

MADISON,  
DANE COUNTY

AND

SURROUNDING TOWNS;

BEING A

HISTORY AND GUIDE

TO PLACES OF SCENIC BEAUTY AND HISTORICAL NOTE FOUND IN THE TOWNS  
OF DANE COUNTY AND SURROUNDINGS, INCLUDING THE ORGANIZATION  
OF THE TOWNS, AND EARLY INTERCOURSE OF THE SETTLERS  
WITH THE INDIANS, THEIR CAMPS, TRAILS, MOUNDS, ETC.

WITH A COMPLETE LIST OF

COUNTY SUPERVISORS AND OFFICERS,

AND

LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS, MADISON VILLAGE AND CITY COUNCIL.

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*ILLUSTRATED.*

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1877.

## ADDITIONS BY J. T. HAWES.

My father and mother and three children moved into the town of Verona on the 7th day of March, 1843. It was a very cold day, with deep snow, which lay on the ground until April, when men went to the town meeting in sleighs. It was a remarkably long and hard winter, and many cattle starved to death. I well remember instances of men coming fifteen miles to get a load of straw, when we would give them the load and keep them over night. We had moved on to Mr. Samuel Taylor's farm, so had plenty of feed. At this time there was only one other family in the town, Peter Martin's, one mile from us. The next nearest was Joseph Vroman, five miles east, Ed. Campbell seven miles north, and McFadden, seven miles south. We living on the road from Janesville to Mineral Point, and as it was the only house for a long distance each way, having a good barn, something very scarce in those days, it was a regular stopping place for all travelers. Among the notables who used to frequent our house was Judge Irvin, Hons. Moses M. and Marshal M. Strong, Ebenezer Brigham, of Blue Mounds, George Delaplaine, etc. J. G. Knapp and E. M. Williamson, of Madison, used to make it their home while acting as surveyors in that part of the county. Judge Irvin was always accompanied by his famous horse Pedro, and dog York. My father one winter boarded old Pedro for the judge. If my memory serves me right, the first child born in the town was Ebenezer Collins. He was born in the evening. My mother was present, and early the next morning she was called to attend the birth of Olive Wheeler, a daughter of William A. Wheeler, who lived at the Badger Mills.

The first religious services in the town were held at our

house, by the Rev. Salmon Stebbins. He was followed soon after by a Methodist missionary by the name of Bennett, who afterwards took up the less honorable calling of office seeking. About this time we had occasional preaching by the Rev. Matthew Fox, of Fitchburg, a Presbyterian minister; also by his father, who was a Methodist preacher. He was known all over the country as Father Fox, or, as he sometimes styled himself in his jocular way, "Ould Daddy Fox."

In the summer of 1845 the settlers built a log school house on the northwest quarter of section 22, but when they had got the body up, they decided it was not located in the proper place, and so sold it to my father, who took it down and moved it on his farm, on section 13, which he was just beginning to open. The next year they erected a log school house on the west edge of what is now known as the Dane county poor farm. The first school was taught by Amy Thornton, in the winter of 1846-7, and I was one of her scholars. It was the custom in those days for the teacher to board around, and the big boys to take turns in building the fires. My turn came every Monday morning, and I remember getting a frozen ear on one of those occasions. The first summer school was taught by Miss Noyes, and the second winter term by Dr. Waterbury. He being the only physician in that part of the country, was frequently called away on professional duties, and at such times he placed the school in charge of some one of the big boys, quite a number of whom were men grown. One of the number, an Englishman by the name of Baker, who was sometimes called upon to preside, caused a good deal of merriment one day by telling some one in a class of spelling, who had left out the letter *n* in a word, that "there was a *hen* in there somewheres."

In 1843 my father was elected the first justice of the

peace in the town, and my brother, Harvey L. Hawes, the first constable. The same year my father was elected a supervisor of the town. Among his duties were the laying out and repairing of roads. This office he held for many years. In 1846 we moved on our own farm, and entertained many travelers in our little log house. A sign over our door with the word BEER in large letters, caused considerable attraction, as it was, for many miles around, the only thing of the kind outside of Madison. As the town has filled up fast with settlers, it will be difficult to follow its history further.

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## VERMONT.

THE town of Vermont lies in the western part of the county between the towns of Black Earth and Blue Mounds, and known as town 7 north, of range 6 east.

The town is well watered by Black Earth and Blue Mounds creeks, with their tributaries. The surface is very uneven, and along all the streams are bluffs or ridges; indeed, the face of the country is rough and hilly, yet there is very much desirable land suitable for all agricultural purposes. The land is covered with oak openings and no prairie. There are no villages in the town.

The town of Vermont was named by one of the settlers after his native state. The first settler was a German, named Joshua Harmony, who located here in 1846. I. C. Steele, who located on section 7, and S. Batty, on section 6, were among the early settlers. The town was organized in 1855. The first officers were Whalen Hasbrook, Isaac C. Steele and Jno. Caldwell; Aaron Dana, clerk. The first sermon was preached in 1849, by H. Mainard, of the Methodist church. The first school district was organized in 1850; A. Campbell first teacher.