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**ST. NAZIANZ, WISCONSIN: LANDSCAPE PERSISTENCE IN A GERMAN  
COMMUNAL SETTLEMENT, 1854-1983**

*The University of Oklahoma*

PH.D. 1984

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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA  
GRADUATE COLLEGE

ST. NAZIANZ, WISCONSIN: LANDSCAPE PERSISTENCE IN  
A GERMAN COMMUNAL SETTLEMENT, 1854—1983

A DISSERTATION  
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By  
PAUL ROBERT JOHNSON  
Norman, Oklahoma

1984



ST. NAZIANZ, WISCONSIN: LANDSCAPE PERSISTENCE IN  
A GERMAN COMMUNAL SETTLEMENT, 1854—1983

A DISSERTATION

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

By

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ST. NAZIANZ , WISCONSIN: LANDSCAPE PERSISTENCE IN

A GERMAN COMMUNAL SETTLEMENT, 1854—1983

BY: PAUL ROBERT JOHNSON

MAJOR PROFESSOR: RICHARD L. NOSTRAND

ABSTRACT

Dismayed by the political and religious environment of mid-nineteenth century Germany, a group of Roman Catholics led by Father Ambrose Oschwald, pooled their resources and migrated to North America. In the autumn of 1854 the group purchased 3,840 acres of wilderness in Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, and established the communal settlement of St. Nazianz. Surviving initial hardships, the religious centered society experienced contentment and growth within its philosophical ideals. Following the death of Oschwald in 1873 many society members sought private title to land parcels in proportion to their input into the communal development. Several years of court contests resulted in nearly one-half of the land being deeded to individuals. By 1896, the aging membership of the society was dwindling and thus the Rome-based Society of the Divine Savior was called upon to care for them. In return, the SDS was given title to remaining communal property. The SDS established a major religious

education center at St. Nazianz and today retains title to nearly 1400 acres.

The village of St. Nazianz initially grew around the religious theme. Today it is a small rural crossroads community that provides retail services and retains much of its founding atmosphere. Many features of the early years that gave an "old world relic" notoriety to the village remain fully evident today. Such living heritage items are recommended for preservation in order to preserve the uniqueness of St. Nazianz.

**DEDICATION**

**To my family for their support**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dissertation research is a complex task that takes a scholar to many different sources and involves contact with a great number of individuals. Thorough research, discovery, and conclusions would not be possible without the help and knowledge of others, and I thank all who have assisted me. I further wish to express specific acknowledgment to the following:

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ST. NAZIANZ, WISCONSIN: LANDSCAPE PERSISTENCE IN  
A GERMAN COMMUNAL SETTLEMENT, 1854-1983

CHAPTER I

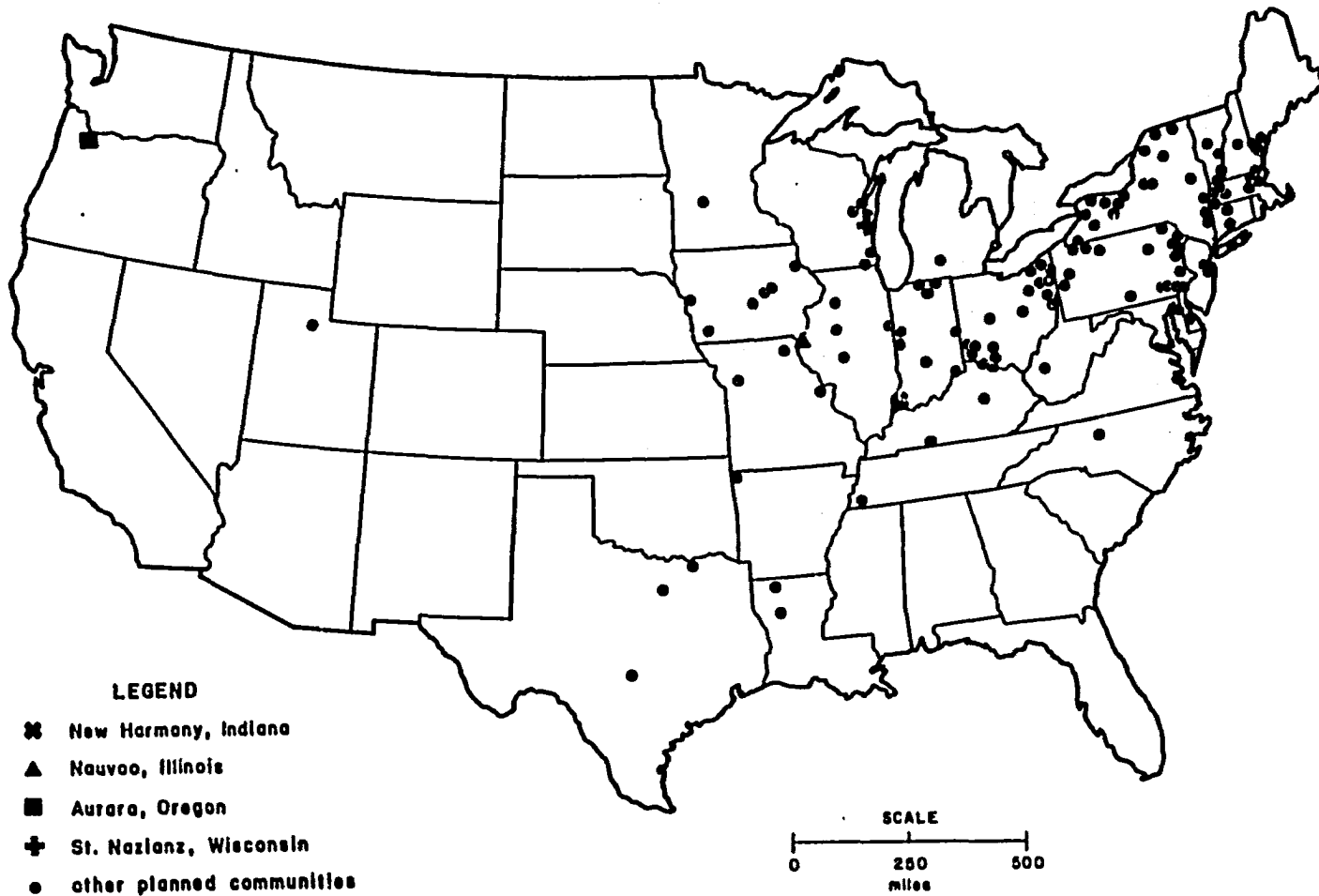
ST. NAZIANZ: SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONTEXT

For the study of utopian or communally-focused planned living, the United States is a natural laboratory. The Pilgrims came to New England in search of an utopia where they might follow their religious beliefs free of outside interference. From the seventeenth century to the present, an endless number of planned settlements have been founded to improve spiritual or social conditions. The establishment of such communities was particularly common to the nineteenth century: one study accounted for 107 individual communities in the sixty years from 1800 to 1860 alone.<sup>1</sup> Figure 1 graphically displays the location of all known utopian or planned communities founded in the United States from 1683 to 1860.

Planned settlements of the nineteenth century may be divided into two philosophical bases: religious motivation and social motivation independent of religion. Religious

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<sup>1</sup>Dolores Hayden, Seven American Utopias (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1976), pp. 362-365.



**FIG. 1 – LOCATION OF PLANNED COMMUNITIES  
IN THE UNITED STATES, 1683-1860**

Source: Dolores Hayden, Seven American Utopias (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1976).

ideals for the settlements varies as widely as did religious beliefs. Some religious-based communities were a form of rebellion against the established church and, as such, expressed a desire to return to a primitive Christianity in which all men were equal. In such a setting, it was believed, no economic or social distinctions had existed among men and, therefore, all property was held in common. Individuals of the community would strive to love one another and to build the kingdom of God on earth. In Europe such ideas were in conflict with the state churches and were viewed with alarm. The ideas were often times consequently oppressed and the believers persecuted. Mother Ann Lee, the founder of the Shaker movement, was imprisoned in England for a period because her unique beliefs conflicted with the Church of England.<sup>2</sup>

Another major ideal for the establishment of religious-based utopias was to prepare the arrival of the millenium, the Second Coming of Christ that was believed imminent. This belief dictated that members of the community practice celibacy and not own private property, as both children and property were not necessities when people were about to be judged by God.

In the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries religious stirrings throughout Europe created minor conflicts

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<sup>2</sup>David Lindsey, Nineteenth Century American Utopias, The Forum Series (St. Charles, Mo.: Forum Press, 1976), p. 3.

between the state, with its established church, and the small groups of independent thinkers. Thus, migration to America and the vast empty areas of which they had heard was inviting to persecuted groups. At that time considerable migration of religious groups to the United States, particularly from Germany, Holland, and England, occurred.<sup>3</sup>

One soon-to-immigrate group was founded by George Rapp in what is now the State of Baden-Wurtemberg in Germany in the late eighteenth century. Rapp was an imposingly tall individual with superb oratorical talent and a strong religious conviction. He was able to use these qualities prophetically when calling for celibacy, common property, and preparations for the millenium.<sup>4</sup> He collected many converts as well as the ire of local church authorities. Rapp and his followers migrated first to Pennsylvania in 1804, then to Indiana in 1814, then back to Pennsylvania in 1824.

The Rappites had strong determination to make the preparation of their souls for the future life the pre-eminent task at hand. Celibacy was a critical key to their beliefs as they held that Adam was originally of both male and female qualities and that they, the Rappites, would someday become like the original Adam in a renewed world.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Charles Nordhoff, The Communistic Societies of the United States (1875; rpt. New York: Hillary House Publishers, 1960), p. 72.

<sup>5</sup>Nordhoff, p. 85.



The Rappites led an austere daily life, arising with the morning sun and retiring soon after the setting sun. Meals were at pre-determined times when all would assemble together in assigned dining halls. Rapp urged that everyone ought to labor with his hands, preferably in agriculture. Leisure time activities centered around Bible study, worship services, and musical performances. Often times the three activities were combined in a single religious theme.

Whereas their community of Harmonie<sup>6</sup> on the Wabash River in Indiana was growing and economically successful, the Rappites sold it to Robert Owen and relocated to Economy, Pennsylvania, in 1824. Possible reasons for the Rappites leaving Indiana include a suggestion of hostile relations developing with neighboring settlements, fear of fever and plague developing along the Wabash River, and a possibility that Rapp felt Harmonie was developed to its fullest.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, it was then necessary to create a new challenge to keep all individuals industrious.

Whether settled by Shakers, Rappites, or any other religiously-focused group, planned societies of the first quarter of the nineteenth century sought to live in accordance

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<sup>6</sup>The Rappites named the settlement on the Wabash River "Harmonie." When Owen purchased the settlement in 1824 the name was changed to "New Harmony." This is documented in: Don Blair, The New Harmony Story (New Harmony, Ind.: New Harmony Publications Committee, 1975), p. 31.

<sup>7</sup>Don Blair, The New Harmony Story (New Harmony, Ind.: New Harmony Publications Committee, 1975), p. 8.

with their interpretation of God's plan, as explained by a self-appointed interpreter.<sup>8</sup>

Communities founded to be social utopias became common in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Laudable underlying bases for such communities were stated by Robert Owen and Charles Fourier in their respective homelands of England and France and then were put into practice in the United States. Such socially-oriented utopians believed they were pioneers in creating a new and improved social order to be practiced for future generations. While men such as Owen and Fourier had not been involved in religious strife, they had seen what they believed to be a decline in man's moral quality and his lifestyle resulting from the industrialized environment of that time. Man was seen as losing his individuality, as becoming too materialistic, and as losing his creativity.

Socially-based planned societies would free man of the impersonalization of the machine age. A "heaven on earth" could be created and man's moral fiber and his creativity could be saved here on earth before it would be lost forever. The focus of such communities thus was on the "here" and the "now" when individuals would live together harmoniously, working for the common happiness and welfare. Men such as Owen and Fourier thus were playing the role of reformer and they

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<sup>8</sup>J. M. Powell, Mirrors of the New World (Hamden, Conn.: The Shoe String Press, Inc., 1977), p. 40.

believed that in America, with a less rigid society than was present in Europe between 1825-1850, they could establish their type of community and serve others before it was too late to do so.

Owen thus came to the United States and in 1824 purchased the Harmonie Wabash settlement from the Rappites. He sought to establish an intellectually-stimulating environment in which individuals would seek to self-improve their knowledge of things and to live in peace and good will with one another.

The philosophy of harmonious living as expounded by Fourier led to a series of Phalanxes being established throughout the United States during the 1840s. At each Phalanx people would seek to live according to Fourier's principles in harmony and proper balance with other parts of society. This was to be expected as God had created what Fourier called a harmonious universe. Phalanxes contained up to 1,800 residents and held all property in common. Work was distributed equitably among all individuals and all worked at a variety of tasks. Thus, no one did something he did not like too long, as in keeping with the goal of harmonious living.<sup>9</sup> The acceptance of Fourier's ideas and the rapid establishment of many Phalanxes in the 1840s was aided by the

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<sup>9</sup>Morris Hillquit, History of Socialism in the United States (1903, rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1965), p. 74.

enthusiastic writings of Horace Greeley in the New York Tribune.<sup>10</sup>

Differing from these early religious- and socially-based planned settlements was the Nauvoo, Illinois, community founded after the departure of the Mormons in 1848. Etienne Cabet, a contemporary of fellow Frenchman Fourier, sought to establish a community combining the social principles of Robert Owen and given religious interpretations.<sup>11</sup> Cabet had outlined his philosophy of an utopian community in his published work, Un Voyage en Icarie.<sup>12</sup> The Icarians, as Cabet's followers were known, lived rather harmoniously for six years in the abandoned Mormon quarters. A board of six elected directors aided Cabet in governing, yet Cabet himself had nearly dictatorial powers independent of the Board of Directors.<sup>13</sup>

By 1856, the harmony had gotten off key on two accounts. First, Cabet became increasingly grumpy and intolerant as his age reached the upper 60s. Second, the Cabet-controlled Board of Directors denied seats to three anti-Cabet candidates who had won popular elections.<sup>14</sup> Verbal and physical protests

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<sup>10</sup>Hayden, Seven American Utopias, p. 14.

<sup>11</sup>Marie Louise Berneri, Journey through Utopia (1950, rpt. New York: Schocken Books, 1971), p. 222.

<sup>12</sup>Etienne Cabet, Un Voyage en Icarie (2nd ed., Paris: Dufruit, 1842).

<sup>13</sup>Nordhoff, The Communistic Societies, p. 335.

<sup>14</sup>Hillquit, History of Socialism, p. 118.

followed and eventually resulted in Cabet and 180 of his followers being expelled from Nauvoo.

In the late 1850s, the Icarians left Nauvoo and moved westward to Corning, Iowa. The colony at Corning, after a shaky beginning, gained strong footing and prospered for several years until a split between younger and older factions formed. The younger faction persevered and eventually carried the Icarian theme westward to California, at Icaria Speranza north of San Francisco, in the 1880s.<sup>15</sup>

Again the 1850s play a role in American planned community development as a time when a second wave of religious communes moved across the land. An intricate element of this new wave was German peoples, with a strong single leader or community director, establishing their communities in the middle western states.<sup>16</sup> Dr. William Keil, who had come from Germany to practice medicine in New York, was an example. He soon became more interested in mysticism and faith healing than in medical practice. With a band of settlers Keil established communal settlements, first at Bethel, Missouri, and later at Aurora, Oregon. Members of the community, living Spartan-like lives with no frills, were taught basic education, the Bible, and how to play musical instruments.

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<sup>15</sup>Paul Karan, New World Utopias, A Photographic History of the Search for Community (New York: Penguin Books, 1975), p. 36.

<sup>16</sup>Lindsey, American Utopias, p. 10.

At Aurora, efficiency was stressed with the result that agricultural and product quality was high. The community was particularly well known for its excellent orchards and ingenious methods of drying fruits.<sup>17</sup> The inn at Aurora became well known and was used extensively as a summer resort by residents of nearby Portland. Guests, who were served fine foods and entertained by the community band, provided an opportunity for cash income for the Aurora group. The band itself traveled outside of the community to festivities in neighboring settlements.

In the Aurora setting, all property was held in common and controlled by a parental-like government in imitation of God's government, as interpreted by Keil.<sup>18</sup> Keil himself was the earthly director of the government and members of the community were to be industrious and efficient. No one was to do tasks they did not like, but all did their full share of work and contributed equitably to the entire group. Marriage and families were openly accepted for those so inclined and each family had private living quarters separate from other people. The people led austere lives, had few and simple clothing items, and lived in a community that was described as having ". . . little room for poetry or for the imagination in the life . . . ."<sup>19</sup> The community survived

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<sup>17</sup>Nordhoff, The Communistic Societies, p. 312.

<sup>18</sup>Hillquit, History of Socialism, p. 41. .

<sup>19</sup>Nordhoff, The Communistic Societies, p. 317.

for several years, accepting as new members only those individuals who measured up during a trial period.

Included in the 1850s wave of German immigrants were individuals and families seeking a new life for themselves as well as community groups such as have been mentioned. The crest of the pre-1860 German immigration occurred between 1846 and 1854 when more than 900,000 came to the United States,<sup>20</sup> the peak year being 1854 with a total of 215,000 immigrants.<sup>21</sup> At the same time states such as Wisconsin, through the establishment of immigration bureaus and the distribution of pamphlets highlighting the good life available, were making extraordinary efforts to attract German peoples.

Between 1846 and 1854 peoples of southern and central Germany were the major immigrant groups.<sup>22</sup> Their exodus was spurred by the religious, political, and economic problems in their native land. Their attraction to Wisconsin was probably many faceted--environmental, economical, and cultural. While there were various reasons for going to Wisconsin, religion deserves special mention. A Bishop Henni had established a Roman Catholic diocese in Milwaukee in 1844, and it

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<sup>20</sup> Albert Bernhardt Faust, The German Element in the United States with Special Reference to Its Political, Moral, Social, and Educational Influence, I (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909), p. 585.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Kate Everest Levi, "Geographical Origin of German Immigration to Wisconsin," Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 14 (1898), p. 367.

served to attract fellow Roman Catholics to Milwaukee and neighboring areas of Wisconsin. Thus, with the main element of German migration at this time being from predominantly Roman Catholic regions of Germany, the attraction of Wisconsin was strong.<sup>23</sup> In 1850, Wisconsin's total population of 305,391 included 38,064 German-born people.<sup>24</sup> In 1860, of a total state population of 775,881, the German-born numbered 123,879.<sup>25</sup>

With those bound for Wisconsin was a group of Roman Catholic parishioners led by Father Ambrose Oswald. Like Lee, Rapp, and Keil, Oswald was a person of high individual ideals, a gentle person, and a person with considerable executive ability.<sup>26</sup> He too had had an idea and the fortitude and perserverance to enact that idea. Oswald was born of respectable peasant parents in 1801 in Mundelfingen in the Baden-Wurtemberg state of Germany. He showed early inclinations to become an ordained clergy of the Roman Catholic church. Encouraged by his parents, Oswald pursued studies at the University and the Seminary of Freiburg and was

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<sup>23</sup>Faust, The German Element, p. 471.

<sup>24</sup>Kate Everest, "How Wisconsin Came By Its Large German Element," Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 12 (1896), p. 300.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>James Louis Small, "A Mid-Western Experiment in Catholic Community Life," Catholic World, 114 (1922), p. 794.



ordained in 1833.<sup>27</sup>

Oschwald served parishes in his home area of southern Germany where he was well-loved by his parishioners. The priest was troubled by the social and political problems of the time. Population pressure on the land was relatively high for that time in southern Germany and Oschwald was disturbed over how hard the people had to work for a livelihood. The political unrest of the late 1840s led to Prussian troops occupying the lands of the people and to persecution of both traditionalist Roman Catholics and conservative Lutherans by the more liberal control of the time.

An aftermath of the Prussian conflict led eventually to the Roman Catholic church altering its stands on several issues. Some of the compromises were more than the enthusiastic, traditional Oschwald could accept in his conscience. He began a series of letters to church hierarchy in Germany protesting resultant changes and challenging their authority to make such changes. From his pulpit, Oschwald openly challenged the edicts and preached his parishioners to observe the traditional rules of the Roman Catholic church. Local bishops threatened reprisals and ordered Oschwald to follow the new doctrine. Oschwald remained firm in his position and in 1848, at the height of the period of conflict, he released

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

Mystischen Schriften,<sup>28</sup> the first of four publications in which he discussed "hidden mysteries which confront a religious soul in its fight against the world, the flesh, and devil."<sup>29</sup> By the spring of 1849 the church hierarchy was well aware of Oswald's treatise and declared it to be one of wild and imaginative untruths which the church had long ago condemned. At this time Oswald was relieved of his parish assignment as a disciplinary measure.

Oswald continued to write down his beliefs and in that same year, 1849, published a second volume, Das Ende von Lied and der Anfang besserer Zeiten.<sup>30</sup> In this work he projected a chiliastic description of the last epochs of the world and of the millenium. Oswald thus set the descriptive stage for Christ to return to earth in a visible form and to set up a new kingdom over all the world. During this period Oswald had continued to serve a flock of loyal followers in their homes. In 1850 the group united itself as The Spiritual-Magnetic Association and chose St. Gregory of Nazianzen, a Greek saint who led his people from the corrupt world into the desert, as a patron saint.<sup>31</sup> In imitation of

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<sup>28</sup>A. Oswald, Mystischen Schriften (Baden: Scotznivosky'schen Printers, 1848).

<sup>29</sup>Frank S. Beck, "Christian Communists in America" (Master's Thesis, St. Paul Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1959), p. 39.

<sup>30</sup>A. Oswald, Das Ende von Lied and der Anfang besserer Zeiten (Baden: Scotznivosky'schen Printers, 1849).

<sup>31</sup>Beck, "Christian Communists in America," p. 43.

St. Gregory, the members of the association were to flee the corrupt world in which they lived and go to a better place.

It was at that time that the seeds of moving to the United States probably fermented, as such a move would likely provide a new uncrowded area in which the people could live and farm and enjoy freedom from local church persecution and conflict with the contemporary Prussia. Coincident with the period were a series of bad crop years and near famine conditions. Perhaps it was in preparation for such a possible relocation to North America that Oschwald, in 1852, at the age of 51, attended the University of Munich and completed a two year study of medicine.<sup>32</sup> He could be not only a priest but also a physician to his group of followers.

By the spring of 1854 the Oschwald group, having definite desires to leave Germany in search of a new home, became formally organized as the Emigrant Association of St. Gregory Nazianzen.<sup>33</sup> Included were 113 individuals, both families and young unmarried men and women. While Oschwald had openly expressed question of new church procedure and doctrine, he and his group left Germany on their own accord and with the blessing of the immediate superior of the church, Archbishop Hermann von Vicari of Freiburg.<sup>34</sup> Further, upon eventually

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<sup>32</sup>Small, "Experiment in Catholic Community Life," p. 794.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Beck, "Christian Communists in America," p. 46.

reaching Wisconsin, Oswald had a letter to present to Bishop Henni of Milwaukee. Oswald and his group did always maintain proper church relationships in Wisconsin.

Members of the Society took several months to prepare to transform their group into a community in the United States. The group would live a cooperative, communistic way of life with no individual titles to property and no personal wealth. Members sold whatever property or material goods they possessed and pooled their financial resources. Initially, members of the Society were to be at least 20 but no more than 60 years old, and they had to be pious Christians, useful to themselves, and to the Society.<sup>35</sup> They were informed as completely as possible what may be ahead for them:

There was mysteriousness about it all; the people were told for what to prepare, what was before them, how they could expect things, pleasant and unpleasant, sweet, sour, and bitter, the dangers, privations and fatigue of the journey, the toils, worries, hard and heavy labors of the first beginning. Nothing was concealed; all things were clearly, openly, honestly, and plainly discussed and arranged.<sup>36</sup>

The group traveled overland, through Paris to Havre, where on June 15, 1854, they set sail for the United States. The group was split between two ships, one taking 52 days to

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<sup>35</sup>Beck, p. 47.

<sup>36</sup>Anton Stoll, History of the Origin and Foundation of the German Colony St. Nazianz in the County of Manitowoc in the State of Wisconsin United States of North America From the Year 1854 to the End of 1866 (1867, trans. Paul Shurek, St. Nazianz, Wis.: Society of the Divine Savior Publishing Dept., 1946), pp. 10-11.

cross the Atlantic Ocean and the other 55 days. Arriving in New York in August, both were united and almost immediately started by railroad for Milwaukee. Oschwald had predetermined contact in Milwaukee as he led the group there and presented Bishop von Vicari's letter to Bishop Henni. Some of the original 113 members were weak and tired upon arriving in Wisconsin and a number became ill and died soon afterward.<sup>37</sup>

It was in Milwaukee that a land speculator contacted Oschwald, resulting in the Society's purchasing 3,840 acres of land in Manitowoc County, about 60 miles north of Milwaukee.<sup>38</sup> Thus, by the last week of August in 1854 an advance party of six men traveled to locate the purchased land and began initial clearing of trees. The community would be named St. Nazianz, in honor of the Society's patron saint, St. Gregory of Nazianzen.

At St. Nazianz many of the principles and practices discussed in connection with other planned settlements were evident. The Oschwald-led community, like the Aurora community, sought to live the life of primitive Christians, in which all things were held in common and the New Testament of the Bible served as the guide for living. Incorporated was a willingness on the part of Brothers and Sisters to live a single life dedicated to God, patterned after the followers of St. Francis of Assisi. Each individual was at liberty to

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<sup>37</sup>Small, "Experiment in Catholic Community Life," p. 795.

<sup>38</sup>Stoll, History of the Origin and Foundation, p. 12.

leave the community whenever he or she wished--and a number did leave over the period of several years.

Like Keil's Aurora settlement, at St. Nazianz marriage was permitted and children were encouraged. Private dwelling units of the families provided the nucleus for village growth. The St. Nazianz society differed markedly on the issue of marriage from the Rappites of Harmonie. However, like the Harmonie Rappites, the Brothers and Sisters at St. Nazianz lived in sexually-segregated barracks.

Under the direction of Oschwald, each person would perform his assigned tasks for the good of the entire community, a theme common to many other planned community ventures. Families and individuals would be provided for as their needs required. Religion was central to daily activity, each day beginning and ending with prayer service. The St. Nazianz people simply sought to recreate the simple, Christian life of earlier times as they interpreted it to have been. They were not preparing for, nor were they expecting, the immediate Second Coming of Christ, although Oschwald had written on that subject in Germany.

Oschwald did not believe himself to have been sent to save the world or to have been a heavenly saint. He was a man with an idea of how to live in harmony with the Bible and with another for the overall benefit of everyone. Often times Oschwald emphasized that the colony had not been founded to enable the members to acquire wealth and personal gain.

The philosophy was that superfluous income was to go toward charitable and religious causes. A statute of the colony read "There must be charity, harmony, true Christian fraternal love, and real Christianity in the parish as well as in the convents, which was our purpose in working together and coming to America, and God will then bless our work."<sup>39</sup>

Oschwald was similar to other utopian idealists of the nineteenth century in that he had strong beliefs and the initiative and energy to pursue his beliefs. Each of the idealists possessed magnetic personalities that attracted others to their cause. St. Nazianz was similar to other planned communities in that it served as a home for the leader and his followers to practice their cause.

The St. Nazianz settlement, however, had one unique quality that separated it from most of its contemporaries-- survival. Whereas most of the nineteenth century settlements of utopian groups exist by name today, they usually have little connection, if any, to the original founding element. Few people are aware of a community's initial founding and, unfortunately, usually do not care anyway. Aurora is a rural village presently becoming included into the Portland metropolitan complex. Few of the original buildings exist and the present site of the village has migrated to the east a few hundred yards. No remnants of the original society are

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<sup>39</sup>Beck, "Christian Communists in America," p. 177.

evident today.<sup>40</sup> At New Harmony, Indiana, the original Harmonie community layout has been restored and many buildings have been either preserved or reconstructed in fine style. The heritage of the Rappites and the Owenites is readily discernible, but it is as a fine form of historic preservation and scholarly study. The two groups associated with the community's early history are not present to function. The Rappites had returned to Pennsylvania long ago and the Owenites had disintegrated a few years after Owen purchased Harmonie. The Shakers are recalled today in the name of Shaker Heights, Ohio, a residential suburb of Cleveland. However, that is all that remains of the Shakers at that location as they sold the site many years ago.

It is by comparison to such communities that St. Nazianz becomes unique. At St. Nazianz, over 1,000 acres of the original 3,840 acres purchased by the colonists remain in the control of the Roman Catholic Society, which is a second generation successor of the original Society of St. Gregory of Nazianzen. The village itself has changed so little that the original layout and its buildings may be easily observed. The local citizens, many of whom can trace their relatives to the Society that emigrated from Germany, are much aware and proud of their village's history and tradition. The Roman Catholic church remains dominant in the people's religious

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<sup>40</sup>Oregon Writer's Project, Oregon, End of the Trail  
(Portland: Binfords and Mort, 1940), p. 307.



and social activities.

St. Nazianz has enjoyed a steady development and expansion from 1854 to the present without ever breaking the connection to its foundation. The community has certainly experienced pronounced periods of change, but has never completely severed its tie to its founding. Very evident on the landscape of the St. Nazianz community are patterns reflecting the founding and the subsequent developments that have taken place. In the following chapters of this study the historical geography of St. Nazianz will be presented in five major time frames, each frame being symbolic of a chapter in the life of the community from its founding to the present. Land use patterns, village structure and growth, and economic activity will be studied for each frame. Features symbolic of each time frame which are present today and worthy of preservation will be highlighted. Thus, in going further, one may learn the geographical story of St. Nazianz to enable fuller appreciation of the community's uniqueness.

## CHAPTER II

### ST. NAZIANZ'S PRE-SETTLEMENT ENVIRONMENT

In August of 1854 Father Ambrose Oschwald and his band of 112 parishioners purchased 3,840 acres of wilderness in the towns of Eaton and Liberty in southwest Manitowoc County (Fig. 2). Manitowoc County is located in east-central Wisconsin along the shore of Lake Michigan, approximately 60 miles north of Milwaukee. St. Nazianz, where the settlers built their community, lies astride the towns of Eaton and Liberty. The village is 15 miles southwest of Manitowoc, which is located on the shore of Lake Michigan and is the principal city of the county.

In this chapter the environment which Oschwald's group encountered in 1854--the soils, topography, drainage, vegetation, and climate--is recreated. Native Americans who occupied the area are also discussed, and specific places are compared through written descriptions, maps, and photographs in an effort to generalize about past and present environments.

## Soils and Terrain

Manitowoc County has a rolling terrain of glacially deposited materials underlain by Niagara Dolomite bedrock. The formation has an escarpment to the west of the county with a north-south trending strike; it dips gently eastward toward Lake Michigan.

The rolling terrain and subsequent soil characteristics are essentially a result of the last two substages of the Wisconsin Stage of Pleistocene glaciation. The first of the two substages, the Cary, brought in dark igneous and metamorphic rocks from the north. Drift of this substage, characterized by a gray, stony earth material, is a major component of the soil in the southwestern part of Manitowoc County where the towns of Eaton and Liberty are located. Such areas are commonly of "prominent gravel ridges, irregular hills, and wet depressions."<sup>1</sup> The second substage, the Valders, covered the Cary deposits throughout the county, except for the southwestern portion. Drift of the Valders is a heavy clay material and is of a pink to red hue. Deposited approximately 11,000 years ago, it is the most recently deposited glacial material.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Manitowoc County Outdoors (Manitowoc, Wis.: Conservation Education, Inc. of Manitowoc County and Manitowoc County Soil and Water Conservation District, 1967), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

In the towns of Eaton and Liberty the rolling terrain produces nearly 200 feet of local relief, with the highest hills approaching 1,000 feet above sea level and the lower stream bottoms cut to about 800 feet. The region slopes eastward and drops to 583 feet above sea level at Lake Michigan 12 miles east of St. Nazianz.

The condition of the soil and its corresponding vegetation cover influenced greatly initial land resource evaluations of early observers. Byron Kilbourn, a surveyer<sup>o</sup> who walked these hills and lowlands in 1834, was impressed with the extent of the wetlands, the variability of soil depth and character, and the anticipated high level of natural productivity of the soil. He commented on the land as being first, second, or third-class, depending upon the above criteria.

In walking the section lines, Kilbourn was struck by the presence of surface water in the form of small springs and stagnant swamps. Between sections 30 and 31 of Eaton, for example, Kilbourn recorded a cedar swamp with thickets of shrubs, such as prickly ash and alder, and trees such as cedars, tamaracks, and birch.<sup>3</sup> The occurrence of poorly drained lands in Eaton and Liberty, as mapped in 1834, covered an extensive area (Fig. 3).

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<sup>3</sup>U.S., Federal Survey Plat Books, Survey of Subdivisions of Township No. 18 North, Range No. 21 East of 4th Meridian, Michigan Territory, Surveyed by Byron Kilbourn, 1834 (microfilm from State Historical Society of Wisconsin), entry for Sept. 9, 1834.

**FIG. 2 – LOCATION OF MANITOWOC COUNTY  
AND THE TOWNS OF EATON AND LIBERTY**

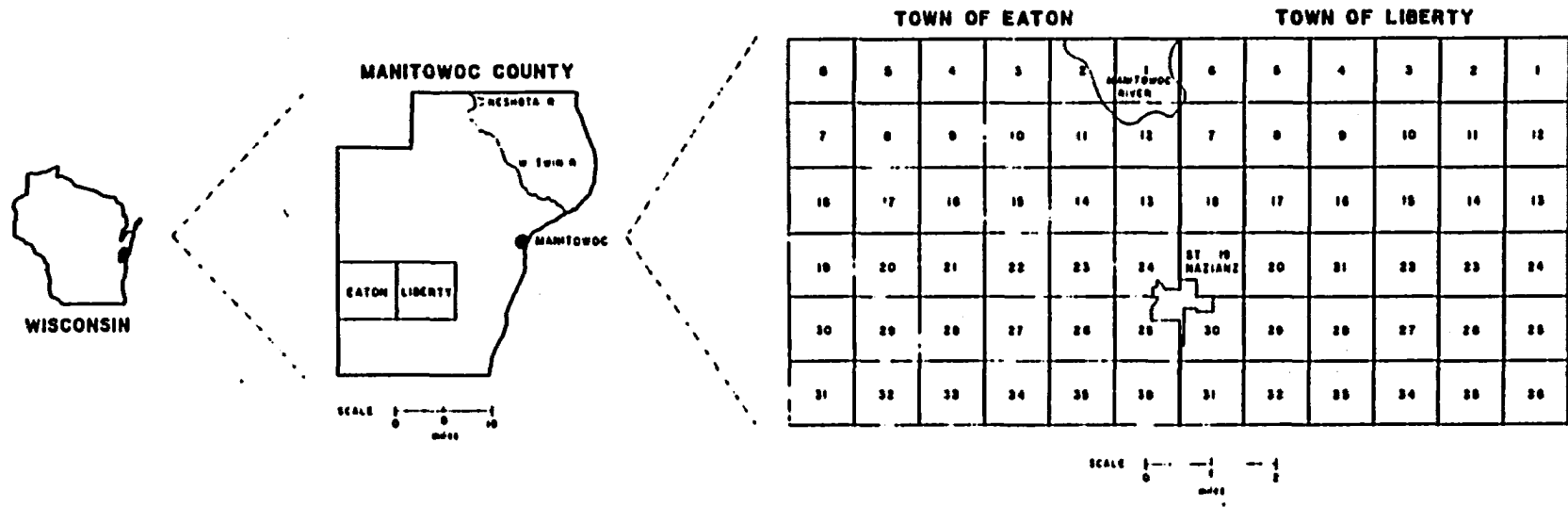
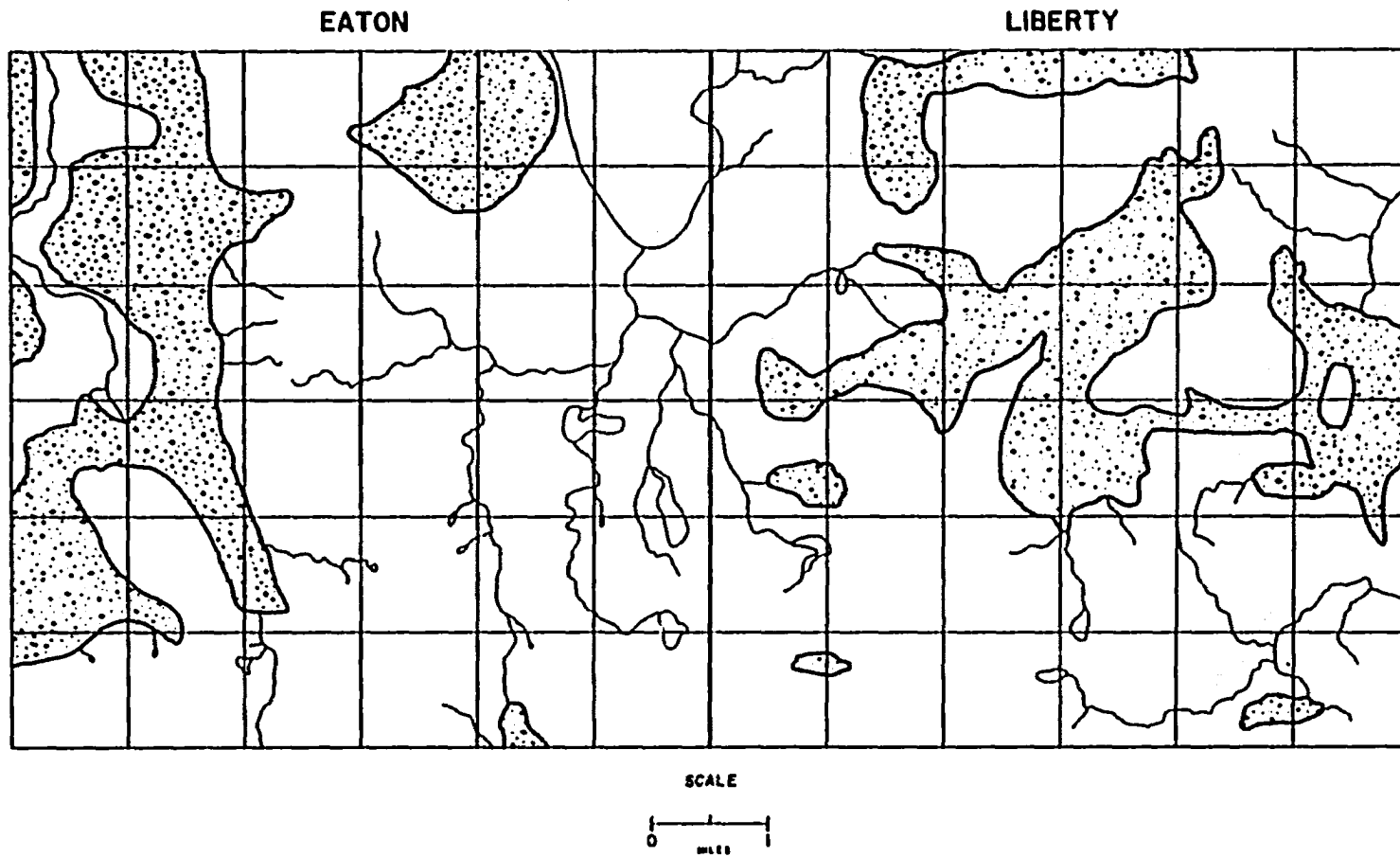


FIG. 3 – SWAMP LAND IN 1834 AS ORIGINALLY MAPPED BY KILBOURN



In describing first-class land in section 25 of Eaton, Kilbourn commented on the rolling and dry land and the good growth of sugar maple, linden, oak, elm, and ash trees.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the surveying record, Kilbourn consistently categorized as first-class land that was not too rough topographically, well drained, and had a good growth of deciduous trees.

A parcel of second-class land observed by Kilbourn to be quite rolling and stony was recorded between sections 27 and 34 in Eaton. Trees listed were pine, white poplar, birch, linden, and elm.<sup>5</sup> Another second-class land parcel, between sections 29 and 32 of Eaton, was described as "broken" land intermingled with cedar swamp.<sup>6</sup> Third-class land was either "excessively broken" or covered with water and included swamp lands.<sup>7</sup>

The only prominent flowing stream in the St. Nazianz area was the Manitowoc River, which meandered eastward toward Lake Michigan across the northern portion of Eaton. A few small kettle lakes, a legacy of glacial activity, are found in Liberty just east of St. Nazianz.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., August 26, 1834.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., September 5, 1834.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., September 9, 1834.

<sup>7</sup>U.S., Federal Survey Plat Books, Survey of Subdivisions of Township No. 18 North, Range No. 22 East of 4th Meridian, Michigan Territory, Surveyed by Byron Kilbourn, 1834 (microfilm from State Historical Society of Wisconsin), entry for August 20, 1834.

Today, many of the swamps are drained and used for agricultural activity. However, there is a location in section 23 of Eaton identified by Kilbourn as swamp that remains swamp today (Fig. 4). A portion of section 30 in Liberty recorded as tamarack swamp and thus third-class land also remains such today (Fig. 5). Kilbourn classified the land up from the swamp as first-class, however. The sugar maple, elm, linden, pine, and birch trees present there in 1834 are the same species visible at that location today.<sup>8</sup>

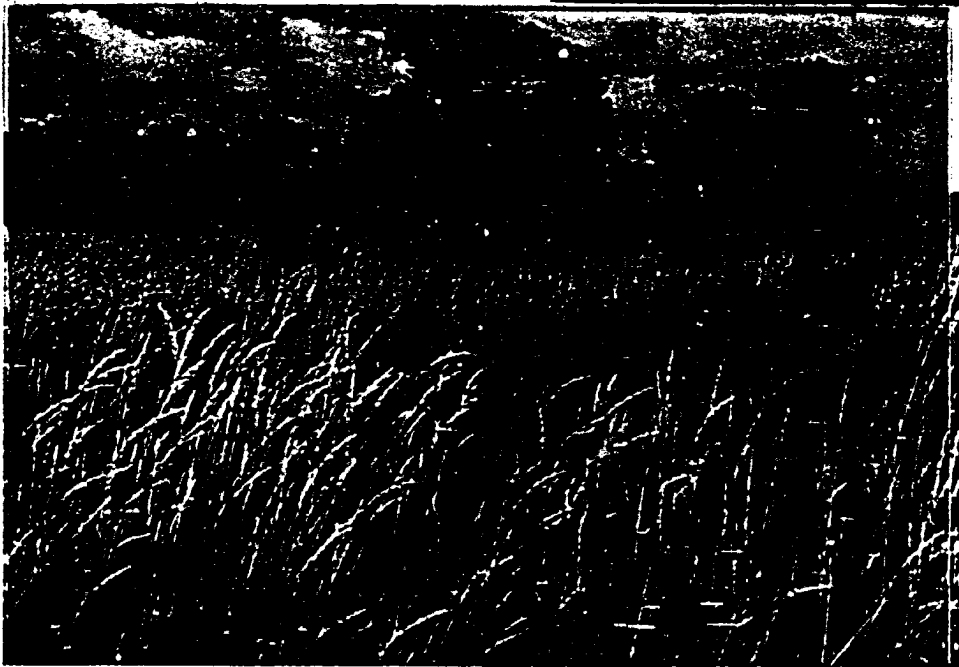


Fig. 4 - A poorly drained area in section 23 of the Town of Eaton that was also described as such by Kilbourn in 1834.

Section 25 of Eaton, classified as first-class by Kilbourn on the basis of the rolling and dry land and the

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.



broadleaf deciduous trees present, today appears much as it was initially described with the exception of the alfalfa and corn crops now present (Fig. 6). Rolling terrain is still everywhere evident in the St. Nazianz area, but now is likely to have been cleared for purposes of cultivation or pasturage (Fig. 7).

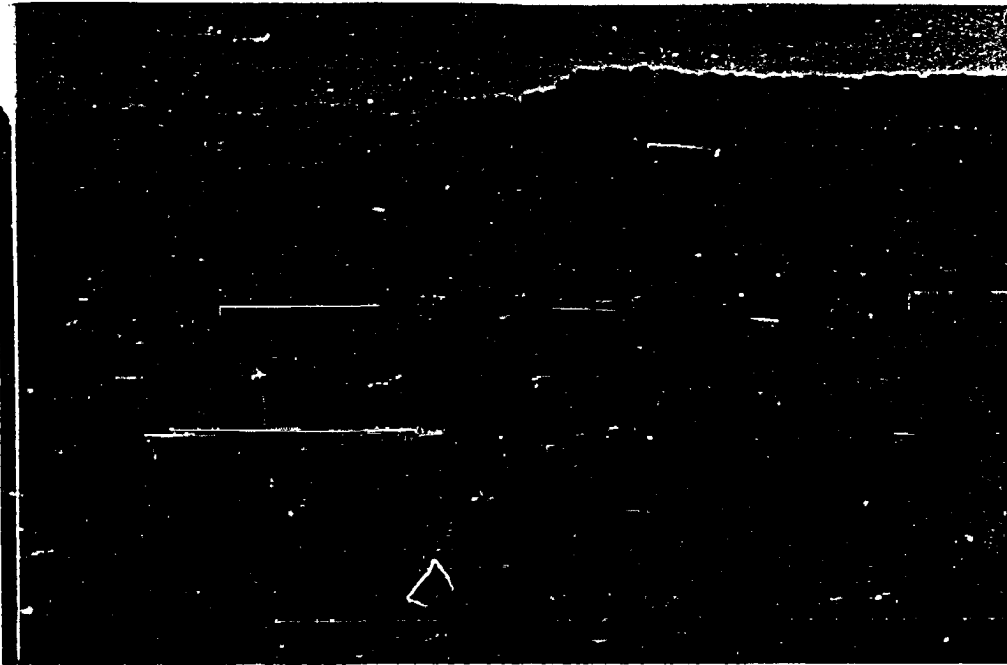


Fig. 5 - A view of section 30 in the Town of Liberty displaying third-class land in the poorly drained swamp area and first-class land in the crop and tree covered background.

Many areas initially categorized as second-class because of conditions of excessively rolling or broken topography and stony soils are today of limited agricultural utility. Such land parcels may appear as pasturage, abandoned fields, or tree stands (Figs. 8 and 9).

Soils in the towns of Eaton and Liberty are generally yellowish-brown colored glacially deposited material that is

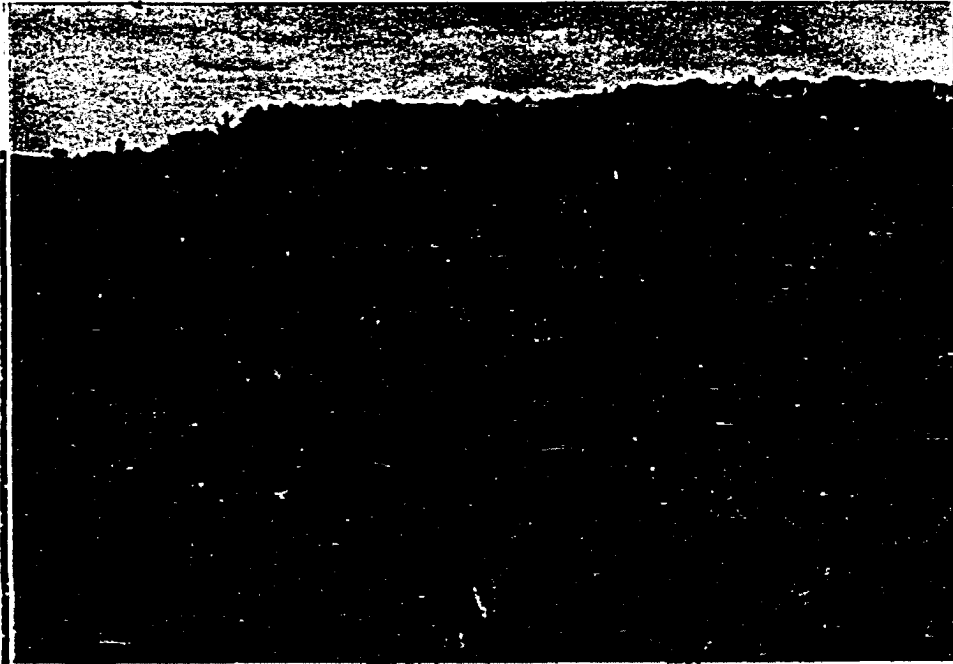


Fig. 6 - Rolling and dry land in section 25 of the Town of Eaton which Kilbourn described as "first-class."

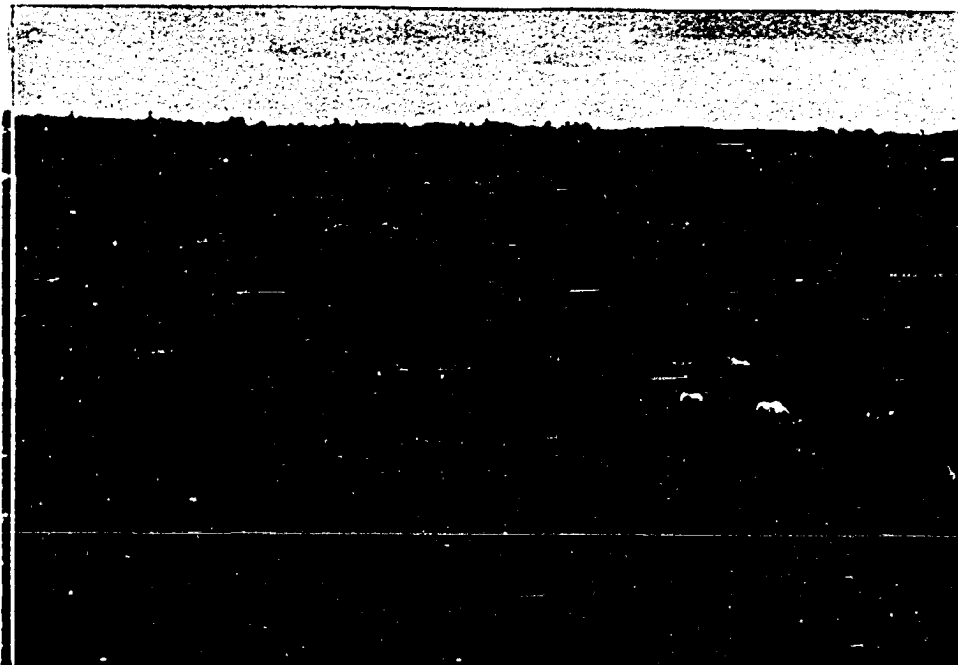


Fig. 7 - Rolling terrain in section 35 of the Town of Eaton which Kilbourn described as "first-class."



Fig. 8 - A view of section 27 of the Town of Eaton which was classed a "broken topography, second rate" land by Kilbourn.

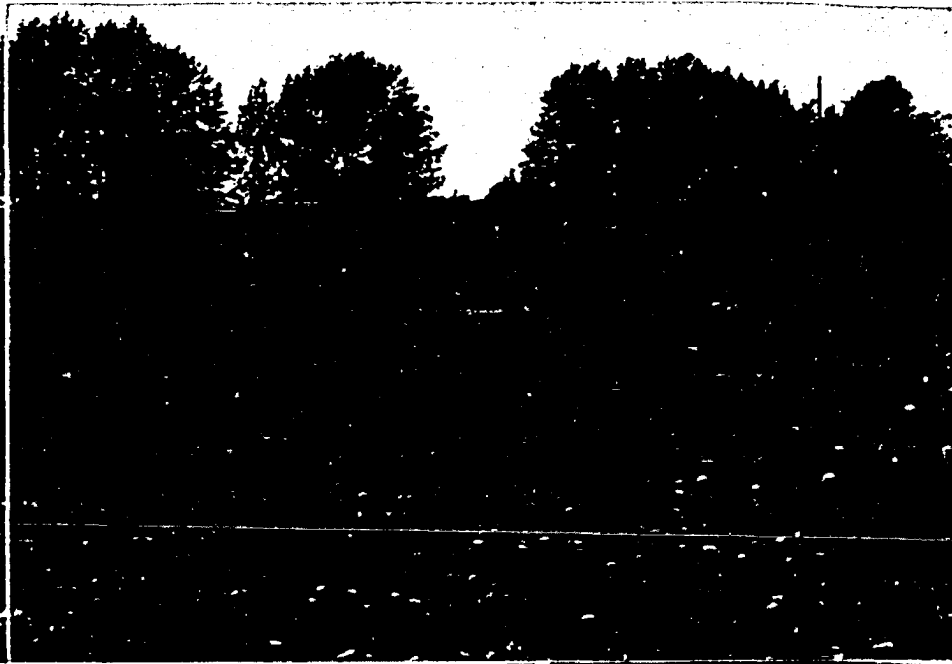


Fig. 9 - Broken topography and stony soils developed on glacial till in section 32 of the Town of Eaton.

rich in calcareous clay, a gift of the Cary Substage of the Wisconsin glaciation.<sup>9</sup> Nearly 75 percent of the land is classified as well drained to excessively drained. The other 25 percent is occupied by peat and muck soils of the numerous poorly drained lowlands. This landscape, estimated to be approximately 13,000 years old, has seen an acceleration of erosion by land clearing and extensive farming since 1850.<sup>10</sup>

### Vegetation

Early observers of Manitowoc County also commented on the thick forest growth they encountered. Pine trees dominated the sandy stretches of the county parallel to Lake Michigan but then gave way to mixed forest inland from the lake shore. The mixed forest, in turn, became increasingly dominated by broadleaf deciduous trees as one went toward the west side of the county.<sup>11</sup>

In 1834 Kilbourn noted that hardwood deciduous trees were on the better drained soils of the rolling terrain in Eaton and Liberty. Sugar maple, beech, linden, and elm are species frequently listed by Kilbourn in his notes. Upon

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<sup>9</sup>Francis D. Hole, Soils of Wisconsin (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), p. 65.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>11</sup>Increase A. Lapham, Wisconsin, Its Geography and Topography, History, Geology, and Mineralogy (1846: rpt. New York: Arno Press, 1975), p. 98.

encountering swampy areas, Kilbourn listed tamarack, hemlock, willow, and birch trees and shrubs such as sumac, alder, and prickly ash. He also commented on wild grapevines that clung to the trees in many places, and he noted occasional spots that were free of trees and were covered with grass. Some of the marshes were partially filled with wild rice.

A view of what some of the area around St. Nazianz may have appeared like in about 1854 may be seen in the photo of a mature broadleaf forest present today in section 23 and 24 of Eaton (Fig. 10. Thick growths of shrubs are present throughout portions of Manitowoc County with sumach a commonly occurring species (Fig. 11).



Fig. 10 - A deciduous forest stand that overhangs the road between sections 23 (left) and 24 of the Town of Eaton.



Fig. 11 - Dense growth of shrubs and mixed forest in section 27 of the Town of Eaton.

### Wildlife

Wild animal life found originally in Manitowoc County included bears, which were seen commonly as late as the 1880s. They lived on the variety of nuts and berries as well as fish such as bass, trout, pickerel, and bullhead that could be taken from the streams. The fish were described as being very abundant in the clear fresh flowing streams of the county.<sup>12</sup> Marshes and other areas of slow-moving water apparently supported sufficient growth of aquatic plants to sustain the fish population

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<sup>12</sup>Manitowoc County Outdoors, p. 10.

## Climate

Manitowoc County has a climate typical of its mid-latitude continental location; meteorological research indicates it has not changed greatly in the past 100 years.<sup>13</sup> It has moderately warm summers with no summer month having an average temperature greater than 71 degrees Fahrenheit. Winters are distinctly cold, the lowest average monthly temperature occurring in January with a reading of 22 degrees Fahrenheit.<sup>14</sup> This reading would be lower if the somewhat moderating effect of Lake Michigan were not present. Spring seasons are normally on the cool and damp side while autumns are generally pleasant and somewhat dry. Precipitation, which averages more than 28 inches per year, is concentrated as rainfall during the warmer portions of the year. The precipitation which does occur during the winter season normally is in the form of snow, the seasonal snowfall averaging 45 inches per winter. Snow covers the ground continuously in most winters for at least three months, from mid-December

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<sup>13</sup>Data for the Manitowoc area shows that annual average temperature readings from the 1850s and 1860s to the 1931-1960 climatic normals increased about 2 degrees Fahrenheit and annual precipitation totals for the same time references increased about 10 percent over the nineteenth century amount. See Fig. 1, p. 260, and Fig. 7, p. 261 in: E. W. Wahl and T. L. Lawson, "The Climate of the Midnineteenth Century United States Compared to the Current Normals," Monthly Weather Review, 98 (1970), 259-265.

<sup>14</sup>U.S., Dept. of Commerce, Weather Bureau, Climates of the States, Wisconsin, Climatography of the U.S., No. 60-47 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 8.

to mid-March.

The monthly temperature and precipitation means of Manitowoc, when compared with Basel, Switzerland, near to Oschwald's homeland, are not appreciably different (Fig. 12). Note, for example, the yearly mean temperatures of 46 degrees and 49 degrees Fahrenheit and the annual precipitation totals of 28.25 and 32.2 inches.

In Manitowoc County the growing season is approximately 160 days and extends from late April until late September.<sup>15</sup> That period is reasonably frost-free. This growing season with warm temperatures and the concentration of precipitation has proven to be a valuable resource for agricultural production.

#### Indian Setting

The name "Manitowoc" is derived from the Indian word "munedoowk" and means "manitou: home of the good spirit."<sup>16</sup> Archaeological evidence indicates many Indian groups have lived in the Manitowoc County area over the last several thousand years.<sup>17</sup> When settlers from the eastern United States and Europe began coming into the area in the late

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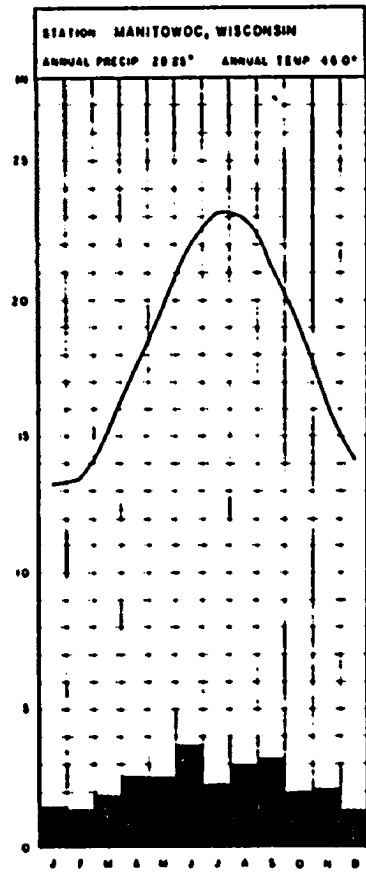
<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>16</sup>Manitowoc County Centennial Committee, Story of a Century (Manitowoc: Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, 1948), p. 5.

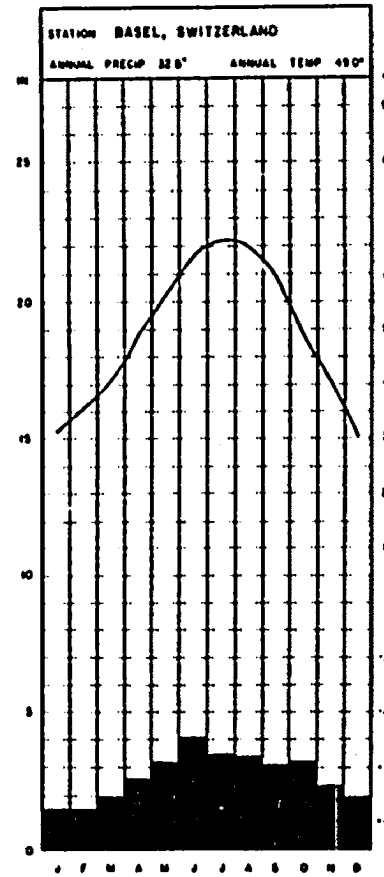
<sup>17</sup>Louis Falge, ed., History of Manitowoc County Wisconsin, I (Chicago: Goodspeed Historical Association, 1912, p. 13.



FIG. 12 - COMPARATIVE CLIMATE GRAPHS OF MANITOWOC AND BASEL



SOURCE: U.S. DEPT. OF COMMERCE, WEATHER BUREAU. (CLIMATE OF THE UNITED STATES).  
CLIMATOLOGY OF THE U.S. NO. 40-47 WASHINGTON, D.C., 1933



SOURCE: WEATHER, THE SWISS OF THE SWITZERLAND.  
2nd EDITION (LONDON: CLARKEBON PRESS, 1927)

1840s the Indian population of the county is estimated to have been several thousand. These natives were primarily a mixture of Chippewas and Menominees, the former were dominant numerically and both lived harmoniously. The Menominees had been looked upon by the United States government as the possessors of the land, as Manitowoc County was included in a large parcel of territory obtained by the federal government from the Menominees in a treaty signed on February 8, 1831.<sup>18</sup>

Prior to 1840 the Indians in Manitowoc County lived in three good-sized permanent villages at riverside locations; each was described as "containing several hundred souls."<sup>19</sup> A number of much smaller encampments existed along streams or amongst hunting grounds. Overall, the natives of the county showed a strong preference for sites where a stream entered a lake or where a number of springs emptied into a stream.<sup>20</sup> Limited amounts of corn, squash, and beans were grown along the river bottoms of the county, and wild rice, which grew along the river banks away from the main flowing channels, was harvested. The rivers also produced food in the form of fish and waterfowl. An early settler described

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<sup>18</sup>William J. Kubiak, Great Lakes Indians (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1970), p. 97.

<sup>19</sup>Falge, History of Manitowoc County Wisconsin, p. 13.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 446 (recollections of James Sibree Anderson).

the occurrence of partridges in the northern portion of Manitowoc County as follows: "I have stood on the Neshota River bottom in the years 1852 and 1853, and had coveys of partridge run around me thicker than the fowls in the village farmer's barnyard and nearly as tame."<sup>21</sup> Raccoon and muskrat were very common along the streams. Fox in the area apparently held the rabbit population in check.

Wolves, foxes, lynxes, wildcats, deer, badgers, and the previously mentioned bears and raccoons were an additional source of food. Many wild berries, including grapes from the vines which climbed the tree trunks, added some variety to the native's diet. Early settlers reported finding wild apple trees as well as plum trees. A variety of nut trees further expanded food offerings.

Garden beds, said to be unique to native cultures around Lake Michigan, were described by an early Manitowoc County observer as three feet wide, eight to ten inches high in the middle with a slope to each side, and a length of 50 feet or more. Often times several beds were adjacent to one another, in which case a path one foot wide would extend between them.<sup>22</sup> The specific function of such beds is questioned today. An early Manitowoc County account stated that the beds were specially prepared for crop cultivation.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 445 (recollections of James Sibree Anderson).

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 19.      <sup>23</sup>Ibid.

Writing in 1960, Quimby stated that "such garden beds seem to be related to enclosures and should not be confused with the Indian cornfield of protohistoric times."<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, such features were present.

Those Indians present in the 1840s were not all permanent residents of the area. A good number migrated with the change of seasons. A common pattern was movement northward in the winter when men concentrated on animal trapping for hides and furs. In spring, the natives moved southward into the broadleaf forest where sugar maples were found for making sugar. In summer, the movement was to riverside sites for facilitating crop cultivation and fishing.<sup>25</sup>

The natives of this area knew thoroughly the environmental rhythms of nature and the resources that were forthcoming. The total native population prior to 1840 probably did not surpass 3,000, but that number lived in harmony with the environment and the available resources. In later years, the white settler, with different backgrounds and aspirations, would see the environment differently and would so interpret and use the natural resources differently.

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<sup>24</sup>George Irving Quimby, Indian Life in the Upper Great Lakes, 11,000 B.C. to A.D. 1800 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 83.

<sup>25</sup>Falge, History of Manitowoc County Wisconsin, p. 447 (recollections of James Sibree Anderson).

## CHAPTER III

### FOUNDING AND GROWTH, 1854--1873

Records of the United States General Land Office show that land in the Town of Eaton was first offered for public sale on September 3, 1835, through the district office of Green Bay,<sup>1</sup> and that land in the Town of Liberty was similarly first offered at the district office of Menasha in September 30, 1835.<sup>2</sup> Records show that in both towns Augustus L. McCrea was the person who first entered title, having paid \$1.25 per acre.<sup>3</sup> In August of 1854 title to 3,840 acres was transferred to Oschwald at a price of \$3.50 per acre, with a \$1,500 payment at the time of purchase, the remaining \$13,440 to be paid in equal installments over the following five years.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>U.S., Records of the General Land Office, Land Office Tract Books, Wisconsin, v. 55 (Washington: The National Archives, National Archives and Records Service, General Service Administration, 1951), entry for Township 18 North, Range 21 East.

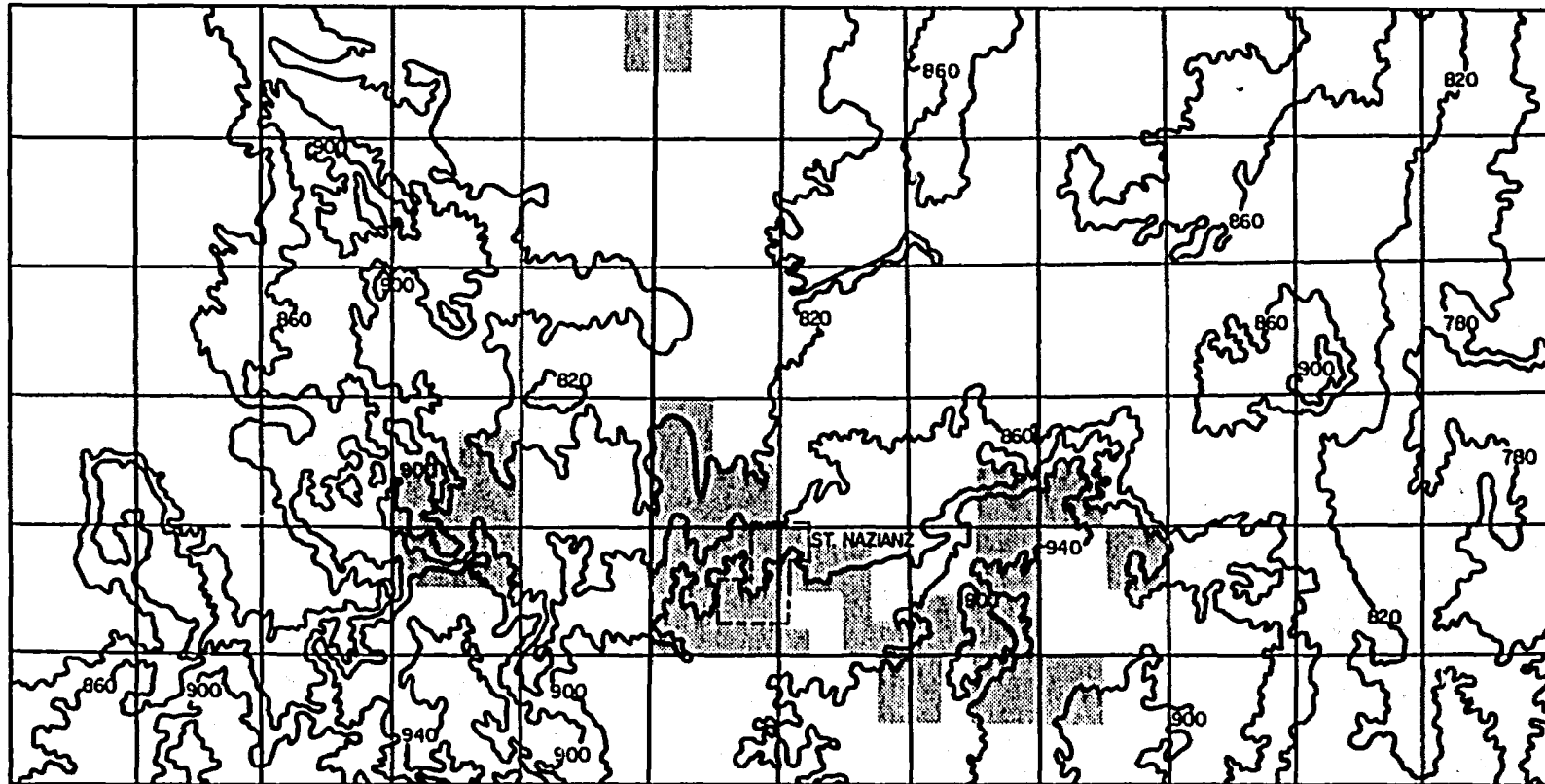
<sup>2</sup>Ibid., v. 58, entry for Township 18 North, Range 22 East.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. The purchase was recorded on June 26, 1850 and patent was issued on April 1, 1851.

<sup>4</sup>Anton Stoll, History of the Origin and Foundation of the German Colony St. Nazianz in the County of Manitowoc in the State of Wisconsin United States of America From the Year 1854 to the End of 1866 (Manitowoc, Wis.: Nord-Western, 1867), p. 12.

EATON

LIBERTY



LEGEND:

~ CONTOUR INTERVAL • 40 FEET

▨ ORIGINAL SOCIETY LAND PARCEL, 1854

SCALE  
0 1 2  
MILES

FIG. 13— TOPOGRAPHY OF EATON AND LIBERTY TOWNSHIPS

Source: 1854 Land Deeds in Archives of Society of Divine Savior, St. Nazianz, WI, and  
U.S.G.S. Reedeville, Kiel, Howards Grove, and Chilton Quadrangles.

Having title to the land, Oschwald sent six men of the group to locate the purchase. The men traveled from Milwaukee to Manitowoc by steamboat. At Manitowoc, they hired a team of oxen and a wagon<sup>5</sup> and followed a trail twelve miles into the wilderness before nightfall forced them to camp. The next morning they began traveling very early, but soon came to the end of the trail, from which point it was necessary to clear the trees to progress further. However, by mid-morning of that second day the group arrived at the spot where the village of St. Nazianz would be built.

The group of six was charged with locating the deeded property and with sufficient clearing and building to enable other group members to come from Milwaukee. By the close of the second day the men had managed to fell enough trees to build a primitive roofless refuge out of logs and foliage. They also recorded seeing curious Indians pass by.

The site chosen for St. Nazianz was a well drained hill and adjacent slope (Figure 13). Conditions of drainage must surely have been an important consideration for choosing the village site. However, there are fanciful legends concerning its selection. One story is that the team of oxen was allowed to drag the wagon through the thicket until it became exhausted and could move no further. There a clearing was made, and the subsequent curving streets of St. Nazianz were

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 13. A fee of \$8.00 paid to the driver is recorded.

established along the path taken by the team pulling the wagon.<sup>6</sup> A second story relates that a mysterious white heifer was seen moving through the dense vegetation. Supposedly, one of the men shouted that it was ". . . a beast of God." Another exclaimed, "Where the heifer lies down, there we will build . . . ." <sup>7</sup> While such stories are entertaining, neither is likely true. It is hard to believe that the owner of the team and wagon would allow such abuse to his property and no further evidence of a white heifer has ever been found. Thus, the higher elevation and gentle slope of the location were probably the desirable attractions.

On the second full day at the camp the six men cut a linden tree to fashion a cross to God in thanks for their land and their ability to work on the land. By September 1 the men were putting a roof on a log blockhouse when Father Oswald and 20 other men arrived. From that day on, the daily life of the group followed a particular pattern with the accent being on the spiritual well-being of everyone. The linden tree cross served as a church for morning and evening religious services each day.<sup>8</sup> Today an encased cross

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<sup>6</sup>Fred L. Holmes, Badger Saints and Sinners (Milwaukee: E. J. Hale and Co., 1939), p. 176.

<sup>7</sup>The Milwaukee Journal, June 11, 1922, part 6, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup>Sister M. Laurentine Kohn, B.S.F., A.B., "History of Catholicity in Manitowoc County with Background of Wisconsin from 1818 to 1940," (M.A. Dissertation, Department of History, University of Notre Dame, 1942), p. 56.





Fig. 14 - The encased cross marks the location where the first cross was erected in the village of St. Nazianz. Anton Stoll once lived in this house.

marks the location of that first cross in the settlement (Figure 14). After eight days the colony had 27 persons and two nearly completed crude buildings.

With the continued growth of St. Nazianz, additional men who had arrived from Milwaukee set out to clear the land--felling trees, cutting away brush, and crudely cultivating the soil. On September 13, 1854, a 25 year old was struck by a falling tree and died minutes later. This tragedy necessitated selection of a cemetery site on a small rise toward the west side of the village.<sup>9</sup> Eventually, this was named St. Gregory's Cemetery when a stone church was built adjacent to the burial ground.

The next building constructed was a church which measured 32 by 24 feet and was built of huge timbers cut in the nearby woods. Because there were no oxen present it was necessary for the villagers to haul the timbers on their shoulders. Some logs were so large that it was necessary for 16 men to carry them. The church was completed for worship by the third Sunday in October of 1854.

November saw a cultural conflict as 18 immigrants arrived directly from Germany.<sup>10</sup> Described as a quarrelsome and funloving lot, the newcomers were not interested in the communal life-style centered around the church. Some were even accused of free-loading and thievery. Eventually, most

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<sup>9</sup>Stoll, p. 16. Father Oschwald and Anton Stoll set out in search of a cemetery site but became lost in the wilderness and did not return until the next morning.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-19.

of the unwelcomed group left the colony, and those few that remained conformed to the village's desired way of life.

As the autumn of 1854 passed and winter approached, half of the group at the village site became afflicted with influenza. Somewhat weakened from the continuous hard work and undernourished by a somewhat scant food supply, some of the men succumbed to the influenza, and by the end of the year six new crosses were added to the cemetery.

At the end of December, 1854, the colony consisted of the church, four houses, a common kitchen, a barn, a blacksmith shop, and a smokehouse. Financial resources had been rapidly exhausted and it was now necessary for Father Oswald to raise additional money. Oswald traveled to Milwaukee and was able to raise \$1,800, a sum used to help meet the \$2,000 of expenses encountered between that fall and the following spring.<sup>11</sup> The population of the settlement had now grown to 70 residents.

The winter of 1854-1855 was one of heavy snows, but nevertheless the men of the settlement cleared land whenever the conditions permitted. Wood shingles were manufactured in anticipation of construction in 1855. Whereas four acres of rye had been planted the previous fall, by spring of 1855 it was possible to plant 24 acres to corn and potatoes.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Frank S. Beck, "Christian Communists in America: A History of the Colony of Saint Nazianz, Wisconsin, During the Pastorate of Its Founder, Father Ambrose Oswald, 1854-1873," (M.A. Dissertation, St. Paul Seminary, 1959), p. 60.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

The harvest of 1855 was good, but was not sufficient to meet the entire demands of the group. This required the purchase of meat and flour outside of the colony. The four acres of rye produced nearly 80 bushels, some of which was used for the next seeding. The remaining rye, in keeping with the spirit of the colony, was shared with neighbors who needed rye seed. Only a small amount of rye was actually ground into flour and used directly to feed the colony.

By spring of 1855 the group numbered 90 and log homes were being constructed to try and accommodate the population. To facilitate this goal, a saw mill was built.

On September 1, 1855, Father Oschwald presented the members of the colony with a statement of financial arrangement and community obligations. The policy statement was directed toward new arrivals, who could join the Society for a fee of \$82.00 cash or its equivalent in labor,<sup>13</sup> but also would serve to avert dissatisfaction among all members at some future time, it was hoped. Up to this time the entire group had eaten at a common table and had been provided with clothing, board, and laundering. The document, which required the signatures of all who wished to join or to remain as members, is summarized as follows:<sup>14</sup>

1. All members pledged to work for the welfare of the

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<sup>13</sup>The Milwaukee Journal, March 12, 1952, part 1, p. 20.

<sup>14</sup>Beck, "Christian Communists in America," pp. 62-63.

colony without wages, the only exception being certain individuals that might sometime be employed under a special contract.

2. Individuals who had received no wages up to this time were to receive a cleared lot, ample for a dwelling and garden.
3. Future work compensation would be as follows:
  - A. Non-members working in the colony would be paid according to strength, ability, occupation, and diligence.
  - B. Payment could be made immediately on land or as cash wage at a future date when the colony's financial situation improved.
4. Non-members would pay their board; more if three meals a day were preferred or less if the simple fare of the society were shared.
5. Food outside of regular meals would be at an individual's expense.
6. Families were to have their own lot, suitable for a dwelling and garden. They would be allowed to keep the produce of their tillage.
7. Additional land could be purchased by families as their income allowed.
8. For the present two year period the common planting of potatoes, corn, rye, wheat, turnips and other vegetables would be shared equitably.

9. Whoever hired outsiders were obligated to pay the expense.
10. Houses were to be built through mutual effort without pay, but the builder was obliged to furnish both the materials and meals required during construction.

The spirit of community that guided the colony of St. Nazianz for nearly 20 years was thus established in concrete terms relatable to the realities of the Wisconsin wilderness. As long as Father Oswald was present to lead, this spirit would help the colony realize the growth envisioned back in Germany.

From these guidelines two items relating to land development patterns are discernible. Items two and six refer to a form of compensation for Society members: a lot, ample for a dwelling and a garden. This foretold that residents not living in group structures would be living in individual dwellings with adjacent gardens. This was the seed for the village growth pattern. Item 3 B states that non-Society members should receive immediate payment due in the form of land. This may indicate that Oswald realized that 3,840 acres was more than ample land for the Society and that some of it could be disposed of in lieu of cash. An implement for transferring Society land back to individual ownership was thus instituted.

The autumn of 1855 saw a notable development--the establishment of the first school in the colony. A female Society member, who had remained in Milwaukee to learn the English language, moved to St. Nazianz to serve as teacher. She held classes each morning in German and each afternoon in English. The English teaching perhaps was a display of the Society's interest in fitting into the new social environment despite the groups' expressed desire to keep a closed, traditional German society.

The following couple of years saw the community continue to clear land for farming, to build structures, and to receive gradually new arrivals. Economic hardship developed in 1857 when, for the second year in a row, the Society could not pay the installment due for the land purchased in 1854. McCrea desired to take possession of all the Society's deeded land, which naturally upset the Society. Eventually the dispute was taken to a Manitowoc County court where a decision demanding the sale of colony holdings sufficient to satisfy unpaid installments was made.<sup>15</sup> Before the Society could find economic aid, some of the choicest lands, including that on which the village with all of the improvements stood, were sold at an auction. Records of the Manitowoc County Register of Deeds office show that an United States Marshal's Deed was issued on December 12, 1857, to repossess a parcel of land

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<sup>15</sup>Stoll, History of the Origin, p. 25.

that included the northern half of Section 25, Township 18 North, Range 21 East.<sup>16</sup> The deed, signed by Major T. Thomas, United States Marshal, was then sold to John C. Starkweather for \$1,633.47 on December 12, 1857.<sup>17</sup>

In reality the Society never gave up possession of its land, for soon afterward Father Oschwald journeyed to Milwaukee and found a benefactor. He encountered a fellow Roman Catholic gentleman from Sheboygan who loaned the colony sufficient funding to buy back land that had been auctioned, including that portion of Section 25 previously mentioned.<sup>18</sup>

As early as 1857, Oschwald was concerned that the continuous arrival of new settlers could weaken the original ideals of the colony. Wishing to segregate the original Society members and others whose ideals were the strength of the colony, Oschwald had two houses constructed, one for each sex, where those people could pursue their ideals of outside influence. Beck has stated that this initial cloistering became "the central phenomenon of the village structure in the years to come."<sup>19</sup> All individuals who desired a single life of poverty, chastity, obedience, and service voluntarily entered these homes to live. Thus, the feared gradual

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<sup>16</sup>From Abstract of Title to Section 25 and 26, Township 18 North, Range 21 East, issued by Jos. M. Zahorik, Manitowoc County Register of Deeds, May 7, 1954.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Kohn, "History of Catholicity in Manitowoc County," p. 58.

<sup>19</sup>Beck, "Christian Communists," p. 67.



disintegration of the colony would be averted, at least for a substantial period of time. Beck concludes that the Clustering gave the community a perpetuity quite unique from the numerous other communal ventures of American settlement.<sup>20</sup>

Construction in 1858 was highlighted by the Rosa Kloster, a pink stucco convent that was built for the newly created Third Order of the Sisters of Saint Francis. The Rosa Kloster eventually would have three additional wings completed, forming an enclosed central garden court. The structure, with its ornate central European-styled cupola, was built on a hillside overlooking the village and remained a central landmark until it was demolished in 1949. A facility for males was constructed on the hill on the south side of the village.

Inside the Rosa Kloster, the sisters braided straw hats and manufactured shoes which were furnished to the entire Society free of charge. Any excess products were sold to outsiders with proceeds going into the community treasury.

When the Oschwald group first settled in Manitowoc County in 1854, what would become the Town of Liberty was then divided, the western half being a part of Eaton and the eastern half a part of Newton. On November 16, 1857, new town boundaries were approved by the County Board of Supervisors.<sup>21</sup> This action separated all of Township 18 North,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Development of Town Boundaries in Wisconsin, Number 36, Manitowoc County (Madison: The Wisconsin Historical Records Survey, 1941), p. 23.

Range 22 East from adjacent Eaton and Newton, and created the Town of Buchanan. This led eventually to Eaton being confined within the area of Township 18 North, Range 21 East, when its boundary with Rockland was confirmed as the boundary between Township 18 North and Township 19 North in 1870,<sup>22</sup> (Figure 15).

The name Liberty replaced Buchanan in November 10, 1861, when "a petition signed by 30 free holders praying that the name of Town of Buchanan be changed to that of Liberty was, on Motion of Henry Bates, adopted, and the prayer of Said petitioners granted."<sup>23</sup>

In 1858 the civic organization of the Town of Eaton was established. Father Oschwald was elected as first chairman of the town, and Anton Spranger, a Society member, was elected to be a supervisor.

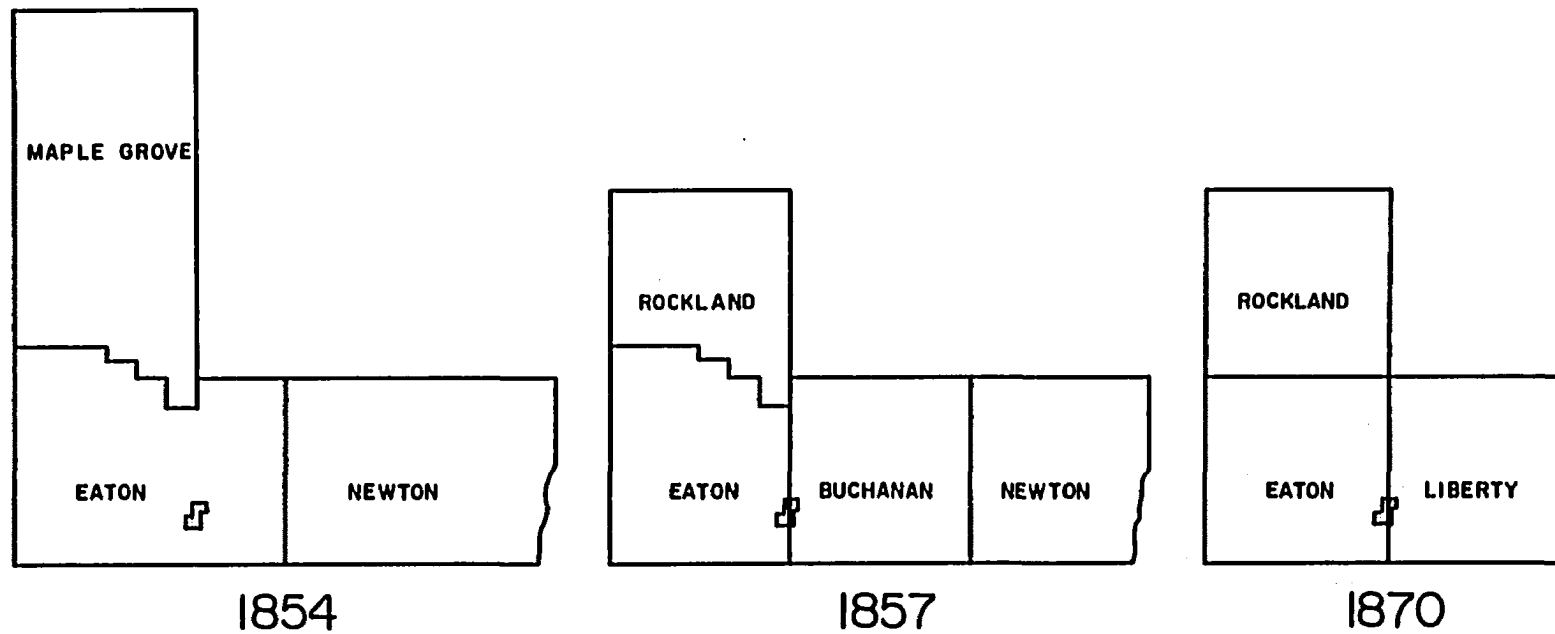
Unfavorable weather for agriculture in 1859 seriously decreased the anticipated harvest, for which the colony had added a new feed and flour mill in 1858. Food provisions were short for the 200 now living in St. Nazianz, and it was necessary to get aid wherever possible. By 1860 the colony had 48 families and numerous single persons, and it contained 56 buildings.

Settlers from Germany as well as from Illinois, Iowa, New York, and elsewhere had arrived at a steady pace in 1862.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 29.



LEGEND:

 ST. NAZIANZ

SCALE

  
0 1 2  
MILES

## FIG. 15—EVOLUTION OF TOWN BOUNDARIES

Source: Development Of Town Boundaries In Wisconsin (Madison, Wisconsin Historical Records Survey, 1941).

During that year the Loretto Monastery, a brotherhouse, was built atop the hill in St. Nazianz (Figure 16). The colony had become stabilized into a cohesive religious and social unit with harmonic growth. A daily routine expressing the Society's devotion to its spiritual foundation and its application of communal living was well established. A young boy, who moved to St. Nazianz with his parents in 1860, recalled in later years that "Das Settlement," as St. Nazianz was often called, was a quiet and pleasant village.<sup>24</sup> A daily routine for all members of the Society consisted of early Mass, after which Oschwald and Anton Stoll would confer outside the church as to what tasks were to be completed for the day and to subsequently give assignments to the Society members. For the noon-time meal the church bell summoned the people from the fields and village. Following the meal, all would go to the church for a prayer session. The evening meal was also eaten in common, and was followed by a service in the church which always was concluded with a song. Thus, a routine of worship, fellowship, and work had been established.

The winter of 1864 was especially severe. Described as a "veritable Russian winter,"<sup>25</sup> the first part of January was very cold. This was followed by nearly four feet of

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<sup>24</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1929), p. 37 (Recollections of the Rev. Dr. Charles V. Stetter).

<sup>25</sup>Stoll, History of the Origin, p. 32.

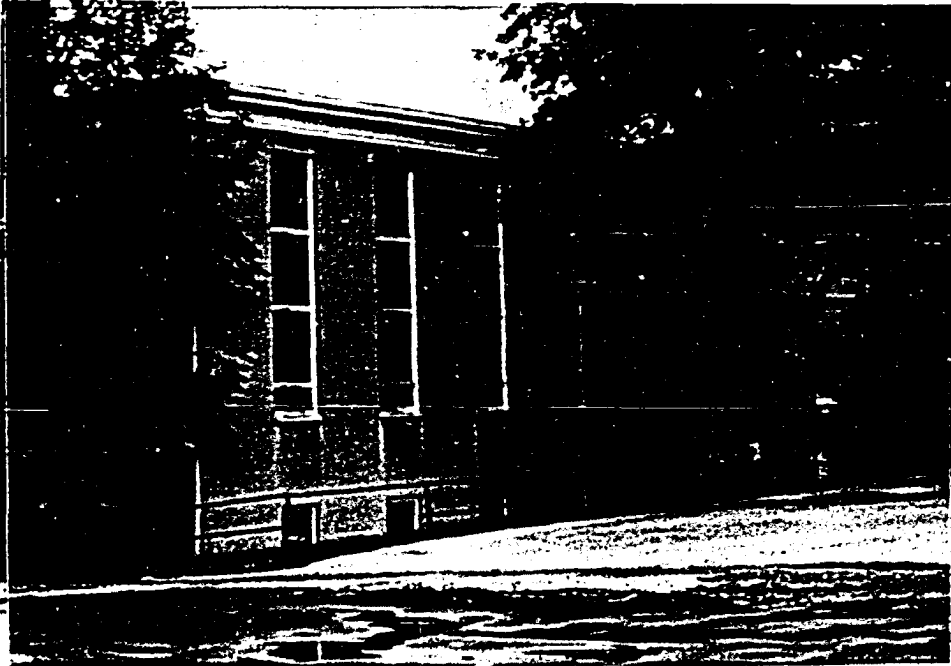


Fig. 16 - The Loretto Monastery of the Oschwald Brothers of the Third Order of St. Francis, built in 1862.

snow. May and June were extremely dry, resulting in diminished crops, including hay. Numerous fires occurred and on one occasion smoke was described to be so thick that visibility was less than a quarter-mile.<sup>26</sup>

The on-going War-Between-the-States was felt in St. Nazianz. Men of the colony were being conscripted up to age 45, and 12 villagers had entered military service by 1864. Another four men had been drafted but instead went to Canada and aspired to start a new association.<sup>27</sup> However, nothing further is record in the St. Nazianz annals concerning their success.

Two notable establishments added in the village in 1864 were a tannery and a district school. The tannery, built at a cost of \$1,300 was equipped with 16 pits and two mechanically-operated weaver's looms.<sup>28</sup> The tax-supported school gave instruction in both German and English languages, and was unique in that Sisters from the village served as teachers. Subjects taught included Catechism and Bible history.<sup>29</sup> This combining of public and parochial education may reflect that everyone in the district attended St. Gregory's church, and thus no one took exception to the established practice.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>27</sup> Beck, "Christian Communists," p. 74.

<sup>28</sup> Stoll, History of the Origin, p. 34.

<sup>29</sup> Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin p. 37 (Recollections of the Rev. Dr. Charles V. Stetter).

The first orphanages of the Society were begun for boys and girls during 1865 and 1866. Establishment of the facilities reflected the spiritual enthusiasm of the Society, for Oswald had expressed that the Society could live into future years through three means: marriage and family growth within the colony; attraction of new members; and care of orphaned children. The orphanage now meant that all three avenues were available to the Society of St. Nazianz.<sup>30</sup>

To replace the 32 by 24 foot church built in 1855, a new one, named St. Gregory's, was begun in 1864, and by 1868 it was nearly completed. Almost all able people participated in its construction, for women and children carried water from the mill pond, and men hauled large boulders for the foundation and the walls. Sisters in the community prepared vestments, and local craftsmen made the altar, benches, and statues. The fieldstone structure is attractive and fully used by the church members today (Figure 17).

As church construction progressed the Society faced a new development. A number of local people attended St. Gregory's but were not actually members of the Society of St. Nazianz. However, they expressed interest in becoming members of the parish and in participating in church governance. The financing of the new structure offered a solution in that individuals and families who would pledge to the building

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<sup>30</sup>Beck, "Christian Communists," p. 123.



Fig. 17 - St. Gregory's church and cemetery. The church was constructed between 1864 and 1868, while the first grave in the cemetery dates from 1854.



fund could become parish members and could vote on church motions.<sup>31</sup>

The spiritual service of the Society was obviously reaching beyond its land borders and communal mission. Perhaps Oschwald was concerned that this outreach, if allowed to continue, would weaken the Society and its closeness; he considered constructing a wall around the village that would supposedly maintain the strong spiritual and social attitudes within and protect from dilution from outside, but the wall was never begun, and reference is made to a state official advising against it.<sup>32</sup>

The winter of 1867 was marked by an extremely heavy snowstorm on January 24-25.<sup>33</sup> Recorded as the heaviest snowfall up to that time at St. Nazianz, weather data show a total accumulation of 10 inches for the two days at nearby Manitowoc.<sup>34</sup> Throughout the area deep drifting of the snow was reported.

The expansion of the community was again reflected in the need for a new flour mill and new saw mill. They were both constructed in 1869 at a combined cost of \$13,000.<sup>35</sup> By

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<sup>31</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954 (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1954), p. 35.

<sup>32</sup>The Milwaukee Journal, June 11, 1922, part 6, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup>David M. Ludlum, Early American Winters II, 1821-1870 (Boston: American Meteorological Society, 1968), p. 174.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Beck, "Christian Communists," p. 77.



Fig. 18 - St. Mary Convent in St. Nazianz. The portion of the building in the foreground was originally the hospital built by Oswald in 1870. The far side of the structure, not visible, was an orphanage which was built in 1866.

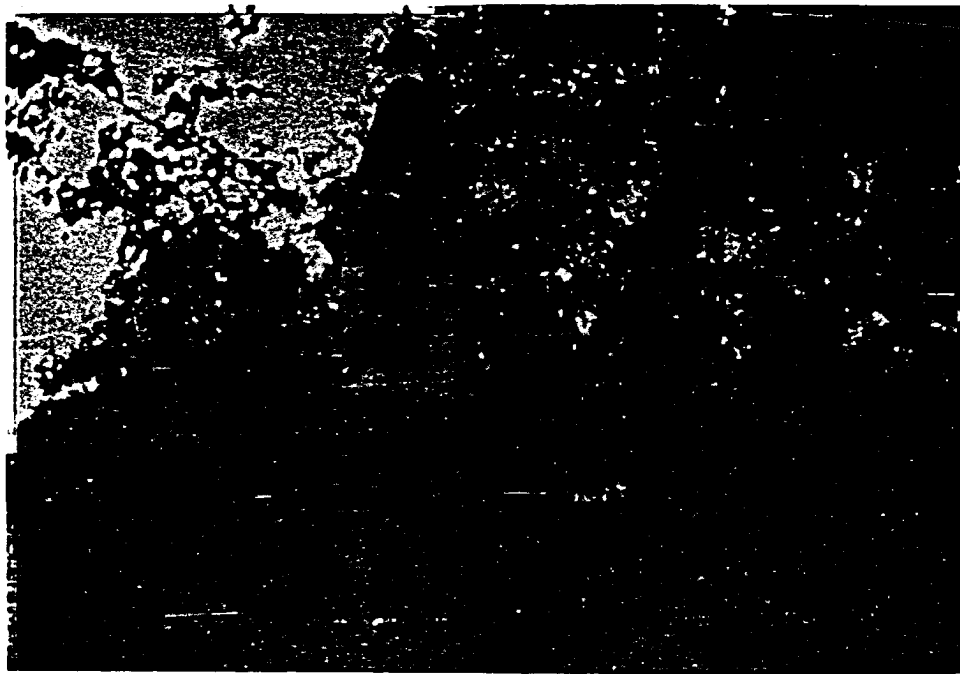


Fig. 19 - The Loretto Chapel, constructed in 1870.



Fig. 20 - A portion of the Twelve Stations of the Cross on the hill adjacent to the Loretto Chapel. Lake Oswald in the background. Photo taken in April, 1978.

1870 a three story hospital of stone and brick was completed. Located adjacent to an orphanage building, the 30 by 60 foot structure eventually became a part of the Rosa Kloster complex (Figure 18).

The efficiency and the progress of the colony in clearing the wilderness and in increasing agricultural productivity is seen in agricultural statistics of the 1870 United States Census schedules.<sup>36</sup> Records indicate that all agricultural activity of the group at that time took place within the Town of Eaton; there was none in Liberty. Production data for the Society and for all of Eaton are summarized in Table 1. It is evident that the Society, with its group participation, was the dominant agricultural enterprise within the Town of Eaton.

Religious structures dominated construction activity in 1871 and 1872. A new seminary was built atop the hill near the brotherhouse and the Loretto Cemetery. Loretto Chapel, on the same hill, was equipped with a bell and a new tower. An eight foot wide trail was cleared on the hillside leading to the chapel for a tranquil setting to locate the Twelve Stations of the Cross. The structures are shown in Figures 19 and 20.

Missionary zeal of the Society was evident in 1872 when the three story Catholic Boarding School was established and

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<sup>36</sup>U.S. Census Schedules for Wisconsin, 1870, Schedule #3, Productions of Agriculture, Manitowoc--Ozaukee Counties, Series No. 82/2/3, vol. 5, pp. 3-4.

TABLE 1

Production of Agriculture Statistics for  
the Society of St. Nazianz and the  
Town of Eaton, 1870

	Society of St. Nazianz		Total for Town of Eaton (including Society of St. Nazianz)
<b>ACREAGE</b>			
improved . . . . .	220		6,256
woodland . . . . .	100		8,258
<b>PRESENT CASH VALUE . . . . .</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>		<b>\$301,816</b>
<b>IMPLEMENTS AND MACHINERY . . . . .</b>	<b>.\$710</b>		<b>\$11,680</b>
<b>WAGES . . . . .</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>\$6,520</b>
<b>LIVESTOCK</b>			
horses . . . . .	6		190
mules and asses . . . . .	3		5
milk cows . . . . .	40		477
working oxen . . . . .	8		202
other cattle . . . . .	15		368
sheep . . . . .	100		821
swine . . . . .	20		494
value of all livestock . . . . .	.\$3,400		.\$53,203
<b>FIELD CROPS</b>			
spring wheat . . . . .	1000	bushels	22,791
winter wheat . . . . .	800	bushels	9,655
rye . . . . .	800	bushels	1,859
Indian corn . . . . .	100	bushels	368
oats . . . . .	500	bushels	16,435
barley . . . . .	100	bushels	657
wool . . . . .	300	pounds	2,564
peas and beans . . . . .	80	bushels	2,854
Irish potatoes . . . . .	.1200	bushels	4,805
<b>DAIRY PRODUCTS</b>			
butter . . . . .	4,000	pounds	.39,584
cheese . . . . .	312	pounds	2,512
<b>HAY . . . . .</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>tons</b>	<b>1,455</b>
<b>FOREST PRODUCTS . . . . .</b>	<b>\$625</b>		<b>.\$1,034</b>
<b>SLAUGHTER ANIMALS . . . . .</b>	<b>\$400</b>		<b>.\$7,881</b>
<b>ESTIMATED VALUE OF ALL</b>			
<b>FARM PRODUCTS . . . . .</b>	<b>.\$7,572</b>		<b>\$80,225</b>

Source: U.S. Census Schedules for Wisconsin, 1870, Schedule #3, Productions of Agriculture, Manitowoc--Ozaukee Counties, Series No. 82/2/3, vol. 5, pp. 3-4. Housed in the Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison.

staffed by Society members at Charlestown, 12 miles west of St. Nazianz. The Society managed the school until it was closed in 1885.

By 1873, the colony of the Society of St. Nazianz had become firmly established. It had weathered some tenuous situations in early years during which the faith and the dedication of the members was perhaps the continuing life-line to the future. During this period, the membership, from all indications, appeared happy with its commitment to the Christian communal life, with its daily life pattern, and with its spiritual and administrative leader, Father Ambrose Oschwald.

At one time many outsiders looked upon the village as a possible future industrial center as reports of milling of flour and wood and of manufacturing of woolen textiles, hats, shoes, beer, and many other products filtered into surrounding areas.<sup>37</sup> Barley and hops were grown in the fields and the men of the brotherhouse mastered the art of brewing. Beer was consumed on the Society grounds as well as in privately-owned pubs. For 1872 a directory of prominent citizens of St. Nazianz<sup>38</sup> included

Rev. A. Oschwald--Leader of Colony  
 Anton Stoll--Business Manager  
 Gottfried Brever--proprietor of St. Gregories House  
 Theod. Meyer--proprietor, Travelers Home

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<sup>37</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 77.

<sup>38</sup>E. M. Harney, Map of Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, 1872 (Milwaukee: J. Kauber, 1872.

Anton Kullar--proprietor of Saloon and Hotel  
Peter Federspeil--blacksmith  
Charles Moerchen--blacksmith  
L. Baumgartner--post master

It is certain that some of these individuals had privately owned interests. Oswald would frequently visit the bars in the hotels or guest houses to meet informally the men of the colony and outsiders as well. He, too, enjoyed the locally-produced beer and would chat informally about work to be done, social issues, and lessons from the Bible.

By 1873, as portrayed on Figure 21, a number of individual lots in the village had been deeded to private land owners. As ledger records from the Archives of the Society of the Divine Savior show, the lot divisions were deeded from either "A. Oswald" or an "Administrator" to a member of the Society, and were recorded by block number, lot number, and assessed value (Figures 22, 23, and 24). These deeds were, at that time, mainly paper transactions which assigned the lot suitable for dwelling and garden, as alluded to in items two and six above, to family units of the Society. Some transactions, however, are indicated to be actual sales. Lot sizes averaged about 80 to 90 feet across by 130 feet deep, or approximately one-quarter acre (Figure 21).

By locating the lots on a map, along with specific improvements present in 1873, it is clear that the village pattern was a modification of what Bertrand has identified as

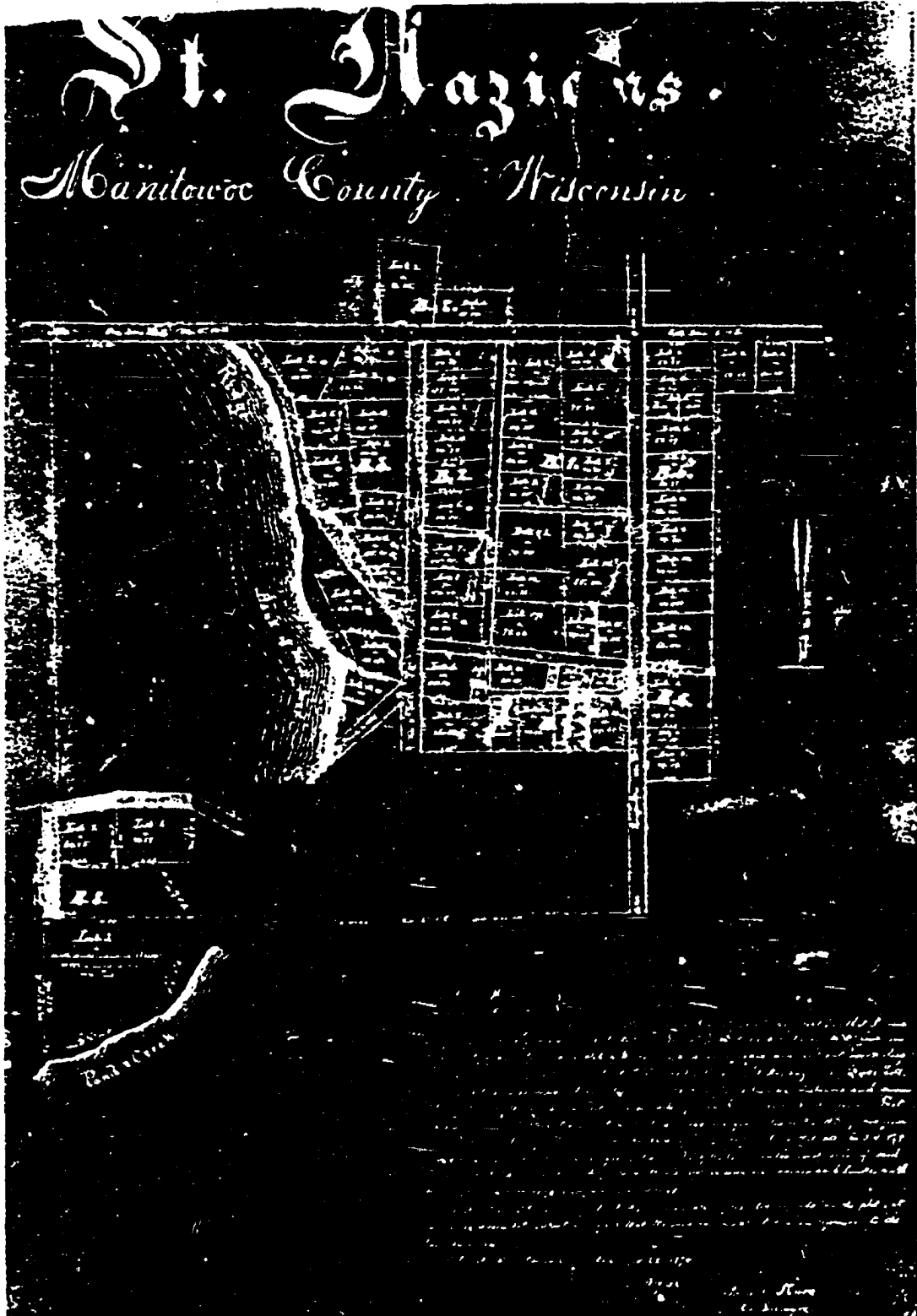


Fig. 21 - Village map of St. Nazianz, as recorded in Manitowoc County Courthouse on November 22, 1874, by John E. Hara, County Surveyor.



1. Lot Block			June	June	Rinsch	Ref	June
1	1	Sold by Bschwato	25	18	25	48	$\frac{99}{100}$
2	"	Dile " "	"	"	"	46	$\frac{700}{100}$
3	"	Administrative Sect 25 June	"	"	"	24	$\frac{51}{100}$
4	"	Sold to Bschwato	"	"	"	49	$\frac{28}{100}$
5	"	" " "	"	"	"	77	$\frac{70}{100}$
6	"	Administrative Sect 25 June	"	"	"	55	$\frac{20}{100}$
7	"	Sold by A. Bschwato	"	"	"	58	$\frac{100}{100}$
8	"	" " "	"	"	"	40	
9	"	" " "	"	"	"	40	$\frac{25}{100}$
10	"	" " "	"	"	"	58	$\frac{95}{100}$
11	"	" " "	"	"	"	59	$\frac{72}{100}$
12	"	" " "	"	"	"	74	$\frac{54}{100}$
13	"	" " "	"	"	"	45	$\frac{46}{100}$
14	"	" " "	"	"	"	85	$\frac{20}{100}$
15	"	" " "	"	"	"	48	$\frac{68}{100}$
16	"	" " "	"	"	"	59	$\frac{4}{100}$
17	"	" " "	"	"	"	78	$\frac{66}{100}$
18	2	" " "	"	"	"	50	$\frac{44}{100}$
19	"	" " "	"	"	"	57	$\frac{59}{100}$
20	"	" " "	"	"	"	44	$\frac{62}{100}$
21	"	Sold by Comite "	"	"	"	59	$\frac{75}{100}$
22	"	" " "	"	"	"	40	$\frac{2}{100}$
23	"	Sold June 25 Administrative	"	"	"	52	$\frac{50}{100}$
24	"	Sold by A. Bschwato	"	"	"	45	$\frac{98}{100}$
25	"	" " "	"	"	"	47	$\frac{70}{100}$
26	"	Sold 23 June Administrative	"	"	"	50	$\frac{50}{100}$

Fig. 22 - Copy of ledger recording lot assignments and assessed lot values. From archives of the Society of the Divine Savior in St. Nazianz.

Lot No.	Block		Series	Plan	Block	Assessed Value
1	3	Sold to June Administration	25	18	21	42 $\frac{42}{100}$
2	"	"	"	"	"	81 $\frac{81}{100}$
3	"	"	"	"	"	60 $\frac{60}{100}$
4	"	Sold to A. Beckwald	7	"	"	45 $\frac{45}{100}$
5	"	"	"	"	"	45 $\frac{45}{100}$
6	4	Sold to June Administration	"	"	"	57 $\frac{57}{100}$
7	"	Sold to Marcker	"	"	"	69 $\frac{69}{100}$
8	1	Sold to A. Beckwald	"	"	"	51 $\frac{51}{100}$
9	"	Sold to June Administration	"	"	"	55 $\frac{55}{100}$
10	"	"	"	"	"	27 $\frac{27}{100}$
11	"	"	"	"	"	62 $\frac{62}{100}$
12	"	"	"	"	"	41 $\frac{41}{100}$
13	"	"	"	"	"	42 $\frac{42}{100}$
14	4	Sold to June Administration	"	"	"	20 $\frac{20}{100}$
2	"	"	"	"	"	18 $\frac{18}{100}$
3	"	"	"	"	"	4 $\frac{4}{100}$
4	"	"	"	"	"	38 $\frac{38}{100}$
5	"	"	"	"	"	16 $\frac{16}{100}$
6	"	Sold to C. Marcker	"	"	"	55 $\frac{55}{100}$
7	"	Sold to George Bill	"	"	"	76 $\frac{76}{100}$
8	"	Sold to A. Beckwald	"	"	"	15 $\frac{15}{100}$
9	"	"	"	"	"	11 $\frac{11}{100}$
10	"	"	"	"	"	54 $\frac{54}{100}$
11	"	"	"	"	"	54 $\frac{54}{100}$
12	"	"	"	"	"	47 $\frac{47}{100}$

Fig. 23 - Copy of ledger recording lot assignments and assessed lot values. From archives of the Society of the Divine Savior in St. Nazianz.

	Lot to Black		Section	House	Parish	Sold
1	5	Sold Comite Amnicis	30	18	22	40 $\frac{15}{100}$
2	"	Sold U: Bischrate	"	"	"	50 $\frac{26}{100}$
3	"	"	"	"	"	52 $\frac{50}{100}$
4	"	"	"	"	"	41 $\frac{22}{100}$
5	"	"	"	"	"	17 $\frac{21}{100}$
6	"	no Sold	"	"	"	52 $\frac{52}{100}$
7	"	"	"	"	"	50 $\frac{75}{100}$
8	"	Sold Comite Amnicis	"	"	"	40 $\frac{60}{100}$
9	"	no Sold	"	"	"	39 $\frac{42}{100}$
10	"	"	"	"	"	58 $\frac{40}{100}$
11	"	"	"	"	"	20 $\frac{50}{100}$
12	"	"	"	"	"	63 $\frac{02}{100}$
1	6	Sold U: Bischrate	"	"	"	69 $\frac{25}{100}$
2	"	"	"	"	"	25 $\frac{02}{100}$
3	"	"	"	"	"	39 $\frac{55}{100}$
1	7	"	24	18	21	59 $\frac{30}{100}$
2	"	"	"	"	"	96 $\frac{85}{100}$
1	8	"	25	18	28	80 $\frac{20}{100}$
2	"	"	"	"	"	56 $\frac{04}{100}$

Fig. 24 - Copy of ledger recording lot assignments and assessed lot values. From archives of the Society of the Divine Savior in St. Nazianz.

the rural hamlet crossroad settlement (Figure 25).<sup>39</sup> The main crossroad at St. Nazianz would develop in the northeast corner of the map, and as of 1873 only limited growth was found beyond that intersection. However, to the southwest, where most of the lot divisions were, a somewhat rectangular clustering was developing. Bertrand states this pattern is common to the rural hamlets of eastern Wisconsin that were settled by group-immigration from Germany, particularly so with groups that came under the organized Roman Catholic or Lutheran church.<sup>40</sup> In such cases the village typically was clustered around a prominent, high-steepled church. St. Nazianz fits well into the mold, except that St. Gregory's church site was at the bottom of the hill. However, later construction did locate the Loretto Chapel, the Stations of the Cross, and the seminary on the hilltop.

The village settlement pattern common to the German settlements of eastern Wisconsin is in sharp contrast to similar group settlements in the Ozarks. Gerlach states that in Perry and Osage counties in Missouri

The German village, from the beginning, had shown a tendency to elongate, regardless of topographic or other physical conditions. In some cases, the village was established as a farm village with each farmer

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<sup>39</sup>Kenneth Bertrand, "Rural Agglomerated Settlements in The Eastern Lake Shore Red Clay Dairy Region of Wisconsin," Transactions, Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters, v. 34, 1942, p. 55.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

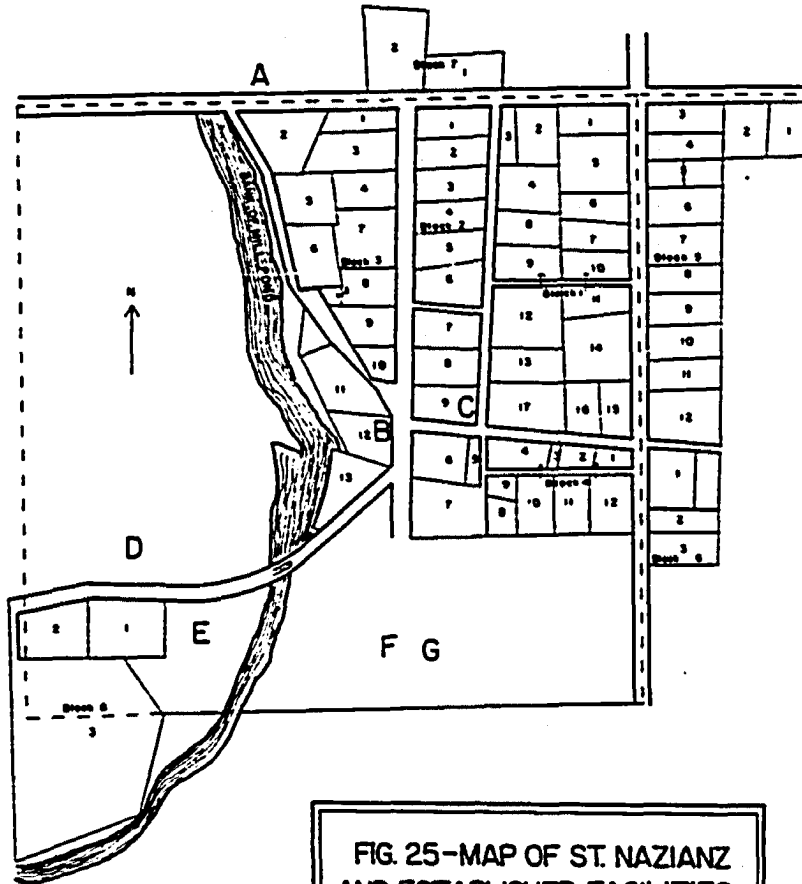


FIG. 25-MAP OF ST. NAZIANZ  
AND ESTABLISHED FACILITIES  
AS OF 1873

LEGEND:

- A-SAW AND GRAIN MILL (1869)
- B-INITIAL CROSS
- C-OLD ST. GREGORY CHURCH
- D-ST. GREGORY CHURCH AND CEMETERY
- E-SEMINARY
- F-ROSA KLOSTER
- G-ST. MARY CONVENT
- H-LORETTO CHAPEL
- I-LORETTO MONASTERY

SCALE  
0 MILE 1/10

H

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having a town lot and an attenuated strip of farmland stretching back from the village, or a totally detached farm some distance from the village.<sup>41</sup>

Such elongated German villages included several of the Roman Catholic settlements in Osage County.<sup>42</sup> Certainly, St. Nazianz in 1873 presented a contrasting village form, as did several neighboring hamlets of eastern Wisconsin. At St. Nazianz the communal structure with its common working of the Society's land helps to explain the contrast of pattern with that in the Ozarks.

Through the cooperative efforts, the Society had left its imprint on the Wisconsin landscape--through land clearing, lot divisions, and the construction of a village. From this formative period in St. Nazianz many relics are visible today. Early village development is depicted in Figures 26 and 27. Figure 26 presents a drawing of the village looking to south, around 1860. Notable features in the photo include the Rosa Kloster in the background; the initial St. Gregory's church in the center; the mill pond in the upper right, and the mills along the creek downstream from the pond. Figure 27 presents a view toward the southwest in 1866 or 1867. Again, the Rosa Kloster sits prominently in the center background of the photo, with the Loretto Monastery atop the hill to the left. This depiction, most likely altered by hand

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<sup>41</sup>Russel L. Gerlach, Immigrants in the Ozarks (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1976), p. 67.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

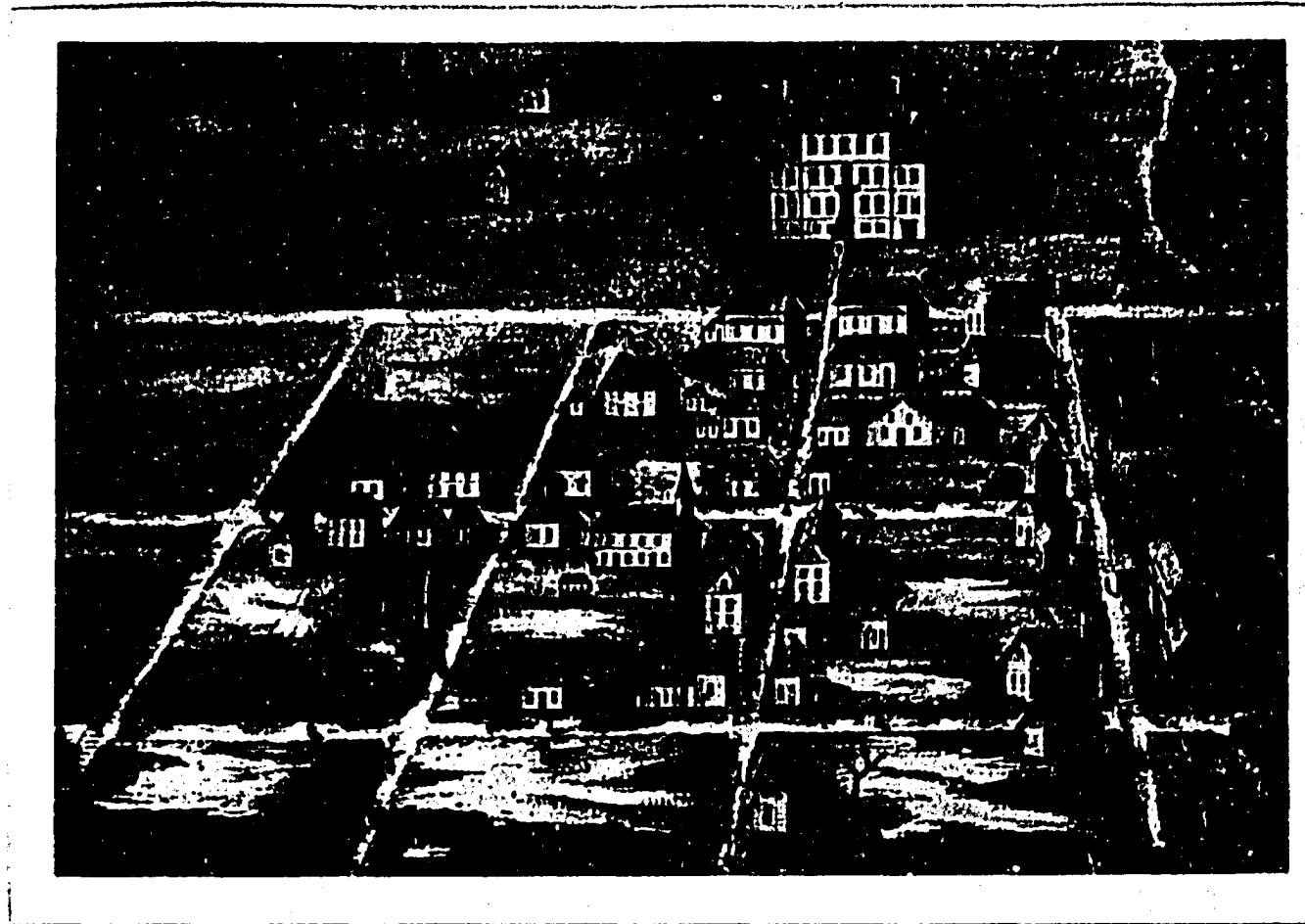


Fig. 26 - An artist's depiction of the village of St. Nazianz in 1860. From front piece of: St. Nazianz, 1854-1954.

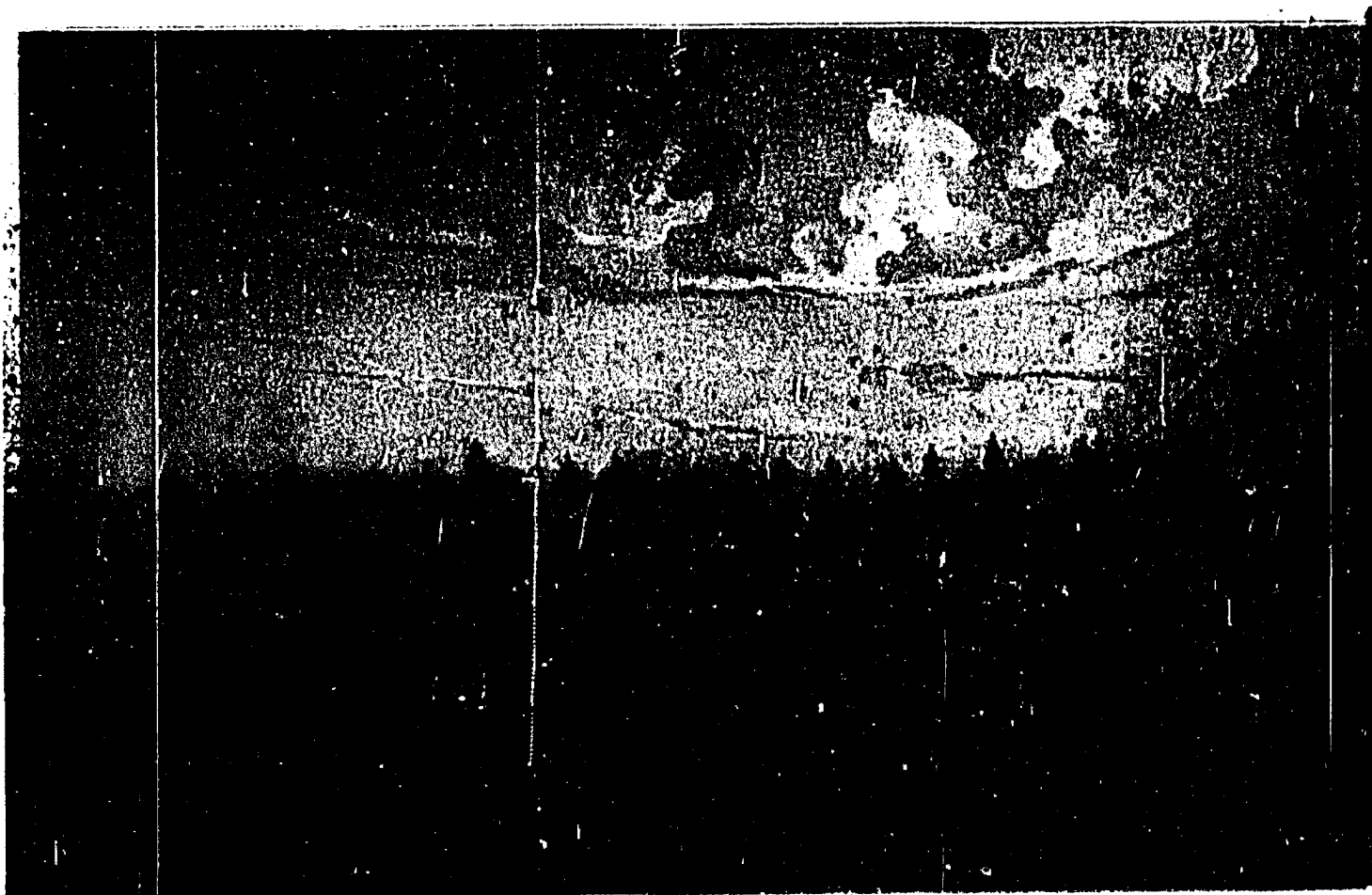


Fig. 27 - A copy of a photograph of St. Nazianz in 1866 or 1867 by W. Morgeneier for the Chicago Lithograph Company.



drawing, presents the cleared fields and fencing associated with the farming and shows the village pattern of buildings to be a "crossroads" cluster rather than elongated settlement. The population at this time estimated to have been about 400, with 80 brothers in the monastery, 150 sisters in the convent and 170 married and single people in the village.<sup>43</sup>

The Loretto Chapel, the Stations of the Cross, the seminary buildings still sit prominently on the hill overlooking the village. In the village many houses and other structures built then are standing today, the most prominent being St. Gregory's church. Lake Oschwald and mill pond, created when a creek was dammed in the 1860's, are present, although the mills have been removed.

The legacy of this period of village establishment at St. Nazianz takes two forms today--a physical village site and a spiritual appreciation of the guiding faith of the original colony and its subsequent reflectance on the physical community. People of the village are well aware of the history of St. Nazianz and are proud of remnants from the past that are present today.

A prime example of such awareness is the recent cleaning given the Loretto Chapel where two women volunteered their services. Neither lady is a native of St. Nazianz, but each had married St. Nazianz men and consequently moved

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<sup>43</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 23.

to the village.<sup>44</sup> They, too, have come to appreciate and understand St. Nazianz: "We just happened to marry men from St. Nazianz and so it (Loretto chapel) also become important to use." As in early St. Nazianz, the entire families--wife, husband, children--worked together.

By 1873, 19 years of development had transformed the St. Nazianz wilderness into a thriving and contented village. The people were living their dream of being members of a Christian communal group free of outside persecution. After such solid growth it must have seemed to the Society that there was no reason to anticipate any problems in the future.

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<sup>44</sup>The Milwaukee Journal, January 13, 1980, part 2, pp. 1 and 13.

## CHAPTER IV

### COMMUNAL DISINTEGRATION 1873-1896

The contentment and spirit of community that had developed in St. Nazianz over the nearly 20 years since settlement in 1854 was severely strained and somewhat broken following the early months of 1873. The rather abrupt change was triggered by the death of Father Oschwald on February 27 of that year.

Prior to his illness, Oschwald had presented his yearly report in which he reviewed the entire situation of the community. He noted the relative prosperity of the Society, its productivity of agricultural and domestic goods, its financial situation, and its spiritual welfare. He emphasized that the last item was the main foundation for the Society and all its activities:

Our calling is not to accumulate earthly riches nor to earn many dollars, as the American usually intends. To achieve that, it would not have been necessary to come here. All except a few of us would have fared better in worldly gain if we had remained in the homeland. Yes, I myself could have had a more peaceful life, had I so wished. Our destiny however was entirely otherwise.

If one views in true perspective those who live in order to gain their own betterment, one notes that they must endure much that is unpleasant, much that is difficult. Therefore, my children, never forget that we are mere pilgrims on this earth, and that time is given to us in order that we may prepare for eternity. I am well pleased with your efforts except in a few matters, and

if God provides us with his grace, we can yet achieve much good. As for me, death will not come so soon. But if providence decides otherwise, we will be content. We hope therefore that things will advance a step nearer to heaven. Again let us reject more and more our faults and thus grow in readiness for heaven. Of course, many will not live to see the coming year, but that matters little, for one has nothing to lose in this world. We live only for God's glory. I now want to bless you all.<sup>1</sup>

While Oschwald was in fine health at the time of this annual report, just before New Year's Day of 1873, the content foreshadows two significant and immediate events: Oschwald's death, and the unpleasantness one must endure in seeking self-betterment.

#### The Death of Father Oschwald

In early February of 1873 Father Oschwald officiated at the burial rites of two brothers of the community. Shortly afterward, he contracted a severe cold, but he still officiated on February 19 at a third funeral service for a departed fellow priest. The following morning he led still a fourth funeral service and then retired to his bed, feeling quite ill.<sup>2</sup> In his bed he received countless visitors, including the Brothers and Sisters of the Society of St. Nazianz.

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<sup>1</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954 (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1954), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Frank S. Beck, "Christian Communists in America: A History of the Colony of Saint Nazianz, Wisconsin During the Pastorate of Its Founder, Father Ambrose Oschwald, 1854-1873," (M.A. Thesis, St. Paul Seminary, 1959), p. 156.

On February 26, Father Oschwald had an assistant priest send the following message to Bishop Henni in Milwaukee:

At the present time Father Ambrose Oschwald has asked me to write and to inform you that he is gravely ill and needs replacement. Would you please send a priest as soon as possible. He wishes to suggest as his preference the selection of Rev. Peter Mutz to be his successor as pastor. Whatever would be best for the welfare of the parish, he leaves to your good pleasure, whether to send someone else or not.<sup>3</sup>

Oschwald himself strongly hoped that the Bishop would appoint Mutz, a young man whom Oschwald first met in St. Louis and who subsequently joined the Society of St. Nazianz.<sup>4</sup> Mutz then entered the seminary and became a priest. Oschwald felt that Mutz knew and understood the colony and would strive to continue his traditions.

Death came to Father Oschwald on the morning of February 27. Several days of prayer service and visitation followed with the actual funeral service being held on March 3. Oschwald's remains were put into a crypt beneath the high altar of St. Ambrose Church, which had been attached to the Loretto Monastery.

Six years prior to his death, Oschwald had prepared a will that he thought would insure the existence of the colony.

It is my will that the association which I have founded at St. Nazianz, Manitowoc County, State of Wisconsin, shall exist for hundreds of years to come after my death, and shall, by the blessing of God, do good to

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>4</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1929), p. 30.

His glory and the welfare of mankind, more especially for schools, also for widows and orphans as it is prescribed by our statutes for the sick and destitute, to the best ability of the association. For this purpose and end I give, devise, and convey and bequeath forever, after my death, all goods and houses which I have caused to be built for the association, and also all the lands which are deeded to me and recorded in my name, to the association as such, consisting of the brothers and sisters, shall pay those debts that stand against my name.

Should the brothers and sisters wish to have their share of the lands separate, then the division shall be made according to the number of inmates of the houses--say about one-third part to the brothers in the house of Loretto and two-thirds parts for the sisters in the house of the Holy Ghost (the Rosa Kloster).

Should it ever occur that the association wants to dissolve itself and disband, then those persons who have contributed money, or their heirs, should be reimbursed first. The residue should be used for their labor as far as it goes.

For the administration of the property of the association after my death, a committee shall be put in power, which committee shall scrupulously take care that the administration is a good one and that the above named purposes, as far as possible, may be attained as good as I would have done myself.

I select as members of this committee of administration my successor in office as chairman, further Anton Stoll, Johann George Soemer and Carl Manzins: of the sisters, first those that will be appointed as superior; second, Helena Klausman, Annastasia Willmann and Anna Silberer. If one or the other of these members should die, then the association shall elect another member and so on as long as the association exists.

There may be changes in these rules after due consideration. I, the undersigned, being in sound mind at the time, have with my own hand subscribed this my last will, testament and conveyance of the goods above named.

(signed) Ambrose Oschwald  
Written at St. Nazianz, the 6th day of August 1867.

The above instrument, consisting of one sheet, was signed, published and declared by the said testator,

Ambrose Oschwald, to be his last will and testament, the presence of who have signed our names, at this request, as witnesses, in his presence and in the presence of each other.

Conrad Moerchen  
J. Lawrence Neumann<sup>5</sup>

What Oschwald expressed in his will was well appreciated by most members of the Colony. One Society member expressed what he believed to be Oschwald's philosophy:

The association would exist hundreds of years to come; not as a new association to be organized after his death upon the basis of property acquired by his last will, but his association he hoped would live as it was already organized. His wish was not merely that a certain body of people would continuously bear a name he had given them, but that they and their successors for many generations should reside upon and own the estates which he had helped them to acquire. What then was, he hoped would still be. The association whose industry and frugality had acquired so much, and which then owned those chosen estates, he hoped would long administer them for the support of schools, widows, and orphans.<sup>6</sup>

However, the will was unable to transfer smoothly the property from Oschwald to the Society of St. Nazianz, and as a consequence, legal strife and partial disintegration resulted.

#### Changes in the Colony Following Oschwald's Death

Father Oschwald had held all property, in his name, in trust for members of the association. The Society of St. Nazianz had never been incorporated, and because it did not

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<sup>5</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954 (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1954), p. 32.

<sup>6</sup>Beck, p. 164.

exist legally, it was unable to accept the property willed by Oswald.<sup>7</sup> Knowledge of this fact caused some malcontents of the Society to take notice that they might now claim their fair share of the community to be deeded to them as private property. Several years of court contesting resulted in a number of Society members demanding property whose value would equal their original deposit in the communal venture plus some reimbursement for their labor for all their years in the colony. The anti-Oswald leaders were Conrad Moerchen, who had witnessed Oswald's will six years earlier, and Anna Silberer, whom Oswald had appointed as a member of the Administrative Council of the Society, and who had once been a Sister in order founded in St. Nazianz.<sup>8</sup> Anton Stoll, Oswald's top aid, acted as defender of the Society and opposed the demands he thought were unfair.

The legal battles dragged on for ten years. There were court hearings in Manitowoc and Madison, sometimes during cold winter periods when travel was a hardship. The battle was often bitter, with the malcontents calling Stoll a "miser" and a "falsifier of the accounts."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Sister M. Laurentine Kohn, B.S.F., A.B., "History of Catholicity in Manitowoc County with Background of Wisconsin from 1818 to 1940," (M.A. Thesis, Department of History, University of Notre Dame, 1942), p. 63.

<sup>8</sup>Edith Borlage, Golden Treasures That Last, trans., Chronicle of St. Nazianz, by Anton Stoll (Manitowoc, Wis.,) p. 49.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 51.



In actuality, there were a number of large debts against the Society and many thought the collapse of the colony was inevitable. Outside counsel convinced the Society leaders to sell a few tracts of land for income. At the same time, Manitowoc County granted a considerable subsidy to the Colony for having conducted a county home for the elderly and for having provided medical assistance over the years.<sup>10</sup>

Eventually, the contesting people were given property whose value equalled their original contribution, but they were denied compensation for their labor contributions.<sup>11</sup> In the meantime, the Society became legally incorporated as the "Roman Catholic Religious Society of Saint Nazianz" so that it could hold title to all remaining property in the manner Oschwald had wished.<sup>12</sup>

A second concurrent conflict concerned the spiritual activity of the Colony. Father Mutz, upon succeeding Oschwald, immediately decreased the frequency of group recitation of prayers, stating that he believed it took too much time from work schedules.<sup>13</sup> Many members objected loudly about changing the daily routine, and, after a series of meetings, were

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<sup>10</sup>Louis Falge, ed., History of Manitowoc County Wisconsin, I (Chicago: Goodspeed Historical Association, 1912), p. 462.

<sup>11</sup>Kohn, p. 64.

<sup>12</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 31.

<sup>13</sup>Raphael Brown, "The Epic of St. Nazianz," Land and Home, 10 (1947), p. 114.

allowed to return to the original schedule of prayer, work, and eating.

Father Mutz served as leader of the Society for 21 years, retiring in 1894. He was not the dynamic individual that Oschwald had been and he was unable to rally the respect that his predecessor had possessed. In the conflict over the property, he did not take a firm stand against those seeking private property. Instead, he tried to moderate between the Moerchen--Silberer faction and Society faithful led by Stoll. Because of this, Mutz did not gain the accolade of either group.

While the period following Oschwald's death was filled with legal and religious strife, the majority in the community lived much as they had in earlier years. The village continued to serve as a small trade and service center, and some agriculturally-related industry developed. In 1875 a cheese factory was opened by private interests and was operated continuously until 1952.<sup>14</sup> It purchased milk from nearby farms. The Kaltenbrun family manufactured farm implements at their farm about one mile north of the village. In later years the family enterprise would patent name-brand implements.<sup>15</sup> In 1895 two periodicals began publication in St. Nazianz--The St. Nazianz Weekly and The Catholic Home.<sup>16</sup> The latter was a

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<sup>14</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 77.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 78.

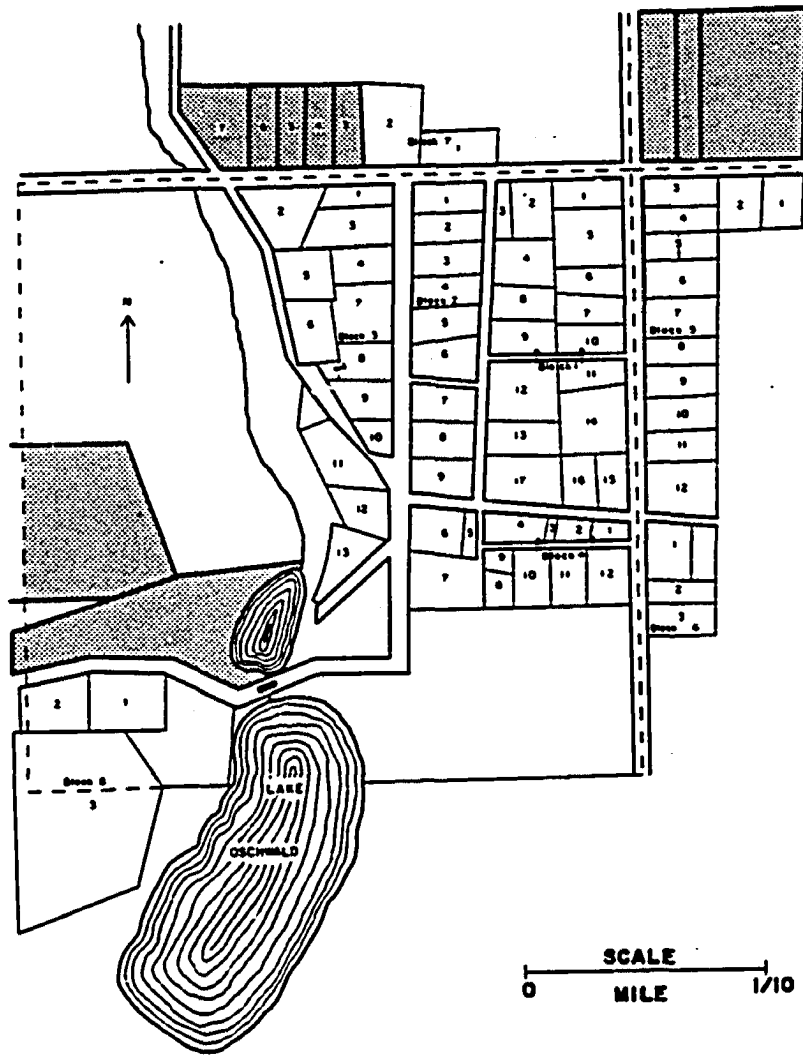
monthly publication printed in both German and English.

During the years under Father Mutz' administration, the village of St. Nazianz slightly extended the growth pattern established in the initial 20 years of settlement (Fig. 28). The frequency of privately owned plots and enterprises increased greatly, partly as a result of Society land being deeded to individuals and families and partly as a result of new village growth not directly associated with the Roman Catholic Society of St. Nazianz. People in the latter group were attracted to the village by employment and economic opportunities, which included the establishment of hotels, markets, and mills (Fig. 29). A patron's directory in an 1893 Atlas of Manitowoc County provides information on the wide range of skills, products, and services that were available in St. Nazianz. It is evident from the patron listing that people of non-German heritage were intermingling economically and geographically with the German nationality of St. Nazianz (Table 2 and Fig. 30).

A special religious shrine, the Lax Chapel, was constructed in 1875. Located in the countryside two miles west of St. Nazianz, it was built by a German immigrant named Lax in honor of the Holy Mother as a promise for the restoration of good health. It stemmed from a legend concerning a statue in Bohemia wherein blood flowed from the statue and persecutors were unable to sink it in water.<sup>17</sup> Lax promised to build the

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<sup>17</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 41.



LEGEND:  
[Shaded Box] Village Growth

FIG. 28—EXTENSION OF ST. NAZIANZ GROWTH PATTERN, 1873—1893

Source: Charles M. Foote: Plat Book of Manitowoc and Calumet Counties, Wisconsin  
(Minneapolis: C. M. Foote and Co., 1893)

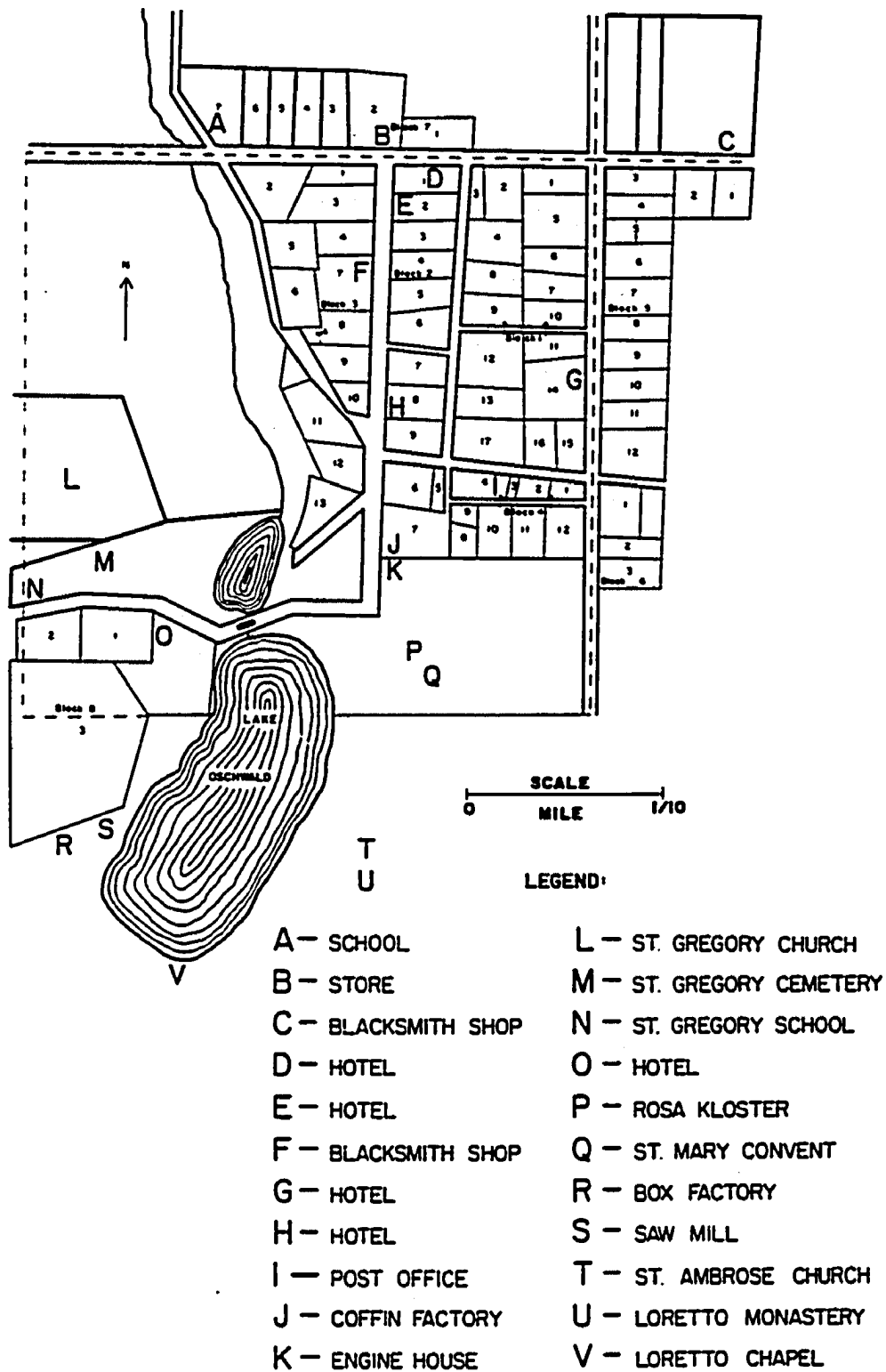
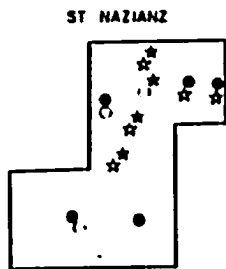


FIG. 29-MAP OF ST. NAZIANZ AND ESTABLISHED FACILITIES AS OF 1893



Patron's Country Of Birth

	Germany or Austria	Other European Country (Norway or Ireland)	United States
MALE	●	△	★
FEMALE	○	◻	☆

Source: Charles M. Foose, Pop. Stats of Missouri and Council Counties, Wisconsin  
(Maneogaha, C. M. Foose and Co., 1893)

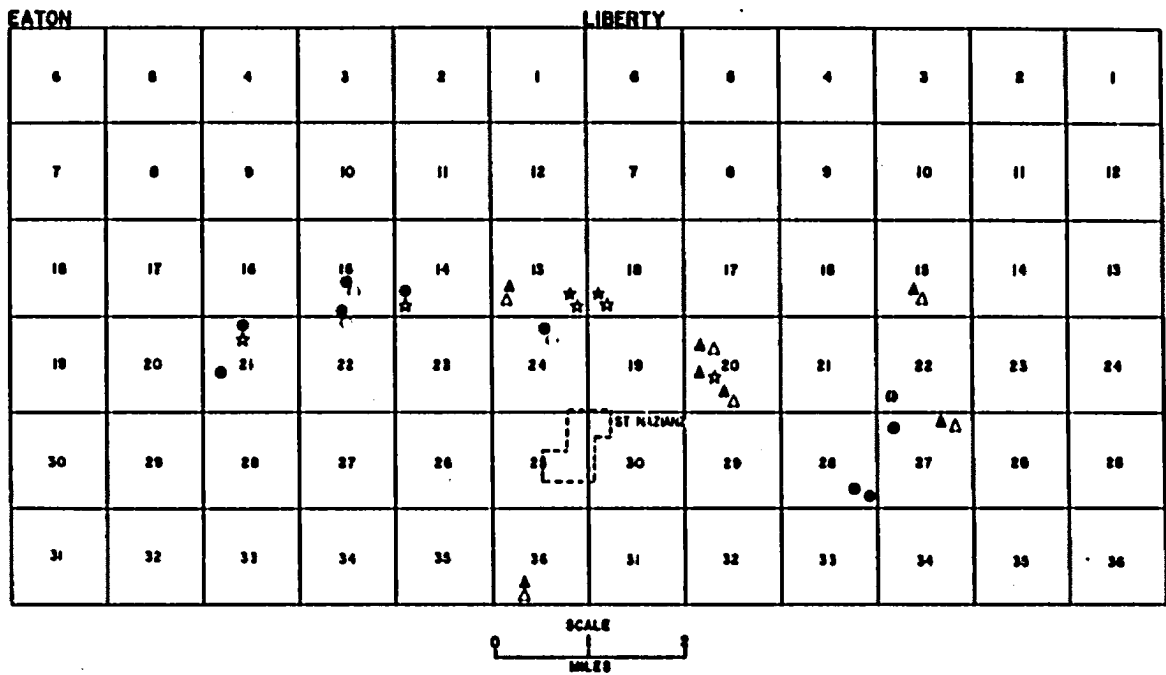


FIG. 30—LOCATION OF 1893 ST. NAZIANZ DIRECTORY PATRONS

chapel as a shrine for the statue, which had been brought to St. Nazianz, if his good health was restored. The shrine soon became well known and, for special religious functions, attracted people from throughout eastern Wisconsin.

### The Colony in 1896

During the two decades following Oschwald's death, the village population, exclusive of the Society's Brothers and Sisters, remained stable at about 200.<sup>18</sup> However, membership in the Roman Catholic Association, consisting of the Brothers, Sisters, and some families, declined severely. Between 1873 and 1896, 105 members died,<sup>19</sup> leaving only 75 members.<sup>20</sup> At the same time there were very few new recruits into the Society, and practically no additions to the celibate groups. By 1896, the Society held less than 1,500 of its original 3,840 acres<sup>21</sup> (Fig. 31). It was evident that some new direction was required were the Society to retain its remaining property.

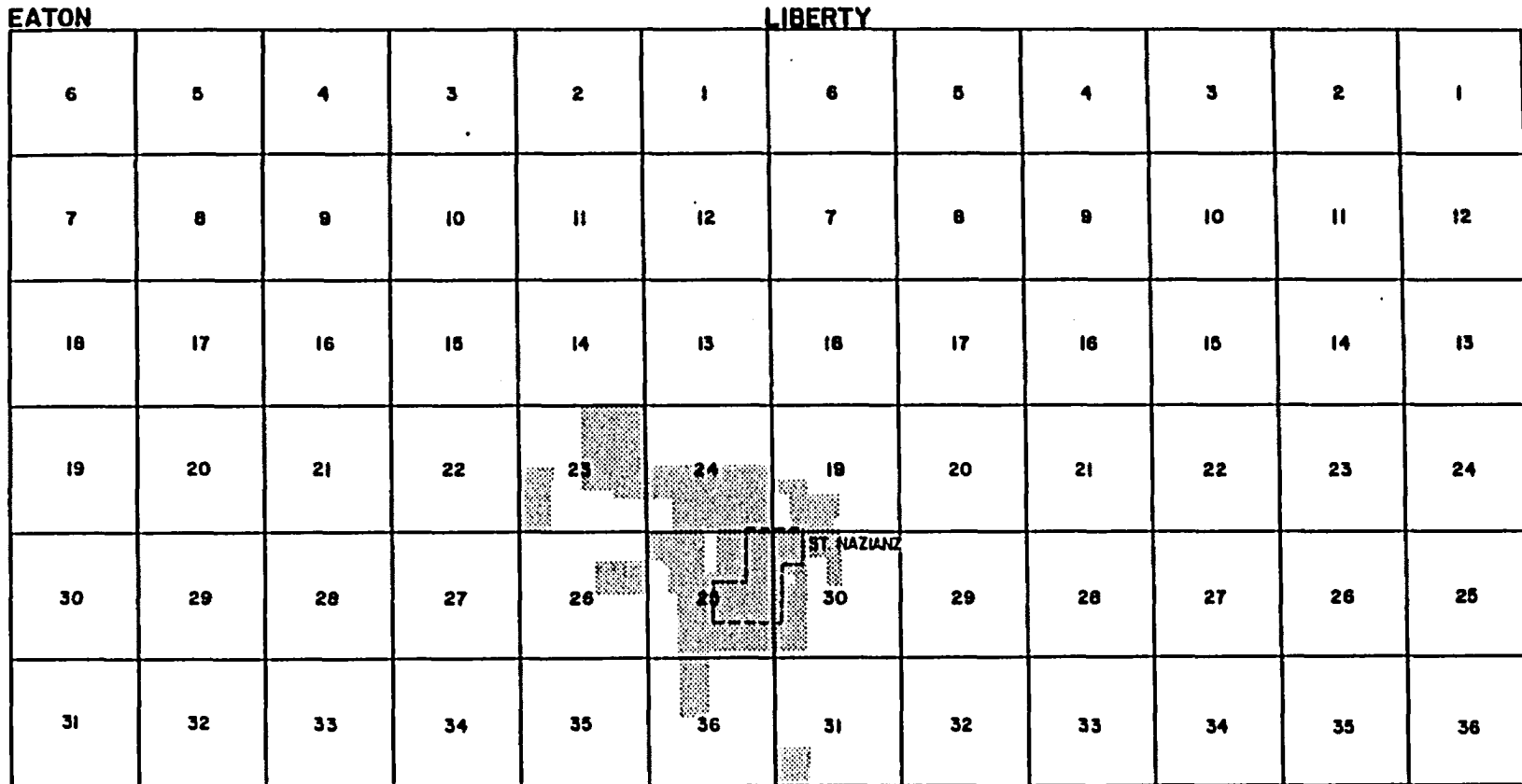
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<sup>18</sup>Beck, p. 167.

<sup>19</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 41

<sup>20</sup>James Louis Small, "A Mid-Western Experiment in Catholic Community Life," Catholic World, 114 (1922), p. 799.

<sup>21</sup>Charles M. Foote. Plat Book of Manitowoc and Calumet Counties, Wisconsin (Minneapolis: C. M. Foote and Co., 1893), pp. 12, 13, 18.



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FIG. 31—ST. NAZIANZ SOCIETY LAND HOLDINGS, 1893

Source: Charles M. Foote: Plat Book of Manitowoc and Calumet Counties, Wisconsin

(Minneapolis: C.M. Foote and Co., 1893)



TABLE 2

PATRONS OF 1893 MAP OF MANITOWOC COUNTY WHO WERE  
SERVED BY ST. NAZIANZ POST OFFICE

<u>Name</u>	<u>Information</u> Town of Eaton	<u>Section</u>
Auburgh, Severt Jensen	Farmer and Stock Breeder	13
Auburgh, John Sieverson	Born in Norway 1816. Wife born in Norway 1818. Married in 1843. Settled farm 1854. Six children.	13
Eberle, F. X.	Manufacturer and Dealer in all kinds of Harness, Collars, Flynets, Whips, Satchels, Trunks, etc. Born in Germany 1861. Wife born in Germany 1865. Married in 1885. Three children.	25
Gutman, Joseph	Farmer and Stock Breeder, Steam Thresher. Born in Liberty 1858. Wife born in Eaton 1859. Settled farm in 1880. Three Children.	13
Koeck, John F.	Undertaker and Embalmer. Keeps on hand a full supply of Wood, Cloth, and Metallic Burial Cases and Caskets. Carriages furnished as desired. Town Clerk, Born in Illinois 1860. Wife born in Manitowoc County 1865. Came to Wisconsin 1862.	25
Kuestermann, J. C.	Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps, Hardware, Ready-made Clothing, etc. Born in Manitowoc County 1860. Wife born in Kentucky 1862.	25

Lettenberger, Herman	Prop. St. Peter's Hotel. Wines, Liquors, and Cigars. Born in Wisconsin 1863. Wife born in Wisconsin 1859. One child.	25
Mayer, Mathias	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Germany 1836. Wife born in Pennsylvania 1893. Married in 1859. Settled Farm in 1866. Eight children.	14
Mutz, Rev. P. A.	Priest and President and Treas- urer of the R.C.R. Society of Saint Nazianz, Manitowoc County.	25
Nilson, Halvor	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Norway 1839. Wife born in Norway in 1844. Married in 1875. Settled Farm in 1857. Four Chil- dren.	36
Noworatzky, Fr.	Land, Loan, and Insurance Agent, Notary Public, Jus- tice of the Peace. Born in Austria 1851. Wife born in Illinois 1856.	25
Pfefferle, Feliz	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Germany 1820. Wife born in Germany 1834. Mar- ried in 1857. Settled Farm in 1855. Eight Children.	24
St. Nazianz Manu- facturing Co.	Manufacturers of Lumber, Shingles, and all kinds of Cheese Boxes, Dealers in Agricultural Implements, Hardware, Paints, and Oils.	25
Schad, Franz	Prop. Eaton House. Insur- ance Agent, Town Treasurer. Born in Prussia 1844. Wife Born in Austria 1845. Mar- ried in 1865. Settled in Manitowoc County 1857. Eleven Children.	25

Schneider, Louis	Dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Notions, Beer, Wine, Liquors, and Cigars. Born in New York State 1846. Wife born in Prussia 1848.	25
Straker, Joseph	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Germany 1866. Wife born in Germany 1863. Married in 1889. Settled Farm in 1889. Three Children.	21
Straus, Simon	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Germany 1858. Wife Born in Eaton 1869. Married in 1885. Settled Farm in 1886. Four Children.	21
Suckorwaty, Andrew	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Germany 1848. Wife Born in Germany 1851. Married in 1873. Settled Farm 1858. Eight Children.	15
Suckorwaty, Joseph	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Germany 1853. Wife Born in Germany 1866. Married in 1884. Settled Farm in 1881. Four Children.	22

Town of Liberty

Burns, John	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Ireland 1832. Wife Born in Ireland. Came to America 1850.	27
Casper, Joseph	General Blacksmithing. Manufacturer of Wagons, Sleighs, and Carriages. Horse-shoeing and Repairing of Machinery. Justice of the Peace. Born in Prussia 1855. Wife Born in Plymouth, Wisconsin, 1859. Married in 1877. Eight Children.	19
Gutman, John	Farmer. Born in Liberty 1862. Wife Born in Eaton 1861.	18

Lenz, August	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Owner of the Celebrated Stallion "George." Born in Prussia 1844. Came to America 1868.	28
Lenz, William	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Germany 1842.	22
Lutzke, Carl	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Germany 1848. Spring on Farm. Water Enough for Mill Purposes. Head Waters of Mud Creek. Manufacturer of Full Cream Cheese on Sections 20 and 27. Prop. of Steam Thresher.	27
Lutzke, Fredrich	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Prop. Steam Thresher. Born in Germany 1843.	28
Marken, Ole	Marken Homestead Farm. Born in Norway in 1843. Came to America 1853. Wife Born in America 1849.	20
Olsen, Mads	Olsen Stock and Grain Farm. Born in Norway 1829. Wife Born in Norway 1866.	20
Rogne, K. K.	Rogne Homestead Farm. Born in Norway 1830. Wife Born in Norway 1834. Twelve Children.	15
Thompson, T. I.	Farmer and Stock Breeder. Born in Norway 1847. Wife Born in Norway 1852. Came to America 1866.	20

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SOURCE: Charles M. Foote. Plat Book of Manitowoc and Calumet Counties, Wisconsin (Minneapolis: C. M. Foote and Co., 1893), pp. 69, 71-72.

## CHAPTER V.

### SALVATORIAN TAKEOVER, 1896-1909

Following Father Ambrose Oschwald's death the splintering turmoil of the decade had ended, and tranquility had been established by the early 1890's. But there remained a cloud on the horizon at St. Nazianz. Death had depleted the ranks of the St. Nazianz Society to just 75 members, and many of these were in their advanced years.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, few new members were being drawn into the community. It became apparent that decisions were required to insure the security of the remaining members and the worthy preservation of the community's land, buildings, and Christian communal heritage.

#### Contact with the Salvatorians

Early in 1896 a former St. Nazianz resident and seminary student, Father Louis Barth, urged the Society members to contact the Society of the Divine Savior (SDS) headquarters in Rome.<sup>2</sup> Father Barth explained to the St. Nazianz community that, in 1881, Father Francis Jordan had founded the SDS to help care for hungry and impoverished people. Barth further

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<sup>1</sup>James Louis Small, "A Mid-Western Experiment in Catholic Community Life," Catholic World, 114 (1922), p. 799.

<sup>2</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954 (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1954), p. 43.

explained that he understood the SDS was seeking to branch into North America, and perhaps it would be interested in becoming associated with the St. Nazianz Society.

A delegation from St. Nazianz consequently visited Archbishop Katzer in Milwaukee to ask his help in contacting the Salvatorians. In turn, the Archbishop, on March 8, 1896, dispatched the following message to Father Jordan in Rome:

there is a congregation of laity here who call themselves Brothers and Sisters and most of whom are already very old. These Brothers and Sisters own about 1,500 acres of land and have a capital of about \$40,000. They wish to take steps to see to it that the intentions and purpose of the foundation of the late Father Oschwald may endure. . . . The members want to be united with your society, at first only so that the members of your society become members of this Congregation--later the whole property would pass into the hands of the Society in order there to continue the work of the late Oschwald. It would take us too far afield here to enter into details regarding the circumstances . . .<sup>3</sup>

The St. Nazianz Society also sent a bank note for \$1,000 to Father Jordan to help pay his travel expenses to come to Wisconsin.<sup>4</sup>

Father Jordan, accompanied by four other Salvatorians, left Rome on July 22 and arrived in Milwaukee on August 4, 1896.<sup>5</sup> Without any delay, the group continued to St. Nazianz to meet with the Brothers and Sisters and to become familiar with the community. Father Jordan then returned to Milwaukee to confer with Archbishop Katzer. Jordan and Katzer returned

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<sup>3</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 43

<sup>4</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1929), p. 45.

<sup>5</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 43.

to St. Nazianz and on August 11 an agreement between the SDS and the Society of St. Nazianz was reached. The SDS would assume responsibility for the spiritual and temporal care of the Society of St. Nazianz. In return, the SDS would receive an immediate grant of 240 acres of land and, at a later date, the remaining 1260 acres<sup>6</sup> of the St. Nazianz group<sup>7</sup> (Figure 32).

#### Arrival of the Salvatorians

Quickly Father Jordan and the Salvatorians initiated activities to update and expand the facilities and services at St. Nazianz. Under the leadership of Father Epiphanius Deidele, a Salvatorian who remained to lead at St. Nazianz when Jordan returned to Rome, the old Oschwald seminary building became the Salvatorian College of St. Nazianz. Over the years it was also known as St. Mary's College. In 1897 construction was begun on a new, larger St. Ambrose Church, replacing the original St. Ambrose Church.<sup>8</sup> Three Sisters of the SDS were sent to St. Nazianz in August of 1896 to take charge of the hospital.

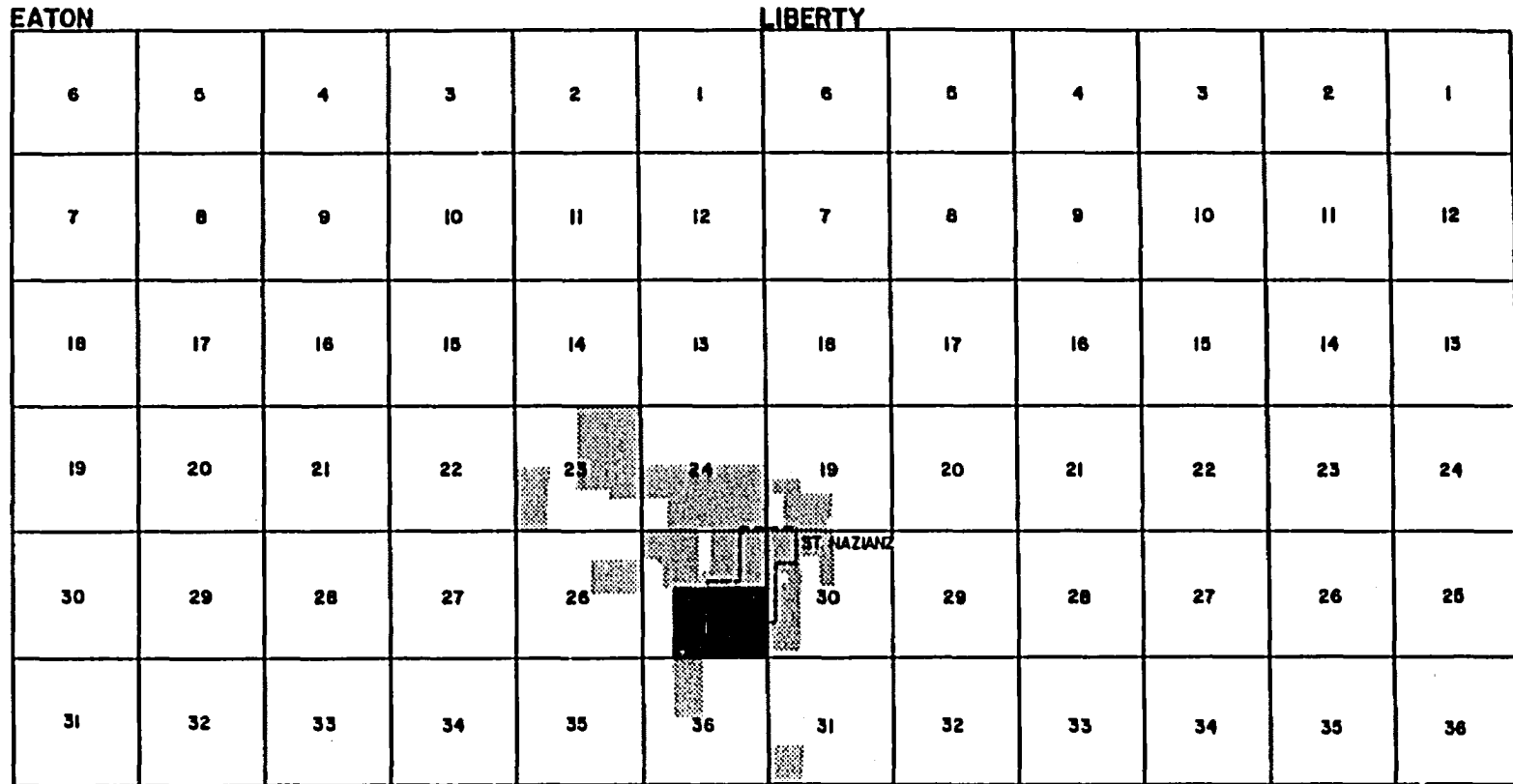
In April of 1897 Father Peter Mutz declined re-election as president of the Roman Catholic Association of St. Nazianz,

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<sup>6</sup>Edward McIntosh Montgomery, "Cooperative Communities in Wisconsin," Proceedings, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 51st Annual Meeting, 1903 (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1904), p. 113.

<sup>7</sup>Raphael Brown, "The Epic of St. Nazianz," Land and Home, 10 (1947), p. 114.

<sup>8</sup>William Nern, "The Salvatorians in the United States," unpublished copy of an address on occasion of Silver Jubilee of first six Salvatorians to make vows, St. Nazianz, Wis., September 8, 1940.



LEGEND:

■ LAND DEEDED TO SDS IN 1896

▨ ST. NAZIANZ SOCIETY LAND

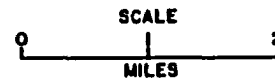


FIG. 32 – SDS AND ST. NAZIANZ SOCIETY LAND HOLDINGS, 1896

Source: Diamond Jubilee (St. Nazianz, Wis. Society of the Divine Savior, 1929) and  
 Charles M Foote: Plot Book of Manitowoc and Calumet Counties, Wisconsin  
 (Minneapolis: C M Foote and Co., 1893).



citing declining health conditions as the primary reason.<sup>9</sup> Father Epiphanius Deidele was chosen to assume presidency of the Association and to become a member of the Board of Directors. The remainder of the Board consisted of two Brothers and two Sisters of the St. Nazianz Association.<sup>10</sup> In effect, the resignation of Mutz and the succession of Deidele had achieved joint governance of both groups.

Mutz's declining health led also to his resigning as pastor of St. Gregory's Church in August of 1899.<sup>11</sup> An interim pastor was appointed from an outside religious order, but by 1905 the Bishop of the Green Bay diocese asked the SDS if they would take the responsibility of administering St. Gregory's Church and provide the necessary clergy.<sup>12</sup> The Salvatorians responded positively to the request. Thus, in a period of less than ten years, the SDS had assumed responsibility for the care of remaining Association Brothers and Sisters, had assumed trusteeship for property and buildings, had become partners in governance of Association resources, and had now become the spiritual caretaker for all of St. Nazianz.

Upon completion of the new St. Ambrose Church in 1905 (Figure 33), the Salvatorians turned to development of farm structures on the hill overlooking the village and adjacent to

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<sup>9</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 43.

<sup>10</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1929), p. 47.

<sup>11</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 43.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

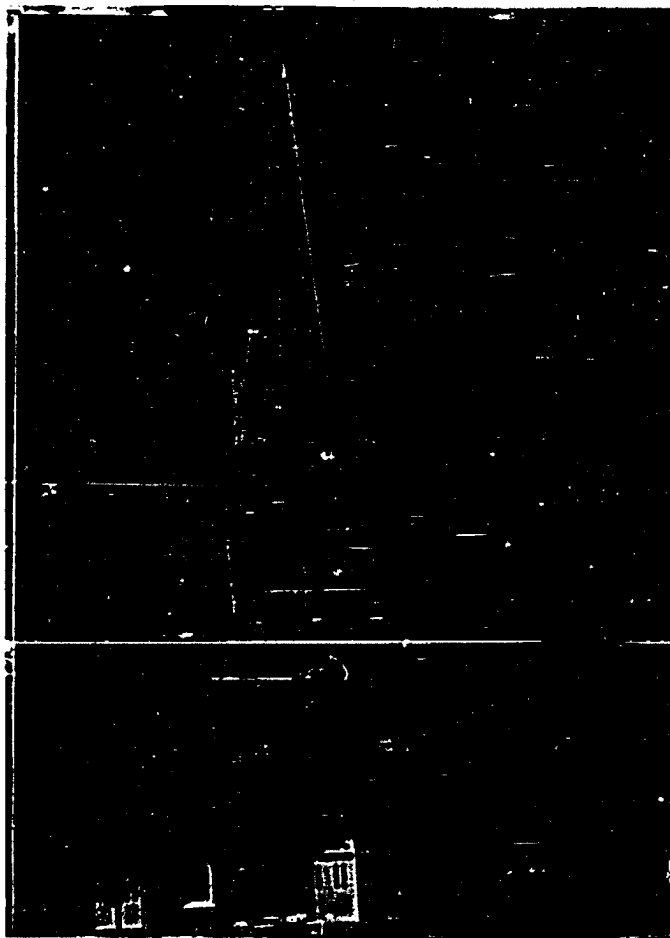


Fig. 33 - St. Ambrose church, on the SDS grounds,  
was completed in 1905.

the seminary facilities. Barns and silos were constructed to store animals, equipment, and farm goods. Earlier in 1901, the Salvatorian Fathers had encouraged the Pioneer Canning and Pickling Factory to locate in the community. To express their support, the Salvatorians purchased \$1400 worth of shares in the publicly owned enterprise<sup>13</sup> which operated continuously through the 1926 canning season. In 1906 enlargement of the monastery was begun, a four year project with work completed almost entirely by the Fathers and Brothers<sup>14</sup> (Figure 34). The men dug a clay pit on the grounds and manufactured their own brick, laid the foundation, and completed the structure. At a triple celebration in 1909, the four story structure was dedicated, the St. Nazianz Association handed the remaining property deeds to the SDS (as located in Figure 31), and Father Epiphanius, the Salvatorian appointed to administer the SDS holdings at St. Nazianz, was installed as the head provincial of the newly organized Anglo-American province of the Society of the Divine Savior.<sup>15</sup> Thus, St. Nazianz became the central administration location for all SDS functions throughout the United States and Canada.

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<sup>13</sup>Sister M. Laurentine Kohn, B.S.F., A.B., "History of Catholicity in Manitowoc County with Background of Wisconsin from 1818 to 1940," (M.A. Thesis, Department of History, University of Notre Dame, 1942), p. 68.

<sup>14</sup>William Nern, "The Salvatorians in the United States," unpublished copy of an address on occasion of Silver Jubilee of first six Salvatorians to make vows, St. Nazianz, Wis., September 8, 1940.

<sup>15</sup>Sister M. Laurentine Kohn, B.S.F., A.B., p. 68.



Fig. 34 - SDS monastery building that was enlarged between 1906 and 1909.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE OLD WORLD RELIC, 1909-1954

The period 1909 to 1954 was one of substantial change for St. Nazianz. A distinct division between the Salvatorian (SDS) institutions and St. Gregory's parish prevailed. Prior to 1896 the Society of St. Nazianz and St. Gregory's were unified, but with the arrival of the SDS Society land was deeded over to the SDS exclusive of St. Gregory's. When the amiable deeding was concluded in 1909 all former Society property had been separated from the village parish. Modest population growth and commercial development typical of rural communities of the period also brought changes. Yet, in 1954 when the St. Nazianz community celebrated the 100th anniversary of its founding, a cohesiveness of spirit and purpose remained. Moreover, St. Nazianz became an old world relic in twentieth century America.

Growth and development in St. Nazianz during this period may conveniently be placed into three categories: physical expansion of religious facilities; expansion of spiritual and administrative functions; and growth of commercial enterprises and population in the village. Each is examined below.

#### Physical Expansion of Religious Facilities

Physical improvements began with a decision by St. Gregory's Board of Trustees to install electricity in the church, school,

rectory, and Sisters' House. A contract with the Manitowoc Rapids Light Company was confirmed and work was completed in the autumn of 1916.<sup>1</sup>

By 1923 it was evident to the Salvatorians that Our Lady's Shrine and Chapel on Loretto Hill was in need of renovations and alterations. Loretto Hill, on the west side of the Salvatorian community grounds, became the site of a shrine in 1855 when Father Oschwald placed a statue of the Blessed Mary in a niche cut into a linden tree. In 1863, after the linden tree had been toppled during a severe storm, Oschwald incased and mounted the statue on a pedestal built upon the site of the fallen tree. Shortly thereafter, another storm caused a broken limb to smash the incasement. Thus, in 1870 construction began on the Loretto Chapel to provide permanent and appropriate protection for the statue. In 1872, with appropriate pomp and ceremony, the chapel was completed and dedicated.<sup>2</sup>

Prayerful pilgrimages and processions to Loretto Hill date back to the beginning of the shrine. An early account describes the events as

. . . a real spiritual stimulant to picture to oneself the entire company of devout settlers praying and singing as they go in procession through 'the forest primeval' to Mary's sylvan chapel. These processions took place on Sundays and Holidays. . . .<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954 (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior 1954), p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1929), p. 70.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Because of the spiritual importance of the Shrine, the Salvatorians decided to replaster and repaint with appropriate painting and frescoes (Figure 35). That the decision was fortunate may be supported by an anonymous Salvatorian from St. Nazianz:

Of late years, love, confidence, and devotion to our Queen in her woodland Chapel have grown in a most surprising and gratifying manner. The renovating and beautifying in and about the shrine is ample proof that local devotion is ever increasing. Throughout the spring, summer, and autumn months hundreds of pilgrims, singly and in groups, seek out this favored spot.<sup>4</sup>

By 1925 the Salvatorian quarters in St. Nazianz were overcrowded, with approximately 100 clergy and students occupying space originally built for a capacity of 50. A committee of SDS officials was organized to examine the space problem and to recommend necessary steps to relieve the cramped conditions.<sup>5</sup> After visiting other institutions in the nation, the committee submitted the following program for enlarging and updating facilities at the SDS seminary in St. Nazianz:

1. New kitchen capable of serving 200 to 300 meals simultaneously.
2. New dining rooms.
3. A multi-purpose building to serve as
  - a) central heating plant
  - b) central water pumping station
  - c) central controls for electrical power
  - d) laundry
  - e) mechanical workshop
  - f) janitorial quarters
  - g) central fire alarm system

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<sup>4</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 70.

<sup>5</sup>Manitowoc Herald-News, December 19, 1925.



Fig. 35 - The Loretto Chapel as it appears today.



- h) garage
  - i) a floor for Sisters' convent
4. A gymnasium with
- a) auditorium with stage and basketball court
  - b) bowling alleys
  - c) pool table and recreation room
  - d) motion picture facilities
  - e) shower room
5. New seminary building for at least 150 students.<sup>6</sup>

The report concluded with an estimate that the total cost would be \$500,000 to \$600,000.<sup>7</sup> A financial campaign was launched, its funds were raised, and ground breaking for the entire proposed project took place in July of 1926.

Coincident with the major building program, the Salvatorian's decided that a more appropriate place was needed for the remains of Father Oschwald. His grave was beneath the altar of the original St. Ambrose Church. Accordingly a stone mausoleum at the base of the hill and to the rear of the Loretto Shrine was constructed (Figure 36).<sup>8</sup> On October 4, 1926, Oschwald's remains were transferred with appropriate religious ceremony which brought together priests, Brothers, Sisters, seminary students, and a Manitowoc County health officer. Many viewed the remains through a glass atop of the casket and noticed that vestments and the body retained their shapes after 53 years of burial, while all iron parts on the outside of the coffin had

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<sup>6</sup>Sheboygan Press, January 25, 1926.

<sup>7</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 51.

<sup>8</sup>Golden Jubilee, 1896-1946 (St. Nazianz, Wisconsin: The Society of the Divine Savior, 1946), p. 42.

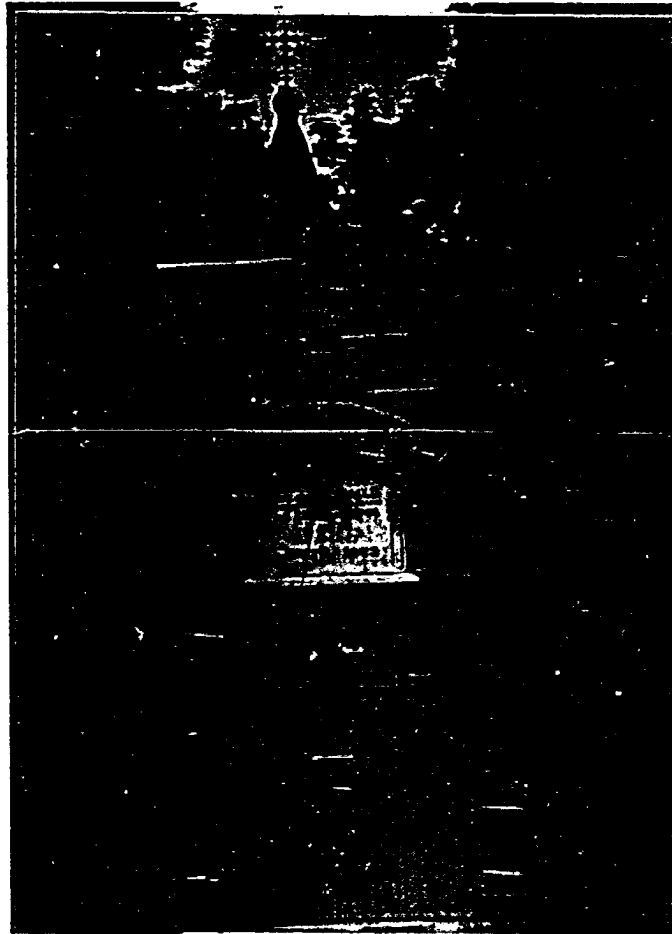


Fig. 36 - The stone mausoleum, built in 1926, is the permanent resting spot for Father Ambrose Oswald's remains.

rusted and fallen away.<sup>9</sup> One witness recalled

. . . the same dust, the same death odor; the biretta on his head was crumpled; the chalice that had been placed in his hand had fallen forward so that the cup was at his now black and shrunken lips.<sup>10</sup>

Oschwald's grave became a place of daily pilgrimage for people in the St. Nazianz vicinity and is still visited by descendants of the original St. Nazianz settlers.<sup>11</sup>

Work progressed rapidly on the entire building project and by the end of 1927 all construction was completed and the facilities were in use. The physical plant was more than adequate and would allow future growth of the seminary student body.

The next 11 years saw no further physical expansion of the Salvatorian facilities, partly because of the construction completed in 1927, and partly because of the economic conditions of the 1930s. By 1938, however, construction was begun on a new seminary building which was completed the following year (Figure 37). In 1939 two large barns were constructed on SDS land north of the village while two old barns on the seminary grounds were demolished (Figure 38). In their place on the hill, a new publishing facility was built.<sup>12</sup> An addition featuring indoor toilet facilities was built at St. Gregory's School in

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<sup>9</sup>Appleton Post-Crescent, March 3, 1963.

<sup>10</sup>Father Winfrid Herbst, "Anything Good?: My Autobiography" (non-published memoirs 1912-1964, St. Nazianz, Wis.), p. 447.

<sup>11</sup>The Milwaukee Journal, January 13, 1980, part 2, pp. 1 and 13.

<sup>12</sup>Golden Jubilee, 1896-1946, p. 43.



Fig. 37 - Seminary education building on SDS grounds, constructed in 1939.

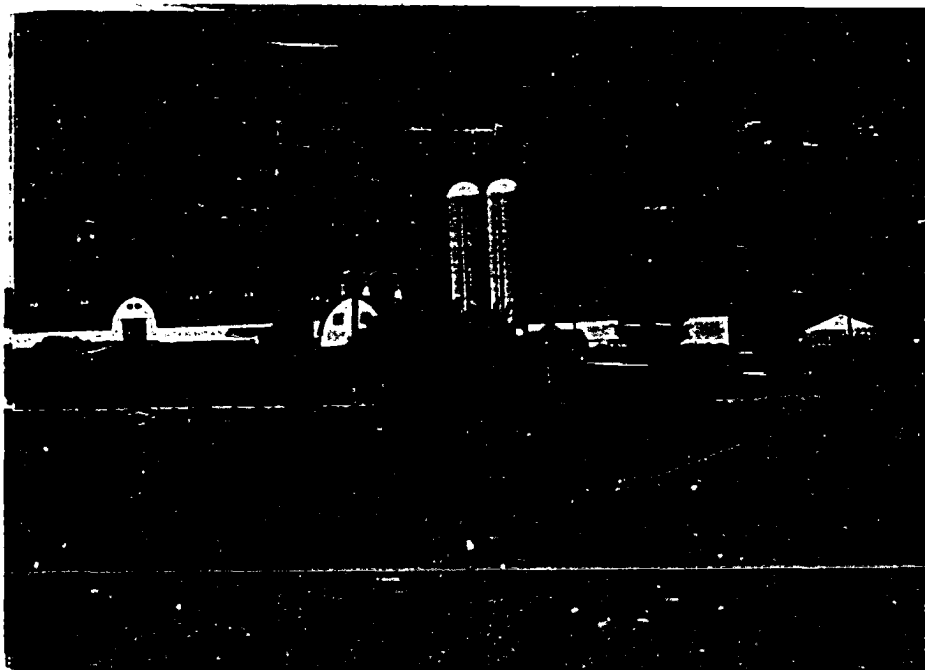


Fig. 38 - SDS owned Colonial Dairy Farm with barns and silos constructed in 1939.

1940<sup>13</sup> while in 1941 the original publishing quarters on the seminary grounds were renovated to become St. Thomas Hall, a combination classroom and dormitory building to handle the increasing number of seminary students, then numbering over 200 (Figure 39).<sup>14</sup>

In the spring of 1944, the St. Nazianz Businessmen's Association asked the SDS for a 99 year lease on 20 acres of swampy land adjacent to St. Gregory's Church. The Businessmen's Association intended to create a park with playground and athletic facilities. Father Bede Friedrich, SDS Provincial at St. Nazianz, replied that a lease for a limit of nine years was negotiable as long as the Catholic Youth Organization was given priority rights for softball games, and provided that no taverns or other entertainment facilities were built without church approval.<sup>15</sup> Oswald Park thus came to exist and today it remains a center of outdoor activity in the village (Figure 40).

Two landmarks of the early religious colony, the original St. Gregory's church with Oswald's living quarters beneath it, and the Oswald Sisters' Pink Convent, had become shrines of a sort (Figures 41, 42). By 1949, however, decreased interest in them and deterioration had made both buildings fire hazards and a danger to curious children.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the decision was made to

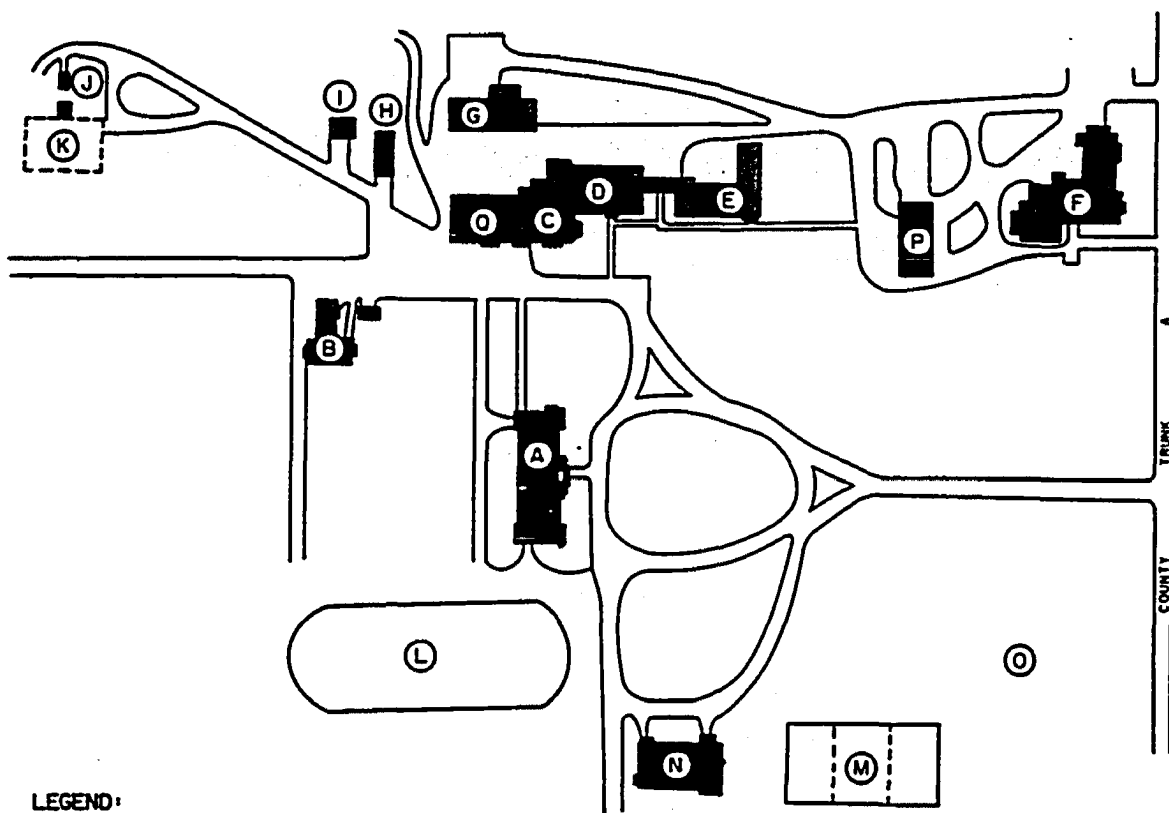
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<sup>13</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 47.

<sup>14</sup>Golden Jubilee, 1896-1946, p. 43.

<sup>15</sup>Letter from Father Bede Friedrich to St. Nazianz Businessmen's Association, May 25, 1944.

<sup>16</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 47.



## LEGEND:

- A — SEMINARY, HIGH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
- B — ST. THOMAS HALL, RECREATION BUILDING
- C — ST. AMBROSE CHURCH
- D — ST. AMBROSE HALL
- E — MONASTERY
- F — ST. MICHAEL HALL, SPECIAL STUDENTS DEPARTMENT
- G — LAUNDRY, GARAGE, AND POWER PLANT
- H — CARPENTER SHOP
- I — PAINT SHOP
- J — LORETO CHAPEL
- K — OSCHWALD TOMB AND CEMETERY
- L — ATHLETIC BOWL AND TRACK
- M — TENNIS COURTS
- N — GYMNASIUM
- O — ATHLETIC FIELD
- P — CLASSROOMS
- Q — LIBRARY

FIG. 39 — SDS SEMINARY GROUNDS, 1939

Source SDS pamphlet, St Nazaire, Wis., 1940

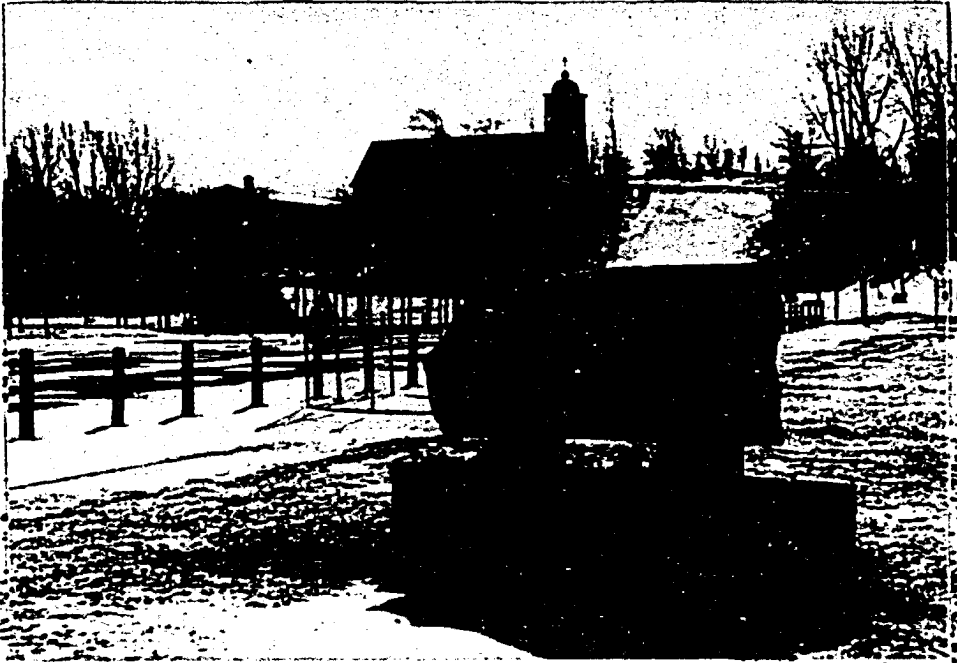


Fig. 40 - Oswald Park, with St. Gregory church in the background.

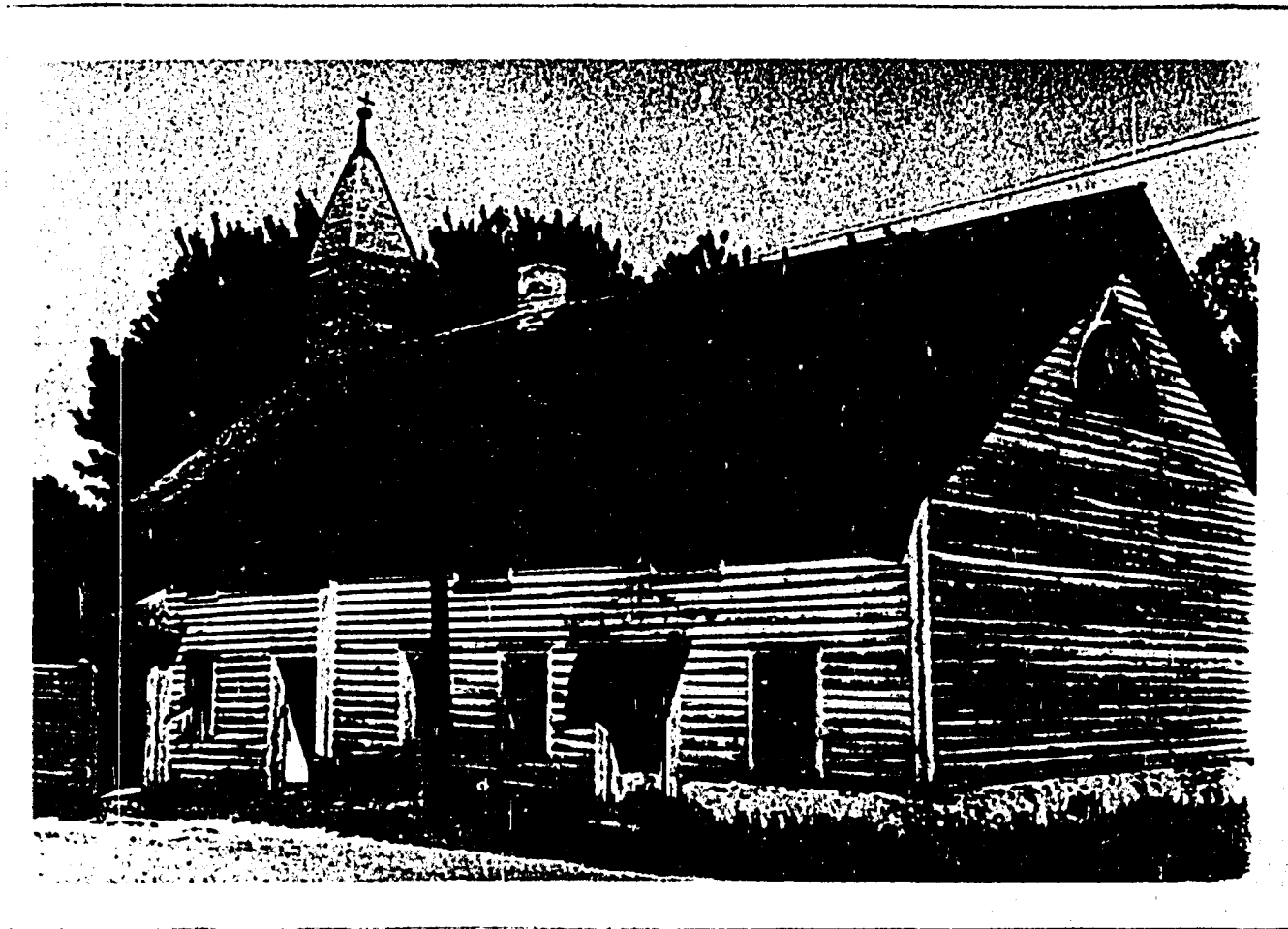


Fig. 41 - Original St. Gregory church on which initial construction began in 1854. Structure was demolished in 1949. Source of photo: St. Nazianz, 1854-1954.



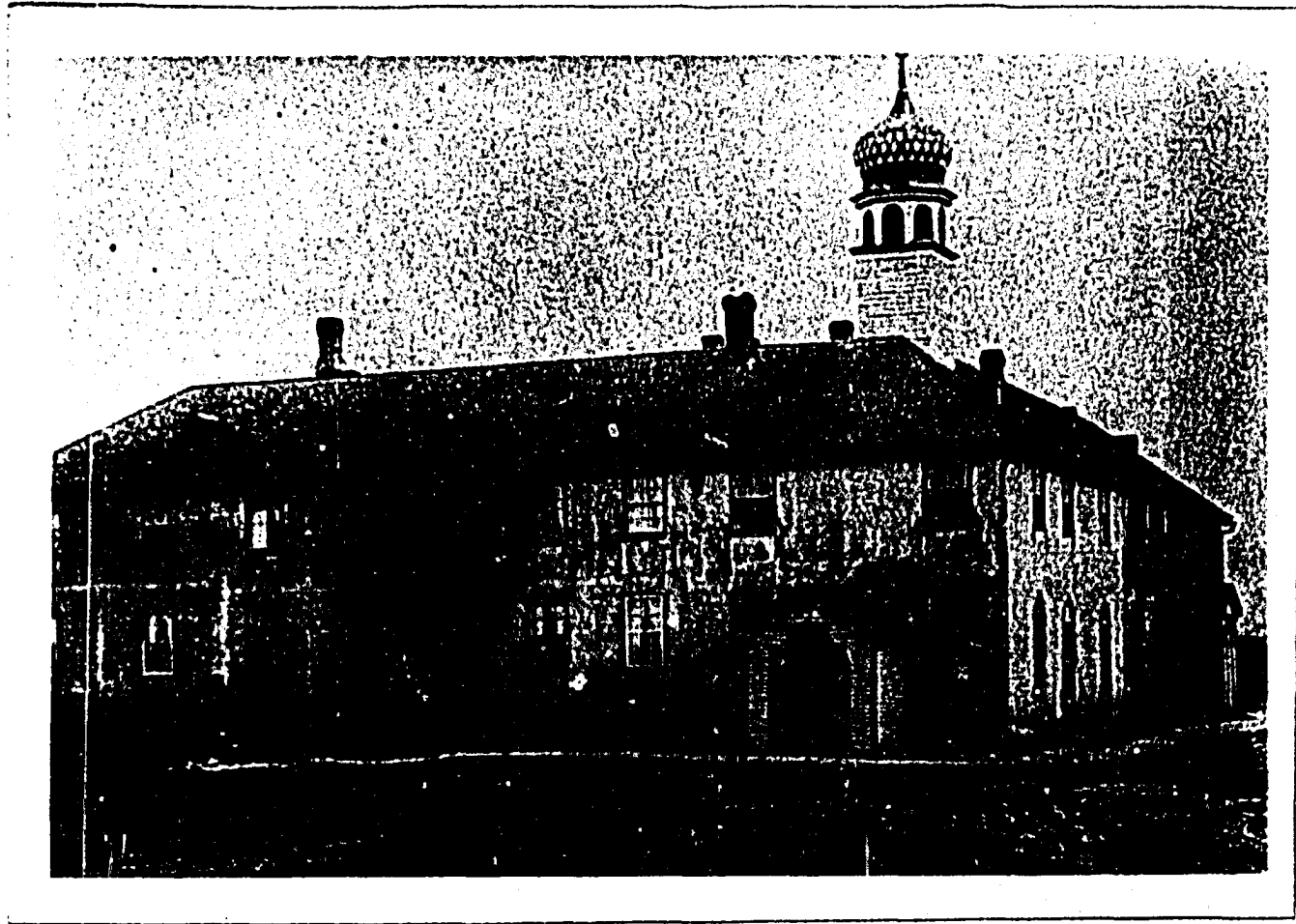


Fig. 42 - The Pink Convent (Rosa Kloster) of the Oschwald Sisters, built in 1860, was demolished in 1949. Source of photo: St. Nazianz, 1854-1954.

raze both.

From 1950 to 1954, a few additional construction projects were completed. In 1952 St. Gregory's parish completed a two story building, a combination social center and school, on land east of the church donated by the SDS.<sup>17</sup> Upon completion, there was more room than the grade school required, and thus St. Gregory's High School opened with 18 freshmen students in the fall of 1952.<sup>18</sup> Word of the new high school spread fast, as it was the only Roman Catholic high school in Manitowoc County at the time, and requests from students in other parishes to attend St. Gregory's were honored beginning in 1954. The response was recorded as "quick and heartening, a commentary upon the Catholic spirit of the people of St. Nazianz and the surrounding territory."<sup>19</sup>

Expansion of Spiritual and  
Administrative Functions

World War I was responsible for the creation of a publishing department at the SDS in St. Nazianz. Two monthly religious magazines, Manna and Der Missionaer, had been printed in English at a SDS facility in Germany and then shipped to the SDS center in St. Nazianz for remailing to individual subscribers in the United States. Because the war interfered with the receipt of the issues, it was immediately decided to publish a local

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<sup>17</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 49.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

edition of Manna for circulation in the United States, and eventually throughout the world.<sup>20</sup> On short notice then, a publishing department became a prominent element in the SDS establishment at St. Nazianz. In 1923, a second magazine, Savior's Call, was begun.<sup>21</sup> Other items published over the years include scores of books and pamphlets dealing with religious education and inspirational reading.

United States involvement in World War I directly affected St. Nazianz when seminary students, like other civilians, registered for the military draft in June of 1917. Religious leaders across the nation lobbied for draft exemption for religious clergy and students, and in September of 1917 word filtered down to St. Nazianz that seminary students were exempt at that time.<sup>22</sup>

Patriotic feeling was strong in St. Nazianz, and as a show of support for American troops, the SDS sponsored numerous events in 1918 to raise money for service organizations. Most noteworthy was a play entitled "Ubaldu Standardus." Described as ". . . full of tense situations, hand to hand encounters, hairbreadth escapes," the play was performed by seminarians with an admission charge of 25 cents.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Sister M. Lauertine Kohn, B.S.F., A.B., "History of Catholicity in Manitowoc County with Background of Wisconsin from 1818 to 1940," (M.A. Thesis, Department of History, University of Notre Dame, 1942), p. 68.

<sup>21</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 63.

<sup>22</sup>Herbst, p. 48.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

Ordination of the first six priests educated at the Salvatorian Seminary in St. Nazianz,<sup>24</sup> three foreign-born and three American-born, was evidence of maturity of the SDS establishment in the United States. The ceremony in August of 1921 was coincident with the 25th year of the Salvatorians at St. Nazianz and was the forerunner of many subsequent ordinations. From the Wisconsin village, ordained Salvatorians would disseminate throughout the world for many years to follow. Word of the quality religious education provided by the SDS brought requests for enrollment from individuals seeking to be secular priests rather than only of service to the SDS. In response, the seminary was opened in 1922 to secular candidates, those who, upon eventual ordination, would be of service to an area diocese rather than a specific religious order.<sup>25</sup>

Extending the religious service of the SDS, the publishing department distributed pamphlets on the benefits of religious retreats to area parishes. This was followed by a visit from a SDS priest to explain the retreat procedure. The result was the first retreat for laymen at the Salvatorian Seminary in July of 1923 and the first retreat for ladies in August of 1924.<sup>26</sup> This service to the lay members grew into many other retreats at the Seminary over the years to follow.

With the increased seminary enrollment at St. Nazianz,

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<sup>24</sup>Golden Jubilee, 1896-1946, p. 39.

<sup>25</sup>Kohn, p. 69.

<sup>26</sup>Herbst, p. 201.

the expanding activity with additional ordained priests, and the missionary interests of the world Salvatorian order, SDS officials expressed interest in relocating the American headquarters to a larger city. In December of 1924 the order purchased quarters in Milwaukee.<sup>27</sup> The larger city permitted more convenient travel connections and more visibility for the SDS and its activities. Establishment of the Milwaukee headquarters foreshadowed a deemphasis of the secluded, rural abbey atmosphere of SDS service and an emphasis on involvement in contemporary society issues. Provincial leaders would no longer be stationed at St. Nazianz and, with future changes in leadership, fondness for and familiarity with the St. Nazianz setting would decline. Today Milwaukee continues to serve as the North America Provincial headquarters for the order while the future of the St. Nazianz facilities is uncertain.

The establishment of mission facilities beginning in 1920 reaffirmed the desirability of moving the American Provincial Headquarters to Milwaukee. By the end of the 1920s seven missions in Oregon, all of them geared to working with the Indian population and staffed by SDS priests from St. Nazianz, had been established.<sup>28</sup> In 1923 the SDS purchased a large colonial mansion in Elkton, Maryland, and established the Salvatorian Mission House.<sup>29</sup> In 1927 a second seminary of the SDS was established

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<sup>27</sup>Golden Jubilee, 1896-1946, p. 40.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

in Washington, D.C., just two blocks from the Catholic University,<sup>30</sup> and in 1932 the buildings of a former military school and agricultural college at Menominee, Michigan, were purchased.<sup>31</sup> Over the years the Menominee facility was used both as a college and as a novitiate and seminary. In 1941 an already established mission in Phenix City, Alabama, was put under the service of SDS.<sup>32</sup> Officially identified as the Negro Apostolate of the Divine Savior, the mission was geared toward helping less fortunate minority people. Finally, in 1946, the SDS opened a third seminary in the United States with the purchase of 415 acres with buildings at Blackwood, New Jersey (Figure 43).<sup>33</sup>

The growth of SDS activities resulted in steady need for support materials. Brothers of the SDS hand-crafted a great deal of requested items and thus reduced the necessity of purchasing many things. Carpenters at the seminary were noted for their "splendid inlaid card tables they made for the students' recreation hall,"<sup>34</sup> and also, for their solid chairs. It was said that

. . . give these Brothers a log from the woods and before long they'll present you with a set of chairs or something else evidencing a craftsmanship that is truly worthy of praise.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Golden Jubilee, 1895-1946, p. 42.

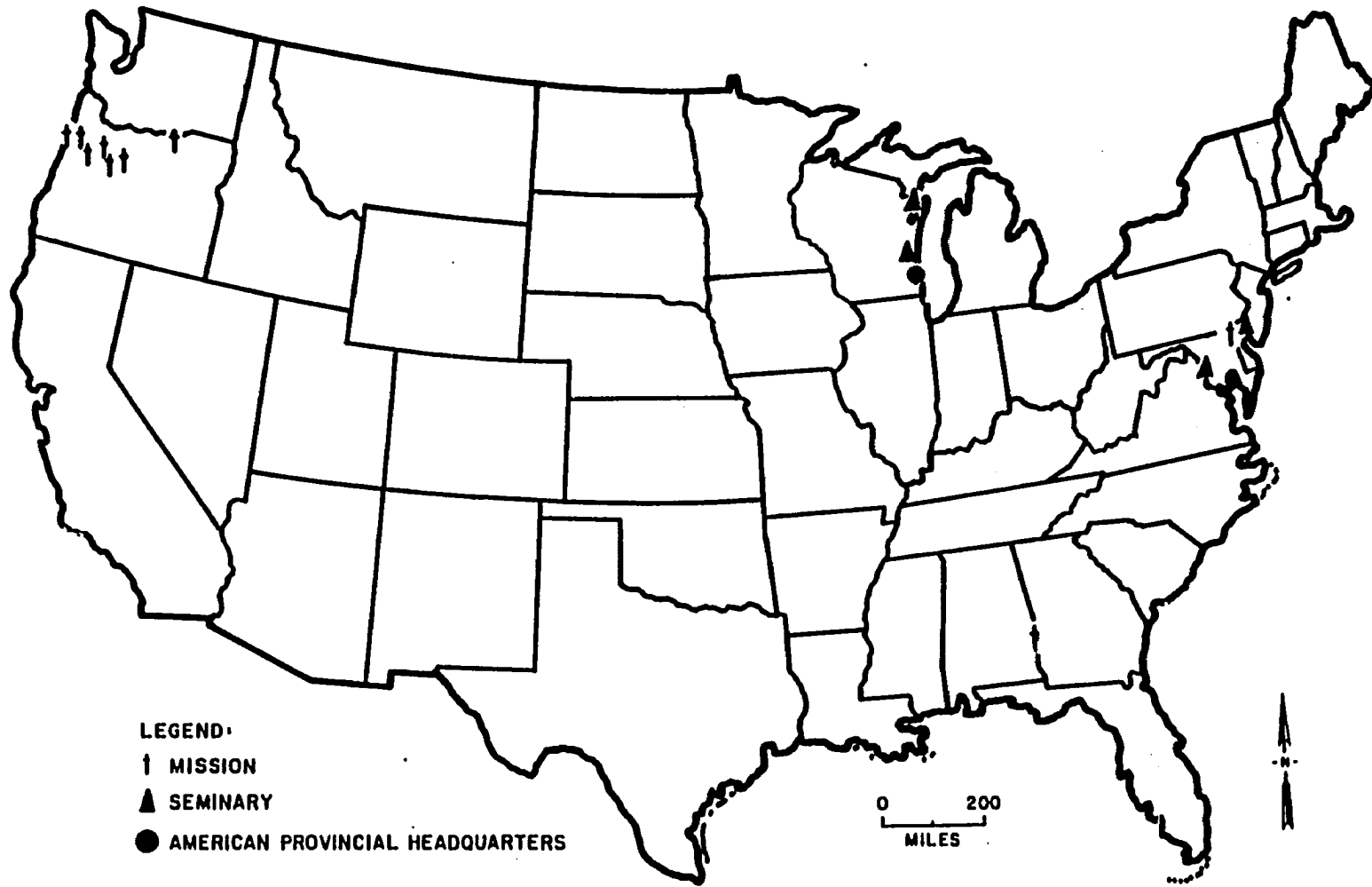
<sup>31</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 61.

<sup>32</sup>Golden Jubilee, 1896-1946, p. 43.

<sup>33</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 61.

<sup>34</sup>Herbst, p. 131.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 132.



**LEGEND**  
 ↑ MISSION  
 ▲ SEMINARY  
 ● AMERICAN PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS

0 200  
 MILES



**FIG. 43— S.D.S. FACILITIES, 1946**  
 Source: Golden Jubilee (St. Nozlanz, Wis. • Salvatorian Fathers, 1946).

The order's blacksmith was described as being able to put the same magic to iron that the carpenters did to wood. The blacksmith ". . . can make chairs and desks and things out of iron that not even the students can bust. . . .<sup>36</sup>

Enrollment at the St. Nazianz seminary grew steadily over the years, reaching 50 students by the 1920s and exceeding 200 students by the 1940s.<sup>37</sup> The students came mainly from eastern and midwestern states and several foreign nations, including Germany. During World War II the continued study by German seminarians at St. Nazianz was uncertain. In November of 1942 Salvatorian officials in Rome and Wisconsin reached an agreement with the United States Attorney General's Office that, on a case by case review basis, German seminarians would be allowed to complete their religious education under the direction of the SDS.<sup>38</sup>

#### Commercial Enterprises and Population Growth

The character of the village of St. Nazianz changed subtly during the 1909 to 1954 period, beginning with the opening of the St. Nazianz State Bank in 1909.<sup>39</sup> The face of St. Nazianz was altered in April of 1918 when a village fire destroyed

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<sup>36</sup>Herbst, p. 131.

<sup>37</sup>Golden Jubilee, 1896-1946, p. 43.

<sup>38</sup>Letter from Lemeul B. Schofield, Special Assistant to U.S. Attorney General, by E. E. Salisbury, Chief of Certification Branch, to Father Bede Frederich, Provincial of Seminary, SDS, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, November 20, 1942.

<sup>39</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 78.



sixteen buildings, including the bank.<sup>40</sup> Fire fighting equipment from Kiel, 12 miles away, had to be brought into St. Nazianz.

The event was one of ". . . great confusion, naturally; and the church bells were ringing nearly all the while."<sup>41</sup> While the Milwaukee press called it a \$200,000 fire,<sup>42</sup> a local observer, Father Winfred Herbst, estimated total loss at \$40,000.<sup>43</sup> Regardless of which estimate was more accurate, people were curious to see the ruins:

Two weeks after, there were, one Sunday afternoon, so many automobiles in St. Nazianz that the streets were blocked. People were crazy to see the ruins. And they almost stormed the college here. I understand that over two hundred persons came in to see our museum that day and, incidentally, pulled almost all the hair out of our . . . badger. . . . In fact, we are getting famous here. If we want solitude we will soon have to take to the woods, go further north.<sup>44</sup>

Recognizing that something more efficient than a bucket brigade was necessary for fire-fighting, a village fire-fighting organization was formed in 1921. By 1925, a modern truck and other up-to-date fire-fighting equipment had been acquired.<sup>45</sup> In 1926, a new fire-house was erected and several large water storage cisterns were built throughout the village.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>The Settlement (St. Nazianz), May, 1979, p. 11.

<sup>41</sup>Herbst, p. 51.

<sup>42</sup>The Milwaukee Journal, April 14, 1918, part 4, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup>Herbst, p. 51.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 80.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

In 1921 a group of local investors pooled \$25,000 to organize the St. Nazianz Silver Fox Company, a fur farm facility that was located one-half mile south of the village.<sup>47</sup> Its early success fostered the establishment of two additional fur farms--for mink raising--within the village.<sup>48</sup> Safety Feed Cutters and New Idea Blowers, farm implements manufactured by the Kaltenbrun's since 1896, continued to be distributed throughout the Midwest from a now expanded facility just north of the village.<sup>49</sup> A Pioneer Canning and Pickling Company, opened in 1901, operated successfully until 1927, when an over-abundance of canned peas from the previous season made the operation unprofitable. However, in 1928, the Valdars Canning Company purchased the plant,<sup>50</sup> and operated it until the plant closed permanently in 1948.<sup>51</sup> Table 3 lists the commercial and professional services found in the village in 1929 which then had developed a distinct commercial core focused on the intersection of the two highways connecting St. Nazianz to other communities (Figure 44).

In 1928 a local mechanic, Frank Heimerl, received a patent for the Gemco Crankcase Oil Heater he had developed. Completed Gemco units were sold to the Chevrolet Motor Division in

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<sup>47</sup>Manitowoc Herald-News, October 14, 1926.

<sup>48</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 78.

<sup>49</sup>Manitowoc Herald-News, October 14, 1926.

<sup>50</sup>Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 78.

<sup>51</sup>The Settlement (St. Nazianz), December, 1979, p. 12.

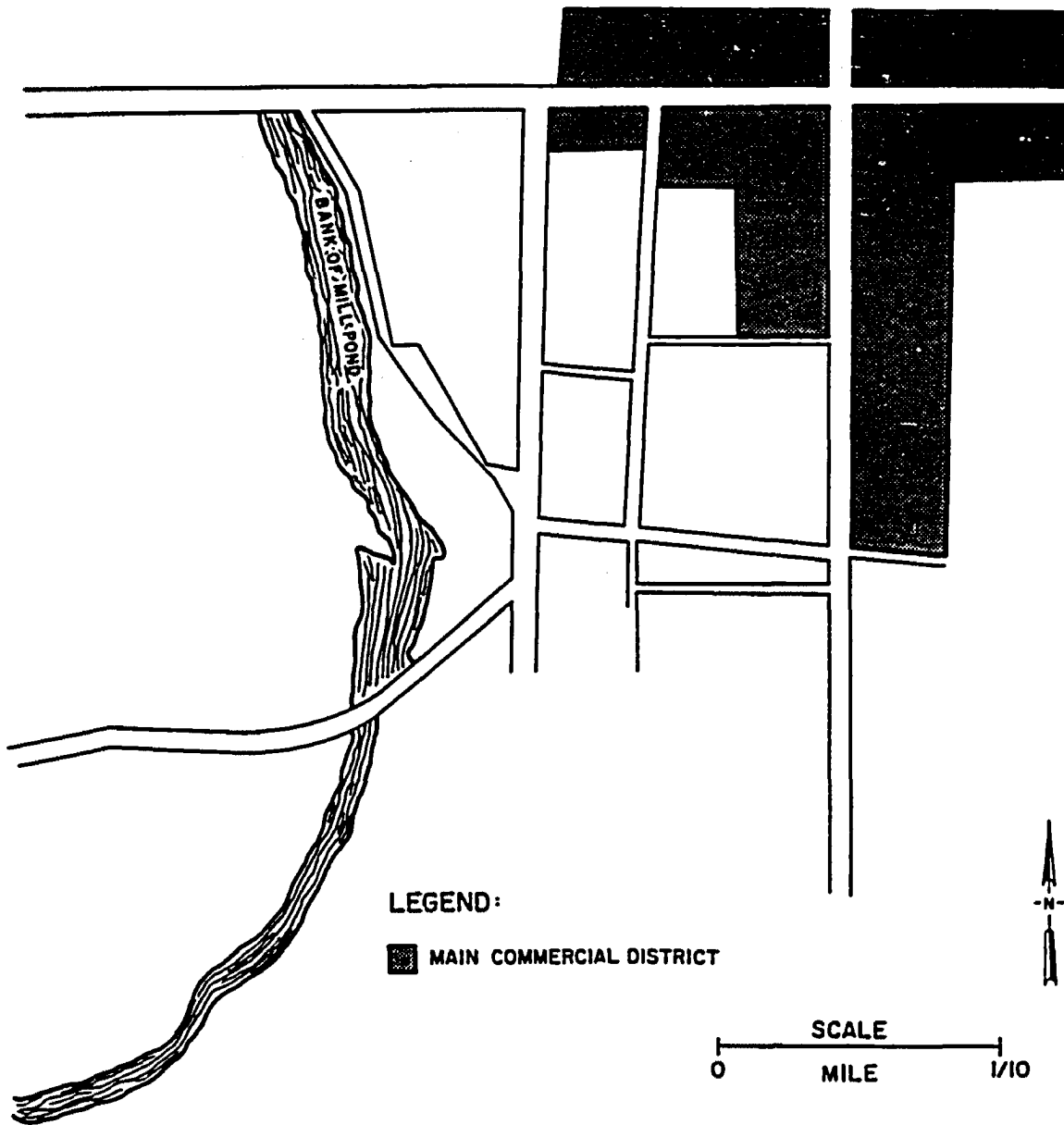


FIG. 44—ST. NAZIANZ COMERCIAL CORE, 1929

Source: Diamond Jubilee (St. Nazianz, Wis.: Society of the Devine Savior, 1929).

Detroit.<sup>52</sup> By 1930, Heimerl had built a machine shop which allowed continued production of the heater as well as repairing and producing other mechanical goods for both village and farm use. Described as a natural mechanic, he devised an early version of today's snomobile in the 1930s. Having observed that automobile wheels were wider spaced than sleigh runners and that the wheels tended to become hung on the runner ruts in packed snow, Heimerl cut down an old car and fitted runners in front, leaving the rear wheels in place. In association with the local canning company, he developed a texturemeter for testing the quality of peas. Proving successful, the device was marketed for use at canneries throughout the United States and Canada, India, and Europe.<sup>53</sup>

During World War II Heimerl's shop was awarded a contract to produce airplane parts. By the war's end, more than 300,000 such parts had been produced.<sup>54</sup> From the 1940s to 1954 the plant continued to sub-contract parts components for larger manufacturing firms. Eventually the plant was purchased by outside interest and its operations moved to nearby Kiel.

November 30 of 1945 was the date of the "Help St. Nazianz Light Up" dance and celebration. The event commemorated the reappearance of street lights in the village, things that had not been operative since the winter of 1922. It was on

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<sup>52</sup>The Settlement (St. Nazianz), December, 1979, p. 16.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 79.

February 22 of that year that ice from a sleet storm caused wires and poles to snap.<sup>55</sup> After many years the St. Nazianz Businessmen's Association organized efforts to raise funds and restore the lighting. The event created national attention, causing one North Carolina citizen to inquire about available housing so that he could take residence in the village.<sup>56</sup>

By 1929, the 75th anniversary of the founding of St. Nazianz, the population, including members of the religious communities, was 525.<sup>57</sup> An unofficial census, compiled by the centennial committee, tallied 630 such village inhabitants in 1954.<sup>58</sup>

#### Old World Relic

As the village of St. Nazianz grew and the operations of the SDS spread, St. Nazianz itself developed a reputation as an old world relic that had changed little since its founding. An article from the Milwaukee Journal describes the 1922 village as follows:

Are you always hoping that one day, just at the turn of the road, you will happen on the little village of your dreams--the tiny town that forgot to grow up?

In the village of your dreams, the days drone happily on. Time is broken now and then by the tinkle of a mild-toned bell. Nobody hurries. Even the bees hold a slack pace down the main street. The village should be fringed with trees and here and there should stand a white birch beside a brook.

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<sup>55</sup> Milwaukee Sentinel, October 20, 1945.

<sup>56</sup> Manitowoc Herald-Times, November 29, 1945.

<sup>57</sup> Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, p. 80.

<sup>58</sup> St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 80.

Blue forget-me nots might bloom on either side of a pink convent door, and sweet roses and pansies grow in the monastery garden. The old bearded brother who cares for the flowers and regulates the audacity of the climbing vines should know every leaf and petal and call them by nicknames--pansies would be little step-mothers.

And in the twilight the villagers should tell over a tale brought from the old world--a story of the miraculous building of a church of the swan in a Bavarian valley--'how the pious countess vowed to rear the church whose picture she had seen in the clouds, just where the white swan had stopped its flight.' Or, they might recall the oxen, that nodding under their heavy yokes led the first 'colonists' through the wilderness to found the village.

Then while it was still evening, the villagers go to bed and at nine o'clock there is not a light in all the town. Early in the morning the nuns in the pink convent open the casings and scatter bread for the birds, and if it is Sunday, they march in long dark procession up the winding road, past the white birches and the dark trees to enter the church on the hill.

If it is a week day the children going to school stop to place lilacs on a wayside shrine. And while some of the menfolk work in the fields, others sit on benches outside their shops and smoke and talk. The toy village makes a dream to dwell upon.

To find the village of the dream you need not go to Brittany, nor to the Black Forest. In Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, at a turn of the road, you will happen on it, and its name is St. Nazianz. . . . St. Nazianz is 18 miles from the city of Manitowoc and 6 miles from the scream of a locomotive, but it is 200 years away from today! . . .

Here is proof that St. Nazianz is utterly old-fashioned. There is not a motion picture theater in the town--no 'silver screen' . . .

Instead, on a summer evening, St. Nazianz goes to the 'Casperle Theater.' That is a puppet show. . . .

You will like St. Nazianz. One does not have to be learned in art to care for a village, so little worldly-wise. Father Oschwald's town is nothing grand nor imposing, but it is a peaceful picture!<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>"Toytown of the Black Forest Leads Simple Life, 200 Years Removed from World of Jazz," The Milwaukee Journal, June 11, 1922.

A 1925 account of St. Nazianz described the location as where:

County highway A winds like a silver ribbon from Kiel . . . it strikes right through the picturesque little village of St. Nazianz about which so much has been written during the last few years; the place where quaint towers of church and convent rise above fields of ripened grain, and where pious folk sing the hymns and say the prayers and perpetuate the customs brought into this quiet valley . . . over 70 years ago . . . from the road . . . an endless stream of motor cars clatter on Sundays in summer . . . <sup>60</sup>

As described above, St. Nazianz was located on county highways rather than numbered state or federal trunk routes (Figure 45). Relative remoteness from the main routeways tended to perpetuate the quaintness of the village then as it does today with the two roads passing through being county highways A and C (Figure 46).

On the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee (1929) at St. Nazianz, The Manitowoc Times described the village as:

. . . nestling among the rolling hills in the western part of Manitowoc county, (it) is remembered by many as a bit of the old country transplanted to American soil . . . a quaint and quiet little inland village, that has retained . . . much of the atmosphere of southern Germany. . . <sup>61</sup>

The Milwaukee Journal, on noting the Diamond Jubilee, wrote:

The colony . . . in a hilly lake region here, long has been one of the most picturesque places in the state. Probably nowhere else in Wisconsin can there be found so much of the old world atmosphere as at St. Nazianz. <sup>62</sup>

The Sheboygan Press commemorated the Jubilee by stating:

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<sup>60</sup> James Louis Small, "Just a House by the Side of the Road." The Milwaukee Journal, August 16, 1925.

<sup>61</sup> The Manitowoc Times, October 11, 1929.

<sup>62</sup> The Milwaukee Journal, October 6, 1929.

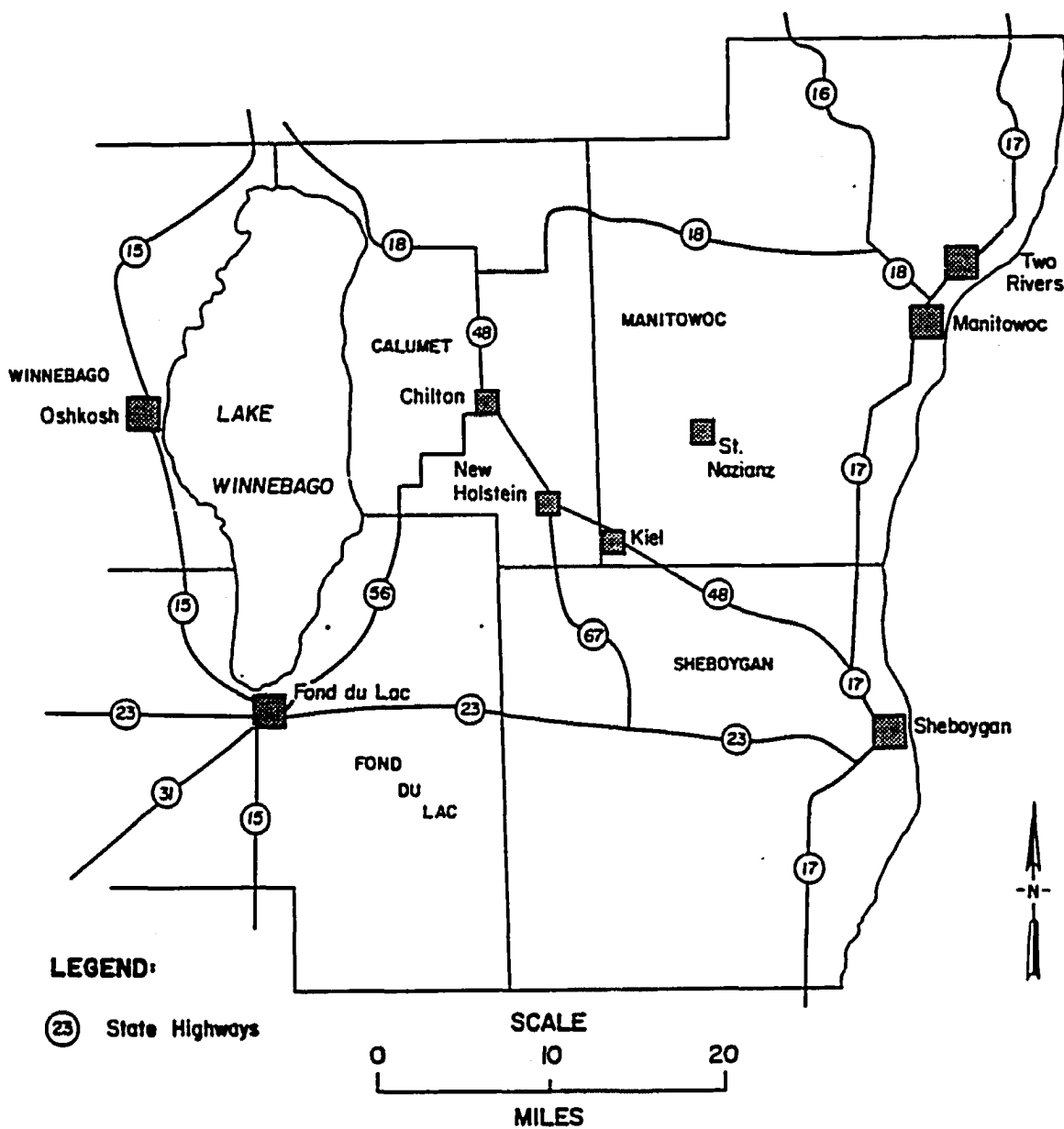


FIG. 45 — MAJOR HIGHWAYS IN ST. NAZIANZ VICINITY, 1918

Source: The Milwaukee Journal, March 18, 1918.



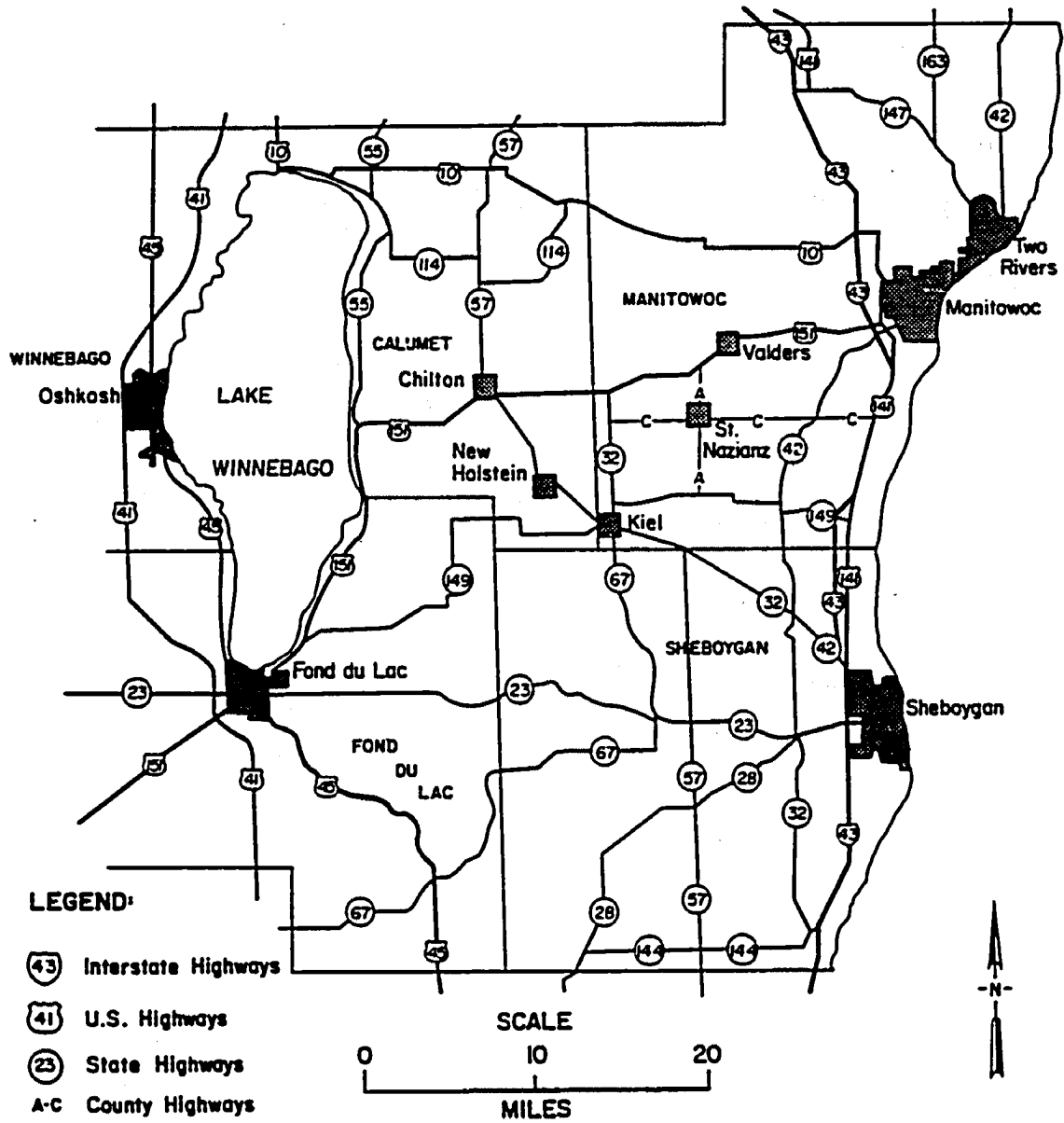


FIG. 46 — MAJOR HIGHWAYS IN ST. NAZIANZ VICINITY, 1983

Source: 1983 Wisconsin Highway Map (Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 1983).

. . . to wander through the streets and outskirts of the village in order to breathe . . . this old country atmosphere. . . . Many artists have come from far and near to sketch this charming picture which words cannot adequately portray. . . . The shops . . . with homes in connection are reminders . . . of shops found throughout Germany . . . many of the children and adults as well are accustomed to converse in German. . . .<sup>63</sup>

The quaint impression of the religious centered village grew widely through the World War II period. For example, in 1939, on the occasion of the dedication of a new seminary building, Bishop Paul P. Rhode of the Green Bay Diocese stated "And so little by little one building after another arose here in this garden spot, secluded as it was from the world."<sup>64</sup> Sister M. Kohn, writing in 1942, said

. . . St. Nazianz has an atmosphere that is decidedly ecclesiastical. It is a quaint rural community which, with sufficient population, has never seen fit to become an incorporated village. It is surrounded by a wealthy farming section and has all the adjuncts of a prosperous village. It has an artificial lake on the banks of which may be seen black-robed brothers and priests of the Order in meditation and study.

The whole ecclesiastical quarter is, while a part of the world, seemingly apart from the world . . . the atmosphere of the place is marked in contrast to the strife and turmoil of the outside world.<sup>65</sup>

As the 100th anniversary of the founding of St. Nazianz approached, preparations were begun to provide a fitting celebration for the occasion. St. Gregory's church was given exterior cleaning and repair, the steeple and roof were painted,

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<sup>63</sup>The Sheboygan Press, October 10, 1929.

<sup>64</sup>Address by Bishop Paul P. Rhode at SDS Seminary, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, June 13, 1939.

<sup>65</sup>Kohn, pp. 69-70.

and the church grounds were spruced up. All of this work was permitted financially through individual donations by the parishioners.<sup>67</sup>

After 100 years St. Nazianz had established itself as an unique rural religious community that could trace its heritage to its founding. It was proud of its spiritual role and its growing marketing function for agricultural activity of the vicinity. St. Nazianz had changed and grown while it preserved its foundation.

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<sup>67</sup>St. Nazianz, 1854-1954, p. 49.

Table 3. Commercial and Professional Service in St. Nazianz, 1929.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number in St. Nazianz</u>
General Store	2
Hardware and Implement Store	3
Automobile Garage	2
Gasoline Station	6
Bakery	1
Meat Market	1
Refreshment Parlor	4
Jewelry and Stationery Store	1
Photographic Studio	1
Entertainment Hall	2
Radio Sales Agencies	4
Barber Shop	1
Shoe Repair Shop	2
Harness Shop	1
Tailor Shop	1
Real Estate and Insurance Agency	1
Blacksmith Shop	2
Feed and Planing Mill	1
Chick Hatchery	1
Electrical Specialty Shop	1
Dentist	2
Medical Doctor	1
Undertaker	1

Source: Diamond Jubilee, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin (St. Nazianz, Wis.: The Society of the Divine Savior 1954), p. 80.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONTEMPORARY ST. NAZIANZ, 1954-1983

Gradual change and adjustment in the economic and service functions of St. Nazianz have characterized the years since 1954. New residential construction has filled in some village lots and has enlarged the village. Some retail businesses and professional services have decreased because of competition from nearby communities and others have stabilized in response to an even demand. The Society of the Divine Savior (SDS) seminary has redefined its mission three times and the future of the community is presently unclear.

#### Economic Troubles at the SDS Seminary

Society's questioning attitude of the 1960s was felt in religious institutions, including the SDS seminary at St. Nazianz. The role of the seminary was rethought and gradually it became less a sheltered abbey for religious study and more an institution of higher education for varied aspects of service to mankind. Freedom of expression and opportunity for individual personal development became balanced against traditional standards of authority. Definite strides were made to open communication between the seminary and surrounding communities. Additionally, parental input on seminary actions was sought. Special social occasions and sporting events were

scheduled to invite the public to see the seminary and learn about it first hand. The seminary was no longer a secluded, sheltered institution of authoritative education but had become an open institution of religious education and human service training.

In 1966 a nine member advisory board consisting of parents, religious officials, and local St. Nazianz citizens, was created to widen the base of policy making. Increased emphasis on lay responsibility coincident with a shortage of professional religious educators caused the seminary to include more lay persons in vital roles in administrative, academic, clerical, culinary, and health care fields. By 1967, the SDS seminary had been accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and had expanded its curriculum to include concentrations in social studies, math, fine arts, and hearing disorders. The St. Nazianz seminary received wide recognition in the Wisconsin press for its innovative thinking and accomplishments. In one instance it was referred to as the "Swinging Seminary."<sup>1</sup>

In the early 1960s enrollment in the seminary remained steady at about 150 students, bringing together young men from 120 cities across the United States (Figure 47). However, by 1965, seminary enrollment across the nation had begun to decline, including that at St. Nazianz. Many seminaries across the nation faced uncertain fates, including possible closings.

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<sup>1</sup>The Settlement (St. Nazianz), December, 1979, p. 2.

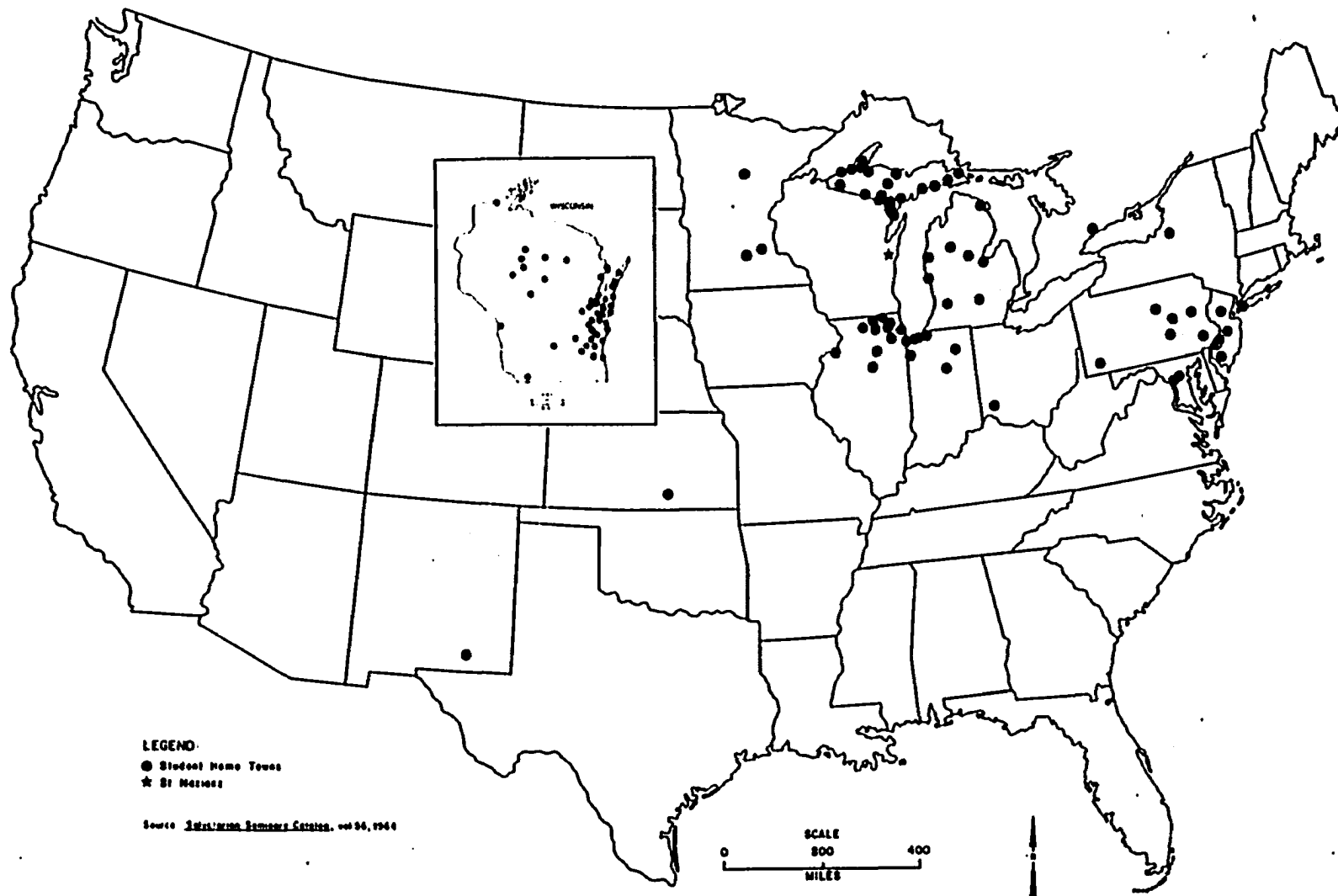


FIG. 47— HOME TOWNS OF SDS SEMINARY STUDENTS, 1963

The SDS seminary underwent a period of self-examination. Statistics showed that only 424 of the seminary's 2,000 graduates had been ordained into the priesthood. Many of the remainder had gone into social service positions such as teaching, medicine Peace Corps, and Vista. Thus, after considerable deliberation, it was determined to reorient the mission of the institution to train leaders in service. No longer would the education be geared to religious training.

A direct result of the self-examination was the termination of seminary education and the starting of the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Prep School. JFK Prep, organized under ecumenical leadership and operated as a nonsectorian independent corporation with the SDS,<sup>2</sup> was open to people of all faiths and was meant to develop "tomorrow's leaders with a deep and abiding concern for men."<sup>3</sup> Initially enrolling only boys, the school accepted girls in the second year of operation. The opening JFK Prep coincided with the closing of St. Gregory's High School in St. Nazianz. Drawing students primarily from the Milwaukee area, enrollment peaked at 180 students during the 1970-71 academic year.<sup>4</sup>

While the terminating of the seminary function and the initiating of JFK Prep were outwardly noticeable changes in SDS activities, given developments promoted other changes. One

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<sup>2</sup>The Milwaukee Journal, January 3, 1982.

<sup>3</sup>The Settlement (St. Nazianz), December, 1979, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Statement by Father David Cooney, SDS, in personal interview, Milwaukee, August 22, 1983.



occurred in 1959 when the SDS Printing Department, since 1917 a major activity at St. Nazianz, was moved 16 miles to New Holstein. The move permitted the use of a new and expanded facility in a community with a larger pool of lay workers.

More prominent than removing the Printing Department was the financial plight of the SDS. The changing trends in education of the 1960s, along with ill-fated investment ventures, brought the SDS to the brink of bankruptcy. By 1966 the SDS found it necessary to sell the seminary buildings and acreage at Blackwood, New Jersey.<sup>5</sup> This particular facility was selected first for sale as it was then the most marketable of SDS properties and could bring financial relief. Even so, the American Province of the SDS was forced to file a bankruptcy petition in the Federal Court of Eastern Wisconsin on November 1, 1970.<sup>6</sup> By late 1971 a plan was formulated for reorganization and for the repayment of creditors between 1972-1975 that would enable the SDS to continue to exist in the United States.<sup>7</sup>

To meet the payment schedule, it was necessary for the SDS to sell all property holdings except for the nearly 1300 acres and buildings at St. Nazianz, the Provincial residence at Milwaukee, and the Salvatorian Center (fund raising, public

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<sup>5</sup>Statement by Father David Cooney, SDS.

<sup>6</sup>Reverend Leo Rummel, History of the Catholic Church in Wisconsin (Madison: Knights of Columbus, 1976), p. 146.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

relations, and printing) at New Holstein.<sup>8</sup> Many members of the SDS were forced to meet new challenges as apostles in service to hospital, religious, educational, and social concerns, and have learned that their service is still vital without the big institutions.

During this period of financial adjustment and administrative reorganization operation of the JFK Prep school was uninterrupted. The school attracted academic interest because of its emphasis on individualized study plans and leadership training for human services professions. Additionally, much notoriety was created by the school's basketball team, in part because of young Mickey Crowe who averaged 40 points per game during the 1974-75 season.

By 1980, even JFK Prep faced economic troubles. Enrollment began declining as tuition increased, even though fees were calculated on a sliding scale according to family incomes. By the fall of 1981 tuition for all enrolled students averaged \$2,600.<sup>9</sup> At the same time the energy costs of heating the old and poorly insulated seminary buildings had escalated greatly. That fall semester only 60 students were enrolled. Acknowledging that "it was inflation that killed the school,"<sup>10</sup> Father Jude Weisenbeck, president of JFK, announced in early January

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<sup>8</sup>Statement by Father David Cooney, SDS, in personal interview, Milwaukee, August 22, 1983.

<sup>9</sup>The Milwaukee Journal, January 3, 1982.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

of 1982 that the school would close on the 15th of that month.

Since the closing of JFK Prep, the former seminary buildings have essentially been empty and unused. Some of the former dormitory quarters for students are used to house retired clergy of the SDS and the small staff of Brothers and priests who care for retirees and the grounds. Actual population on the SDS grounds in recent years has averaged 25 persons.

### Village Incorporation

Early in 1956 a group of concerned citizens organized a drive to incorporate St. Nazianz as a village. This called for separating village lands from the towns of Eaton and Liberty and governing them under a separate village structure. Arguments for incorporating as a village included:

1. Building Activity: Recognizing that many new homes that had been built in the years just prior to 1956, the organizers insisted "These investments must be protected against others who may wish to build barns, outdoor toilets or chicken coops in the area."<sup>11</sup>
2. Streets: Parking, snow removal, and street care were becoming an increasingly major problem, and it was argued that a village government could attend to the problem more efficiently than the town governments.
3. Planning: People in the village could best plan their local environment so that future building and street extensions would form a logical pattern.
4. Industry: Proponents of incorporation reasoned that local employment opportunities could only be expanded through attracting new manufacturing or retailing interests to St. Nazianz, and an established local government would have the best chance of succeeding in attracting such new development

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<sup>11</sup>"Incorporation Information" (mimeographed pamphlet, 1956), p. 1.

5. Sewers: New Wisconsin sewage regulations had imposed restrictions against open ditch sewage discharge and had projected dates for construction of central sewage systems where they did not then exist. Also, in recent years some livestock had died because of contamination flowing from St. Nazianz into open streams. By incorporating in 1956, the village could collect taxes immediately for the sewage system cost that would be encountered in a few years and thus have a money pool with which to work. This would prevent an extremely abrupt tax increase at the time of actual construction.
6. Fire Insurance Rates: Without any pressurized water system, citizens of St. Nazianz were paying fire insurance at the highest rate as determined by a rating bureau. With incorporation, a village water system could be build and thus lower the insurance rates while also eliminating the need for all dwellings to have separate wells and pumps.
7. Police Protection: Incorporation would allow St. Nazianz to have a local peace officer. The officer would ". . . have the right and duty to arrest the speeder who endangers our children and keeps us up at night, or keep the dogs from our gardens."<sup>12</sup> Further, the officer was needed because "all communities are now having Civil Defense preparations to guard them in case of war or bombing attacks."<sup>13</sup>

Opponents of incorporation asked if St. Nazianz were big enough to be incorporated. Proponents estimated that in 1956 St. Nazianz had a population of 764, which was greater than the respective populations of other nearby communities at the time they were incorporated (Table 4). Proponents further argued that incorporation would bring in more tax revenue to St. Nazianz. Greater tax receipts would potentially increase employment opportunities at home, and this might increase the possibility of young citizens remaining in St. Nazianz: "One

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<sup>12</sup>"Incorporation Information," p. 2.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

father of 5 children said that not one of his children is home with him because St. Nazianz is too small and his children had to move far away."<sup>14</sup>

St. Nazianz' economic stature was deemed to be sufficiently developed to survive incorporation. Evidence cited included the number of local enterprises and the fact that during the economic depression of the 1930s the local bank, unlike others in neighboring communities, did not close.

An underlying problem that had long been facing the village was the need for a sewage system to replace old and over-used septic systems. A large portion of the village was recognized as having poor drainage because of the great clay concentration in the soil. A publicity pamphlet warned that "any home with a family and wash water will have septic tank trouble soon."<sup>15</sup> Additionally, the Wisconsin State Health Department had ordered St. Nazianz taverns to dig new wells and to flush out their septic pits.

Some citizens questioned if the SDS would pay taxes to the proposed incorporated village. SDS representatives assured that they would pay the same rate charged individual residences for water and the sewer system. Also, the SDS would pay taxes on all lots, houses, and farm property within the proposed village limits except for the actual seminary grounds and facilities.

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<sup>14</sup>"Incorporation Information," p. 3.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

In response to charges that the SDS would act as a single unit and thus decide the referendum vote, incorporation proponents stated that non-SDS village residents eligible to vote numbered 328 while the total number of Brothers, Sisters, and priests eligible to vote was 92.<sup>16</sup> Further, it was argued, why should the village or the seminary necessarily vote against one another? The benefits St. Nazianz derived from the presence of the seminary were listed:

1. A local payroll of \$180,000 per year, employing local citizens.
2. Students who spent money in the village.
3. Visiting parents and friends who spent money in the village.
4. The seminary farm that created much agribusiness.
5. County highway A which was a cement highway because of traffic generated by the seminary.
6. A double electrical power line into the village because of the seminary power demand.
7. Dial telephones and special long distance service because of the SDS.<sup>17</sup>

The commentary concluded:

We need the Seminary much more than they need us! What would happen to us if they moved out?<sup>18</sup>

The Incorporation Information pamphlet urged that every responsible citizen should exercise the right to vote for or against incorporation. The pamphlet then stated:

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<sup>16</sup>"Incorporation Information," p. 4.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

You must first decide if you want St. Nazianz to grow or stand still. If you want it to be a better place to live, if you want more employment for yourself or your family or if you want you children to be able to get jobs here. If you want this you will be for incorporation. If you are afraid of the future, if you don't think St. Nazianz can or should grow and be safe you will be against incorporation. Don't forget:

When the local Catholic Church was built some people were against it! When the first fire truck was bought some people were against it! When the concrete highway came to town some people were against it! When George Washington School was built some people were against it! When the Bank was built some people said St. Nazianz could never support a bank!<sup>19</sup>

The corporation was approved by 269 to 95 vote in a June 2, 1956 election.<sup>20</sup> As a result the incorporated village of St. Nazianz was separated politically from the towns of Eaton and Liberty on June 5 of that year.<sup>21</sup> Hence the village would be governed by a Village President and a City Council comprised of elected citizens.

### The Village Today

Despite passage of incorporation in 1956, village population has fluctuated only slightly and services have changed but

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-6. The pamphlet concluded that "Nothing can stop us if we all work together for a bigger and better St. Nazianz, even Father Oswald . . . said: Let Every Man Do His Best--Promote the Welfare of His Neighbor!"

<sup>20</sup>Minutes of Village Clerk, Village of St. Nazianz, June 5, 1956.

<sup>21</sup>Said territory is located in Section Twenty-four (24) and Twenty-five (25) of Township No. Eighteen (18) N., Range No. Twenty-one (21) E., and in Sections Nineteen (19) and Thirty (30) of Township No. Eighteen (18) N., Range No. Twenty-two (22) East, all within the Townships of Eaton and Liberty Manitowoc County, Wisconsin. . . . Letter from Harold R. Firkus, Clerk Village of St. Nazianz, to Frank Bushman, Clerk, Town of

little. One service that expanded was the John Miller Implement Company, a farm implements retail sales and servicing agency. The family-owned company had earned a quality reputation based upon its record of service to farmers in a wide area around St. Nazianz. In 1962 the scope of operation was expanded as the company became an importer of tractors from Italy (the Same brand). This import connection led to the establishing in St. Nazianz of a training center for the entire United States where dealers and mechanics were trained for servicing Same tractors. This function continued until the late 1970s. The Miller Company today maintains a large operation, still sells Same and other tractor and implement brands, but has not coordinated any Same training sessions for over five years. Miller employees do take equipment throughout the mid-west and demonstrate it to interested agricultural people.<sup>22</sup>

The Braun Electric Company built a new plant in 1977 on the site of the old Pioneer Canning and pickling Company. Braun produces electrically driven agricultural equipment including milking machines, barn cleaners, and manure stackers. They distribute these goods over a large area of eastern Wisconsin.

The Village Board in March of 1972 nominated citizens to comprise a Housing Authority. The group was assigned the task of applying for Federal Housing and Urban Development funds to

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Eaton, and to Revel Thompson, Clerk, Town of Liberty, July 17, 1956.

<sup>22</sup>The Settlement (St. Nazianz), October, 1979, pp. 10-11.



finance construction of quality public-funded housing for the elderly. After several years and countless bureaucratic forms and procedures, the Housing Authority received notification that the funding was exhausted. In the meantime, property had been acquired on the southeastern village limits (Figure 48). An alternative source of funding, the Farmers Home Administration, did approve the project, and guaranteed financing in the spring of 1979. Ground was broken in September and 20 housing units for the elderly were completed in 1980.<sup>23</sup>

A mobile home park in the northeast part of the village has developed in the last twenty years. Maintaining a rectangular lot and street pattern, the park today contains 30 units and represents a mix of middle-age and younger folks, some of whom work in St. Nazianz.

From 1969 to 1983 21 new residential buildings were constructed in St. Nazianz. The dwellings were clustered into certain pockets along West Court Street in the southwest part of the village, adjacent to First Avenue in the northwest, and along Sixth and Eighth Avenues in the southeast (Figure 48).

Reasons why people initially chose to establish or re-establish residency in St. Nazianz vary. However, a prevailing reason focuses on the intangible benefits of the small community environment: life-long family ties; friendly neighborhood relations; and support in time of need. A series of articles featuring new village residents was printed in The

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<sup>23</sup>The Settlement (St. Nazianz), October, 1979, pp. 10-11.

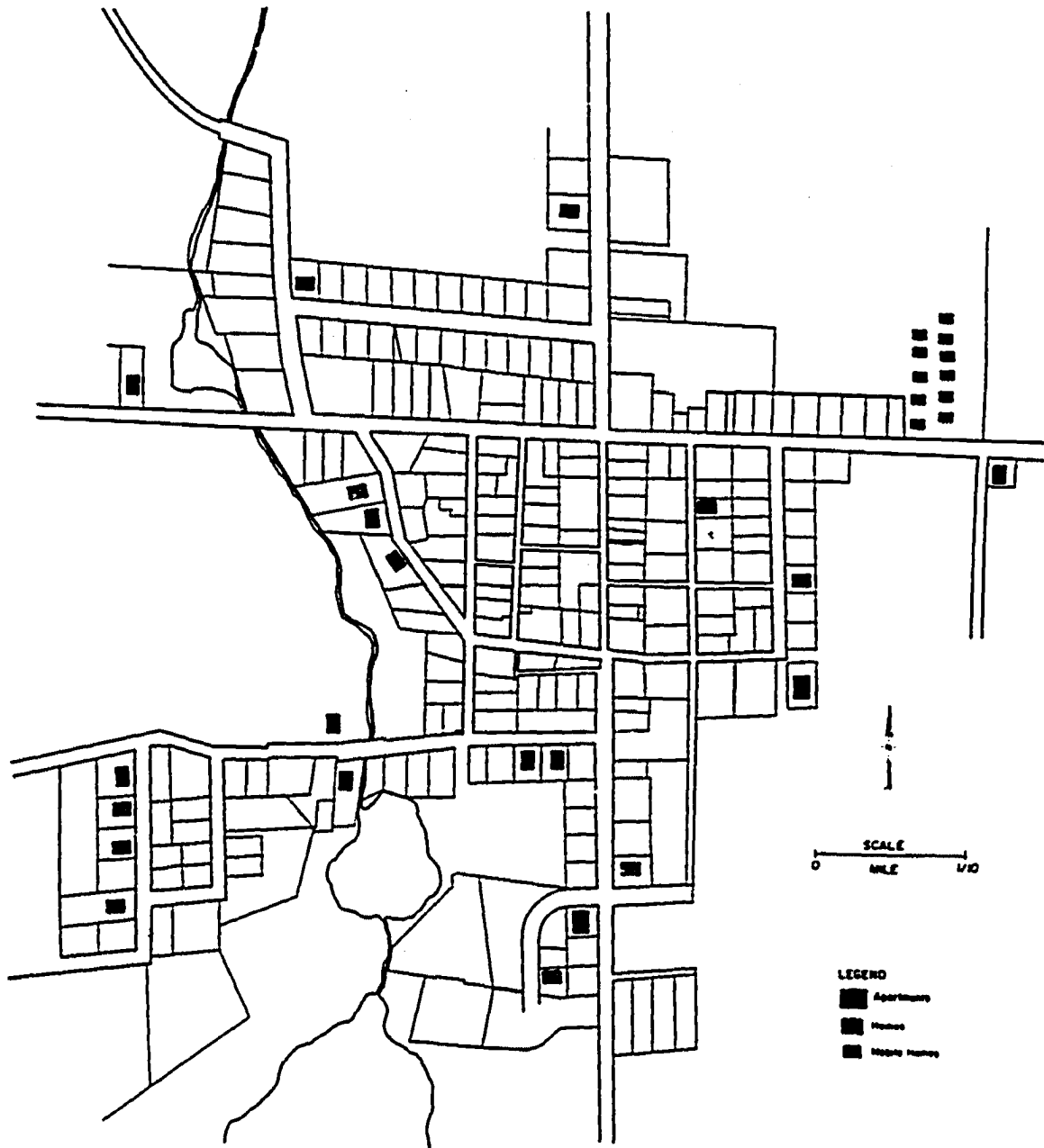


FIG.48—NEW HOUSING UNITS, 1969—1983

Source: Building Permits Issued, Office of Village Clerk, 1969—1983

Settlement during 1979. A generic description of the residents and a capsulization of what attracted them to St. Nazianz is provided in Table 5.

In recent years the number of retail and service enterprises has stabilized as has the population of the village of St. Nazianz and the surrounding countryside (Table 6). At the present the village has only one grocery. Many residents make periodic food shopping journeys to nearby larger communities and thus, in reality, the local grocery is in-adequate for all needs. There are no clothing or general merchandise retailers but there is one large hardware store which carries a wide range of goods. Professional services available include one dentist and two law offices. Braun Electric Company, the only manufacturing establishment in the village, employs ten people at present. The entire array of retail, service, professional, eating, agribusiness, construction, automobile, and manufacturing outlets is given in Figure 49. The concentration of commercial and professional activity around the intersection of County Highways A and C, begun years before, has continued to the present day.

#### Persistence of Founding Heritage

Evidence that the founding spirit of St. Nazianz remains among the present-day citizens has surfaced on several occasions in recent years. In 1972 the villagewide June observance of the Feast of Corpus Christi was resumed after a 12 year absence. Always of special significance to the Christian

Table 4. Population of Villages at Time of Incorporation.

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<u>VILLAGE</u>	<u>YEAR OF INCORPORATION</u>	<u>POPULATION</u>
Kiel	1892	510
Reedsville	1892	510
Valders.	1919	417
Mishicot	1950	577
St. Nazianz	1956	764*

\*estimated

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SOURCE: "Incorporation Information" (mimeographed pamphlet, 1956), p. 3.

Table 5. New St. Nazianz Residents, 1979.

<u>PERSON</u>	<u>PLACE FROM</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>	<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>
single	Chilton	likes opportunities for hunting, fishing, and cross-country skiing	New Holstein
single male	Stockbridge	enjoys the open country atmosphere and the outdoor recreational opportunities	Manitowoc
husband wife	Kiel	like the village atmosphere and the nice neighbors	retired Kiel
husband wife	Kiel	closeness to family and friends	Two Rivers
husband wife	Madison	opening local barber shop	St. Nazianz
husband wife	DeKalb, Ill.	friendliness of the community purchased a tavern	St. Nazianz

SOURCE: The Settlement (St. Nazianz), August, October, November, and December, 1979.

Table 6. Population of St. Nazianz Vicinity, 1960 to 1980.

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	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>
Town of Eaton	716	741	764
Town of Liberty	966	1089	1170
Village of St. Nazianz	669	718	738

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SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census:  
1980 Census of Population, Number of Inhabitants,  
Wisconsin.

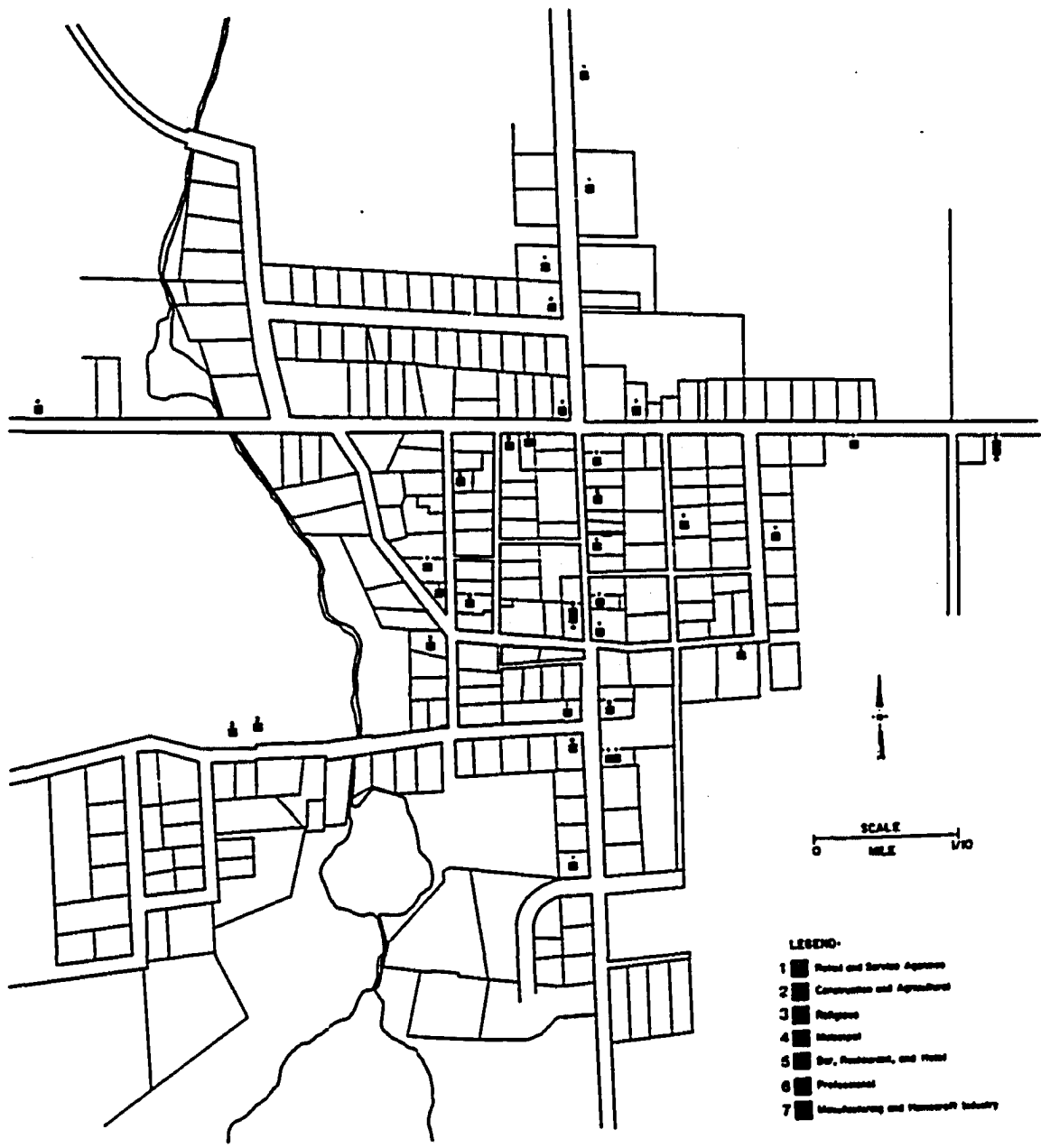


FIG.49- ST. NAZIANZ 1983

tradition of St. Nazianz, the observance, which commemorates Father Oschwald and his group sailing from France in 1854, has traditionally been celebrated with a large festival of religious worship and procession through the village. However, changing attitudes and declining interest associated with "changes and unrest that were occurring in the Church and the world" resulted in discontinuing the event in 1960.<sup>24</sup> During the period of nonobservance it was stated that the community "had lost a sense of tradition, of the things that tie us to the past, which we need to give us direction for the future."<sup>25</sup> The Festival of Corpus Christi remains a special day to the citizens of St. Nazianz and rekindles pride in the village's founding heritage.

To celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the founding of St. Nazianz in 1979, 12 issues of The Settlement were published by a civic committee under the editorship of Anselm Platten. A life-long citizen of St. Nazianz, Platten had worked as Department Head of Inventory Services at the Seminary for 41 years and had been a local reporter to the Sheboygan Press and Manitowoc Herald-Times-Reporter newspapers. Intended as a communications vehicle for all people of St. Gregory's Parish, the village, and the organizations which had roots in St. Nazianz, the paper sought to bring out the "color of the Community and in the words of the founder, Father Oschwald, 'Promote the

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<sup>24</sup>Father Cyril Dickrell, SDS in The Settlement (St. Nazianz), May, 1979, p. 3.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.



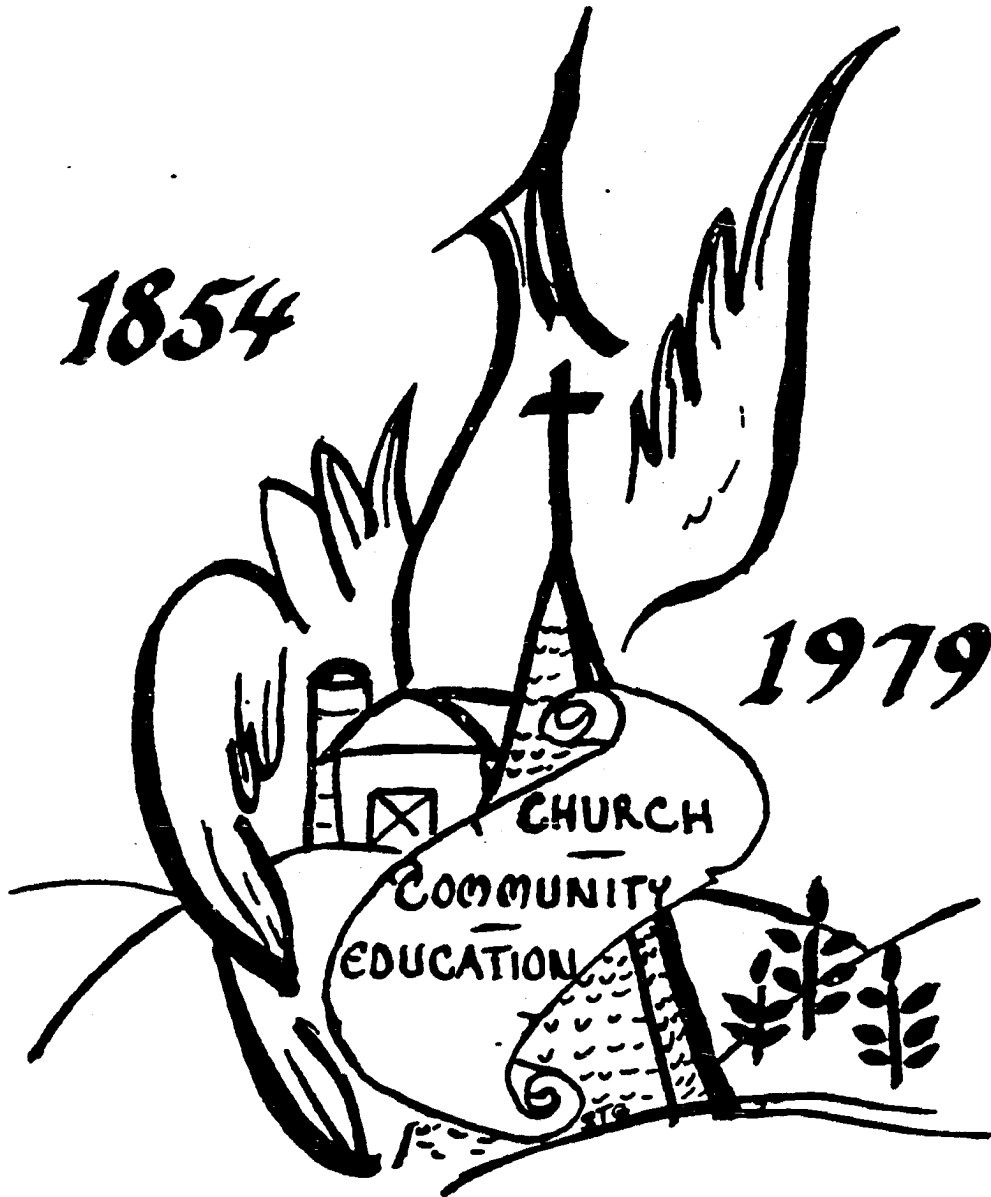
Welfare of Our Neighbors."<sup>26</sup> Over the course of twelve issues, articles on all aspects of the settlement and development of the community were presented to foster admiration for past accomplishments and awareness of the cohesiveness of the community. Long-time residents recalled the village of their youth in some articles while others traced changes in the village's religious and service functions. For the October issue, Sister Therese Geiger, a teacher at St. Gregory's school, designed a shield for the special year (Figure 50).

Two community-wide celebrations were observed in 1979. The first occurred on June 10, when St. Gregory's Parish observed the Feast of Corpus Christi. Following the worship service in the church, those attending participated in the traditional procession through the village with stops at the site of the first church and at a shrine at St. Mary's Convent. Following the procession the entire village community joined the parish community for a picnic at the school grounds. The group included many out-of-town and out-of-state persons. That same month, President Jimmy Carter sent a letter of acknowledgment of the anniversary to the Congregation of St. Gregory's Church (Figure 51).

A second anniversary event was observed on October 14, the 125th year of the actual raising of buildings and initial settlement. A special religious service at St. Gergory's Church was held. Following the service a community-wide

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<sup>26</sup>The Settlement (St. Nazianz), March, 1979, p. 5.



**St. Gregory Parish**

**St. Nazianz, Wisconsin**

Fig. 50 - Shield designed to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Village of St. Nazianz.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 22, 1979

To the Congregation of  
St. Gregory Catholic Church

I am pleased to send each of you my warmest greetings  
as you observe your anniversary. You have my best  
wishes and my prayers for continued spiritual growth.

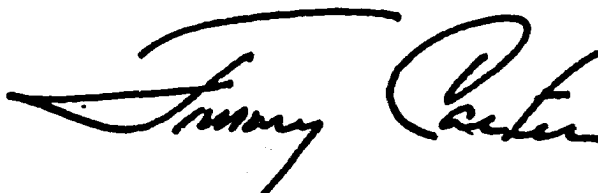
A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jimmy Carter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom of the letter's text area.

Fig. 51 - Presidential acknowledgement of the 125th anniversary of the Congregation of St. Gregory.

social and pot-luck dinner took place in St. Gregory's School.<sup>27</sup>

The spirit of St. Nazianz continues. On July 2, 1983, a remodeled and expanded St. Mary Convent was dedicated.<sup>28</sup> The original structure was built in 1866 and initially served as a hospital and an orphanage. Today it is a retirement home for the Salvatorian Sisters and can care for as many as 25 Sisters. The Salvatorian Sisters assumed responsibility for the facility in 1896 when they arrived in St. Nazianz with the Salvatorian Fathers. At that time the Sisters cared for the aging Oswald Sisters and a small orphanage population.

On July 8-10, 1983, the 129th Anniversary of St. Nazianz' founding was celebrated with Settlement Fest Days. Outdoor activities, athletic contests, dining accommodations, and a new automobile raffle were organized by the Lion's Club. This now annual festival provides much fun to those participating but also helps people to recall their local heritage. This awareness and appreciation of the village's past helps to preserve St. Nazianz' special identity spiritually, culturally, and physically.

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<sup>27</sup>The anniversary events were made possible through the cooperative efforts of countless individuals and the church and civic organizations. Exemplary is the comment in The Settlement (June 1979, p. 15) concerning the St. Nazianz Lions Club: If the founder of our village, the Rev. Ambrose Oswald were alive today he would certainly have a place in his heart for the St. Nazianz Lions who through their efforts conform to his wishes by 'Promoting the Welfare of their Neighbor.'

<sup>28</sup>Manitowoc Herald-Times-Reporter, June 26, 1983.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Consciously and subconsciously, St. Nazianz today preserves much of its heritage in a diversity of ways. The name of the community commemorates the tie to St. Gregory of Nazianz, the patron saint selected by Father Ambrose Oschwald and his flock to spiritually guide them in their movement to the New World. The Roman Catholic Church and St. Gregory's Parish remain central in the spiritual and cultural life of a large segment of the community's population. Religious shrines are common on residential lawns and the Feast of Corpus Christi has been reinstated as a village-wide event. The community observed its 125th anniversary in 1979, and each of the 12 monthly issues of The Settlement in that year fondly recalled past events and people and carried a continued theme of appreciation for accomplishments and growth.

A prominent component of contemporary St. Nazianz is the Society of the Divine Savior. It continues to care for the buildings and land to which it received full title in 1909. The seminary facilities on the hill to the south of the village, the St. Mary's Convent at the foot of the hill in the village, and the large two-siloed barn of the Colonial Dairy Farm are village landmarks. Whereas the convent and the

dairy farm are fully functional, the seminary facilities atop the hill are essentially unused at present. Since initial construction under Oswald's guidance in 1862, the hill facilities have always been the center of religious and spiritual education. Over the years the buildings were home to St. Francis Seminary, SDS Seminary, and JFK Prep School. But, since the closing of JFK in 1981, only a skeleton population of retired priests and a staff have resided on the hill. The lack of a formal educational program is certainly a break in continuity with earlier years. Indeed, pending a decision by the SDS, the future of the hill facilities is uncertain.

On the grounds of the SDS establishment is a shrine complex consisting of a cemetery for SDS priests, a statue of Father Francis Jordan, Father Oswald's tomb, the Loretto Chapel, and the Twelve Stations of the Cross on a wooded slope overlooking Oswald Lake. In order to locate this quiet area a newcomer must ask directions. Indeed, with the decrease in traffic on the SDS grounds, the number of visitors to the shrines has decreased, as evidenced by the path of the Stations of the Cross which was overgrown with vegetation during the summer of 1983 (Figure 52). The path was normally cleared and easy to detect. When facilities attract little traffic, they also receive little care. Thus, concern must be expressed for the fate of these shrines.

At present St. Gregory's Parish continues the religious service tradition so strongly associated with St. Nazianz.

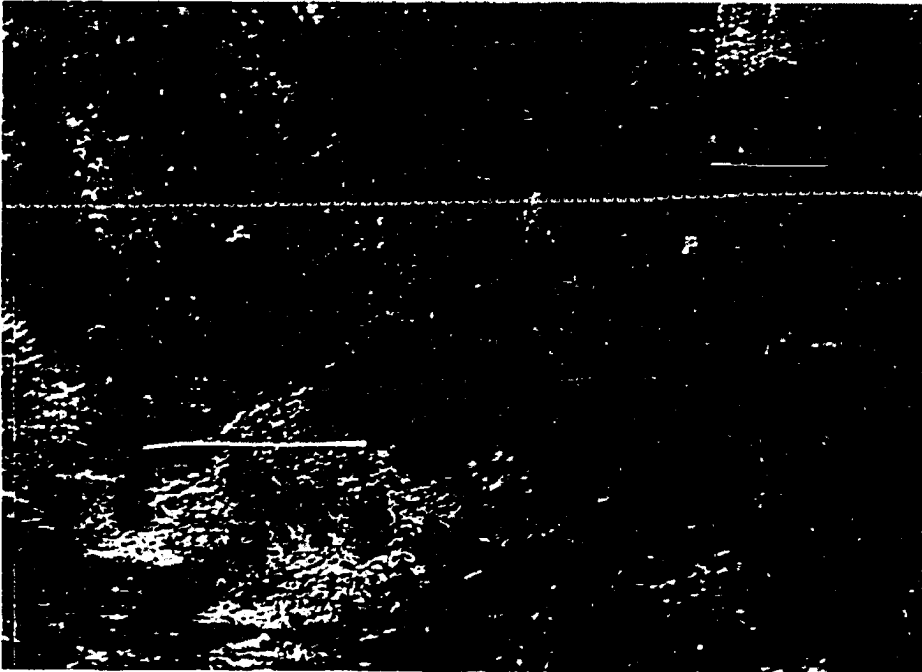


Fig. 52 - Stations of the Cross, overgrown with vegetation in August of 1983.

The parish consists of 300 village families and also serves the surrounding countryside.<sup>1</sup> St. Gregory's School, grades kindergarten through eight, is the only school functioning in St. Nazianz. Students who choose to attend public schools are bussed six miles to Valders. The community enthusiastically supports the St. Gregory Junior High basketball team in competition with neighboring teams. Village wide events, such as the Feast of Corpus Christi and village birthday celebrations, are held in Parish Hall, the largest meeting facility in the village.

The parish cemetery, located on the west grounds adjacent to the church, was begun when the first death occurred in the village. In the cemetery are graves dating from 1854 to the present, including those of persons who played prominent roles in the St. Nazianz story.

Village changes have included the conversion of buildings to varied uses, some buildings having experienced multiple conversions. When changes in building use are mapped, one sees a transition from retail and service activities in the vicinity of the South Second Avenue and Birch Street to primarily residential use today (Figures 53 and 54). Today, the principal artery of retail and service facilities is along Main Street and Fourth Avenue (Figure 49).

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Anselm Platten, member of St. Gregory Parish, in personal interview, St. Nazianz, January 13, 1984.



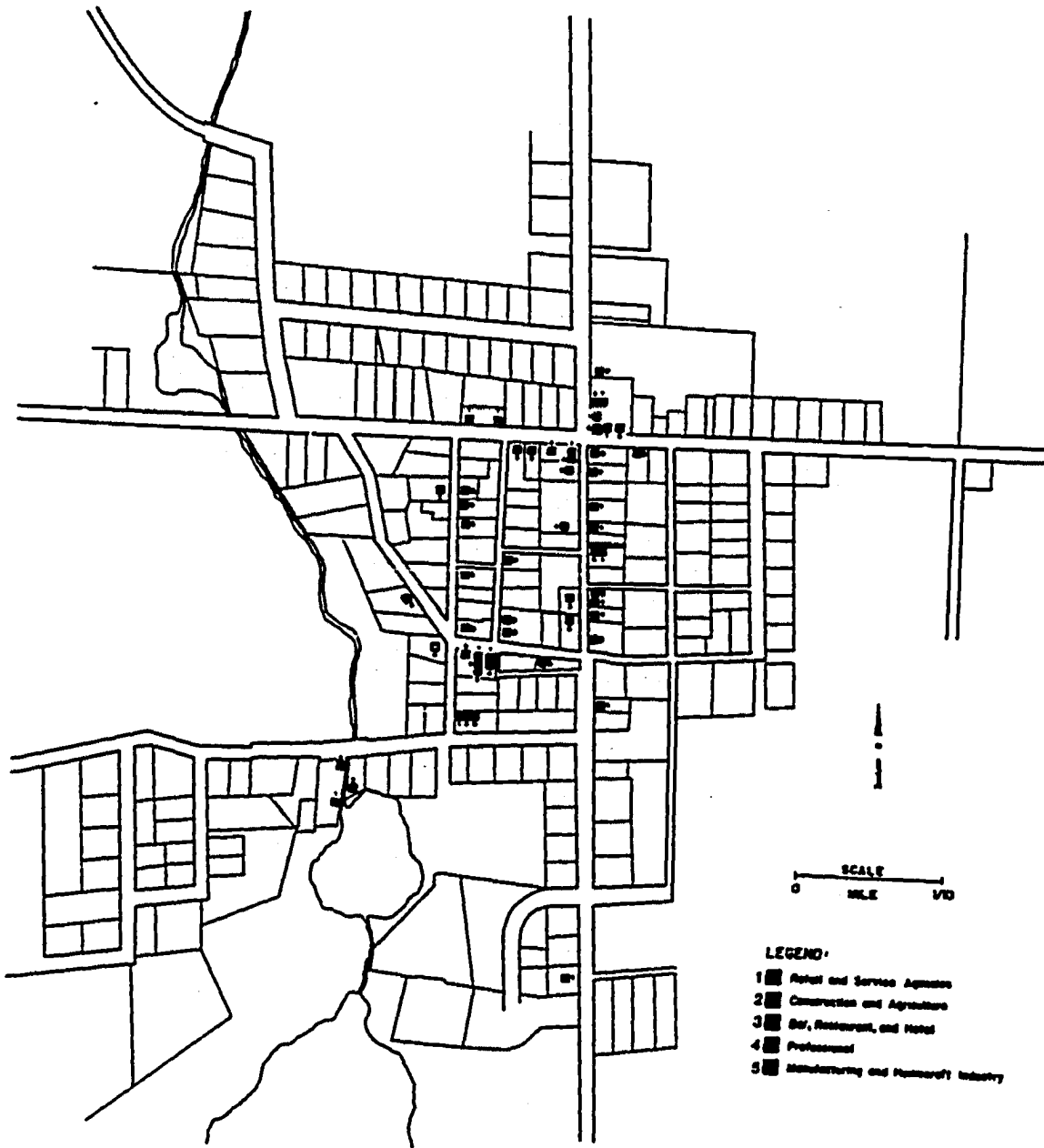


FIG.53—PAST BUILDING USAGE IN ST.NAZIANZ

Source: The Surveyor, January—December, 1979

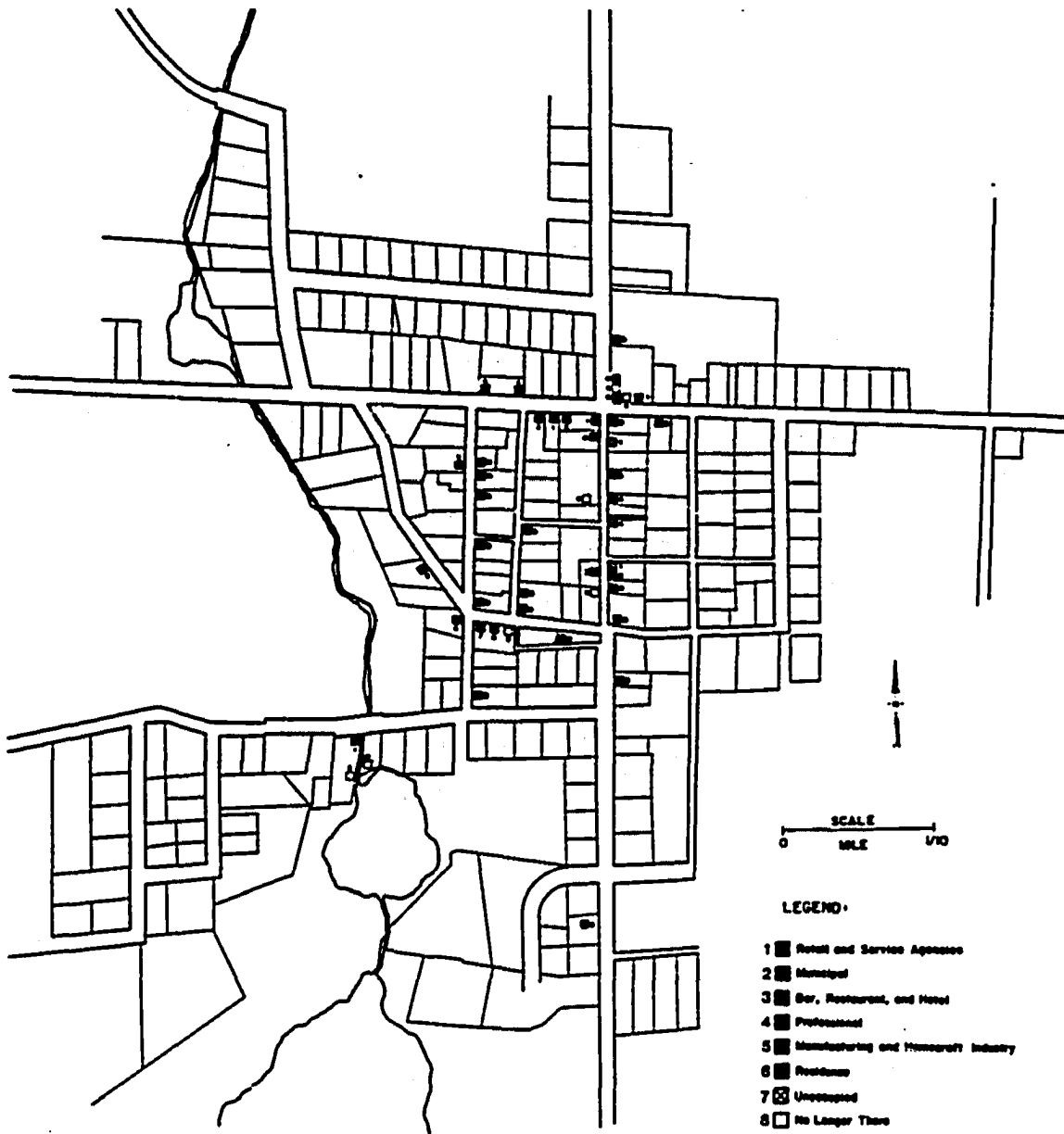


FIG.54—PRESENT BUILDING USAGE IN ST.NAZIANZ

Preservation Recommendations

Much of the historic character of St. Nazianz today is largely unnoticed because it has become part of the routine pattern of life. Homes built more than 100 years ago have been updated and the religious institutions of St. Gregory's and St. Mary's continue to serve their peoples. Buildings that were inns a century or more past are supper clubs or bars. The unique pattern of winding streets, courts, and alleys also persists. To the resident who lives in St. Nazianz everyday, the heritage awareness can be subverted by overexposure. But to the historical geographer who has researched the community thoroughly, St. Nazianz seems to demand that residents and visitors be more aware of its treasures. The residents should establish public markers, a visitor information board, and map a walking/driving tour.

An appropriate location to erect a large multi-colored bulletin board already exists at the intersection of South Third Avenue and Birch Street, the site of the original St. Gregory Church constructed in the autumn of 1854. The deteriorating structure was removed in 1949 but today a granite cross monuments the open lot of grass. The bulletin board could be placed on the same grounds and could tell a brief history of the St. Nazianz Society, the initial of the village, the arrival of the Salvatorians, and the various educational institutions that have been a part of the community. Two maps would be vital: one to locate the 3,840 acres originally

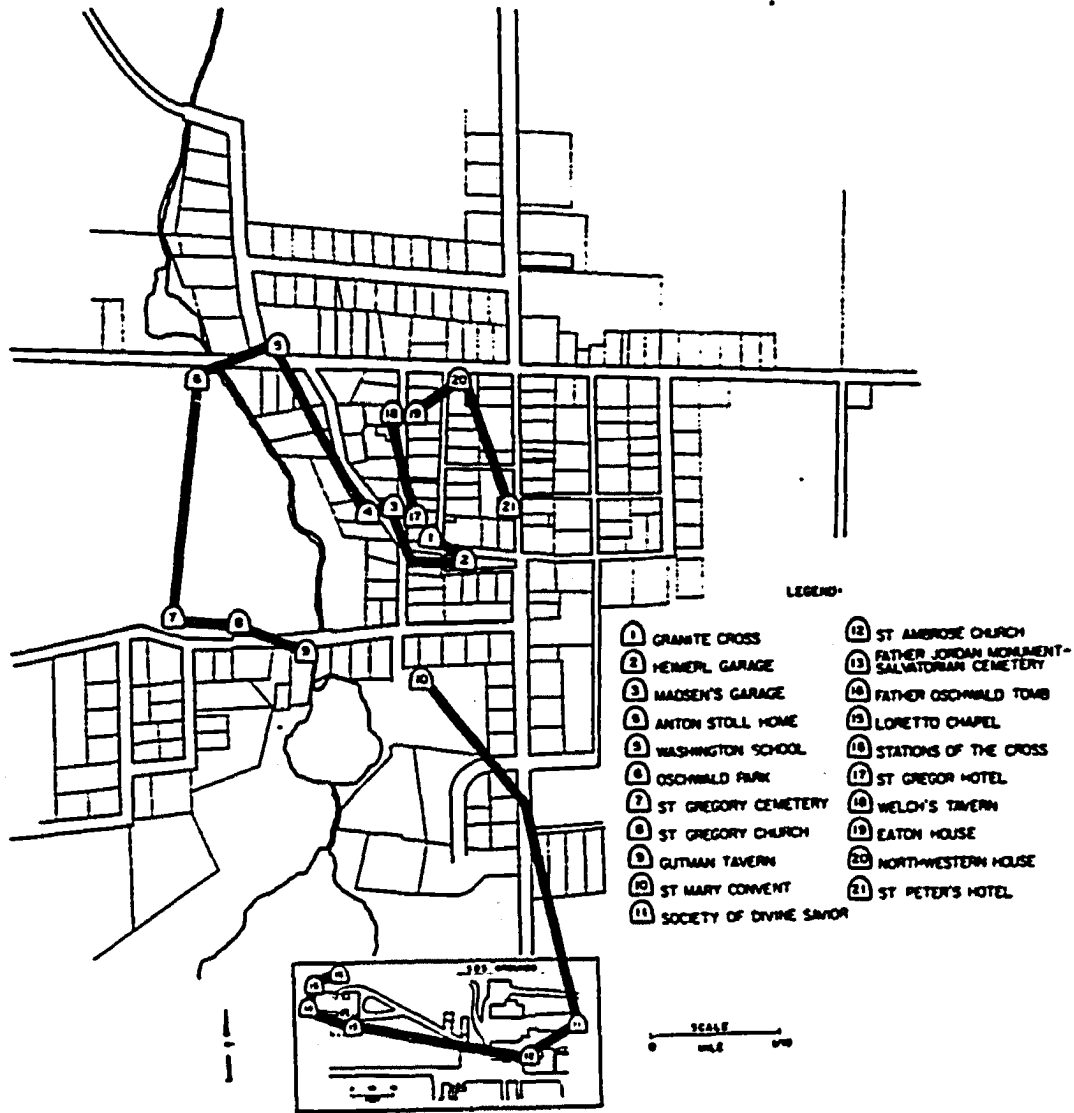


FIG.55—LOCATIONS OF RECOMMENDED PRESERVATIONS

purchased in 1854 and what of that acreage is retained by the SDS today, and a second to locate prominent geographic and historic points in the village. A brochure with a map of the village and the attracting points could be provided for three different walking/driving tours. The suggested routes and their attractions are provided below (Figure 55).

#### Route 1

1. Granite Cross (corner of South Third Avenue and West Birch Street)--A cross of Wisconsin granite marks the location of the first St. Gregory church building, built in 1854. Building was demolished in 1949 (Figure 56).
2. Heimerl's Garage (West Birch Street)--Building where the Gemco heater was developed and where aircraft parts were manufactured during World War II. Building presently used as a storage facility (Figure 57).
3. Madsen's Garage (114 South Second Avenue)--Classic styled service station of the 1930s. No longer on a main traffic artery, facility used for repair and maintenance functions (Figure 58).
4. Anton Stoll Home (South First Avenue)--Home of the trusted assistant of Father Oswald who represented cause of St. Nazianz Society in property title disputes following Oswald's death. Shrine at side of house locates site of initial cross erected in St. Nazianz in September of 1854 (Figure 14).

5. Washington School (West Main Street)--Public school building erected in 1920. Last public school facility in village, students are now bussed to Valders. Purchased by village in 1983 and converted into village hall (Figure 59).
6. Oswald Park (West Main Street)--Originally a marsh site belonging to the SDS, the Lions Club was given permission to develop it into a park in 1944. Names after Father Oswald, leader of the communal society which founded St. Nazianz (Figure 40).
7. St. Gregory Cemetery (West Church Street)--Contains graves dating back to 1854, including prominent members of the St. Nazianz Society (Figure 60).
8. St. Gregory Church (214 West Church Street)--A prominent landmark with its round gold-domed steeple and Wisconsin fieldstone exterior, the church was built in 1868. It has long been the spiritual and cultural hub of the village (Figure 17).
9. Gutman Tavern (215 West Church Street)--A popular refreshment and socializing establishment of the past (Figure 61).

#### Route 2

10. St. Mary Convent (300 South Second Avenue)--The structures, built in 1866, served initially as a hospital and an orphanage. Remodeled several times, most recently in 1983, it is now a care center for

retired Salvatorian Sisters (Figure 62).

11. Society of Divine Savior grounds (off of Highway A)--  
Grounds were initially developed in 1857 under Oschwald's direction. Grounds have been home of St. Francis Seminary, Salvatorian Seminary, and JFK Prep School.
12. St. Ambrose Church (SDS Grounds)--Built in 1896, the chapel serves as worship center for those residing on the SDS grounds (Figure 33).
13. Father Francis Jordan Monument and Salvatorian Cemetery (SDS Grounds)--White marble statue commemorates Father Jordan, the founder of the SDS. Cemetery has graves of members of the SDS (Figure 63).
14. Father Ambrose Oschwald Tomb (SDS Grounds)--Stone incased vault was placed in this tomb in 1926, Oschwald initially having been buried beneath altar of a chapel in the seminary (Figure 36).
15. Loretto Chapel (SDS Grounds)--constructed in 1870 under Oschwald's direction to honor the Lady of Loretto, the chapel is maintained as a quiet place of prayer (Figure 35).
16. Stations of the Cross (SDS Grounds)--The Stations wind through the bushes and trees, on a hillside overlooking Lake Oschwald (Figure 20).

### Route 3

17. St. Gregor Hotel (119 South Second Avenue)--An early

favorite refreshment and socializing center, St. Gregor's was frequently visited by Father Oswald. Oswald would socialize with St. Nazianz Society members and review and plan society activities (Figure 64).

18. Welch's Tavern (106 South Second Avenue)--This building was once a popular refreshment stop in the village (Figure 65).
19. Eaton House (105 South Second Avenue)--An early inn that served food and drink, the facility remains a socializing stop known as the Tom Cat Lounge (Figure 66).
20. Northwestern House (111 West Main Street)--An early village inn, the building today houses Meyer's Supper Club (Figure 67).
21. St. Peter's Hotel (204 South Fourth Avenue)--An early inn that also served food and drink, the building today is the location of the St. Nazianz Opera House bar and restaurant (Figure 68).

#### Recommendations in Context of Historical Geography

The establishment of the tour routes and the identification of significant points in the village would help to preserve an unique community and would help to educate uninformed local residents and outsiders. Such preservation would fit within the context of Newcomb's "pragmatic preservation of



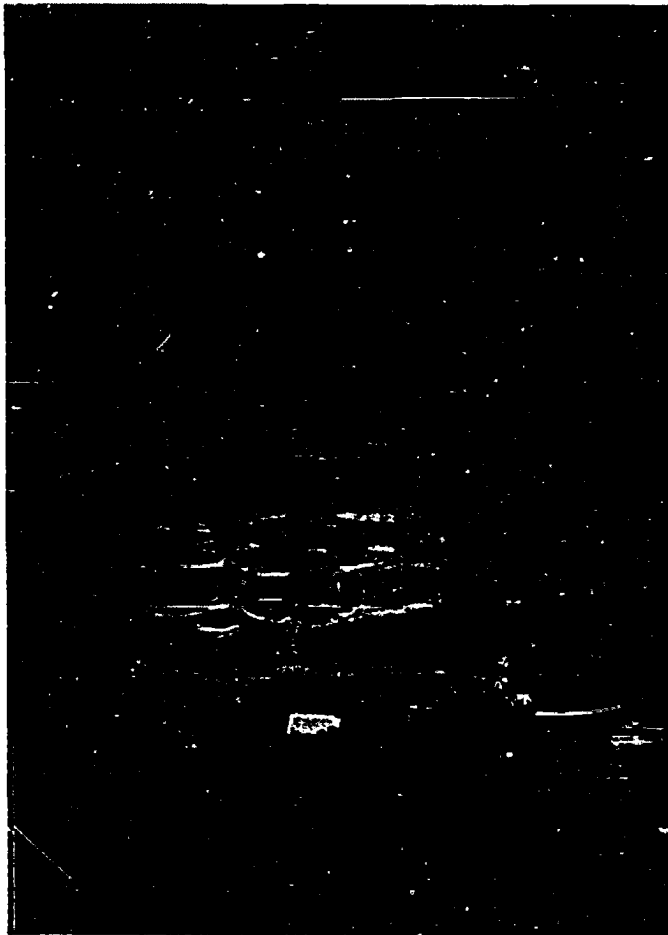


Fig. 56 - The Granite Cross marks the location of the first St. Gregory church building.



**Fig. 57 - Heimerl's Garage where automotive and aircraft parts were once manufactured.**



Fig. 58 - Madsen's Garage today is primarily a maintenance facility.



Fig. 59 - Formerly the Washington School, this structure is now the St. Nazianz village hall.



Fig. 60 - St. Gregory cemetery was established in 1854.

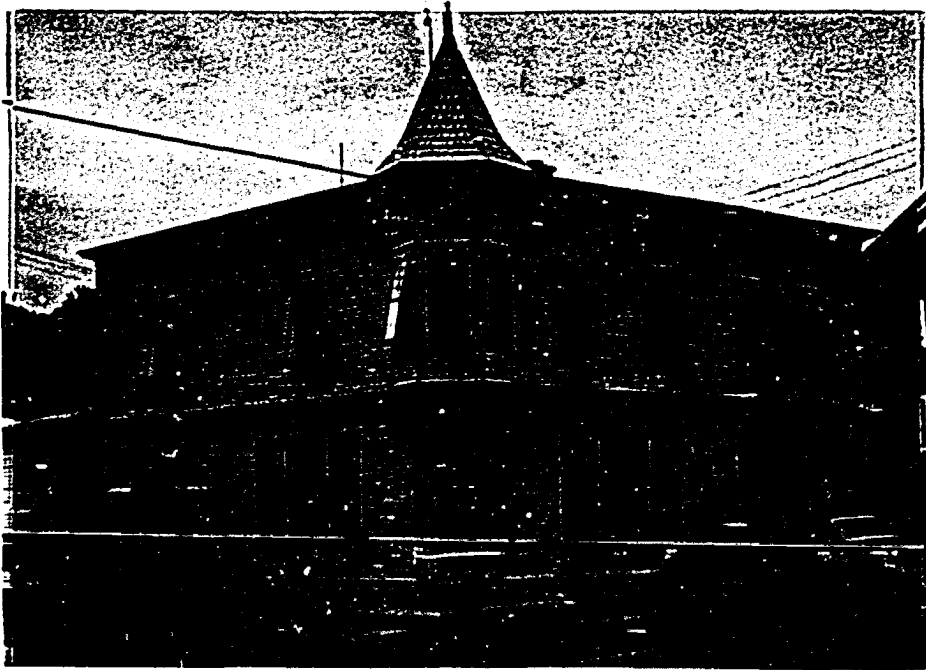


Fig. 61 - This building once housed the Gutman Tavern, a popular socializing spot of the past.

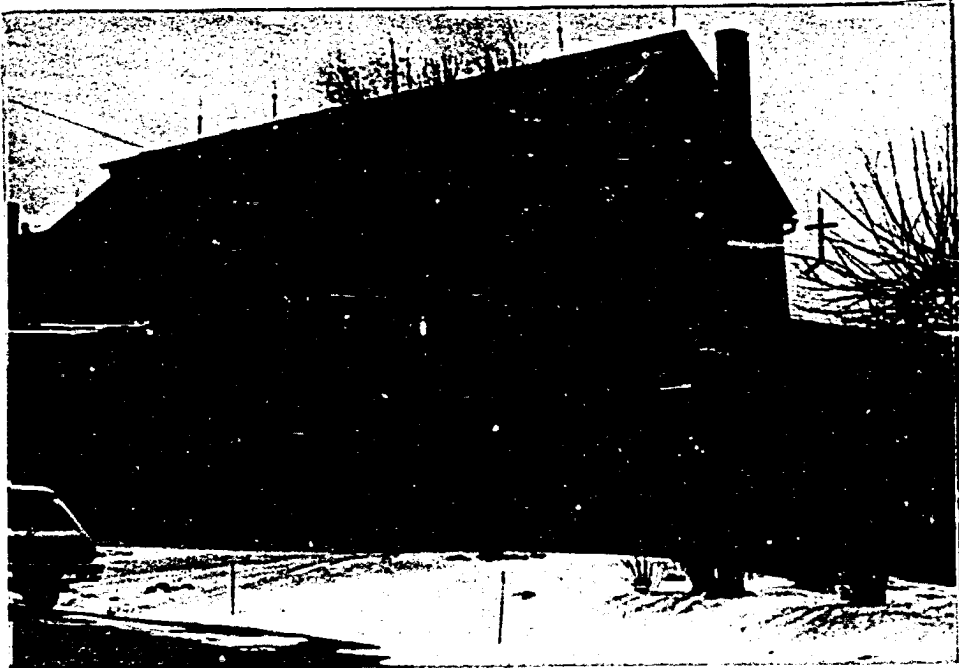


Fig. 62 - St. Mary Convent. The structure, part of which dates to 1866, includes a 1983 addition.

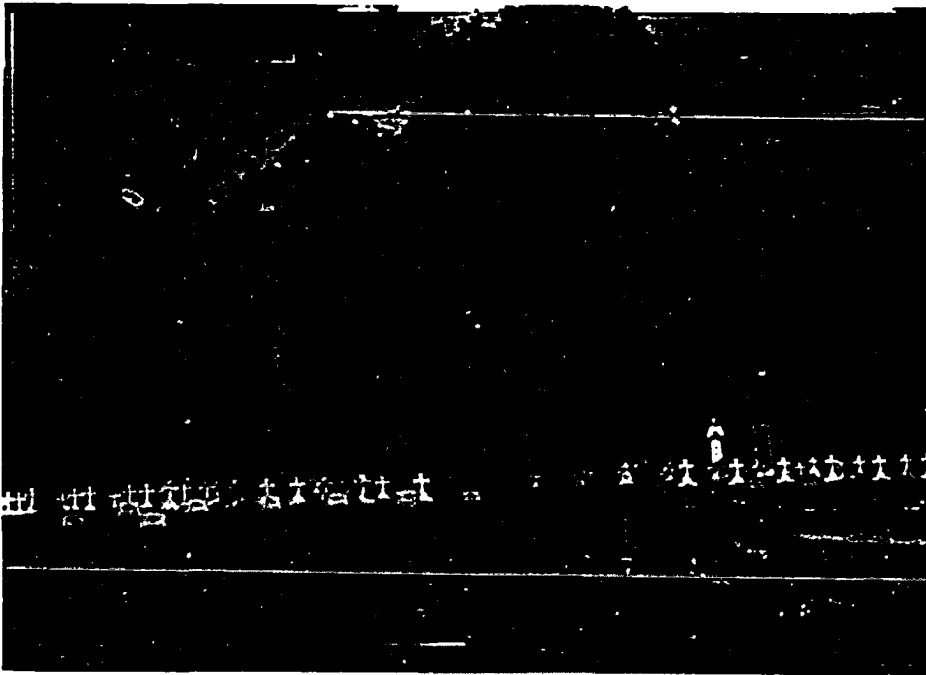


Fig. 63 - SDS cemetery with white statue of Father Frances Jordan.

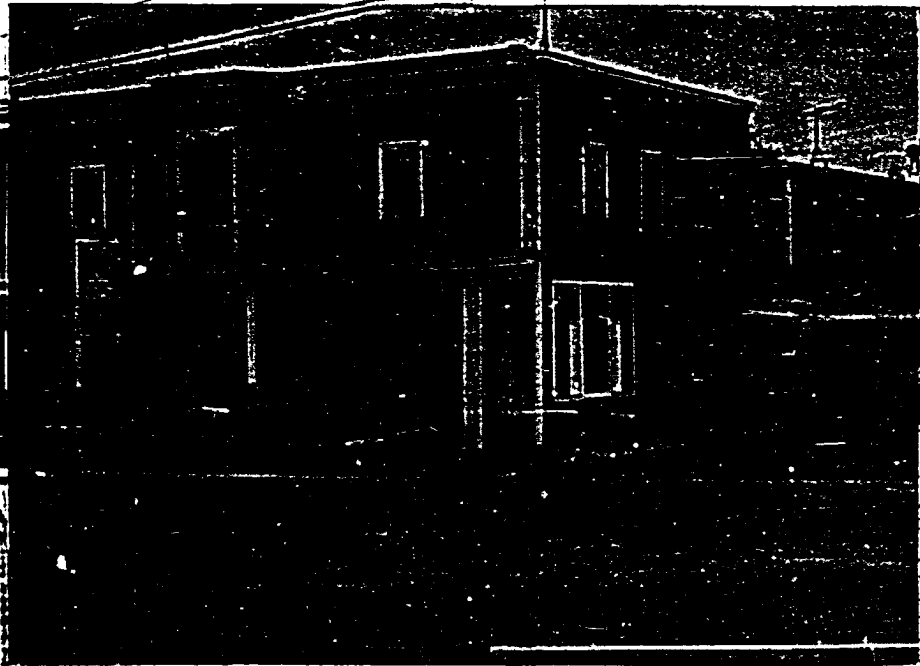


Fig. 64 - St. Gregor Hotel has been a popular refreshment and socializing center since the time of Father Oschwald.

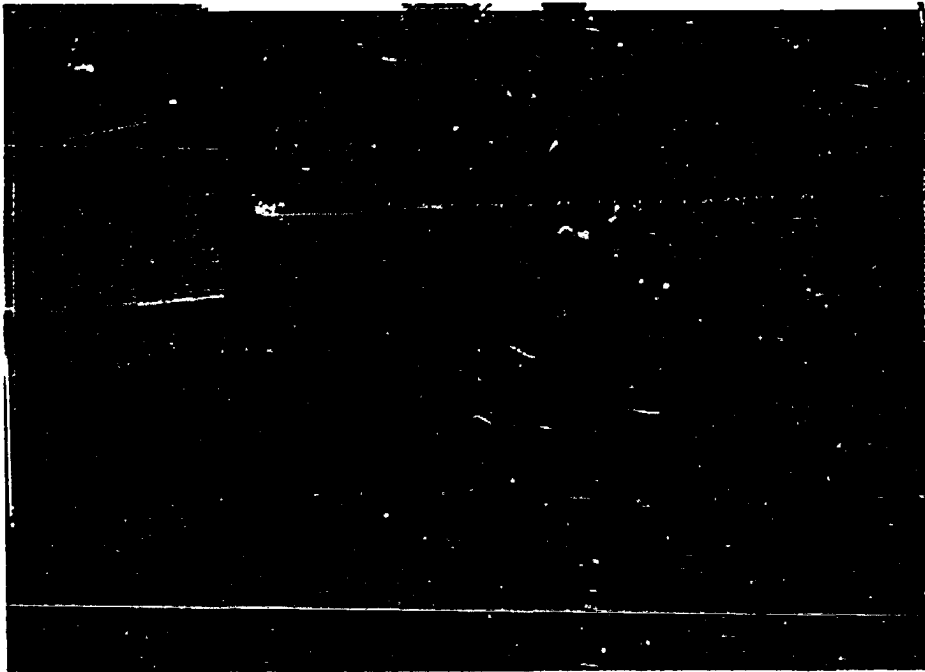


Fig. 65 - This building once housed Welch's Tavern.

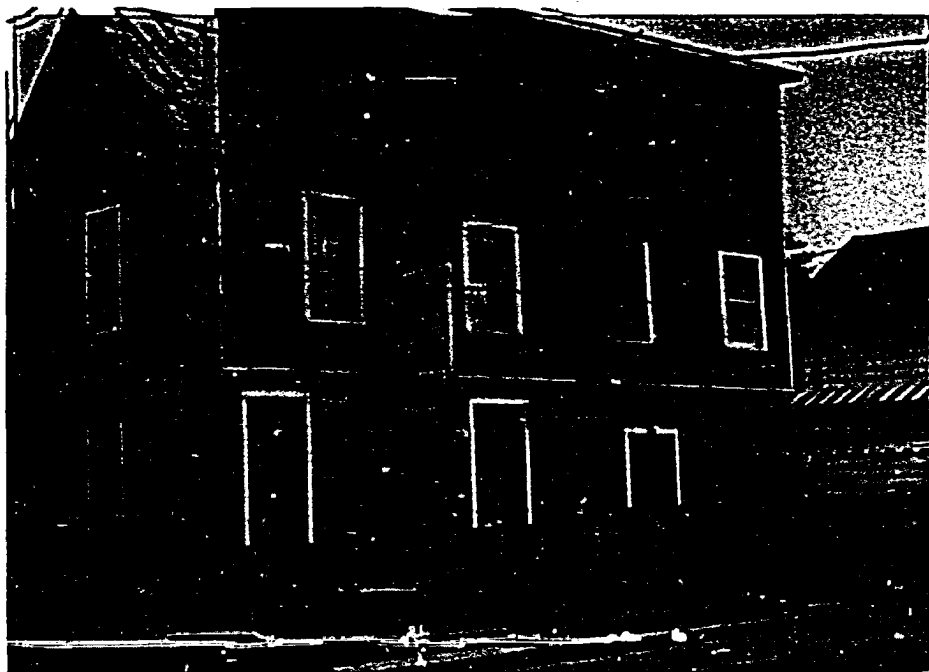


Fig. 66 - Presently occupied by the Tom Cat Lounge, this building was formerly the Eaton House Inn.



Fig. 67 - Meyer's Supper Club presently occupies the site of the former Northwestern House Inn.



Fig. 68 - St. Peter's Hotel formerly occupied the quarters of the present St. Nazianz Opera House.



landscape legacies."<sup>2</sup> Newcomb states, "visible history is a geographic resource amenable to planned exploitation with help from applied historical geography."<sup>3</sup> Newcomb further states that this approach to historical geography can be merged with community planning activities. Whereas the recommendations for preserving the legacy of St. Nazianz are not put forth with a profit motive in mind, they do seek to exploit the heritage of the community for cultural and intellectual purposes. Steps taken at this time not only would help to insure the preservation of vital sites but could be compatible with community planning for future growth.

To accomplish the recommendations for St. Nazianz, no property purchases would be necessary and no relocation of buildings or residents would be involved. Only limited expenses would be required for markers and route brochures. Newcomb's recommendation that preservation ". . . proceed in a working harmony with respect to the present day environs . . ." <sup>4</sup> would be met as the qualities of the contemporary village would not be disturbed. Residences, businesses, and institutions would carry on their functions in the market structures. Completed, the markers and the walking/driving tours would provide ". . . utilization of geographic appreciations

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<sup>2</sup>Robert M. Newcomb, "Twelve Working Approaches to Historical Geography," Yearbook, Association of Pacific Coast Geographers, 31 (1969), p. 42.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

in the blending of authentic antiques with a contemporary landscape."<sup>5</sup>

Examples of such historic preservation "in place" are numerous in the United States. In recent years it has been my good fortune to visit the following area communities featuring historic preservation:

1. Mineral Point, Wisconsin--Lead mining settlement founded in the 1820s; sponsored by State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
2. Stonefield Village, Wisconsin--Recreation of rural farm community of 1850s; sponsored by State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
3. New Harmony, Indiana--Rappite Settlement of 1814 to 1824; sponsored by a private New Harmony Foundation.
4. Springfield, Illinois--Abraham Lincoln era preservation; sponsored by United States government.
5. New Salem, Illinois--Abraham Lincoln era preservation; sponsored by State of Illinois.
6. Nauvoo, Illinois--Early Mormon community; sponsored by the Mormon Church.
7. Bishop Hill, Illinois--Swedish utopian religious settlement of 1840s; sponsored by State of Illinois.

Each of the visited locales align with Newcomb's description of preserved communities being "upon the modern countryside, are exploitable as scenery, foci of interest for travelers, or

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<sup>5</sup>Newcomb, "Twelve Working Approaches," p. 43.

money-making attractions."<sup>6</sup> Each has recreated or, as is proposed for St. Nazianz, preserved in place significant aspects of its heritage, and each has available a brochure guide for self-directed tours. Some guides are very elaborate and detailed with photographs and brief narrative while others are very simple and brief. In some cases these guides are sold as a revenue raising source. In each of the seven communities there are some buildings which serve as museums and have a staff person or two giving demonstrations in crafts of the time preserved. Such elaborate guides, use of buildings, and presence of staff in buildings is possible under the sponsorship of private, religious, or state funded programs.

For the recommended preservation at St. Nazianz such museum and staffing resources are not mentioned for three reasons:

1. Financial support required for such facilities is not easily available from any source at the present time;
2. buildings recommended for identification/preservation in St. Nazianz are fully utilized at present;
3. and establishing historic preservation at St. Nazianz in the same mold as in other preserved communities is not necessary.

The uniqueness of St. Nazianz is that it exists today as a contemporary community integrating the past with the present.

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<sup>6</sup>Newcomb, "Twelve Working Approaches," p. 42.

Early village structures are homes to residents and businesses just as they have been for more than 100 years, and newer structures are intertwined among the buildings and streets of the early community. St. Nazianz, unlike so many other utopian and communal settlements, never "closed the door" on its early founding heritage. Instead, it has experienced a transition from the communal St. Nazianz Society to a contemporary village. Many communally built structures long ago passed into private ownership. Occupancy in many instances has remained in the same family over several generations. There was no mass movement to another locale nor mass sale of village properties to non-village interests. When Father Oschwald died, there was legal conflict over title to property, but the conflict was settled without bloodshed and any mass exodus. When the St. Nazianz Society reached the point it could no longer care for its land, it did not sell out. Instead, the Society arranged to deed over the property to the Salvatorians, and thus the religious training and service function so critical to the community's founding was continued. Today, St. Gregory's parish remains central to religious, cultural, and social activities in the village.

St. Nazianz is a living community with a distinct heritage. Changes have been transitions rather than revolutions. Identification of significant community landmarks and areas will allow local citizens and visitors to become aware of the unique story of St. Nazianz. It will also help to preserve

that St. Nazianz legacy that blends so well into the rolling moraines of eastern Wisconsin.

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