

Kaukauna Was Sold By Indians In 1793 For Two Barrels Of Rum

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First Transfer of Property in Appleton Was By Government to Walter Newberry in 1831—Deal Included Almost Entire Fourth Ward, Early Records Show

BY LOUIS A. FISCHER

THE history of the first few hundred years of the Fox River valley is at the same time the history of Wisconsin for the same period. This region therefore might fittingly be called the cradle of the northwest, as far as white settlement is concerned.

With Green Bay as the gateway to this territory, the cities of DePere, Kaukauna, Appleton, New London, Menasha, Neenah, Oshkosh, Fond du Lac and Portage form the links in the chain of history in which is wound some of the choicest Indian lore, the explorations of the Jesuit missionaries and the experiences of the earliest settlers of the northwest.

Although this region has almost as ancient an historical background as old New England itself, it is lacking in historical records, which should be quite sufficient reason for prizing such a record, where it exists, all the more highly.

For the same reason it may probably be additional incentive for preserving against fire and theft some of the old public records of Outagamie-co, which was at one time a part of Brown-co, Michigan territory. Among the records of the courthouse, there is that of an old Indian deed in which A. G. Koch, register of deeds, takes particular interest and which attests the sale of about 1,280 acres of land at Kaukauna in 1793 for two barrels of rum.

NO EXPLORATIONS

There are of course no records which tell of the voyages and activities of Allouez, Marquette, or Joliet, who 350 years ago found Indian resorts at the places previously mentioned and an Outagamie Indian village at New London.

The office of register of deeds likewise contains no record of land transfers of the time when this region was under the dominion of the French, nor of the short period preceding the Revolution in which it was British territory, nor of the time when following the war it fell into the possession of the United States and was made a part of the Northwest territory in 1787.

There is no reference to this territory's being made a part of Indiana territory in 1800, or a part of Illinois territory in 1809, or a part of Michigan territory in 1818. At the time the document referred to was recorded, this region was a part of Michigan territory. But at the time it was drawn it belonged to the Northwest territory.

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barrels of rum. Two Kaukauna streets have been named after these two men.

The deed is recorded in French and the signatures of the Indians are given by their signs, pictures of an eagle, a duck, a beaver, a young eagle, etc. The property was first sold by two Indians named The Eagle and Black Tobacco. But since others claimed the property, a further settlement of a few gallons of rum was necessary before they quitclaimed it. Further payments of the same stock to other claimants became necessary. The deed, translated, is as follows:

"In 1793, were present Wabisipine (The Eagle) and Tobacnoir (Black Tobacco) who have willingly abandoned and released to Dominique Ducharme the land from the portage of Grand Kaukauna to the end of the prairie below, by 40 arpens in depth, and on the other side opposite the said portage 4 arpens wide and 30 in depth; which the grantors are contented and satisfied to release for two barrels of rum, and in witness whereof make their marks. The old Wabisipine being blind, the witnesses have made his mark for him. The Eagle, Black Tobacco. Witnesses: C. Hanison, Lambert Macabey.

"But other parties having claimed the portage have also sold their share and give security from all trouble by directing the payment of five gallons of rum, for which they are content and satisfied. In faith of which they make their marks: Young Eagle, The Beaver. Witness, C. Hanison.

"Testified at the portage of Kaukauna in the year of our Lord, 1793, thirty-first day of August.

"In 1797, Aug. 8, for part of the portage, one barrel of rum. In 1798, July 16, to satisfy his sons, one barrel of rum. In 1799 to satisfy the differences between themselves, one barrel of rum well mixed, D. Ducharme, The Beaver. Witnesses: Black Tobacco, Wachitte, The Eagle, The Drinker."

When the Menominee Indians repudiated the treaty of 1821 entered into by some of their chiefs and the chiefs of New York Indians, the United States in a treaty on Feb. 8, 1831, acquired from the Menominees a large tract of territory in which all of what is now Outagamie-co was included. Soon thereafter homestead claims were taken in this region. At the same time reservations for the Menominees and the New York Indians were made.

What appears to be one of the earliest recorded transfers of Appleton property is the government patent issued to Walter Newberry on Aug. 10, 1837, giving him possession of nearly all of the Fourth ward. The grants

included 370 acres in sections 25 and 36 of the lower Fourth and all except about 60 acres of section 35 in the upper Fourth ward and "the flats." The homestead claim was recorded Aug. 31, 1835.

Two other United States government patents were issued the same day to John P. Arndt, for 74 acres in section 34, or the west part of Appleton, and to Joshua Hathaway, Jr., for about 200 acres in section 26, or the present Second ward.

EARLY OWNERS NAMED

Other early landowners in the Appleton plat were George W. Lawe, John F. Meade, Alexander J. Irwin, William H. Sampson, Newman Blood, Asa B. Randall and James Blood, although Hippolitus Grignon is considered to be the first settler in Appleton, he having built a log house here that was used as a trading post. Section 23, or what is now the Sixth ward, was transferred by the federal government to the state in 1849, after which state grants were issued.

It will be noted from the records that settlements sprang up in three different sections of the present city of Appleton, and which eventually became known as the Appleton, Lawesburgh and Grand Chute plats. The oldest maps of these three plats are on file in the vault of the Outagamie Loan & Title Co., to which the writer of this article is indebted for much of this information.

RENAMED STREET

The first plat, the town of Appleton, embraced 191 acres in section 26 and that part of section 35 that lies north of Fox river. It was, in other words, practically the present Second ward. North Division, Union and North-sts and the river were the boundary lines. This plat was recorded Jan. 16, 1849, but the transfer of block 1, Appleton plat, was made by Amos A. Lawrence to Lawrence college on Nov. 21, 1848.

The original Lawesburgh plat, located in sections 25 and 36, was bounded by Union and Franklin-sts and the Fox river. It represented the present First ward and was named after George W. Lawe, who owned considerable property in this plat or village. Union-st in those days was called Division-st, because it divided the Appleton and Lawesburgh plats. When all three plats were merged into one village, the street was named Union-st.

The third village, or Grand Chute, plat, was located in the west end of the present Appleton and was separated from the village of Appleton by North Division-st. Much of this land was owned by an attorney named Morgan L. Martin and the village was

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Volumes in that office vault contain records of documents entered long before this region was made a part of the new territory of Wisconsin in 1836. Records in the same volumes show that Appleton was platted as a village and that land was granted for Lawrence college at about the time Wisconsin was declared a state. The pages in those books, beginning with the year 1851, no longer refer to this unit of the state as Brown-co, but as Outagamie-co. Then follows the era of the three original plats which were united to incorporate as Appleton village and the era of Appleton as a city.

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