THE GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
OF
LACROSSE COUNTY
BY
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PART 1

Physical Features

LaCrosse County is located in west central Wisconsin, and has an area of about 481 square miles, or 307,340 acres. As streams form part of the boundaries, the county is somewhat irregular in shape. The topographic maps of this region show that LaCrosse County consists of a thoroughly dissected plain, and from a geological standpoint has reached an early mature stage of development. The surface may be divided into two topographic types, the valleys and uplands. The most prominent topographic feature is the line of bluffs extending across the area from north to south. They have an average elevation above the Mississippi River of about 500 feet. To the west of these bluffs lies the valley of the Mississippi. At LaCrosse the floor of this valley has an elevation above sea level of 681 feet. Fully one-half of the valley lies within the present flood plain, while the remainder is occupied by two and sometimes three distinct terraces, ranging from twenty to seventy feet in elevation above the river. With the exception of the flood plains of the largest streams, the county as a whole is naturally well drained. The Black River which forms the northwestern boundary for about fifteen miles, receives the waters from Flemming Creek and a number of other small streams which drain the northern part of the county. The LaCrosse River crosses the county from east to west, draining the central and eastern parts of the county. While there are three important railroad lines in the county, the upland country is so rough that the road beds have followed the valleys of the Mississippi and LaCrosse rivers, and as a result, some parts of the county are not conven-
ently reached by the railroads,

LaCrosse County lies within the unglaciated portion of Wisconsin, and is comparable with a large area in the southwestern part of the state. The surface material from which the soils of LaCrosse County have been derived has been classified by the Soil Survey into five soil series and sixteen soil types. These soils have been derived from the mantle loess which covers a large part of the area, from the disintegration of the underlying rocks, and from the material washed down from the slopes, transported by the rivers, and deposited in terrace formations.

Early History.

The annals of the territory now known as LaCrosse County, previous to its legal existence under that specific name, is the history of the state, and its story during the territorial days is the history common to the great Northwest. The Spanish claim to this territory, the French regime, and the British domination, made such a slight impression upon this region that little remains to the present day. Of necessity however, LaCrosse County must have come under the observation of the very early explorers, then the trappers, priests, and other seekers after conquest, fame, and wealth. Following the natural highways of the Wisconsin and Fox rivers to the southwest and the Mississippi to the northwest, the line of exploration passed by, and doubtless tarried at points within the present limits of LaCrosse County; which we have every reason to believe, due to the natural advantages of the region, was a site for one of the earliest trading points.

The earliest visitor to this region of which there is any record was Father Hennepin, who in 1680, under orders from LaSa
LaSalle, set out to explore the upper Mississippi. He was accompanied by two voyageurs, and they passed the mouth of the Wisconsin River, the mouth of the Black, and a little below Lake Pepin were taken prisoners by the Sioux, and taken north to the present site of St. Paul.\(^1\) Other early explorers passed this way; LaSueur in 1683, and Perrot in 1685.\(^2\) Shortly after this French territory, which included Wisconsin, was ceded to the British, the noted traveler, Captain Jonathan Carver, visited the northwest Territory passing up the Mississippi as far as St. Anthony Falls.\(^3\) After the Treaty of Paris, the division of the Northwest Territory began. What is now Wisconsin became part of the territory of Indiana. It was three years later that the first authentic account of the present site of LaCrosse and vicinity was given by Major Zebulon Pike, the distinguished explorer, who visited the country in 1805 recording to his diary: "Passed the Racine River, also a prairie called LaCross, from a game of ball frequently played on it by the Sioux Indians. This prairie is very handsome, it has a square small hill. It is bounded in the rear by hills similar to Prairie des Cheins."\(^4\)

As the county of LaCrosse was not created until after Wisconsin became a state, much of its early history is recorded in the annals of Crawford County. The Black Hawk War had a bearing upon the development of this section although LaCrosse County was not the theater of this war, but the knowledge of the country which

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2. Bryant, Benj. F. Memoirs of LaCrosse County, Madison 1907, p. 28.
that event made public, was immediately followed by a tide of immigration which made its way up the Mississippi. Between the settlements in the lead regions and the fur bearing country of the great Northwest the traffic increased, and besides the boats that followed the windings of the river, trails were cut through the forest, one of the earliest passing through the present site of what is now the city of LaCrosse.

During the decade preceding the admission of Wisconsin as a state, there is little recorded concerning LaCrosse and LaCrosse County. Prairie LaCrosse was principally known as a camping ground for parties, both Indians and whites, who were following the river trails to the northwest. Later events belong to the founding and development of LaCrosse settlement into a village and later into a city. There have been many and various theories held as to the origin of the name "LaCrosse." Two of these have geographical significance. One, that the name was chosen from a game played by the Indians on this excellent prairie; the other, that the Mississippi River and its tributaries form a cross at this point.

Location and Environment

LaCrosse is located in latitude 43°49' North, and longitude 91°15' West. It is in the western part of the county upon a small plateau some forty feet above the water level. This little prairie contains about thirteen square miles, being seven miles long and two and one-half miles wide in the widest part, and is backed by lofty bluffs. The town was known in the early days as Prairie LaCrosse, or as some of the early writers give it as Prairie a la Crosse. From the river the land originally rose to the height of about forty feet, and was then level or gently undulating. The
soil is sandy, light, and loose near the river, darker and more compact about the center, and has a strip of very fertile soil directly under the bluffs. These bluffs which are on both sides of the Mississippi, rise to a height of five hundred feet, ascending gradually within sixty or seventy feet of the summit, where there appears an overcropping of perpendicular rock, above which are hilly slopes covered with shrubs and oaks. The bluffs are close enough to give protection to the city but not so close that they hamper or restrict its growth. Among these bluffs the city has individual favorites, one of which is Grandad's Bluff, so named because when standing on the next bluff to the north, which is Miller's, one can see the profile of an old man with a beard. The crest of this bluff rises in a perpendicular wall 450 feet above the level of the city. The hill is capped with limestone, which is being quarried; the rest of the hill is sandstone. At the crest has been planted a marker by the United States Geological Survey, giving the elevation at that spot as 1150 feet above sea level. The view from the top is very extended; with the city of La Crosse immediately below, and beyond the river stretching to the north and south, you can well understand why this site of sandy prairie was chosen as the location for a city.

The Mississippi bottom land has a conspicuous series of terraces. They furnish the sites of all the important cities and villages along the river. In some places the terrace land occupies only one-half of the bottom of the gorge, as in the case at

8. Noted by observation.
LaCrosse. At LaCrosse the flood plain occupies the western side of the bottom land, and there is no terrace at the base of the Minnesota bluff except at La Crescent, Minnesota. The present channel of the river is about half way between the bluffs. At the city of LaCrosse the terrace is bordered by a steep, west-facing scarp thirty-one feet high. The surface of the terrace rises less than ten feet more in the city. It ends in a low, east-facing scarp, where the abandoned valley of the LaCrosse River lies within the terrace near the base of the Wisconsin bluff. The northern end of this bluff is cut into several parts between (a) LaCrosse River (b) Black River (c) the French slough of the Mississippi River. Within the present limits of the city both the Black and the LaCrosse Rivers empty into the Mississippi and this conjunction tells the story of the growth and prosperity of this metropolis of western Wisconsin.

Beginnings of the city

The record of the city began with the coming of Nathan Myrick in 1841. He came up the river on a flat boat from Prairie du Chien and brought goods for trading with the Indians. He did not select this site by chance but realized that such a junction of rivers was a favorable place for communication with the Indians and passing traders. As fur trading in this region flourished, due to the forests to the west and east, a better collecting and distributing center could not be found.

It is of interest to note that the early arrivals in LaCrosse who were not fur traders, did not tarry, but went on up the Black River to engage in lumbering, the industry which was soon to play

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T. Martin, Lawrence. Physical Geography of Wisconsin, p. 143
B. Bryant, B.F. Memoirs of La Crosse County, p. 32.
a vital part in the growth of LaCrosse. In 1844 the population of the settlement numbered less than twelve inhabitants. For the first few years the settlement was slow and the outlook anything but encouraging. This was the transition period between fur trading and lumbering. In 1845 J.W. Levy visited the little frontier post, opened a tavern, and traded with the Indians. His wife writes an interesting letter of those early days in LaCrosse which is recorded in the Wisconsin Historical Society Collections for 1911. She tells of the Indian traders being in sympathy with the Indians, who were being removed by the United States Government. The trader thought that if the Indian were removed his own means for getting a livelihood would also be removed. She describes the little settlement in the process of adjusting itself to the influx of men, due to the lumber industry of the Black River, LaCrosse being used as a terminus for cargoes, and thereby making it a base of supplies and a stopping place for lumbermen. Finally, she describes her later years when LaCrosse was beginning to be an agricultural community. The first farmers settled in the fertile coulees among the bluffs. So rich were these farms that an early settler is reported to have grown wheat upon one field, without fertilizing it for eighteen consecutive years.

In 1847, Timothy Burns, afterwards Lieutenant Governor of the state, passing through LaCrosse, perceived from its location that the town had commercial possibilities, and he purchased an interest in the business of Myrick and Miller. To him is really due the honor of founding LaCrosse, for he had the village platted.

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9. Bryant, B.F. p. 34
10. Ibid p. 34
11. Wisconsin Historical Society Proceedings, 1911 p. 201
and he set in motion the forces that brought its prosperity. From 1850 the growth of LaCrosse progressed steadily, although it was a transition which was discouraging to those who were not able to look a little way into the future. As the settlers began taking up the lands, the Indians retired into the more distant forests; with them also disappeared many of the most valuable fur-bearing animals, which had up to this time been the chief source of wealth of the Northwest. The settlers were poor, led a hand-to-mouth existence, and in the early years, had nothing to barter with the traders comparable in value with the furs brought in by the Indians.

In 1853 the New York Tribune noticed the little, ambitious, far away settlement and prophesied that LaCrosse must figure as the second city of Wisconsin. This same year Mr. Levy built a wharf boat 86 by 26 feet, with a warehouse and receiving room. This greatly facilitated the handling of goods and produce transported on the river.

The question now arises, why LaCrosse should have grown while many other settlements on the Mississippi did not. I shall attempt to show that to its geographical location LaCrosse owes its growth. Those familiar with the Mississippi are aware that good sites for cities are rare. As a general thing, high bluffs on either side of the river extend so close to the bank as not to afford sufficient room for a steamboat landing, much less a site for a city that expects to grow. Prairie du Chein was on the same side of the

12. Bryant, B.F. p.34
13. Ibid, p.35
river and had plenty of room, but it was built on low swamp land, and recedes from the river some little distance. LaCrosse alone, among the various cities of significance along the upper course of the Mississippi, has an ideal site. This site has much to do with the progress and permanent prosperity of the city. LaCrosse is set on the east bank of the Mississippi between the LaCrosse and Black rivers, and just opposite the rich valley of the Root River in Minnesota. It is the only spot in this bluff region between Dubuque and St. Paul to which flows an extensive river from the east, with a corresponding one from the west, furnishing an easy channel through which the tide of commerce could flow unchecked. Indian trails came in from all points and centered upon the prairie, and so marked were the advantages of this point, as regards position, that one is not surprised that LaCrosse became a terminal city.

Advantages of Site of City

By 1854, the advantages of the site of LaCrosse for the building of a large city seemed to have been recognized. A steam saw-mill was already in operation and the vast tract of pine timber land along the whole Black River valley began to pour its wealth into the laps of the pioneers. This land could then be purchased at $1.25 per acre, and the advantages of direct water communication to the Southern markets were noted. Flat-bottomed boats loaded with lumber went down the river, the cargo was disposed of at $30 per thousand, and the boats sold for more than their original cost. The vast prairies to the west and northwest of LaCrosse, though not appreciated at their full value, were recognized as sources of future wealth. The probability that LaCrosse would be
a junction of railroad and river traffic in the near future was confidently prophesied. In looking forward to the advent of the railroad, then in the process of building, it needed little argument to show that the line of traffic between the east and west would pass through Chicago, and would seek a direct route to the Northwest, and that LaCrosse lay in the natural line of communication. At that time the superiority of railroad over water transportation was not appreciated as it was at a later date, and the advantages of the river as a means of communication was overestimated; the LaCrosse and Milwaukee railroad, now a part of the C.M.& St.Paul system, was at the time in the process of construction, and the citizens of LaCrosse anticipated having railroad connections with the East. This was not a reality however until 1858. In the mean time, the citizens did not lose heart but devoted themselves to the consideration of the great source of wealth of that day, the lumber business. The superiority of the site for that purpose was fully demonstrated, for while the inland towns languished in inactivity or were abandoned altogether, waiting for the advent of the railroad, the growth of LaCrosse was steady and rapid.

The LaCrosse Democrat in 1857 reprints the estimate of the importance of the city of LaCrosse as given by a correspondent in the Chicago Democratic Press. The writer predicted for the future, and these predictions have long since been realized. "It has been supposed by many that along the Mississippi, leading towns and cities must be located on the west side of the river—One of the exceptions to this rule is LaCrosse. She has a large and fertile
country which, from its geographical position, must be always tributary to her, and hence she has a substantial basis for future prosperity and progress. At LaCrosse the Mississippi bends largely westward, making this city the natural outlet for the rich valleys of the LaCrosse and Black rivers. The LaCrosse Valley is one of the richest and most delightful agricultural regions in the state, and the valley of the Black River contains immense groves of excellent pines, besides being a very inviting farming region. The counties that surround LaCrosse will always afford her a large and lucrative trade. She is also to be the terminus of the Milwaukee & LaCrosse and the Mineral Point & LaCrosse railroads, and will then enjoy the advantages which river and railroad communication can afford. LaCrosse is now in the eighth year of her growth and contains some five or six thousand inhabitants. (over estimated) Her industries give evidence of her prosperity and thrift. She is destined to be one of the leading cities upon the upper Mississippi." 14 At this time LaCrosse was looking for settlers. The men who were building the town and financing the enterprise wanted it to pay, and such newspaper articles were good advertising matter.

EARLY HISTORY The first lumbering in LaCrosse County of which we find record was the rafting of logs in 1844, by Myrick and Miller; these were got out on Black River and sent down the Mississippi to St. Louis. Although the Mormons had cut some timber for their dwellings about two years previously, the credit for the first commercial venture from LaCrosse belongs to Myrick and Miller. This firm continued to operate until 1847 when a heavy flood cost the firm more than $20,000 in booms, logs, and lumber, led to the dissolution of the firm. The first important lumber company was organized in 1864, called the "Black River Improvement Company," which sold stock to the extent of $50,000 to the several loggers. The early growth of the city of LaCrosse was dependent almost entirely upon the lumber business, which has now been superseded by other lines of manufacturing, as the cutting away of the forests destroyed the lumber manufactures.

The first saw mill was built in 1852. The following year it was estimated that from twenty-five to thirty million feet of pine was cut on the Black River and its tributaries, which found its outlet to the market by way of LaCrosse. By 1878 there were about a dozen mills in active operation, some of them hardly ex-

16. Ibid, p.500
17. Ibid, p.501
celled in magnitude and capacity by any in the Northwest. Although the lumber manufacture which laid the foundation for the large fortunes which were built up in the city has passed away with the destruction of the forests and there are no saw mills in LaCrosse at the present time, yet there is still a large lumber interest. One of the largest business houses of the city, the C. L. Colman Lumber Company, is capitalized at $1,000,000.

How the newspapers of the day boosted the growing city and its lumber industry can be estimated from the following extract from an editorial. "But few of our citizens are aware of what is being done in this new and important addition to LaCrosse (North LaCrosse). Within the past two months, three steam saw mills have been started at that point. One is now running, the second is nearly completed, and the third will be in full operation in less than a month. Two more mill sites have been engaged, soon to be occupied. In addition it is confidently anticipated that a large machine shop will be in operation at that point before the end of 1856. Dwelling houses are being erected as fast as lumber can be obtained; and, situated as the place is, at the foot of the LaCrosse Valley on Black River Lake, and within one mile of the public landing (city of LaCrosse), it is certain that this settlement will grow. It is to be regretted that the intended plank road is not already completed across the marsh, so that strangers should not over-look the improvements in this part of our town;"

18. Hotchkiss, Geo. W. p. 502
19. LaCrosse Chamber of Commerce, 1920
and that we can show to them that on the Black River Lake, and on the Mississippi River below our city we have facilities for booming logs and sawing lumber, unequalled by any point on the Mississippi." 20

There was no city in the state more interested in the lumber business than LaCrosse. The vast area of Southern and Western Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Dakota, found an inexhaustible market for all the lumber LaCrosse could send out. In 1858, a correspondent of the Daily Wisconsin writes concerning the lumber industry of LaCrosse, which was reprinted in the LaCrosse National Democrat for the benefit of its subscribers. "The lumber business is an immense one. There are no less than seventeen steam saw mills in LaCrosse and vicinity. Some idea may be obtained of the capital required in these mills, when we state that in one of the mills we found a steam engine of 80 horse-power, Boston made, at an expense of $25,000. When lumber is high and ready for sale some idea may be formed of the active prosperity of this young city.---- But it should not be supposed that LaCrosse must rely upon its lumber alone. The land in all directions from it is superior.

excellent. The valley of the LaCrosse river, which we traversed thirty miles in a stage, is equal in beauty and fertility to the best lands of the Rock River valley. It is the lumber and agricultural resources that have given so rapid a growth to LaCrosse. Its residents also calculate to draw a large trade from the rich country of Minnesota, opposite the city." 21 Such boosts as these, print

20. LaCrosse National Democrat, (Editorial) July 11, 1856
21. Ibid, July 27, 1858
ed in the papers of the state with wide circulation were the 
means of sending many sturdy pioneers into the region, with its 
unlimited natural resources, to make his home.

**IMPORTANCE** The Wisconsin Lumberman, printed in the year 1873, d 
discusses the lumber interests of LaCrosse by saying that the l 
leading industry of LaCrosse is the manufacture of pine lumber. 
In describing the largest mill in the city it was said to be un-
like most lumber mills as it did not have the traditional rough, 
dirty appearance, but was described as being as neat as an old m 
maid's kitchen. "Nothing is wasted; the sawdust is burned in the 
engines. The capacity of the mill is about 50,000 lath in ten 
hours. It cuts 15,000,000 feet of lumber per year." The main in-
terest in LaCrosse lumber at this time was due to the fact that 
the output of lumber was pine, and LaCrosse was in advance of ot 
other cities in manufacturing pine lumber, which was just gaining 
prominence. After the Civil War was over lumbering began its real 
growth on the Black River and it continued to grow until it reach-
ed its zenith in 1881. For the next ten years the output of logs 
remained at about 200,000,000 feet, but the decline came suddenly 
after 1890 when the amount dropped from 207,000,000 feet to 72, 
000,000 feet in 1897. In 1898 it was estimated that the entire a 
amount of timber left in the region of the Black River, to supply 
the future wants of the mills at LaCrosse, would not exceed 200, 
000,000 feet. This was all put into the mills by 1900. The fol-
lowing graph pictures an official record of the quantity of logs 
handled by the Black River Improvement Company, in billion feet 
of lumber.

22. Wisconsin Lumberman, Vol. 1, 1873, p. 125
23. Hotchkiss, Geo. W., p. 501
24. Ibid. p. 502
The *LaCrosse Chronicle* in 1905 commented on the situation by saying: "Situated at the most available point for getting logs from Black River, LaCrosse boomed the lumber industry which in turn made the city staunch and rich as it is today. Lumbering supported the city until today when the lumber industry is gone; factories have in turn reversed places with logging, and now uphold the city. Synonymous with the name LaCrosse are logging and lumbering, and those who were sturdy pioneers when Wisconsin was a struggling state are now the lumber kings of LaCrosse."25

The following table shows the rise and decline of the river towns with the rise and decline of the lumber industry. LaCrosse started as a lumber town lust as the others, but its superior location furnished the means for its accelerated growth. Prairie

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25. *LaCrosse Chronicle*, July 30, 1905
du Chien was a river town but it could not be called a lumber town.
Very little timber was shipped down the Wisconsin River, but I pl
place it here to compare with the booming city of LaCrosse, which
had the advantage of being the gateway to the Northwest.

<table>
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<td>7735</td>
<td>14509</td>
<td>25090</td>
<td>28395</td>
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<td>655</td>
<td>647</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Manufacturing

The city took note of its other resources, such as the inex-
haustible quarries of the bluffs for building stone, and for the
manufacture of lime. There was also excellent clay in the vicin-
ity for brick making. In the light of later developments, some of
the advantages set forth to attract the home-seeker are interest-
ing if not amusing. The newspapers published such statements as
these: "Our hills and uplands can sustain thousands of the wool-
bearing race," and "Cotton can be brought up from the South in our
magnificent steamers." Whether or not LaCrosse might have develop-
ed as a cotton manufacturing center if the Civil War had not inter-
vened, is impossible to say, but the fact remains that in neither
the line of woolen nor cotton manufacturing has the energy of the
city been directed. It does not seem, however, that LaCrosse could

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26. Federal Census Reports for the years indicated.
installed the necessary machinery and provided itself with the cheap labor which was so plentiful in the East. The demand for cotton goods was in the East, not in the West at that time, manufacturing of that sort takes root in a densely populated region, not in a frontier town. However, there was a demand for manufactured goods in this section of the country such as farm machinery, flour, wood-working industries, (sash and door) and leather goods. The Civil War gave a tremendous stimulus to the manufacture of agricultural machinery in Wisconsin. The absence of thousands of men and boys who were fighting in the war, compelled farmers to purchase labor conservers on a scale never before known. "The several agricultural shops in this city," reports the LaCrosse Democrat in 1863, "are driven with work and hardly able to meet the demands on them for threshing machines, reapers, fanning mills, etc. A million more dollars can be profitably invested here in the manufacture of farm tools and labor-saving implements of all kinds. There is no end to the demand which increases each year in astonishing rates."27

LaCrosse during the later sixties supported the largest shipyard on the upper Mississippi River, where light-draught packets and barges for the river trade were constructed in considerable numbers.28 LaCrosse was favorably situated from a manufacturing standpoint. Raw materials were easily obtained; wool from the uplands, wood from the nearby forests, and iron ore from the Northern Minnesota mines. Its location was also favorable for manu-

27. LaCrosse National Democrat, July 28, 1863
28. Ibid, July 7, 1863
facturing from the fact that the city was ninety miles north and two hundred miles south of a competing point.

A brief survey of the manufacturing conditions as they exist today in LaCrosse affords a convincing explanation of the steady progress of the industries of the city. The total output of factory produce for 1918 was approximately valued at $20,000,000, as against $7,676,581 in 1900, and 8,139,432 in 1910. The most important of LaCrosse manufacturing plants were listed by the War Industries Board in the Resources and Conversion section of their record compiled in 1918. These I have listed here according to their classification, omitting those with less than ten employees.

(1) Wood working Industries of LaCrosse:

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<th>Name of Company</th>
<th>Products manufactured</th>
<th>Number employed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Segelke &amp; Kohlhaus Mfg., Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LaCrosse Box Co. #1 and #2</td>
<td>Nail boxes</td>
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<tr>
<td>The E. Hacker Co</td>
<td>Church Furniture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smith Manufacturing Co.</td>
<td>Wagons and Trucks</td>
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<td>LaCrosse Cooperage Co.</td>
<td>Beer Packages</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>John O. Weisse Co.</td>
<td>Wood finishings</td>
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(2) The Metalworking Industries of LaCrosse

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<tr>
<td>National Gauge and Equipment Co.</td>
<td>Gauges</td>
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<tr>
<td>LaCrosse Plow Co.</td>
<td>Plows</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Textile trades of LaCrosse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Products</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LaCrosse Knitting Co.</td>
<td>Socks</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. LaCrosse Chamber of Commerce Figures, 1918
Textile Trades, continued.

Badger Hosiery Mills          Woolen Socks          83
LaCrosse Garment Co.         Dresses and Aprons      70
LaCrosse Clothing Co.        Overalls and Jackets     63
(ten others listed)

(4) Food Products of LaCrosse

Montague Co.                  Cakes and Candy        150
Jos. B. Funke Co.             Candy                    100
Listman Mill                  Flour                    100
(five others listed)

(5) Leather Trades of LaCrosse

LaCrosse Rubber Mills Co.     Boots and Shoes       900
LaCrosse Boot & Shoe Mfg.,Co.  Shoes                  34

(6) Miscellaneous Manufactures of LaCrosse

G.Herleman Brewing Co.        Beer                    225
J.Gund Brewing Co.            Beer                    169
Wisconsin Pearl Button Co.     Buttons                157
J.A.Salzer Seed Co.           Seeds                   146 (30)

Agriculture and Dairying

CROPS Until 1890, the growing of grains constituted the chief type of agriculture in LaCrosse County, with wheat as the principal crop. Owing to the decline in the price of grains, and to the fact that constant cropping of such grains was depleting the soil of its fertility, a change took place, and now the principal type of agriculture is general farming, with dairying as the

30. Classification and Index of Manufacturing Establishments, 1918
War Industries Board, Region 17 (Wisconsin) Office of Industrial Commission, Madison, Wisconsin
main feature. Hog raising is carried on to a considerable extent, and in some sections of the county truck farming has developed. The crops most extensively grown at present, in order of their importance are hay, oats, corn, barley, wheat, and potatoes. According to the U.S. census report for 1909, there was more land devoted to hay production, including the wild marsh grasses, in LaCrosse County than to any other crop. A yield of 60,423 tons were secured from 30,465 acres, or an average of nearly two tons per acre. By 1919 this acreage had gone down to 29,669, but this included 1,125 acres of alfalfa while only 34 acres were grown in 1909. The acreage devoted to oats is second only to that of hay. In 1909, 28,504 acres yielded 911,685 bushels of grain or 31 bushels per acre. In 1919 this acreage was 29,659 with a production of 1,557,091 bushels or 39 bushels per acre. While the year before (1918), the yield had averaged 52 bushels to the acre.

Corn ranks next to oats in importance. In 1909, the amount produced was 621,425 bushels from 10,810 acres of land, giving an average yield of 31.3 bushels. In 1919, the production from 24,056 acres was 1,299,024 bushels, or an average yield of 54 bushels to the acre. As the dairy industry increased so did the acreage devoted to corn become greater. Silos are numerous and much of the corn is cut and preserved for stock feeding during the winter months. A large part of the crop is left to mature to be used as feed for hogs, beef cattle, and dairy cows. In 1919, 124, 31. Wisconsin Department of Agriculture. Division of Agriculture Statistics. Madison, Wis.
32. Ibid 33. Ibid
140 tons of silage was put up for winter use as compared with 75,595 tons in 1918.34

Rye is important on the sandy soil of the county, and while the yields on the light soils are low, it does better on such land than any of the other grain crops. From 5,944 acres, a yield of 65,797 bushels or an average of 11 bushels per acre was secured in 1909, while in 1919, 124,610 bushels were secured from 7,330 acres, an average of 17 bushels to the acre. In 1918, the yield averaged 21 tons to the acre.35

Sugar beets are grown in the vicinity of Bangor and West Salem. The beets are shipped to Janesville where they are manufactured into sugar. The factory cooperates with the farmers by sending labor to do the cultivating and weeding. The average yield is 20 tons to the acre.36

Peas are grown for canning, being hauled to the factories at Onalaska and West Salem. The acreage for 1919 was 1962, while in 1917 it was only 1260, as compared with only 240 acres in 1909.37 Each year shows a marked increase in the amount of canning peas raised; as the market for canned vegetables increases, so do the canning factories, which in turn calls for an increased production of the vegetables. Within a radius of five or six miles of LaCrosse, truck crops and small fruits are grown extensively for local markets. These crops include early and late potatoes, cabbages, melons, celery, beets, and rhubarb.38

34. Department of Agricultural Statistics.
35. Ibid 37. Ibid
36. Ibid 38. Interview with County Agent, LaCrosse Co., Wis.
The fruit industry has not been developed in LaCrosse County to any great extent. Apple culture has received very little attention, although over a large number of slopes throughout the upland portion of the county the conditions are favorable for the successful development of this industry. The growing of small fruits and berries have been developed on a commercial scale in the vicinity of Sparta on the adjoining slopes bordering the county and there is no reason why equal success should not be attained along the valley of the LaCrosse River.

FARM INDUSTRIES Dairying and hog raising are now considered the most important farming industries in the county. In 1909 there were 20,046 dairy cows and 28,578 swine in the county, which number by 1919 had raised to 25,198 dairy cows and 37,248 swine.\textsuperscript{39} Dairying is confined chiefly to the upland section of the county. Throughout the region there is a succession of slopes which are better suited to the development of dairying than to any other type of farming. Those slopes that are too steep for the production of crops are excellent grazing land. The cattle are principally Holsteins, Jerseys, and Guernseys. Dairy products are sold mainly in the form of butter and cheese. About 93.9 per cent of the land in LaCrosse County is in farms.\textsuperscript{40} In 1894 these farm lands had a total value of $3,319,581; but by 1919 this value had raised to $19,465,052.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{39} Department of Agricultural Statistics.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid
\textsuperscript{41} Report of the County Board of Supervisors. 1894 and 1919. LaCrosse Wisconsin.
The following table shows the value of farm lands in LaCrosse County for the year indicated, in millions of dollars. This table was compiled from the reports of the County Board of Supervisors, on file in the office of the County Clerk, LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1905</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1907</td>
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<td>1909</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OAT ACREAGE IN LACROSSE COUNTY 1919

1 Dot = 20 Acres
CORN ACREAGE IN LACROSSE COUNTY 1919

1 Dot = 20 Acres
NUMBER OF DAIRY COWS IN LACROSSE COUNTY 1919

1 Dot = 20 Cows
PART III

TRANSPORTATION

Waterways

The first means of conveyance of importance to the city of LaCrosse, was the natural waterway, the Mississippi River. This river made communication with the outside world comparatively easy, and it greatly facilitated immigration to this region in the early days. In connection with the Black River in furnishing an outlet for the products of the vast pine forests of Northern Wisconsin. The Mississippi was, without a doubt, the main factor in the up building of the city of LaCrosse, which in its early days, as I have pointed out, was a "lumber town".

The first steamboat which ascended the Mississippi to the present site of St. Paul was the "Virginia" in 1823. It was 118 feet long and drew six feet of water. After this trial of the "Virginia", one or two boats ascended the river annually to carry supplies to the trading posts. In 1844 the number of arrivals had increased to forty-four. One of the first necessities of river commerce was the building of suitable wharves. Until 1858 LaCrosse had no wharf at all adequate, and the one built that year deserves notice, not only as an early enterprise but on account of its unique method of construction. It was called the Willow Dock, with 136 feet front, 160 feet deep, and 12 feet high. Bunches of willow twigs were ingeniously woven together in such a manner as to keep the sand in and the water out; each bundle containing one hundred small trees or sprouts. Fifty-thousand of these bundles were required for the construction.

42. Bryant, B.F. Memoirs of LaCrosse County, p. 67
The willows were expected to sprout and grow, root together, and form a lasting structure. It at least furnished the first permanent and commodious dock, the best above St. Louis.

The river traffic and travel was a constantly increasing factor in the growth and importance of the village, as a brief comparison will show. The steamboat arrivals at LaCrosse from the opening of the season until the first of May, 1853, were twenty-two; for the corresponding time the following year, forty-four. In 1856 from May third to August ninth, the arrivals in LaCrosse were fifty-one. In the latter year, six new boats were put on the river. In four years the business on the Mississippi River increased from $17,000 to $400,000. In 1857 the "Northern Line" of St. Louis, was established with a fine array of boats, and the following year Capt. Davidson established a line from LaCrosse to St. Paul. The golden period of the river traffic and navigation on the Mississippi was from 1865 to 1872, after that year it declined. Attempts have been made to revive the river traffic but without success. According to Geo. B. Merrick, a pioneer river pilot on the Mississippi, these failures are due to the fact that all government expeditions to revive river traffic are superintended by West Pointers instead of under the direction of some pioneer river pilot who knows the Mississippi River thoroughly. From the study of waterways vs railroads in the United States, it is clear that water transportation cannot compete with the speed and efficiency of the railroads. This discussion of the reviving of river transportation may serve to keep down excessive freight rates in certain localities but as an equal competitor there is little danger.

43. LaCrosse National Democrat, July 31, 1857.
44. Bryant, B.F. Memoirs of LaCrosse County, p. 68.
45. Ibid, p. 68.
Secretary Reid of the LaCrosse Board of Trade in 1907 said, "The railroads enter our city and make us a natural distribution point for a tremendous traffic that ought to be carried on the river, and the territory that is naturally tributary to our city will create and require an amount of river borne traffic that almost staggers belief, when compared with the traffic of today". In this same report Secretary Reid says that if the coal consumed in the territory were delivered by barges, it would be much cheaper. Coal up the river and grain and iron down the river are to be the three classes of freight that may be expected to furnish the bulk of river traffic. This same idea is being voiced by Captain Thompson, assistant U.S. Engineer, located at LaCrosse, who declares that transportation on the Mississippi has a great future before it. The channel of the river at LaCrosse is now deep enough for boats that displace five feet of water and it is expected that the channel will be improved during the next five years so that boats that displace six feet of water may enter. The government is at the present time, building barges to be operated on the Mississippi, to carry freight as discussed in Mr. Reid's report. The barges are to be operated by the government for the first few years and later sold to private owners.

A study of the following commercial statistics on the tonnage and valuation of river freight for the port of LaCrosse in recent years shows that the number of tons in years 1907, 1908, and 1909 is larger by at least 200% than the preceding years and therefore the increased valuation.

46. LaCrosse Daily Tribune, June 3, 1907.
47. Interview with W.A.Thompson, LaCrosse, Wisconsin.
48. Ibid.
The year 1911 shows small tonnage with a large valuation. This is due to the fact that almost all the material hauled in this year was miscellaneous merchandise (local packets) valued at $125 per ton. The drop in 1912 was due to the local packets going out of business, and thereby little merchandise was hauled, and the materials transported by water were mainly lumber, brick, and other low value products.

49. Interview W.A. Thompson, La Crosse, Wisconsin.
We cannot leave transportation on the Mississippi without mentioning the ferry boats that plied across the Mississippi at LaCrosse for nearly a half century. The first boat, the "Wild Cat" in 1864, was operated by mule power. In 1855, a Mr. Bates put on a steam ferry called the "Honey Eye". As early as 1859 the question of the free ferry was agitated among the citizens of LaCrosse. The promoters urged that the city would benefit from the entire trade of the rich valleys and prairies of southern Minnesota which would be sufficient to build on and support a large commercial city. "They can bring the farmers of the west to these doors or compel them to go twenty miles out of the way to other towns". The result was that the ferry boat "McRoberts" by 1862 was making two trips a day to LaCrescent for twenty-five cents a team. LaCrosse was the natural point for all Minnesota settlers to market in, and a common sight was a stream of shoppers crossing in the ferries each week. Ferries continued to be the only means of crossing the river up to 1892, when the LaCrosse-Mississippi bridge was built. Although agitation for free crossing was begun in 1858, the desired result was not obtained until September 1915, when the bridge was declared free by the common council at LaCrosse.

It was early realized that if LaCrosse was to benefit by river transportation the docking facilities must be improved. The Rivers and Harbors Act of June 3, 1896, provided for a survey of LaCrosse Harbor, Wisconsin. The survey was made in November 1896 by Assistant Engineer W.A. Thompson, who rendered a report, estimates, and maps. LaCrosse harbor like most upper Mississippi River harbors

51. History of LaCrosse County, Edited by Western Historical Publishing Co., p.603
52. LaCrosse Daily Union, Oct.15, 1869
53. LaCrosse Weekly Democrat, May 1, 1862
54. LaCrosse National Democrat, Dec. 7, 1858
55. Interview with Mr. Raddish, LaCrosse, Wis.
56. Document 210, 54th Congress, 2nd Session, House of Representatives
was simply the river front or wharf of the city. In the early
days of steamboating, and down to about 1882, there was a good
landing from Jay Street to Pine Street for about 2400 feet, and
also along the east side of the Black River, above the LaCrosse
River for a half mile. In those days the channel of the Mississ-
ippi joined that of the Black, above the mouth of the LaCrosse
River, and the water of both the first named streams, ran together
in a deep and wide groove along the city front, and was sufficient
in velocity to carry away or hold in check the debris thrown out
from the LaCrosse River. Since 1882, the channel of the Mississ-
ippi has moved by degrees lower down, so that it strikes the eastern
shore some distance below the mouth of the LaCrosse River. The
change resulted in a great improvement to through navigation. But
the sluggish current of the Black River was now unaided by the
Mississippi, no longer able to handle and restrain the sand and
mud deposits from the LaCrosse River, so that the bar increased to
such an extent as to prevent at low stages, landings in the Black
River and also in the harbor of LaCrosse from Pine Street to a
point almost midway between Main and State streets. A change
that had been made in the channel of the LaCrosse River artifici-
ally about 1884 perhaps helped to accelerate deposits. The bridge
crossing the river at Mt. Vernon Street still further restricted
the available length of the wharf to about five-hundred feet. The
railroad track along the levee also lessened the space for hauling
freight; the eddy below the bar was troublesome, and sometimes, on
account of the nearness of the bridge, made the departure of boats
dangerous. No landing below the bridge was considered practical

57. Interview with W.A. Thompson, LaCrosse, Wisconsin.
as saw mills and other manufacturing concerns occupied nearly all the shore between the bridge and LaPlume Island. The sewage accumulated in the harbor as there was no current to carry it away. Capt. Thompson proposed in his report at this time (1896), to have a dam or bulkhead built of brush and rock to an elevation of eight feet above low water of 1864, commencing at the center of Main Street and running up stream to a point about 1000 feet from shore nearly opposite the foot of Badger Street. This dam, which was to have a preponderance of brush the cheaper material, was to be 1,575 feet long, the lower 800 feet being on a flat curve and the remainder a straight line. A smaller dam was to be built to an elevation of four feet above low water, for the purpose of catching deposits from the LaCrosse River - about 450 feet.

It was further proposed to dredge the bar on the river side of the large dam to a depth of four and one-half feet below low water and deposit the material, estimated at 55,000 cubic yards, on the inside of the bulkhead, commencing at the lower end and working up stream saying this material, if properly used would make an additional 800 linear feet of landing and would fill to one foot above high water, the space inside the bulkhead up as far as the north line of Vine Street. It was proposed at this time, to insure a current along the main dam or bulkhead, and thereby prevent the formation of another bar there, to improve the Mississippi in this locality by building the four wing dams from Grand Island, and the lateral dam at the foot of Island No. 105.

58. The Situation as Reported by W.A.Thompson.
60. Ibid.
All this improvement was estimated to cost $17,000 and this amount was asked for. In 1899 it was appropriated by congress and the work immediately started. The city made the needed changes in the sewers and a dredge was made in the river 1,142 feet long, 26 feet wide and of an average depth of 5 feet at low water. The sand dredged was used on the bulkhead. The dredge finished its work of casting up the embankments July 23, 1900. The city of LaCrosse hauled its waste material from street grading on to the lower 600 feet of the long dam, raising it from a height of eight feet to nearly eleven feet above low water, which is the grade of the railroad tracks along the levee. In 1902 the hydraulic dredge was kept at work pumping sand from the harbor bar and depositing it behind the bulkhead. About 84,000 cubic yards of sand were moved by the dredge. In 1903 the levee was graded and stone re-laid over an area of 17,000 feet. The following year, 1904, no work was done on the harbor, but in 1905 the work was completed with a few hundred dollars of the appropriation left, which was spent to settle outstanding debts. From these annual reports of the Chief Engineer upon the improvement of the Mississippi River, I have compiled a list showing the number of steamboats, barges, and rafts, until by 1912 the number of barges become too few to show upon the graph. The accelerated number of steamboats in 1918 is due to the increased number of excursion steamers that are putting in their appearance.

NUMBER OF STEAMBOATS AND BARGES PASSING THROUGH THE LACROSSE BRIDGE

1893 | 250 | 500 | 750 | 1000 | 1250 | 1500 | 1750 | 2000 | 2250 | 2500 | 2750 | 3000 | 3250 | 3500 | 3750 | 4000

1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900
1901
1902
1903
1904
1905
1906
1907
1908
1909
1910
1911
1912
1914
1916
1918

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Steamboats
Barges

66. From the Annual Reports upon Improvements of Mississippi River.
HIGHWAYS

INDIAN TRAILS A study of the transportation of LaCrosse takes us back long before railroads had reached Wisconsin. Travel through that territory was by boat, horse, or snow sledges. There were no roads such as had been developed from the Indian trails which interlaced the face of the county, and traces of which can still be found. The early traveler found that these trails often followed the best possible routes for bridle paths or roads. Prairie schooners, farmer wagons, and stage coaches followed in due time. Bridges were slow to be built. In the earliest days, unloaded wagons were ferried across the rivers in Indian "dug-out" canoes, the horses swimming behind and the freight brought over in relays. Later the railroads followed the route of the Indian trail.

STAGE-COACHES These trails were very numerous in the vicinity of LaCrosse. All those of Northern Wisconsin centered in this locality. The white man followed the Indian; first on foot, then on horseback, and next by stagecoach. The stagecoach was a popular method of travel during the first two decades of LaCrosse as a settlement. One of these lines was the Burbank's line, that carried mail as far as St. Paul. This line was the largest and best known. It was well advertised by the newspapers of the time. "This line is the best equipped and best paying of any in the west. Their winter stock consists of one hundred and sixty superior horses and eight concord sleighs. The company receives one hundred dollars a day from the government for carrying the mail--the profits of this line cannot be less than thirty-thousand dollars the coming winter".

67. Thwaites, R.C., Stories of the Badger State, p. 172-4
68. LaCrosse Daily Union, Nov.12,1859. 69. Ibid
WAGON ROADS  LaCrosse was the center of a large number of wagon roads reaching out in all directions to the Black River valley, to the Fox-Wisconsin portage, to Baraboo, Prairie du Chein, and to the Root River valley across the Mississippi in Minnesota. Some of these were post roads and received the earliest attention, but as fast as the country was settled, local authority improved the highways as well as possible. The early roads followed the river valleys in order to find a passage through the bluffs. One of these roads, between Prairie du Chein and LaCrosse is now under discussion; the proposition being to have this road improved as a scenic highway between the two cities.

PLANK ROADS  The two villages of LaCrosse and Onalaska were separated by an impassible marsh land; Onalaska being about seven miles to the northwest of LaCrosse. There was a great desire to remove this difficulty of communication between the two villages. In 1856 the LaCrosse & Onalaska Plank Road and Bridge Company was organized whose purpose was to build a plank road between the two villages. This road was completed the following year and it not only brought about the increased prosperity of the termini of the road but caused the village of North LaCrosse to be built which was later incorporated within the city of LaCrosse. A bridge was built over the LaCrosse River not far from its mouth where it separates LaCrosse into two sections. The company operated this road until 1859 when the county bought it and made it a free thoroughfare. The road still goes by the name "Plank Road" or "Causeway."
That there was need for improvement in these early roads is shown by the amusing report of a traveler to Prairie du Chein in the early part of the winter 1857-1858. He tells how the road between LaCrosse and Prairie du Chein was "in sublime condition for grand and lofty tumbling" and adds, "We folks of LaCrosse do get some tall cursing for not attending to the roads in season". We also see such statements as these in the newspapers of the day, "The stagecoach between LaCrosse and Sparta made the distance in twelve hours in spite of the roads."

RAILROADS.

LaCROSSE & MISSISSIPPI In spite of the fact that LaCrosse had water communication which gave it an advantage over the inland towns, there was no subject that received so much attention in the early days as the building of the railroad. Every issue of the newspapers commented upon the situation, gave the latest developments, urged the cooperation of the citizens, scoffed at the pretensions of the rival towns, and kept the burning question constantly before the people. The first attempt to get a railroad was made in 1852, when the LaCrosse & Milwaukee Railroad was chartered. The commissioners met but that was the extent of their progress. In 1856, the company consolidated with the Milwaukee, Fond du Lac, and Green Bay Company. New hopes were aroused but little accomplished. In 1856 the Milwaukee & Watertown Company joined them and the road was built as far as Portage. The same year Congress made a grant of land for the purpose of aiding the building of the road through Portage northwest to the St. Croix River and thence to the west end of Lake Superior and to Bayfield.

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74. Bryant, B.F., p.72
75. LaCrosse National Democrat, Dec. 7, 1858
76. Bryant, B.F., p. 71
77. Ibid.
The land grant was transferred to the LaCrosse-Milwaukee Company and in 1858 the road was finished through to LaCrosse, but the company was not reimbursed by the grant which was never confirmed. The formal opening of the road was no small event. It was celebrated on Wednesday, October 14, 1858 with appropriate ceremonies. The first train had fifteen loads of freight and the second had nine, so the prospects of the promoters proved good from the start. A little later the paper states, "A stroll through the depot yesterday satisfied us that the road was doing an immense business. The whole of the large depot is completely filled while the plank levee between the depot and the river there is scarcely a foot of unoccupied space. Every boat down brings a full load of produce, and every day a large train with a similar load leaves for Milwaukee."

The name of the road was changed to the "Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad" and it is a lamentable fact that with the dropping of the name "LaCrosse" a good part of the struggle as promoter of the railroad was forgotten. Although the name was changed back to "LaCrosse & Milwaukee" road in 1860, still the name in early railroad history remains "Milwaukee & Mississippi". Consolidating of railroads was talked of in 1860, and in a short time the LaCrosse and Milwaukee became a part of the Chicago, Milwauk ee & St. Paul Railroad Company.

One point in the development of transportation at LaCrosse which excited more than local interest was the building of the LaCrosse Railroad Bridge. It was one of the times when the state tried to nullify Federal authority.

77. Bryant, B.F., p. 71
78. Ibid 79. Ibid.
80. LaCrosse Daily Union, Nov. 8, 1859
81. LaCrosse Tri-Weekly Union & Democrat, June 6, 1860
Civil Engineer Dodge of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad Company proposed the site for the bridge to extend from the roundhouse in the fifth ward across the lower end of Finch Island to a point on the Minnesota bank, a short distance from the LaCrescent Ferry landing. The site was selected in the sole interest of the company, and the most direct route between Chicago and St. Paul, without considering the interests of LaCrosse as a commercial center. The board of U.S. Engineers of the War Department announced their choice as being a direct crossing, at the foot of Mt. Vernon Street. The railroad objected to the plan of the U.S. Engineer because it increased the length of the railroad two miles, that the right of way through the city would be expensive and hard to get. This dispute cost Governor Washburn his re-election as he vetoed the bill "An Act to Authorize the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad Bridge across the Mississippi". He vetoed this bill in spite of the fact that the U.S. Congress had authorized the construction of such a bridge. In the meantime the railroad officials forbade any trains to enter the city of LaCrosse, saying that the grass would soon be growing in the streets of the city. But as LaCrosse had made use of river transportation before the advent of railroads, so she made use of this method again. Trade went on as usual, with merchandise being shipped across the river to the Minnesota side and transferred to the Southern Minnesota Railroad.

Subsequently the feud died out and the bridge was built at the point desired by the railroad company. It crosses the Black River to French Island and then across the main channel of the Mississippi.

32. History of LaCrosse County, p. 590
33. Interview with Mr. Raddish, LaCrosse, Wisconsin.
The construction was authorized by the legislature in 1874, and the construction which began the same year was completed in six months. It is hard to say which was the best choice but the bridge served to further the development of interstate commerce.

BARABOO AIR-LINE This line was incorporated to build a road from Madison via Baraboo, to LaCrosse. It was organized in the interest of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad. The road reached LaCrosse only after much difficulty, which necessitated the cutting of three tunnels in the ridges between Elroy and Sparta at a great expense. The road was consolidated with the Chicago & Northwestern, and runs through LaCrosse county parallel with the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul. The road was built to Winona Junction and the company then leased, and later purchased, the "Winona Cut Off" and a short line was built from Onalaska to LaCrosse, thereby gaining an entrance into LaCrosse.

CHICAGO, BURLINGTON & QUINCY In 1886 a Mr. Thompson who had been acting president of the Santa Fe Railroad built the Chicago, Burlington & Northern Railroad from Savannah, Illinois, to Oregon. He followed the Mississippi the entire length of the state of Wisconsin, two hundred twenty miles on the east bank of the river and up to St. Paul. Some years later this line was taken over by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, of which this system is now a part. This road handles an immense business at the city of LaCrosse. It gives LaCrosse direct communication with Chicago and northern Illinois, and all points on the Mississippi from Savannah to St. Paul.

84. Interview with Mr. Raddish.
85. History of LaCrosse County, p. 390
86. Ibid.
87. LaCrosse Republican Leader, Aug. 1, 1885.
LACROSSE & SOUTHWESTERN

A railroad was built to connect the city of LaCrosse with Viroqua, the county seat of Vernon County. This road is of local importance to the counties of LaCrosse, Monroe, and Vernon.

The Green Bay & Western Railroad also figures in the history of LaCrosse transportation. The road is built between Green Bay and the Mississippi River. The company was first chartered as the "Green Bay & Lake Pepin" railroad. This road uses the "Winona Cut Off" and built a short line between Onalaska and LaCrosse. These several railroads give LaCrosse a daily service of seventy-four passenger and sixty-seven trains daily.

86. History of LaCrosse County, p. 590
89. LaCrosse Chamber of Commerce, 1918.
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PERSONAL INTERVIEWS CONCERNING LACROSSE

W.A. Thompson, Assistant U.S. Engineer.
Mr. Raddish, City Engineer.
Mr. Whitney, LaCrosse Normal.
W.H. Spreiter, County Agent.

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