Norwegians Came in 1838

Ole K. Nataste was the first Norwegian settler in Wisconsin. He came to Jefferson Prairie in 1838.

Ole Natesa, lately from Numedal in Norway, became the first Norwegian settler in Wisconsin and the founder of the fourth Norwegian settlement in the United States when, on July 1, 1838, he claimed 80 acres of prairie land a mile and a half south of Clinton and decided it should be his home for the rest of his life.

As a result of Nataste's lone pilgrimage into Wisconsin from Northern Illinois that summer, the tide of Norwegian immigration was definitely turned towards Wisconsin.

Coming from Norway to northern Illinois in May, 1837, Ole Nataste and his brother, Ansten, were forerunners of Norwegian immigration from their home district in Norway. Missionary work done by Ansten Nataste on a return trip to Norway in 1838 resulted in the founding of the present large Norwegian settlements of Lutheran Valley and Jefferson Prairie in Rock county and the Rock Run settlement in Winnebago and Stephenson counties, in Illinois.

Rich in historical references, Rock county probably comprises the most important area in the United States as far as Norwegian immigration and Lutheran church history are concerned. When "firsts" in Norwegian history in America are mentioned, Rock county can be spoken of oftener than any other region.

In April, 1837, Ole and Ansten Nataste, convinced that small future awaited them in their home country, struck out across the mountains from their home district, Numedal, with Stavanger as their destination. Skis were used on the journey. They had converted all their resources into cash and had about $800 between them, which with the knapsacks on their backs, skis and personal equipment, were their entire possessions.

From Stavanger they took a boat to Gothenburg, Sweden, and from there took an ore boat, Enigheden, to Fall River, Mass., making the journey in 32 days at a time when most sailboats required nine weeks or more for the voyage.

The brothers made a leisurely journey west, stopping in New York and at Rochester, where they spoke to several members of the first Norwegian immigrants to America, who came in the sloop Restauratonen in 1825. Hearing that another party of Norwegians, who had come in 1836, had gone to LaSalle county, Ill., the Nataste brothers decided to follow them.

Their plans were changed in Detroit, however, when Ole Nataste met a fellow countryman on the street and learned he was one of a party of Norwegian immigrants who had come from Norway in July 1837, on the Aegir, another sailing vessel.

The Nataste brothers joined the party and came with them to Chicago, where they were dissuaded from settling in LaSalle county. Instead, the party sent out four men to investigate and these selected a location at Beaver creek in Iroquois county, about 60 miles south of Chicago. There the immigrants moved, but by the next spring the majority of the settlers had died from malarial fever. Their land was a swamp as soon as heavy rains came.

The few survivors moved to LaSalle county the next spring.

The Nataste brothers escaped the fate of the Beaver creek settlers. They left that settlement early in the winter of 1838 and moved to LaSalle county, where they built a hut on the Fox river. They lived there for a period until they separated in the spring. Ansten to return by way of New Orleans to Norway and Ole to strike out on an exploring trip to new territory. Both Ansten and Ole Nataste achieved their aims. Ansten returned to Numedal and brought back a party of more than 100 of his countrymen the next year, and Ole gained his life long ambition by settling on a claim of 80 acres south of Clinton in Rock county after a prospecting trip which had led him through northern Illinois. His main purpose in coming to America had been achieved —the securing of a farm, and a location where his countrymen could settle if they wished.

When Ole Nataste came to Jefferson Prairie, which included a large area of land south of Clinton, there were only eight settlers in the area, according to his own account. Just who these eight were is uncertain, but they were probably Charles Tuttle, Dennis Mills, Milton Warner, William Murray, Griswold Weaver, either Oscar Pratt or Franklin Mitchell, and Stephen Dunbar and Daniel Tasker and their wives.

According to Nataste's account of his first year there, spent alone without any of his countrymen to talk to, "the monotony of the prairie was relieved by small bunches of trees. Deer and other game were abundant. The howl of the prairie wolf disturbed my sleep." Nataste completed a two-room log house in the summer of 1839 and was ready to receive any immigrants that his brother Ansten might bring back with him.

Ansten Nataste, who had spent the summer and winter of 1838 in Norway describing the wonderful opportunities which awaited immigrants to America, had secured promises from 104 of his countrymen to come to America, and late in the spring of 1839 they were ready to sail on the Emelia from Drammen, each person paying $33.50 passage money. This group went on the usual route from New York to Milwaukee by water, and not knowing that Ole Nataste had gone to Wisconsin, proceeded to Chicago. Here Ansten
learned that instead of staying in La-Salle county his brother had moved to Rock county. Some of the Emelia party immigrants had friends in La-Salle county and went there, but the majority followed Ansten to Rock county, where they arrived in September, 1839. While the 82 who reached the Nasteta cabin stayed is not known, but it is reported that 14 families stayed for a considerable period in Nasteta's two-room log cabin and temporary quarters were probably erected for the remainder. That same year the first settlers came into Newark township from Jefferson Prairie, and the immigrants who had come with Ansten Nasteta found the end of their rainbow.

One of the first to strike out from Jefferson Prairie to find land more to his liking was Gullek Gravdale, who became the founder of the Luther Valley Norwegian settlement and the first settler in Newark township. He came in the fall of 1839. Gravdale's first prospecting trip was made with Gisle Halland and Goe Bjono. Both Gravdale and Halland bought land and Bjono took a claim for Mrs. Gunhild Odegaarden, a wealthy widow.

Gullek Gravdale is credited with building the first log house in the Luther Valley settlement. His log house was built in November, 1839, in what is now Beloit township. The first log house in Newark township was constructed by Mrs. Gunhild Odegaarden early in 1840.

Gullek Gravdale is credited with having made the first purchase of land of any of the Norwegian immigrants, having had his purchase recorded in MIlwaukee. On Jefferson Prairie, Ansten Nasteta and Thorstein Nilsen were first, recording their land on Dec. 25, 1839.


Hans Gjermundson Haugen, who came the same year on the Bunyan, a ship which carried passengers who were unable to get on the Emelia, died on Jefferson Prairie Aug. 1, 1840, and was the first Norwegian to be buried on Wisconsion soil.

Two members of the Emelia party, Gullik Knudson Laugen and Gunnell Stordock, stayed in Chicago and came to Luther Valley later. They were married in Chicago to two girls who had come from Numedal with them. As an example of the changing of names which was prevalent among early Norwegians, Gullik Knudson Laugen dropped the Laugen part of his name and later became known as Gullik Springen, due to the fact that he had settled next to a spring on Luther Valley.

Both the Luther Valley and Jefferson Prairie settlers who arrived in the fall were fortunate in having a large amount of game available during the winter, as they had had no time to raise any crops. Gullik Knudson Laugen relates that on the first trip to Beloit from Luther Valley after the first snow fall, skis were used.

"There was considerable wonder and speculation among Americans around Beloit," he said, "as they thought some strange animal had left the tracks until they noticed the men on skis. Beloit at that time comprised a mill, a hotel, two stores and a few cottages."

Several members of the Emelia party were not satisfied at either Jefferson Prairie or Luther Valley. Led by Clement Stabeck, they took over land near Davis, Ill., establishing the Rock Run settlement, which extended into Winnebago county west of Durand. Others who located there the same fall were Syvert Tollefson, Ole Anderson and a Knudson. Gunnell Stordock moved to Rock Run from Luther Valley later, living until 1870. This settlement never reached the size of Jefferson Prairie or Luther Valley. But good fortune and prosperity smiled on the pioneers of the three settlements.

The oldest Norwegian immigrant who came to America was Halvor Gullickson Skavlem, who was 81. His birthdate can still be seen on the memorial marker at his grave in the Luther Valley cemetery. He came in 1841 and died a week after his arrival.

Church history is closely bound with the life of the early Norwegian settlers in Rock county. The first three Norwegian Lutheran ministers in America, Elling Eielson, C. L. Clausen and G. F. Dietrichson, lived for many years in Rock county.

Eielson was the first Norwegian Lutheran pastor ordained in America, and the house in which he lived while preaching in settlements in this territory was standing about 2½ miles south of Clinton until a few years ago when it was moved to Hig Memorial park in Racine county. In 1841 Eielson built the first Norwegian house of worship in America at Fox River. In 1841 and 1842 he made two trips to New York on foot to get religious printing done. He was ordained in 1843 and in 1846 organized the first Norwegian Lutheran Synod in America at Jefferson Prairie. Eielson was president of this synod until his death in 1883.

C. L. Clausen, who was ordained as a pastor in the Norwegian Lutheran
church a short time after Eielson moved to Lutheran Valley in 1846 and built the first Norwegian church parsonage in the United States. This limestone building is still standing near the Lutheran Valley church. The first pastor's wife among Norwegian immigrants to die and be buried on American soil was Mrs. Martha Clausen who died Nov. 8, 1846. She is buried in the Lutheran Valley cemetery, where a memorial tablet honors her.

Founders of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, another synod, meeting at East Lutheran Valley church in 1851, sat on benches now being used in the West Lutheran Valley church near Brodhead. These founders were H. A. Preus, A. C. Preus and C. L. Clausen, Superintendent of the synod was Clausen.

Another synod was organized at Jefferson Prairie in 1860. This was the Scandinavian Augustana synod, comprising Swedes and Norwegians.

An interesting feature of the East Lutheran Valley church is the church bell. This bell was the first used among Norwegians in America to call Norwegian families to worship. It was hung for the first time in the stone Lutheran Valley church built in 1857. The first church was built in 1847.

Luther Valley was the publishing center of Norwegians in America in 1851 and 1852. Near the Lutheran Valley church is a limestone building, now owned by the Knof Delsrud estate, where the first successful Norwegian newspaper was published in 1852. This paper was called the Emigranten. C. L. Clausen was its editor. Before the stone building was completed, the newspaper was printed for a short time in the home of Gunder Springen. L. S. Heyerdahl, founder of the family by that name in Beloit and Lutheran Valley, was one of the typesetters.

In 1867 the publishing business was moved to Madison, later to LaCrose and finally was merged into what is now the "Minneapolis Tribune." An earlier Norwegian newspaper had been published at Muskego in 1847, but it did not continue publication after 1849. This paper was called, "Nordlyset," or Northern Light.

Printing business at Lutheran Valley was brisk in 1851, with C. L. Clausen instrumental in organizing the Norwegian Press association, which published the first Norwegian church paper in America, "Maanedstidende." This was printed in the same stone building where The Emigranten was published. The first copy came off the press in 1851. Merged later with another paper, the name was changed to Lutheraneran.

From Rock county's Norwegian settlements came many of the founders of other Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Dakota colonies. Rock county remained the "jumping off" place for many years for immigrants bound farther west. Descendants of most of the pioneer settlers are still found on farms in the two Rock county settlements, as well as in Illinois. Beloit, Orfordville and Brodhead have large Norwegian populations today, many of whom were drawn from nearby settlements.

Among the Norwegians who lived in this territory and became nationally known in later life were Gilbert Haugen, Iowa congressman, who spent much of his early life near Orfordville, and the senator from Minnesota, Knut Nelson, who lived near Whitewater in his youth. Halvor Skavlem, now living at Janesville and Lake Koshkonong, is a national authority on Indian lore.

1848 Examinations

Beloit Journal, 1848: "Beloit College.—We are requested to state that the next college year will commence on Wednesday, September 20. The faculty will be ready to examine applicants for admission to the sophomore and freshman classes on the 19th and 20th. Candidates for the freshman class will be examined in Virgil, Sallust, Cicero's Orations, the Greek Reader, Latin, Greek, and English Grammar, Arithmetic, Algebra, and Geometry. Candidates for the sophomore class will also be examined in Livy and the Odes of Horace, Xenophon's Analogy and Memorabilia, Algebra and Geometry. Other Greek and Latin authors may be received as a substitute for those specified above. The preparatory department will be opened on the sixth of September, under the charge of Mr. S. T. Merril.

"The college edifice will be ready for use at the commencement of the year."
apartment buildings, a modern theater—all these and many more unquestionably will come.

Plan Commission

- The Beloit City Plan Commission was created under the authority of section 62.23 of the Wisconsin Statutes of 1923, and despite the fact that the city manager form of government presupposes that powers of commissions be vested in the city manager this commission was continued to function since the adoption of that form of government here.

Members of the present city plan commission are W. J. Fitzgerald, a contractor; Lee Clark, realtor; the Rev. J. E. Hanz, pastor of St. Jude's Catholic church; C. F. Kindschi, insurance man; City Engineer C. J. Popelka, City Manager George B. Ingersoll, Ralph Schellenger, and the president of the city council, now R. M. Fisher.

The duties of the commission are:
1. Recommend to the council changes in the present street and alley system;
2. Prepare plans for street and alley systems in unplatted portions of the city;
3. Insure platting of territory adjacent to the city so that it shall efficiently serve needs if it becomes part of the city;
4. Classify streets as to traffic requirements; recommend changes in railway or highway communication between Beloit and other cities;
5. Recommend zoning, building, and housing restrictions;
6. Make recommendations as to location of bridges and public buildings;
7. Recommend means and routing of public transportation;
8. Recommend action to be taken on any other matters commonly considered as constituting a part of the general subject of city planning.

French Were Pioneers Too

- Among the wooded hills west of Beloit, in Newark Township, are the farms and old stone barns and houses of early French settlers, most of whom came from near Belfort and Dalsle in Alsace-Lorraine and had known each other there. They were looking for new country, frontier land where they could make their farm homes among the forests and streams.

About 1845 a young man, Peter (Pierre) Beley, found his way here from France. At that time the country west of the village of Beloit was a great forest, where Indians still occasionally camped. This wilderness must have appealed to Beley's pioneer spirit for he went into the wildest part of the dark forest and built his log cabin there, in the sandy hollows 10 miles straight west of town. Peter Beley chopped down trees and grubbed out the stumps to clear enough land for a small garden. The next year he set out to chop a farm out of the forest.

His letters home to Dalsle must have been full of exciting tales of the frontier life and his relatives and friends soon wanted to come to America. On April 8, 1847, a passport was issued to Jean Pierre Beley, age 55; his wife, née Girard, 54; three sons, 28, 24 and 18; and a daughter, 12. Jean Beley was born in 1792. The boys were Frédéric, Charles and George. The little girl was Louise. They went to Havre and took passage on a sailing vessel, the Apollo, for New York. Storms buffeted the ship; they were at sea more than a month.

They lived for a year in New York State, where Louise was sent to school. In 1848, the year Wisconsin became a state, they came here and settled near the cabin of the son. On Nov. 15, 1848, they bought from John M. Keep, for the sum of $50, a homestead of 40 acres which is still being farmed by the Beley family. Eugene Beley, who now lives on the farm, has the original deed to the land and the passport issued to his great-grandfather in the name of the king, Louis Philippe.

Soon after came François Merlet and his wife, Barba, friends of the Beleys. They also were from Dalsle. From La Chappelle came the family of Vincent Cousin, and Mr. and Mrs. François Lieb, their four sons, Vincent, Philip, François and Richard, and the daughters, Francis and Adeline. In a little while three of the Lieb brothers and the two sisters went on farther west to Minnesota. The parents and François stayed here and established farms near the Beley home.

The next year the news of California gold reached Beloit. In the spring of 49 Peter, George and Charles Beley hitched their team of oxen to a stout wagon and started west. They did not join the Beloit companies of gold seekers but went alone, without fire-arms. They walked the entire distance, making the trip in six months.

At the goldfields George had bad luck and in two years was ready to come home. His parents sent him $100. With this money he paid his stagecoach fare and bought himself a pair of new pants. He got home safe and sound but the long ride on the coach had completely worn the seat out of his pants. Penniless he came back to the family cabin.

The eldest son, Peter, stayed in the goldfields six years. He accumulated some gold, returned, and bought more land adjoining the family homestead. Charles Beley spent 16 years in California and came back well laden with gold. Dressed in his rough miner's clothes and carrying his gold dust in a pack, he went by sea to Panama, walked across the isthmus, and took ship to Philadelphia, where he cashed his gold. He then came back to Beloit and bought a farm near that of his parents.

The other son, Frédéric, meantime had gone to New Orleans. He married a Mlle. Monier, and lived there 18 years until the death of his wife. He was a blacksmith and swordmaker for the Confederacy during the Civil war. At the close of the war he returned to the farm in Newark township.

In the meantime the hardworking Frenchmen had carved prosperous little farms out of the wilderness. As more land was cleared they made arrangements for more of their friends to come over. Those who came during the early '50's were François Moret and his wife, Francis, Celestine Rossez, the Eichers, the Morelles, the Rambolds, Nickola Roy and his wife, C. Klopfenstein and his wife Mary, and the Madruses. François Madrus was born in 1796, when Napoleon was a youth; and his wife Mary Ann in 1799. They brought with them their two sons, Jean and Peter, and a daughter.

Catherine Girard Beley, wife of Jean Pierre Beley, was the first French woman in what later became the French community west of Beloit in Newark Township. With her husband, three sons and a daughter, she came to Beloit in 1848. The same year Jean Pierre Beley bought from John M. Keep the first 40 acres of the farm now occupied by his descendant, Eugene Beley. For 88 years without a break a Beley has lived on the farm. The Beleys were forerunners of many French families whose descendants still occupy farms of the section.
Francis, who married a man named Caron. These pioneers, some of whom were born in the 18th century, are buried in the Newark cemetery on a hill overlooking their old homes. As each family arrived it bought a tract of land, and soon there was a community of a dozen or more farms. As they cleared more land and raised good crops they replaced their log cabins with stone or frame houses. Often they merely built a stone addition to the old cabin. Some of these are still occupied. They planted fine arbor's, which are still fruitful. They all spoke their native language and lived much as they did back in Alsace and Lorraine.

In the spring of 1864 a group of young men and girls of Belfort decided to come to the new settlement. Among them were Celeste and Nicholas Haas, Peter Rusch, Louise Bernard and Peter Crave, with his sisters, Mary and Maggie, and their widowed mother, Catherine. Their home was in the village of Aggenue, near Belfort. Mrs. Crave's sister, Mrs. Rambolt, had come to Beloit 10 years before. The newcomers lived with the older families and started at the work of making their own farms. Peter Crave, then 19 years old, decided to join the army of the north in the Civil war. He enlisted in Co. K, of the 3rd Wisconsin Infantry on Aug. 30, 1864, when he had been in this country only 11 days and could hardly speak a word of English. He served throughout the remainder of the war in the army of General Sheridan, and fought in the battles of Atlanta, Savannah, Bentonville and Averysboro. When he received his discharge at the close of the war he returned to the Crave farm in Newark township. Mr. Crave, now 90 years old, lives in Beloit at the home of his son, Charles.

The young woman, Louise Bernard, married George Meuret. She loved the country life of the new community, and wrote home glowing descriptions of her good times to her younger sister, Emily. When Emily was 16 years old she decided to come to Beloit. Her father and mother would not leave their comfortable home in Dassel so she came alone. Emily, (Mrs. Vincent Cousin), now 87 years old, lives in Rockford. She has vivid memories of the journey and the life here in the early days. It was in 1865 that she came. She was put in the care of two young men, family friends from Alsace, who were also going to America. With them they carried an enormous round cheese, the delicacy of the region, which they intended to give to President Lincoln, one of their heroes. In Paris they were saddened by the news of his assassination. At a town in Ohio Emily was met by her uncle, Peter Beley, who brought her to Beloit. Their train arrived at 2 a.m. They walked the 10 miles to the Beley farm, while wolves howled in the woods, and arrived at dawn at the log cabin.

Many of the farms in Newark are still cultivated by descendants of the early settlers.

From Erin Came Pioneers

Westward the course of empire takes its way
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day,
Time's noblest offspring is the last.

—Lord George Berkley

So wrote Lord George Berkley, the Irish bishop of Cloyne 200 years ago. He visited the New England colonies and established schools in Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York. The close of the Cromwellian wars resulted in the forfeiture and confiscation of vast estates in Ireland. Hundreds of the poor class were sold to slave owners in the West Indies. A few of the white Irish immigrated to Virginia. The McCarraths, whose ancestors built the Blarney Stone castle in County Cork, 500 years ago, which tourists now osculate, settled on the lower Potomac and intermarried with the F. F. V. (first families of Virginia) and their descendants live there today.

William Jack told the writer that he came to Beloit in 1838; that he was a native of Ireland, and labored in the construction of the old Red Mill in Beloit. Thomas A. Power arrived from New York in 1842 and was the first chairman of the village board.

With the advent of the railroad the Irish immigration from the east increased rapidly. It is a well known fact that Irish men who labored in construction work later became officials of the same lines. I have this statement from John Lawler of Prairie du Chien, who declared to me more than 40 years ago, when he was a member of the board of directors of the Milwaukee and St. Paul Ry. Co., that he labored as a day hand in its construction.

Hugh McGavock came to Beloit about 1853 with his parents and became famous as a railroad agent. He was a large contractor on the Union Pacific and the Northern Pacific. Among those who were engaged in business in Beloit and resided here before 1860 are: Alice Broder, Thomas Buckley, William Butler, Michael Caldwell, John Clinchy, Michael Egan, John Finnegan, Patrick Fitzgerald, Dennis Garrigan, Richard Gullen, Arthur Gillespie, Martin Kehoe, John McAlpin, Hugh McDermot, Thomas Moran, Henry Pentland, Daniel Riordan, George Shaw and William Shaw.


On the whole the list of names mentioned represent a class of useful and industrious citizens. McAlpin and Pentland were early merchants. Riordan was a merchant and for several terms an alderman. His son is now postmaster at Beloit and the first native born postmaster.

The Irish element in Beloit has much to be proud of. Scores of descendants of parents who strove to educate their children and prepare them for the duties of life, are found today behind bank counters, in commercial houses, in railroad offices, in the learned professions, in pedagogics, 'teaching the young idea how to shoot.'—By Cornelius Buckley.

Smith J. Sherwood moved from Chicago to Beloit in the spring of 1854 and purchased all the land now known as Hillcrest and built on it the first residence, which was completed in 1855. Later he sold a part of the land to Judge Mills and A. P. Waterman, but retained the driveway from what is now Emerson street to his residence, which he called Sherwood avenue.
standing and appreciation of the beautiful; to bring a realization of the greatly enhanced value of well-designed industrial products; to vitalize other subject matter by means of construction and representation; to help the child to realize that appearances and facts of form may be easily expressed; to develop the ability to discriminate between good and bad examples of fine and industrial art and to apply these standards to every day life; to stimulate self expression; and to enable the child to experience satisfaction through his own intelligent use of art principles.

The highlight of the school art year for the past decade or so has come in the late winter or early spring when an exhibition of public school art is staged at the college art hall under auspices of the Art League. This display is surprising in its range and shows how the creative ability of the child develops and changes as he progresses from the first grade to adolescent years.

Distinction has come to Beloit for the past three successive years in that a Beloit eighth grader has won the district Helen Farnsworth Mears Art prize, given by the Federation of Women. Miss Kornelia Schneider, now studying with Frank Lloyd Wright, Miss Lois Smith and Miss Barbara MacKaye were district winners, the latter also taking first place in the state.

Theodore Lyman Wright, the long friend of Beloit Greek citizens. In 1911 a fraternal benefit organization was formed. After several years the organization lapsed. But there was a need for a local organization of this type, and on Dec. 30, 1922, the Hellenic Brotherhood Elpis was established. Its objects and aims are:

"To promote among its members and nonmembers the spirit of good fellowship and the love for their adopted country; to provide moral and financial support to its members and to protect the immigrant and the worker."

The first president of the organization was Alex Castagles. Through the years the following men have held that office: George Peters, John Tsikkognian, George Chekouras, John Spyreas, Christ D. Parrish and George A. Malleris. Frank Catchis is now the president. The brotherhood maintains an office and lodge hall at the corner of Pleasant street and Eclipse avenue. There are 65 members.

Theodore Lyman Wright Chapter 164 of the Order of Ahepa was established on March 27, 1928. There are 60 members of the Beloit chapter of this national organization. The presidents, successively, have been Antonios Kochicas, James Fortounis, Peter C. Zouvas, Steven Economopoulos, James Fortounis and Gus Perry. Last summer the state convention of the Ahepa was held in Beloit. The program of the Order is as follows:

"On July 26, 1922, eight men, conceiving the proper moral principles and merits of fraternalism, gathered in the basement of a school house in Atlanta, Georgia, and taking for their foundation the love, truth and justice, those virtues, those principles which can never be destroyed, organized the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association which is known as the Order of Ahepa, a non-partisan in politics and non-sectarian in religion, and with objects, aims and purposes—

"To promote and encourage loyalty to the United States of America; allegiance to its flag; support to its constitution; obedience to its laws and reverence for its history and traditions; to instruct its members by precepts and examples in the tenets and fundamental principles of government; to instill in every one of its members a due appreciation of the privileges of American citizenship and the sacred duties attendant therewith; and to encourage its members to always be profoundly interested and actively participating in the civic, social and commercial fields of human endeavor; to awaken in every member an abhorrence of all

- From the shores of Greece in the first decade of the century came a group of men who now play an active part in the life of this community.

The first Greek to come to Beloit arrived about 1902. No one now remembers his name, but he was known as Christ. In the fall of 1905 Kostas Jannacopulos and his cousin, George, came. Their home was the village of Tropea, in the southern province of Arcadia. About the same time came John Spyrellas, Mike Vaskas and John Giorgian. Later that year and in the spring of 1906 several more Greeks came to Beloit. They came from all parts of their native land and most of them made the long trip alone. Some became acquainted in Milwaukee or Chicago before they came here. Among them were John and Anton Kochicas, James Jannacopulos, George Chelalis, Alexander Garoufas and George Paris.

They were welcomed by Professor Theodore Lyman Wright, the life-long friend of Beloit's Greek citizens. In addition to his work as head of the Greek Department at Beloit college, "Teddy" Wright, in 1907, began giving night classes in Middle College to help the new arrivals learn the English language. One of his pupils, Bill Vark, (Vargadis), entered the college that same year as a special student and graduated in 1911. He is now principal of a high school in the east.

Each year several more Greeks followed the first group here. There are now about 35 families of Greek descent in Beloit.

When the Balkan war broke out in 1912 about 20 young Beloit Greeks went back to fight for the country of their birth. Some were wounded and several were killed in the fighting against the Turks. Fifteen returned to Beloit when the war ended late in 1913. Only four of the veterans still live here. They are John G. Kochicas, James L. Leson, John Mavroulis and Harriet Vanagas.

About 18 Beloit Greeks went to the World war under the Stars and Stripes. One, John Kapralos of the Coast Artillery, died in service. Veterans who died after the end of the war were Christ Hion, Velico Petroff and John Zunis.

In 1911 a fraternal benefits organization was founded. After several years the organization lapsed. But there was a need for a local organization.
political corruption—the destroyer of free institutions; to promote throughout the world, and especially in the United States of America, a better and more comprehensive understanding of the Hellenic peoples and Nation, and to revive, cultivate and marshal into active service for America the noblest attributes and highest ideals of true Hellenism; to labor for the perfection of the moral sense of its members; to promote among them a spirit of good fellowship, common understanding and mutual helpfulness; and to point out to them the advantages of education, the beauties of sacrifice and the deformities of selfishness; to champion the cause of education; and to support the American System of public schools and to keep them free from religious prejudice; to resist, by lawful means and methods, any tendency toward a union between the government of the United States of America and any church or religion, and to repel the interference of any religion in governmental affairs."

The English language is the official language of the order and is used in the transaction of all its business.

The Greek Ladies' club was organized in 1930. Its main purpose is child and social welfare, to promote a better understanding among the Greek women and their American sisters, and to foster and maintain a Greek language school for the children of Greek extraction. The presidents of the society have been: Mrs. James L. Leeson, Mrs. George Gianopoulos, and Mrs. John Mavroutlis. The children's Greek class is taught by Constantine Tziolas, language teacher at the high school. Mr. Tziolas was born in Greece and spent his boyhood there.

* * *

When Beloit Beat Pecatonica

- There was a hot time in this little old town on the night of Sept. 15, 1889 when Beloit defeated the Pecatonica Blues in baseball, 8 to 0.

- Perhaps beating Pecatonica in any branch of athletics would not seem like much of an accomplishment today but 47 years ago the Blues formed one of the most formidable baseball teams in the middle west. So widespread was their fame that the Chicago papers devoted considerable space to their achievements.

- Beloit, in 1889, was not so well known in a baseball way as Pecatonica and was regularly rebuffed in its efforts to obtain games with the haughty Blues but finally the stars of the Illinois hamlet conceded to come here on Sept. 15, which was a Sunday.

- An immense crowd turned out to see the bitter rivals clash at a South Beloit field known variously as "Montgomery Hill" or "Hayes' Pasture."

- According to the story that has come down the years Mullen and Larry Rosenthal, the Beloit pitchers, were both suffering from sore arms as a result of games played a few days previously, but each offered to sacrifice his wing on the altar of civic loyalty. Mullen was chosen to start first with the understanding that when he tired Rosenthal would rush to the rescue.

In the first two innings neither team scored but in the third the Pecatonica defense fell apart and Beloit tallied four runs, most of them attributable to the visitors' errors. The Beloiters went on to count a run in each the fourth and seventh innings and added two in the eighth.

Mullen, so strenuously did he toil, well nigh threw his arm out of its socket and finally retired with the gleeful crowd thundering his acclaim in the seventh. Rosenthal finished and, like Mullen, held the woebegone Blues helpless.

The Beloiters promptly claimed the championship of this section and there were few to say them nay.

Besides Larry Rosenthal and Mullen others who participated in the game for Beloit were Frank Rosenthal, Frank Van Wart, J. W. Layden, Charlie Stocking, Pat Hawkins, John Mills and John Gibbons. George Hall was manager.

A faint, indistinct photograph of the team shows some of the athletes sporting fierce mustachios.

* * *

No Buckets, No Hooks, No Ladders

- Beloit Journal, 1851: "They have had a fire in Rockford and another in Rockton. We shall very probably not be as much longer without having one ourselves as we have been and when we do have one, nothing will be so much needed as a fire engine. We do think our citizens are disregarding their own safety, and losing sight of a wise economy, in not procuring one. We hope some one will set the project on foot immediately, and head it with a substantial subscription. No buckets, no hooks, no ladders, no engine—what should we do if we had a fire?"

* * *

Many Children Die

- Beloit Journal, 1850: "The superintendent informs us that the interments in the cemetery of this town for the last three months have been: August, 4 adults, 4 children; September, 4 children; October, 3 adults, 1 child."

* * *

- Western landmarks are impermanent as fallen leaves. Nothing endures but the sky and the silent waves of the plain. —Hamlin Garland in Back Trailers From the Middle Border.
at the top of the hill back of the East Side pumping station, which supported a 90,000 gallon wooden tank at a height to give a normal pressure of 50 pounds. In 1927 this was replaced with a 200,000 gallon steel tank and tower nearby, which maintains a normal pressure of 80 pounds per square inch.

A point of utmost importance to the health of the people of Beloit, but which is probably not as well known as it deserves, is the exceptional purity of its water supply. No city in Wisconsin or in America has water of better purity than that of Beloit. The utmost care is taken to maintain that high standard. Every two weeks samples are tested by the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene.

The water goes into the mains as it comes out of the ground, without the addition of any chemical purifiers, for the reason that there is nothing to purify. This is a matter of exceptional good fortune—because the purity of the water hundreds of feet below the surface of the ground is beyond the control of man in that particular locality. Some day this condition may change, and it may become necessary to provide chemical purification.

There are 67.3 miles of water mains in the distribution system serving Beloit.

* * *

- The original street car system was built by T. M. Ellis, senior. Father M. J. Ward was also interested in the venture. This was an offshoot from the Rockford-Beloit-Janesville interurban railway, which began to operate to Beloit in 1902.

A power station in South Race street east of State street, constructed in 1901, furnished power both to the interurban railways and to the local system in Beloit. This station was shut down about 1920, and thereafter power was obtained from a transmission line from Rockford Electric Company, until discontinuance of the street railway in 1930.

In 1930 Wisconsin Power and Light Company purchased the property of the Beloit Traction Company, and supplanted the track and cars system with motor buses.

* * *

Reading Society

- The Beloit Reading Society was organized in the fall of 1878 with 60 members and had for its object home study and subsequent weekly discussions of various topics. First officers were the Rev. Fayette Royce, president; W. H. Beach, vice-president; Miss Lillian Brown, secretary; Charles F. Rau, Jr., treasurer.

* * *

First Italians Came in 1901

- An important element in the life of modern Beloit is its large and industrious Italian population. It was not until the beginning of this century that Italian people came to Beloit to make their homes here. Now there are 307 men and women who were born in Italy, their names running all the way from Abate to Zito. Most of the earliest families to settle in Beloit came from Tuscany in the rich northern farming country. Later large numbers came from the sunny island of Sicily; many from around Marsala, which is at the west end of the island in the province of Trapania; and some from the eastern province of Messina in the shadow of Mt. Aetna.

Beloit's "pioneer Italians" were Mr. Angelo Galli and his wife. They have lived here 35 years, coming in 1901. Mr. Galli, now 70 years old, still lives here with his family, at 911 Harrison avenue.

Mr. Galli's home was at Lucca, in Tuscany, not far from Pisa, famous for its leaning tower. When he was 22 years old he decided to come to America. He came here in 1888 and went to Chicago. There he met Margaret Piecci, who also was from Lucca. Their parents had been acquainted there. They were married and lived in Chicago 10 years. After moving to Rockford for two years they came to Beloit in 1901. Their daughter, Anna, grew up here and was the first Italian child to attend the public schools. Mrs. Galli died here in 1928.

The next Italian family to settle in Beloit was that of Caesar Dell, also from Tuscany. He was the proprietor of an ice-cream parlor on State street. His daughter, Georgia, married Adolph Panicucci in 1906. They live in South Beloit. A son, Albert, also lives here.

About 1903 a man known as "Columbo" came here. He ran a saloon at the corner of State and Broad for several years. Many older Beloiters remember him but no one knew his name. Everyone just called him Columbo. He left Beloit many years ago and now lives in Canada.

A year or so later Eugene Chelini and his wife, Phenia, made their home here. Mr. Chelini has been dead many years. Mrs. Chelini still lives here on Porter avenue.

Then came Ignatius Bonafede and his wife, Isabelle. They were from Marsala in the province of Trapania.

In 1905 several more Italian families established themselves here. From Lucca in Tuscany came Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Veroni. They came to America in 1903 and lived for two years at Gallatone, Pa., a lumber town which is now deserted. Mr. Veroni died in 1921. His wife and her family live at the end of Park avenue in South Beloit.

In the same year Benny Green came. He came from Italy alone when he was 18 years old. After working in Chicago for a while he heard of Beloit and decided to make his home here.

Charles and Antonio Amato came from Marsala. They were followed two years later by their nephew, Frank Anastasi. About the same time Anton Stracuzzi came; and also the Renato Vanucci family.

In 1909 Daniel Torrisi, present chief of police, came here from Pennsylvania. He had come to America eight years before, when he was only 14 years old. His home was in Giardini, a small town near Taormina in the province of Messina.

In the next few years, while Beloit's population was increasing very rapidly, these "early Italian settlers" were followed by several hundred more families from the old country who chose Beloit as the best place to live in the new world.

- George Seegmiller, for many years poormaster and a veteran of the Civil War, was noted for his close resemblance to "Uncle Joe" Cannon and their birthdays were both in May, only three days apart. Mr. Seegmiller once wrote to "Uncle Joe" and received the following letter in reply: "Dear Mr. Seegmiller: I thank you for your congratulations and reciprocate your good wishes. I hope you will continue to play cribbage and old sledge for many years to come and that you will always enjoy your smoking in this life and be immune in the next.—As ever with respect, J. G. Cannon." 

- Probably the best remembered curtain in the old Wilson opera house was the one that had on it pictures of a ruined temple, fallen columns, majestic trees and beautiful clouds. This verse from Lord Byron's "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" was painted underneath the picture:

"And there they stand as stands a lofty mind
Worn, but unyielding to the baser crowd
All tenantless, save to the crannying winds,
Or holding dark communion with the clouds."

THE BOOK OF BELOIT
From Immigrant to Citizen

This is the story of one man in Beloit, only one of the many who made the great journey from the old world to the new. He happens to have come from Greece, but his experiences and ideas must be to some degree typical of all those who came here two or three decades ago from the Mediterranean countries.

He was born in a little village perched on a mountainside in the southern part of Greece. Under the bright Mediterranean sky, with its constant sun, he and his three brothers and two sisters played and wandered about the fields and streams of the neighborhood. Only a few miles away on all sides the horizon was broken with high mountain peaks. The villagers never crossed the ranges and few strangers ever came. The little community was isolated among its golden grain fields and olive trees. The people were peaceful and contented. They lived much as the country folk did in Greece's golden age when the Parthenon was built. Life changed only with the four benevolent seasons. The small boys ran barefoot, wearing the traditional cloak, a loose knee-length shirt with a leather belt around the waist.

When this particular boy was eight years old he "discovered" America. One of his child's textbooks at school devoted a chapter to the new land. There were pictures of big cities, of cowboys and Indians. His imagination was fired; it became his dream to go to America. He no longer put all his heart into the games with the other boys. He felt that he was only waiting for the time when he could leave his home and start on his great adventure.

The father and mother soon found what was in the child's mind. Instead of laughing at their serious little son they discussed the matter with him. His awe-struck sisters listened wide-eyed and silent. After many excited conversations the parents gave their consent. The relatives gave what they could and the father borrowed some money to make up the necessary expenses. In the spring the father and his nine-year-old son walked down the hill paths to the nearest seaport, not many miles away. A small steamer was lying in the harbor ready to up anchor for New York.

The child had dressed himself in man's clothes, with long pants, so as to appear older. But the officials at the steamship company saw through this disguise and refused to take the responsibility for a nine-year-old. If the boy should be turned back at Ellis Island the company would have to stand the expense of returning him to Greece. The boy was heart-broken but the officials were adamant and the disappointed youngster went home again, more determined than ever to go to the new world.

Three years later he tied his few belongings in a bundle and went down to the seaport. Here in the city he worked for a year, supporting himself and saving money for his passage. When he was 13 years old the company agreed to take him. He did not go home to say goodbye; the family would be sad. He just wrote a letter home and went up the gangplank. The crowded ship steamed through the Mediterranean and across the Atlantic. In May, 1906, it reached New York. The immigrants were herded through Ellis Island and a bewildering Babel of tongues. At the end of the day they were given a meal and the steamship officials placed them in their "immigrant hotel" for the night. The next morning each was tagged with a destination ticket. The Greek boy, almost lost in the confusion, knew only that he wanted to get to Milwaukee, where his oldest brother was. Whenever one of the blue-coated officials came near him he would shout "Milwaukee." He was given a tag, and with many other immigrants, all carrying bundles and luggage, walked several miles through the streets of the New York waterfront to the Milwaukee train, where they were packed into a special immigrant car.

Not one knew a word of English. Someone had said it was dangerous to show money; it might be taken away. For two days and nights they rode without food. At the stops the conductor would come through the car looking for the tags for that city. The immigrants were afraid to leave their places even to go to the washroom for fear they would be overlooked. The boy thought the ride would never end, but finally the train reached Chicago. A friendly trainman took the lad to the station lunch counter, ordered bowls of oyster stew, motioned the boy to eat. The boy devoured five bowls of the hot stew. People in the restaurant were laughing, but the hungry youngster hardly noticed anything but the food.

As there were no more trains for Milwaukee that day the immigrants were locked in a room at the station. In the middle of the night they were put on a train and arrived about dawn at Milwaukee. There the boy learned that his brother had moved to Beloit. After a week his brother sent for him. Several of the other young Greeks on the immigrant train decided also to come to Beloit.

Now it was up to the boy to get a job and make his living. He was 14 years old. He faced the world with only his small strength and his native ability.

He made the rounds of the factories writing his name on application blanks but he could get no work. Though his resolution did not falter he could not help being frightened. No one paid him any attention or if they did it was only to stare or laugh.

After several weeks a foreman at one of the large foundries hired him as a helper. When hunting for a job he used the name of Pappas because it was easier than his real name for the foreman to understand and remember. Most of the Greeks did this, consequently there was a whole "family" of Pappases at the foundry. On payday they were called by their time-clock numbers. The boy's pay was $1.10 a day. His job was to haul molding sand in a wheelbarrow from the bins to the castings. The loaded barrow weighed much more than the boy. On the very first haul over the narrow, unsteady plank his strength gave way and the load tipped over. After righting the barrow the boy started to scoop up the sand in his hands. When the foreman saw him taking the clean sand off the dirty floor he gave him a hearty kick to show him his mistake.

The boy had also to help hold the huge ladles, by means of metal rods, while the molten iron was being poured. The other workers did not have the time to show him how to do this safely. He did not know enough to buy the special shoes and gloves necessary. When the glowing liquid metal was being poured out of the ladles sparks and splashes would fall outside and burn his hands and feet. The boy could not let go the supporting rod to brush off the fire, and got many blisters. He was so afraid of the molten iron that he would hide in the washroom when he saw that it was time for a pouring. After two months of this he was fired.

By this time he was utterly discouraged. Except for his brother, whom he could see only for a little while in the evening, he knew no one. He could not talk to anyone and could not understand any conversation. He longed to be home in Greece again. His courage was almost gone but he would not give up. Again he started looking for a job. Finally he was hired to chisel rough edges off castings. The foreman got the right tools for him and showed him the best way to do
the work. Soon he began to make progress.

At the end of that summer Prof. Theodore Lyman Wright came home from Europe. Professor Wright, head of the Greek Department of Beloit college, was a classical scholar and a traveler. He had made 25 trips through Europe and had been many months in Greece. He knew the country and the people and spoke the language. When he got to Beloit he found more than 20 young Greeks, all more or less lost in the community because they could not speak English. "Teddy" Wright at once made friends with them and offered to teach them English. They accepted eagerly, and soon there was a night class of more than 20, meeting in Middle College. Prof. Wright was a kindly teacher and his students were anxious to learn. So they made fast progress. One of the young men entered the college that year and graduated in the regular course of four years. Prof. Wright gave new hope and inspiration to the bewildered immigrants. The young boy, 14 years old, began to feel more at home here. Throughout his life Prof. Wright was the friend and adviser of the Greeks here. They brought him their troubles and they also had good times together. When he died in 1920, at the age of 74, the young Greeks lost their most respected and admired friend.

For six years the boy worked in the factory. After a year or so he could speak English fairly well and he had made friends among his fellow-workers and the townspeople. When Joe Steiner came here as physical director of the Y. M. C. A., several Greek boys joined the gym classes and took part in the games. Then, at age 20, he began to feel that he was a part of the life of Beloit and no longer an outsider.

In 1912, when he was 21 years old, the Balkan war broke out. With the Greeks defending their country from the Turks, the boy wanted to help fight for his native land. He and his brother and several others returned to Greece and joined the army. His brother, with his whole battalion, was drowned when a wall of flood-water swept down the drain where their camp was pitched. The boy saw service in battle and was wounded. His name was placed on the casualty lists as dead. His mother died when she saw the list.

The young man found that he was no longer at home in Greece. During his six years in the United States he had become an American. His ways and his thoughts were different from those of his old schoolmates. He wanted to help Greece win the war but he realized that he wanted still more to get back to Beloit, now his home. When his enlistment expired he returned.

Back in Beloit the war-time boom was on and factories were running at full capacity. He got a better job. In time he obtained his citizenship papers. He married and now has several children. He is now a businessman.

Being an American citizen is his greatest pride, and he is anxious to do his part in civic enterprises and improvements. One of his favorite hobbies is athletics and he seldom misses a local game. As he has come to understand and love America, he sometimes wishes the immigrants had been better understood; they came here. "We were not so very much different," he says, "and we were all really working for the same things and the same ideals." He wishes that the slums of the big cities could be broken up and done away with forever. "The people in the slums never got to America," he says.

"When the immigrants were coming here in such large numbers many of them were bewildered. There was no one then to advise and guide them and most of them gathered in small areas in the big cities, and they never could get out. All they knew of America was a big factory to work in and a couple of rooms to live in. Most of them were people of good families and fine character. In the slums they were in the hands of racketeers and surrounded by the worst influences. Some of them never had much chance to become real Americans."

He studies the history of America and looks to the future of his adopted country with confidence.

His hero is Theodore Lyman Wright, "a man who knew human beings."

Citizens From Lithuania

- In the years before the World War Beloit was the home of a large Lithuanian population. In later years some of the old people moved away or died and many of the children, now grown up, married and left Beloit. There are now about 42 Lithuanian families living here.
- Most of the first Lithuanian residents left their native land because of the freedom this country offered. Until 1918 Lithuania was a Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire, and was governed oppressively by the Tsar. Lithuanians have always had an intensely nationalistic and freedom-loving spirit. In racial makeup they are distinct from the Slavs and Russians with whom their history has been entwined. Their language, while it has affinities with the Slavonic, is really an independent tongue. It is the most ancient and archaic of all living Aryan languages.
- In the 13th century they were vanquished by the Russians. In the 16th century they united with Poland in peaceful regime. But in 1772 the Russian conqueror, Frederick the Great, aided by the armies of Austria and Russia, swept over north central Europe and destroyed the smaller states. In that year, and in 1793 and 1795, the divisions of Poland were carried out, and each of the great powers took a slice of territory. A small section of Lithuania went to Prussia. Greater Lithuania was taken by the Russian Empress, Catherine the Great.
- In 1949 a Lithuanian ukase forbade official use of the name Lithuania, substituting for it "Northwestern Country"; the Lithuanian language and books were forbidden, and the schools closed. It was not until 1918, when in the havoc of the war they beat back a Bolshevik invasion and proclaimed their independence, that Lithuanians became a free people. In the meantime, for a century, they were under the oppressive rule of the Tsars. But their spirit of independence never died out. It brought many to America and some to Beloit.
- The first Lithuanian to come was Joe Urban, who came here in 1902. He worked as a moulder. He died several years ago. He never married and has no relatives in this country.
- Two years later John Rosimitis brought his family here from Racine. He had come to this country in 1896. Now an old man, he does not remember his boyhood home in Lithuania. He made his home on Park ave., and worked for Fairbanks, Morse & Co. He later moved to Janesville, and then to Rockford, where the family now lives. The children are Nellie Vinston, Mrs. Walter Petkus, Mrs. Frances Gelzinis, and a son, John, who lives with his parents. Mr. Rosimitis has retired, and now occupies himself with gardening.
- Joseph Degris came here from Waukegan, Ill., in 1905. He and his wife rented a home in Quinn's Court, and Mr. Degris went to work at the Berlin shop, now the Yates-American Machinery Co. He had come to this country in 1896. He has been more than 30 years "on the job" as cupola tender, and at other work. There are two daughters, Anna and Mary, living at home.
- Also in 1905 came Alex Ezdon and his wife, now both deceased. Their
sons, Peter and Anton, and a daughter, Mrs. Bernice Callahan, live here. Joe Andriulis came to Beloit from Brooklyn, N. Y. in April, 1905. He moved to Rockford many years ago and has no relatives here.

In 1906 Mr. and Mrs. LouisRalish came. Mrs. Ralis was born in Kelmia, Lithuania. Her husband, who worked at the Berlin factory, died many years ago. Their children are Joseph, Walter, Mary and Edward, at home; and Mrs. Anna Reed and Mrs. Charlotte Strace.

Peter Waichulaitis and his wife, Mary, came in 1907. He had come to America in 1893, from the town of Airogala in Lithuania. Mrs. Waichulaitis, then a young woman, came to this country in 1900 with her family. In Illinois she met Peter Waichulaitis. They married and lived in the mining town where he worked. After a year they came to Wisconsin and began farming. In 1908 the family came to Beloit and bought a grocery store. They were in business until 1917, when they returned to their farm near Sturgeon Bay. Several years ago they came back to their home here, where they still live. They have three grown children; Mrs. Emilia Prduwlow, Chicago; Mrs. Antoinette Fisher, Chicago; and Peter, manager of the Green Co. store in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Mrs. Waichulaitis is the most remarkable practical linguist in this region. In 1916 the Daily News feature writers, M. H. Hedges and K. T. Waugh interviewed Mrs. Waichulaitis. Some excerpts from the story are:

"Mrs. Waichulaitis is something more than linguist and interpreter. She is a property-holder and citizen, arraying herself on the side of law, education, religious toleration and patriotism. Moreover she has interpreted nation to nation, and alien to American, not merely linguistically but temperamentally as well, for she seems to be of a catholic nature, diplomatic by gift, capable of putting aside petty racial differences for vital social principles. She (with her husband, Peter) owns four houses and a store, has two daughters and a son in the public schools, and during Judge C. D. Rosa's incumbency was official interpreter of the Beloit municipal court. . . ."

Another prominent family is that of Anthony Witkus, who came to Beloit in 1908. When the family came to Beloit they lived in Quinn's Court for a time, later moving to their own farm home on the McKinley avenue road. Mr. Witkus first worked as a crane operator at the Berlin factory, and later went to the Beloit Iron Works, where he still works. There are four Witkus children; Mrs. Helen Strands, New York City; Mrs. Martha Radway, Cleveland; and Julia Witkus, Cleveland; and Peter, who works at the Gardner Machine Co.

When Beloit's Lithuanian population was at its peak the group had an active benefit association, but it has lapsed. In 1907 the St. Anthony Society, a religious organization, was formed. It was discontinued in 1921.

On Feb. 1, 1915, the Lithuanian Educational Club was founded. Its purpose is to guide and assist the people of this nationality to become Americans and fulfill their duties as citizens. It also maintains a sickness and death benefit fund. It is still active, with more than 30 members.

As their native land is primarily an agricultural country, most of the Lithuanians came from farm homes or villages. While many of them here are industrial workers, they usually raise gardens at their homes. Their habits of thrift and industry have helped them acquire property. Almost all of them are home-owners, have automobiles, and have provided for the education of their children.

Beloit Real Estate Board

- Two Beloit business organizations of achievement in the community are the Real Estate Board and the Insurance Underwriters of Beloit.

The Real Estate Board has continued to function without interruption since its organization on May 2, 1919, when J. R. Schuster was elected president, C. W. Merriman, vice-president, and Fred L. Kile, secretary-treasurer. Present at the first meeting were Schuster, J. Dana Peet, C. M. Dazey, R. Baum, S. A. Barnes, A. W. Blanchard, Kile, J. W. Day, and W. O. Wright. Other charter members were the late W. E. Burns, Joel B. Dow and C. W. Merriman.

The board has served the people of Beloit by maintaining a high standard of business ethics. The passing of the Wisconsin real estate brokers' license law was urged by the Beloit Real Estate board. The said law safeguarded the interests of the people. A multiple listing service was inaugurated when the board was formed and has been of real value to the prospective seller or purchaser for many years.


The Real Estate board's officers for the year 1936 are: L. C. Merry, president, W. F. Bauchle, vice-president and Fred L. Kile, secretary-treasurer. The Insurance Underwriters Association was organized on November 20, 1925. First officers were W. J. Tucker, president; Don Van Wart, vice-president; Fred Kile, secretary and treasurer. Tucker continued as president for five years.

The objectives of the organization, which have been realized through the years of its operation, were: "The formation of an association of those engaged in the local insurance business, to encourage and promote good will, harmony and cooperation between members; to establish correct practices in the conduct of the insurance and surety business, embracing all commercially recognized forms of indemnity, exclusive of life insurance, and in general to improve and elevate the business of insurance and to enforce upon its members the highest ethics of the insurance business."

Agencies represented at the first meeting of the association were J. A. Love, Maurice McDonald, Peet Brothers, G. F. Zarwell, H. P. Tower, Tom Monahan, Don Van Wart, Wright and Kile, Day and O'Neal, Evans, Dow, Roberts and Wilkinson, W. H. Martin, and D. R. Comiskey.

Officers of the association this year are William J. Divine, Jr., president; Don Van Wart, vice-president; and Mrs. Vera Sherwood, secretary-treasurer. The association now has 29 members, comprising 95 percent of the agents in Beloit.

Members of the Beloit association are also affiliated with the Rock county association which was organized on March 25, 1935, with W. J. Tucker as president, C. S. Mitbon of Edgerton as vice-president, and George S. Shurtleff of Janesville as secretary-treasurer.