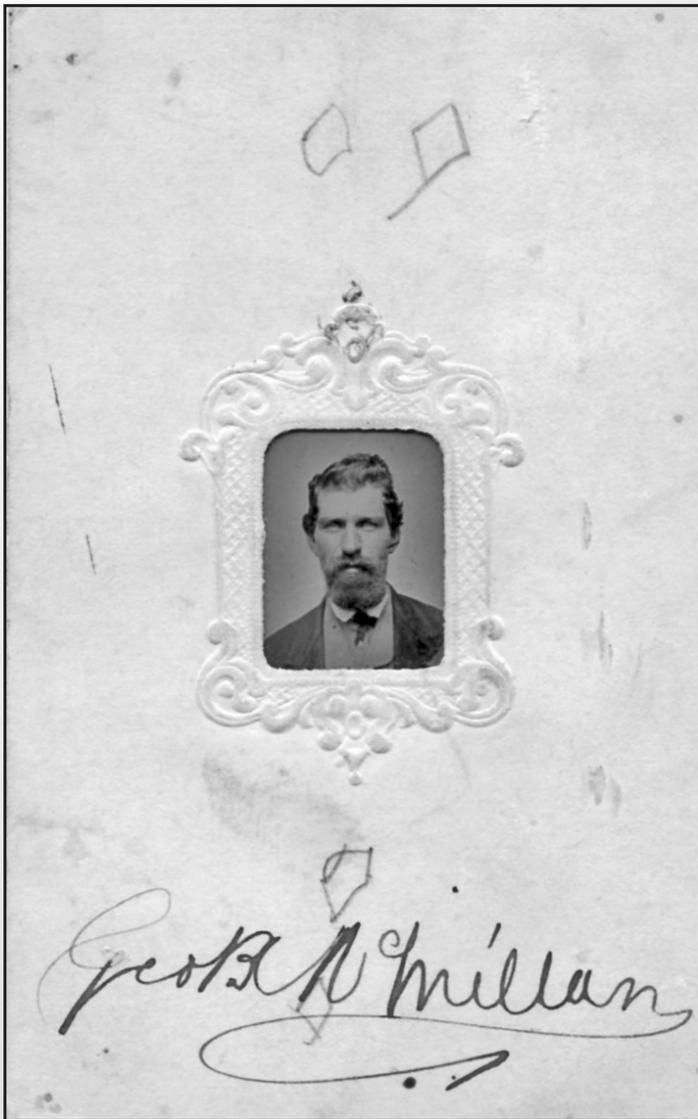




Barns of Wood County



SWCHC



*From his Civil War diary*

Raleigh

April 28, 1865

Have the full particulars of the surrender. Expecting to start for home soon.

April 29:

Men still acting as if the year of jubilation had come.

Cannons booming all morning.

Men throwing their cartridges away. Placing hundreds in heaps under ground and touching fire.

Hot. Sweat. Cross two rivers. Heavy rain. Dark. I get wet through.

My tent caves in.



*George McMillan, front, fourth from left, and other 16th Wisconsin Volunteers at dedication of Wisconsin monument at Shiloh, 1912*

*Thank God, Grant, and good sense*  
*George McMillan*

As Uncle Dave is fond of pointing out, had the bachelor George McMillan been killed at Shiloh, his niece, Mary McMillan Burt, would have had significantly less money to give away and there might be no McMillan Memorial Library or SWCHC Museum. According to McMillan's account, he was saved by a tree, behind which he "found shelter" during the battle of Shiloh. At right, McMillan revisits the site in a photo that has been extensively reprinted by the Wisconsin Historical Society which includes McMillan's Civil War diaries in its archives.

Below is a commonly-displayed depiction of the Shiloh battle with a minor enhancement by the *Artifacts* photo editor. The print is part of a 2012 exhibit at the Museum commemorating the Civil War Sesquicentennial, assembled by Holly Knoll.

WHS



*Researching the Civil War: a case study*

## Two John Jones

*By Ron Harris*

For many years there has been speculation surrounding the lone tombstone that stands along the Wisconsin River in Port Edwards that reads, “JNO. JONES, CO G, 12TH WIS INF.”

As it turns out there are actually three tombstones supposedly marking the burial place of John Jones of Company G of the Wisconsin 12th Infantry.

Reporters and historians have attempted to figure out how John Jones could be buried in three places: along the Wisconsin River in Port Edwards; Forest Hill cemetery, Wisconsin Rapids; and Ivy Green Cemetery, Bremerton, Wash. There are tombstones in each place as above ground proof. There also was some high tech digging with ground penetrating radar at the Port Edwards grave site by Ho-Chunk Nation technicians. As reported by Mark Scarborough in a 1997 *Daily Tribune*, the final report “definitely shows a body on the site.”

The official roster of Company G of Wisconsin’s 12th Regiment Infantry offers a clue, listing John Jones 1st and John Jones 2nd. Where is John Jones 3rd? The stone in Forest Hill does bear the “2nd” designation, so that must be John Jones 1st by the river—or maybe not.

Why not see what Washington has to say? Requests for service records can be made by downloading form 83A from the website of the **National Archives**, filling it out and providing payment. Days or weeks later in the bowels of 700 Pennsylvania Avenue an archivist will locate the Jones’ files and photocopy the contents, including muster rolls, enlistment forms, and other papers such as the list of possessions returned to the family in the event the soldier was killed in battle, or more likely, died of disease. A majority of the over 620,000 deaths in the Civil War were due to some contagion or infection.

Records for John Jones 1st consist of several documents. One card from the “Company Descriptive Book” shows “Enlistment Sept 18, 1861, Gr. Rapids Wis by Captain Howell, term—three years, scar on left instep.”

A separate Volunteer Enlistment shows he reenlisted in Natchez, Mississippi, January 4, 1864. He was 26 year old, five feet five and a half inches in height with “grey eyes,” “light hair” and “fair complexion.” Occupation: Farmer. Born in Norway.

The Enlistment states Jones was “Mustered into the service of the United States, in Company G, 12 Regiment of Wisc Infy Volunteers on the 30 day of Jan 1864 at Hebron Miss, G. W. C. Hyde, 1st Lieut 53rd Ills Infy, ACM 4th Div 17th Ala.”

Surgeon E.M. Rogers signed the enlistment stating that recruit Jones “is free from all bodily defects and mental infirmity.”

The paper was signed by recruiting officer Lieut. L. T. Linnell of the 12 Regiment of Wisconsin Infantry Volunteers. The reverse side of the enlistment form is the “DECLARATION OF RECRUIT” where Jones signed a statement that he was a volunteer, never was previously discharged from the U. S. Army, etc.

Also included in the file is a series of 28 Muster Rolls—small cards that list the soldier, his rank, company, regiment and any notes the officer taking the roll might make. Each card is for two months of service. Several of the cards just state “present.” Others bear notes:

Nov and Dec 1862—Sick in Hosp at Bolivar, Tenn

July and Aug 1863—Sick at Vicksburg, Miss.

Jan 30, 1864—Detachment Muster-out Roll, Hebron, Miss; Last paid to Oct 31, 1863; Clothing account last settled Oct 31, 1863 drawn since \$13.67; M. O. by virtue of reenlistment as Vet. Vol. under provisions of G. O. No. rgr Series 1863 . . .

Jan and Feb—1865, Reenlisted & mustered in as Vet Jan 4 ’64

March and April 1865: “Veteran”

May and June 1865—Absent in Wisconsin

on 20 days furlough from June 28, 1865 to take home as per Gen order no 101 dated May 30 '65 one musket \$6.00; Veteran.

Louisville Kny July 16, 1865; Muster-out today July 16, 1865; Last paid to Apl 30, 1865; Last settled Dec 31, 1864; Am't for cloth'g in kind or money adv'd \$31.89; Due U. S. for arms, equipments, &c., \$6.00; Bounty paid \$210.00, due \$190.00.

Since John Jones 1st was born in Norway, Blaine Hedberg of the **Vesterheim Genealogical Center and Research Library** in Madison was able to look up old church records.

Hedberg stated, "Jones was born April 15, 1834 in Krødsherad, Buskerud, Norway, son of Ole Jonsen Lesteberg and wife, Ronnoug Jensatter. Ole Jonsen Lesteberg and family arrived in New York on the ship 'Ellida' in 1842 and proceeded to Racine County, Wisconsin. Ole died in the 1840s.

"According to Civil War records, the Norwegian John Jones died in Bremerton, Washington in 1920, but seems unlikely that his Civil War gravestone would be found in Grand Rapids. I suspect that the elusive grave marker is from the second John Jones...I believe that it would be wise to try and track down the death certificate for John Jones who died in Bremerton in 1920 and make certain that his body was not brought back to Wisconsin for burial. If not, then we know for certain that the stone you located is the other John Jones."

The website of the **Bremerton Historical Society** listed **Donna Larsen**, who was researching the surname, "Jones."

An email to Ms. Larsen brought this response:

"John Jones is the direct great grandfather of my husband, Joe. He was b 15 Apr 1833 in Norway, Sigdal, Buskerud and died 2 Oct 1920 in WA, Kitsap Co., Bremerton.

"I have a copy of his notarized Declaration for Pension from service in the Civil War from 18 Sep 1861 to 18 Jul 1866 including a re-enlistment, all in Co. G, 12th Regiment, Wiscon-

sin Infantry.

"I also have a copy of his death certificate showing burial in Ivy Green Cemetery 4 Oct 1920. He can also be found in the 1870 Federal Census, Iowa, Sac Co., Jackson Twp.; 1880 Census, WI, Waushara Co., Plainfield; 1900 Census, MT, Ravalli Co., ED#84, Victor; and 1920 census, WA, Kitsap Co., Bremerton.

"He married Jane Elizabeth Ward 2 Aug 1860 in WI, Wood Co, Grand Rapids. Jane was born in PA 15 Jul 1843 and died in Bremerton, WA 15 Feb 1926. . . . John and Jane had six children, the eldest born in WI and the others in IA, Sac Co. William Sherman Jones is the grandfather of my husband."

Unfortunately, soon after Ms. Larsen sent this email, she passed away. She did indeed send John's death certificate (John died of "Apoplexy, Old Age and High B. P.") He was 87 years, five months and 17 days of age. Ms. Larson also sent a family photograph taken in Ravalli, Montana in 1918-19, two years before John's death.

A letter of inquiry sent to the **Ivy Green Cemetery in Bremerton, Washington** resulted in Don D. Hock, Park Facilities Specialist for the City of Bremerton, sending copies of cemetery records and photographs of the tombstones of John Jones and Jane Ward Jones.

The **Soldiers and Citizens Album** includes a summary of Mr. Jones' harrowing war experiences.

"John Jones, Grand Rapids, Wis., member of G. A. R. Post No. 22, was born April 15, 1836, in Kredshra, Norway. He came in youth to America with his parents, landing at New York and proceeding to Racine County, Wis., where he was brought up on a farm and he has been engaged in agricultural pursuits all his life.

"He is the owner of a farm situated 20 miles from Grand Rapids in Juneau County. His father died when he was 11 years old and he was apprenticed by his mother to learn the fuller's trade with William Hovey, a woolen manufacturer of Waterford, with whom he remained un-

til the property was destroyed when he returned to his mother and took a farm. He went from Racine to Adams county, where he 'entered' a farm in company with his mother and, when it was sold, 'entered' another place in Wood County near Grand Rapids. Three years later, he sold the farm and went into the lumber woods.

"He enlisted Sep. 14, 1861, at Grand Rapids in Company G, 12th Wisconsin Infantry, for three years and received final discharge July 16, 1865, at Louisville.

"He went from Camp Randall to Quincy, Ill., crossing the river to Hannibal, proceeding thence to Weston, where he made a stay of three weeks and was engaged in a fruitless expedition of three days after the guerrilla Gordon. He went next to Fort Leavenworth and started for Fort Scott, marching to Lawrence and wading a swamp 12 miles in length. He went next to Fort Riley, expecting to go to New Mexico, but returned to Fort Leavenworth and went down the river expecting to fight at Pittsburgh Landing [Shiloh].

"But the battle was over and they stopped at Columbus and during the stay there two distinct shocks of earthquake occurred.

"The next service of Mr. Jones was to Sabine River where he was on guard duty on railroads and many, of the command became infected with the malaria of the swamps. Whiskey was ordered for the men and the abstainers made over their rations to the drinkers who determined to have more whiskey, and stole a barrel of it, which they hid in the river. The doctor concluded that the command was cured and this medicine was cut off.

"The next removal of Mr. Jones was to Humboldt, Tenn., where the summer was spent in scouting and skirmishing. The 2nd Tennessee Cavalry, stationed there without arms, were under their protection.

"Mr. Jones was in a scouting expedition under Captain Langworthy of Company G, and went to Huntington to disperse guerrillas, who were annoying the Union people. Mr. Jones was taken sick and was left at Huntington and stayed at the house of a Dr. Hutchinson three days. He then

started on a mule for Humboldt, 70 miles distant to travel alone through an unknown country in which rebel and Union skirmishing parties were abundant.

"In the forenoon of the first day he encountered seven men who took his equipments from him. It was proposed to take him prisoner, but one of them remarked that they had no use for a sick Yankee and he was released. He camped that night in the woods, not daring to apply at a house and he suffered greatly from exposure. He started at daylight and traveled until noon, having had no supper or breakfast. He was compelled to apply at a house for relief and the inmates treated him with great kindness, urging him to remain with them until he was better. The man of the house was a refugee and he remained there three days, when he started again on his journey, provided with food.

"After he had traveled about three hours he encountered three rebels, who took his mule and blouse and compelled him to go back nearly 10 miles, when he became so sick, he could go no farther and they threatened to shoot him. They became convinced that he was going to die and left him, after taking his last corn dodger from his pocket. He managed to, crawl to a negro hut about a mile away, where an old negro woman made him some gruel and kept him through the night.

"She divided her corn bread with him in the morning and he started again for Humboldt, encountering the Union picket line of cavalry. His illness increased and he was sent to the hospital at Bolivar, Tenn., and three months later rejoined his regiment at Camp Butler near Memphis. During his stay at Bolivar, VanDorn threatened the place and the convalescents were placed under arms for its defense.

"The command was sent to join Grant before Vicksburg and proceed thither by way of Milliken's Bend to Grand Gulf, 28 miles below Vicksburg. The mortar boats that had run past the batteries were shelling Vicksburg. When the mortars were discharged the concussion of the air seemed to lift the men from their feet and they could read a paper in the light of the firing.

“The regiment moved to the rear of Vicksburg, participating in the siege and after the surrender proceeded to the capture of Jackson. Mr. Jones was again taken sick and was in the field hospital three months, after which he was in the destructive movement known as the Meridian expedition. On the return, the command captured and destroyed railroad stock, including nine locomotives and brought the bells to camp for fun.

“The winter of 1863-4 was spent in skirmishing with guerrillas, during which Mr. Jones was in all expeditions under General Gresham. In January, 1864, he veteranized and in April received his veteran’s furlough, and on rejoining his regiment made connection with Sherman’s army at Ackworth and passed through the actions subsequent and prior to the siege of Atlanta, including several hard battles about Atlanta and those at Big Shanty, Marietta and Jonesboro, after which he was in the chase of Hood and went thence to Savannah and through the Carolinas and Virginia to the termination at Washington.

“He returned to Grand Rapids and engaged in farming. He was married August 2, 1860, to Jane E. Ward and they have six children, named Nellie A., Dana M., William T., Minnie, Arthur and Edith. When Arthur was 14 years old he was accidentally wounded, his right leg being shot off.

“Silas H. Ward, brother of Mrs. Jones, was a soldier of the 7th Wisconsin and was wounded at the battle of the Wilderness. A brother-in-law, Alpheus Coon, was in the 18th Wisconsin and was killed at Pittsburgh Landing. Mrs. Jones was born in Mercer Co., Pennsylvania.

“In 1866, Mr. Jones went to Iowa and located on a farm where he remained until 1879, when he removed to his farm in Waushara County and, in 1886, removed to Grand Rapids to educate his children.

“While stoning up a well in Iowa, Mr. Jones was injured and lost his right eye. He is the son of Ole and Arena (Jensen) Johnston. He acquired the name of Jones through the perversion of his father’s name and has been known by it in America. After the death of his father, his mother returned to Norway.”

We thus have a fairly full account of the life and exploits of John Jones 1st, leaving us with a tombstone along the Wisconsin River in Port Edwards and a tombstone in Forest Hill cemetery—one marking a Jno. Jones and the other marking a John Jones 2nd, both of Company G of the Wisconsin 12th Infantry Regiment.

There is no other John Jones listed in the official roster of Company G, so it is possible John Jones 2nd has two tombstones. Tombstones are sometimes placed in cemeteries to memorialize a loved one even though he or she may be buried elsewhere or have an unknown burial site.

A letter directed to the **National Archives** elicited a response that included a small card with a record of a tombstone sent to Port Edwards in 1879 for “Jones. Jno./ Pvt, Co. G, Regt. 12th Wis. Inf./Cemetery—Village, City or Town—Port Edwards/ County and State—Wood. Wis./Grave\_\_\_\_\_, died June 1865/ Headstone supplied by D. W. Whitney/ Contract dated Nov. 29th 1879.”

National Archives Archivist, Arthur House, indicated there may be a letter of request from Port Edwards in the files at the Archives indicating who ordered it and under what circumstances, but those documents are not indexed and it would take much time—more than the archives could spare—to search through thousands of pages of records. At least we know the stone by the river must be the one ordered in 1879. What about that stone in Forest Hill?

Another record supplied by the National Archives is an order form sent from Grand Rapids (now Wisconsin Rapids) Jan. 1, 1910, requesting a number of tombstones to be delivered to 750 Baker Street.

The application is signed by D. E. Carey, Commander of Post 22 of the G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic). Daniel E. Carey was himself a war veteran, a volunteer with Company K of the Wisconsin 25th Infantry Regiment.

The stone installed in Forest Hill Cemetery differs from the Port Edwards stone in that it has the “2nd” designation.

Cemetery employees examined the burial site in **Forest Hill Cemetery** and opined that there was no burial there based on the ground contours around the stone. Records at the Cemetery office have John Jones 2nd listed, but staff indicated that did not necessarily mean there was a body.

Listed as buried in Forest Hill Cemetery is "John Jones 2nd, Co. G., 12t, Jan 18-1869"

The death date for is at odds with the one stated for the Port Edwards request. Which is it? 1865 or 1869?

Among the **letters of John Edwards Jr.** to his father in Hazel Green, Wis., is one from May 25, 1865, in which he says "Every thing is running like a charm at present. But I expect a stampede amongst the men in a day or two. Mrs. McShane has been sick for a week and yesterday the doctor said it was the small pox; and a great many have been exposed to it all ready, by being there attending to her.

"But I try all I can do to keep excitement down by telling them its not small pox and that there is no danger, but half are scared to death now. I have stoped all travel to Jno House and told him yesterday to stay over there and not to come in the mill or across the slough either. And he will have to do it too. I think I can keep it confined to the island. That is if no one has taken it allready."

Locals have long thought than Jones died of smallpox, thus explaining his hasty burial along the river near where he died. Apparently, there were some people living on the island near where the current Port Mill is located and there was a slough between the island and shore, thus making quarantine of those on the island possible.

Does "Jno House" mean "Jones" House? John's House? Or was there someone named Jno (John) House living on the island?

Another letter from John Edwards to his father July 14th, 1866, states ". . . Jones died the morning of July 4th there is some small pox in town yet but I don't think it will spread much more as we are very carefull about it now. . . ."

Marshall Buehler provided an article from a 1924 "**Nepco Bulletin**" in which **John P. Brennan**, employee of the company since 1877, states that, "When Mr. Brennan came here a Mr. Clinton was in partnership with Mr. John Edwards, the grandfather of Mrs. L. M. Alexander. This Mr. Clinton was shot near a picket gate close by the present guard lock. In the early days there was a saloon there, the only one located in Port Edwards. There is at present a fence around a grave at the guard lock where it was supposed Clinton was buried, but the grave is not that of Clinton who was buried at the Rapids, but of a man by the name of Whiskey Jones who drove team for the late Jonathan Edwards."

Whether the details of John Jones 2nd death and burial are ever definitively determined, we can look at his service records.

The **Company Descriptive Book** indicates John Jones 2nd was 33 years of age, 5' 9 1/2" tall, had a fair complexion, blue eyes, and black hair. His occupation was lumberman and birth place South Wales. Enlistment was at Grand Rapids, Wisconsin, Oct. 2, 1861, by Captain Howell. Enlistment was to be for three years. Jones had "J. J." tattooed on his left arm. Muster-in was in Madison Oct 31, 1861.

Muster rolls just show Jones "present" until January of 1864 when he was listed as "Absent without leave series [?] 23/64."

An explanation follows for March and April when he is listed as on "Detached service at Vicksburg, Miss" as "Teamster." In September and October 1864 he is listed as "on detached service at Chattanooga, Tenn since Oct. 22nd '64." Later in October he is "Absent ordered to Chattanooga to be mustered out." In November and December 1864 he is he is "Mustered out by reason of expiration of term of service; Loss Oct 30/64 Discharged expiration of service." His Muster-out Roll indicated he was last paid up to April 30, 1863; his clothing account was last settled October 1862, and he had drawn \$80.77 on account since. No bounty had be paid previously, so Jones was due \$100.

The only newspaper account of the life of John Jones 2nd is this note found in the *Wood County Reporter* of November 24, 1864: “Returned—Jones, alias Old Rye Jones, returned from Co. G, 12th Reg., last week. He looks as natural as a warm meal, and is now ready to pursue the duties of private life as of yore. Jones has many old friends about town who will be pleased to welcome him home. He has served his country faithfully for three years, and as far as we know, made a good soldier.”

A number of issues of The *Wood County Reporter* are missing for the pertinent dates. If there were some reports of small pox deaths, no records have been found.

Thanks to Marshall Buehler who provided background documents and research. Don Krohn and Mr. Buehler published one of the first articles on the John Jones question in the *Daily Tribune* of 1961, including a photograph of the tombstone in Port Edwards. Dave Engel and Mark Scarborough published articles in the *Daily Tribune* and Engel’s *River City Memoirs*.

Missing issues of the *Wood County Reporter* and that elusive document at the National Archives, if ever found, may shed some light on how John Jones 2nd died and why he was buried in isolation on the banks of the Wisconsin River.

John Jones 2nd burial site is being maintained by local volunteers and the Domtar Corporation. A new tombstone was installed beside the old stone in 2005. A sign on the site has been placed to explain what is known about Jones. Visitors can park in the lot of the boat ramp at the foot of Ver Bunker Avenue in Port Edwards and walk about a hundred yards south on the river bank. Domtar keeps the area mowed for easy access.

**The Jones graves were the subject of the May 23, 1987, *River City Memoirs* in the *Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*. The book, *River City Memoirs V*, contains letters showing that the Johns Edwards supported John Breckinridge against Lincoln in 1860 and that John Edwards Jr. paid a substitute to take his place in the U.S. Army.**



John I and Jane Jones, Ivy Green Cemetery, Bremerton, Wash.

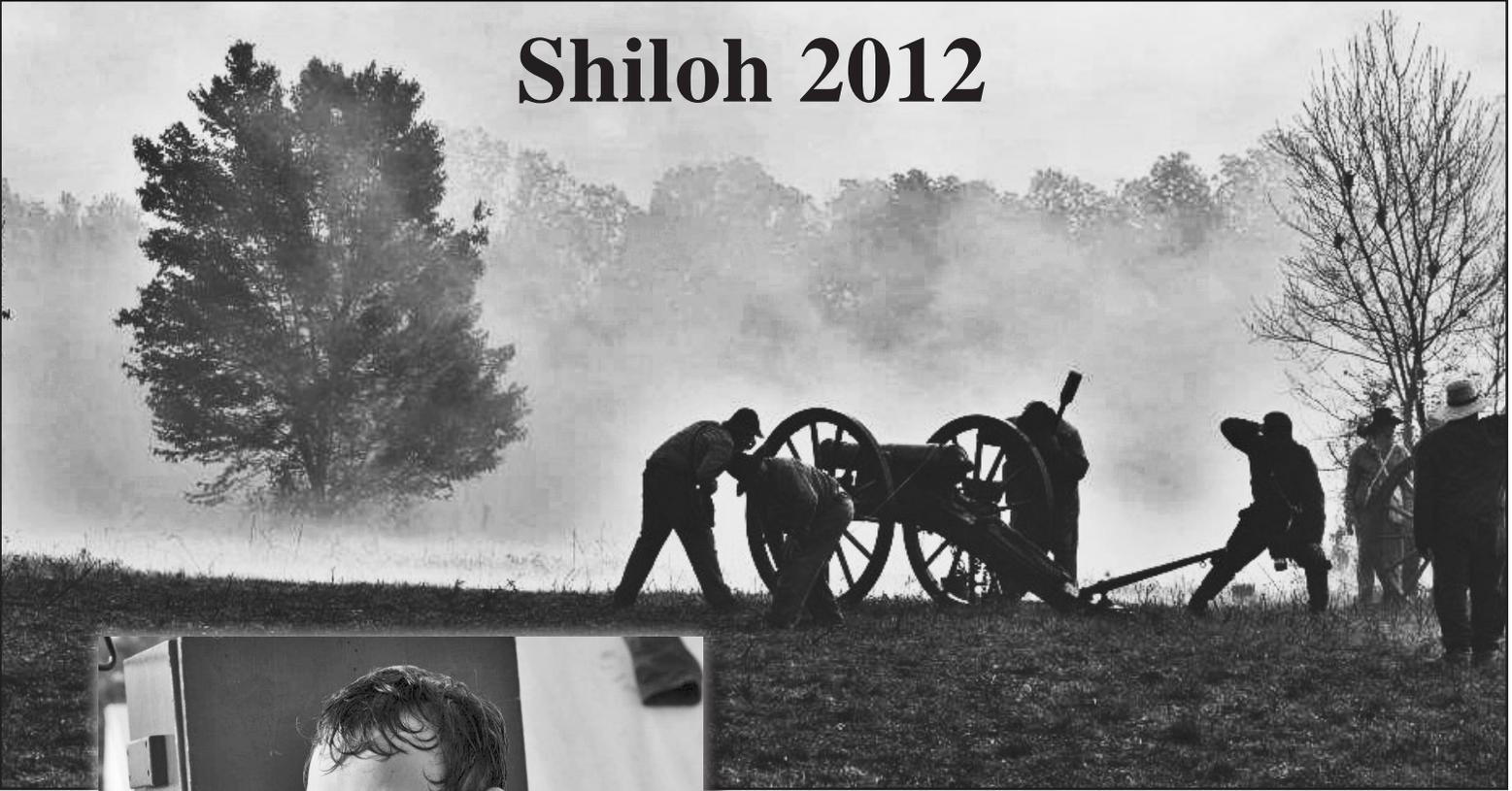


John Jones II at Forest Hill Cemetery, Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.



John Jones II at Port Edwards riverbank

# Shiloh 2012



Wisconsin Rapids Confederate reenactor  
**Billy Parker**  
 presents:  
**Notes from the Field:  
 Battle of Shiloh**

## April 5, 1862

We are encamped about a mile from the Yankees who are at Pittsburg Landing. Nothing but mud around here. Captain Even ordered roll call. That evening we had 17 men present. I checked the troop's muskets, only Private Wookie's musket was dirty after inspection. I helped him clean it. General Cleburn came by and said tomorrow we would have us a big fight on our hands. The boys are excited about the thought after a whole winter of nothing but training in Corinth. I am not so sure about this coming battle as we have never seen the elephant before and I don't believe the Yankees will break like we hope. It is in god's hands now.

## April 6, 1862

Reveille was blown at 4:30 this morning. Wish I did not go to bed at midnight or drink all that whiskey. The 6<sup>th</sup> Louisiana was formed and ready to go by 5:30. As acting company 2<sup>nd</sup> sergeant it is my job to keep the men quiet and in line. We had one vet of the war of 1812 fall in line with us. Captain Even ordered him near me so I could keep an eye on him. At dawn we attacked the Yankees near the town of Purdy. After a fight the yanks broke and ran. Got some

pretty good loot off some Ohio boys we captured there. Surprisingly, few casualties from our end of the line. Got a little rest and some grub before once again we were called back to battle. This time we were marched about a mile away. When we got to the field we were told to hold a tree line while they brought some cavalry and artillery. After a time that seemed like forever we were ordered into the field, heard it was called Duncan Field. As we did, the damn yanks came out of the lines. I have never seen so many blue bellies in my life and I hope never to see that many ever again. We charged and fell back only to charge again. On the final charge we pushed into the federal artillery. I got into a hand to hand fight with a Yankee corporal and got clubbed in the gut but I ended up killing him. Lost my whole company in the charge but I guess we had won that day.

Since I lost them I went back to where we were camped the night before but I took a trip through Purdy first and caught a nice little peep show. When I got back to camp I found the rest of my company already back at camp. Guess they are calling that last battle the hornets' nest.

After a little discussion I found out that I had made it the farthest into Union line than anyone else in my company. We had taken their lines and we will finish the Yankees up tomorrow.

#### **April 7, 1862**

Long night, am so tired. During the night the yanks brought in reinforcements from Savanna, Tennessee, via steamboat. They seemed to be coming from everywhere. We held for awhile but they just kept pushing and we fell back through an old peach orchard. We put up a stiff resistance there but they just kept coming. We lost half our company. First Sergeant Long was killed and George, our war of 1812 vet, was captured. Private Wookie was ordered to the rear when his gun malfunctioned. When Captain Even was wounded, he ordered us to retreat. That left me in charge.

We are now somewhere between Shiloh church and Corinth, Mississippi. I don't know what we will do tomorrow. I just want to get what is left back to Corinth. I hope I get a promotion into the officer ranks for what I did here.

*By Sgt. William Parker, Company B 6<sup>th</sup> Louisiana*

*Billy Parker's in there somewhere.*



# War of the Rebellion

## A Sesquicentennial Exhibit - By Holly Knoll

- **William Parker Display**

The large display case to the right holds the Civil War collection of William Parker. A native of Wisconsin Rapids, he participates in reenactments with the 6<sup>th</sup> Louisiana Company B, including the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reenactment of the Battle of Shiloh, Tenn. Parker is also active with the Sons of Union Vets Dept. of Wisconsin. His collection boasts many artifacts from the Civil War including many items from the Confederates.

- **Case Letter**

An April 1862 letter written from Grand Rapids illustrates the rumors, fear and heartbreak at home. The original document and an 1861 map depict Wood County during the war. Videos of the Civil War will be played in this area as well.

- **David Laspa Display**

Display case to the left exhibits the collection of David Laspa, Wisconsin Rapids. Most items represent the Union side of the Civil War. Laspa also participates in battle reenactments in his spare time.

- **Shiloh Wall**

This wall visually encompasses the Battle of Shiloh at Pittsburg Landing. While photos are rare, sketches and paintings recreate the action of what was, for many, a shocking first battle.

- **Soldier Biographies**

On the large table can be examined a large assortment of soldier biographies and other relevant texts. Most of the soldiers represented are from Wisconsin Rapids and the surrounding areas.

### **Headquarters**

The headquarters alcove portrays where officers would have likely met to plan the next day's battle. Portraits on the walls show Civil War participants with links to Wisconsin Rapids. (Play the matching game and learn how we are still connected to the war.)

- **Camp**

The soldiers' camp area depicts what the men would have called home during the war. The soldiers would have slept on the hard, cold earth under a canvas tent. Games and letter writing broke up the monotony.

- **Aftermath**

At Shiloh, Union casualties amounted to 13,047 (1,754 killed, 8,408 wounded and 2,885 missing) while Confederate casualties were a little lower at 10,699. This was the costliest American battle up to that point. The war would be longer and harder than anyone imagined.

- **Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)**

The Grand Army of the Republic case displays memorabilia from Wood County Post No. 22. Veterans joined the GAR to socialize and exercise political influence.

- **McMillan and Cochran Displays**

Two men from Grand Rapids that fought in the Civil War are George McMillan and J.W. Cochran. On display are some of their personal items including books, diaries, utensils and photographs.

- **Women of the War**

Some women became nurses in battlefield situations while others helped out on the home front, where they undertook jobs, including farming, that the men normally would have done.

- **Pictures from the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary reenactment at Shiloh, Tenn.**

Joe Waters is the photographer for the same unit that William Parker reenacts in. On display are photographs from the Battle of Shiloh reenactment that was held the last week of March 2012 at Shiloh National Battlefield. To see other photographs by Joe Waters please visit <http://www.flickr.com/photos/joewaters/>.



## Shiloh 2012

*Joe Waters photo*

South Wood County Historical Corp.  
540 Third Street South  
Wisconsin Rapids WI 54494

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*Artifacts*, a local history magazine and newsletter for the South Wood County Historical Corp. welcomes contributions of writings and photographs relevant to the greater Wisconsin Rapids area. For a year's subscription and membership send \$20 to the address above. Questions? Contact Lori Brost, Museum Administrator and assistant editor, 715-423-1580. [lori@swch-museum.com](mailto:lori@swch-museum.com)



**Shiloh 2012**

*Joe Waters photo*



*Uncle Dave 2012*

**Wisconsin Monument at Shiloh National Battlefield Park, Tennessee**



*Holly Knoll*

*J.W. Cochran's knife was carried in the Civil War and is dated 1864*