OVERVIEW

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the economic and social growth of the United States was accompanied, particularly in the northern states, by intellectural ferment, social changes, and a variety of humanitarian reform movements. Americans resolutely believed they were creating a new society, and felt the possibilities of progress were almost limitless. Some old attitudes and traditions persisted, yet the last 150 years have been marked by tremendous social change. The Civil War destroyed slavery and fundamentally altered the status of American blacks, while technology, industrialization, and urbanization precipitated profound changes in American life.

An important aspect of nineteenth century social reforms was the accompanying humanitarian movements. Many Americans began to develop more sensitive attitudes toward cruel, unjust, and unequal treatment of poor, disabled, and oppressed people. No longer were they willing to tolerate forms of suffering which had previously been accepted as inevitable.

The roots of humanitarianism can be traced to the ideals of the Enlightenment and the American Revolution, as well as the resurgence of Christian precepts during the early nineteenth century. Many of the reformers were members of Protestant churches and regarded the improvement of social conditions as Christianity in action. Reformers pursued their objectives by organizing societies, disseminating propaganda in newspapers, in pamphlets, and at public meetings, and by petitioning state and federal officials for appropriate legislation.

The most conspicuous of the social reform movements was the crusade to abolish slavery. Other significant causes included relief for the poor, aid for the sick and disabled, women's rights, and the temperance and labor movements.

By the early decades of the nineteenth century some Americans were beginning to believe that indigence was due more to misfortune and not, as previously assumed, to laziness or vice, and that paupers should receive some sort of relief and assistance in becoming productive, self-respecting members of society. This change in attitude was due, in large part, to newly emerging economic conditions. The growth of urban communities and the rise of the industrial system with its accompanying cycles of prosperity and depression were exascerbrating unemployment and indigence. Initially, the relief of the poor was left to private charity. Numerous philanthropic agencies, usually connected with religious congregations, were also established for this purpose. In Wisconsin, as elsewhere, city, county, and state authorities provided assistance by establishing poorhouses, workhouses, and orphanages (Parkes 1953:265).

Even more in need of public assistance were the mentally ill. Originally regarded as incurable, they were often housed in poorhouses or jails and were treated little better than animals. In Wisconsin the State Board of Charities began to press for a separate system for the care and treatment of the insane in the mid-1870s. In 1878 the legislature responded by passing a measure that allowed counties to construct asylums, with half of the construction costs assumed by the state. During the early 1880s asylums for the chronic insane were constructed in various counties across the state; this county system of organization became known as the "Wisconsin Plan."

By the end of the nineteenth century, Wisconsin's care of the dependent, disabled, and mentally ill involved a system of mixed county and state care. Counties were given responsibility for the care of the chronic insane, as well as paupers, while the state was

given the authority for the care of "recent and acute" cases of insanity, as well as the disabled and dependent children (Berthrong 1951:200-201).

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, crime, pauperism, and mental illness seemed to many reformers to be closely associated with the prevalence of alcoholism. Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia initiated the campaign for temperance in the late eighteenth century principally on medical grounds. In its early stages the movement counseled moderation rather than total abstinence and did not seek any kind of legislative action. By the 1820s, however, alcohol in any form began to be viewed as an unmitigated evil and the demand for total prohibition began to grow. The American Society for the Promotion of Temperance was formed in 1826; in 1833 this and other temperance organizations combined in the Temperance Union (Parkes 1953:267).

The first temperance society west of the Great Lakes was established at Green Bay in 1832. A few years later, in 1839, prohibitionists were able to convince Wisconsin's territorial legislature to create a new, alcohol-free county: Walworth County. This experiment in county-wide temperance succeeded for over a decade, but by the 1850s an increasingly diversified population made total prohibition impossible to enforce and the experiment was abandoned. In Wisconsin the temperance movement was principally concentrated in the lead mining district of the southwest and in the Yankee settlements in Milwaukee, Kenosha, Racine, Rock, Walworth, and Waukesha counties. One of the most important of the state's temperance societies was the Sons of Temperance, established in 1845. A secret society, in many ways similar to a fraternal organization, the Sons of Temperance agitated for the regulation of liquor traffic and initated the first attempts at total prohibition within the state (Smith 1973:628).

By the 1870s considerable opposition to the temperance movement developed in Wisconsin, particularly among the German population. Attempts were made to politicize the issue, but the political arena generally remained closed to the controversy until the 1890s. At that time the temperance climate in the state was transformed by the maturation of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The organization flourished in Wisconsin. In fact, the state provided the national organization with its most effective and best known leader, Frances Willard of Janesville (Raney 1940:318-319).

At the turn of the century, Wisconsin's temperance reformers began a two-pronged strategy to achieve their goals. On the one hand they strove for prohibition at the local level, usually on a county by county basis. By 1905 approximately 11 percent of the state's counties were dry, and by 1919 nearly 45 percent had accepted prohibition. At the same time, temperance advocates pursued prohibition on the national level (Raney 1940:319). By 1914 their efforts began to gain nationwide attention, and in 1918 the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified, prohibiting the manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating liquor in the United States.

A significant feature of these reform movements was the prominent role played by women. At the beginning of the nineteenth century American women had no political and few legal rights, but they were beginning to assert their convictions about social evils with considerable vigor. It was not long before some of them demanded the right to participte in politics.

The economic transformation occuring in nineteenth century America profoundly affected women and their position in society. New employment opportunities drew women out of the home and into the labor market, while household tasks became easier, giving women new freedom and more time to participate in community activities.

Middle-class women were the chief beneficiaries of these economic and technological changes. Few working-class or immigrant women could take advantage of the new services and products, and they were limited by their lack of prosperity. Middle-class

women became the backbone of the feminist movement, which was almost exclusively urban based. They formed and joined women's clubs, organized the temperance crusades, and marched in suffrage parades.

The campaign for women's suffrage in Wisconsin generally paralleled that of the national movement. Before the Civil War, women's suffrage sentiments surfaced only occasionally and were part of a much broader movement aimed at achieving social reform, temperance, and prohibition. Immediately following the Civil War, suffrage activities in the state were rather tenative and sporadic, but the movement gradually gained much needed support, especially among progressive-minded politicians. After 1885, Wisconsin suffragettes succeeded in forging a remarkably efficient, well organized, and widespread movement. While the movement suffered some discouraging setbacks, most notably the failed 1912 Suffrage Referendum, Wisconsin's suffragettes contributed to the movement's ultimate national success, the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 (Raney 1940:324).

Another aspect of social reform focused on industrial labor. In New England, skilled craftsmen began to organize unions as early as 1800, but several decades elapsed before the craft-union movement was launched, and it was longer still before unskilled workers became organized. In Wisconsin unions fought for such labor causes as safer working conditions, higher wages, shorter hours, and collective bargaining. Unions also served as focal points for social and political activities. In their role as representatives for the economic concerns, social rights, and welfare of a large segment of the state's blue collar population, unions played a key role in Wisconsin's industrial and commercial growth. Politically, the labor unions in the state stimulated the development of protective labor legislation and third party alternatives also serving as a vehicle for socialist and communist ideologies.

Wisconsin's labor movement was intimately connected with the socialist ideal, as both a political and social force. During the post-Civil War period, many of Milwaukee's German workers were converted to socialism through the teachings of German Socialist Ferdinand Lassalle and by Karl Marx's International Workingmen's Association, which was broadcast through the city's German language newspapers. In 1874 a Milwaukee branch of the International Workingmen's Association was created and a Workingman's party was established in 1876; it later merged with an early socialist political organization to form the Social Democratic Party of Wisconsin. Later, the communist influence surfaced in the Congress of Industrial Workers (CIO), particularly popular among Milwaukee workers. Its appeal was considerable throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

Wisconsin's role in the realm of social reform has been significant. The state provided the Women's Christian Temperance Union with its most effective and charismatic leader, Frances Willard. Under her leadership the WCTU broadened its reform interests far beyond the temperance issue, causing it to advocate protective legislation for working women, the establishment of kindergartens, and training programs for young working women. Other prominent social reformers in the state included Mathilde Franciska Anneke, vice-president of the National Woman Suffrage Association; Ada James and Crystal Eastman Benedict, both significant leaders of the Political Equality League; Olympia Brown, Universalist minister, president of the State Suffrage Association (1884-1912), and president of the Federal Suffrage Association (1903-1920); and Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (1900-1904 and 1915-1920) and first president of both the League of Women Voters and the International Woman Suffrage Alliance. In the area of labor reform, the state was among the first to create an Industrial Commission to enforce labor laws and mediate labor disputes, and was the first to initiate workmen's compensation laws. Important Wisconsin labor reformers included professors John R. Commons and Richard T. Ely, both associated with the University of Wisconsin. Professor Commons helped draft the bill creating the Industrial Commission and later served as one of its members. Professor Ely played a major role in establishing the university's reputation as a leader in economic

research in the training of experts for state service. He also served as first president of the American Association for Labor Reform (1906). These reforms and reformers underlie Wisconsin's commitment to progressivism and serve as a basis for the state's liberal reputation.

Since achieving statehood, Wisconsin has often played a significant role in the development of the national political scene. The concept of a three party system for instance, was influenced by the state's early organization of a Republican party as well as the emergence of the Social Democratic Party in 1897. More importantly, Wisconsin is inextricably tied to progressive reform. Any history of the Progressive Era must focus on Robert La Follette and the state's leadership role in that movement. The state continued to maintain its liberal reputation through its contributions to the new Deal and the Democratic party.

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PROTECTION

Threats to Resources.

Resources associated with women's organizations as well as the suffrage and temperance movements are threatened by their virtual lack of identification and appreciation. Few of these organizations occupied their own buildings; most meetings were likely held in halls, commercial spaces, or private homes. Until recently, these aspects of social history held little interest for the majority of historians and preservationists. Thus, over the years the locations of many related historic sites have not been identified. As a result the location of associated sites may remain obscure.

In contrast, many fraternal organizations occupied their own halls or lodges. Due to their immense popularity during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, resources associated with a wide variety of fraternal organizations could be found in nearly every sizeable community throughout the state. In urban areas lodges and halls were often located in central business districts. The popularity of these organizations has diminished considerably since the 1930s. Many associated structures have been abandoned; others have been modified for dissimilar uses. Those resources located in historic central business districts are particularly threatened with abandonment or demolition due to shifting population patterns.

Significant sites and structures associated with organized labor activities in the state are principally threatened by a lack of identification. While numerous union organizations had their own headquarters, many others held meetings in rented halls, commercial spaces, or private homes. Identification of these resources may be especially difficult. Sites and buildings associated with specific strikes or other labor activities also may be difficult to identify.

Advances in modern technology and medicine have wrought profound changes in the approach to health services. Hospital facilities, in particular, have been modernized and expanded. Where historically significant hospitals have been maintained, original interiors are rarely intact. Many other historic hospitals have been abandoned, demolished, or modified for other uses.

During the past several decades the nature of historic services for indigent and disabled persons has been drastically altered. Many services and their associated resources are no longer needed due to modern technological advances, such as tuberculosis sanitoriums. The management and operation of some facilities, such as mental institutions, are handled very differently from their historic predecessors. In other cases, services once provided by municipalities, counties, or the state have been taken over by the private sector. Many of the historic facilities associated with services for the indigent and disabled no longer reflect modern approaches to their care. Accordingly, many of these historic structures have been abandoned or demolished.

Survey Priorities

Thematic survey of properties associated with prominent leaders in the closely allied fields of temperance, suffrage, and women's organizations.

Thematic survey of resources associated with the State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs of Wisconsin and its antecedants, focusing on Milwaukee, Madison, Beloit, Janesville, and Racine.

Thematic survey of the nineteenth century fraternal organization, the Good Templars, the only temperance organization in Wisconsin known to have built its own meeting halls.

Thematic survey of sites and structures associated with significant events in the women's suffrage movement.

Thematic survey of sites and structures significant in the temperance movement, such as resources associated with the publication of the Old Oaken Bucket, a popular statewide temperance paper published in Racine during the mid-nineteenth century.

Thematic survey of tuberculosis sanitoriums.

Thematic survey of water cure centers, such as Bethesda Springs in Waukesha.

Attempt to locate resources associated with the "ticket hospitals," located in the lumbering areas of northern Wisconsin.

Thematic survey of county asylums.

Attempt to locate any poorhouses and poor farms that remain in the state.

Registration Priorities

Women's Organizations, Suffrage, Temperance

Music Hall, Fond du Lac (site of organizing meeting of the Equal Rights Association, 1868)

Site of convention in Milwaukee that resulted in the formation of the Wisconsin Woman's Suffrage Association, 1869.

Church of the Good Shepherd, Racine (associated with Olympia Brown, Universalist minister and woman suffragist)

Services for the Poor and Disadvantaged

Northern Wisconsin Center for the Developmentally Disabled, Chippewa Falls

Southern Wisconsin Center for the Developmentally Disabled, Union Grove (Racine County)

Mendota Mental Health Institution, Madison

Labor Movement

Agen Block, Superior (housed the Finnish-American newspaper, Amerikan Suomalainen Tyomies, which was instrumental in promoting organized labor in the iron mining industry)

Temporal Boundaries: 1830-1919, with special emphasis on the periods 1849 - 1855 and 1872-1919.

Spatial Boundaries: Entire state, with particular emphasis on the southern and north-central regions.

Related Study Units: Fraternal Organizations, Women's Organizations, Woman's Suffrage.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A national phenomenon that originated in New England in the late eighteenth century and spread through the entire country over the course of the next 150 years, temperance was the first social reform movement to grip Wisconsin. The movement, however, is not easily defined. Sentiment on alcohol control was divided among those who advocated temperance or moderation in alcohol consumption, those who desired to legislate absolute prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcohol, and those who wanted to see strict licensing control (Nesbit 1973:235). In fact, it was not until the postbellum years that a coordinated and self-conscious "movement" emerged. Even then, many temperance groups, united behind the liquor issue, extended their crusade to other issues, such as women's suffrage, urban reform, mandatory Sabbath observance, economic reform, and even vegetarianism.

At the time of Wisconsin's settlement, the temperance campaign was well underway in the East, especially in New England, the Mid-Atlantic states, and the "burned-over" district of western New York. In 1836 the nation contained over 7,000 temperance societies, with an estimated total membership of 1.5 million (Schafer 1925:281). While liquor traffic first emerged as a social and political issue during the French and British fur trade with the Indians in the late eighteenth century, temperance in Wisconsin properly dates from the 1830s (Nesbit 1973:21,70). In 1832 the first temperance society west of Lake Michigan was founded at Green Bay; by the end of the next decade these organizations had become quite prevalent. They were concentrated in the southwestern lead mining region and also clustered among settlements of New England Yankees in Milwaukee, Kenosha, Racine, Waukesha, and Rock counties (Smith 1973:627). These groups operated independently of one another, and generally distanced themselves from territorial politics.

In 1839 two brothers, Samuel and Jeremiah Phoenix, persuaded the territorial legislature to create a new, alcohol-free county for their teetotalling followers. Over the next few years a steady stream of settlers from New York made their way to Walworth County, named after a prominent eastern temperance leader. The Town of Delevan flourished for several years as a model "dry" community and as a center of antislavery ferment. By the 1850s, however, an increasingly heterogeneous population made total conformity impossible to enforce and the experiment was abandoned, although Delevan and the county seat, Elkhorn, remained dry towns throughout most of the nineteenth century (Weisensal 1965:7; Smith 1973:627).

At approximately the same time that the Phoenix brothers were launching their liquor-free utopian venture, branches of the Washingtonian Revival Society sprang up in southern Wisconsin. This was an eastern-based organization dedicated to reforming habitual drunkards and mobilizing public opinion against saloons and the traffic in liquor (Schafer 1925:281; Smith 1973:627-628). Like most reform societies in this period, the Washingtonians were a fleeting phenomenon, "flowering with a burst of religious

enthusiasm, then fading rapidly" (Nesbit 1973:237). By mid-century they were well along the path to oblivion, weakened by numerous reorganizations and drained by the stronger appeal of more dynamic groups.

The most important force in the early temperance movement in Wisconsin was the Sons of Temperance, established in 1845. A secret society with many of the trappings of a fraternal organization, the Sons of Temperance promoted sentiments for the regulation of liquor traffic and provided the initiative behind the first attempts at prohibition in Wisconsin. Led by John B. Smith of Milwaukee, the organization grew rapidly; in 1849 it boasted over 20 lodges with a combined membership around 3,000 (Schafer 1925:282; Smith 1973:628). By the mid-1850s, the efforts of the Sons of Temperance were supplemented by another quasi-fraternal organization, the Good Templars. The strength of both organizations lay in the southern portion of the state, particularly the southeast. This region emerged as the primary locus of temperance activity in the years preceeding the Civil War. Indeed, the state's only temperance publication, a magazine edited by Universalist pastor A. Constantin Barry, the Old Oaken Bucket, was published in Racine and widely distributed throughout the southeast (it appeared in pro-temperance Grant and Lafayette counties as well) (Smith 1973:611).

The Sons of Temperance succeeded in politicizing the liquor issue, and in so doing engendered the ethnic and cultural conflict that to defined the temperance crusade in Wisconsin for the next 60 years. The temperance crusaders' push for restrictive legislation brought them into direct conflict with the state's largest foreign ethnic group, the Germans. Drinking was an integral part of German culture, especially the Sunday afternoon "Gemutlichkeit," or after church beerdrinking, dancing, and socializing. The Germans, who came to America for economic rather than social freedom, had little interest in escaping German culture, and clung tenaciously to their language and customs, tending to interpret attacks upon their drinking habits as assaults upon their culture in general. Not surprisingly, the Germans formed the backbone of the anti-prohibition movement, which arose in response to the agitation for dry legislation (Weisensal 1965:1-7; Current 1976:586).

The bulk of support behind the temperance movement through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries came from white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants. In large part this phenomenon was due to religious tradition: the Yankees were heir to a long tradition of temperance taught through the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian congregations to which they belonged (Weisensal 1965:3). Moreover, at times the temperance movement took on a nativist tinge, directing its activities against the foreign imbibers, especially the German and Irish, rather than the native-born (Smith 1973:628). Finally, it should be noted that the Scandinavian ethnic groups, particularly the Norwegians, were temperance stalwarts. Again, the influence of the church, in this case the Evangelical Lutheran Church, played a large role in shaping opinion.

In 1849, at the urging of the Sons of Temperance, the Wisconsin legislature passed an unusually strict Bond Law which made saloon keepers legally liable for the actions of their intoxicated customers. All those selling liquor were required to post a $1,000 bond; "Women could bring suits for damage against the vendor for self and children; and a pauper destitute by reason of intemperance could sue the most frequented dealer" (Deutsch 1931:266). The new law caused an uproar in the German community, which quickly organized a repeal movement. Despite this popular and vocal campaign, the law was not eradicated from the legal code, but actually was strengthened in 1850 by the "Smith Bill," named after its author, temperance leader John B. Smith (Schafer 1925:287). Immediately following the bill's enactment, a German mob in Milwaukee marched to Smith's house and proceeded to smash the windows. In the weeks that followed, the German press and politicians denounced the Smith Bill as "foolish, impractical, odious, and illiberal" (Schafer 1925:287). To a large degree, this assessment proved accurate: the bill was difficult to enforce, and many communities chose to ignore

it. Only where there existed massive public support or an especially zealous sheriff did the Smith Bill have much effect.

Unwilling to be satisfied with a statute allowing local enforcement, the movement began to press for outright prohibition rather than simply temperance. It appears that the leadership passed from the Sons of Temperance to the Good Templars in the 1850s. Under their direction, a campaign was mounted for the passage of a "Maine law," so called because Maine had recently become the first state in the Union to outlaw the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages (Deutsch 1931:267; Brownsword 1960:169).

The prohibition campaign received a boost when neighboring Iowa passed a "Maine law" in 1851 and Illinois tightened legal restrictions on saloon licensing the same year (Schafer 1925:288). Nevertheless, the Templars and their allies suffered a setback at the hands of the efficiently organized and politically powerful German opposition: in late 1851, the Smith Bill was repealed and replaced with a simple licensing act (Current 1976:143; Raney 1940:144). Frustrated, the temperance crusaders turned to direct action. Sauk, Waukesha, and Grant Counties witnessed outbreaks of saloon smashing in 1852, 1853, and 1854 (Byrne 1951:84, 99-116,143). Despite their passionate commitment to the cause, the temperance movement met with little success in the 1850s. Following a state-wide referendum in 1853, an alliance of dry politicians and Free Soilers managed to pass a weak prohibition law in 1854 exempting beer, wine, and cider from prohibition. Democratic Governor Barstow vetoed the measure in an effort to placate his German constituency (Byrne 1958:118; Current 1976:215-225).

The trauma of the Civil War and its aftermath brought temperance activity in Wisconsin to a temporary halt. During these years, the Good Templars underwent a factional split, with the dominant wing abdicating leadership of a political strategy and concentrating instead on education and moral suasion. At the same time, the Yankee element in the state declined while the number of Germans correspondingly increased. The result of this demographic shift was a political realignment that ensured the entrenchment of a liberal licensing program as state policy (Schafer 1925:293,298).

The temperance issue was revived in 1872, but not through any grass roots initiative. In that year, Governor Washburn recommended the subject of liquor control to the state legislature. The result was the Graham Bill, drafted by Alexander Graham of Rock County. Reminiscent of the Bond Law of 1849, the Graham Bill required the posting of a $2,000 bond by saloon keepers and included a civil damage clause with a long list of eligible claimants. There was also a penalty for drunkeness attached to the bill, as well as numerous safeguards against circumvention (Deutsch 1931:267-268).

The Graham Bill created a furor in state politics, hardening the Anglo-German split. From a purely pragmatic standpoint it was a political blunder, for the bill alienated large numbers of liberal Germans from the ranks of the Republican Party, which had sponsored the legislation, and drove them back into the arms of the Democrats. When the Graham Bill was strengthened by the GOP-sponsored Leland amendment a few months later, which made the Graham provisions part of every city charter, a "volcanic storm of protest" erupted (Deutsch 1931:270). One of the principal victims of the reaction was Governor Washburn, who was overwhelmingly defeated in his reelection bid in a campaign charged by the high emotions surrounding the liquor issue.

Again, it was the Milwaukee Germans who formed the nucleus of the wets' counterattack. In the 1870s they were better organized than in the 1840s and 1850s, largely due to the leadership of brewing industry magnates. Soon after the initial passage of the Graham Bill, a group of influential German businessmen and community leaders, including brewers Valentin Blatz and Joseph Schlitz, formed the Wisconsin State Association for the Protection of Personal Liberty, and, a few months later, the American Constitutional Union. After the signing of the Leland amendment, these groups came

together as the Personal Liberty League. Initiated by Milwaukee distiller Samuel Rindskopf and Morris Schoeffer, the respected editor of the Banner and Volksfreund, the Personal Liberty League developed into the spearhead of the anti-prohibition movement. It succeeded in gaining the support of other German cultural and civic societies, imploring them to "join in one solid, mighty phalanx in the campaign for freedom. . . against temperance laws and other repressive measures." The League scored an immediate victory when it prevailed upon the Milwaukee City Attorney to advise Mayor Harrison Luddington that the Graham Bill and its "most obnoxious" amendment were unconstitutional. Henceforth, city authorities ignored the bill's bond provisions and enforcement there was lax.

Governor Taylor, a reform Democrat who succeeded Washburn, took a moderate stance on the liquor issue, favoring temperance rather than prohibition. Taylor felt that the state was not a proper agent for the enforcement of private morality. Upon taking office in 1874, he recommended that the legislature repeal the Graham Bill. The lawmakers responded with a compromise measure, which, in the words of one Republican representative, was "a mixture of German license and Democratic logic" (Deutsch 1931:278-279). The liability features of the Graham Bill reduced the fee required for obtaining a liquor license, and lessened the fine for drunkeness.

Disenchanted with both the Democratic and Republican Parties, prohibition advocates, again led by the Good Templars, renewed their quest along independent political lines. In 1875, 1877, and 1879, they ran a separate temperance ticket in state elections. These efforts met with only a modicum of success: the Prohibitionists received significant percentages of the vote in most areas but failed to win any offices. Two Wisconsin politicians, Samuel Dexter Hastings and Eugene Wilder Chafin, went on to play key roles in the national Prohibition Party, an equally unsuccessful venture that peaked in the 1880s. Hastings, who as a Republican had been Wisconsin State Treasurer during the Civil War, was both a member of the Prohibition Party's executive committee and its treasurer. Chafin was the Party's candidate for president in both 1904 and 1908. Both men, it should be noted, were Prohibition candidates for governor of Wisconsin (Raney 1940:317).

The battle between Wisconsin wets and drys remained at a standoff throughout the 1880s. The Templars and other like-minded groups continued their efforts to win converts on the community and local levels. They met with some degree of success, for it became impossible to purchase a drink in several counties, mostly rural and in the northern part of the state. Many churches, especially those administering to the working poor, began to stress temperance to their parishioners in this period. Other working-class organizations, such as the Knights of Labor, echoed a similar theme, tying temperance to self-improvement and economic reform.

The political arena remained closed to Wisconsin temperance reformers during the 1880s and early 1890s. The Republicans, having learned a hard lesson, refrained from placing the liquor issue on the political agenda. State Democrats, strongly supported by the German element, had no desire to raise the issue and sat content with the liberal law of 1874, leaving the sticky question of enforcement up to local authorities. Meanwhile, the brewing industry had entered an expansive stage: beer had become big business, largely due to new technological processes and the rise of a national market, and with industrial growth came a good deal of political clout.

The temperance climate in the state was transformed in the 1890s with the maturation of an important and unique organization: the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The WCTU was founded in Ohio in the early 1870s as an organization for women, devoted to temperance and the securing of political rights. It grew rapidly, especially in the Midwest, and by 1880 had over 26,000 members (Raney 1940:318). The organization flourished in Wisconsin from its establishment there in 1873 as the Women's

State Temperance Alliance; and in fact, the Badger State provided the WCTU with its greatest leader, Frances Willard of Janesville. Willard became President of the Evanston, Illinois Female College and Dean of Women when the college merged with Northwestern University. Evanston became the home of the WCTU.

The WCTU drew upon a strong evangelical tradition and developed a close working alliance with many Protestant churches. Interestingly enough, its emphasis on female suffrage alienated many male temperance advocates who saw this demand as too radical and, possibly, threatening. The real genius of the WCTU lay in its organizational abilities and in its efficient use of the media, in an era of newspapers and lecturers. The Wisconsin chapter, headquartered in Milwaukee, had its own Lecture Bureau, its own publication, The Motor, and contained a number of departments, each focusing upon a different field of temperance activity. For instance, one department directed its energies toward securing abstinence pledges from miners and lumbermen, another devoted itself to "scientific temperance instruction" in the schools, another concentrated upon foreign speaking peoples, and still another worked among prison, jail, and almshouse inhabitants. Other departments campaigned against alcoholic medication, which was fairly common in this era. They also strove to enforce Sabbath observance and tried to influence the established mainstream press. In addition, the Wisconsin WCTU maintained a home for wayward women, agitated for the franchise, and recruited new members through "parlor meetings," a nineteenth century organizing technique not unlike the Tupperware party. In addition to meeting in private residences, temperance reformers congregated in churches and fraternal halls. With the notable exception of the Good Templars, very few of these groups constructed their own buildings.

As a women's organization, the WCTU offered a unique perspective on the temperance issue. It saw a causal relationship between men's intemperance and domestic violence, and demonstrated the link between saloon keeping and prostitution (Raney 1940:318-319). In the 1890s, its efforts were supplemented with those of the Anti-Saloon League, a federation of smaller temperance organizations based in Oberlin, Ohio, which established a Wisconsin branch in 1895 under the direction of Rev. Henry Coleman, a leading Methodist minister. Together with the Anti-Saloon League, the WCTU forced an awareness of what it perceived to be the corruption of politics by the "liquor interests." Many Wisconsin saloons were owned by the large Milwaukee breweries (70 percent in 1911 according to one source), and a good number of taverns had adjoining houses of ill repute attached to them. The community of Hurley, for example, contained 65 saloons in 1904, and 35 of these also functioned as whorehouses (Weisensal 1965:14-15). Through their superb informational activities and perceptive linking of social ills, the WCTU and the Anti-Saloon League succeeded in widening the support for temperance beyond those narrowly concerned with the evils of drink per se. They carried the temperance crusade beyond a single-issue and presented it as a broad social reform.

At the turn of the century temperance reformers pursued a two-pronged strategy. On the one hand they worked to bring about local prohibition, usually on a county-by-county basis. This involved building public support, allying with friendly politicians, and placing referendums on local ballots. In Wisconsin, 11 percent of the counties were dry by 1905; this figure had increased to 45 percent by 1919. Even though this proportion seems quite large, it should be noted that Wisconsin lagged behind the national average which stood at approximately 71 percent in 1916 (Raney 1940:319). Simultaneously, the dry forces worked to bring about national prohibition, directing a significant amount of energy toward the federal government. By 1914, these efforts had begun to bear fruit: in December of that year the House of Representatives drew public attention to a debate on a resolution for submitting a prohibition amendment to the various states for ratification. Although the measure passed, it lacked the requisite two-thirds majority and went no farther. Significantly, all but one of Wisconsin's representatives opposed the measure.

The austerity that accompanied American entry into the First World War furthered the

prohibitionist cause. In June 1917, the use of grain for the production of distilled liquors was forbidden. In addition, the perceived need for sobriety on the part of a nation engaged in battle helped create an atmosphere favorable to prohibition; in the fall of 1919 both houses of Congress agreed to submit the prohibition resolution to the states. In the House, the Wisconsin delegation was split. In the Senate, La Follette, who vacillated on the issue of prohibition, voted in favor of the resolution (Wisconsin's other Senator, Paul O. Husting, had recently passed away, leaving a vacant seat) (Raney 1940:320,352). Although wartime exigencies helped secure Congressional support for prohibition, the impact of the war should not be exaggerated. "The advent of prohibition in the United States was the fruit of a generation or more of education and propaganda which had created a majority in favor of such legislation" (Raney 1940:320).

The ratification battle in Wisconsin was a fierce one. Except for a small portion of the State Senate, the legislature which eventually ratified the eighteenth amendment was elected in the fall of 1918. This election focused, almost obsessively, upon the liquor issue. The Anti-Saloon League contributed $70,000 towards the campaigns of confirmed dry candidates. The League also launched an aggressive campaign against German American brewers and their association with the German American Alliance, whose charter was revoked that year for "engaging in pro-German activities." One prohibitionist claimed that "the worst of all German enemies, the most treacherous, the most menacing, are Pabst, Schlitz, Blatz, and Miller" (Timerlake 1963:179).

Meanwhile, the once powerful German element stood by helpless, rendered impotent by the still strong anti-German sentiment aroused by the War. In January 1919, Wisconsin became the 38th state to ratify the eighteenth amendment: too late to have any real effect, as the 36 states needed had already indicated their support. In July 1919, the state legislature passed the Mulberger Act, outlawing the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcohol within the state, and establishing a state prohibition commission. Two years later, the Mulberger Act was strengthened by a piece of legislation known as the Sverson Act (Raney 1949:321).

Economic interest was a compelling reason for German Americans to oppose prohibition. Beer was not only culturally important, but also of considerable economic significance to Wisconsin's German born population. Some of the nation's largest breweries, Miller, Shlitz, and Blatz, for example, were Wisconsin-based and owned by Germans. As the prohibition crusade mounted, there was increasingly close cooperation between the National German American Alliance and both the United States Brewers Association and the National Association of Commerce and Labor, a "front" organization of businessmen (Timberlake 1963:107,165).

While Germans did, in fact, generally oppose prohibition for both economic and cultural reasons, the German born population was by no means homogeneous, or unanimously in opposition to prohibition. Germans split along religious and political lines. The majority of Germans were Catholic and voted Democratic (anti-prohitionist), while non-Lutheran Protestants and Jews usually voted Republican. Lutherans fluctuated according to issues and candidates. There was a considerable socialist following among Milwaukee's German population, and there were "free thinking" groups scattered throughout the state, often associated with Turner Societies, which opposed the authoritarianism of all established religions. The Socialist Party, overall, supported prohibition. German socialists did not uniformly fall into line, one way or the other, on the prohibition issue.

The cultural importance of beer to Germans fed nativist, anti-German sentiments among prohibitionists, which peaked during World War I when prohibition sentiment was at its highest. The fact that Germans drank beer, rather than hard alcohol, could suggest that Germans were in fact less intemperate than Yankee wets. A leading German newspaper in Milwaukee posed the issue not in terms of alcohol consumption, but rather "temperance-despotism or Democracy and personal freedom" (Byrne 1959:119).

Although the temperance reformers rejoiced, prohibition was not very popular in Wisconsin. In April 1929, in a referendum on the Sverson Act, 350,000 Wisconsin voters indicated that they favored its repeal, while barely 200,000 desired to retain it. The next month the legislature repealed the law, abolishing the prohibition commission. Of course, Wisconsin remained dry, due to the federal enforcing act, the Volstead Act. The significant point to be made is that at no time were a majority of Wisconsin citizens supporters of prohibition. Rather, prohibition in the state was due to the conjunction of three factors: "a genuine prohibition sentiment embraced by a majority in the United States and a militant minority in Wisconsin, skillful pressure politics on the part of this minority. . . and conditions incident to the World War" (Raney 1940:322-323).

When Prohibition came to an end in 1933, first with the federal legalization of light wine and beer in March and then with the ratification of the twenty-first amendment in December, the temperance movement had practically dissolved. During the Prohibition years, temperance groups performed a "watchdog" function, keeping an eye out for bootlegging activities and calling the attention of local authorities to neighborhood speakeasys and the like. However, to a large and certain degree, the movement's very success rendered it superfluous. Various groups, most notable the WCTU, have remained active to the present day, but never again have been able to hold much sway over public opinion.

IDENTIFICATION

Resource Types. Private residences associated with temperance leaders, halls and meeting rooms, churches, Good Templar halls and lodges, union halls (Knights of Labor).

Locational Patterns of Resource Types. Resources associated with the temperance movement generally are located in residential neighborhoods (homes of prominent reformers), and city center areas (halls and meeting places). The movement in Wisconsin was especially strong in the northern section of the state, and this area may contain more sites and structures than the southern region.

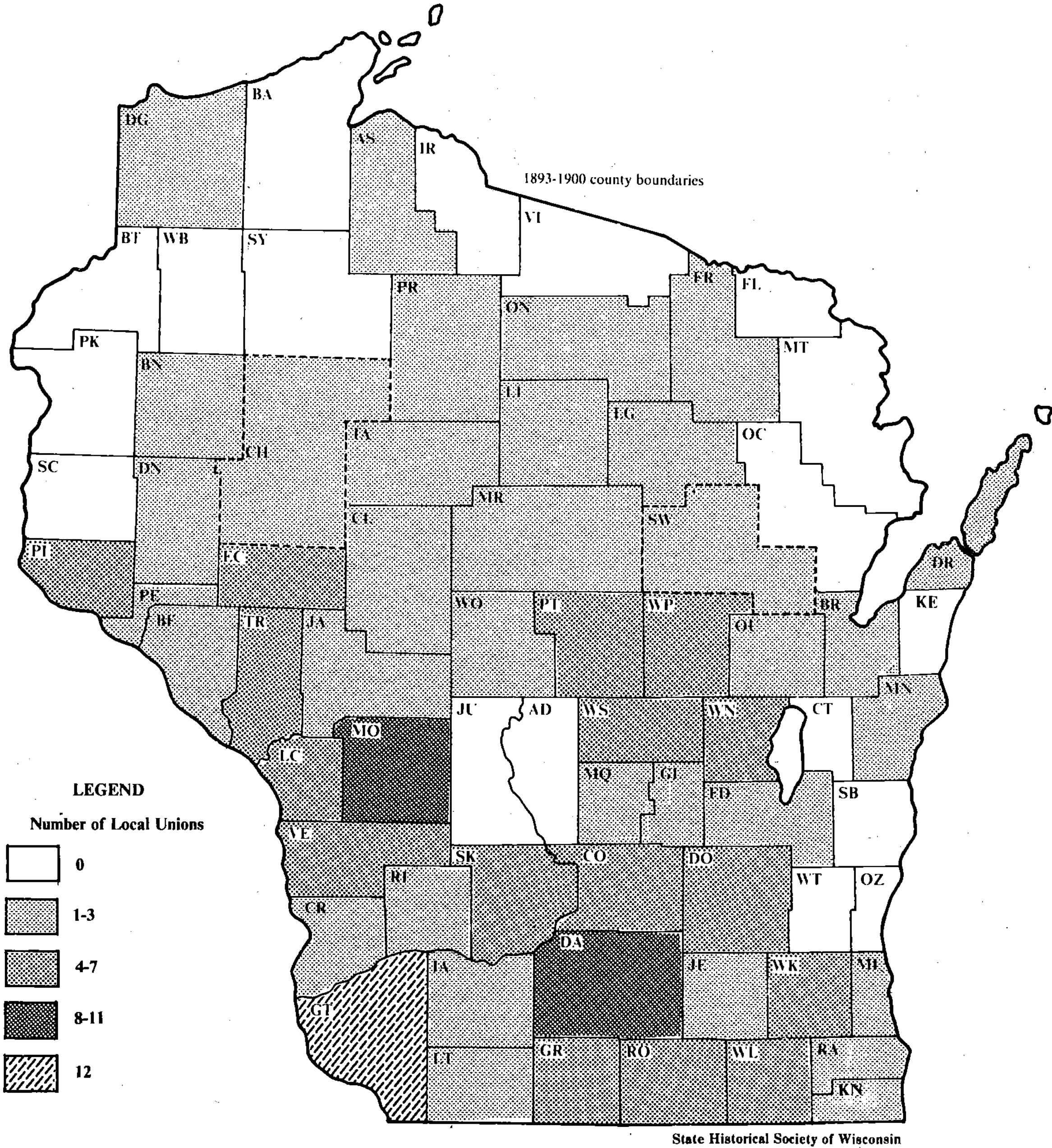
Previous Surveys. Structures associated with the temperance movement were mentioned, but not necessarily identified, in the intensive surveys of Waukesha, Sturgeon Bay, New Richmond, Kaukauna, Ashland, Beloit, Eau Claire, and the southwestern mining surveys.

Survey and Research Needs. Research designed to provide accurate statistical data on temperance group membership is needed, especially in the German dominated southeast. Information on the distributional pattern, activities, and membership levels of the smaller temperance societies is needed as well. An elucidation of the important connection between the temperance movement and the various Protestant denominations would aid in assessing the local social and political impact of individual churches. Finally, more research should be conducted on the temperance element in working class politics in the late nineteenth century, especially in connection with the Knights of Labor and city-wide labor bodies in the larger urban centers. A thematic survey to discover buildings associated with the state's most prominent temperance leaders is needed. All intensive surveys should strive to disciver local seats of temperance activity.

EVALUATION

National Register Listings and Determinations of Eligibility
Frances Willard Schoolhouse (1853), Craig Ave., Janesville, Rock County (NRHP 1977)

Context Considerations. Structures associated with the temperance movement tended to be multifunctional. Meeting halls often served many groups, especially when they were publicly owned. Knights of Labor halls also housed libraries, cooperatives, and union offices. Structures should be evaluated in regard to their primary purpose, but consideration should be given to the significance of the temperance organization. Significance may be concerned with the impact of an organization on local politics, economics, and society.



Women's Christian Temperance Union, Local Unions in 1900, by county

Source: Women's Christian Temperance Union of Wisconsin, *Minutes, 1900*, pp. 64-65, 118-125.

Anonymous
1891 Cyclopaedia of Temperance and Prohibition. Funk and Wagnalls, New York.
Most definitely a good source.

Blocker, Jack S.
1976 Retreat from Reform: The Prohibition Movement in the United States, 1890-1913. Greenwood Press, Westport, CT.
One of the best treatments of the later prohibition movement.

1979 Alcohol, Reform, and Society: The Liquor Issue in Social Context. Greenwood Press, Westport, CT.
Collection of essays, sociological slant, extends well into the twentieth century.

Bordin, Ruth B.A.
1981 Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty 1873-1900. Temple University Press, Philadelphia.
Best treatment from a feminist perspective, sheds new light on women's participation in the movement.

Benson, Ronald M.
1974 American Workers and Temperance Reform, 1866-1933. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame.
Poor analysis but useful information on working class temperance activity and sentiment.

Brownsword, Joanne J.
1960 Good Templars in Wisconsin 1854-1880. Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Wisconsin.
Most complete history of the organization. Facts are abundant, but analysis is less than satisfactory.

Byrne, Frank L.
1951 Cold Water Crusade: The Antebellum Wisconsin Temperance Movement. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin.
Superb treatment of the early movement in the state.

1958 "Maine Law Versus Lager Beer: A Dilemma of Wisconsin's Young Republican Party." Wisconsin Magazine of History 42(2):115-123.

1961 Prophet of Prohibition: Neal Dow and His Crusade. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.

Cashman, Sean D.
1981 Prohibition: The Lie of the Land. Free Press, New York.
Idiosyncratic examination of twentieth century prohibition; good information on bootlegging activity.

Cherrington, Ernest L.
1913 History of the Anti-Saloon League. American Issue Publishing Company, Westville, OH.
A classic, if highly partisan, treatment of an important late nineteenth century organization.

1920 The Evolution of Prohibition in the United States. American Issue Publishing Company, Westville, OH.
Useful but dated.

Clark, Norman H.
1976 Deliver Us From Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition. W.W. Norton and Company, New York.
The stress here is on ideology.

Cochran, Thomas C.
1948 The Pabst Brewing Company: The History of an American Business. New York University Press, New York.
Contains some relevant information on the "wet" counterattack and political clout of the Milwaukee brewing industry.

Colvin, D. Leigh
1926 Prohibition in the United States: A History of the Prohibition Party and the Prohibition Movement. G. H. Doran, New York.
More useful a a primary source than as a source of accurate information and sober analysis.

Current, Richard N.
1976 The History of Wisconsin (vol. 2): The Civil War Era, 1848-73. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.
Very helpful, great deal of synthesis; see especially pp. 142-143, 215-216, 226-227.

Deutsch, Herman J.
1931 "Yankee-Teuton Rivalry in Wisconsin Politics in the Seventies." Wisconsin Magazine of History 14(3):262-282.
Very good treatment of the central dynamic in Wisconsin temperance politics.

Dunford, Edward B.
1943 The History of the Temperance Movement. Temperance Press, Washington, D.C.

Englemann, Larry
1979 Intemperance: The Lost War Against Liquor. Free Press, New York.

Epstein, Barbara L.
1981 The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism and Temperance in Nineteenth Century America. Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, CT.
Good treatment, from a feminist perspective, of the nexus between religion, temperance and women.

Gusfield, Joseph R.
1963 Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL.
Political history in the Hofstadter tradition.

Hays, Agnes D.
1974 Heritage of Dedication: One Hundred Years of the National Women's Christian Temeperance Union, 1874-1974. Signal Press, Evanston, IL.
Admiring in-house history of the WCTU; not too useful, save for names and dates.

Kleppner, Paul
1970 The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics, 1850-1900. Free Press, New York.
A classic work which provides a valuable context in which to set the postbellum temperance movement.

Kobler, John
1973 Ardent Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition. Putnam, New York.
Good treatment of twentieth century prohibition on the national level.

Krout, John A.
1925 The Origins of Prohibition. A.A. Knopf, New York.
In many ways still the best single work on temperance and prohibition.

Lucker, Jeffrey
1968 The Politics of Prohibition in Wisconsin, 1917-1933. Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin.

Meyer, Paul R.
1976 The Transformation of American Temperance: The Popularization and Radicalization of a Reform Movement, 1813-1860. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa.
One of the best works on the early movement.

Miller, Robert M.
1958 American Protestantism and Social Issues. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.
Deals with the religious aspect of social reform, some useful information on temperance.

Nesbit, Robert C.
1973 Wisconsin: A History. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison.
Good synthesis, see especially pp. 237-239, 368-370, 394-395, 356-357.

Odegard, Peter H.
1928 Pressure Politics: The Story of the Anti-Saloon League. Columbia University Press, New York.

Otis, Delos S.
1919 The Rise of National Prohibition, 1865-1919. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin.

Porter, Susan M.
1896 Temperance Legislation in Wisconsin, 1849-1856. Unpublished B.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin.

Raney, William F.
1940 Wisconsin: A Story of Progress. Prentice Hall, New York.
See especially pp. 316-317, 143-144, 321-322.

Rumbarger, John J.
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Schafer, Joseph J.
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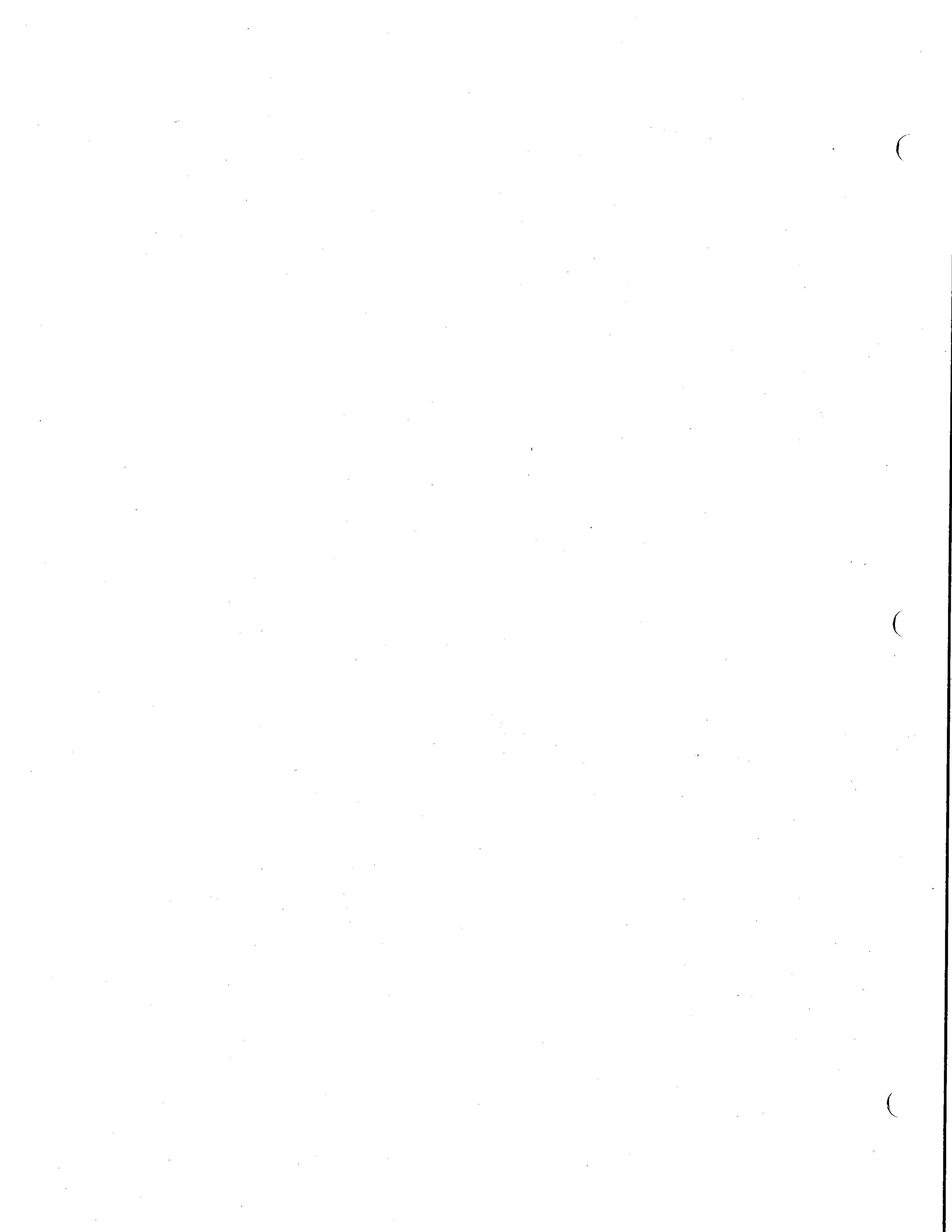
Smith, Alice E.
1973 The History of Wisconsin (vol. 1): From Exploration to Statehood. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.
Excellent synthesis, well-documented, of early temperance movement in the state. See especially pp. 626-630.

Thelen, David P.
1964 "La Follette and the Temperance Crusade." Wisconsin Magazine of History 47(4):291-300.

Turner, James R.
1972 The American Prohibition Movement, 1865-1897. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin.
Useful for comparing the Wisconsin experience with that of other states and regions.

Tyrell, Ian R.
1979 Sobering Up: From Temperance to Prohibition in Antebellum America, 1800-1860. Greenwood Press, Westport, CT.

Weisensel, Peter R.
1965 The Wisconsin Temperance Crusade to 1919. Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Wisconsin.
Excellent piece of scholarship, loaded with information.



Temporal Boundaries: 1850-1920, with particular emphasis on the period 1885-1920.

Spatial Boundaries: Entire state.

Related Study Units: Women's Organizations, Temperance Movement.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Nationally, the women's suffrage movement had its origins in social movements dating from before the Civil War, particularly the abolition, temperance, and social purity campaigns. Many of the suffrage movement's leading spokespersons, including Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, saw women's suffrage as simply a logical extension of citizenship to women, as it had been extended to blacks in the fourteenth and fifteenth amendements, for which they had actively fought. As the nineteenth century came to a close, the social and economic changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution transformed the traditional position and outlook of American women. They entered the workforce in unprecedented numbers, gaining a significant measure of economic independence for the first time. For white, middle and upper class women, the doors to education, professional occupations, and careers, long shut tight, slowly began to open. The nucleus of the women's suffrage movement was drawn from these two groups of women: an older generation of social reformers and a younger generation of activists who found that the traditional domestic sphere for women could no longer engage their interests and abilities. As one writer observed, "the woman suffrage movement was one significant part of this continuing change in the position of women, and the woman suffrage agitation in Wisconsin formed a significant part of this nationwide ferment" (Graves 1954:351).

The campaign for female suffrage in Wisconsin followed the same general pattern as the national movement. "Three distinct stages mark the evolution of woman suffrage agitation. Before the Civil War, the woman's rights movement was part of a larger force aiming at universal reform. During the Reconstruction era, the reform community disintegrated into scattered, independent forces. In 1890, two rival suffrage organizations, the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association, merged to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association. From 1890 on, the suffrage movement "grew into a tightly coordinated national organization" (Buhle 1978:1; Kraditor 1965:4). Before the Civil War, suffrage sentiment in Wisconsin surfaced only occasionally; for the most part it was subsumed within broader movements aimed at securing moral reform, and temperance or prohibition. However, it should be noted that in this period there were several unsuccessful attempts on the part of progressive-minded legislators, independent of any grass roots movement, to introduce legislation which would widen suffrage to include blacks and women. Between the end of the War and the mid 1880s, the suffrage movement in the state came into its own. Its activities in this period were tentative and sporadic. It failed to build any significant social base among Wisconsin women, preferring instead to curry favor with sympathetic politicians. Nevertheless, the seeds of success were planted in this era as the issue of female suffrage was brought to the fore. After 1885, Wisconsin women activists succeeded in forging a remarkably efficient, highly organized, and widespread movement. Although the movement suffered some discouraging defeats on the state level (most notably the failed 1912 Suffrage Referendum), by the second decade of the twentieth century, its efforts had culminated in victory with the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment to the federal constitution.

In the years prior to the Civil War, the suffrage issue was not a prominent one. Although the State Constitution originally proposed in 1846 would have granted women the right to vote and to hold property apart from their husbands, the Constitution adopted in 1848 omitted these measures. Hence from the moment of statehood onward, Wisconsin women were disfranchised (Raney 1940:324; Graves 1954:2-6). In 1851, the University of Wisconsin's Athenaean Society sponsored a lively debate on the question of woman suffrage, but this was essentially a moot exercise. The first real suffrage activity in the state came about in 1853 when noted New England women activists Lydia Fowler and Clarina Howard Nichols toured Wisconsin under the auspices of local temperance groups; while the women centered their lectures on the liquor question, they included strong pleas for women's rights in each address. Two years later, Lucy Stone travelled through Wisconsin on a similar tour. Stone's speaking engagements were billed as speeches on the necessity of abolishing slavery, but she, like many feminists of the period, forcefully linked this issue of basic rights to that of woman suffrage (Graves 1954:6-11; Grant 1980:107).

There was little local, Wisconsin-based suffrage agitation in this period. One notable exception, however, merits mention: in the mid-1850s Mathilde Franciska Anneke, a refugee from the failed German Revolution of 1848, re-established her radical German language newspaper, Frauenzeitung, in Milwaukee. Aimed at women, the paper stressed political and economic equality with strong socialist overtones. Anneke went on to play a key role in both the Wisconsin and national suffrage movements, serving as a vice-president of the National Woman Suffrage Association. Her limited command of English, however, restricted her effectiveness as an organizer (Graves 1954:14-15; Current 1976:123).

The earliest Wisconsin-based legislative initiative aimed at extending the vote to women came in 1867 when John T. Dow, an assemblyman from Rock County, introduced a universal suffrage bill. The measure was soundly defeated, in both 1867 and 1868 when it was reintroduced by Dow's successor D.E. Maxson (Graves 1954:22-25, Current 1976:531). Undaunted, Dow continued the fight. In October of 1867, he organized and presided over the state's first suffrage convention, held in Janesville. This meeting laid the groundwork for the establishment of the Equal Rights Association of Wisconsin, organized a year later at a founding convention in Fond du Lac's Music Hall. Dow was installed as president of the Association, and Paulina Roberts of Racine and Mrs. L.A. Hooker of Fond du Lac filled the vice-presidential positions (Graves 1954:25-27; Current 1976:532). Available evidence suggests that the Equal Rights Association accomplished little of substance, and quickly lapsed into obscurity. One writer, commenting on the Association's failure to build a base of support, predicted that "the great majority of women in Wisconsin had not yet awakened to a social consciousness that they would eventually come to feel" (Graves 1954:28). Yet, the formation of this early suffrage organization was important, for "it does show that the seed was there. Long years of appeal to justice and reason would provide fertilization and germination" (Graves 1954:28).

The place of the Equal Rights Association soon was taken over by another group that proved to be more enduring: The Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association (WWSA). The organization of the WWSA reflected, in part, a change of strategy on the part of the national suffrage movement, which in the late 1860s began to expand its agitational efforts through the formation of state societies. Founded in February of 1869, at a Milwaukee convention attended by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association worked diligently, lobbying in Madison for the right to vote. Capably directed by Dr. Laura Ross Wolcott of Milwaukee, one of the first female medical practitioners in the state, the WWSA succeeded, with the help of friendly politicians, in drafting and introducing numerous suffrage bills. The legislature, however, steadfastly refused to pass these measures. A suffrage bill in 1870 died in committee. In 1871, Noah D. Comstock of Trempealeau County introduced a piece of legislation granting the right to vote to tax paying women, but it was killed by the Senate. Several petitions,

collected by the WWSA and other local groups, were routinely accepted by the legislature and then ignored (Graves 1954:28-38; Grant 1980:108). A good part of the staunch opposition to woman suffrage stemmed from the linking, in the public mind, of suffrage with temperance and prohibition sentiment. Many otherwise sympathetic politicians (especially Democrats) declined to support suffrage legislation out of fear of political backlash and reprisal from their largely "wet" constituents. Their fears were not unfounded. Many of the older generation suffragists had their political beginnings in the temperance and prohibition movements and clearly made connection between the causes. They believed that women's votes would effect a moral reform in the political sphere; by virtue of their moral superiority, women's votes could counter intemperance and lawlessness. Logically, the powerful and growing liquor and brewing lobby actively opposed any measure which would extend voting rights to women (Flexner 1974:260; Nesbit 1973:395). Frustrated over the string of defeats, one advocate remarked in 1873 that the suffragists seemed to enjoy about the same social standing as advocates of arson (Current 1976:533).

Wisconsin suffrage activists achieved a minor victory in 1885 when both houses of the State Legislature passed a school suffrage bill, allowing women to cast their ballots in elections pertaining to educational matters. The bill became law the following year after it passed a statewide referendum by a close vote (Grant 1980:108). Activists used the new law as a wedge, pressing the equal rights issue by attempting to vote in non-school elections. In 1887, suffragists took the matter to the courts. The incident that precipitated the legal action occurred in Racine where authorities denied Reverend Olympia Brown the right to vote in a municipal election. Although the Racine County Circuit Court upheld Brown's right to vote, the State Supreme Court reversed the decision, ruling that the legislative intent behind the law had been for women to vote only for specific school officials. In a second case arising out of a contested Oconto County election, the Court gutted the law, declaring that it "merely set forth a principle, and that further legislation was required to implement proper voting procedure for women" (Grant 1980:108; Graves 1954:65-78).

The financial costs of the litigation, borne by the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association, practically ruined the organization. In addition, there was much criticism from within its own ranks for ever having gone to court in the first place. In debt, ignored by those in power, and ridiculed by a patriarchal public, the WWSA found itself on hard times. Membership fell off at an alarming rate; by the turn of the century it had dwindled to less than seventy (Graves 1954:78-80). Olympia Brown called this period the "Great Desert of Woman Suffrage" and observed that "people no longer come to meetings from curiosity, ridicule had lost its force; the stale old jokes no longer amused; no one came even to scoff" (quoted in Graves 1954:355).

The great problem that the movement had failed to resolve was that of building grass roots support. It had done little actual organizing and hence never surmounted the obstacle of female apathy and indifference, let alone active hostility on the part of men. In the early 1880s, the Racine Journal (no friend of the women's movement) accurately editorialized that only when a great mass of women demanded the ballot would the tide turn: "So far the agitators have made little progress in convincing their own sex. The great majority of women seem to be content with exclusion from the responsibilities of government and manifest no absorbing ambition to fill offices. So far as appears not one woman in twenty wants to vote and it is doubtful if one in fifty would vote were they given the chance. The future may show a decided change in the sentiment of womankind but until a radical change is brought about the effort to secure them the privilege of suffrage will prove abortive" (quoted in Graves 1954:42).

Failure to achieve any substantial victory after the 1885 school suffrage bill accentuated an already existing conflict: the generational one. Younger women were influenced by the militant tactics of the English suffragists and by the radicalism of the burgeoning Socialist

Party which had gained considerable support in Wisconsin. They wanted a more dynamic, forceful approach to organizing and agitation. They directed their anger against the older women, particularly Olympia Brown, who had founded the movement but had declined to actively recruit supporters. This older generation believed that the WWSA should maintain a low profile to avoid arousing the ire of its opponents. It worked among elite women and politicians, and showed no interest in reaching out towards middle-class or working women (Grant 1980:110). The comments of Mary Swain Wagner were typical of the young group. Speaking in 1910, she denounced the WWSA's leaders as "a bunch of doddering old ladies" and asserted that the state had not had a real suffrage association for years, calling for the formation of a new organization with live members instead of dead ones (Graves 1954:116). Sentiment in support of a separate organization had grown steadily during the period 1890-1910 and culminated in 1911 with the formation of the Political Equality League (PEL). The constituency of the Political Equality League was considerably more radical than that of the WWSA, attracting some of the movement's most dynamic, capable women, including Ada James and Socialist Crystal Eastman Benedict. For a time, the PEL overshadowed the older WWSA whose members were largely white, middle class Protestants whose politics were often conservative and nativistic.

Ada James was the moving force behind the Political Equality League. A resident of Richland Center, James had been involved in the women's movement since the age of 16, encouraged by her progressive parents. Her mother, Laura James, was an active suffragist, and her father, State Senator David G. James, was one of the few staunch allies of the suffragists in the Legislature. Under her capable direction, the League succeeded in broadening the movement's base of support. Instrumental in this regard was James' recruitment of several capable, influential Wisconsin women to the cause, including Belle Case La Follette. La Follette introduced the suffragists to mass organizing techniques successfully used by her husband Robert. Soon, woman activists were seen speaking on street corners, "stumping" in parks, going door-to-door with promotional literature, shaking hands at factory gates, and addressing union meetings, civic organizations, and religious groups. Soon, the Political Equality League had overtaken the WWSA in size, and in so doing, pressured the latter group to adopt some of its bold tactics (Grant 1980:109-112).

Suffrage organizations frequently met in the homes of local women. Indeed, the main organizational technique was the "parlor meeting" in which sympathetic women would be contacted by a suffrage group and convinced to invited a number of friends to her home for a discussion of women's rights. Pledge cards and informational literature would be distributed, and occasionally the suffrage organization would provide a guest speaker. Many local chapters of the WWSA and Political Equality League grew out of previously existing women's groups: sewing circles, literary clubs, luncheon organizatos, and the like. These, too, met in the homes of members. Likewise, headquarters of most groups were based in the homes of leaders. Conventions and larger meetings were held in civic halls, auditoriums, and in warm weather in outdoor tents often located on county fairgrounds or in municipal parks.

Although in the broadest terms, the Wisconsin suffrage campaign replicated the movement on the national level. In the years before victory, the suffrage coalition contained a wide array of social forces, including the State Teachers' Association, the Federation of Women's Clubs, the Federation of Labor, Ladies of the Maccabees, the Grange, the Farmer's Society of Equity, the Ministerial Association, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the Social Democratic Party. What was exceptional about the Wisconsin experience, however, was the central role played by Milwaukee Socialists, and their considerable following among the city's sizable German American population. German association with the state's liquor and brewing interests created conflicts with prohibition and temperance organizations with whom women's suffrage was often linked. The antagonisms between these various groups came to a head in the context of World

War I when anti-war Socialists and German-Americans were red-baited and accused of being anti-American. They were pitted against the mainstream suffragists, riding high on the wave of pro-war patriotism. The conflict found its most bitter expression in the School Board Elections of 1917-1919.

From 1910 on, Socialists were dominant in city politics. That year, Milwaukee elected its first socialist mayor, a position the socialists held for the next 40 years. They controlled the City Council and were influential on the School Board, on which Meta Berger, wife of influential Milwaukee socialist Victor Berger, served for 30 years. Socialists, despite intense internal debate on the issue, consistently advocated women's suffrage, and were largely responsible for its final victory. Socialists' support for suffrage had ramifications beyond their role within the suffrage coalition, which was remarkably non-antagonistic in the pre-war years.

By 1911, six states had made provisions for female suffrage (Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, Washington, and California). Encouraged by these gains and bolstered by the formation of the Political Equality League, the movement in Wisconsin received a new lease on life. A combination of growing public support and increased lobbying with state legislators helped Wisconsin suffragists succeed in pressuring the legislature to pass a bill calling for a referendum on female suffrage. Signed by Governor Francis McGovern on June 2, 1911, the bill provided for a referendum in November of 1912. The task before them, the Wisconsin suffragists began to mobilize with feverish intensity.

The referendum campaign brought about a partial rapprochement between the WWSA and the Political Equality League. The two groups cooperated, albeit uneasily at times. Their most successful joint venture was the establishment of a speakers bureau which dispatched lecturers to labor and farm conventions, school meetings, and the like (Grant 1980:114). Yet, it was the more innovative Political Equality League that gave the dynamism to the campaign. The League sponsored highly publicized "auto junkets": automobile tours throughout the state with suffragists speaking from an open car in each small community along the route. It published and distributed to all newspapers in the state a news sheet, The Press Bulletin, a compact distillation of suffragist news designed to dispell misunderstanding and to attract favorable media coverage. It also made an effort to appeal to minority groups, publishing broadsides in five foreign languages. It even organized a Men's League for Woman Suffrage, a venture endorsed by the University of Wisconsin's football coaching staff (Grant 1980:115)! In Milwaukee, a black suffrage group was organized under the auspices of the St. Mark African Methodist Church. During the summer and autumn months in 1912, the suffragists set up rest tents at state and county fairs, where babysitting was provided along with refreshments and suffrage literature. All in all, women organized in unprecendented fashion.

Nevertheless, the referendum failed to pass. In fact, it fell short by almost 100,000 votes. A major factor in the defeat, as in earlier efforts, was the opposition of the brewery, liquor, and tavern interests who feared that if women were enfranchised they would support prohibition measures. State Senator S. M. March of Neillsville, in a letter to Ada James, agreed that liquor interests had stymied woman suffrage. He noted that "Wisconsin is progressive in politics just so long as the progressive measure does not in any way interfere directly or indirectly with the liquor interests, but as soon as that special interest is touched we are at the rear of the procession of states, so far as progress is concerned" (quoted in Graves 1954:219). Other factors contributing to the failure of the 1912 referendum include the vigorous opposition of the German-Americans in the southeast portion of the state, an opposition related to the dominance of the brewing industry in that area. Even wards that had overwhelmingly supported Socialist Victor Berger in his bid for a Congressional seat turned out to vote against the suffrage amendment.

According to Crystal Eastman Benedict, the campaign manager, German-American

socialists and sympathizers split on the suffrage issue: "most of the Socialist Party members stood by their platform and voted with us, but their sympathizers did not" (Buhle 1978:70). German-Americans, socialists, and non-socialists alike were divided on women's rights issues. Even Congressman Berger was sometimes ambivalent, according to his wife Meta Berger, an ardent suffragist. When the electoral efforts failed, Socialist legislators pushed for a constitutional amendment the following year; the amendment passed in the Senate by 17 to 15 and in the Assembly by 47 to 26. The measure was vetoed by Republican governor Francis McGovern on the grounds that it did not represent the public sentiment expressed in the previous election (Buenker 1981:132).

Despite the failure of the suffrage referendum and the constitutional amendment, some good emerged from the campaigns. The suffrage movement had moved forward; out of the defeat arose a new "awareness by voters and women of the issues behind the women's movement and the integration of suffrage into the political mainstream" (Grant 1980:117). The organizational foundation erected in 1911 and 1912 served as a solid base upon which the movement built. Furthermore, the WWSA and Political Equality League combined forces, merging in 1913 and retaining the name of the former group (Raney 1940:325).

Ada James continued to provide leadership and vision to the women's movement. An example of her innovative talent was the 1914 suffrage school that convened in Madison. Inspired by the success of a similar workshop held in New York the previous year, the Wisconsin session instructed women in the best methods of organizing. Six courses were offered: the legal and economic status of women, Wisconsin laws governing women and children, public speaking for suffrage, propaganda and press work for suffrage, organization for suffrage, and the history of woman suffrage. In addition several lectures were given, including talks on "The Property Rights of Women", and "The Economic Aspects of the Woman Movement" (Graves 1954:247-248).

1915 proved a difficult year for the Wisconsin women's movement. Three separate suffrage bills considered by the legislature failed to reach a vote despite persistent lobbying and pressure (Graves 1954:254-256). Worse, disunion again plagued the suffragists. The Congressional Union (CU), a new national suffrage organization devoted to working toward a federal amendment to the Constitution, was formed in 1913; in 1917 it became the National Woman's Party. The Congressional Union grew out of a committe of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. The two organizations shared the ultimate goal of universal woman suffrage but differed over tactics. The NAWSA had adopted a state-by-state strategy, working its way up to amendment of the federal constitution. The Congressional Union decided that the time was ripe for a federal amendment. Borrowing militant tactics from their British sisters, members of the CU picketed daily in front of the White House, provoked massive arrests, went on hunger strikes, and had to be forcibly fed. The CU also waged a punitive campaign against the Democrats, whom they held responsible for women's disenfranchisement. This tactic stood in contrast to those of the NAWSA, which had always been decidedly non-partisan (Haper 1922:675-677).

Leaders of the Wisconsin movement, as with the national one, were split over the new organization. Some women felt it was too militant and would harm the cause; others, including Ada James and Zona Gale of Portage, lent their support to the Congressional Union. In 1916, a Wisconsin branch of the CU was formed with James as chairperson, and Harriet Harvey of Racine, Mrs. Richard Lloyd Jones of Madison, and Mrs. William Welch of Milwaukee as vice-chairpeople. In Wisconsin, the CU was relatively inactive. It accomplished little more than mailing out announcements and literature, including the CU publication The Suffragist, all of which came from national headquarters in Washington, D.C. There is record of only a single local branch of the CU being formed, in Milwaukee by Crystal Eastman Benedict. Thus, the career of the Congressional Union was a discouraging spectacle to its followers. By the end of 1916 the only really prominent

woman who espoused it was Ada James (Graves 1954:261-269).

World War I brought further dissension and factionalism to the Wisconsin suffrage movement, as it did to most other reform movements. On the one hand, there was a sizeable group of women opposed to the war effort, including socialists and radicals as well as a number of German-Americans. But there was also an even larger group which supported the war and considered their anti-war sisters as traitors. This latter group held sway and succeeded in using the WWSA as an organ of patriotic propaganda. The 1917 WWSA convention, for example, relentlessly harped on patriotism. It held a "loyalty luncheon" replete with speeches and toasts in support of the war, adopted a pledge of loyalty, and went on record condemning those woman's groups which opposed the war and militarism. This jingoism and flag waving had an unfortunate effect in that the WWSA lost several of its most talented organizers, including Ada James, Theodora Youmans of Waukesha, and Meta Berger of Milwaukee, who either resigned or were suspended for their pacifist convictions (Graves 1954:282-287).

The School Board election of 1919 was the political arena in which socialist and non-socialists battled over the Americanization of foreigners and support for the war effort. Both sides looked to women's votes to be the cutting edge in their victory. Both camps urged women to "do it for the children's sake" (Buenker 1981:136). The "non-partisan" coalition, or the anti-socialist coalition, consisted of groups such as the Voter's League, the Good Government League, the Loyalty League, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Americanization Committee of the WWSA. The latter was, ironically, directed by Mary Wood Simons, who broke with the Socialists over patriotism and war. The issues over which the two sides fought were the loyalty and cultural integrity of German-Americans and what the socialists saw as an effort to use schools "as instruments of Americanization." The School Board elections split the once united suffrage coalition, with a patriotic and nativist constituency emerging victorious. The socialists' failure to rally women to their progressive cause was a bitter lesson that votes for women would not necessarily bolster the socialist cause (Buenker 1981:140).

Yet, in another regard the war aided the suffrage movement. It helped create an atmosphere favorable to the extension of the vote. As the war drew to a close Congress was deluged with petitions from across the country. Both major parties, as well as President Wilson and his cabinet, went on record favoring woman suffrage. After the nineteenth amendment was passed subject to ratification by the states, Wisconsin and neighboring Illinois began a race to become the first state to approve the measure. Illinois (which had granted women the right to vote in 1916) became the first, but only by a few hours, for the Wisconsin ratification papers arrived in Washington later in the afternoon of June 12, 1919. Soon afterwards, with the suffrage question finally resolved, the WWSA dissolved itself and reformed as the League of Women Voters.

The struggle of Wisconsin women for the right to vote spanned a period of over fifty years and coincided with similar struggles waged by women in other parts of the United States. Beginning in the middle of the nineteenth centry, there was a long period of agitation by scattered groups before an organization was perfected. Then came another long period when progress seemed to be almost completely absent. Finally, the suffragists were swept to success in the wake of changes in the concept of the place and duty of women in society and the perfection of organizational techniques.

IDENTIFICATION

Resource Types. Private residences of suffrage leaders, civic halls, auditoriums, opera houses, music halls, other meeting places.

Locational Patterns of Resource Types. Resources associated with the suffrage movement are generally located in residential neighborhoods in urban areas (homes of suffragists). Halls and auditoriums in which conventions were held tend to be located in downtown and other city center areas. Suffrage activity was more prevalent in the larger cities in the state, particularly in the southeast.

Previous Surveys. No surveys to identify suffrage-associated buildings and sites are known to have been undertaken.

Survey and Research Needs. Various localities should be examined to determine if the homes of feminists and suffrage activists are still standing. Priority should be given to these prominent women: Olympia Brown, Racine; Ada James, Richland Center; Theodora Youmans, Waukesha; Dr. Laura Ross Wolcott, Milwaukee (associated houses known to be gone); and Crystal Eastman Benedict, Milwaukee.

EVALUATION

National Register Listings and Determinations of Eligibility

Zona Gale House (1906), 506 W. Edgewater St., Portage, Columbia County (NRHP 1980).

Victor and Meta Berger House, 2576 N. First St., Milwaukee, Milwaukee County (NRHP 1984, North First Street Historic District, Brewers Hill MRA)

Context Considerations: Many of the residences associated with prominent Wisconsin suffragists will have undergone modification. They should be evaluated in relation to the integrity guidelines and requirements normally used. The use of civic halls and auditoriums by suffrage groups may increase the historical significance of those sites. An opera house, for example, may be historically significant for its use during the suffrage movement.

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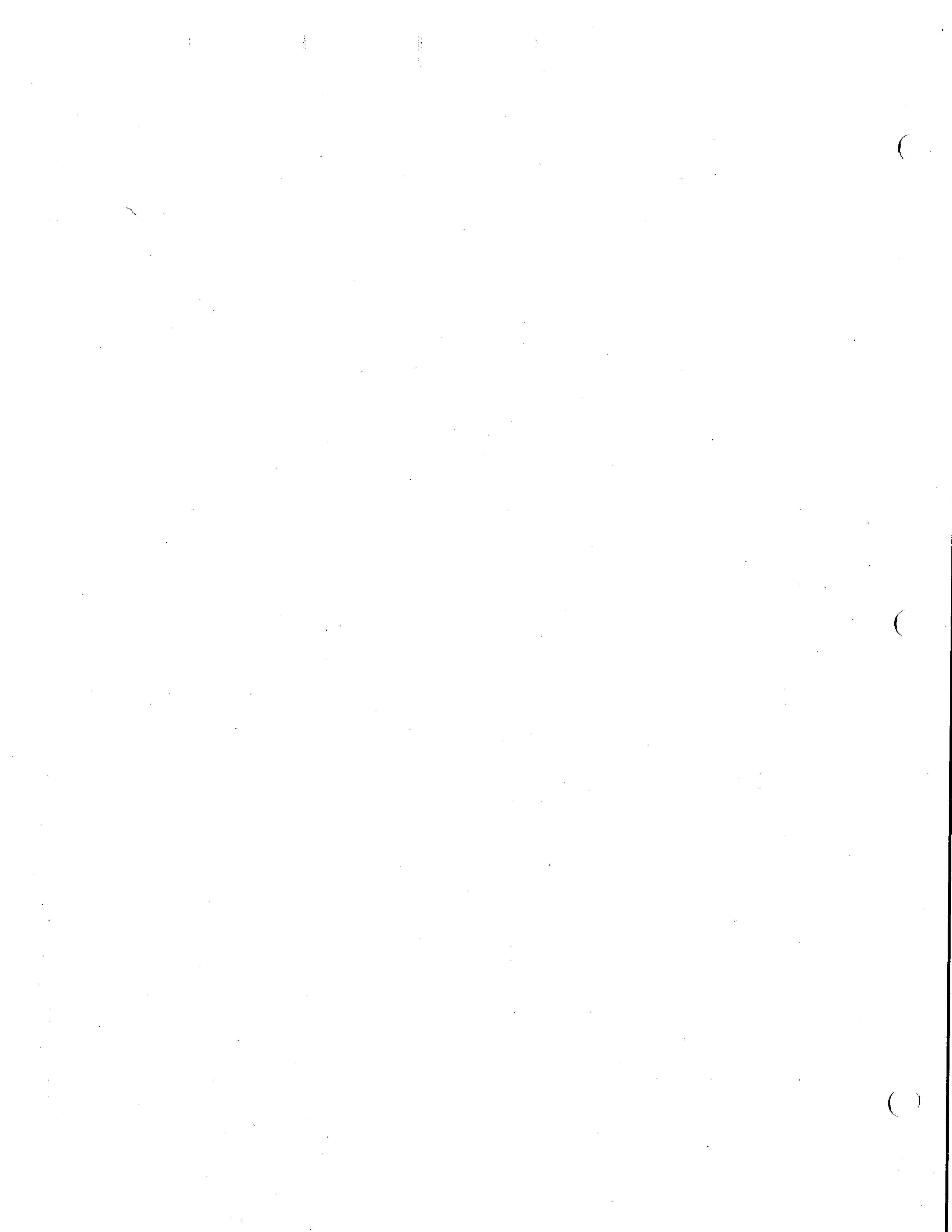

Temporal Boundaries: 1837-1930.

Spatial Boundaries: Entire state, with an emphasis on the major metropolitan areas.

Related Study Units: Woman's Suffrage Movement, Temperance Movement, Early Labor Organizations, Twentieth Century Labor Organization and Legislation, Health Services, Services for the Poor and Disadvantaged.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of women's organizations in Wisconsin parallels their development on the national level, with Wisconsin women creating a formidable network of grassroots organizations. Wisconsin produced a handful of leaders prominent in the women's movement nationally. For instance, Frances Willard, president of the Women's Christian Temperance Movement spent her childhood in Janesville; Carrie Chapman Catt, a suffrage leader, was born in Ripon; and Julia Grace Wales, known internationally in the World War I Peace Movement, taught English literature at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. More important than a handful of exceptional leaders, however, were the myriad of women's organizations in which literally thousands of Wisconsin women were involved.

Although women were sometimes active in the same political organizations as men, they were denied real leadership. They more often created their own organizations, arguing that their sensibilities and consciousness as women defined a uniquely female approach to politics. Women organized for specific reforms, such as the abolition of slavery, the protection of married women's property, temperance, suffrage, and protective labor legislation for women. However, they also had more generally ameliorative concerns, such as better educational opportunities for women, children's health and nutrition, and civic improvement, such as improving public sanitation and creating libraries. Denied access to direct political power, women created their own avenues for change, through pressuring male legislators, petitioning the government, and winning public opinion to their side. Women often justified their activism as the logical extension of their traditional role as homemakers and as nurturers of society's young. Their activities were simply what prominent social worker, Jane Addams, called "municipal housekeeping."

Two of the principal causes around which women organized were temperance/prohibition and women's suffrage, which dominated women's activism in the late decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century. As there is a study unit devoted to each of these issues, this unit will address these two crucial areas of women's organization only cursorily, focusing instead on women's early participation in anti-slavery societies, their club work, and their war and peace work during World War I and after.

In Wisconsin, as elsewhere, many women initially became involved in politics through the anti-slavery crusade. Activity on behalf of enslaved blacks awakened in women a consciousness of their own condition, and their exclusion from a society dominated by white men. For some, this consciousness was pricked by their exclusion from anti-slavery societies, as was the case in Racine County where Wisconsin's first anti-slavery political party was founded in 1842. But in spite of such situations, it was also true that many of abolition's strongest advocates, men and women alike, were also staunch supporters of women's rights, including prominent abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison and Theodora Youmans, president of both the Wisconsin Women's Suffrage Association and the

Wisconsin Federation of Women's Clubs. Youmans observed that "in the early days of statehood abolition of slavery, women's rights, and the temperance cause were inextricably intertwined, and the advocate of one was apt to be the advocate of all" (Youmans 1921:4). Youmans' observation of the "early days" was equally true of later days. There was a remarkable overlap in the areas of women's activism well into the twentieth century as well as a similar pattern in political development, from moral reform and temperance in the mid to late 1800s, to suffrage and protective labor legislation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, to patriotic and peace activities in World War I and after. While this generally describes the pattern of women's organizing, it is also true that women did not always agree on the issues.

The first known organization in Wisconsin made up exclusively of women was the Female Moral Reform Society of Prairie Village (Waukesha), established in 1837, one year after Wisconsin had formed as a territory. As was the case with the earliest women's organizations nationally, the Female Moral Reform Society began as a sewing circle where women had the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas. The group dissolved six years later, divided over the issue of censoring dancing and card parties. At the time of its dissolution, it had 130 members, nearly all of whom were abolitionists, including one former slave (Schwalm 1984:10). Waukesha, a focal point of Wisconsin's anti-slavery activity, was the site of one of two female anti-slavery societies founded in Wisconsin in 1844; the other was founded in Milwaukee. Between 1844 and 1852, women's anti-slavery activities reached their peak (Schwalm 1984:21).

In 1844, women from Racine County participated in a nationwide anti-slavery petition campaign. In the absence of direct representation, abolitionist women adopted petitioning as their primary means of political expression. Women's petitions accounted for half of those received by Congress (Lerner 1976:112). Between January 17 and March 3, 1848, women from 12 states presented Congress with 120 petitions carrying 16,878 names "for a release from slavery of all their sex in the United States." Women circulated petitions at anti-slavery society meetings, in their churches, and by going house to house in their communities. Wisconsin, from its beginning, was a free territory by virtue of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Wisconsin participated in an anti-slavery petition campaign which was occurring nationwide, though probably not nationally coordinated, with the greatest activities occurring in Jefferson, Fond du Lac, Racine, and Waukesha (Schwalm 1984:35).

Women's clubs, more than either temperance or suffrage organizations, accounted for the organizations to which Wisconsin women belonged. In 1882, the Women's Exchange, a unique effort directed by women for women, emerged in Milwaukee as a branch of the Women's Education and Industrial Association. The organization was modeled after the Woman's Educational and Industrial Union that was founded in Boston in 1877. The Milwaukee group claimed to be the second such organization in the country; its founding was spearheaded by Mrs. Marion V. Dudley who had been an active member of the Boston organization prior to moving to Milwaukee. The Milwaukee group revolved around working committees, such as the Education Department, Committee on Hygiene and Physiology, Department of Civil Responsibility, Committee on Protection of Friendless Young Girls, and the Committee on Industries, a job referral agency serving women in the areas of nursing, housekeeping, teaching, and sewing. Life memberships in the Association were taken out by some of the wealthiest and most socially prominent women in Milwaukee. The funds acquired through such women allowed the group to start a series of lectures on art and a class on political economy by January 1883.

The Women's Exchange, the Association's most successful accomplishment, functioned as a consignment center where maiden or widowed women in financial need or women otherwise confined to the home were able to sell handmade household goods upon payment of a dollar per year membership fee. The consignment center received ten percent on the amount of the sale. The Exchange's goal was to encourage women's independence and to

help maintain the self-respect of those who might otherwise have had to rely on charitable assistance. The Exchange stressed the monetary and economic value of women's time and skills and emphasized that home-crafted products were as equally valuable as men's work. Soon after its establishment, the Exchange branched into areas other than retail sales, such as the operation of a restaurant and the sponsorship of training classes. Always concerned with improving women's skills, the Exchange also offered classes in cooking, culinary chemistry, sick room botany, and household economy (State Historical Society of Wisconsin 1986: Item 8; 15-16).

The Wisconsin Federation of Women's Clubs (WFWC) was founded in 1896. By 1900, it included 133 clubs with over 5,000 members. While the club movement has been considered generally conservative, their membership and their activities varied from community to community. From literary clubs to clubs actively promoting or opposing suffrage, they ranged the political spectrum. There were probably women's clubs in every major community and in many smaller communities throughout the state. Some such clubs were formed by minority ethnic and cultural groups such as Jews and blacks.

Historically, Wisconsin's black population has been small in relation to the total population, especially before World War II. Blacks constituted only 176 members of Milwaukee's population of 71,616 in 1870; in 1910, they accounted for only 980 people out of 373,857 (Trotter 1985:8). By 1930 there were only 7,501 blacks out of a total population of 578,249 in the city. In 1940, the black population had increased only to 8,821 (City of Milwaukee, Department of City Development 1986: Immigration and Settlement; 57, 82).

Generally, as the black population increased in northern cities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, blacks became increasingly segregated within the spatial, economic, social, and political structure of the cities (Trotter 1985:3). Between 1890 and 1915 in Milwaukee, racial intolerance towards blacks increased and created significant social and economic barriers that hampered the efforts of Milwaukee blacks to advance themseleves. Among Milwaukee's many ethnic groups of the period, none were more thoroughly relegated to the lower ranks of the urban economy than blacks (City of Milwaukee, Department of Development 1986: Immigration and Settlement; 47; Trotter 1985:14).

In Milwaukee, as in other cities, blacks responded to socioeconomic, political, and racial restrictions by intensifiying their efforts to build a separate black institutional life (Trotter 1985:29). Such attempts were not, however, conducted without deep internal conflicts among blacks themselves. Friction slowly developed within the black community between an elite group of older black immmigrants more interested in white support and an emerging new elite based upon black support (Trotter 1985:27).

Despite problems plaguing black unity, black institutional life developed and expanded betwen 1890 and 1914, gaining its fullest expression in the black press and in the proliferation of black clubs, fraternal organizations, mutual benefit societies, social welfare organizations, and churches (Trotter 1985:29, 31).

Founded in 1868, a missionary society connected to St. Mark's African Methodist Episcopal Church in Milwaukee was Wisconsin's first black women's organization (Kohler 1948:101). The Daughters of Protection, active during the 1880s and 1890s, was the first black women's civic club (Kohler 1948:101). In Milwaukee, the Silver Leaf Charity Club emerged in the 1890s; the Woman's Improvement Club appeared in 1908; and the Phyllis Wheatley Club was founded in 1912 (Trotter 1985:32). Like many other black organizations, women's clubs reflectd the increasing stratificatin among the black community of the period. For instance, the Cream City Social and Literary Society, founded in the 1880s, was made up primarily of wives of Milwaukee's oldest black residents. On the other hand, the Woman's Improvement Club, formed just before World

War I, represented the distinct influence of an emerging new middle class. These clubs sponsored fund-raising socials, balls, picnic, and entertainments of various types. The proceeds were donated to charitable work among blacks (Trotter 1985:32).

Due to racial tensions, it does not appear that blacks and whites commonly joined together in clubs. In fact, in 1900, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, meeting in Milwaukee, refused to seat black women (Trotter 1985:29).

Prior to World War I, there were less that 3,000 blacks in Wisconsin. Black migration to northern cities, however, increased somewhat during the war to bolster war efforts. As a result of an expanded population, new black women's clubs developed. In 1923, the State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs of Wisconsin was founded. Initially, 13 clubs joined the organization, including the Phyllis Wheatley; Woman's Improvement; Silver Leaf Charity; Civic Study; Good Work; Big Sister; and the City Federation in Milwaukee. The Phyllis Wheatley and Mary Jane Missionary Society, and the Macedonia Missionary Society of Madison. The Woman's Culture Club of Beloit was also an original member. The State Federation's first regular meeting was held in St. Mark's African Methodist Episcopal Church on June 9-11, 1924, at which time the Woman's Ideal and Mother's Council of Milwaukee and the Sunshine Club of Janesville joined the group (Davis 1933:104). At this meeting, plans emerged for Wisconsin's federation to join the National Association of Colored Women, which it did in August 1924 (Davis 1933:104). By 1948, the Federation included clubs from Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Kenosha, Delavan, Beloit, and Janesville (Kohler 1948:101).

In spite of such a proliferation of black women's clubs, the black population in Wisconsin was much smaller than the white population. Consequently most women's clubs in the state were dominated by white women, most of whom were middle class. Many club leaders were the wives and daughters of prominent citizens, including Belle Case La Follette, wife of "Fighting Bob" La Follette, then a state senator; Ada James, daughter of Senator James from Richland Center; and Julia Lapham, daughter of prominent educator, Increase Lapham. Their family and financial connections aside, these and scores of other women effected changes in towns and cities across the state through the club movement. No doubt the status of some within their communities facilitated their "municipal housekeeping" (Follet 1982:10).

Club women quite logically and successfully argued that issues that affected the health and welfare of their families were rightfully areas in which women should have some say. Consequently, club women were involved in movements for kindergartens, public libraries, better cities, sanitation, and other civic improvements, as well as campaigning to place women on school boards. Numerous clubs undoubtedly used the same argument to rationalize participation in more overtly political activities, such as organizing for or against suffrage or prohibition. Women were demanding direct political power to enable them to better oversee their "appropriate domestic sphere."

Characteristic of Wisconsin club women, especially the Federation's leaders, was the impressive overlap in the organizations in which they were members and causes to which they were committed. The typical club woman was likely to be involved in suffrage, temperance, library, patriotic, or church work. Many were also members of professional associations, historical societies, and state boards or commissions. Overlapping membership in the Wisconsin Women's Suffrage Association, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), the YWCA, the Wisconsin Free Library Commission, the Red Cross, and the League of Women Voters were among the most common coincidences of organizational affiliation (Steinschneider 1983:127-129). While club women engaged in socially useful activities, they were able to do so only because their social status afforded them the luxury of voluntary and unpaid labor.

Professional women, like Ellen Sabin, president of Milwaukee's Downer Colleges, also found time for leadership positions in Wisconsin's club movement, serving on several of the WFWC committees. She was also on the Wisconsin Board of Education, a member of the National Education Association, and actively supported woman's suffrage. Mary Bradford of Kenosha was also a professional educator. In 1911, she was elected to the Wisconsin Teacher's Association and was later a leader of the National Council of Administrative Women in Education. She was active in educational reform, introducing industrial arts, kindergartens, home economics, and specialized education for handicapped children throughout the Wisconsin school system.

Women like Bradford, Sabin, Crosby, and Morris are representative of the wide range of activities in which Wisconsin women's club members were involved. In many cases, their memberships and involvement in different organizations were mutually reinforcing. While most of their activities could be construed as appropriate to a woman's domestic sphere, in that they drew upon women's "natural" maternal and nurturing qualities, the clubs by no means encouraged women to remain confined to their domestic responsibilities. And while most of the WFWC's leaders and most active members were well educated, financially secure, and from prominent families in their communities, they were clearly not simply social butterflies whose club activities filled otherwise idle time. Many women used their club activities to further their commitment to social reform and advancement for women.

Lucy Morris from Berlin (Winnebago County) was a founder and first president of the WFWC. From 1896 to 1916, she also served on the Wisconsin Free Library Commission. She organized League of Women Voters chapters and coordinated women's civilian war services for Green Lake County. Ella Neville, Morris' successor to the presidency, was on Green Bay's library commission for 50 years and was active in the Brown County and State Historical societies. Emma Crosby of Racine, the Federation's president from 1910 to 1912, was a leader of the local DAR, was active in the First Presbyterian Church of Racine, and served on the advisory board of the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association.

Sophie Gudden of Oshkosh, also a club woman, was active in both the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association and the Political Equality League. A native of Germany, Gudden focused her suffrage work on German women. Gudden was an important asset to the suffrage cause, as Germans were traditionally and culturally conservative on issues pertaining to women's rights. She was also president of the Wisconsin Consumers League and vice president of the National Consumers League.

Not all Federation leaders, however, were advocates of women's suffrage. Carrie Edwards, of Oshkosh, was an active member of the Wisconsin Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage. Edwards was also involved with the DAR and the Ladies Society of the Oshkosh Congregational Church. She served as the Federation's seventh president, beginning in 1909 (Steinschneider 1983:136). To the extent that Edwards endorsed women's involvement in the public sphere, it was "for home, and school, for art, music, for intellectual growth, and domestic efficiency, for better homes and more conscientious mothers." Club women were to devote themselves to "honest citizenship, of manly boys and modest girls .. clean morals and religious influences" (Follet 1982:13).

Edwards, along with Martha Buell, of Madison, represented the anti-suffrage women of the WFWC's five member Policy Committee. The other three members were ardent suffrage proponents: Lucy Morris, Theodora Youmans , and Mrs. Earle M. Pease. In 1912, these five women led the debate within the WFWC to decide the organization's stand on woman suffrage. By a vote of 129 to 63, the delegates endorsed the suffrage amendment (Follett 1982:18). (See Women Suffrage study unit).

The victory was due, in part, to the tireless efforts of Theodora Youmans. Youmans, of Waukesha, was president of the Wisconsin Federation from 1900 to 1902 and was instrumental in the 1913 merger of the state's two main suffrage organizations, the

Political Equality League and the Wisconsin Woman's Suffrage Association. The union was maintained until 1920 when the Nineteenth Amendment was passed. After 1920, Youmans continued her commitment to women's political equality in the League of Women Voters and in the Republican Party, serving on the Republican National Committee in 1920. Youmans also served on the Board of Normal School Regents from 1905 to 1915 (Steinschneider 1983:150).

On the state level, club women organized a campaign to place women on the State Board of Control of Reformatory, Charitable and Penal Institutions, which consisted of five members who inspected and oversaw the operation of state institutions. (See study units on Health Services and Services for the Poor and Disadvantaged). Again, they argued that this was in keeping with women's traditional domestic and nurturing roles. The "intuitive perceptions of women" would balance the "executive ability" of men. They were particularly concerned about the welfare of women and girls in state institutions (Steinschneider 1983:88).

In 1899, at the club women's prodding, Assemblyman Thomas McGrath introduced a bill providing for two women members on the Board of Control. The bill was defeated. It was not until 1905, with the backing of Governor La Follette, that a bill was passed creating a position for one woman on the Board of Control. When, in 1917, a bill was introduced to reduce that one woman to an auxiliary member and reduce her salary, women's clubs flooded the state legislature with petitions in opposition to the bill. The woman's seat on the Board was retained (Steinschneider 1983:92).

Another campaign undertaken by the WFWC was National Baby Week, sponsored nationally by the General Federation of Women's Clubs, of which the WFWC was an affiliate, and the United State's Children's Bureau. The National Children's Bureau was headed by Julia Lathrop, also a member of the Wisconsin Federation. The purpose of National Baby Week, celebrated between May 15 and May 21, 1916, was to provide education on infant and maternal health through lectures and demonstrations on baby and prenatal care by medical experts, literature distribution, and exhibits on health related themes. The Wisconsin women were aided in their efforts by the Wisconsin Anti-Tuberculosis Association, the Extension Department of the University of Wisconsin, the State Board of Health, and the Free Library Commission. Eighty-three Wisconsin communities reported celebrating Baby Week (Steinschneider 1983:103).

Baby Week was a precursor to the Children's Bureau's more ambitious Children's Year Campaign of 1918, and paved the way for the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act in 1921. The Sheppard-Towner Act allocated federal funds providing for health clinics to reduce maternal and infant mortality. Although several years in the making, club women's efforts resulted in real improvements for women and children; making their presence felt in the traditional male arena of politics through their appropriate and sanctioned rolls as caretakers of society's children. (Steinschneider 1983:lll).

Representative of women's clubs on the local level were the Ladies Literary Society of Wausau, the Women's Christian Temperance Union of Reedsburg, and the Eau Claire, Hudson, and Madison Women's Club, which were affiliates of the WFWC. Annette Shaw of Eau Claire was a prominent member of the WCTU locally, statewide, and nationally and was also a charter member of the Eau Claire Woman's Club. There, women petitioned to install a water fountain at the corner of Barstow and Water streets. They also operated a Home for Friendless Girls and Women (Taylor 1983:56,107). In Reedsburg, the WCTU had 34 members. In 1884, they installed a newsrack in the local railway depot, which they kept stocked with temperance tracts (Stager 1983:150).

The women of Wausau, Hudson, and Madison were considerably more ambitious. The 13 members of the Ladies Literary Society of Wausau, founded in 1877, were responsible for installing street signs throughout the town and gates for the Pine Grove Cemetery. Their

other accomplishments ranged from implementing a visiting nurse program in the public schools, organizing an anti-tuberculosis campaign, and running the public library, to pressuring the city to hire policewomen. In 1879, they hosted suffrage speakers Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. In 1922, they purchased the home of Mary Schofield (razed) for their club house. In 1935, they changed their name to the Wausau Woman's Club. The club is active to this day (Norton and Malaguti 1984:198).

Also still active is the Hudson Women's Club, founded in 1916. Their fund raising activities resulted in playgrounds and landscaping in city parks, and the erection of historical markers (erected 1930) for an Indian burial ground, Hudson's first white settler, and a French trading post. In 1953, they played an active role in the expansion of the public high school, and were also instrumental in creating the St. Croix County Home in New Richmond, a county mental hospital (La Rowe 1984:86).

Perhaps the most active club, however, was Madison's Women's Club. Madison women started and sustained the PTA, initiated kindergartens, hot lunch programs, manual and domestic arts programs, and physical examinations in the public schools. They organized the city's first garbage pick-up program and led a clean milk crusade. They established playgrounds and social centers, raised funds for Madison General Hospital and for the branch library in the Sixth Ward (1244 Williamson Street--extant). In keeping with traditional notions of women as keepers of public morality, Madison club women saw to the enforcement of the anti-cigarette and curfew laws and served as a censoring board for motion pictures (Mollenhof 1982:371-373).

Among their various activities, Wisconsin women also participated in peace organizations. The first autonomous national women's peace organization, the Women's Peace Party (WPP), emerged in 1915 in response to World War I. Between 1905 and 1914, the peace movement concentrated primarily on the development of international legal systems to maintain world order. The program adopted by the WPP signalled a new orientation in America's peace activism. It established a broad commitment to general social justice and viewed war as antithetical and obstructive to the development of a more just society (Marston 1985:23). The women's peace movement attracted many women who were also involved in the suffrage movement, in part because the peace movement, like the suffrage movement, emphasized women's ability to bring a level-headed, conciliatory approach to politics. Along with other groups, the International Women Suffrage Alliance sent delegates to the meeting at which the Women's Peace Party was founded.

In April 1915, the International Woman Suffrage Alliance conducted its own meeting and organized an international peace group, the International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace; the WPP became a member of the new organization. During the meeting, the most significant proposal for dealing with the immediate war crisis came from University of Wisconsin, Madison English teacher, Julia Grace Wales. Wales' idea of "continuous mediation" emphasized the need for rational resolution of international conflicts. Wales' proposal became known as the Wisconsin Peace Plan and involved bringing neutral nations together to deliberate on the disputes of warring nations.

WPP adopted the plan as the first plank on its program, and the idea met with enthusiastic support from other American peace societies (Marston 1985:36). Hamilton Holt, editor and owner of the influential journal, The Independent, lectured across the country on the topic of peace. Once he learned of Wales' plan, he began discussing it at each lecture. When Wales took her idea to the first Hague conference, the delegates adopted it unanimously. Wales' innovative plan seemed to offer a practical and feasible method to begin resolving the conflicts of war (Marston 1985:36).

A delegation was sent to present the plan to President Wilson and Congress, and delegates also visited European nations seeking their willingness to implement the plan. When President Wilson brought the United States into the war, despite his campaign promises to

keep the country neutral, Wales supported the war effort. By the time that the United State became actively involved, the hope of a mediated end to the war seemed unrealistic to most people. In 1917, Wales joined the majority of pacifists who decided that intervention had become necessary. Her Peace Plan, however, was not lost. When Wilson issued his famous Fourteen Points in March of 1917, one of his "points" called for the creation of the League of Nations, which was modeled on Julia Grace Wales' Wisconsin Peace Plan (Trattner 1961:214).

After the war, women pacifists met in Europe to chart a course for the future. They adopted a formal constitution based on the goals of the International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace and founded a new organization, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The WPP became the United States' national branch of the League.

The League emerged in Wisconsin in the fall of 1922. Branches developed in Madison and Milwaukee: individual women from other Wisconsin communities also became members of the League. Directly after the war, the political atmosphere in the United States was not favorable for peace activities. Many women's groups advocating peace and the diminution of national defense came under attack as unpatriotic (Marston 1985:61). But by the late 1920s, the atmosphere once again became congenial to peace activities, and peace groups resumed their activities in great numbers. The League grew from a small, unpopular group of committed pacifists to a mass organization with widespread public support (Marston 1985:71).

In the early 1930s, Wisconsin League women lobbied for black and minority rights; they consistently examined political candidates' voting records on issues of anti-lynching and anti-imperialism (Marston 1985:72). They were also successful in many of their lobbying efforts, securing cuts in the National Guard budget, limiting the building of new armories, and making military training non-mandatory in schools (Marston 1985:76).

Jessie Jack Hooper is another Wisconsin woman notable for her personal contributions to causes championed by women. She became recognized at the local, state, and national levels as a leader in the fight for women's suffrage and in the peace movement of the 1920s and 1930s. She lived in Oshkosh throughout her entire life and was married to Benjamin Hooper, a prosperous wholesale grocer, from 1888 until her death.

Mrs. Hooper's prominence in political affairs began in the early twentieth century when she became a Regent in the Oshkosh chapter of the DAR. Later, as president of the Oshkosh Ladies Benevolent Society, she worked to form a visiting nurses society and a tuberculosis sanatorium. Both projects were realized. In this same period, Mrs. Hooper was involved in woman suffrage as an early member of the Wisconsin Woman's Suffrage Association. She lobbied in Madison for passage of the infancy and maternity bill, the children's code, and raising the age of consent as well as other woman's rights issues.

Following the First World War, Mrs. Hooper lobbied in Washington for the woman's suffrage amendment and, after its passage by the Congress, was instrumental in getting it ratified quickly in Wisconsin. By 1922, she was the president of the state chapter of the League of Women Voters and one of the most politically prominent women in the state. In that year, she was nominated to run for the United States Senate by the Democratic Party. Her successful Republican opponent was the incumbent senator Robert M. La Follette.

The rest of her life was largely devoted to furthering the cause of World Peace. She was a member of the national committee of the League of Women's Voters for International Cooperation to Prevent War and a founder of the Conference for the Cause and Cure of War in 1925. In 1932, this group asked Mrs. Hooper to present nearly a million petition signatures favoring peace to the Geneva Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of

Armaments.

She died in Oshkosh in May 1935. Her home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. The house was designed by local architect William Waters and built for the Hoopers in 1888. It is considered a good example of the Shingle Style (State Historical Society of Wisconsin 1978: Jessie Jack Hooper House).

The above is by no means a comprehensive survey of women's organizations active in the state, but rather an overview of the range of activities in which women were involved: anti-slavery and moral reform societies, suffrage, temperance, women's clubs, church, and peace work. Women were active in a variety of organizations during World War I, most notably the Red Cross, the DAR and the Women's Relief Corp. After the war, women organized for peace as actively as they had supported the war effort, which they had often done in the name of peace. There were, undoubtedly, women active in virtually every community in the state. Their organizational membership was overlapping, creating a wide network. While most of the organizations in which they were involved did not have their own buildings, a survey of the churches, libraries, private homes in which they met, as well as the buildings they were instrumental in building, such as libraries, hospitals and school buildings, will undoubtedly reveal numerous significant buildings associated with the history of Wisconsin women's organizations.

IDENTIFICATION

Resource Types. Homes of prominent individuals, club houses, libraries and churches in which women's organizations might have met; also buildings that women actively help build through their fund-raising efforts, including schools, libraries, hospitals and sanitoria and municipal buildings.

Locational Patterns of Resource Types. Cities, towns and villages throughout the state. Women's organizations probably existed in a majority of communities in the state.

Previous Surveys. While the information is often scant, several intensive survey reports, incuding those for Eau Claire; Geneva Lake; Hudson; La Crosse; Oshkosh; Superior; Wausau; Waukesha; and the West Side, (Milwaukee), do contain information dealing with a variety of women's organizations.

Survey and Research Needs. There are a number of excellent maters' thesis on womens history in Wisconsin, including Leslie Schwalon's The Anti-Salvery and Reform Activities of Women in Wisconsin, Janice Steinschneider's " Not a New Woman, But an Improved Woman:" The Wisconsin Federation of Women's Clubs, 1895-1920, and Susan L. Smith's The Black Women's Club Movement: Self-Improvement and Sisterhood, 1890-1915. These could serve as guides to determining significant structures associated with women's organizations throughout the state.

EVALUATION

National Register of Historic Places and Determinations of Eligibility

Zona Gale House (1906), 506 W. Edgewater St., Portage, Columbia County (NRHP 1980)

Mabel Tainter Memorial Building (1889), 205 Main St., Menomonie, Dunn County (NRHP 1974)

Woman's Club of Wisconsin, 813 E. Kilbourn, Milwaukee, Milwaukee County (NRHP 1982)

Frances Willard Schoolhouse (1853), Craig Ave., Janesville, Rock County (NRHP 1977)

Israel Stowell Temperance House (1840), 61-65 E. Walworth Ave., Delevan, Walworth County (NRHP 1978)

Jessie Jack Hooper House (1888), 1149 Algoma Blvd., Oshkosh, Winnebago County (NRHP 1978)

McCoy Farmhouse (1852-1885), 2925 Syene Rd., Fitchburg, Dane County (NRHP 1980)

First Kindergarten (1856), 919 Charles St., Watertown, Jefferson County (NRHP 1972)

Context Considerations. Many structures associated with women's organizations were multifunctional. Meeting halls often served many groups, especially when they were publicly owned. Women's groups also met in private homes, libraries, churches, and schools. These structures should be evaluated in regard to their primary purposes, but consideration should be given to the significance of the women's organization as well.

Significance should be tied to the impact of an organzation on local politics, education, economic, and society.

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Temporal Boundaries: 1823 - present, with special emphasis on the period 1866-1910.

Spatial Boundaries: Entire state, with emphasis on those areas settled prior to 1885.

Related Study Units: Women's Organizations, Temperance Movement.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although fraternal organizations appear to be on the wane today, they formed an integral part of American culture and society in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Numerous and diverse, these widespread institutions provided members of an extremely mobile and heterogenous society with cohesive and relatively constant forms of social order. Helping to create and maintain group identity in a fluid and pluralistic world, they formed a key part of the social web that held together American culture.

Fraternal organizations performed a wide range of social, cultural, economic, and occasionally political functions. Persons adrift in a strange new city or newcomers to a seemingly closed rural town found communities of kindred individuals sharing similar values and world views in fraternal organizations. For isolated frontier homesteaders, fraternal groups provided an important occasion for meeting and socializing, a role that implies additional significance in an era that predated the advent of modern transportation and communication. For immigrants bewildered by a foreign culture, fraternal organizations offered a refuge to persons from the same ethnic background, who spoke the language of the old country. Collectively, members endeavored to come to terms with the customs, mores, and folkways of thier new home, yet, at the same time, preserve their cultural heritage.

Fraternal organizations served both their constituents and the larger society. They not only provided their members with fellowship, fun, and diversion, but supplied vital support to education, commerce, and public health. Before the rise of the twentieth century welfare state, fraternal organizations assumed many important "public" functions, such as providing indemnities to families of deceased brethren, helping maintain mental health and medical facilities for the indigent, and contributing funds for scholarships, public works, and municipal improvements.

Travelling in the new republic in the early nineteenth century, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that "Americans of all ages, conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations. Whenever at the head of some new undertaking you see the government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association" (Tocqueville 1966:vol. 2,114).

At the same time, it should be noted that the history of fraternal organizations has a dark, insidious underside. Many critics and historians have regarded fraternal groups as a class phenomenon: social constructs of an insecure petty bourgeoisie anxious to achieve a certain degree of prestige and status, disdainful of the lower classes, fearful of the social elite, and hostile to all foreign peoples and ideas (Muraskin 1975:1-42). Fraternal organizations have tended to be bastions of racism, nativism, and general intolerance. Until quite recently most organizations closed their doors to Blacks, Jews, and Catholics; many continue to practice less overt forms of discrimination. As a result, separate, parallel organizations were formed by minority groups. On frequent occasions, fraternal

groups have formed the nucleus of vigilante activity, taking the law into their own hands, particularly in response to real or imagined leftist threats. In sharp contrast to European fraternal organizations, American associations have remained aloof from politics, except for activity of this reactionary sort.

Fraternal organizations, then, possess a dual character. On the one hand, they have played a key role in the emergence and maintenance of a pluralistic society, providing a means through which different sorts of people could contribute to the common good. On the other hand, however, they have helped sustain a racial and religious intolerance deeply embedded in American culture.

Broadly speaking, it is possible to discern two basic types of fraternal organizations: those whose primary purpose is social, providing companionship and constituting a "club" in the formal sense, and those that exist as a means of accomplishing specific ends, providing life insurance, bringing about moral reform, etc. The first category can be labelled "recreational"; the second can be termed "instrumental" (Schmidt 1980:5).

Recreational-type organizations are the more numerous, and the older of the two types. Among these are included many of the more familiar fraternal groups: Freemasons, Elks, Moose, Odd Fellows, Shriners, and Woodmen. Although many of these organizations originated as secret societies, these now tend to have a high public profile, largely due to their charitable undertakings, such as the Shriners' hospitals for crippled children. The most prevalent of the instrumental-type organizations is the benefit society. These function as private insurance companies to which members pay annual premium dues and receive coverage against death and illness. Although some of these groups also have a social aspect, most have developed to the point where they are indistinguishable from formal insurance agencies. As a result, they tend to be less well-known than their recreational-type counterparts. Other instrumental groups that merit mention include the Good Templars, an organization devoted to temperance and prohibition which flourished in the mid-nineteenth century, and various burial societies, usually ethnic in composition and serving their members by purchasing cemetery plots and providing burial services, coffins, flowers, etc.

It would be pointless to attempt a systematic accounting of all the fraternal organizations that operated in Wisconsin. The number of lodges easily exceeds a thousand, and the range of diversity is dysfunctionally wide, rendering such a task impractical, if not impossible. It is possible, however, to speak in terms of representative examples and to provide a chronological outline of fraternal activity in the State.

The history of fraternal organizations in Wisconsin can be divided into four sequential and distinctive time periods: 1) 1823-1865, the origins and initial growth of fraternal activity; 2) 1866-1910, the "golden years" in which the number of fraternal associations and lodges peaked; 3) 1911-1945, the transformation of fraternal organizations from a major focus of social activity to an adjunct form and the beginning of theirdecline; 4) 1946 to the present, a period of continued decline and accelerated dissolution. It should be noted that with the exception of the first period, this chronology corresponds to the national experience.

ORIGINS AND GROWTH, 1823-1865

The Freemasons are the oldest fraternal organization in both the United States and Wisconsin. Although the Order traces its origins to the guilds of the medieval era, the modern organization dates from the early eighteenth century. Masonic lodges appeared in America as early as 1730, apparently carried across the Atlantic by Englishmen who had been familiar with the order in Britain. By 1776, the Order was firmly established in the east, and according to the Masons, several heroes of the Revolution, including Washington, Franklin, Revere, and the Adams' played active membership roles. As the population grew and expanded beyond the eastern seaboard, the flow of humanity across the

Appalachians carried the order to the west. A secret society enamored with regalia, passwords, mystic rites, seals, ceremonies, degrees, signs, and signals, the Masons had a powerful attraction; select membership in the exclusive organization seemed to confer status, privilege, and a certain degree of prestige to its members. Most importantly, the Masons provided an archetype after which hundreds of other fraternal groups modeled themselves.

Not surprisingly, fraternal activity in Wisconsin began shortly after the establishment of the first permanent white settlements in the territory, with the establishment of a Masonic lodge in the winter of 1823. Formed in Green Bay by a group of military officers stationed at Fort Howard, this "Menominee Lodge" lasted for only seven years. Nevertheless, the Masonic Order grew slowly over the next two decades, and by 1843, when the Wisconsin Masons held their first statewide convention in Madison, there were three sizeable, active lodges, operating in Platteville, Mineral Point, and Milwaukee (Smith 1973:671). By 1865 lodges appeared in most urban centers in the southern and east-central counties, and numbered around 150.

At the same time the Masons convened in Madison, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows boasted two Wisconsin lodges: one in Mineral Point, and one in Milwaukee. Like the Masons, the Odd Fellows was an English institution that immigrants had brought to the New World; and like the Masons, the Odd Fellows were infatuated with ritual and regalia. Thomas Wiley founded the American Order in 1819 in Baltimore, and it quickly grew in numbers. In fact, it appears that during the anti-Masonic hysteria that gripped the nation in the 1830s, Odd Fellowship came close to eclipsing Masonry, although this trend was reversed when the scare died down in mid-century. Odd Fellows lodges follow a pattern similar to the Masons in this period. The number of lodges fluctuated between 100 and 125 at mid-century, and they appeared in most settled areas.

Both the Masons and the Odd Fellows were primarily social groups. They met regularly, usually weekly, for drink and company. In this early period they did not appear to engage in any type of civic or charitable activity. A wholly different kind of fraternal group came to Wisconsin in 1854: the Good Templars. In that year, the Templars formed a lodge in Sheboygan Falls, shortly followed by the establishment of another in Stoughton. Founded in 1851 in Utica, New York, the Templars strove to realize two goals: the securing of personal abstinence from alcohol on the part of its members, and obtaining government prohibition of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors and spirits. This was done through moral suasion, educational campaigns, and the provision of an institutional alternative to the saloon in the form of Templar meeting halls. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, however, a sizeable faction devoted themselves to political lobbying, causing irreperable internal tension and dissent and producing little effect. Membership was open to all, women and children included; and perhaps this fact along with the group's proselytizing attitude explains the Templars phenomenal growth. In 1856, the organization had slightly over 500 members in the State of Wisconsin. Four years later that figure had incresed over twelvefold to 7,134; and at the close of the Civil War, Wisconsin membership hoovered around the 10,000 mark, largely concentrated in the southeastern portion of the state (Brownsword 1960:18; Nesbit 1973:356). (See study unit on Temperance Movement.)

PEAK ACTIVITY, 1866-1910

The period immediately following the Civil War witnessed a phenomenal growth in the number of fraternal organizations, due largely to increased immigration to Wisconsin. The Knights of Pythias, Shriners, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Independent Order of Foresters, Modern Woodmen, and Woodmen of the World all established numerous Wisconsin lodges, to name only a handful of the better-known groups. Fraternal lodges begin to appear in the northern and west-central areas of the state in this era. This also was the period in which many fraternal orders instituted

female auxiliaries; for example, in the late 1860s a group of Masons created the Order of the Eastern Star, a sororal association with membership open to the wives and daughters of Masons. By 1893, the Eastern Star had a large enough Wisconsin membership to warrant the formation of a Grand lodge; and in 1899, the Order contained over 75 subordinate lodges.

People organized for sociability and recreation along ethnic lines. Not surprisingly, this fact is reflected in fraternal organizations. British and other Anglo-Saxon immigrant groups provided the bulk of Masons, Odd Fellows, and Good Templars. Transplanted New England Yankees, a particularly status conscious group, formed societies like the Sons of the Pilgrims. The large German population, concentrated in Milwaukee and the lakeshore counties area, developed an entire social structure of its own with fraternal groups devoted to musical, theatrical, gymnastic, and literary pursuits (Current 1976:128, Smith1973:572). Although the Irish organized fewer fraternal groups, probably due to their low social and economic status, they did engage in fraternal activity. One important Irish fraternal group was the Ancient Order of Hibernians, a large, multi-purpose organization that performed a number of social functions. It also supported of a charitable wing, the Hibernian Benevolent Society, and indicative of the fierce nationalism of the Irish, it maintained a militia. Finally, it should be noted that the Irish in Wisconsin, as elsewhere, were members of a variety of Catholic fraternal groups such as the Catholic Knights, and the Catholic Order of Foresters. For the most part, however, Irish fraternal activity was restricted to the larger cities, and was especially pronounced in Milwaukee.

It was in this postbellum period that fraternal benefit societies rose to prominence. Most early lodges were grassroot organizations formed to meet the specific economic and social needs generated by their members' status as workers and aliens. Thus, they differed from recreational fraternal groups in that they were the products of the immigrant working class anxious for at least a small degree of protection against the hazards of urban life and industrial work (Bodnar 1981:6). Some, like the Ancient Order of United Workmen (the largest nineteenth century fraternal benefit society in the United States with 126 Wisconsin lodges in 1888), welcomed all workers, particularly craftsmen and their journeymen and apprentices. Other groups organized along occupational lines: typographers, iron molders, carpenters, railwaymen, etc. Many of these, such as the shoemakers' Knights of St. Crispin or the Knights of Labor, evolved into bona fide trade unions. In addition, almost every ethnic group had at least one benefit association, many of which originated in Europe on the town and regional level. Finally, there existed a host of benefit societies that performed no real "fraternal" function but acted as private insurance companies. These included the Equitable and Fraternal Reserve Associations, which later merged to form one of the largest insurance companies in the nation, and the Beavers National Mutual Benefit, currently one of Wisconsin's biggest insurance firms (now known as the National Mutual Benefit).

The older fraternal groups, Masons, Oddfellows, etc., continued to grow in this period. Almost every community of more than a few hundred inhabitants contained at least one Masonic lodge; and it was not uncommon for communities of under a thousand in population to have 10 to 15 lodges representing a variety of fraternal groups. Of course, this surprisingly high ratio is partially explained by the fact that many persons held multiple memberships. Nevertheless, it is clear that fraternal organizations formed a central focus of social life in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. They were important cultural institutions that played an instrumental role in the maintenance of group life, particularly in the more isolated rural communities.

Finally, it was in this period of growth that fraternal organizations constructed their own lodges, halls, and meeting places. Fraternal groups often congregated in rooms located above commercial enterprises in the center of business districts and saloons. When fraternal structures (halls, lodges, temples) were constructed, these too were situated prominently in downtown areas. Often, wealthier and well-established groups such as the

Odd Fellows allowed other, smaller fraternal organizations to use their halls, usually for a nominal fee. Other groups, especially Catholic Orders, met in churches.

TRANSFORMATION, 1911-1945

The late nineteenth century was a time of rapid economic transformation. The transition from a largely rural agricultural economy to an urban industrial one inevitably produced profound changes in the social order. Poverty and social unrest reached unprecedented proportions, and older communal values gave way to newer commercial ones. Fraternal organizations responded to these changes: their functions gradually changed to accomodate a new reality. It could be said that they developed a "social conscience" in this era, moving beyond purely recreational activities and assuming active leadership roles in their communities. Many groups became heavily involved in charitable undertakings, including aid to the poor and indigent, financial support for settlement houses and homes for the delinquent, as well as participation in numerous local projects designed to alleviate the hardships of the laboring poor. In the urban centers, many fraternal organizations played key roles in municipal reform movements and in the establishment of public welfare institutions.

Particularly significant in this period was the development of a commercial orientation on the part of many fraternal groups. In several cities and towns, fraternal organizations worked closely with local Chambers of Commerce and businessmens' associations, such as Lions and Rotary Clubs, to promote trade and commercial activity. This boosterism also included the development of civic improvements aimed at attracting business to the community. In addition, fraternal groups provided an "old-boy" network that facilitated the conduct of business; countless business deals were concluded in fraternal lodges and meeting halls.

As a whole, fraternal groups stopped growing in the early decades of this century. The Great Depression signalled the start of a long period of decline which sharply accelerated after the Second World War. Economic collapse had a particularly devastating effect upon benefit associations: hundreds were ruined due to weak financial structures based upon informal and often irregular assessments. Most of those that managed to survive reorganized along sounder contractual and actuarial lines, and this often meant the loss of the fraternal aspect (Bodnar 1981:6). The Depression acted as a brake upon other groups. Defunct and inactive lodges were common to all fraternal orders in the 1930s, and certain groups lost scores of members. The Knights of Pythias lost close to 90 percent of its membership, a setback from which it never recovered.

Interestingly enough, black fraternal groups increased their numbers and members in this period, while other organizations suffered stagnation and decline. The Prince Hall Freemasons established a number of lodges in the Milwaukee, Kenosha, and Racine area in this period, and the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks also registered a gain in members. This is a puzzling phenomenon which may be explained by the fact that it was in the teens and twenties that a black middle class emerged, anxious to imitate white middle class cultural forms.

DECLINE, 1945-PRESENT

Despite a fleeting revival in the 1950s, fraternal organizations have not fared well in the post-war period. They generally have failed to attract younger members, and have slipped into the background of social life where they often go unnoticed. Their charitable work has continued but, with the exception of large organizations like the Shriners, has not served to keep them in the public eye. A series of court decisions in the 1960s censured fraternal groups for their racist policies and no doubt this has had negative consequences in terms of their public perception.

Still, fraternal organizations are far from dead. They remain active in most communities, even if their membership rolls are small and their public profile is low. If fraternal groups seem to be lost in the fast pace and anonymity of the big city, in smaller communities they retain a vestige of their older importance as a center of social life.

IDENTIFICATION

Resource Types. Meeting halls, lodges, community centers, union halls, large rooms in commercial buildings, saloons and taverns, churches and parish halls.

Locational Patterns of Resource Types. Resources associated with fraternal groups are generally located in downtown business districts and central city areas. In more rural areas, fraternal halls may be found alongside well-travelled roads and major highways.

Previous Surveys. Structures associated with fraternal groups have been identified in several intensive surveys. No comprehensive survey of related resources has been undertaken.

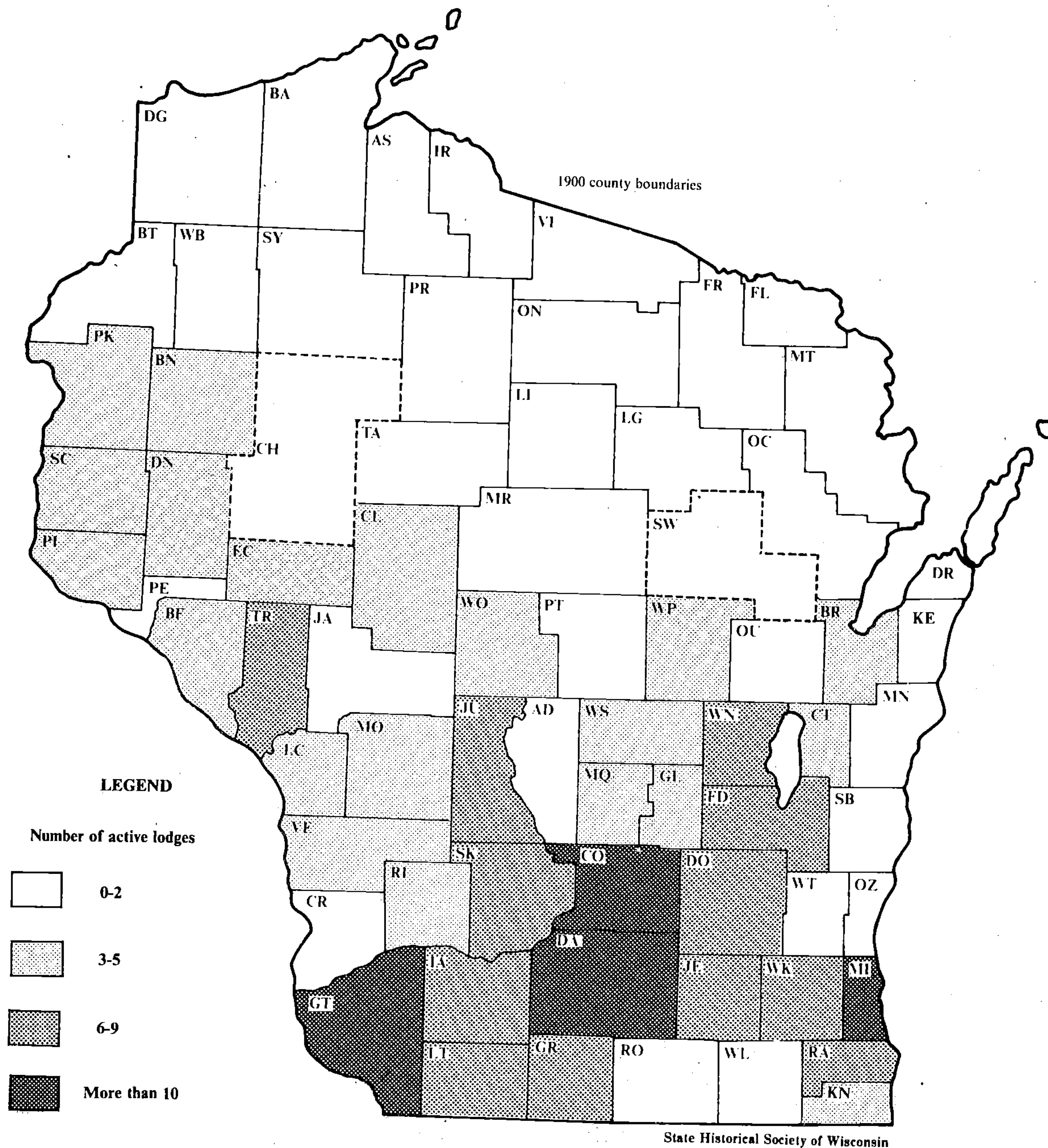
Survey and Research Needs. Research aimed at providing accurate statistical information on fraternal activity in the state is needed. This could be accomplished with a minimum of difficulty by using city directories to track fraternal organizations at five, ten, or 15 year intervals. Surveys of specific fraternal organizations could be undertaken on a city, county, or regional basis.

EVALUATION

National Register Listings and Determinations of Eligibility

Racine Elks Club (1912-1913), 601 Lake Ave., Racine, Racine County (NRHP 1984)
Knights of Pythias Building, 436 Main St., Menomonie, Dunn County (included in the Menomonie Downtown Historic District, NRHP 1986)
Masonic Temple (1923-1924), 330 E. College Ave., Appleton, Outagamie County (NRHP 1985)
Kilbourn Masonic Temple, 827 N. 11th St., Milwaukee (NRHP 1986)
Tripoli Temple, 3000 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee (NRHP 1986)
Masonic Temple (1922-1923), 1015 Wisconsin Ave., Racine, Racine County (NRHP 1977, Southside Historic District)
Sparta Masonic Temple (1923), 200 W. Main St., Sparta, Monroe County (NRHP 1987)
Temple of Free Masonry (1927), 616 Graham Ave., Eau Claire, Eau Claire County (NRHP 1988)
Excelsior Masonic Temple (1922), 2422 W. National Ave., Milwaukee, Milwaukee County (NRHP 1988)
Pythian Castle Lodge (1927) 1925 W. National Ave., Milwaukee, Milwaukee County (NRHP 1988)

Context Considerations. Structures associated with fraternal groups need to be evaluated with regard to their primary purpose. Thus, a saloon in which a fraternal group met weekly for a period of years would usually not be considered significant on the basis of its fraternal function. On the other hand, a hall built by a fraternal group but also pressed into service for other functions could be significant as a fraternal hall, as long as the significance can be substantiated and other integrity requirements are fulfilled. The historical significance of a fraternal group should be linked to its contributions to the development of the community in which is is found.



Active Masonic Lodges in 1900

Source: *Proceedings, Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Wisconsin. 1900* (Milwaukee, Burdick and Allen), pp. 93-115.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Institutional health care is a surprisingly modern phenomenon. "The general hospital, as we know it today, did not appear until the late nineteenth century, when social and technological developments revolutionized the practice of medicine" (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:105). Prior to this, most patients requiring surgery or intensive medical care were treated in their homes by private physicians. Hospitals, where they did exist, treated mostly the poor and transient. Before the Civil War, these institutions were few and far between; at the time of Wisconsin's admission to the Union in 1848, less than 50 hospitals existed in the entire country (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:105).

Nevertheless, there was a significant exception to this trend: military hospitals, or "infirmaries" as they were known to contemporaries. Following the War of 1812, the federal government created a far-flung network of forts in the Upper Mississippi Valley to safeguard newly acquired territory from Indian attack and British disruption. The area that eventually became the State of Wisconsin contained three such posts: Fort Howard, established at Green Bay in 1816; Fort Crawford, established the same year at Prairie du Chien; and Fort Winnebago, constructed in 1828 in Columbia County, near the present site of the City of Portage. Each of these installations had a small infirmary staffed by an army surgeon, who sometimes was aided by an assistant. Inspection reports describe these as small wooden structures, often in a state of disrepair, crowded and unventilated. During the Black Hawk War in the early 1830s, for example, an officer decried the Fort Howard hospital as being "in such bad repair that unless some labor be bestowed upon it, not only the poor patients, but even the medicine and stores will suffer from wet as the roofs are not tight" (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:106). These disparaging reports, of which there were many, may have had a positive effect: by 1840 improvements had been made. At Fort Crawford (where Dr. William Beaumont served as post surgeon from 1829-1831, during which time he conducted numerous experiments on the digestive processes) patients were cared for in a stone hospital built in about 1835, and at Fort Winnebago a 60-bed facility with three rooms and a kitchen was erected (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:105-106, Smith 1973:99).

"Poor and inadequate though the facilities were, the hospital was an important part of the military complex" (Smith 1973:99). In addition to treating military personnel, the army surgeons attended to settlers in the scattered communities around the forts. Most patients, in fact, were not battle casualties; rheumatism, catarrh, opthamalia, dysentery, diarrhea, and malaria were the most common ailments (Smith 1973:99-100).

During the territorial period, Wisconsin suffered a shortage of doctors. Although entry into the profession was easy, often limited to apprenticeship and study under a pratitioner, many midwestern doctors abandoned their medical practices and turned towards more lucrative pursuits such as land speculation. Medical care in this period was quite rudimentary, even primitive by later standards. Doctors did not agree on the meaning of symptoms, the prescription of medicines and minerals, or even basic procedures. In addition to "regular" doctors, allopaths, homeopaths, hydropaths, Thompsonians, eclectics,

and botanics flourished (Smith 1973:483; Current 1976:185).

Moreover, medical supplies were hard to come by, especially in the more isolated areas, and equipment was often simple and homemade. A typical physician might own no more than a mortar and pestle, a set of balances, splints and bandages, and a few syringes. Only around mid-century did stethescopes and forceps become commonplace (Smith 1973:483; Pickard and Buley 1945:15-16).

It appears that the cholera epidemic that ravaged the southern portion of the state in the mid-1830s and the smallpox outbreak in Milwaukee in the early 1840s prompted changes in the territory's medical practices. Realizing their inability to adequately attend to the problem of widespread sickness, many of the more prominent medical practitioners began a drive toward higher professional standards. In 1842, the territory's first medical society was established, followed three years later by the Milwaukee medical society (Smith 1973:483; Frank 1915:117-118). In 1843, the Milwaukee city government, faced with an unprecedented amount of illness and disease which showed little sign of abating, established a "pesthouse" in which smallpox and cholera victims could be quarantined from the rest of the community. No nursing or medical care was provided in this sorry, overcrowded wooden structure "hardly large enough to accomodate a poor family of ordinary size," so a stretch of the imagination is required if it is to be considered Wisconsin's first non-military hospital (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:106; Harstad 1960:256). Some of the smaller communities improvised to take care of the sick and dying during the epidemics of the 1840s. In Muskego, for example, a large barn on the shore of Big Muskego Lake was converted into a "pesthouse;" similarly, in Luther Valley near Beloit, a private home was pressed into service (Harstad 1960:220).

The distinction of being the state's first true hospital properly belongs to St. John's Infirmary of Milwaukee (later renamed St. Mary's Hospital). Run by the Sisters of Charity, a Catholic Order based in Maryland, St. John's Infirmary was established in the midst of the cholera epidemic in 1848. Located on Jackson Street between Oneida and Wells, the two-story frame building continued to function after the epidemic had subsided. Although it was open to all denominations and classes, most of its patients were "charity cases" (Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform 1872:74-74; Shoemaker and Jones 1981:107; Frank 1915:144-147). The Infirmary's facilities were extremely limited. Its shortcomings were made clear when, in 1850, a ship laden with typhus-stricken passengers put in at Milwaukee; the Infirmary could not even begin to accomodate the ill. Instead, the sick were taken to empty federal buildings along the waterfront and to an improvised hospital on Jones Island. The patients were cared for by the Sisters of Charity, a selfless act for which the community later repaid the Order by contributing funds for the construction of a new hospital (Current 1976:514; State Board of Charities and Reform 1872:74).

The new hospital building, completed in 1858, stood at the site formerly occupied by the pesthouse on Jefferson Street, which had been relocated to Wauwatosa. The structure was a three-story brick edifice with six large wards capable of housing 50 patients, plus an additional 10 rooms for private patients. Baths and indoor plumbing helped make the hospital, which was named St. Mary's, one of the most modern in the region (Johnson 1946:80; Shoemaker and Jones 1981:107). The Sisters succeeded in securing a contract with the Treasury Department in Washington for the care of injured and sickly seamen; and at any given time approximately one-third of the patients at St. Mary's were naval personnel. The government paid 50 cents a day for each sailor, thus providing the hospital with most of its cash income (Johnson 1946:90). In addition, the Sisters relied heavily on private charitable donations and upon funds paid by the county for care of the indigent. Nevertheless, St. Mary's was constantly in debt.

Most patients at St. Mary's came for medical rather than surgical care. Tuberculosis, typhoid, pleurisy, alcoholism, malaria, and pneumonia were the most common ailments

treated prior to the Civil War. The surgical cases that the hospital did handle were, for the most part, amputations, usually the results of industrial accidents. A large proportion of these cases were railroad workers, since St. Mary's had contracts with several railroad companies. Very few obstetrical cases appear on the hospital's records; the first baby delivered was in 1875, but the number of births remained negligible throughout the nineteenth century, since home delivery under the supervision of a midwife remained the norm (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:108). It should be noted, however, that by 1900, surgery was on the rise, eclipsing medical care by 1910. This phenomenal increase "resulted primarily from the successful application of anethesia and antiseptics, which allowed surgeons to explore regions of the human body hitherto forbidden" (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:108).

Several hospitals were established during the Civil War. Over 90,000 Wisconsin men left home to fight for the Union, and it is estimated that at least 12,000 of these soldiers died and thousands of others returned with serious wounds and debilitating injuries (Berthrong 1951:21, 30). Government and private charities responded by setting up several ad hoc institutions.

When Wisconsin casualties began to increase at the end of 1862 and in early 1863, Mrs. Louis Harvey, the widow of the Governor, established a hospital for returning wounded. Operating out of the Farwell House in Madison (no longer standing), on the edge of Lake Monona, Harvey's United States General Hospital was the first such facility in Wisconsin. In 1864 two similar hospitals had opened in Prairie du Chien and in Milwaukee (Current 1976:370; Berthrong 1951:31). Although essentially private undertakings, these hospitals received a significant part of their funding from state, county, and municipal governments.

Also in 1864, a group of Milwaukee women formed the Wisconsin Soldiers' Home Association. They raised the capital for the venture by soliciting funds from the community, and operated out of rented rooms on West Water Street. "Here the soldier could come and be provided with temporary rest and entertainment, and when too sick to proceed on his journey, he could receive medical aid as was required, and kind and careful nursing" (Current 1976:371). By 1865, enough money had been raised to enable the group to purchase their own property (which later went to the federal government for a National Asylum for Disabled Soldiers, one of four national soldiers' homes authorized by Congress in 1865 and predecessor to the Veterans' Administration Center at Wood). Between April 1864 and July 1866, the Home sheltered 31,650 soldiers (Current 1976:371).

Milwaukee's Passavant Hospital (later known simply as the Milwaukee Hospital) also opened its doors during the Civil War, although it was not intended primarily for battle casualties. Doctor William A. Passavant began soliciting funds for a charity hospital as early as 1850, appealing to private charities, religious groups, and city and county governments. In 1863, he secured possession of a large brick house with room for approximately 30 patients and located on the city's outskirts. During the 1860s and 1870s, Passavant specialized in the treatment of smallpox cases (Frank 1915:147; Current 1976:514). Destroyed by fire in 1883, the building was rebuilt the following year. However, it was plagued with financial difficulties from this time forward, and the city eventually assumed management of the facility (State Board of Charities and Reform 1886:241; Frank 1915:147).

Another form of early hospital merits special mention, for it seems to have been peculiar to the lumbering regions of northern Wisconsin and Minnesota. "Ticket hospitals" sprang up in the last quarter of the nineteenth century as the white pine lumber industry rose to prominence in the north woods. Each fall, when the seasonal labor would begin, an insurance agent travelled through the lumber camps selling 10 dollar hospital tickets to the lumberjacks and logging crews. These tickets entitled the workers to unlimited medical and surgical care in participating hospitals for the upcoming year. The first of these

"ticket hospitals" in Wisconsin was opened in Wausau in 1886 by Dr. A. W. Trevitt. By the mid-1890s similar facilities were operating in Eau Claire, Ashland, Marinette, and Merrill (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:111).

Beginning in the late 1870s, the number of hospitals in Wisconsin began to increase. By 1886, major health care facilities were located in Madison (St. Anton's Hospital), Racine (St. Luke's Hospital), Oshkosh (Alexian Brothers Hospital), Appleton (Prescott Hospital), La Crosse (St. Francis Hospital), and Chippewa Falls (St. Joseph's Hospital). As the names of these institutions suggest, many were run by religious orders. However, most hospitals received patients of all denominations, although several accepted only male or female patients, depending upon the nature of the order (Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform 1886:242).

Curiously, the state's capital lacked a first-rate hospital until the very end of the century. The problem became acute when St. Anton's Hospital closed in the early 1890s, leaving only Mrs. Mary Hayes' private hospital with bed space for no more than 10 patients on East Doty Street. In 1898, a group of Madison's most prominent citizens incorporated as the Madison General Hospital Association, an organization devoted to establishing a general public hospital. In 1900, the Association took over the Hayes hospital, and supplemented its limited facilities by renting a double house with accomodations for 16 additional patients. At the same time, it launched a fund-raising drive for the construction of a large, modern hospital (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:118).

In October of 1903 the 30-bed Madison General Hospital opened. The three-story building contained nine private rooms, five wards, operating and anesthetizing rooms, and residential quarters for the nurses. By the close of the hospital's second year of operation, the need for a larger building was apparent. In 1912, Madison General moved into a new fireproof building "designed with the most up-to-date features: monolithic floors, solariums, sun porches, diet kitchens, dressing, delivery, and operating rooms, and isolation, hydropathic, and X-ray departments" (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:120). The hospital continued to expand over the next 60 years. A nursing school was added soon after the new facility opened; and additional wings were built periodically. In 1929, Madison General could house 175 patients; by mid-century that figure had more than doubled (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:120-121).

During the twentieth century, both the number and capacity of general hospitals steadily expanded. "Between 1900 and 975 the number of general hospitals in Wisconsin tripled, from 53 to 159, and the number of beds in such institutions increased nearly sevenfold, from approximately 3,500 to 23,500" (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:118).

Veterans' legislation helped fuel this growth in both the 1920s and 1940s. The War Veterans Act of 1923 created the U.S. Veterans Administration which jointly administered a network of veterans' hospitals with various state governments. Wisconsin Memorial Hospital, an 11-building complex situated on 50 acres of land at Mendota near Madison, was devoted to the care of ex-servicemen (Hannan 1929:228). Following the Second World War existing veterans' institutions were expanded and new ones built to accomodate the increased demand for services. In the same period, the Hill-Burton Program provided additional federal funds for hospital construction. By 1966, over 100 hospitals had been built in Wisconsin under this program (Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau 1966:188). The Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, Wisconsin, also contains a hospital. Finally, it should be noted that the number of hospitals in Wisconsin has been declining since 1960; however, available bed space continues to increase.

SPECIALTY TREATMENT CENTERS

At the turn of the twentieth century, Wisconsin witnessed a diversification in its health care facilities, many of which provided specialized care and services. A public health

movement, which created these specialty treatment centers arose in the context of a rapidly industrializing society. This, in combination with a massive influx of immigrants who brought cultural norms, posed entirely new health care needs, particularly in growing urban areas like Milwaukee. Much of the health movement's energy was focused on improved sanitation, such as garbage removal and pure foods and drugs, in an effort to stem the spread of infectious diseases, including cholera, small pox, and tuberculosis. Also in the face of an increasingly professional medical establishment, there was greater concern with licensing non-degreed health care providers such as chiropractors and midwives. The impetus for more stringent licensing was in part a genuine fear of medical "quacks" and an effort to standardize health care, but it was also a consequence of doctors' efforts to gain a firm control of the medical profession, to the exclusion of alternative health care providers. This professionalization did not always result in improved health care for the general population. Most notable of the specialty treatment centers which arose in Wisconsin were tuberculosis sanitariums, maternity hospitals, isolation hospitals, and chiropractic hospitals and clinics.

FACILITIES FOR TUBERCULAR PATIENTS

Early in the twentieth century, following the University of Wisconsin's successful control and eradication of tuberculosis in cattle, citizens hoping to do the same for humans began lobbying for a state sanitorium. Agreeing that general hospitals should no longer be responsible for isolating and treating the sick, the legislature passed an act calling for the creation of a state sanitorium in 1905. In 1907, the state opened a central facility, known as the Wisconsin State Sanitorium (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:115). Located in Waukesha County;s Statesan, a district situated eight miles west of the City of Waukesha, the State Sanitorium provided treatment for persons afflicted with all forms of tuberculosis. It also admitted cases of suspected tuberculosis. Any legal Wisconsin resident over sixteen years of age was eligible for admission. Originally, the Sanitorium contained bed space for 86 patients. In the mid-1930s expansion raised this number to 104 (S.B.C. 1934:360). The total patient capacity of the institution peaked at 238 in 1936.

Located on the top of Government Hill, the Sanitorium was able to take advantage of sunshine and moving air, valued as curative agents. Twenty buildings occupied a 228 acre site, including a brick hospital and six wooden cottages for ambulatory patients. These cottages consisted of large, screened porches of ten beds each and a center room used as a living space (State Board of Control 1936:409). Treatment consisted of little more than rest and relaxation in a "fresh-air" environment, with constant monitoring of patients' conditions. Approximately 20 percent of the Sanitorium's patients succumbed to the disease each year. The facility closed in 1957, due to the nearly complete conquest of tuberculosis.

The state also maintained a part-time facility in Oneida County, Camp Tomahawk. Situated on the eastern shore of Little Tomahawk Lake, Camp Tomahawk received and cared for patients threatened with or recovering from tuberculosis, although pre-tubercular cases were infrequent. A 100 acre section of the 536 acre property was cultivated by the patients as part of their therapy program. Convalescents performed graded labor under skilled supervision in an attempt to rebuild health and stamina. In addition, study courses were offered in a variety of academic subjects. A farm adjoined the camp, but was not worked by the patients (State Board of Control 1934:368-373). Camp Tomahawk also ceased operation in 1957.

Inspired by the state's activities, private groups of physicians established two special tuberculosis hospitals, the River Pines Sanitorium at Stevens Point and the Blue Mound Sanitorium near Milwaukee. Realizing the need for additional facilities (especially in the north and west), the legislature approved a plan to create a system of county sanitoriums in 1911 (Shoemaker and Jones 1981:116). Unfortunately, many counties, especially the

less populated ones, could not afford to finance the construction and operation of additional health-care facilities. This problem was partially alleviated in 1915 with the passing of special legislation to allow for the establishment and maintenance of district sanitoriums; several counties would thus pool their resources and jointly administer a single institution.

The Tri-County Pureair Sanitorium, servicing Ashland, Bayfield, and Iron counties, is a representative example of the county district sanitoriums. Located south of Bayfield overlooking Salmo Bay, the Pureair Sanitorium was constructed between 1918 and 1923, and opened in July 1920, even though the complex was only partially completed. The site consisted of five buildings: the sanitorium, the doctors' and nurses' residences, the power house, and a sewage treatment plant. The sanitorium itself was a T-shaped structure consisting of a main block, with wings on the north and west sides. Window openings were abundant, since fresh air was considered essential in treating tuberculosis. Windows were left open at night, even in winter, and often rooms would fill with snow. Pureair was full to capacity from its opening through the 1940s, when the antibiotic streptomycin was developed. From the 1940s onward the need for prolonged bedrest was greatly reduced. Pureair closed in 1975.

It is likely that by the late nineteenth century, most communities of any size operated "pesthouses" to isolate carriers of infectious disease. The unsanitary conditions and overcrowding, especially in Milwaukee but in other developing urban areas as well, were major contributing factors to the spread of diseases like small pox, scarlett fever, tuberculosis, diptheria, and typhoid. The massive influx of foreign-born during this period, many of whom lived in the overcrowded areas where the diseases spread, meant that foreigners were often both the victims and the scapegoats of these fatal diseases. Foreign-born were less resistant to existing diseases and brought with them new strains of disease. They were also often resistant to health officials' efforts to vacinate them, in part because there was no consensus within the medical community that vacination in fact lessened, rather than increased, the likelihood of catching the disease. All of these factors dove-tailed with the nativist, anti-foreign sentiment which burgeoned during the Progressive Era. The control of infectious disease became the focus of political struggle during this period. Milwaukee's Isolation Hospital, which many of the city's residents viewed as a glorified pesthouse, was central to an intense political battle which raged in the mid-1890s, when an epidemic of small pox swept the city (Leavitt 1975:136-140).

The Isolation Hospital was built in 1878 on Mitchell Street near Nineteenth Avenue, in the city's heavily Polish and German-populated Eleventh Ward. It was razed in 1916, and the South View Hospital was built on the site. Between 1903 and 1912, Isolation Hospital No. 11 operated out of what previously had been the Wisconsin General Hospital, located at 107 Seventh Street (built in 1891). The city of Superior also operated a "pesthouse," as did the city of Hudson, located originally in the First Ward School on South Third Street, built in 1867. Most pesthouses were located outside the city limits to curb the spread of infectious disease; they were often located in buildings for which the community had no other use.

Maternity hospitals and homes were also located throughout the state. Several major maternity hospitals were located in Milwaukee, including: Klae's Hospital and Training School for Nurses, built in 1898 on 318 Cherry Street (razed); Milwaukee Maternity Hospital which opened in 1906, housed at 424 Vliet Street and in 1914 relocated to the John Plankinton home at 1529 Grand Avenue; and Miscericordia Hospital, which opened in 1908 in the former residence of William Pitt Lyndee on Chestnut Street between 22nd and 23rd streets. Miscericordia was a hospital and refuge for unwed mothers, most of whom were charity cases. The original structure, plus several additions, housed Miscericordia until 1968, when it relocated to Brookfield (Hatala and Wenger 1984:21-22). The original structure was demolished in 1982. All of these maternity hospitals apparently offered health care to pregnant women, as well as training to midwives, who after 1909 were required to register with the State Board of Health.

Maternity hospitals or homes in all likelihood existed in most communities around the state, either in private homes, or occupying a few rooms in a commercial building, as was the case in Superior. There, the Women's Christian Temperance Union established a hospital and home in 1898 for women and children. It was located on the upper floor of a commercial building at 1525 Tower Avenue. La Crosse also had a maternity hospital, St. Ann's Maternity Hospital. It was constructed in 1926 and was located at 620 South Eleventh Street. It was part of the St. Francis Hospital complex and was operated by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (Rausch and Zeitlin 1984:170).

Another area of specialized cures that flourished in the state at one time were the water cures. Among the most prestigious of these posh but sometimes short-lived ventures was the resort-spa built in Madison in 1854 by local developers George P. Delaplaine and Elisha Burdick. The $40,000 structure, located in what is today Olin Park, was closed down three years later, a financial failure. Lakeside House, as it was later named, reopened in 1866 as an exclusive resort hotel. Lakeside House became a prominent feature in Madison's burgeoning tourist industry. In 1873, Madison tourism received an additional boost, the discovery of mineral springs. The water would allegedly "eradicate ... chronic diseases [and] restore ... manhood" (Mollenhoff 1982:127-129).

Waukesha's Bethesda Springs, founded in 1868, enjoyed similar popularity which lasted well into the twentieth century. Of some 50 such mineral springs found in the Waukesha area, only the White Rock, discovered in 1870, and Silurian Springs, in use since 1840, rivaled the Bethesda Springs in popularity. Around these springs, and several others, were built exclusive resort hotels, health spas, the Keeley Institute (a drug and alcohol abuse sanitorium), and the Moor Mud Baths. These, too, catered to the monied clientele, who came mainly from Chicago to seek refuge in the relative isolation of rural Wisconsin. As the tourism industry blossomed, it was the resort atmosphere which drew the tourists rather than the unique, healthful attributes of the mineral water (Howard, Needles, Tammen, and Bergendoff 1982:21-26).

Waukesha also hosted one of a number of Keeley Institutes which existed in the state at the turn of the century. Dr. Leslie E. Keeley's cure for alcoholism was the application, four times daily, of a preparation of the chloride of gold and sodium. Allegedly, 25,000 were cured of their dependencies over 15 years (Taylor 1985:51). Waukesha's Keeley Institute, established in 1892, occupied the old Park View Hotel on North Street. The building was destroyed by a fire in 1914 (Howard Needles Tammen and Bergendorff 1982:25). There was also a Keeley Institute in the city of Lancaster in Grant County. Lancaster's Institute was located in the Grand Central Hotel (extant, 108 North Washington Street) from 1891 to 1894. Also in Lancaster was the Shade Sanitorium, which was housed in the former residence of Lancaster Civil War veteran, John B. Callis (extant, 208 East Maple Street). Dr. Shade's Sanitorium employed various techniques, including thermotherapy, hydrotherapy, electro-therapy, osteopathy, massage, and chiropractics (Taylor 1983:51).

Chiropractic, a non-surgical, drugless therapy using spinal manipulation to restore normal nerve functioning, had its beginnings in the late eighteenth century in Davenport, Iowa. Its originator, Daniel David Palmer, opened his Palmer School of Chiropractics in 1898. Wisconsin's close proximity to Iowa meant that the profession and treatment were established here earlier than it developed in other parts of the country; its first Wisconsin practitioner is believed to have began in 1902 (Mawhiney 1984:10). Chiropractors, enthusiastic over their new-found art, touted their spinal manipulation as a cure-all, claiming cures for arthritis, tuberculosis, deafness, asthma, high and low blood pressure, constipation, skin diseases, and nervous disorders, to name but a few (Mawhiney 1984:122).

Not surprisingly, this new healing art and its immediate popularity were met with

considerable suspicion, and its practioners were called "quacks," by the established medical profession. In 1907, Dr. Shegataro Morikubo, a chiropractor in La Crosse was arrested, allegedly, for practicing without a license. Morikubo was, in fact, the earliest registered chiropractor in the state. It is likely that he was arrested not for medical practices, but rather for his outspoken remarks on growing tensions between the United States and Japan. On July 9, 1907, he was quoted in the La Crosse Tribune as saying: "Japan will not engage in a war with the United States unless it is necessary to protect its own country." Less than two weeks later, the "Jap Chiropractor" was arrested (Mawhiney 1984:33). Morikubo was eventually acquitted, although chiropractors were still considered marginal as health professionals. They were considered "irregular practioners" and were likely targets for arrest for practicing medicine without a license. Morikubo's arrest spurred the formation of the Wisconsin Chiropractic Association, formed in 1911 by 17 chiropractors in Ashland. Much of their energies were devoted to securing legislation which would afford them the same security as other medical practioners.

Throughout the 1920s, the state legislature entertained numerous bills regarding the licensing and control of chiropractors. In 1925, a licensing statute was enacted and a Board of Examiners of Chiropractic Practioners was created (Mawhiney 1984:135). Although by then there were chiropractic clinics in scores of communities around the state, there was only one chiropractic hospital in the state. The Wisconsin General Chiropractic Hospital, located in Prairie du Chien, was completed and began operation in 1928. Beset with financial difficulties, the facility close in 1934. It later reopened as a regular hospital, Beaumont Hospital. In more recent years, it has functioned as a convalescent home (Mawhiney 1984:155).

As the medical profession developed throughout the century, many of these specialty treatment centers became obsolete, either because the services they provided were absorbed into regular hospital facilites, as with pre-natal and obstetric care, or became their treatments were no longer necessary. Tuberculosis, small pox, cholera, and other infectious diseases were eliminated through improved sanitation and vaccination, making tuberculosis sanitaria and isolation hospitals obsolete. Water cures were found not to be the panacea that they were once believed to be. Of the specialty treatment centers discussed above, only chiropractic clinics exist in any numbers. Chiropractic healing has been accepted, for the most part, as a legitimate, professional type of health care. Clinics exist throughout the state.

IDENTIFICATION

Resource Types. For the period prior to 1885, medium and large-size homes were used, some of which may have been altered to provide ward space. For the period after 1885, large, institutional-type buildings were used. If a complex or set of buildings comprises the hospital, one large, central building is usually surrounded by smaller ones such as residential quarters for staff, maintenance structures, powerhouses, and isolation units.

Locational Patterns of Resource Types: Facilities were located in urban, metropolitan areas, usually in the center of the city. Isolation units may be found in outlying areas. For more rural locales, facilities are usually located equidistant from major community centers.

Previous Surveys: Structures associated with hospitals and other health-care facilities were identified in the intensive surveys of Eau Claire, New Richmond, Ashland, Neenah, Superior, Platteville, and Kaukauna, but no thematic surveys of this nature have been undertaken.

Survey and Research Needs. A comprehensive compilation of Wisconsin health care facilities, including dates of establishment and locations, would facilitate further research. Approximately 170 "general hospitals" are operational today.

EVALUATION

National Register Listings and Determinations of Eligibility

Fort Winnebago Site (1828-1845), Town of Pacific, Columbia County (NRHP 1979)

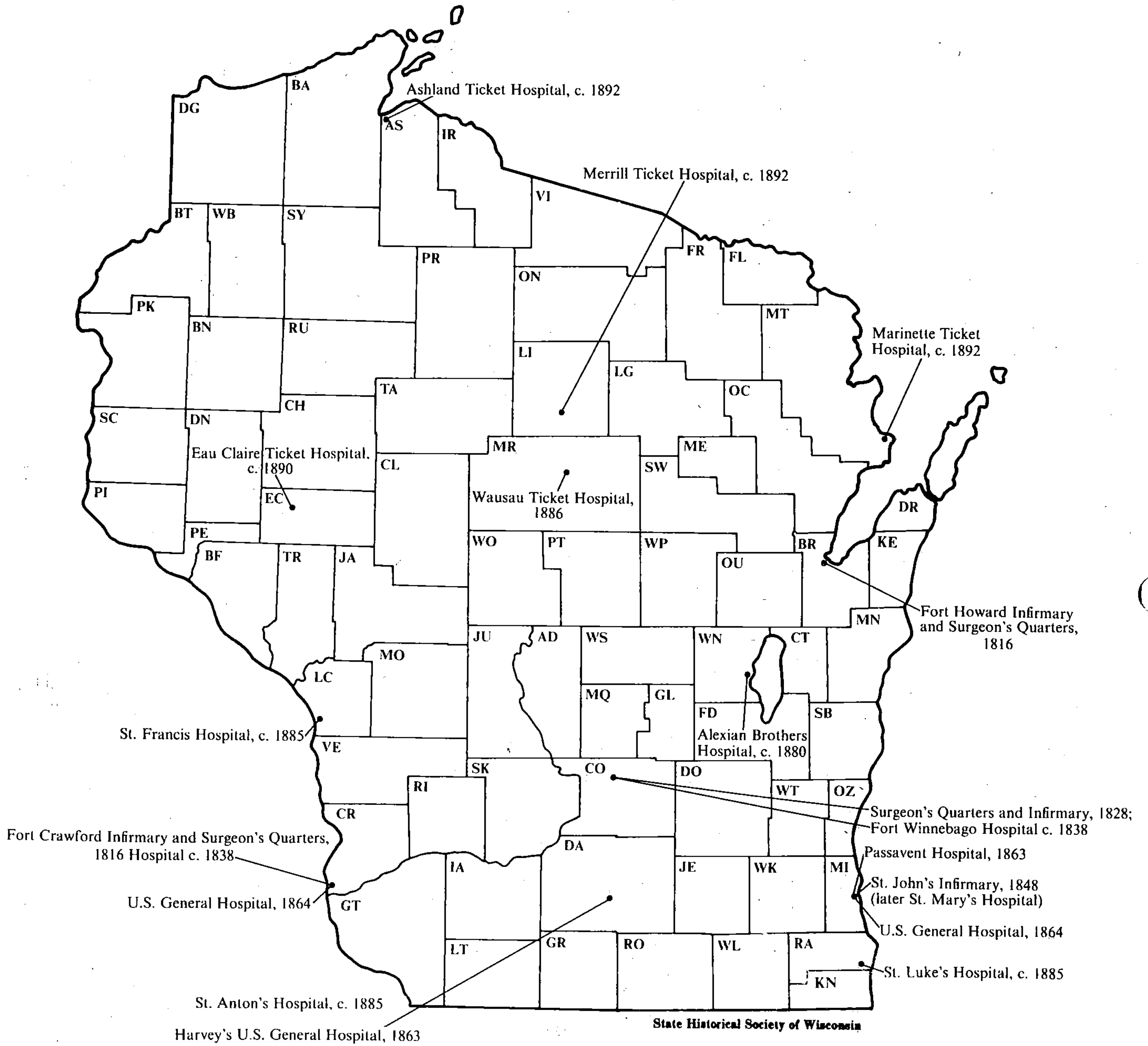
Fort Winnebago Surgeons' Quarters (1828), Town of Pacific, Columbia County (NRHP 1970)

Second Fort Crawford Military Hospital, Rice Street and S. Beaumont Rd., Prairie du Chien, Crawford County (NRHP 1974)

Fort Howard Buildings (1816-1817), Heritage Hill State Park, Town of Allouez, Brown County (NRHP 1979)

Reedsburg Municipal Hospital, 547 N. Park St., Reedsburg, Sauk County (NRHP 1984, Park Street Historic District, Reedsburg MRA)

Context Considerations: Hospitals and other health facilities rarely appear as they did in the nineteenth or early twentieth century. Additions have usually been added and interior alterations are normal. The latter should not be considered a major obstacle to eligibility, but additions should not totally overshadow the historic components. The usual tests of integrity should be applied. Some health facilities were originally built as houses and have reverted to that use. The present use should not hinder an evaluation of historical significance.



Early Hospitals in Wisconsin, 1816-1892

Source: Compiled by Halpern

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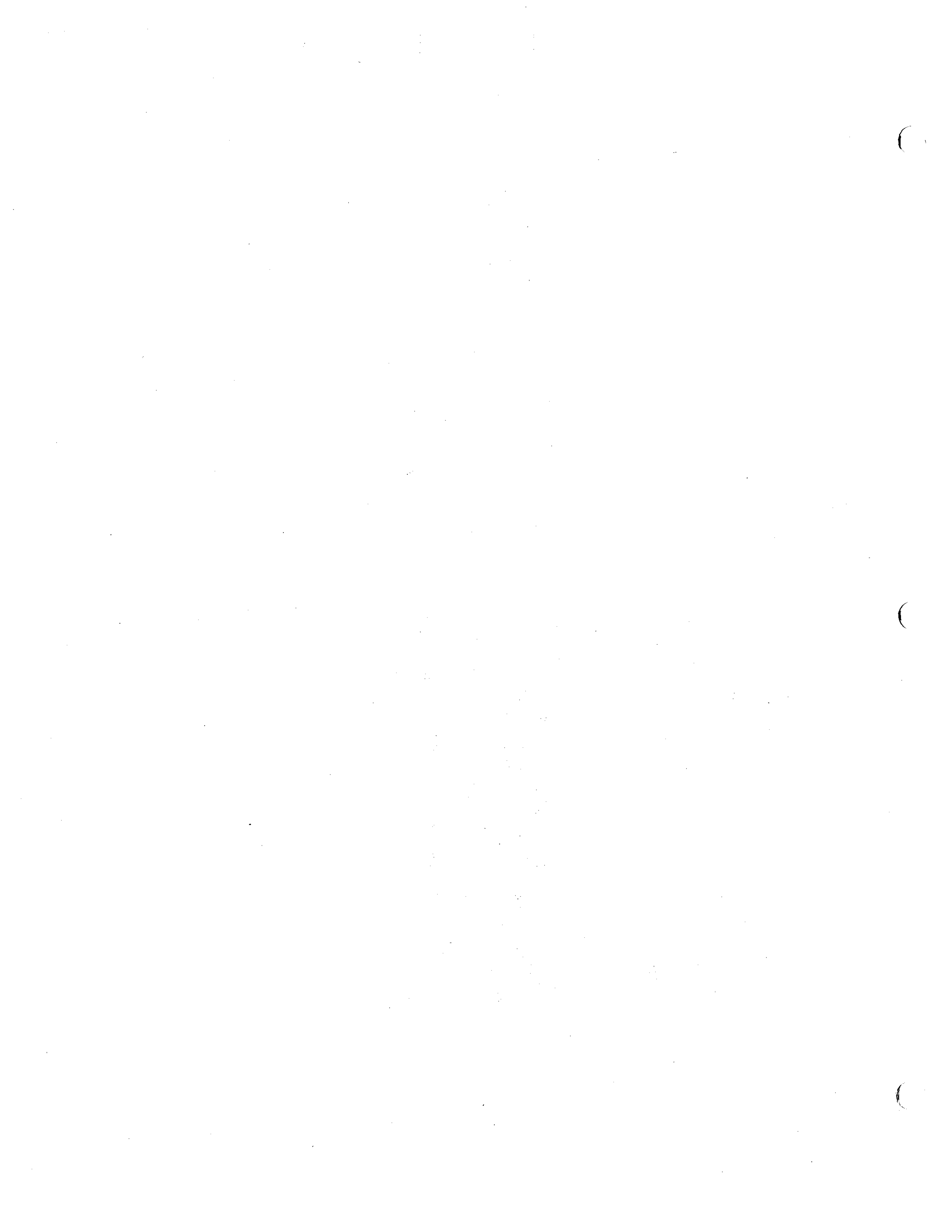


SERVICES FOR THE POOR AND DISADVANTAGED

Temporal Boundaries: 1845 - 1936.

Spatial Boundaries: Entire state, with heavy concentration in the southeastern portion.

Related Study Units: Health Services.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The construction of asylums and poorhouses during the Jacksonian era constituted a revolution in social practice. Prior to this time, Americans had followed very different procedures in regard to deviant and dependent members of society. In colonial and early national America, poverty and dependency were regarded neither as flaws in society, nor as things to be feared and eliminated. Rather, they were accepted as natural occurrences, and their unfortunate victims were seen as integral parts of the community to be pitied and helped (Trattner 1974:17). Early Americans "relieved the poor at home or with relatives or neighbors; they did not remove them to almshouses...they left the insane in the care of their families, supporting them in case of need, as one of the poor. They did not erect special buildings for incarcerating the mentally ill. Similarly, homeless children lived with neighbors, not in orphan asylums" (Rothman 1971:xiii). Only the largest cities, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York, were exceptions to this general rule. These communities were the first to establish asylums, prisons, and poorhouses, but here it must be noted that these institutions were last places of resort.

Why, then, in the 1830s did Americans suddenly depart from past tradition and practice and start institutionalizing wayward members of society? Three compelling explanations have been put forth. First, there is the notion that institutionalization was primarily a method for disciplining and regulating the workforce. "Society had to keep large numbers of the urban lower classes in line, in a social sense, in order that they would stay on the line, in a factory sense. If the laborer would not fulfill his task of his own free will, he would be forced to work in an almshouse...institutionalization was a way of making the lower classes work in one setting, if not another." Thus, coercion rather than benevolence or charity motivated the change (Rothman 1971:xvi).

A second argument holds that the phenomenon of institutionalization can be explained as a triumph of bourgeois morality and ethics. A rational, calculating sensibility imposed a rigid and unbending control upon the insane and deviant. Through the asylum, society would conquer madness by undermining it into conformity; the "autonomy of unreason" would be abolished as madness was institutionalized (Foucault 1967: passim; Rothman 1971:xvii-xviii).

The third thesis maintains that only when the institutional "reforms" of the Jacksonian period are firmly situated in social and political context can sense be made of them. Here, the response to the deviant and dependent emerges as a "vigorous attempt to promote the stability of the society at a moment when traditional ideas and practices appeared outmoded, constricted, and ineffective. The almshouse and the orphan asylum, the penitentiary, the reformatory, and the insane asylum all represented an effort to insure the cohesion of the community in new and changing circumstances" (Rothman 1971:xviii).

These three theses need not be considered as mutually exclusive of one another. They complement each other, and, taken together, provide a more powerful explanation. In any case, one thing remains clear: beginning in the 1830s the poor and deviant were

considered a social problem and a potential source of unrest. They lost their status as neighbors and were removed from the community to places where temptations could be eliminated and their behavior controlled with appropriate rewards and punishments (Rothman 1971:156, 179).

The history of Wisconsin's provision of facilities for the poor, insane, and handicapped begins well after institutionalization became commonplace in the East. The Wisconsin Territorial Statute of 1838 established the county as the administrative unit, charging county commissioners with "entire and exclusive superintendence of the poor." The same law defined the poor as any persons unable to obtain a livelihood because of "bodily infirmity, idiocy, lunacy, or other unavoidable cause." Thus, as a legal category, the poor included other dependent groups (Berthrong 1951:7). If possible, the poor were to be cared for by relatives, and the statute provided for a fine of $15 to be levied upon relatives refusing to take in the indigent. County commissioners were empowered to make contracts with local residents for the care of the poor, a sort of government sanctioned and supervised indentured servitude. They also were granted the authority to build and regulate workhouses, the first one being constructed in Brown County in 1845 (Berthrong 1951:8). Most poorhouses in the nineteenth century actually were farms, the only exceptions being those institutions in urban areas (such as Milwaukee's poorhouse, located within the city itself). Inmate labor was used to raise a few crops for consumption by the poorhouse residents. Many of these facilities were temporary--that is, the county would contract with different individuals on a two or five year basis, so in any given twenty year period, four or five separate locations might serve as the poorhouse. Counties lacking poorhouses usually ignored the poor, or if they were violent or a nuisance, jailed them.

In 1838, the Wisconsin Territorial Act codified and clarified the poor laws. Townships were granted the authority to construct poorhouses and asylums, a measure passed to fill the needs of the more densely settled regions of the southwestern and lakeshore sections of the state, which were relatively thickly settled (Berthrong 1951:10). County judges could commit to close custody any person they deemed dangerous to the public safety or to themselves; and from this juncture onward, institutionalization of the poor and the insane, as well as the handicapped (retarded, epileptic, blind, and senile) became common practice in Wisconsin.

Yet, separate institutions for each class of dependents did not exist until relatively late in the century. At this point, all groups were incarcerated together in poorhouses or, where these were lacking, in jails along with common criminals. Even after the establishment of separate facilities for the insane, retarded, blind, and homeless, county and local poorhouses contained hundreds of such persons. The following table illustrates this trend (numbers are approximate):

NUMBER AND CLASSIFICATION OF POORHOUSE INMATES IN WISCONSIN 1888 - 1906

	1888	1894	1900	1906
Insane	11	11	17	18
Idiocy	15	22	27	23
Old Age	132	292	412	453
Disease	265	412	316	553
Loss of Limbs	10	53	117	86

Deformity	45	17	20	22
Blindness	20	30	23	24
Lying in	9	10	8	7
Not Disabled	253	103	23	16

SOURCE:

Crafer 1910:101-102

The Rock County poorhouse, located eight miles east of Janesville, can be taken as a typical example. Established in 1854 on a private farm acquired by the county board, by 1870 the poorhouse was one of 22 in 58 counties. At any one time between 50 and 60 persons resided there; those that were strong and able worked on the farm, but more than half of the inmates performed no labor. Most residents would stay for a few weeks or a month and then depart--but more often than not they would return within the space of a year. A diverse group, the only characteristic that the residents had in common was their longterm dependence. They included the aged, the handicapped (blind, crippled, retarded, and insane), as well as mothers unable to support their young children (Fleckner 1978:289-291).

Conditions were deplorable. The six sleeping rooms lacked windows and ventilation and swarmed with vermin and bedbugs. Moreover, the building, a wooden frame structure, was a firetrap. Despite repeated warnings from the State Boards of Charities and Control, no corrective measures were ever taken (Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform 1886:49, 20l; Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform 1888:48, 97; Fleckner 1978:290). In general, the insane suffered the worst treatment. When the State Board of Charities and Reform issued its first report in 1871, the document detailed horrible abuses: insane persons chained and manacled, bedded down in straw pens like cattle, deprived of food, etc (Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform 1871:17-71). In 1882, county officials made some half-hearted reforms, erecting separate structures behind the poorhouse for the male and female insane. The following year a new superintendent was employed, after the previous manager was discharged for refusing to improve sanitary conditions. Despite these measures, the poorhouse continued to serve "as a convenient location where society could segregate, and forget, its most helpless and desperate members" (Fleckner 1978:290).

The following table lists the county and city poorhouses that existed in 1910. Many of these served as the county asylum as well:

COUNTY AND CITY POORHOUSES IN WISCONSIN IN 1910

County or City Supported	Capacity	Location
Appleton (city)	30	Appleton
Adams County	30	Big Spring
Ashland County	50	not known
Brown County	50	Green Bay
Barron County	25	Barron
Clark County	20	Neillsville
Columbia County	60	Wyocenia
Crawford County	25	not known
Chippewa County	50	Chippewa Falls
Dane County	75	Verona
Dodge County	60	Juneau
Dunn County	35	not known
Eau Claire County	26	Eau Claire
Fond du Lac County	50	Fond du Lac
Green County	50	Monroe
Grant County	54	Lancaster
Iowa County	50	Dodgeville
Jackson County	30	Black River Falls
Jefferson County	60	Fort Atkinson
Juneau County	35	New Lisbon
Kenosha County	18	not known
Kewaunee County	60	Alaska
Lafayette County	35	Darlington
La Crosse County	65	not known
Marathon County	40	Wausau
Monroe County	40	Sparta
Milwaukee (city and county)	500	Wauwatosa, Milwaukee (city)
Oneida County	57	not known
Pierce County	22	Ellsworth
Racine County	38	Union Grove
Richland County	40	Woodstock
Rock County	60	Johnstown Center
Sauk County	60	Reedsburg
Sawyer County	10	not known
St. Croix County	50	Roberts
Sheboygan County	60	not known
Taylor County	12	Medford
Vernon County	55	Viroqua
Walworth County	60	Elkhorn
Washington County	45	West Bend
Wood County	35	Grand Rapids
Waukesha County	75	Waukesha
Waupaca County	35	Little Wolf
Winnebago County	150	Winnebago

SOURCES:

Crafer 1910:62-63
Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform 1886:212-213
Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform 1888:108-109

Beginning in the mid-1870s, the State Board of Charities began to press for the creation of a separate system for the care and treatment of the insane. Although the Wisconsin State Hospital for the Insane in Madison began receiving patients in 1860 (see below), most of the state's insane continued to languish in poorhouses. In large part this was due to the fact that the Madison facility preferred to treat the curable insane. In 1861 the superintendent of the State Hospital reminded the public that "It should be particularly borne in mind that the Institution is not designed as a mere asylum, but as a hospital for the treatment and cure of insanity and consequently incurable cases will not be retained therein" (Trustees of the Wisconsin State Hospital for the Insane 1861:1). At the time these remarks were made, only 103 patients resided at the State Hospital, and an estimated 900 insane remained in county and local facilities (Wisconsin Board of Charities and Reform 1874:84).

In 1878 the legislature approved a measure allowing counties to construct asylums, with half of the building costs provided by the state. Beginning in the early 1880s, following the lead of Milwaukee County, asylums for the chronic insane were constructed in various counties across the state. While these facilities did not provide any sort of treatment, they did remove the insane from poorhouses and jails where they often were subject to mistreatment at the hands of fellow inmates. The county system of organization, which became known as the "Wisconsin Plan," essentially abandoned the chronic insane in that no treatment was provided. A.O. Wright, the secretary of the Board of Charities, made this explicit in 1881, stating that the public should rid itself "of the delusion that some extraordinary medical treatment is needed for the chronic insane. Whatever may be the case with the recent cases of insanity the chronic insane who are returned from our hospitals to the poorhouses are cases in which the best medical care has already failed and in which there is nothing left except to trust time and common sense treatment" (Berthrong 1951:215-219). Despite these oft-repeated claims, the "Wisconsin Plan" had numerous critics who lobbied for total care, known as the "New York Plan" after the system established in that state. Nevertheless the county system gradually took hold. By 1885 12 counties had constructed asylums. By 1910 35 such institutions existed (Berthrong 1951:219-220). The following table lists county asylums in 1910. Again, it should be noted that many of these were merely makeshift structures attached or adjacent to existing poorhouses.

COUNTY ASYLUMS IN WISCONSIN IN 1910

County	Location	Date established
Brown	Green Bay	1882
Chippewa	Chippewa Falls	1896
Columbia	Wyocena	1883
Dane	Verona	1883
Dodge	Juneau	1883
Douglas	Superior Station	
Dunn	Menomonie	1892
Eau Claire	Eau Claire	1901
Fond du Lac	Fond du Lac	1886
Grant	Lancaster	1883
Green	Monroe	1883
Iowa	Dodgeville	1887
Jefferson	Jefferson	1882
La Crosse	West Salem	1885
Manitowoc	Manitowoc	1885
Marathon	Wausau	1894
Marinette	Peshtigo	1907
Milwaukee	Wauwatosa	1889
Monroe	Sparta	1903
Outagamie	Appleton	1890
Racine	Racine	1890
Richland	Richland Center	1897
Rock	Janesville	1882
St. Croix	New Richmond	1897
Sauk	Reedsburg	1882
Shawano	Shawano	1913
Sheboygan	Sheboygan	1882
Trempealeau	Whitehall	1900
Vernon	Viroqua	1889
Walworth	Elkhorn	1882
Washington	West Bend	1899
Waukesha	Waukesha	1903
Waupaca	Weyauwega	1903
Winnebago	Winnebago	1882
Wood	Marshfield	1910

SOURCE:

Crafer 1910:45-46; Proceedings. Current Association of County Asylums 1913:68-70

Wisconsin's solution to the problem of the insane, deviant, and dependent of the state, as it developed after 1878, involved a system of mixed county and state care. The county was made responsible for the care of chronic or incurable insane as well as paupers, while the state was made accountable for the care of "recent and acute" cases of insanity along with handicapped persons and dependent children. In 1871, the state government moved to consolidate administrative control over state sponsored facilities for the poor, handicapped, and dependent by creating the Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform. Composed of representatives from the Boards of Trustees of the various institutions, the Board of Charities and Reform soon found itself the object of attacks by opposition Democrats who accused the board of financial improprieties. The controversy continued to rage for a decade; and in 1881, in an attempt to restore harmony and dispell rumors, financial control of the state institutions was given to the newly formed State Board of Supervision of the Wisconsin Charitable, Reformatory, and Penal Institutions.

Unfortunately, the two administrative bodies refused to cooperate with one another, prompting the legislature to abolish them both in 1891. The Wisconsin State Board of Control, composed of members appointed by the Governor for two-year terms, replaced the feuding bodies. The Board of Control retained jurisdiction over the various institutions until well into the twentieth century (Berthrong 1951:200201; Long 1940: passim). Each of the types of constitutions under its jurisdiction is discussed below.

CENTRALIZED FACILITIES FOR THE INSANE

Although the state legislature provided for the construction of a lunatic asylum as early as 1854, the project was not begun until 1858 due to political squabbles and infighting. Modeled after the Massachusetts State Hospital in Worcester, Massachusetts, the Wisconsin State Lunatic Asylum (later renamed the Wisconsin State Hospital for the Insane, popularly known as "Mendota") admitted its first patient in July, 1860 (Trustees of the Wisconsin State Hospital for the Insane 1861:11-13). Located on Lake Mendota, across from the city of Madison, the State Hospital occupied a wooded site in the Town of Westport. Designed by S.V. Shipman, the original four story building, 65 by 120 feet, was completed in 1862. Subsequently east and west wings 250 feet in length and two transverse wings 87 feet long were added. In 1904, a three story addition to the rear of the main building afforded room for a dining room, an additional male ward, bakery, and laundry. Other buildings constructed early in the century included a powerhouse, nurses' home, greenhouse, and a 50 bed structure for convalescent male patients (State Board of Control 1934:218). In addition, a 226 acre farm with barn and other farm buildings adjoined the property. In 1925 a Farm Colony was established. Located on a large farm three miles north of the institution, the colony provided outdoor exercise and occupation for patients while producing additional amounts of produce to meet the hospital's needs (Wisconsin Blue Book 1929:224).

Soon after the Mendota facility commenced operation it became apparent that its 177 patient capacity fell far short of the state's needs. Thus, in 1870 the legislature passed an act to provide for an additional institution for the insane. A 337 acre site four miles north of the City of Oshkosh, on the west shore of Lake Winnebago, was selected for the new Hospital. Also designed by S.V. Shipman, the Northern Hospital for the Insane provided bed-space for an additional 215 patients when it opened. Although construction began in 1871, completion was delayed for more than two years due to a severe shortage of bricks and other building materials due to the extraordinary demand created by the rebuilding of Chicago after the disastrous fire there (Trustees for the Northern Wisconsin Hospital for the Insane 1873:5-7) (State Board of Control 1934:262). A sizeable farm, located just off the hospital grounds, was maintained by the Hospital. In 1873, 100 acres were ploughed and under cultivation. By 1934, approximately 800 acres of farmland were used: 300 on the main farm, and 250 on each of two nearby "colonies" (State Board of Control 1934:274).

As noted above, the State Hospital treated only the "curable" insane: those patients that doctors deemed standing a good chance of recovery. Judges or juries of county or district courts could commit patients. Individuals could voluntarily commit themselves by applying to the superintendent in writing, with certification by two qualified physicians. The hospital also served as a place for treatment of narcotic drug addicts. With the opening of the Northern State Hospital for the Insane in Oshkosh in 1873, the state was divided into two districts. Patients from the southern and western counties went to the Lake Mendota facility; those from the northern counties and the lakeshore area were sent to Oshkosh (State Board of Control 1934:218).

In 1909, the legislature made provision for the erection at the Northern Hospital for the Insane of a building for the dangerous and criminally insane. However, for various reasons, political and financial, work was never started. In 1911, the legislature returned to the problem of the criminally insane, setting aside funds for the building of a separate

facility at Waupun, to be known as the Central Hospital for the Insane. The first patients were admitted in January 1914. Four classes of inmates were incarcerated at Waupun: 1) persons convicted of a criminal offense and who had become insane while in prison; 2) persons accused of a crime but found not guilty by reason of insanity; 3) persons accused of a crime but not tried due to insanity; 4) persons who because of suicidal or homicidal tendencies were dangerous to themselves or others. It should be noted that all of the inmates were males (Central Hospital for the Insane 1916:7-9). The hospital was situated on a 72 acre tract of land, and consisted of one massive brick and stone building with various interconnected wings. Farm buildings and maintenance structures also stood on the grounds (Hannah 1929:227-228).

All three of these institutions continue to function today. The trend in recent years, however, has been towards the de-institutionalization of patients. In part this is due to the severe fiscal crisis which has forced budgetary cut-backs. In part it reflects new ways of thinking about the treatment of the insane and mentally impaired. Many of the county asylums have become "half-way houses" in which patients can enjoy greater freedom and responsibility than they had access to in the larger state institutions. In addition, numerous private facilities care for less acute cases, receiving a portion of their funding from the state.

FACILITIES FOR THE BLIND

In the fall of 1849, J.T. Axtell began offering classes for the education of the blind in Janesville. His was a private venture supported by local citizens and servicing blind children in the Rock County vicinity. Despite charitable contributions from the community, the school ran into financial difficulty within a year of its opening. It could be that there were not enough blind children in the immediate vicinity to support the school. In 1850 several prominent Janesville businessmen, accompanied by parents of some of the students, travelled to Madison to persuade the legislature to underwrite the school's expenses. Their arguments were persuasive; later that year, the school was incorporated as the Wisconsin Institute for the Education of the Blind. The charter provided that any blind Wisconsin resident between the ages of eight and 21 could be admitted, with the state assuming the cost of tuition, room and board. Parents were expected to provide clothing and to assume the costs of transportation. It should be noted that on occasion blind children from neighboring states and territories attended, with their families paying their way or, rarely, sharing the expenses with their local communities (Berthrong 1951:39; Current 1976:187).

The Institute for the Education of the Blind opened its doors in October, 1850. Eight students enrolled that first year. It occupied rented rooms in Janesville until June of 1852, when it moved into a building constructed by the state and situated on what were then the outskirts of the city (Wisconsin Blue Book 1909:649). Enrollment steadily rose over the next few years. Thirty-two pupils attended in 1858, and by 1870 the Institute was servicing around 70 students each term and by the mid-1930s an average of 150 students took courses annually (Berthrong 1951:39). The legislature was pleased with the school, apportioning funds for its enlargement in 1854, 1859, and 1864. Unfortunately, disaster struck in April 1874 when an early morning blaze destroyed the entire structure. At the next legislative session, $56,000 was set aside for the erection of a single wing of a proposed new building on the old site; in 1876 a further allotment of $90,000 was granted for the rebuilding of the main structure (Beck 1909:649).

The classes offered at the Institute for the Blind can be divided into three categories. First, subjects paralleling those of other public schools were taught, with the blind reading with their fingers first in books with raised letters, and later braille. However, until the 1920s most instruction was given orally (Cunningham 1891:455). Students also took musical training, both vocal and instrumental. Here, the purpose was not mere enjoyment; it was hoped that some students could use their musical ability as a practical

means of support after graduation. The third category of instruction also was aimed at teaching the blind a useful trade in order to keep them off the welfare rolls. Thus, brush and broom making, weaving, knitting, and sewing were systematically taught. Around the turn of the century, a course in piano tuning was introduced into the curriculum which proved quite popular and successful because many blind persons naturally compensate for their handicap by developing acutely sensitive hearing faculties (Beck 1909:649-650; Hannah 1929:245-246).

In the early years of the twentieth century, the Institute began to address the problem of the adult blind in the state (estimated at around 3,000 persons in 1934). During summer recess the Institute offered classes for blind adults. In 1924, the state established a Field Agency for the Adult Blind, under the direction of the State Board of Control. The Field Agency's staff visited the adult blind to investigate their condition, to instruct them, and to help them find suitable employment. In 1929, the Agency employed, besides a director and clerical staff, four home teachers, a fieldworker, and a placement secretary (Hannah 1929:247; State Board of Control 1934:519-521).

In 1903 private charities with the aid of city government established the Workshop for the Blind in Milwaukee. Intended to provide training and employment to the adult blind, the Workshop became a "cottage industry" for blind craftspeople. Willow baskets and other reed and willow products were produced and sold locally, with profits going into a fund out of which blind workers drew nominal wages. In 1925, the legislature placed the Workshop for the Blind under the supervision of the Janesville Institute for the Blind, although the facility continued to operate in Milwaukee. Henceforth, the state provided raw materials, machinery, and tools, as well as the railroad fare to any indigent adult blind desiring to learn a trade. By 1929 37 blind workers supported themselves through employment at the Workshop (Hannah 1929:246).

FACILITIES FOR THE DEAF

The origins of state-supported facilities for the deaf are similar to those for the blind; both began as private ventures which were taken over by the state after they ran into fiscal difficulties.

In 1850 Miss Wealthy Hawes, a graduate of the renowned New York Institute for the Deaf and Dumb, started offering classes for deaf-mutes in rented rooms in the town of Delavan. When the school closed a year and a half later for lack of funds, area citizens rallied to the cause. Led by Ebeneezer Cheseboro, father of two deaf pupils, they circulated petitions around the southeastern part of the state, and lobbied in Madison for state incorporation of the school. In 1852 the legislature rewarded their efforts, chartering the Wisconsin Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb (later renamed simply the Wisconsin School for the Deaf). At the time of its founding, it was one of only 16 such schools in the United States (Berthrong 1951:40-41; Current 1976:187).

For the first year of its existence, the school continued to operate out of rented rooms in central Delavan. Fourteen students attended in 1852, but many more applied for admission, prompting the School's Board of Trustees to make plans for the erection of a larger permanent structure. H.K. Phoenix, one of the trustees, donated 12 acres of land west of the city and construction soon commenced. The two story brick building was completed in the spring of 1854, and could comfortably accomodate 35 pupils and an academic staff of five persons (Trustees for the Wisconsin Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb 1852; Trusttes for the Wisconsin Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb 1854:13). When the building was destroyed by fire in 1879, an additional 20 acres were purchased alongside the Southwestern Division of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway, and four new buildings were constructed. The new facilities provided bed and workspace for 220 children and included a gymnasium and workshop (Trustees of the Wisconsin Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb 1879:8-9; Beck

1909:647).

The school's articles of incorporation provided for the free instruction of any deaf Wisconsin resident between the ages of eight and 25. At the time of the school's founding it was estimated that approximately 125 deaf-mutes resided in Wisconsin. Skilled teachers, graduates of specialized institutions, instructed pupils in lip-reading and articulation, as well as regular academic subjects (State Board of Control 1934:6507). During the school's first few decades qualified teachers proved difficult to come by and to retain; usually they had to be recruited from the East. As with the Institute for the Education of the Blind, officials at the School for the Deaf felt obliged to teach their pupils a trade, so as to prevent them from leaving school "unfitted to obtain an honorable living, and in danger of becoming pests to society" (Trustees of the Wisconsin Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb 1856:15). Hence, shoe and cabinet making were taught at Delavan. In their reports, the Board of Trustees liked to emphasize this area of instruction. They saw the institution's role as the training of useful, productive members of society: "Like the common schools, we take the child ignorant and return him intelligent. Like the master workman we return him a skilled mechanic. We take him a consumer--we return him a producer" (Trustees of the Wisconsin Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb 1866:17).

Despite the school's expansion after the 1879 fire, its capacity fell far short of the state's needs. After 1885 cities, under the supervision of the appropriate agency, were allowed to maintain schools for the deaf. The largest and most well known of these was the Milwaukee Phonological Institution, but at the turn of the century 11 other schools existed. These operated out of local elementary and high schools in Appleton, Ashland, Black River Falls, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Green Bay, La Crosse, Marinette, Racine, Stevens Point and Superior (Inspectors of Schools for the Deaf 1902:14). In the mid-1920s, the Delavan School began to retain a field worker for the purposes of visiting isolated families with prospective deaf students, counselling the adult deaf, and attempting to aid graduates in finding employment. At about the same time, significant numbers of graduates matriculated at Gallaudet College, an institution for the deaf in Washington, D.C. (State Board of Control 1934:506). This institutional link was maintained for several decades.

FACILITIES FOR THE RETARDED

From the territorial period until the late 1890s retarded citizens who had become dependent on county and local governments for support were housed in the county poorhouses. There they languished, uncared for in any genuine way, along with paupers, epileptics, the insane and the elderly. Since many county poorhouses in the years before the Civil War were merely extensions of local jails, these dependent persons were treated as criminals--subject to harsh disciplinary measures, fed poorly, and forced to work. The retarded, then called "feeble minded," and the mentally ill often were abused by their fellow inmates.

As early as 1867, progressive-minded forces in the state had begun to lobby for a separate institution for the mentally deficient. Led by Assemblyman W.W. Reed, reformers introduced legislation aimed at establishing such a facility in 1868, 1869, 1871, 1877, and 1878. All of these attempts proved unsuccessful. Reed, an indefatigable devotee to the cause, persisted. In 1887 he travelled to Jacksonville, Illinois, and visited the State Home for the Feeble Minded there. Returning to Madison, he presented his findings to his colleagues in the Assembly, introduced another bill, and lobbied in the Senate for its passage. Both houses approved the bill, but Governor Jeremiah Rusk vetoed it. In his veto message, Rusk reasoned that since Wisconsin had adopted a county system for the care of the chronic insane, the same system should serve the retarded. A similar bill was introduced in 1891; it was tabled. Another attempt two years later also met with failure (Berthrong 1951:229-232).

Finally, in 1895, the Legislature passed a bill providing for the establishment of a school and home for "the custody, training, and education of the feeble-minded, epileptic, and idiotic of the state." Originally known as the Wisconsin Home for the Feeble Minded, the institution opened in 1897. Located three miles from Chippewa Falls, Chippewa County, the institution accepted 42 patients in its first year of operation. During the early 1900s the facilities were expanded to include an administration building, two school houses, a hospital, a bakeshop, a carpenter and machine shop, and eight cottages with accomodations for approximately 400. By 1934, additional cottages had been constructed, expanding the capacity of the school to 1,000. Later buildings included two dairy barns, a greenhouse, several less important agricultural buildings, and six residences for officers and employees (Berthrong 1951:234; State Board of Control 1900:37; State Board of Control 1934:306). Originally the school grounds covered 600 acres; by 1901 adjoining lands had been purchased or ceded to the institution by the City of Chippewa Falls, increasing the total acreage to 1,021 (Froehlich 1901:523).

Despite the large size and ample facilities at Chippewa Falls, the Home for the Feeble Minded could not meet the needs of the state's population. An estimated 3,000 retarded and epileptic inmates were housed in various local institutions and private hospitals at the turn of the century (Froehlich 1901:523). Thus, in 1919, a second facility was opened in Racine County, two miles from Union Grove, under the name the "Southern Wisconsin Home for the Feeble-Minded and Epileptic." It also was built on the "cottage plan", and housed 450 inmates in eight buildings (State Board of Control 1934:332-334). In the mid-1920s the names of the two institutions were changed. The Chippewa Falls facility was rechristened the Northern Wisconsin Colony and Training School and the Union Grove Home was renamed the Southern Wisconsin Colony and Training School.

Both institutions were run in a similar fashion. Inmates were divided into two categories: those suitable for education, and those classified as "helpless or lower grade." The first group received training in a variety of academic and vocational subjects, the latter including basketry, brush making, mat and rug weaving, and chair caning. The second group, whose median mental age was estimated at eight years in 1934, received some vocational training. Both the Northern and Southern Colonies supported farms. The operation at Union Grove was the larger of the two, stretching over some 520 acres, of which 400 were under cultivation from 1900 onward. In addition to the agricultural and dairying activities, cattle and hogs were raised for slaughter and sale. About 75 students at each institution, mostly older boys, provided the labor for the farms. They lived separately from the other inmates, on "internal colonies." The farms continued to function until 1948, when they were turned over to the Department of Corrections.

The Northern Colony also supported three "extramural colonies." One provided pre-parole preparation for girls, and was located on a farmstead adjacent to the institution. In addition to domestic duties, the girls occupied themselves by caring for a garden plot and raising barnyard poultry. The Colony's annual report explained "It is in this unit that the ... girl is oriented to life in a small group, her previous institutional training is more definitely organized and she is given an opportunity to demonstrate her ability for domestic service and her fitness for extra-institutional social adjustment" (State Board of Control 1934:320). It might be noted that for a period of almost 30 years, beginning in 1913 with the State Sterilization Law, hundreds of inmates, mostly female, were sterilized annually at both the Northern and the Southern Colonies. This was a common procedure at the time, especially for girls about to be released from custody (State Board of Control 1934:45, 311; State Board of Control 1936:352-353).

The two other extramural colonies performed a similar pre-parole function for male inmates. These were located at farms about six miles form the Northern Colony (State Board of Control 1934:321). Possibly because the farming operation at the Southern Colony was so extensive, no pre-parole colonies were supported.

Both the facilities continue to function today. In the late 1950s, the names were changed again; instead of "colonies," the institutions are referred to as "Centers for the Developmentally Disabled." Currently they are administered by the Department of Health and Social Services (Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau 1980:436).

FACILITIES FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Prior to 1885, orphans and neglected minors were cared for by private charities or religious institutions, although evidence suggests that many homeless children were placed in county poorhouses. In 1885 the State Legislature instructed the Board of Supervision to select a suitable site and erect buildings for a state school and temporary home for dependent and neglected children. Stevens Point, Waupaca, Green Bay, Oshkosh, Fond du Lac, and La Crosse all submitted bids, but after visiting the various sites, the Board settled on an 164 acre tract of land in Monroe County, just north of Sparta. During the following year, three cottages were constructed. Two of these were built of solid brick and stood two stories high with an attic and stone basement. They were capable of accomodating 100 students each. The third building was a frame structure veneered with brick, also two stories tall. Originally intended for the superintendent and his family, it soon was used to house the younger children, accomodating 30 of them. Known as the State Public School, the institution opened its doors and began receiving students in November 1886 (Cunningham 1891:458).

Within a year of the school's opening, it became apparent that additional space was needed. In 1887-1888 a large central building, made of brick with a stone foundation, was built along with two additional cottages. Two years later a cold-storage building and ice-house was completed, and work on a barn, slaughterhouse, infirmary, and boiler and engine house was underway. Approximately 175 students attended the State Public School in its first three years. When the additions were complete, 250 students were accomodated; and by 1909, the population had reached 450 (Cunningham 1891: 448, 458; Beck 1909:652-653).

Modelled after the Michigan State Public School in Coldwater, Michigan, in both design and purpose, the Wisconsin institution was intended to fulfill three functions. First and foremost, it served as a "state clearing house," a "...depot between children in their neglected conditions in the several counties and the many homes to which children will be welcome." Any child under the age of 16 deemed by a county or juvenile court to be dependent or neglected could be committed to the State Public School where efforts then would be made to find a foster home. Secondly, crippled children under the age of 21 were temporarily lodged at the School while convalescing. For the most part these children came from county poorhouses and overcrowded private orphanages, well-to-do families being able to provide for their own. Finally, insane, feeble-minded, and epileptic children who had been abandoned or neglected by their parents were often placed in the Public School (State Board of Control 1934:488)(Wisconsin State Board of Charities and Reform 1890:90).

At any given time approximately 45 percent of the school's charges were temporary residents waiting to be placed in family situations, approximately 50 percent suffered some sort of mental deficiency, and the remaining five percent were healing cripples (State Board of Control 1934:490; State Board of Control 1936:555). The institution, then, was a kind of "catch-all" facility for Wisconsin minors who, for one reason or another, had become wards of the state. Most of the children sent to Sparta remained there for only a few months, some for merely a week or two. The exceptions tended to be those with mental deficiencies, many of whom resided at the school until reaching maturity and then were transferred to the state hospital at Mendota or to one of the county asylums.

A working farm of 75 acres adjoined the school. Here, male students were taught the

rudiments of agriculture and, in the process, provided the school's kitchen with produce and a variety of dairy products. Girls were instructed in sewing and cooking; and teachers endeavored to impart the equivalent of a common school education to their students, despite the considerable difficulties caused by frequent turnover and a wide range of intellectual and mental capabilities (Beck 1909:653; State Board of Control 1934:497-498, 500-501).

For a number of years older students were "farmed out," or indentured, to local farmers to help fill seasonal labor needs, but this practice was discontinued around the turn of the century when several cases of maltreatment and abuse received public attention. In 1904 the superintendent's report included a defensive reply to mounting public criticism which had charged the school was run in a manner similar to a prison camp: "Our children are in no sense prisoners. Although committed by courts of record until 18 years of age, they have no jailers...their cottages are never locked. Any child may walk out at any time" (State Board of Control 1904:338). Yet it is certain that conditions at Sparta were far from idyllic. Each year many children ran away; and cases of abuse continued to surface.

Beginning in the early 1920s, the State Public School maintained two cottages near Madison for the care of crippled children who had undergone surgery. There they received care and corrective treatment at the Wisconsin General Hospital. When discharged they were either returned to their homes or, in the case of dependency, sent to Sparta (Hannah 1929:243-244). It appears that these cottages were abandoned in the 1930s, when the Depression forced a reduction of services.

It should be pointed out that the State Public School at Sparta did not supplant the church-run and charity-sponsored orphanages in the state, but supplemented these private efforts. The Catholic and Lutheran Churches, in particular, maintained several orphanages in Wisconsin. These ranged from large institutions, such as St. Rose's Orphan Asylum in Milwaukee which housed 150 girls, to smaller homes, such as the two orphanages maintained by the Catholic Association, St. Michael's Male Orphan Asylum in La Crosse and St. Francis Female Orphan Asylum near Sparta (Wisconsin Board of Charities and Reform 1880:204-207).

CIVIL WAR INSTITUTIONS

The hardships created by the Civil War placed an enormous strain upon the limited resources of the state. An estimated 12,000 Wisconsin soldiers lost their lives in the conflict, leaving widows and broken families (Berthrong 1951:30). Government and private charities responded by setting up a number of temporary institutions. After the war ended, the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) addressed the needs of veterans by establishing facilities for the care of the crippled and, later in the century, by maintaining retirement homes.

The most serious problem facing the state was that of war orphans, estimated to be 6,000 in 1865 (Berthrong 1951:31). During the final years of the war, Mrs. Louis Harvey, the widow of the governor, established a hospital in Madison in 1863. After the war she continued to maintain interest in these homeless waifs. She took several of them in, lodging them in the hospital, and lobbied energetically on their behalf before the legislature. In 1866, due largely to the efforts of Mrs. Harvey and former Governor James T. Lewis, the legislature passed an act establishing the Soldiers' Orphans Home of Wisconsin. In practical terms this meant state funding for Mrs. Harvey's institution, which gradually phased out its medical operations. War orphans between the ages of four and 14 were supported free of charge. The home continued to function as an orphanage under Mrs. Harvey's direction until 1914 (Berthrong 1951:51; Current 1976:518).

The first veterans institution in Wisconsin was established in 1865. The Wisconsin

Soldiers Aid Society, a federation of charitable groups which had worked throughout the war sending supplies and care packages to the front, set up the Bureau of Employment for Discharged Soldiers which operated out of the Milwaukee YMCA. The Bureau endeavored to find jobs for the veterans, devoting special attention to those who were wounded or crippled. It asked that "the light occupations of all towns and communites" be given to the men who had incapacitated themselves for heavier work by "giving their limbs, their health, and their blood to the nation." The Bureau functioned for a three year period and then, feeling its work completed, dissolved (Current 1976:371, 393).

In 1865, a group of prominent citizens in Milwaukee held a "sanitary fair" to raise funds for the construction of a disabled soldiers home. By the following year, a 26 acre site had been purchased. However, this property was sold the next year, and a larger, 365 acre tract was purchased in what is now the Town of Wood. Even before construction of the first buildings had been completed, veterans began to arrive. They were cared for in Milwaukee by the Wisconsin Soldiers Home Society which lodged the men in temporary quarters; others resided at the construction site, living in the two farmhouses on the property. Over the next few years, an infirmary and hospital were built, and separate buildings were added for a chapel, barracks, a new hospital, and quarters for the staff. A cemetery was established in 1871.

In 1887, the GAR founded the Wisconsin Veterans Home, located in King (Waupaca County), to provide for the needs of aging and infirm veterans. From its founding until the 1890s the Home consisted of one main building, the former Greenwood Park Hotel, and several adjacent cottages. In the 1890s, following a fire which destroyed the hotel, a series of new buildings were raised: additional cottages, a three story frame house which served as the Commandant's residence, a chapel, and a doctor's residence which also functioned as an infirmary. A hospital was built in 1929. In 1889 the federal government began suporting the institution, paying $100 for each veteran to settle there. The state of Wisconsin acquired the property in 1890, although the GAR continued to operate the home. In 1917, control over the home was transferred to a Board of Managers appointed by the Governor; in 1945, as part of a general reorganizaton of veteran functions by the legislature, jurisdiction over the Home was given to the newly created Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs. In order to be admitted to the Home a veteran must have served in the U.S. armed forces for a period of at least 90 days, one day of which must have been during a war-time period; he must also be a resident of Wisconsin. Wives, widows, and mothers of duly qualified veterans are eligible as well.

Resource Types. County asylums and poorhouses: jails and lock-ups, residential-type dwellings, barns and other agricultural buildings.

State asylums: institutional buildings and complexes, barns and other agricultural buildings, maintenance buildings, powerhouses.

Facilities for the blind, deaf, retarded, and dependent: both residential and institutional buildings, cottages, chapels, barns and other agricultural buildings.

Sanitariums and other facilities for the tubercular: cottages and residential-type buildings, hospitals, barns and other agricultural buildings.

Civil War institutions: large, private homes converted into hospital-like facilities, institutional complexes.

Locational Patterns of Resource Types. For county asylums and poorhouses: usually located in rural and semi-rural areas, although several larger cities supported their own poorhouses. Often the county asylum and poorhouse were situated together. In many instances the location of the county poorhouse/asylum changed frequently, as often as every five years, since county government contracted with private citizens for the running of the institution.

State asylums: Mendota, Oshkosh, Waupun.

Facilities for the blind: Janesville (Institute for the Education of the Blind), Milwaukee (Workshop for the Blind).

Facilities for the deaf: Delavan (Wisconsin School for the Deaf), local elementary and high schools.

Facilities for the retarded: Chippewa Falls (Northern Wisconsin Colony and Training School), Union Grove (Southern Wisconsin Colony and Training School).

Facilities for dependent children: Sparta (State Public School).

Sanitoriums and facilities for the tubercular: Statesan, Waukesha County (Wisconsin State Sanitarium), Oneida County (Camp Tomahawk). Sanitoriums were usually located in rural, wooded areas, often on hills or bluffs.

Civil War institutions: Madison (Harvey's United States General Hospital, later Wisconsin Soldiers' Orphan Home), Prairie du Chien and Milwaukee (U.S. General Hospitals), Milwaukee (Wisconsin Soldiers' Home Association), Wood (Wisconsin Soldiers Home), King (Wisconsin Veterans Home).

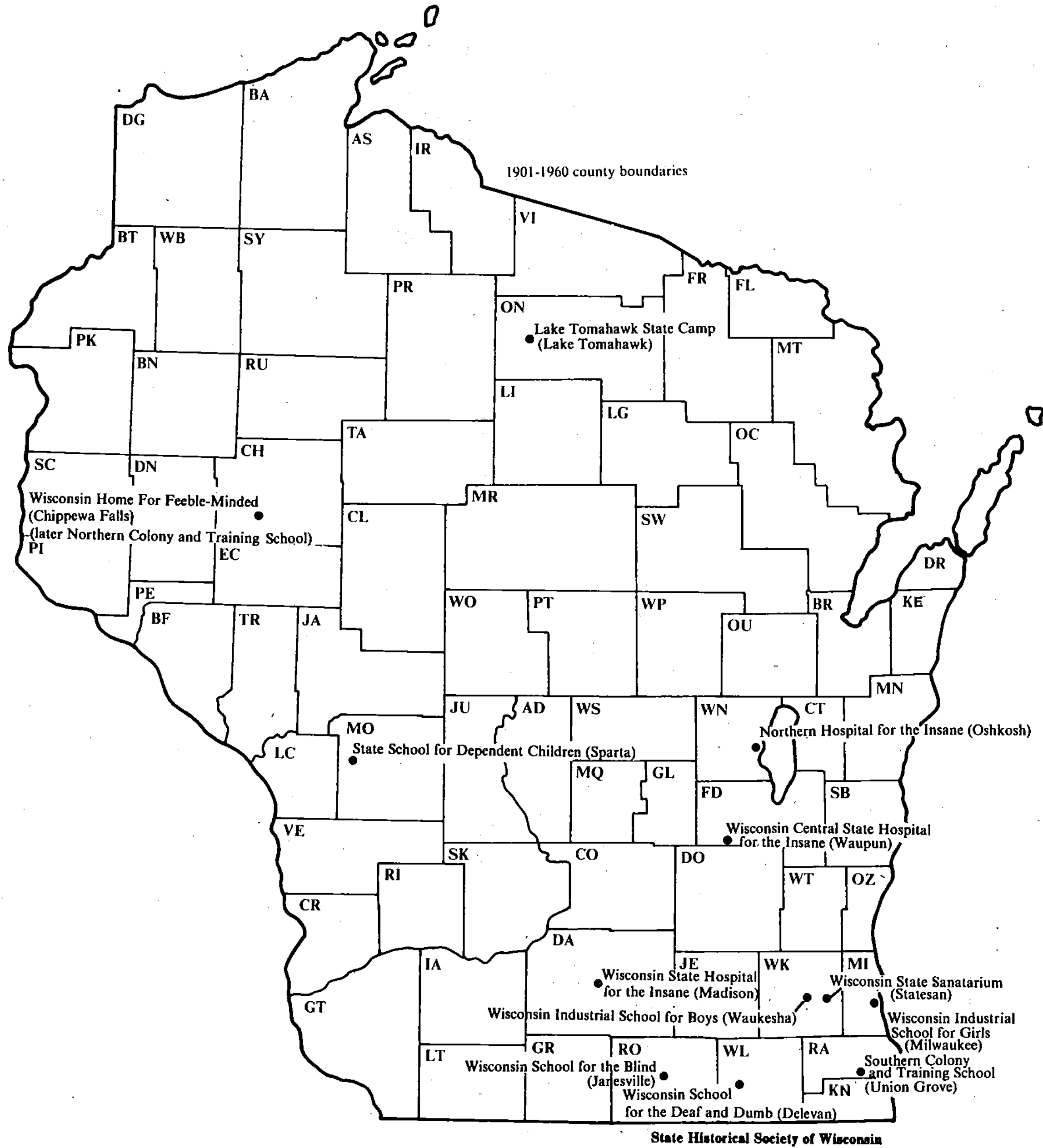
Previous Surveys. Structures associated with institutions for the poor and handicapped were identified in the intensive surveys of Eau Claire, New Richmond, Chippewa Falls, and Kaukauna, among others.

Survey and Research Needs. Further research is needed to determine the precise locations of the various county asylums and poorhouses. Again, it should be noted that these changed over time. Similarly, additional work is needed to determine the location of county sanitoriums, as well as private facilities for the tubercular.

National Register Listings and Determinations of Eligibilty

Music Building, 1700 West State St., Janesville, Rock County (NRHP 1987)
Phoenix Hall, 309 West Walworth St., Delavan, Walworth County (NRHP 1987)
Pureair Sanatorium (1918-23), Town of Bayfield, Bayfield County (NRHP 1981)
Ward Memorial Hall, 5000 W. National Ave., Wood, Milwaukee County (DOE 1984)

Context Considerations. Structures associated with county asylums and poorhouses were sometimes originally constructed for private use (farmsteads), and must be evaluated for their primary use over time. Large institutions should be evaluated with consideration that such facilities are modified over time to accommodate changing theories of treatment. Historic components of facilities should not be obscured by subsequent additions and, if architecturally significant as well as historically significant, exteriors should be largely intact. Prominent buildings, such as administrative buildings, are considered more important than service buildings, such as laundries. For more institutional structures (state asylums, etc.), many of the buildings performed a subsidiary function (powerhouses, greenhouses, barns). They should be considered for eligibility only if the primary structures are no longer extant or as contributing to a district.



State Institutions For Dependent and Handicapped Persons, c. 1935

Source: Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library, *Wisconsin Blue Book, 1935* (Madison, 1935), pp. 292.

County Insane Asylums, 1910

Source: Crafer, Thomas *The Administration of Public poor relief in Wisconsin and Minnesota* Ph. D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin 1910, and Proceedings of the Current Association of County Asylums 1903-1924.

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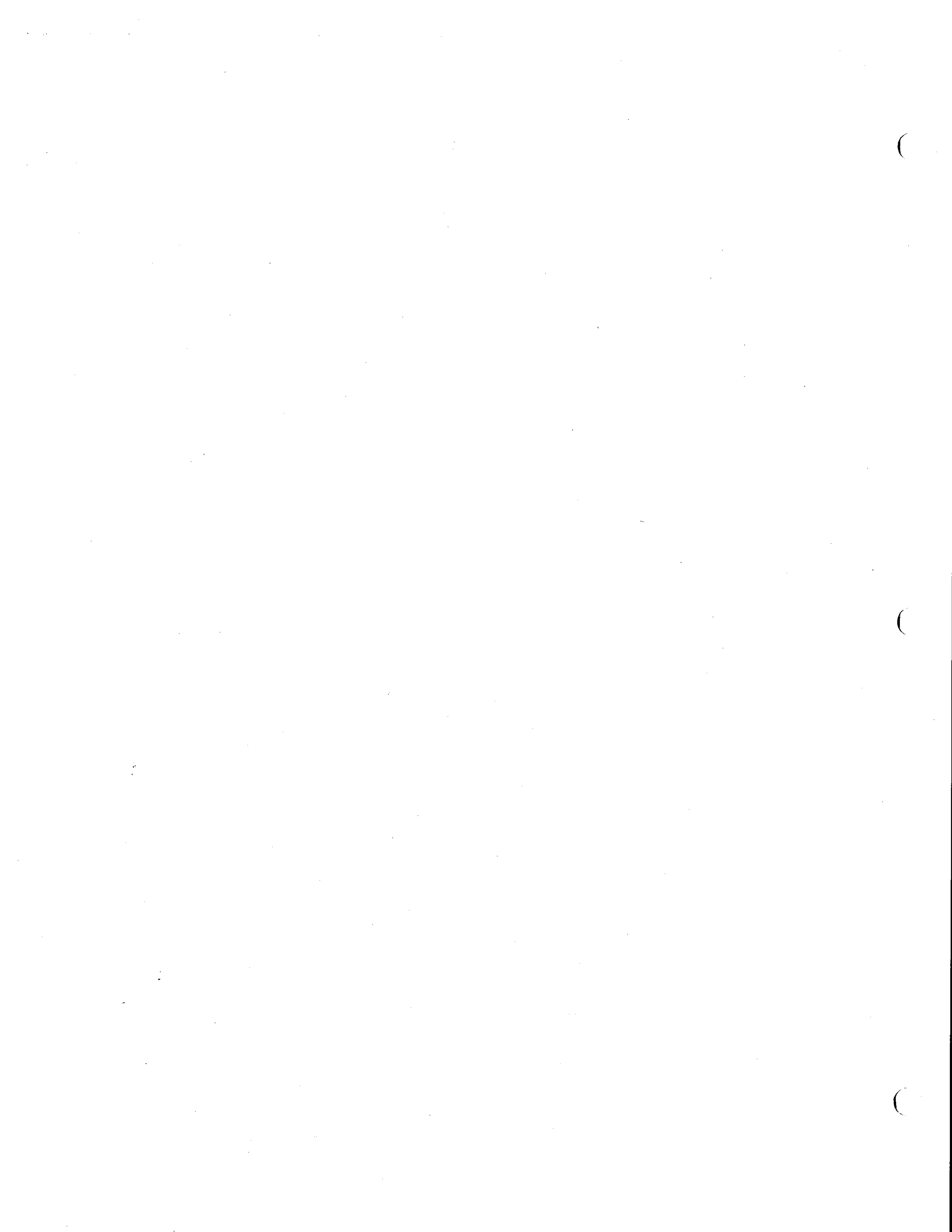


Temporal Boundaries: 1847-1886, formation of the American Federation of Labor.

Spatial Boundaries: The state of Wisconsin in general, centered mainly in Milwaukee and the larger industrial and manufacturing communities of the Southeast and lumber and milling towns in the North.

Related Study Units: Twentieth Century Labor Organizations and Legislation.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest unions in the United States were formed in the urban centers along the East Coast by such craftsmen as carpenters, printers, and shoemakers. These skilled laborers had begun to organize by 1800, long before railroads and factories appeared on the scene.

In 1836 the Wisconsin Territory was created and more and more settlers, from both the eastern states and Europe, began immigrating to the region. A majority of these settlers became involved in agricultural pursuits, especially wheat farming. Within a brief span of time Wisconsin emerged as a major grain exporter. The lakeshore cities of Kenosha, Racine, Sheboygan, and particularly Milwaukee evolved into wheat-exporting centers.

By 1850 Milwaukee had a population of over 20,000. It was there that the first Wisconsin unions were founded. Two of the earliest unions were established by the bricklayers (1847) and the carpenters (1848). These building trades were essential to the city's expansion. The construction of housing, docks, warehouses, and commercial shops was dependent upon them.

Transportation also played a key role in Milwaukee's growth. Unions connected with its development also emerged at an early date. The Ship Carpenters and Caulkers Association, for instance, called the first successful strike in the city in 1848, while the Sailor's Union formed in 1851. Milwaukee's other pre-Civil War trade unions included the shoemakers, formed in 1848; the tailors, formed in 1850; and the cigar makers, formed in 1852. Milwaukee's printers established the typographical Union in 1852 as well (Ozanne 1984:3-4).

Until the opening of the Civil War in 1861, unions and associations of workers were weak and achieved little lasting success against management. In 1860, wages for skilled workers averaged $1.73 per day, with ordinary laborers averaging $1.05 per day, and farm hands receiving board and $13.96 per month. All Wisconsin average wages were slightly below the national averages (Current, 1976:122). Employers played on the fears and ethnic differences of their employees - fears of being replaced with cheap immigrant labor, and ethnic rivalry. High job turnover rates and unionization along trade or industry lines hindered the larger organization of labor.

During the Civil War, unions won some impressive wage gains. High inflation of the period stimulated workers to join unions, and the labor shortage brought about by the war enhanced their bargaining powers. (Ozanne 1984: 4). Strikes, "hitherto almost unknown," became a common means of forcing up wages in industries producing goods for the war effort (Merk, 1916:163). Strikes were fairly frequent, small in scale (usually involving a single shop or ship crew), short-lived, and fairly successful in the short-run considering the war economy.

Strikes were occasioned by low wages, the withholding of pay or irregular payment, the

use of company store and script pay, the discounting of company script, and the hiring of unskilled labor to manage the new machine technology. Employers introduced women, black, and immigrant workers as sources of cheap labor, successfully manipulating white male workers' prejudices. In 1863, for instance, the Milwaukee Typographical Union Number 23 at the Milwaukee Sentinel went out on strike when women were first hired as compositors, a consequence of an unusually high number of printers volunteering for the war effort. Their strike was unsuccessful and the women kept their jobs, receiving slightly more than half the wages their male predecessors had received. In 1864, women's wages averaged $3 to $5 a week, while those of an unskilled male worker averaged $1.75 per day. In 1866, shortly after the emancipation of slaves, 300 to 400 black workers were brought in as strikebreakers by the Northwestern Union Packet Company. By 1870, blacks had replaced Irish workers as deck hands on Mississippi steam boats. It was through the employers' use of this "divide and conquer" strategy that Blacks and women first found their way into what became their major sources of employment (Merk 1916:166-169). Despite this lack of labor solidarity, Wisconsin workers fared comparatively well financially as a result of the war, most fully realizing gains after 1865, as the war came to an end and prices of goods fell drastically without a corresponding drop in wages and benefits.

With the successes of the war years behind them, and a renewed challenge to their status by employers, workers moved to form larger labor associations with national ties and to attempt active political participation. Since 1864, there had been discussion of reducing daily work to eight hours. Following the philosophy of Ira Steward, Milwaukee workers formed the Milwaukee Labor Reform Association in September, 1865, and began agitating for an eight hour day. This early attempt at labor reform marked the beginning of a rift in the interests of agricultural and industrial workers, one which continued to grow throughout the twentieth century as legislative measures became the dominant means of labor reform. In 1867, the Milwaukee Sentinel commented: "If labor could secure 10 hours pay for eight hours work, it would be an injustice to the great overwhelming mass of agricultural labor, which works longer than eight hours a day, for it would raise the price of manfactured products which this class consumes" (Merk 1916:179).

In 1867 the Milwaukee Labor Reform Association, whose name was later changed to the Eight-Hour League, supported a law banning all work after eight hours without an accompanying reduction in wages. Wisconsin employers, fearing the effect of a compulsory eight-hour-day law, were completely opposed and proposed crippling amendments to the bill. As a result, the final bill presented to the legislature for consideration concerned women and children only. It stipulated that eight hours should constitute a day's work for women and children in all manufacturing establishments except those where workers and employers agreed to the contrary or where workers and employers were not required to hire anyone who insisted on the eight-hour day, the law was virtually meaningless (Ozanne 1984:6-7).

In 1869, workers interested in influencing state politics as a way of gaining benefits (an alternative to striking) organized the State Labor Reform Party at Black River Falls. Built on the foundation laid by the Wisconsin National Labor Union organized in Milwaukee in 1866, the Labor Reform Party's policies included the assimilation of the interests of all trades and industries, uniform wage labor rates, and fair treatment of workers. Attempting to accomplish these goals politically, the party fielded local candidates in Milwaukee and Watertown through 1872, but realized little political success.

Throughout the 1860s and into the 1870s, disgruntled workers occasionally turned to cooperative enterprises in production and marketing. In 186l, a strike by Milwaukee Shipwrights and Caulkers caused nine men to organize the cooperative enterprise of Allan, McClellan and Company. The venture succeeded, but was eventually bought out by some of the men and converted to a private enterprise. While the cooperative was successful, it hurt the union by drawing off its best workers and leaders. Not all cooperatives were so

successful, and most disbanded in the first few years due to dissension among the members, poor management, or under-capitalization. Other cooperative ventures included the Carpenters Cooperative Sash and Door Company, the Badger State Carpenters and Home Builders Cooperative, the Milwaukee Furniture Manufacturing Association, the Cooperative Cigar Manufacturing Company, and cooperative attempts by printers from the Milwaukee Sentinel and Milwaukee Boot and Shoe Makers. In 1865, Joseph Bennett, a member of the Milwaukee Machinists' and Blacksmiths' Union, organized a union grocery store on the Rochdale Plan, but after six months this venture in distributive cooperatives proved too small, inconvenient, and limited.

The first large national trade union organization in Wisconsin was the Knights of St. Crispin, a "pioneer national union," initially comprised of shoemakers. The increased demand for shoes precipitated technological changes in their manufacturing. The introduction of the power pegging machine, and later the sole sewing machine in 1862 radically transformed the industry. "The sole sewing machine ... in one hour accomplished the work of a journeyman in 80" (Merk 1916:170). These inventions allowed for a division of labor and a substitution of unskilled for skilled laborers. The Knights of St. Crispin was originally conceived and organized in Milwaukee on March 1, 1867, by Newell Daniels and six associates in the employ of the Atkins, Steele and White Factory and quickly spread from Wisconsin to the East. Attracting the German Custom Shoemakers' Union of Milwaukee as their second lodge, union branches also formed in Oswego, New York, Milford, Hopkinton and Stoughton Center, Massachusetts; it even attracted the Chicago Shoemakers' Union with its 600 members. By April, 1870, 327 lodges were organized, with ten lodges in Wisconsin by the end of that year (Lescohier 1910:5-11).

The immediate organizational success and rapid spread of the union nationally gave the lodges confidence. Its philosophy did not condemn the factory system or labor-saving machines that reduced skilled employment in the trade, but rather opposed the use of the unskilled "green hands" running them. The strategy of the national union was to protect and limit the learning of skills by these new hands. Local unions did not always adhere to the union line and went on strike for immediate financial benefits. The central organization provided strike funds, but little national direction for the more than 50,000 members. The Knights of St. Crispin was initially successful in its strikes, but the lack of organization and cooperation as well as increased employer opposition spelled doom for the union. At its height, there were over 400 lodges nationally; 13 were located in Wisconsin, including lodges in Oshkosh, Green Bay, Sheboygan, Fond du Lac, and Portage. The loss of a major strike in Lynn, Massachusetts in 1872 precipitated the Knights of St. Crispin's decline. A combination of falling membership, increased mechanization, changing markets, and national depression virtually broke the union by 1873 (Merk 1916:172).

What gains Wisconsin labor had made in the 1860s were threatened in the 1870s and 1880s. During these years, large industrial firms in Milwaukee operated with a labor turnover averaging as much as 350 percent annually in some years. Railroad and lumber companies were guilty of many abuses of labor as they were able to depend upon a steady supply of fresh recruits to replace those who quit or were injured. "Blacklisting, control of local officials, introduction of scabs, and use of the militia were common weapons against organized labor" (Nesbit, 1973:390). Conditions for organizing were difficult, as there was a large, transient population of unskilled labor and high turnover in shops. The predominance of agriculture in Wisconsin's economy also made employment in certain industries, such as canning and meat packing, highly seasonal.

A few effective unions were to be found among the skilled workers; but these tended to be craft-oriented, nativistic, and disinterested in the common laborer. In the absence of labor unions strong enough to protect workers' rights, however, public sentiment shifted from guild or state intervention on behalf of workers to court and state protection of employers. Unionism "flowered in the good times when business would bargain, but was easily

crushed when hard times made employers more militant" (Nesbit, 1973:391-392).

While the depression of 1873 and the following years of stagnation and recovery marked a low point for union activism and success in Wisconsin and the nation, some union influence returned in the prosperous later years of the decade. After 1878, better economic times prompted successful strikes by flour millers, tanners, coal heavers, iron workers, the Seaman's Union, railroad yard employees, and printers, and unsuccessful attempts by lumbermen and dockworkers. This era also saw the rise of city labor federations such as the Milwaukee Trades Assembly, which attempted to elect political candidates between 1880 and 1883, but with little success or trade union support.

A well known labor incident of this period occurred in Eau Claire in July, 1881, when 2,000 sawmill workers went on strike, demanding a ten hour day without wage reductions, and protesting a twenty percent wage withholding policy. While there was no threat of violence, the mill owners and the city's mayor called on Governor William Smith to send the state militia to aid in keeping the peace. The governor agreed and eight companies were sent to Eau Claire. This was the first occasion in Wisconsin in which the militia was called out on strike duty. Despite the absence of violence, after the arrival of the troops five union leaders were arrested. Others fled the city, effectively destroying the strike's leadership. Within a few days the mills were reopened and the strike was broken (Ozanne, 1984: 14-15).

The strongest labor organization of the time was the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor. Founded as a secret organization in Philadelphia by Uriah S. Stephens in 1869, the Knights abandoned secrecy and attained national organization in 1878. Associated with the Eight Hour Movement, and based on the principle of "one big union," the Knights organized both trades and industries, skilled and unskilled workers, and encouraged cooperative enterprises. Their mixture of militancy and caution, national organization and cooperative utopian idealism, proved to be both their strength and weakness.

Organizers for the Knights of Labor appeared in Wisconsin in 1878. Robert Schilling, labor activist and socialist, began to organize support for the Knights in Milwaukee, and his influence slowly spread throughout the state. In 1881 there were only two lodges in Milwaukee, but by 1886, that number had risen to 50, with 16,000 members and probably another 8,000 members in the rest of the state. Nationally, the Knights of Labor reached the peak of its power in 1884, when it won a railroad strike against Jay Gould in the southwestern part of the United States. In Wisconsin its success was mixed, but it experienced no major defeats until 1886. While Schilling maintained fairly strong handed control of the Knights, his position was contested by the more radical socialist Paul Grottkau. Grottkau and other radical leaders associated with the Socialist Labor Party and the renewed Eight Hour Movement pressed for more militant action against Schilling's cautious counsel. The movement came to a head in May, 1886, in the Bay View Riots in which 14,000 workers left their jobs and paraded around Milwaukee and Bay View closing down factories. Once again, corporate capital called on the governor, Jerry Rusk, to suppress the riot with state militia troops. The ensuing confrontation of workers and guardsmen left five workers dead and four badly wounded when guardsmen fired into the workers' ranks. Although the Knights of Labor had discouraged this activity, it received much of the blame, and both Schilling and Grottkau were arrested. While many condemned Governor Rusk and the guardsmen, others praised the action which came the day after the Haymarket bombing in Chicago.

While only Grottkau and several others were convicted, the incident proved fatal for the Wisconsin Knights of Labor as a union. In 1886, members helped form the People's Party to capture political power, and did very well throughout the state, particularly in Milwaukee County. In 1887, they changed the name to the Union Labor Party, but concerted opposition by vested interests around the state curtailed their 1886 political gains. The Socialist Labor Party and Populist Party both vied for labor's vote throughout

the early 1890s, with little political success. Nationally, as in Wisconsin, the Knights of Labor lost its strength and membership, and power passed from its hands to the nascent American Federation of Labor. Showing promise of being the first modern national organization to combine trade and industrial unionism with producer and consumer cooperatives, the Knights of Labor's ultimate collapse in 1897 was due in large part to its own size and diversity as well as corporate opposition and the effects of an economic depression. (Gavett 1965: 48-71)

The history of labor unionism in Wisconsin is intimately connected with the rise of socialism as a social and political force. Milwaukee's large German population had always been receptive to socialist thought. In the post-Civil War years, the influence of Karl Marx's International Workingman's Association and the teachings of Ferdinand Lassalle in Leipzing, broadcast through the Milwaukee German language newspaper Phalanx, turned many labor organizers and unions toward the socialist ideal. In 1874, a Milwaukee branch of the International Workingmen's Association was formed and met at a place called Casino Hall (Gavett 1965:28). Moving to establish themselves as a viable third party power, members formed the Workingman's Party in 1876, and merged with an earlier Socialist Party of Milwaukee, the Arbeiter-Bund, to form the Social Democratic Party of Wisconsin in 1877.

During the 1870s and 1880s, political protest in rural areas manifested itself in the Grangers, the Greenbackers, and the Populists. While none of these groups attracted a sizable constituency, they nonetheless left their mark on Wisconsin politics. The Grangers, as the Patrons of Husbandry were more popularly known, were able to organize anti-monopoly sentiment into a diverse political coalition, the Reform-Democratic Party, which was strong enough to sweep the Republicans out of office and to elect Grange leader, William Taylor as governor in 1873 (Nesbit 1973:368, 384). In 1877, the Greenbackers, tapping people's fears about the return to the gold standard, forced both Republicans and Democrats to take a stand on the issue and also made a respectable showing at the polls when Greenbacker Edward P. Allis ran for state governor. In 1886 the Populists, or People's Party, organized by Robert Shilling of Knights of Labor fame, dominated the Milwaukee County elections and elected a member to Congress (Nesbit 1979:394). However, organized agrarian unrest began to ebb by the late 1880s. The few agrarian organizations that did remain active cast their lot with the Social Democratic Party, later to become the Socialist Party.

In 1886, the dominant labor union of the twentieth century, the American Federation of Labor, was formed. From that year on, the AFL vied with more radical alternative unions for workers' support. (See Twentieth Century Labor Organization and Legislation study unit).

IDENTIFICATION

Resource Types. Union halls and public meeting halls, homes of labor leaders, industrial buildings and other work places associated with labor activities, cooperative factories and stores, political party headquarters.

Locational Patterns of Resource Types. The main focus of early labor activity was in Milwaukee and the surrounding industrial corridor; lumbering and mill towns in northern Wisconsin along the major rivers and waterways; in or near most of the larger cities in Wisconsin.

Previous Survey. No thematic survey dealing with nineteenth century labor movements has been undertaken to date. However, several intensive survey reports, including the Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, La Crosse, Oshkosh, Superior, and West Side (Milwaukee) intensive surveys, do provide information pertinent to nineteenth century labor movements.

Survey and Research Needs. Identification of extant union halls or lodges, factories that were the scenes of union organization or major strikes and riots, and cooperative factories and stores.

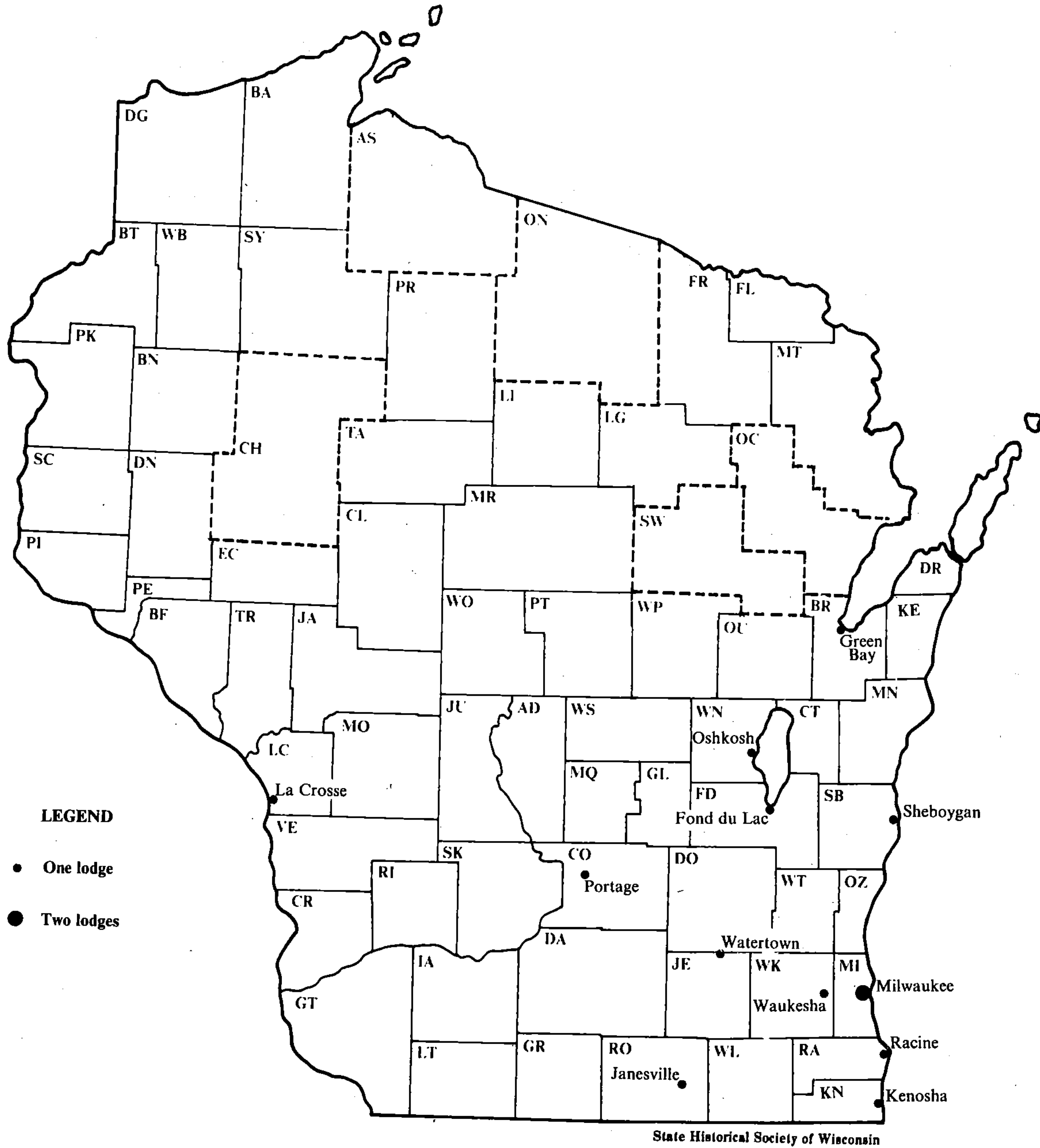
EVALUATION

National Register Listings and Determinations of Eligibility

Bay View Historic District, Milwaukee, Milwaukee County (NRHP 1982)

Puddler's Hall (1871), 2461-2463 S.St. Claire St., Milwaukee, Milwaukee County (DOE 1977)

Context Considerations. Most nominated properties associated with nineteenth century labor movements will merit local significance; however, some properties associated with historically significant labor related events, e.g., major strikes, may merit statewide significance. Many nineteenth century labor associated structures may have undergone various alterations or modernization. Some modern intrusions will not detract from National Register eligibility, but the overall architectural integrity of these structures should be an important context consideration.



Assemblies of The Knights of St. Crispan, 1867-1874

Compiled by David R Lewis.

Local Assemblies of The Knights of Labor, 1877-1896

Source: Jonathon Garlock, comp., *Guide to The Local Assemblies of The Knights of Labor* (Westport, Ct. 1982.).

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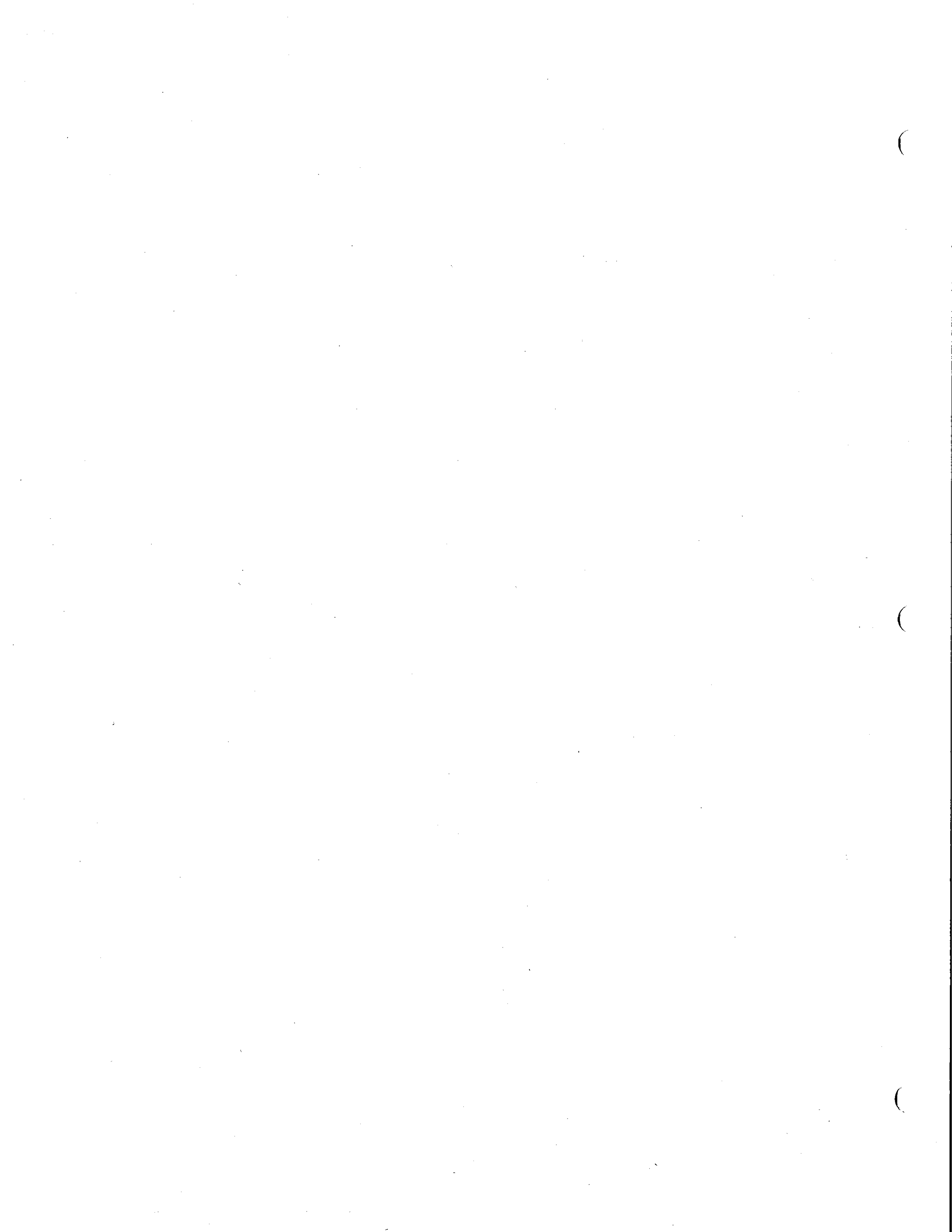

TWENTIETH CENTURY LABOR ORGANIZATION AND LEGISLATION

Temporal Boundaries: 1886-1958

Spatial Boundaries: The entire state of Wisconsin, particularly Milwaukee and the industrial corridor along Lake Michigan, and the lumber and mill towns of the north.

Related Study Units: Early Labor Movements; Central European Settlement.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The experience of Wisconsin workers with organized labor unions extends back to the 1840s (see Early Labor Movements study unit) and continues through the present day. While many individual unions, associations, and cooperative ventures have had only a fleeting existence, the historic popular support for these organizations to protect the rights of workers demonstrates their transcendant importance.

In many ways, the Knights of Labor mark the beginning of the modern, organized trade union. Organized by Uriah S. Stephens, a Philadelphia tailor, in 1869, the Knights embraced both skilled and unskilled workers. It grew rapidly, despite the bitter and unsuccessful railroad and coal strikes of the 1870s.

The Knights of Labor were first organized in Milwaukee by Robert Schilling in 1878. By 1888 there were over fifty lodges and more than 16,000 members in that city; and there were half again as many members dispersed throughout the rest of Wisconsin.

The Knights reached their pinnacle of power in 1884, when they won a railroad strike in the southwestern part of the country. After the violent "8 hour a day" strikes a few years later, however, the organization lost popular support and membership steadily declined (Clark 1956:6-7).

While the Knights of Labor declined in members and influence, many individual trade unions survived and slowly increased in strength. These formed the basis of a new and eventually very powerful organization--the American Federation of Labor (AFL). It was formally organized in New York City in December, 1886. Its first president, Samuel Gompers, inspired and led the union until his death in 1924.

In 1887, only months after the creation of the AFL, Frank J. Weber, a long-time Wisconsin labor leader and intimate of Gompers, organized the Milwaukee Federated Trade Council (FTC). By August of that same year the council had become affiliated with the AFL. The emphasis of the FTC, in the words of its constitution, was focused on "unity of action and organization among working people . . . to combat the evergrowing encroachment of organized and consolidated capital," while its function was to deal with the "many questions affecting the welfare of the working class which cannot be dealt with in special or separate Trade or Labor Unions. . . ." (Gavett 1965:77-78).

In 1893, the leadership of the FTC proceeded to form a statewide labor movement, the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor (WSFL). This body became the central organization for trade unions throughout the state. Printers, seamen, cigarmakers, and carpenters were represented at the organizational meeting in Milwaukee. With the assistance of the WSFL several locals in other trades were formed. In Fond du Lac, for example, cigar makers had unionized in 1891; that group along with carpenters, tailors, painters,

printers, and woodworkers established a Trade and Labor Council in 1901. A similar council was formed in Kenosha the following year, with bakers, barbers, machinists, and electrical workers represented along with several other trades. All of these organizations became members of the WSFL.

While the WSFL and FTC generally followed the national policy dictated by the AFL, they were unique in some ways. Both played a more active role in politics than did the AFL and both were socialist-oriented. The preamble to the WSFL constitution, for example, called for public ownership of all essential industries, while the FTC provided financial support to the Socialist Party in Milwaukee. And early labor leaders, such as Frank J. Weber and Frederick Brockhausen (long time secretary of the WSFL) were prominent in the Milwaukee's Social Democratic Party (Clark 1956:8-9; Gavett 1965:98)

The relationship between Wiscosin labor and socialism was a close one. There were a considerable number of socialists among the laborers of German descent, socialist German newspapers in Milwaukee as early as the 1870s, and a Socialist Labor Party ticket in nearly every election beginning in 1876. It was not until the 1890s, however, that the socialists, under the leadership of Victor Berger, became a significant factor in the state, particularly in Milwaukee.

Berger, an immigrant from Austria-Hungary in the 1890s and editor of Vorwarts, a German language newspaper, realized that the socialists needed support from a wider segment of the population in order to achieve their goals. He first tried to achieve a partnership between the socialists and the Populists. In 1893 he and Robert Schilling, leader of the Knights of Labor, organized the Cooperative Labor Party, which had the endorsement of the Populists, socialists, and trade unions. This partnership was short-lived, however, neighter Berger nor the majority of the trade union leaders in the state joined the Populists in 1896 in their support of Democratic presidential nominee, William Jennings Bryan.

In 1897, Berger figured prominently in the creation of the Social Democratic Party in Milwaukee; this expanded into a national organization, the Socialist Party of America by 1898. Unlike the old Socialist Party, the Social Democratic Party had more of a reformist than a revolutionary orientation and completely supported the trade unions.

The Social Democratic Party dominated politics in Milwaukee for over three decades. In 1905 it elected its first two assemblymen, one of whom was Frederick Brockhausen, the secretary of the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor (WSFL). Until 1936 the party always had representation in the Wisconsin Legislature. In 1910 it elected Emil Seidel mayor of Milwaukee (Witte 1951:139-140). Socialists also won a majority on the city council that year. Berger was elected to Congress that year as well--the first of his party to be elected to a national office. He was to be reelected to four more terms before his death in 1929. In addition, the party placed two senators and twelve assemblymen in the legislature.

Two years after the socialist victory in Milwaukee, a Democratic-Republican combination candidate defeated Seidel for reelection. The socialists regained control of the mayor's office in 1916, however, when Daniel Hoon was elected to that office. Although he remained in office for over twenty years, Hoon never enjoyed a socialist majority on city council.

While they favored government ownership of major industries and utilities, the socialists did little to disturb the capitalistic system once they gained power. The party became primarily identified with good municipal government (Clark 1956:8; Olson 1960-1961:113-115).

The close socialist-labor alliance in Wisconsin, and particularly in Milwaukee, was not

approved by the entire labor movement. In 1902, disgruntled printing pressmen, typographers, and other unions in Milwaukee formed the short-lived Central Trade and Labor Union as a dual central labor body in opposition to the socialist-dominated Federated Trade Council (FTC). AFL president Samuel Gompers was also displeased by the socialist activity and agitation in Wisconsin that threatened the stability and unity of the labor movement, particularly as the socialist-led FTC and Wisconsin State Federation of Labor supported the idea of industrial unionism. But Berger's "step at a time" approach to socialism, focusing on practical demands to ameliorate the condition of working people, the effectiveness of the socialist organizing and electoral campaigns, and their reputation of incorruptibility (compared to either the Republicans or the Democrats) assured the socialists' leading role in Wisconsin's labor movement in Wisconsin.

As the AFL and Social Democratic Party both worked to solidify their hold on the Wisconsin labor force during the early twentieth century, another union arose to briefly challenge their influence. In 1905, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), a syndicalistic, socialist oriented union initially supported by socialist leader, Eugene Debs, established local unions in Milwaukee and elsewhere in Wisconsin. Among those joining in Milwaukee were individual machinist locals, cigar makers, brewery workers, tailors and leather workers. In the north, the IWW attracted lumber and mill hands. But the IWW generally failed in Wisconsin due to intense opposition by Victor Berger's moderate Social Democrats and the allegiance of craft unions to the FTC in Milwaukee.

After years of negligible gains and broken strikes, labor benefitted from legislative advances in the first two decades of the twentieth century, particularly in Wisconsin. In an atmosphere of progressive reform, Wisconsin anticipated the national revision of labor laws by several years.

During the administration of Governor Francis B. McGovern, 1910-1914, a great deal of labor legislation was enacted. In 1911 the state legislature established a system of vocational education. It created a three-man Industrial Commision and gave it broad powers to enforce labor laws. The legislature also passed new safety laws, workmens' compensation, and laws regulating the labor of women and children (Clark 1956:10).

Much of the legislation was influenced by Charles McCarthy, head of the Legislative Reference Library, and John R. Commons, a professor of economics and labor history at the University of Wisconsin. While McCarthy focused on the creation of vocational schools, Commons wrote the workmens' compensation law and was one of the first members of the Industrial Commission.

This Industrial Commission was given the duty to administer laws dealing with safety, workmen's compensation, child labor, women's labor, mediation and arbitration, apprenticeship, and employment offices. Other functions were added later: minimum wage legislation in 1913, wage collections in 1931, unemployment insurance in 1932, and fair employment practices in 1945 (Hoferbecker 1958:15).

In the area of protective legislation for children, Wisconsin was one of four states to comply with the National Labor Committee's 1925 recommendation for minimum employment standards for child laborers (Schmidt 1933:391). Wisconsin ratified the Child Labor Amendment to the Constitution in 1926, adapting it by including two of the Child Labor Committee's recommendations. This legislation prohibited children under 14 years of age from working and limited employment of children aged 14 through 16 to eight hours of labor per day or 48 hours a week. No children were to work between 7:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. of the following day or during school hours unless they had completed the eighth grade; proof of age and completion of eighth grade was required when hiring child laborers.

Where protective legislation for children had received strong backing from labor

organizations, legislation limiting the hours and condition of women's employment did not receive the same unqualified support. Between 1911 and 1931, the Wisconsin state legislature battled continually over bills restricting women's work. While legislative initiative for such measures came primarily from socialists and while organized labor did not actively oppose them, most trade unionists argued that organizing women workers into unions was their preferred means of improving the working lives of wage earning women rather than securing protective legislation. In practical terms, however, organized labor did little beyond issuing general platitudes on the need to organize women workers (Schmidt 1933:187).

Active support for protective legislation for women came primarily from a coalition of Progressives and women's organizations, most notably from the Wisconsin Consumer's League, the Women's Legislative Council, and the Women's Trade Union League. By the late 1920s, the coalition had expanded to include many women's organizations, many of which had not previously been interested in labor legislation, others of which were not particularly women oriented. Among them were the Federation of Women's Clubs, the League of Women Voters, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Young Women's Christian Association (Schmidt 1933:203-204).

Opposition to protective legislation for women came, expectedly, from the major employers of women workers, such as hotel owners' associations, the Pea Canners' Association, the Wisconsin Laundryman's Association, and the Shoe Manufacturers' Association. Each argued for exceptions to legislation to accommodate the needs of their particular industry. The canners, for example, claimed that the short season and the perishability of the pea crop necessitated significantly longer hours, especially during the rush season. Pea canning was of vital economic interest to the state. In 1913, peas were ranked as Wisconsin's primary agricultural crop, accounting for half the peas grown in the United States. Nearly half those employed in pea canning were women and children. Similarly, the Laundryman's Association sought modification in working women's hours during the days following legal holidays, arguing that the extra day's accumulation of laundry demanded longer hours from their workers.

Legislation restricting women's employment also inconvenienced farmers, particularly curtailing the hours in which rural communities could shop in country stores, as such stores were often staffed by women. More generally, the hour laws for women "would make it even more difficult to keep women on the farms" (Schmidt 1933:192-207).

Between 1911 and 1923, the Wisconsin State Legislature considered numerous bills limiting the daily and weekly hours that women could work. In 1923, a new law provided a nine hour day and a 50 hour week. Night work, from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M., was prohibited. The law allowed the Industrial Commission to make minor modifications in hours for specific employers. While the law specified that the Industrial Commission was to oversee the law's enforcement, it was not until 1931 that any penalty for its violation was provided (Schmidt 1933:206).

Gains made by Wisconsin labor were consolidated nationally during World War I. During this period of national need, the federal government was more sympathetic to labor's demands, and manufacturers allowed greater benefits in order to maintain their workforce and lucrative government contracts. Workers saw in these employer actions and in pieces of legislation like the Clayton Act (1914), which exempted labor unions from anti-trust suits, the possibility for stronger unions and more equitable wages and conditions. In Milwaukee, union membership jumped from 20,000 in 1913 to 35,000 by 1920. Throughout the state, AFL membership surpassed 50,000 workers (Gavett 1965:126; Raney 1940:376).

World War I also marked the beginning of the slow deterioration of Socialist leadership in

Wisconsin labor. Strongly opposed to American involvement in the war, socialist labor leaders and German-American workers came under increasing criticism for their denunciation of the war. Although a large portion of Milwaukee's German population included union members, they continued to voice their opposition to the war on ethnic grounds. Socialist leadership in Wisconsin labor unions continued in spite of this divergence of ideology, but without the influence of earlier years. Socialist control of the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor persisted in restricted form until World War II.

After World War I, labor's power and influence began to dwindle rapidly. The diminished demand for labor, resulting from the end of the war and an economic depression which began in mid-1920, reversed the balance of power between unions and employers. Throughout this period employers banded together in an open shop crusade; they labeled it the "American Plan," implying unionism was synonymous with the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (Ozanne 1984:57). Employers also worked to enforce yellow dog contracts and effectively lobbied for anti-boycott and anti-picketing legislation. Injunctions, labor spies, and strike-breakers were also used to control and destroy labor unions.

Many employers established company unions as well; and profit-sharing and bonus plans, opportunities to buy stock, group health and life insurance plans were offered employees. This made them more dependent on the company and lessened the influence of the labor unions. AFL membership declined from nearly five million during World War I to approximately three-and-a-half million by the mid 1920s. In Milwaukee, union membership dropped from 35,000 in 1920 to 20,000 in 1932 (Clark 1956:12).

One bright spot for Wisconsin in a decade that otherwise marked little progress for labor was the establishment of the Milwaukee Workers College in 1922. With roots dating to 1888 and the Workingmen's Reading Club established by Milwaukee trade unions, the college provided advanced educational opportunities for working class men and women. This program in turn led to the University of Wisconsin's School for Workers. Originally established in Madison in 1924 as a summer school for women workers, the program became co-educational in 1928, and continues today as a University of Wisconsin program designed to address labor and management issues.

The experience of organized labor during the 1930s was a mixed one. Initially, the massive unemployment occasioned by economic hard times shattered AFL membership. Fear of unemployment and job insecurity reduced the number of strikes in Milwaukee to only six in 1933. In an effort to ameliorate the conditions of the state's unemployed, Wisconsin again took the initiative in legislative reform. Wisconsin's 1932 Unemployment Insurance Act, the first of its kind in the country, affirmed the state's commitment to what Profesor John R. Commons had defined as the workers' "right to security in the tenure of employment against arbitrary discharge ... [and the] right of the unemployed to have work furnished by the government" (Nelson 1967:110). Common's reasoning in this regard was a logical extension of his rationale for creating the state's Industrial Commission in 1911: it was the responsibility of the state to provide for its residents, the strong to provide for the weak.

Three years later, the Federal Government used Wisconsin as a model for the 1935 Social Security Act's unemployment compensation provision. While these new laws extended temporary relief for some of the millions of people who were out of work during the Great Depression (as much as 25 percent of the labor force in 1933, and never below 14 percent), there were several categories of workers who were excluded from benefits. Ironically, they were among those most in need of protection: employees of non-profit institutions, farm laborers, and domestic servants. In 1930, 25.1 percent of the country's white male workers were employed in agricultural production while 29.6 percent of white female workers were domestic servants. The percentage of black workers in both of these areas of employment was significantly higher. In 1935-1936, the National Health Survey found that 36 percent of black men and 28 percent of black women were unemployed,

compared to 21 percent and 19 percent of white males and females, respectively (Haferbecker 1958:134; Rose and Hill, eds. 1967:15; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census 1933:59, 61).

The tumultous years of the Depression resulted in an array of legislation expressly aimed at protecting and facilitating labor's right to organize. The Norris-La Gaurdia Anti-Injunction Act of 1932; the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 and Wisconsin's equivalent, the Wisconsin Recovery Act; the National Labor Relations Act of 1935; the 1937 Wagner Act; and Wisconsin's "Baby Wagner" Act all came as a result of massive labor unrest, of both the employed and the unemployed, that flared throughout the decade (Haferbecker 1958:87, 104, 161, 177). All of this legislation affirmed workers' rights to self-organization and protected unionized workers from discriminatory practices of employers. With these new protections, labor unions in Wisconsin as elsewhere in the country, seized the opportunity that these new laws afforded them. In 1937 alone, the State Federation of Labor doubled its membership, while the burgeoning alternative organization, the Committee of Industrial Organizations, gained thousands of members from mass production industries (Haferbecker 1958:162-165).

An important exception to the general success of unionism during this period was the effort, led by the WSFL, to establish collective bargaining at the Kohler Company, a plumbing supply firm located just outside Sheboygan. In the summer of 1933 Federal Labor Union, No. 18545, was organized at the plant in what proved to be the beginning of an intermittant 30-year struggle for union recognition.

Sheboygan workers had a long history of union support, while the Kohler family, owners and managers of the firm, had an equally long history of opposition to unions. When the AFL affiliated Federal Labor Union (FLU) was created in 1933, the company responded by establishing a rival company union, the Kohler Workers' Association (KWA). The company stated its willingness to meet with the FLU, but also said it would meet with other individuals and members of the KWA. After a series of meetings, during which it became clear that the company would not sign a labor agreement with anyone, the FLU called for a strike for July 16, 1934. The union's mass picketing prevented the company from operating. In response, the firm hired 250 deputies and armed them with guns and tear gas. It mounted machine guns on the roofs of various plant buildings and on the deputies' trucks. On July 27 tensions flared and a mob, estimated at 4,000 to 5,000, began stoning company buildings, breaking hundreds of windows. The deputies responded by using tear gas to repel the strikers and strike sympathizers, and then opened fire on the crowd, killing two workers and injuring 42 others. The next morning Governor Albert Schmedeman sent in 600 National Guard cavalrymen to prevent any further violence. The National Guard restored order and removed the company's machine guns. The FLU then petitioned the National Labor Relations Board for a representative election. The election, with the FLU and the company union (KWA) on the ballot, was held the following September, and amid an atmosphere of fear and intimidation the company union won.

The FLU refused, however, to call off the strike and maintained token picketing at the plant for seven years. The strike was not officially ended until April 1941 when the Kohler Company, wanting to use union construction work for plant expansion, and asked the WSFL president, Herman Seide, to end the strike. In return the company offered jobs to all workers still on strike except for the three principal officers of the FLU (Ozanne 1984:68-69).

Later episodes in a second Kohler strike have become part of the Congress of Industrial Workers (CIO) history. By the early 1950s some Kohler workers were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with their representation by the company union. They approached the CIO affiliated United Auto Workers in an attempt to organize a new union that would better represent their interests. In the spring of 1952 a representative election

was held and the UAW won the right to represent the Kohler Workers. Despite expectations that a strike might develop, the Kohler Company and the UAW were able to reach agreement on a one-year contract in February 1953. This contract marked the first time in the twentieth century that Kohler had dealt with anyone other than a company-dominated union.

As the terms of the contract neared its end early in 1954, the company began making ready for a strike, implementing the same sort of preparations it had undertaken approximately 20 years earlier. This infuriated the union and on April 3, 1954, the second Kohler strike began. It lasted even longer than the first, officially ending in September 1960. Settlement came only after a decision by the National Labor Relations Board that Kohler was guilty of refusing to bargain. The company agreed to 4.5 million dollars in back pay and pension credits to illegally discharged strikers, who were rehired. But not until December 1965, 11 years after the strike began, was a new contract between the UAW local and the company signed (Ozanne 1984:100-101).

All of the progressive legislation of the 1930s was designed to benefit workers; its aim was to minimize labor strife by placing the state in a mediating role between employers and employees. Labor law reform, like protective legislation for women, did not receive unanimous support from organized labor. While unions had overwhelmingly supported state intervention in 1911 when industrial safety codes were implemented, some labor leaders had become skeptical of this strategy of accommodation by the 1930s. The new legislation offered labor some protection from gross abuses of workers' health and safety when unions were not strong enough themselves to make such demands, but it also placed limits on unions' freedom to force concessions from management when they had the capacity to do so. Additionally, more radical sectors of the labor movement were wary of relying on the state or federal government to protect their interests; the gains won through pro-labor legislation of a progressive administration could be taken away by one more sympathetic to the concerns of business and agriculture.

Labors' fears in this regard were warranted. The pro-labor legislation of the early and mid-1930s was eroded and eventually reversed in the 1940s and 1950s. In 1939, several states neutralized the pro-labor impact of legislation protecting the rights of employees by enacting additional laws to protect the rights of employers; Wisconsin's law was the Employment Peace Act of 1939. These state laws were precursors to federal legislation, notably the Taft-Hartley Act, passed in 1947. The Taft-Hartley Act included many bureaucratic hindrances to organizing, such as written authorization for employee union dues deduction and detailed reports of union membership and finances. There were also rigid stipulations of how and when unions could strike. Sit-down strikes were prohibited, and there was a requirement of 10 days notice before striking in any industry in Wisconsin involving farm or dairy products where a strike "would cause destruction or serious deterioration of such product" (Haferbecker 1958:167-168). Organized labor was, of course, opposed to such legislation.

Since its inception, the American Federation of Labor made few attempts to unionize skilled and unskilled industrial workers, focusing its efforts instead on skilled tradesmen. Attempts to change this policy were made, but few skilled industrial workers were unionized. The question of industrial unionism was raised and defeated at the 1935 AFL convention, but John L. Lewis and other leaders refused to accept the majority decision. Later that year they formed the Committee for Industrial Organization, and in 1938 changed the name to the Congress of Industrial Organizations. This national division of labor between industrial and trade unionists had a large impact on the Wisconsin labor movement. The Communist Party, unsuccessful with its Trade Union Unity league, threw its support behind the CIO. Communists were among the CIO's most committed and effective organizers. The AFL leadership and much of its membership were justifiably concerned with the threat that the CIO's industrial unionism posed to the craft unionism of the AFL. Seizing on the Communist presence in the CIO, AFL leadership "red-baited"

the new union and succeeded in expelling its affiliates from the national AFL. Upon exclusion from the AFL, the CIO became the "Congress," rather than the "Committee" of Industrial Organizations. The Wisconsin State Federation of Labor and the Milwaukee Federated Trades Council were hesitant to expel groups supporting the CIO. In response, they instituted what came to be known as the "Wisconsin Plan"--an active policy encouraging mediation and reconciliation between the industrial and trade unionists. Yet these WSFL attempts ultimately failed, and the state CIO withdrew from the WSFL and Milwaukee FTC, and created their own regional organizations--the Wisconsin State Industrial Union Council, organized in 1936, and the Milwaukee County Industrial Union Council, organized in 1938.

In Wisconsin the CIO's greatest organizing efforts were carried out by the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the United Steelworkers. The UAW sought to enroll automobile workers, automobile parts workers, and agricultural implements workers. The first of the major Wisconsin plants to go over to the CIO were those that had originally been represented by the AFL Auto Workers. In July 1936 the AFL National Auto Workers Council affiliated with the CIO. As a result the WSFL lost not only the unions in the large automobile plants--Nash as well as General Motors in Janesville--but also the unions in several smaller auto parts manufacturing plants. Among the non-automobile AFL unions that changed their affiliation to the CIO were the Allis-Chalmers manufacturing plant at West Allis and the J.I. Case Company, a large agricultural implements company in Racine (Ozanne 1984:79-80).

After its initial organizing successes of the late 1930s, the CIO in Wisconsin entered a period of crises. A number of the new CIO leaders were so left-wing in their ideology and political activities that they brought on several years of destructive warfare within the state organization. The core of the new left-wing leadership came from the huge UAW Local 248 at Allis-Chalmers (Ozanne 1984:86-91). Contributions began to be made to allegedly Communist-dominated organizations, delegates were sent to meetings of those organizations, and foreign policy resolutions were passed that followed precisely the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. At the CIO state convention in 1940, for instance, a resolution was approved urging complete neutrality in the European war. This policy of neutrality urged by the state's CIO leadership was a complete reversal of the "collective security" policy which they had advocated prior to the Nazi-Soviet non-agression pact of August 1939. Russia not only remained neutral while Germany attacked France and Great Britian, but urged Communist parties around the world to recommend neutrality for their countires (Ozanne 1984:86-91).

It has been alleged that the union leadership of the Allis-Chalmers plant followed the Soviet line so closely that a strike was planned to impede American defense mobilization efforts. Local 248 held its first strike vote on January 19, 1941, but failed to get a majority as required by Wisconsin law. A second vote was held on January 22, this time authorizing a strike. (Later this vote was found to be fradulent; over 2,000 ballots had been fasely marked.) (Gavett 1965:182).

Since the strike did adversely effect the country's defense mobilization effort, the government issued a call to the employees to return to work while the company and the union continued their negotiations. In late March a back-to-work movement began to gain support as a result of the appeal. Consequently, on April 1 several hundred pickets invaded the plant and broke all its windows. The company then closed down all operations and made no attempt to reopen during the remainder of the strike, which was finally settled two days before the Wiscosin Labor Relations Board had scheduled a board-supervised strike-authorization election (Gavett 1965:182-183).

The threat of further strikes to impede the defense effort came to an end on June 22, 1941, when Germany invaded Soviet territory. The Communists in the state CIO, as elsewhere, ended their denunciation of administration's reactionary war policy and began

to call for the overthrow of Fascism.

By the end of World War II adverse public reaction toward the Communist influence in unions had grown dramatically. Dissent among the membership of the CIO (both state and national) was on the increase as well. With the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, all unions protected by the National Labor Relations Board had to require their members to sign an affidavit stating they were not members of the Communist Party. By 1950 the Communist influence had been purged from the CIO, making possible the slow rebuilding of labor's public image and political influence (Ozanne 1984:94).

The massive influx of blacks into war industries and into the armed services in World War II forced the issue of discrimination on the public consciousness. In 1945, Wisconsin and six other states enacted laws whose purpose was to "encourage the employment of all properly qualified persons, regardless of their race, creed, national origin, or ancestry." While Wisconsin was a forerunner in this early civil rights legislation, despite a miniscule Black population (In 1950, Milwaukee, whose population was four percent black, had the state's largest Black population), the bill was a token gesture in that it contained no penalty for noncompliance. It was not until 1955, and then in response to public outcry, that any compulsory features were added to the law. Even then, however, its impact was limited as only $5,000 was appropriated to the law's implementation (Haferbecker 1958:179-181).

The most significant event in the post-war labor movement occurred in 1955 when the AFL and CIO unions merged nationally. Organizational problems hindered the Wisconsin merger, but in 1958 the two unions organized under the leadership of George Haberman. The merger combined in excess of 260,000 workers from over 1,100 union locals.

IDENTIFICATION

Resource Types. Union halls and public meeting halls, homes of labor leaders, industrial buildings and other work places associated with labor movements, cooperatives, political party headquarters, convention centers.

Locational Patterns of Resource Types. The main focus of twentieth century labor activity has been in Milwaukee and the surrounding industrial corridor, the lumbering and mill towns in northern Wisconsin along the major rivers and waterways, and in or near most of the larger cities in Wisconsin.

Previous Surveys. No thematic survey of twentieth century labor associated properties has been undertaken. However, several intensive survey reports, including the Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, La Crosse, Oshkosh, Superior, and West Side (Milwaukee) intensive sureys do provide information pertinent to twentieth century labor organizations and legislation.

Survey and Research Needs. Identification of extant union halls or lodges, factories that were the scene of union organization or major strikes and riots, and cooperative factories and stores.

EVALUATION

National Register Listings and Determinations of Eligibility

John R. Commons House (1913), 1645 Norman Way, Madison, Dane County (NRHP 1985)

Context Considerations. Most nominated properties associated with twentieth century labor organizations and legislation will merit local significance; however, a few sites and/or structures associated with historically significant labor related events, e.g., major strikes and labor meetings, may merit statewide or even national significance. Many twentieth century labor associated structures may have undergone various modernizations or alterations. Some modern intrusions will not detract from National Register eligibility, but the overall architectural integrity of their structures should be an important context consideration.

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