

**VOLUME I**

**Final Report**

**Bay View Neighborhood  
Historic Resources Survey**

**City of Milwaukee  
Wisconsin**

**July, 1990**

## Abstract

The Bay View Intensive Survey was undertaken by the Department of City Development in 1989-90 as part of the development of the City of Milwaukee's Comprehensive Historic Preservation Master Plan. The project intensively surveyed the Bay View Neighborhood bounded approximately by East Bay Street, Lake Michigan, East Oklahoma Avenue, and South Howell and South Kinnickinnic Avenues. The major products of the survey include data forms for each building within the study area and extensive research into the thematic history of the Bay View neighborhood as summarized in this report.

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## I. Introduction

## I. INTRODUCTION

The survey of the historic resources of the Bay View Neighborhood was begun in 1979 as part of a reconnaissance survey of the historic architectural resource of the City of Milwaukee. That study was undertaken by the City of Milwaukee in conjunction with the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, and was co-funded with a survey and planning grant. The results of that overview study identified a need for an intensive survey of the area outlined on the following map.

In 1985 the Department of City Development initiated the present intensive survey in cooperation with the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society. Funding was provided by a survey and planning grant from the National Park Service. This survey is part of the City of Milwaukee's on-going effort to prepare a city-wide inventory of sites, buildings, districts and objects important to Milwaukee's history. The products of the survey--survey sheets, and the survey report -- are valuable resources for local state, and federal planning efforts. They indicate the historically important districts, sites, and objects which should be taken into consideration when projects are undertaken which may effect them.

This report presents a concise history of the Bay View Neighborhood including its architectural and cultural development and its historical resources. The scope of the study has been the whole spectrum of the

neighborhood's past as revealed in its present form, including its street pattern and its commercial, industrial, institutional and residential buildings. The report deals with those manifestations of the neighborhood's past which should be retained as living, active parts of the city's present and future life. Its function is threefold: it is a planning tool which can be used to guide future development; it is an educational resource useful in the study of state and local history; and it can be a catalyst for awakening civic pride, helping property owners to become aware of the historical and architectural environment around them and encouraging them to take a positive interest in the future of their Bay View neighborhood.

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## II. Historical Summary

## 1. Historical Overview

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## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: MILWAUKEE'S SOUTH SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD

### Introduction

When looking at a specific place, one first sees its physical shape: its topography, scale, boundaries, and buildings. But closer views can also reveal how a culture's hopes, needs, values and ideology shape and materialize in the environment. Thus, in outlining the study area's broad geographical history from its settlement to 1930, both physical and cultural characteristics are included. This opening chapter, which is adapted from the book Built in Milwaukee, is a "bird's eye view" of the area's growth, within the context of the city as a whole, while succeeding chapters detail the Bay View neighborhood's building history as well as its social, political and economic development.

### Topography and Early Settlement: (1800-1846)

Water has been a central force in shaping Milwaukee's physical and economic landscape. The city owes its existence to the confluence of the Milwaukee and Menomonee Rivers into Lake Michigan. At the mouth of the rivers, an estuary provided a safe harbor along the western coast of Lake Michigan, and the rivers afforded access to inland regions. Long before the first white settlers speculated upon the promise of the site for a city, the Indians had recognized its advantages for human habitation. Archeological evidence indicates that the Indians occupied the area in prehistoric times. In his studies of Indian remains during the 1830s and 1840s, Increase Lapham found over one hundred earthworks and burial mounds (in the shapes of birds, mammals, lizards, and man) within the present city limits. Accounts of French explorers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reported mixed bands of

Indians living in the Milwaukee area, composed mostly of Potawatomi and Ottawa, with some Chippewa and Menomonees. In the middle of the 1700s, the site began to develop as a French-Canadian trading post, and by the 1830s it prospered under the direction of Solomon Juneau. By the early nineteenth century, the Wisconsin Indian population was in social and political flux due to the advancing frontier of White settlers. Communities of Potawatomi, Menomonee, and Chippewa Indians lived in and around Milwaukee, and traded with early settlers (Lapham, *The Antiquities of Wisconsin*, pp. 10-19).

The name Milwaukee, reputedly meaning "the beautiful land," appears in travel accounts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as Melleoiki, Millwakey, and Milwarch among other spellings. Pioneer Daniel Fowler was among many who postulated about the origins of the place-name Milwaukee. In his paper read to the Old Settlers' Club in 1876, he suggested that the name derived from the Indian word "Mahn-a-wawkie," meaning good land, and signifying "a good place for game, fish, and to harvest the marromin (wild rice)" (Flower, p. 92).

Early accounts reveal much about the appearance of the natural landscape at the time of exploration and first settlement. Low wetlands lined the banks of the Milwaukee and Menomonee Rivers. This estuary was alive with fish, waterfowl, and many species of birds. On the south side, a narrow promontory of land (Walker's Point) was surrounded by tamarack swamp and marsh which extended to the river's mouth. A wild rice swamp, covered with at least two feet of water, lay along the west bank of the Milwaukee River in an area roughly bounded by Wisconsin Avenue on the north, Fourth Street on the west, and the Menomonee River on the south. Above Wisconsin Avenue, the ground was

dryer and tamarack, black ash, tag alder and cedar grew along the riveredge lowlands. Cherry Street was the northern terminus of the wetlands. Soft and boggy land skirted the east side of the Milwaukee River. The area south of Clybourn Street was entirely marsh except for two islands and a strip of land along the beach. According to pioneer James Buck, this lake beach "was at least ten feet in height and from one hundred to two hundred feet wide." It was thickly covered with white cedar, balm of Gilead, crab apple and oak (Buck, pp. 53-67).

At the edge of the wetlands, steep bluffs rose to dry high lands. These bluffs, cut by springs and ravines, had rounded fronts and were heavily vegetated. On some bluffs, poplar and hazel trees were interspersed with a few black and burr oaks. Wild plum trees were found in one part of Walker's Point. On the east side above Wisconsin Avenue, a few oaks and a series of small sand dunes punctuated a thick growth of small bushes. Black, burr, and white oaks dominated the west side bluffs. Beyond the bluffs lay a gently rolling terrain of deciduous forest and prairie (Buck, pp. 53-67).

Milwaukee's topography influenced the physical and political character of the early settlement. The watercourses divided the area into three sections: east, west, and south. Indian land cessions following the Black Hawk War opened southeastern Wisconsin to Yankee settlement in 1833. By 1835 lands had been surveyed and were ready for public sale. By then, however, a handful of promoters had claimed the lands which comprised the original nucleus of Milwaukee. Morgan L. Martin, in partnership with Solomon Juneau, staked out the eastern wedge between the lake and the river as a townsite. Byron Kilbourn, an Ohio engineer and surveyor, chose the west side of the Milwaukee

River. The third developer, George H. Walker, established his claim south of the river junctions on a peninsula which became known as Walker's Point. Beyond these recent town plats, pioneer farmers staked out homesteads. The settlement of the study area began as an agricultural hinterland with some trading carried out with the maritime commerce that was beginning to ply the Milwaukee River basin.

The 1830s were the heyday of land speculation and townsite promotion in the territory between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi River. In Milwaukee, this not only produced competing settlements but also influenced the original layout of the village. In 1835 Kilbourn and Juneau filed their respective plats for the west and east sides. Both plats followed the gridiron plan of repetitive rectangular blocks which was a common layout for western towns during the nineteenth century. This plan facilitated land survey, lot subdivision, and sales. Its uniformity appealed to promoters and prospective buyers alike. Both the Kilbourn and Juneau plats, however, shared the typical failing of the gridiron plan: they disregarded topography. The plats preserved the straight line and the right angle at the expense of the natural lay of the land and the individual features of the site. The only deviation in Milwaukee's checkerboard street pattern was East Water (now North Water) and West Water Street (now a part of Plankinton Avenue), which followed both sides of the Milwaukee River above the Menomonee. Winnebago Street formed a diagonal on the northwest side, but this was actually an incorporation of a preexisting trail. Several randomly-placed public squares were also included in both plats. Because of competition between Juneau and Kilbourn, however, the east-west streets did not align evenly and had different names.

The limits of the town were extended in 1845 by the addition of Walker's 1836 plat on the south side. Due in delays in clearing land titles, Milwaukee's third gridiron plat was not recorded until 1854 (Still, 19, 36. Repts, The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States, pp. 294, 364). The original Walker's Point Plat was bounded on the north by the Milwaukee River, on the east by Lake Michigan, on the south by Greenfield Avenue and on the west by a point midway between today's South Twelfth and South Fourteenth Streets (there is no South Thirteenth Street in the survey area). The narrow ridge of land called Walker's Point was originally bounded on the east and west by low-lying swamp land while to the southwest were steep wooded bluffs that extended as far as South Ninth Street. Higher ground, thickly covered with hazel brush and interspersed with a few black, burr and white oaks extended west to today's South Twenty-Third Street. (Buck Pioneer History (1876) p. 53-56). The Walker's Point Plat established the pattern of land subdivision for the entire South Side. It imitated the grid plan first used in Byron Kilbourn's original plat of 1835. Several trails radiated from the village nucleus into the surrounding wilderness. They generally followed earlier Indian routes and connected Milwaukee with Green Bay, Chicago, and southwestern Wisconsin, as well as smaller nearby settlements in the interior. Although stagecoaches advertised to the contrary, most of these roads were little more than unimproved wagon paths in the 1830s. South Kinnickinnic Avenue, an old Indian trail that had been widened into a wagon route, provided the principal overland access to the Bay View area.

Despite its formal gridiron plan, Milwaukee at this time was a small frontier village of scattered buildings. Writing in the early 1840s, Increase Lapham described some of the site's features:

The city commences about a mile above the mouth of the river, at a place called Walker's Point, and extends about a mile and a half along the river. Below Walker's Point, the river is bordered by impassable marshes. The ground occupied by the town is uneven, rising from the river fifty to one hundred feet, thus affording very beautiful stations for residences, commanding a full view of the town and bay, with its shipping. But few of these sites have yet been occupied and improved, as their peculiar importance and interesting views would lead us to suspect (Lapham, Wisconsin: Its Geography and Topography, p. 113).

Throughout the small riverfront community, radical alterations of the terrain had begun by the 1840s. Hills and bluffs were removed or graded (eliminating, no doubt, some of the commanding views) and the remaining soil was used to fill in the marshes and lowlands along the river banks. These and other costly "improvements" were financed by the local promoters (chiefly Byron Kilbourn and Solomon Juneau) to entice settlers to their respective townsites. By 1837, Kilbourn had spent about thirteen thousand dollars for the construction of roads and streets (Still, pp. 23-24, 97). George Walker did relatively little to improve his plat.

In Juneautown, on the east side of the river, buildings clustered along Water Street near the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue. Kilbourntown, on the west side, was centered at the corner of Third Street and Juneau Avenue. In Walker's Point, what little settlement there was clustered about South First and Second Street on the river bank. Among the earliest structures were log cabins and "claim shanties," built by driving stakes into the ground and surrounding them with basswood lumber. Most buildings, however, were frame

with clapboard exteriors. These were modest structures, one to three stories high. They included an intermingling of dwellings, stores, taverns, sawmills, and shops belonging to blacksmiths, coopers, and other tradesmen.

The first South Siders were Yankees, primarily from New York State and New England. Settlers who arrived in the 1830s included Horace Chase, John Odgen, Morgan L. Martin, Joel Wilcox, Uriel B. Smith, George Wentworth, Russell Bennett, and Joseph Williams. Some of the streets in Bay View bear their names, and a few of their houses remain. "Chase's Point," as Horace Chase's claim in Bay View at the mouth of the Milwaukee River was called, was the informal headquarters for the Town of Lake, created in 1838, which originally encompassed all of the South Side except Walker's Point.

By the 1840s small cabins and farmsteads dotted the Bay View area. The settlers gradually filled the marshes, graded the bluffs, and cleared the forests. Turnips, potatoes, oats, and rutabaga were among the first crops grown. At the same time, the South Side showed signs of early urbanization. George Walker filed the first South Side plat, a gridiron street layout for Walker's Point, which was incorporated into Milwaukee in 1845. The next year a bridge was built over the Milwaukee River at Water Street, connecting the north and south sides of the city. The riverbanks near the bridge, known as the Walker's Point Bridge, were gradually built up with warehouses, docks, and small retail businesses during the 1840s and 1850s. Dredging and maritime activities (such as shipbuilding, commercial fishing, and manufacturers and dealers in naval goods) altered the natural face of the South Side waterfront. Wolf and Davidson's Shipyard was established in 1858 at the mouth of the Kinnickinnic River, becoming Milwaukee's largest shipbuilder by the 1870s.

Gradually other industries began to locate along the banks of the Kinnickinnic River.

### **From Village to City: 1846-1880**

#### **Economy**

Although it was incorporated as a city in 1846, Milwaukee at that time was actually three villages only slightly connected together, because of the river barriers and the lingering speculative rivalries of the thirties (Still, p. 107). In the middle period of its growth, however, Milwaukee emerged as a city whose land use and commercial specialization connoted an increasingly urban society.

Milwaukee's desirable location and the westward migration of population were instrumental to its growth in the mid-nineteenth century. The steamboat added new importance to waterside locations. More significantly, Milwaukee's site at the edge of the rich Wisconsin farmlands made its development as a commercial trade center possible and profitable. In the 1840s and 1850s Milwaukee became a principal wheat market and shipping point. By 1865, the city was the largest primary exporter of wheat in the world, and it held a major position in the wheat trade until the 1880s.

As Wisconsin agriculture began to diversify, so did Milwaukee's manufacturing activities. The city's economy grew around the processing of regional agricultural products. Major processing industries between 1850 and 1880 included flour milling, meat packing, tanning, brewing, and boot and shoe making. Most of these were small-scale establishments until the 1870s. Most manufacturing activities were found in the heart of the city concentrated

primarily along both banks of the Milwaukee River below Michigan Street and above Juneau Avenue (Still, p. 107; Simon, pp. 27-28, 29-33).

Heavy industry began in the late 1860s. The city's location near regional iron ore supplies and marketing routes spurred its beginnings in heavy industry. Bay View was established as Wisconsin's first company town in the 1860s when Eber Brock Ward built his rolling mills there. Thus, Milwaukee's economic growth in the middle period can be attributed to its proximity to plentiful natural resources: agricultural land, iron ore, rivers, forests, and a lakeshore harbor.

### **Transportation**

Developing transportation, the corollary to Milwaukee's economic rise, shaped the city's growth and physical appearance. Plank roads were the first mode of improved transportation. The first of these was the Watertown Plank Road, constructed in 1846 at private expense between Milwaukee and Watertown. Its success led to the construction of other plank roads. No plank roads were built in the study area, although Kinnickinnic Avenue was steadily improved to better accommodate the growing volume of traffic.

Harbor improvements began in the 1840s. Filling in the marsh, dredging, and pier construction transformed the meandering Milwaukee River mouth to a deepened watercourse lined with buildings and wharves. A minor waterfront commercial area developed at South Second Street in Walker's Point. The first railroad operated in 1851, connecting Milwaukee with Waukesha. By 1855 service to Chicago was available. The first terminus for the Chicago railroad was in Bay View although it had been extended to Walker's Point at South Second and

Seeboth Streets near the river bank within a few years. At the close of the sixties, twelve hundred miles of railroads radiated from the city, including rail connections to New York. In 1873, ten railroad lines with fourteen branches ran tributary to the lakeshore city (Still, p. 44-47, 169-178, 201, 327)) Major rail corridors stretched south through Bay View, east-west along the Menomonee Valley, and north along the Milwaukee River. Depots, rail yards, and roundhouses became pronounced visual elements in a city whose economy had always relied upon a complex of transportation routes. The original railyard and roundhouse on Bay Street for the Chicago railroad was in use until the 1880's.

### **Population**

The U.S. Census recorded a total population of 20,061 in 1850, almost 90% of which resided in the Kilbourntown and Juneautown plats. The survey area was only sparsely inhabited. However, Milwaukee's population had grown to 115,587 by 1880, by which time the Bay View area was being settled in earnest. Milwaukee's expanding and diversifying economic base prompted a dramatic population growth from the 1840s to 1880. Much of this increase stemmed from the influx of European immigrants to the city, which had become a major embarkation point in the 1840s and 1850s from immigrants traveling west through the Great Lakes. German, British, Irish and Scandinavian -- in that order -- made up the major immigrant groups in Milwaukee before 1880. The British and Welsh primarily settled in Bay View after 1868 where they had been recruited to work in the rolling mill.

The entire Midwest received large numbers of Germans in the mid-nineteenth century, but Germans comprised a disproportionate share of

Milwaukee's population, totalling a third of the city's inhabitants. German's steadily increased in Bay View until they outnumbered the Yankees and the British. The combination of urban frontier opportunity and available farmlands attracted the first Germans, who set up an ethnic community that acted as a magnet for later settlers. The Germans were distinctive not only because of their numbers, but also because they were present in all occupational levels of the city's economy. While over half of Milwaukee's Germans were skilled workers or craftsmen, they also included a significant number of the city's professionals, and a majority of its laborers. Unlike the Irish and later arrivals, such as the Poles, Milwaukee's Germans were not easily classified according to one economic class. Likewise, the Germans could not be typed according to religion, since Catholics, Protestants, and Jews were among their ranks. Therefore, rather than forming an ethnic subculture, the Germans created a coordinate German society to the American one (Simon, pp. 35, 38, 41; Conzen, pp. 35, 69, 124-125; Still, pp. 112, 570).

The Irish also arrived early and settled in Bay View. Their main community was centered in the Third Ward south of Michigan Street on the east side, but spilled over into Bay View where there were employment opportunities in the rolling mills and other factories.

### **Expansion and Land Use**

As Milwaukee's population grew and its economy diversified, the city's territory expanded to the north, south, and west. By 1860, Milwaukee's boundaries reached Burleigh Street on the north, Lincoln Avenue on the south, and Twenty-Seventh Street on the west. The original gridiron plats were continuously extended. With only slight variations in block and lot sizes,

this street pattern was repeated well into the twentieth century. Revision of the Milwaukee charter in 1856 put this precedent into law by stipulating that subdividing property into city lots "shall, in platting the same, cause the streets and alleys in such plat to correspond in width and general direction with the streets and alleys in said city adjacent to" the new additions. The 1874 City Charter also included this provision. Bluffs were leveled and marshes were filled to make the city's topography conform to its checkerboard layout. (Simon, p. 23; Milwaukee Dept. of Public Works, City Engineer, Annexation Map of Milwaukee; Milwaukee Dept. of Public Works, City Engineer, Maps Showing City and Ward Boundaries, 1848-1958; H. Belden and Company, Illustrated Historical Atlas of Milwaukee County (1876); Wrights Directory Company, "Wrights Maps of Milwaukee and Suburbs" (1877) The main streets of the old plats were extended north, south and west to form the basis of the street grid for newly platted areas.

Bay View was laid out as an independent village by the Bay View Iron Company in 1867 and thus was not originally planned to align with the city's preestablished grid plan. Its principal streets were platted parallel to Lake Michigan with an irregular arrangement of cross streets that angled westerly toward Kinnickinnic Avenue. As obstacles, such as streams, ponds and railroad tracks were encountered, the streets twisted and turned to avoid them or else dead-ended, creating Bay View's informal village-like street plan. Gradually other small subdivisions were appended haphazardly to the original Bay View plat, resulting in the irregular street plan that distinguishes the area between the Kinnickinnic River and Lake Michigan north of Oklahoma Avenue today.

Land use specialization paralleled the city's physical growth between 1846 and 1880. In the 1850s, the initial intermixture of dwellings, workshops, stores, and warehouses began to evolve into an urban landscape differentiated according to function. There was a growing separation between workplace and residence. By the 1860s, retail shops, offices, banking and insurance firms concentrated in the portion of the central business district roughly bounded by Clybourn, State, Broadway on the east side of the river, and Second Street on the west side. Commission merchants, warehouses, and docks increasingly located downriver in the Third Ward. An important commercial area had developed on the near South Side across the river near the railroad depot on South First and Second streets. Mills and factories clustered along the Milwaukee River except for the brewers who mainly located on the north edge of downtown in the vicinity of Juneau Avenue. Most of the numerous small workshops in the city were located along or near the Milwaukee riverfront, the main axis of mid-century-Milwaukee (Conzen, pp. 138, 140).

Even though the south side initially grew more slowly than other areas of the city, its industrial future was evident by the 1860s. Ironworks and foundries were built in Walker's Point. Among the earliest, erected in the 1850s, were the Bay State Foundry and Globe Iron Works. On the southern edge of the Menomonee Valley, the Burnham Brothers Brickyard and the Pfister and Vogel Tannery attracted laborers. In the mid-1860s, Edward P. Allis' Reliance Iron Works relocated to the South Side.

South of the city limits, at the mouth of Deer Creek on the Milwaukee Bay, the Milwaukee Iron Company constructed a rolling mill in 1868-69. The iron company laid out the village of Bay View as a company town. Other metal

products-related heavy industries soon built plants near the rolling mill in the river valley at the north end of Bay View, creating employment opportunities and spurring settlement.

### **Neighborhoods**

Milwaukee's early neighborhoods surrounded the core of the city. Those closest to the city center combined residential and commercial land uses. At the periphery, the neighborhoods were almost entirely residential, with the exception of major commercial routes and small retail shops and services clustered at strategic street corners.

Early in the city's history, the study area's neighborhoods developed patterns of segregation by ethnicity and income. In 1853, one recent German immigrant observed that "an especially noteworthy feature is the separation of the various nationalities into different quarters of the city" (Wagner and Scherzer, p. 114; quoted in Conzen, p. 126). To some extent, these residential patterns reflected the desire to live near others who shared the same cultural background. Residential patterns also reflected rent-paying ability, proximity to employment, concerns about social status, and stage in the family cycle.

Neighborhoods on Milwaukee's South Side were characterized in this era by a greater ethnic heterogeneity. The area developed more slowly than the East and West Sides because of extensive marshes and a contested land title. In the 1840s and 1850s, settlement concentrated in the northern part of Walker's Point. By the later 1870s, the Bay View population was a mixture of British, Welsh, Germans, Yankees, and Irish.

## Urban Services

Essential urban services (water, streets, sewers, fire and police protection) in Milwaukee were transferred from private to public responsibility during the middle period. Early "internal improvements" (which also included marsh-filling, bridge construction, and harbor dredging) were provided by a combination of the speculator-promoters (Juneau, Kilbourn), and major business interests, such as the Bay View Iron Company, and the voluntary efforts of the citizenry. By law all able-bodied men were expected to labor two or three days annually on the streets. After the Civil War, private subsidy of urban services proved woefully inadequate due to the rapid growth and physical complexity of the city. Many houses were unserved by sewers, and the private wells upon which people relied for water became increasingly polluted. This created serious health hazards, including cholera and smallpox.

Public concern over health, sanitation, and safety was the chief motivation for extending the domain of municipal government. The City Charter of 1874 gave the Board of Public Works responsibility for water, streets, sewers, bridges, sidewalks, wharves, and public structures throughout the city. The 1870s stand out as a decade in which major advancements in urban services were begun. The city built and operated its first municipal water works, constructed the massive Menomonee Valley interceptor sewer system, and expanded the number of paved streets. By 1880, Milwaukee had ninety miles of water pipe and ninety-eight miles of sewer main. Twenty-five miles of streets had been paved with wooden blocks, the most popular form of paving at the time. In 1871, a small full-time paid fire department was authorized, replacing previous volunteer methods. The largest fire in the city's history, which destroyed most of the Lower Third Ward in 1892, did much to agitate public action for

fire codes and building regulations, as well as increased fire department personnel and equipment.

The village of Bay View grew steadily under the patronage of the Bay View Iron Company and the ad hoc government of the Town of Lake in the 1870s. In 1879, it was incorporated as an independent municipality. The need for improved services finally led to the annexation of the village by the city in 1887. (Simon, pp. 47-52; Milwaukee Board of Public Works, Annual Report, 1880 pp. 6, 7, 9, 13, quoted in Simon, pp. 49, 53; Still, pp. 238- 358-59, 517-18).

Urban transit in Milwaukee also began in this area. The first horse car company, the River and Lakeshore Company (later the Milwaukee City Street Railway Company) commenced operation 1860 with a franchise granted by the city. It ran a short downtown route between the two downtown railroad terminals. After the Civil War, new routes were built to connect the downtown with outlying destinations such as North Point (on the East Side), Bay View and Forest Home Cemetery (on the Southwest Side). Two other street railway companies were formed before 1880: the Cream City Railway Company (incorporated in 1876), which served the downtown and the East Side; and the West Side Street Railway Company (incorporated in 1874), which operated most of its routes in previously settled sections of the downtown and the West Side. By 1880, Milwaukee had a horse-drawn streetcar network which connected the downtown with most parts of the city. Lines often ended near cemeteries and parks, giving urban dwellers access to popular recreation spots and rural retreats. The hub of the system, however, was the central business district where most people still worked and shopped.

Despite the introduction of the streetcar into the urban environment, Milwaukee remained essentially a pedestrian city during this period. Ridership on the streetcars remained low. In the late 1860s and 1870s about ninety percent of the population lived within two miles of the heart of the city at Water Street and Wisconsin Avenue, and fifty-eight percent within one mile. Even newly-developing areas at the edge of the city were only three to four miles from downtown. Reliance on foot travel placed a premium on central residential location in the pre-auto era. The city's wealthy citizens tended to live at the city center, while out lying areas were developed by newer immigrants (Conzen, pp. 142, 152; McShane, pp. 58-59; Simon, pp. 46-47). Because the city was so compact, however, most people were able to walk to work and shopping until the 1890s, when the streetcar network really became a heavily used urban necessity. By the turn of the century, commercial and industrial expansion had usurped much of the residential land downtown forcing many people to live beyond easy walking distance of their jobs and the major downtown stores. Because of its isolation from the central business district, the south side developed its own 'downtowns', first on National Avenue and later at Mitchell Street. Bay View's commercial strip developed on South Kinnickinnic Avenue.

## **INDUSTRIAL METROPOLIS: 1880-1940**

### **Economy**

The period after 1880 was marked by Milwaukee's transition from a commercial trade center to an industrial city. Many of the processing industries which had established Milwaukee as a thriving frontier city in its earlier years, however, continued to rank among the leading producers in the city.

The South Side also began to assume its present physical form and appearance in the late 1870s and 1880s. Industrial development in the Menomonee Valley and at the mouth of the Kinnickinnic Creek expanded employment opportunities for new settlers and substantially increased the South Side's growth rate. Poles began to arrive in large numbers in the 1870s, and within a decade Milwaukee's South Side, particularly the southwest section, became a predominantly Polish community. Bay View, however, remained heavily German, Irish, Scottish and British in its ethnic make-up.

The city's dominant metal products processors constructed huge complexes on the fringes of the city in Bay View, in the Menomonee River Valley and along the major railroad corridors. These became major employers on the South Side and helped determine its working class character. These plants provided employment opportunities for the steady stream of newly arriving immigrants. As the scale of manufacturing increased, the size of the plants grew. The many small workshops with living quarters above which had characterized Milwaukee before 1890 gradually disappeared as manufacturing was increasingly housed in large buildings built exclusively for that purpose. The most dramatic concentration of these loft industrial structure occurred in the Lower Third Ward, which was almost entirely rebuilt as an industrial area after the Third Ward Fire of 1892. An another major industrial area extended from the Third Ward south into Walker's Point and northern Bay View.

### **Residential Growth**

By the 1880s, platted areas extended west to South Twenty-Seventh Street and south to Lincoln Avenue, but except for Walker's Point, the South Side was

still sparsely settled. Open land, farms, greenhouses, orchards, and private parks intermingled with newly subdivided tracts, recently-graded city streets, and the scattered cottages of newcomers. Several florists had nurseries and greenhouses in the vicinity of Bay View, while truck farms filled much of the vacant land in southwest Bay View.

By the early twentieth century, however, housing construction and increased population density had transformed the South Side. The demand for residential property chipped away at remaining open space and agricultural land. Public parks (such as Humboldt and South Shore Park) replaced the older private picnic grounds and recreation sites. With the exception of a few tracts, platted areas reached south to Oklahoma Avenue. Milwaukee's South Side had become a densely-settled area of urban neighborhoods. The study area itself was mostly built-up in a frenzy of development that began in the late 1880s and lingered into the early twentieth century.

Despite the rapid urbanization of Bay View in the late nineteenth century, and the modest means of the immigrant settlers, the neighborhoods did not resemble the stereotypical crowded districts of America's largest cities, those built largely of tenement houses. Though fairly densely populated, the Bay View area was, and still is, comprised mainly of detached single-family cottages and duplexes. The cottages are generally wood-frame, one to two-stories high, with gable roofs and square or rectangular plans. Duplexes, often with Queen Anne or Georgian Revival stylistic elements, and Bungalow Style houses occur with increasing frequency in the southern part of the neighborhood.

The South Side neighborhood has changed little physically since World War I. The most dramatic physical change was caused by the destruction of the iron mill and many of the buildings of the other great industrial complexes at the northern edge of Bay View. Today this land is largely vacant. The principal effect of this has been that it is difficult to envision today that pastoral, serene Bay View was founded and existed for most of its history as the bustling, residential and commercial adjunct to a great series of noisy, smoke-belching mill complexes.

2. Historic Indians



## HISTORIC INDIANS

Prior to permanent white settlement, a number of Indian groups were known to have inhabited the Milwaukee area. Instead of being a permanent home to one or more Native American tribes, however, the area was referred to by early traders and the Indians themselves as a place where yearly gatherings were held, where tribes from the north, west and south congregated, smoked together, and discussed matters of general interest and formed new alliances. These gatherings would sometimes last for months, and it seems that some members of these tribes lingered in the area and formed mixed villages. The earliest accounts indicate that Pottawatomies, Winnebagos, Chippewas, Menomonee, and a few Ottawa resided here at different times. (History of Milwaukee, 1881, pp. 38-42)

The Ottawa were reported in Milwaukee as early as 1762 at which time they were said to be a troublesome group, probably because they were anti-British at the time. Later, Ottawa were reported as living among the Ojibway and Pottawatomie along the Lake Michigan shore. (CRMW Historic Indians, pp. 11-2, 11-3, 11-12) From 1784 through 1834 the Menomonee Indians were here, too, and maintained a village about 150 rods south of the present harbor. (History of Milwaukee, 1881, p. 43) The most prevalent Indian tribe group was the Pottawatomie, an Algonquin-speaking group which had originated in Michigan's Lower Peninsula. In 1698 they were reported to be sharing villages in Milwaukee with the Mascouten and Fox Indians. They were mentioned again in Milwaukee in the 1750s. The French traders La Framboise, Mirandea, Vieau and Juneau all reported contact with Pottawatomies in the Milwaukee area. It was also determined that the name "Milwaukee" was of Pottawatomie origin.

(History of Milwaukee, 1881, p. 37, 42; CRMW Historic Indians, p. 12-1, 12-3)  
Although different Indian groups occupied different parts of the state and Milwaukee at different decades, it was the Pottawatomie and Menomonee who most consistently claimed land in the area of Milwaukee in the early nineteenth century. In the treaties by which these Native Americans relinquished their claims, the Pottawatomie turned over to the federal government those lands south of the Milwaukee River in 1835 while the Menomonee ceded their holdings north and east of the Milwaukee River in 1831. The removal of Indians from the area began in May of 1838. (History of Milwaukee, 1881, pp. 43, 79-81)

Indian villages were once located on Milwaukee's South Side in the Bay View and Jones Island areas, while another small village of mixed Indians existed in the vicinity of today's South Sixth Street and National Avenue. Another village was located at the junction of Forest Home and Muskego Avenues at a site referred to as the Indian Fields. It was at this latter location that area Indians gathered in 1838 for transfer to lands west of the Mississippi River under the supervision of Jacques Vieau, Jr. (Utzat and Ruege, pp. 28-29)

Bay View was known to have had a least two Indian villages in addition to assorted campsites and burial grounds. Pinpointing the specific locations of these Indian settlements with accuracy is difficult due to the imprecise nature of early pioneer accounts. Also, dramatic topographical changes, as a result of grading, filling and excavation, have erased or obscured many of the old natural landmarks that would have been useful in locating the villages. These activities also destroyed the physical remains of the Native American sites themselves.

The most important Indian village in the Bay View area was located on what is today known as Jones Island, a peninsula located along the Lake Michigan shore



### 3. Immigration and Settlement



## IMMIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

English, Scottish, and Welsh immigrants brought to Bay View their extensive knowledge of steelmaking. England was then the world's leading steel producer. It was from these early immigrants that later waves of immigrants including Germans, Italians and eastern Europeans learned trades in the manufacture of steel. The steel industry, or more specifically the Bay View rolling mill, transformed Bay View from a sparsely-populated Yankee farming community into a bustling industrial village during the late 1860s.

Settlers from the British Isles and their descendents founded the industrial village of Bay View, named it, and developed its early housing, churches, and industry. British settlers lived in the survey area between Lake Michigan and the Chicago North Western railroad tracks. It was in this area that Bay View's "gold coast" developed on South Superior Street and on South Shore Drive where many building lots afforded magnificent views of Lake Michigan.

This area remained a predominantly English residential neighborhood until after the turn of the century. A sizable Italian community began moving into the northern end of the neighborhood near the Bay View rolling mill during the first and second decades of the twentieth century. Once called "Little Italy" by Milwaukeeans, the Italians were relative latecomers to the survey area, but they are still strongly identified with Bay View.

Germans had begun settling west of the Chicago North Western railroad tracks by about 1870 and they were by far the single largest ethnic group in

the survey area by 1900. Despite the size of the German community, they initially were not as politically and professionally prominent in Bay View as they were in other parts of Milwaukee during the same time period.

Germans and their descendents are still probably the largest ethnic group in the survey area, although none of the neighborhoods today has a distinctly German character. Germans eventually came to dominate much of the commerce in the five points commercial area and on South Kinnickinnic Avenue (see Commerce chapter).

Around the turn of the century, eastern European immigrants began moving into the area west of the Chicago North Western railroad tracks between East Lincoln Avenue and East Bay Street. English settlers had previously lived in this area. The eastern European immigrants found employment in the manufacturing corridor that developed along the nearby Kinnickinnic River and around the Bay View rolling mill. While the mill was the survey area's largest employer until the early twentieth century, the manufacturing base of the community broadened to include a diverse mixture of industries that continued to provide steady employment for Bay View workers long after the rolling mill closed in 1929.

Today, although much of the industry in the survey area has disappeared, many descendents of the early residents of Bay View have remained. If any neighborhood still has a distinctly ethnic character, it is the "Little Italy" area which is located at the southern edge of the former rolling mill site. Here several Italian businesses remain such as the Groppi Market (see Commerce chapter) and Club Garibaldi (see Social and Political Movements chapter) and

serve as reminders that there is still a sizable Italian population in the area. The Germans, too, are well represented architecturally with such landmarks as St. Lucas Lutheran Church (see Religion chapter) which recalls the churches of Germany which the immigrants had left behind in their native land.

Following is a brief history of the major ethnic groups associated with the survey area.

### ENGLISH

The early success of the Bay View rolling mill, which was the survey area's largest employer, depended largely on the highly skilled labor of English immigrants who had learned the steelmaking trade in their native land. Bay View was predominantly an English settlement during its early days after the founding of the rolling mill in 1868. Although Germans became the largest ethnic group in the survey area by the turn of the century, Bay View in 1905 was still home to more English natives than any other ward in the city.

England, the cradle of the industrial revolution, lead the world in the production of steel and iron during the nineteenth century. Making steel from iron ore by the so-called Bessemer process was an English innovation that significantly improved the quality of railroad rails and other steel products that were vital to the development of the American frontier.

Eber Brock Ward, the founder of the rolling mill, discovered that America could supply an ample number of hard-working laborers, but not the skilled artisans and tradesmen needed to build the blast furnaces and tend to the

finer points of manufacturing Bessemer steel. Staffordshire, England was the cradle of steelmaking technology and it was there that Ward reportedly sent representatives to hire men to construct and operate the new Bay View rolling mill. A number of English tradesmen accepted Ward's offer of employment and moved to Bay View. Some of the English immigrants did not come directly from their native land, but had worked for several years at other iron companies in America before beginning work at the Bay View mill.

Some of the more important English immigrants who helped to build the mill were James Meredith and William Dennis, both of whom were reputed to be outstanding furnace-builders. They came to Bay View to supervise the construction of the first blast furnace in 1869. This furnace was put in use on April 15, 1870. Other Staffordshire, England natives working at the mill included furnace keepers Stephen Bird, William Jewess, Henry Lee and Joseph A. Starke, all of whom later became active and prominent residents of Bay View.

Stephen Bird was born in Staffordshire, England in 1829 and began working in a steel company at the age of eight. He came to America in 1855 and worked in Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania for fourteen years before moving to Chicago to work for Eber Ward's North Chicago Rolling Mill. Bird came to Milwaukee in 1871 to work at the Bay View mill and was still employed there in the early 1880s.

Henry Lee, another prominent English immigrant in Bay View, was born in 1835 in Brierly Hill, England and began work in iron and steel making at the age of nine. He came to America in the spring of 1869 and before coming to Milwaukee, he worked in Ohio and Pennsylvania rolling mills.

Stephen Bird and Henry Lee were typical of many of the early tradesmen who worked at the Bay View mill. What they lacked in formal education, they made up in extensive apprenticeships in some of the most advanced iron and steel making firms in England during the nineteenth century.

The English settled in the survey area on a narrow strip of land between Lake Michigan and the Chicago Northwestern railroad tracks. Many of the small cottages in this area date from the late 1860s and early 1870s and were built as worker housing by the rolling mill management. The architectural character of the English settlement area differs from the later, German neighborhood west of the railroad tracks that was built between about 1880 and 1900.

Many of Milwaukee's early settlers were English-speaking, American-born, so-called Yankees, who were of English, Irish, or Scottish ancestry. The Yankees too, were present in the early Bay View community and made up a significant portion of the early settlers in Bay View. One of the early Yankees in Bay View was John F. Parkes, born in Wyandotte, Michigan in 1861, who worked in the mill as a "heater." His father, Josiah Parkes, was a native of England who also worked in the iron trade. Wyandotte, Michigan was the site of an earlier, very large steel mill built by Eber Brock Ward. John Parkes began work in the Bay View mill in the spring of 1879.

The English brought their religion with them to Bay View. The Methodist Episcopal Church in Bay View, now called Bay View United Methodist Church, located at 2772 South Kinnickinnic Avenue was founded in 1868 by a group of Bay Viewites who were predominantly of English or Yankee background. The first public services were held in the office of the Milwaukee Iron Company in January 1867 (see Religion chapter for more information).

Another Bay View church, St. Luke's Episcopal, was founded in 1872 by a predominantly English and Yankee group. The Episcopal church in this country is an offshoot of the Church of England. The church was located on the northwest corner of South Kinnickinnic and East Clement Avenues for many years, but the congregation relocated by the 1960s to 3200 South Herman Avenue, which is a few blocks south of the survey area. The original church building has since been demolished.

English and Yankee settlers dominated the political affairs of the early Village of Bay View, which was incorporated in 1879. John C. Parkes (apparently no relation to John F. Parkes mentioned earlier), the first Village Board President, was an English native born in 1831 who came to America as an infant with his parents. In addition to his village board activities, he was superintendent of the Bay View rolling mill. Before coming to Bay View in 1878, he worked at Eber Brock Ward's North Chicago Rolling Mill. (History of Milwaukee, 1881:1616-1633; Milwaukee city directories; Gurda, 1979:11-33; Korn, 1980: 52-53.)

#### WELSH

The Welsh tended to cluster together in this country more than other immigrant groups. Settlement in closely-knit communities was important because most immigrants spoke Welsh and hoped that the Welsh language, religious nonconformity, and other aspects of their culture might be preserved in America. However the process of acculturation to American was easy and the necessity to use English language doomed this to failure.

Later Welsh immigrants also brought their skills from industrialized England to the iron and steel mills of western Pennsylvania and Ohio. Few of the Bay View Welsh came directly from Wales. Most, apparently, had previously worked in steel mills in Pennsylvania and Ohio. One of the typical Welsh immigrants in Bay View was John Kidney who was born in South Wales in 1841. He began work at age eleven in a rolling mill in the north of England. In 1854 he came to America and worked in Pottsville, Pennsylvania until 1857 and from there went to Johnstown, Pennsylvania. In March of 1859 he returned to England, but came back to America in October of 1860. He eventually enlisted in the Union Army and was taken prisoner by Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. After the war he worked in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and in Cleveland, Ohio before coming to Milwaukee in 1870 to work at the Bay View rolling mill.

William W. Williams, another Welsh immigrant, worked in the Bay View rolling mill as a skilled puddler, which was a job essential to the refining process of Bessemer steel. Born in South Wales on June 20, 1828, he apparently left his homeland with his parents in 1847 and settled in a Welsh farming community near Genesee, Wisconsin in Waukesha County. In 1850 Williams went to Ironton, Ohio to learn the steelworker's trade and he came to Milwaukee in August 1867 to work in the Bay View rolling mill. He was still employed with the mill in the early 1880s.

The principal extant landmark to the Welsh community in Bay View is the Welsh Congregational Church, which was built in 1873 by a small group of Welsh families. The tiny, white, front-gabled, clapboard-sided church building located at 2739 South Superior Street has undergone only a few alterations

over the years. It presently houses a Christian Science congregation. The Welsh community in Bay View was never very large and the immigrants were integrated into the larger English settlement in an area bounded by Lake Michigan, the Chicago Northwestern Railroad tracks, and the Bay View rolling mill.

The Welsh congregation was organized in 1868 when Sunday services began at the house of Mr. and Mrs. William W. Williams. Sunday School for instruction of children was held Sunday morning and an afternoon sermon was preached by a visiting pastor from the Milwaukee Welsh Church. It was a Protestant congregation that conducted worship services exclusively in the Welsh language.

The congregation was formed with about six families which totaled about 30 adults. The congregation grew during its first year and in 1869 they began to hold services in the Bay View village schoolhouse before moving to their own church in 1873 (see Religion chapter).

Several Welsh families left Bay View after the temporary closing of the rolling mill following the nationwide, Financial Panic of 1873. Regular services were suspended and the church nearly closed. With the return of economic prosperity during the late 1870s, some Welsh apparently returned to Bay View and the church resumed regular worship. Research indicates that the Welsh Congregational Church disbanded in 1898 or 1899. Today, Bay View is not know as an ethnically Welsh area of the city. (Allen and Turner, 1988:45-47; Milwaukee city directories; History of Milwaukee, 1881:1616-1633)

SCOTS

The first Scotsman to settle permanently in Milwaukee was James Murray, a native of Creiff, Scotland who moved here in 1835. He was reportedly the first painter and glazer in the village and also dealt in real estate in a partnership with James McNeill, another Scotsman who came in 1836. By 1840, there were approximately 140 Scottish immigrants in Milwaukee. These first immigrants were part of the "Great Migration" of the nineteenth century and they came from Scotland for many reasons and by many routes. By 1850, there were 339 persons in Milwaukee listing Scotland as their place of birth. Most of these people lived in the city's First Ward north of the central business district.

Religiously, the Scots in Milwaukee tended to be either Presbyterian (which was an offshoot of the Church of Scotland), or Episcopalian. By 1860 there were 428 Scots in Milwaukee County. The First Ward in the city was home to 104, the Fourth Ward had 69 Scots and the Fifth Ward had 85. Few, if any, Scots lived in Bay View at this time, which was a sparsely-populated rural farming community. The 1860 census listed 63 separate occupations for Scots in Milwaukee, with that of machinist leading with a total of twelve. Many Scots who came to America learned the steelmaking trade in large factories in England and Scotland.

Thomas Waddell was a Bay View Scottish immigrant who was in many ways, typical of his countrymen who settled in the survey area. Born in 1848 in Gartshire, Scotland, he worked in the Bay View rolling mill as a "heater." He learned the steelmaking trade at the Mossend Iron Works in Lanarkshire, Scotland where he started work at the age of 14. In 1868, six years later, he

worked in England for a few months, but then returned to Scotland before leaving for America in 1871 to apply his trade at Eber Brock Ward's Bay View Rolling Mill. Waddell was typical of the skilled labor that Eber Brock Ward knew was essential to build his business.

Another Bay View Scot of a slightly different background was John Campbell who worked as an engineer at the Bay View rolling mill. He was a native of Edinburgh, Scotland, born on February 5, 1822, who came to Milwaukee in 1851. He moved to a farm in Walworth County a short time later where he lived for nine years. He then moved to Wauwatosa, lived there for two years, and then returned to Milwaukee. In 1869 he accepted a job at the Bay View rolling mill and lived at the corner of Erie and Ontario Streets in the survey area.

Thirteen Scottish members of Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee founded Bethany Presbyterian Church in Bay View in 1872 (see Religion chapter). Following a reorganization in 1886, the church was renamed Grace Presbyterian Church and is still located in the survey area today on South Kinnickinnic Avenue. The Presbyterian church was an American offshoot of the Church of Scotland, a protestant denomination. Most of the early members were of Scottish descent, but today many different ethnic groups are represented in the congregation.

Most of the early Scots in Bay View lived in the area east of the Chicago Northwestern railroad tracks mingled with the other English-speaking settlers including the Welsh, English and Yankees. Bay View today does not have a distinctly Scottish neighborhood and the survey area is not presently known as

an ethnically Scottish section of the city. Scots were always a relatively small ethnic group in the city and historically Scottish immigrants apparently felt no strong need to live near other Scots. The earlier small concentrations of Scots in particular industries and places became even less pronounced in the twentieth century when American industries such as the Bay View rolling mill no longer needed to recruit Scottish workers for their skills. (Allen and Turner, 1988:43-46; History of Milwaukee, 1881:1616-1633; Milwaukee city directories; Caroon, 1969:20-33)

### IRISH

Although no neighborhood in Bay View today has a particularly Irish character, the principal extant building in the survey area associated with the Irish is Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church located on the southeast corner of East Russell and South Kinnickinnic Avenues. It was in the general vicinity of the church that a distinctly Irish community began developing about 1870.

The Irish settled early in Milwaukee with a population of about 2,000 by 1847 when the total population of the city was only about 11,000. Their emigration was occasioned by the repeated failures of the potato crops in Ireland beginning in 1842, although the years of the greatest crop failures were 1843 and 1846. Most of the early Irish settlers in the city, though born in Ireland, appear to have resided for a time at some other American locality before coming to Milwaukee. This was true of many of the English, Scottish and Welsh immigrants as well. Generally, the immigrants had acquired a skill or trade before coming to Milwaukee, although many were hard-working day-laborers.

Irish immigrants can be divided into two broad groups. Those who arrived in America from Ireland in the 1700s had been predominantly Protestant, often strongly Presbyterian. Most were of Scottish heritage -- a result of an earlier migration to northeastern Ireland. The descendants of the Scottish who moved to Ireland have been called the Scotch-Irish. An estimated 2 million Scotch-Irish migrated to North America in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Irish immigrants of the 1840s, however, were Roman Catholic Irish natives. Most of Milwaukee's Irish immigrants fall into this group.

James McIver was among the smaller group of Scotch-Irish immigrants in Bay View. He was elected Bay View Justice of the Peace in 1879 and also served as the community's Police Justice. He was born in 1836 in Northern Ireland and came to America in 1866 settling in Philadelphia before moving to Milwaukee in 1870. His father, Patrick McIver, died in Scotland in 1845. McIver was a farmer's son and had little formal education, but was self-taught in legal matters. In 1889 McIver was still the Justice of the Peace, according to the city directory, and he lived in a house that is still standing at 2415 South Wentworth Avenue. McIver's house was located in a neighborhood that was predominantly English and Scottish.

Dennis Kelly was a Roman Catholic Irish immigrant born in 1842 who came to America with his parents in 1843 -- a year that coincides with a severe potato famine in Ireland. The Kelly family settled in the Town of Franklin in Milwaukee County. Dennis Kelly was a Milwaukee police officer during the early 1860s and was appointed Deputy Inspector of the House of Correction in downtown Milwaukee for 18 months, apparently beginning in 1866. During the

1880s, Kelly was the proprietor of Union Park beer garden and saloon located on the east side of the 2800 block of South Kinnickinnic Avenue (razed) in the survey area. According to the city directory, he lived at the saloon in 1885. (See Recreation and Entertainment)

Milwaukeeans of Irish parentage numbered about 15 percent of the total city population in 1850 and 1860 according to census information. The census found 3,436 persons in Milwaukee of Irish birth in 1890, but only 2,653 in 1900 and 1,447 in 1920. Those of Irish parentage totaled 11,772 in 1900 and 10,038 in 1920, indicating that the size of the Irish community in the city began to decrease during the early twentieth century.

There were two significant events that radically altered the history of the Milwaukee Irish community. The first occurred on September 6, 1860 when nearly four hundred members of the Irish community including many of its leaders died in the wreck of the Lady Elgin steamship. The tragedy was felt for years and seriously affected Irish-American community life and spirit in Milwaukee.

The early Irish community in Milwaukee was centered in the city's Third Ward which is bounded roughly by the Milwaukee River, Lake Michigan, and East Michigan Avenue. In 1892, a devastating fire destroyed scores of buildings in the ward sending many Irish in search of new homes elsewhere in the city. Many moved to the Immaculate Conception parish area in Bay View which had been founded in 1870 by a small group of Irish immigrants and their descendents.

Although some of the Irish were skilled tradesmen, many were laborers at the Bay View rolling mill and other factories in the community. By 1881 the size of the Immaculate Conception parish was about 200 families which gives a rough idea of the size of the Irish community in Bay View at that time. The church continued to grow and it is believed that the overwhelming majority of church members before 1920 were of Irish descent (see Religion chapter). A large, neoclassical style, brick church building was built for the parish in 1907 to replace an original frame structure built in 1871. Architecturally, it is one of the largest and most significant buildings in the survey area. During the 1920s other ethnic groups, most notably the Italians, were assimilated into the parish.

Today the former Irish neighborhood that surrounded the Immaculate Conception church complex is an ethnically-diverse community that features a well-maintained mix of working class, one to 2-1/2 story frame houses dating from about 1870 to 1929 although the majority of the houses were built before 1900. Perhaps the most notable Bay View resident of Irish descent was actor Spencer Tracy (1900-1967) who reportedly lived in the survey area on South Wentworth Avenue (see Notable Persons chapter). (Milwaukee city directories; History of Milwaukee, 1881:1616-1633; Rummel, 1976:97-105; Allen and Turner, 1988:47-51; Desmond, 1930:365-374; Austin, 1946:153; Gurda, 1979:29-31)

### GERMANS

The Bay View Germans settled west of the Chicago Northwestern railroad tracks and by the turn of the century they had developed a thriving community of stores, churches, parochial schools and fraternal organizations. Many of the shopkeepers and merchants in the five points commercial area and on South

Kinnickinnic Avenue were German immigrants (see Commerce chapter). Although Germans were the largest ethnic group in the survey area by 1900, the English, Scottish and Welsh settlers initially exerted more influence over political and business matters in the village of Bay View prior to 1887.

Religion divided German immigrants into separate social groups. About one-third of the nineteenth century German immigrants are believed to have been Roman Catholics, with various Lutheran, Reformed, and Evangelical groups accounting for most of the Protestants. For most Germans, religion was at least as important to their ethnic identity as language, and immigrants tried to live near other Germans of the same religious denomination. This was a national trend that was also apparent in Bay View.

One Roman Catholic parish and four Protestant congregations were founded in the survey area by German immigrants and their descendants. In all of these churches, worship services were originally conducted in the German language, but by the 1920s, all had introduced regular English language services. Today none of the Bay View churches is known to conduct a regular German language service.

A small group of German Protestants had settled in Bay View by the early 1870s and founded St. Lucas Lutheran Church in 1872 which is now located at 2605 South Kinnickinnic Avenue. The small size of the early congregation, which numbered about 16 families in 1873, gives some indication of the size of the German immigrant community in Bay View at that time. The number of German-speaking Roman Catholics in the survey area remained small until the late 1880s when about 50 German-speaking families banded together in 1887 to

found St. Augustine Roman Catholic Church which is located at 2530 South Howell Avenue.

The three other Protestant congregations founded by German immigrants were Bethel Evangelical and Reformed Church founded in 1883 at 2392 South Woodward Street (now merged with Bay View United Methodist), Christ Evangelical Church founded in 1895 at 2644 South Pine Street (now located at 915 East Oklahoma Avenue), and the German Full Gospel Mission founded in 1917 which was originally located at 2702 South Howell Avenue (now the Bay View Assembly of God located at 2392 South Woodward Street). Additional information about these congregations can be found in the Religion chapter.

Germans and their descendents are still probably the largest ethnic group in the survey area, although none of the neighborhoods has a distinctly German character. The principal legacy of German settlement are the five churches they built during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Of these, St. Lucas Evangelical Lutheran Church, built in 1887, is an excellent example of the continuation of German design and building practices in America. This church is similar in appearance to churches built in Germany during the late nineteenth century.

More has been written about Germans in Milwaukee than any other ethnic group in the city. The successive waves of German immigration to the United States during the nineteenth century had a significant impact on the history of both the city and the state. By 1900, 72 percent of Milwaukee's population was of German birth or descent. In the same year, Germans accounted for 47 percent of Wisconsin's total foreign-born population. The history of Germans

in Wisconsin has been widely documented, and a thorough recount in these pages is not possible.

The first significant wave of German immigration to Milwaukee began in the late 1840s. A potato blight that swept across most of western Europe in 1845 severely affected many German farmers who were particularly dependent on the crop; many emigrated rather than face starvation and hardship (O'Connor, pp. 98-99). Still other Germans were political refugees nicknamed the "Forty-eighters" who fled their country following the unsuccessful liberal revolution of 1848. A third, smaller group of Germans called Old Lutherans came to America beginning in 1839 because they opposed the union of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches that was imposed in 1817 by King Frederick William III of Prussia, who ruled the northeastern part of present-day Germany. The coincidence of these events caused nearly one million Germans to come to the United States between 1845 and 1855 (WCRMP, Settlement, 2-1; Austin, p. 140). Many of the Old Lutherans settled in rural areas outside of Milwaukee, although about 20 families settled in the city west of the Milwaukee River on land they purchased from Byron Kilbourn, one of the founders of the city (Conzen, pp. 18-19, 144). Thousands of German immigrants came to Milwaukee during the 1840s, mostly from the southwestern states of Rhenish Prussia, Baden, and Saxony. Later, immigrants in the 1860s and 1870s came from northwestern Germany (Schleswig-Holstein, Ost, Friesland, Hanover, Oldenburg, and Westphalia) and finally from northeastern Germany (Prussia, Pomerania, Upper Silesia, and Mecklenberg) in the 1880s and 1890s (WCRMP, Settlement, 2-1). The original centers of German settlement in the city were located west of the Milwaukee River, at Market Square near today's City Hall east of the river, and in Walker's Point on the south side (WCRMP, Settlement, 2-10). The

first arrivals were mostly farmers, minor craftsmen, and day laborers. Entrepreneurs and well-educated Germans came in the mid- to late-1840s. Many of the later immigrants were skilled artisans, tradesmen, and businessmen who immigrated to better their economic situation (Conzen, pp. 18-19).

After the Civil War, from 1865 to approximately 1874, slightly more than one million additional Germans entered the United States. Depressed economic conditions in this country slowed German immigration between 1874 and 1880, but between 1880 and 1893 the pace again stepped-up, and nearly two million more Germans crossed the Atlantic to America (WCRMP, Settlement, 2-1). The Financial Panic of 1893 in this country caused another temporary slackening of immigration. Travel restrictions during World War I and postwar immigration restrictions significantly reduced the number of German immigrants coming to Wisconsin in the twentieth century.

According to an 1846 school census, the population of Milwaukee was 15,000 and the division by nationalities was as follows: American-born (so-called Yankees) 6,969; German 5,708; and Irish 2,487 (Desmond, p. 369). During the 1840s and 1850s, Milwaukee was decidedly Yankee in culture, but the growing German character of the city eventually became dominant. During the last 30 years of the nineteenth century, Milwaukee gained a reputation as the "Deutsch-Athen" or, in English, the "German Athens." The immigrants brought with them from Germany an appreciation of theater, music, literature, and art. Milwaukee was also sometimes referred to as the American Munich because of its many beer gardens and cafes (Austin, pp. 140, 147). The German language was used as often as English in business, churches, and even some public schools. The overwhelming German presence in Milwaukee left its legacy on business,

industry, government, and religion. Germans were particularly inclined to join fraternal, athletic and social organizations, and such groups flourished by the hundreds in the city during the late nineteenth century. In addition to fraternal lodges, among the wide variety of organizations they founded were gymnastic associations, such as the Milwaukee Turners, amusement clubs, fire companies, militia groups, musical societies, and hunting clubs. Perhaps no other ethnic group in the United States ever developed such a varied assortment of organizations and institutions. (Conzen, pp. 167-180)

### ITALIANS

Among the early ethnic groups to settle in Bay View, the Italians were relative latecomers, who did not have a settlement of significant size in the survey area until the first decade of the twentieth century. There were two general phases of Italian immigration to America. During the pre-1880 period, Italian immigrants were predominantly from Northern Italy, the most prosperous and powerful region in what had become a unified country in 1870. These immigrants, who included well-educated professionals and skilled craftsmen, established small communities in many American cities. Early Milwaukeeans with Italian surnames included George Laurena, a watchmaker, and Nelson Francesco, a shoemaker, who were both listed in the first city directory published in 1847. By most historical accounts, however, the city's first Italian immigrant of record was Michael Biagi who was born in 1832 in Tuscany and settled in Milwaukee in 1860. He established the city's St. Paul Hotel on what is today South Second Street.

After 1880, the Italian-American communities began to change as large numbers of immigrants from southern Italy and Sicily began pouring into the

American melting pot. These newcomers, compared with the earlier groups of Italian immigrants, tended to be less educated farmers. By 1910, Italian immigrants had established three small communities in Milwaukee. The majority lived in the city's Third Ward in an area bounded by East Michigan Street, North Broadway, the Milwaukee River and Lake Michigan. Italians began moving into this area during the early 1890s after the Irish began leaving the neighborhood following a devastating fire in 1892 that destroyed many homes and businesses.

A second group of immigrants, primarily from Sicily, began moving into a neighborhood north of the central business district near the East Brady Street commercial strip about 1910. A third, small Italian community of immigrants from central and northern Italy was established in Bay View near the sprawling Illinois Steel Company rolling mill. It was common among the early Italian immigrants to group themselves in colonies according to the provinces or hometowns from which they originated.

Carlo Basso was reportedly the first Italian to settle in Bay View about 1890. Many Bay View Italians were called Marchegiani because they came from a large region in northern Italy called "Le Marche." Within this region, many immigrants came from the Ancona and Pessaro provinces. The towns in Ancona where these people may have lived are Fossombrone, Brugnetto, Santa Ehia, and Monte Burca. Some Bay View Italians also came from the Piedmont region, the capitol of which is the famous city of Turin. Many Bay View immigrants from this region came from the towns, Courgne' and Bosconero. In 1926, the Milwaukee Journal reported that about twenty percent of Milwaukee's 20,000 Italians (about 4,000 people) lived in Bay View. That figure evidently

included first and second generation Italians born in this country in addition to immigrants.

The Italians from the provinces of southern and central Italy came primarily from Puglia (provinces of Bari and Foggia), Abruzzi (provinces of Chieti and Aquila), and Campania (provinces of Naples, Salerno and Avelline). By 1910, the Italian population of Milwaukee could be divided as follows: Sicilians 65%, Southern Italians 20%, Central and Northern Italians 15%. Many Italians in Bay View worked as laborers in the rolling mills and in the Milwaukee Street railway car shops at the corner of South Kinnickinnic Avenue and East Mitchell Street. Some immigrants found work in the large Pfister and Vogel tannery located on East Stewart Street at the north end of the survey area (MI 426-4, -5).

Fewer than 800 Italians lived in Milwaukee in 1900, although total Italian immigration to the United States by the turn of the century was estimated to be about 5 million. According to the 1910 U.S. Census, the Italian population of Milwaukee had mushroomed to 4,685, of which 3,554 were born in Italy and 1,131 were born in America. About 300 foreign-born Italians were living in Bay View in 1910, making it the second largest Italian community in the city outside of the Third Ward. After 1910, the Italian population in Bay View continued to increase.

In 1913, Gioconda Groppi, an Italian immigrant, founded a food market at 1441 East Russell Avenue (MI 392-33, see Commerce chapter), to serve the growing Bay View Italian population. This market survives today and is operated by descendents of the founder. The Groppis were one of several Bay

View families from the Tuscany region of central Italy. The rapid increase in Milwaukee's Italian population reflects an unprecedented period of immigration between 1900 and 1910 when 10 million Italians settled in America.

Many of the Bay View Italians originally migrated to the mining camps of Northern Michigan and Wisconsin before journeying to Milwaukee at the turn of the century to work at the Illinois Steel Co. rolling mills. Some of the original Italian families in the survey area were the Bassos, Gardettos, Barbieris, Marinos, and Boggios.

The Bay View Italians lived in an area that previously had been inhabited by Irish, English, Welsh and Scotch immigrants and their descendents. Most Bay View Italians lived within an area bounded by Lake Michigan, South Superior Street, the Chicago Northwestern Railroad right-of-way, and East Russell Avenue.

For many years, Italian Roman Catholics living in Bay View have worshipped at the Immaculate Conception Church located on East Russell Avenue (MI 391-20). Initially the Italian immigrants were not easily integrated into the English-speaking parish. As an alternative, in 1916 Father Fadanelli of Blessed Virgin of Pompeii Church (the city's first Italian parish in the Third Ward) started a mission for Italian-speaking Catholics in a building at South Logan and East Conway Streets. Apparently no services were offered, but several nuns did give religious instructions to Italian children. This program is believed to have lasted about two years and was succeeded by another mission operated by the Jesuit Order and Father Lyons of the Catholic Instruction League. Sunday services were conducted and workers from the

League taught religion classes. In 1920 a third mission was established in a store on the corner of East Russell and South Wentworth Avenues across from the G. Groppi Market. Religious services were conducted by several priests from the St. Francis Seminary located south of the survey area in the suburban city of St. Francis. The mission faded within a few years as Italians began to be assimilated into the Immaculate Conception parish. Although there was once some agitation in Bay View to create an Italian-speaking, so-called national parish, it was an idea that never garnered widespread popularity in the Italian community.

In 1934, a group of Italian women in Bay View founded the religious society, "Our Lady of Lourdes" at Immaculate Conception parish which worked toward the goal of bringing an Italian priest to the parish several times a year to hear the women's confessions in their native language. During the early 1940s, their goal was realized. Italian families also became more active in the Immaculate Conception parish when they sent their children to the parish grade school.

By the mid-1920s the Bay View Italian community was firmly established in the survey area, but the closing of the Bay View rolling mill in 1929, coupled with the economic austerity of the Great Depression during the 1930s, left many Italians in the survey area without steady employment. With the return of economic prosperity during the post-World War II years, Bay View Italians began dispersing throughout the Milwaukee metropolitan area. Many of the descendents of the original Bay View Italian immigrants still make their homes in the survey area. Although Italian-Americans live throughout the survey area, the original immigrant neighborhood at the northern part of Bay View

retains reminders of its Italian past in such businesses as the G. Groppi Market and Club Garibaldi, a popular tavern and meeting hall that has hosted many Italian social and community gatherings since the 1930s. (LaPiana, 1915:5-63; Gurda, 1979:39-45; Meloni, 1969:34-46; Carini, n.d.:3-14; Andreozzi, 1974: all of an unpublished manuscript)

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

A study of Bay View ethnic groups requires piecing together many scattered bits of information from a number of sources. A good beginning point is the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. A Manual for Historic Preservation (1986). While designed to assist in the evaluation of historic sites and properties, the manual provides a valuable overview of most of the State's ethnic groups, lists National Register properties associated with those groups and provides excellent bibliographies. Conzen's Immigrant Milwaukee 1836-1860 (1976) should also be read in conjunction with any study of Milwaukee although it concentrates chiefly on German immigrants and gives only minimal information about Bay View. Still's Milwaukee. The History of a City (1948) gives a good general overview of immigration, and Simon's The Expansion of an Industrial City: Milwaukee 1880-1900 (1971) provides many useful population and occupational tables. Census records from 1940 through 1970 from the U. S. Department of Commerce also help to fill in the picture of twentieth-century immigration. Also helpful is the Special Census of Milwaukee - Milwaukee and Washington Counties, Wisconsin as of April 3, 1985 available at Milwaukee's Department of City Development.

For a study of individual ethnic groups, the Milwaukee County Historical Center Library's Clipping Collection is particularly useful, since local newspapers have kept abreast of the newest groups settling in the city. The Central Library's Clipping Collection is also good in this regard. Allen and Turner's We The People (1988) is an outstanding overview of immigration to the U.S. and also presents an analysis of current patterns of ethnic settlement based on the 1980 census.

G. LaPiana's, The Italians in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1915) is a very descriptive account of the early Italian community, containing considerable demographic data. Humphrey J. Desmond's article, "Early Irish Settlers in Milwaukee," Wisconsin Magazine of History (June 1930) provides a general overview of that group.

4. Fur Trade



FUR TRADE

The fur trade in Wisconsin dates back to the arrival of Nicolet to this region in 1634. From 1634 to 1763 the fur trade was dominated by the French, who were succeeded by the British between 1763-1815 and then by the Americans from 1815 to 1830. The fur trade came to an end with the diminished supply of fur-bearing animals and the removal of the Indians from the state. The most important trading centers were Green Bay, Prairie Du Chien and La Pointe. It was from these centers that the traders would disperse to the interior. (Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Vol. 1, Fur Trade, p. 1-1)

Documented fur trading activity in Milwaukee dates to the mid-eighteenth century, about the time of the transition from French to English domination. Local histories relate the names of a number of traders, few of whom spent more than a season or two in the area. As a result, Milwaukee, although an important field post, never developed into a major trading center as had the earlier named cities. Among the traders recorded are: an unnamed Englishman, whose unethical trading practices led the Indians to ask for a replacement around 1760; a New Jersey native, Alexander Henry (1760-1765); a clerk in the employ of Mr. Lottridge of Montreal (spring, 1763); traders McKay and Allen (1763), and Alexander La Framboise, who came to Milwaukee annually for a number of years through c. 1786. La Framboise was said to have had a cabin at the mouth of the Milwaukee River. Others included Jean Baptiste Mirandeu (c. 1789-90 until after the turn of the century); John B. Beaubien (late 1780s until the turn of the century); Laurent Fily, a clerk in the employ of Green Bay merchant Jacob Francis (c. 1804, 1805); Stanislaw Chappeau (c. 1800-1805); Antoine Le Claire, Jr. and "Old" John Kinzie (1804-c. 1810). Jacques Vieau

set up a trading post two miles up the Menomonee River and was active here each winter from the 1790s to around 1818. His son-in-law, Solomon Juneau, took over the business and established his own post near the intersection of today's North Water Street and East Wisconsin Avenue. (Flower, pp. 56-65)

Undoubtedly, these traders had some contact with the native Americans camped in the Bay View area. However, no documents or archeological evidence have been found to indicate that any buildings associated with the fur trade were constructed within the Bay View survey boundaries. Bay View, therefore, played a relatively minor role in the overall history of the fur trade in Wisconsin.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

A good starting point for pursuing the history of fur trade in Wisconsin is the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Historic Preservation Division's publication Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin (1986), Vol. 1, Fur Trade. This manual for historic properties gives a concise overview of the evolution of the fur trade in Wisconsin and has a valuable bibliography. Flower's History of Milwaukee (1881) gives the fur trade a local perspective and has some rather interesting accounts from elderly descendants of the traders and pioneers.

5. Agriculture



AGRICULTURE

Agriculture played a significant role in Bay View's history only for a relatively brief period between the time of pioneer settlement in the 1830s and the 1870s when the community incorporated as a village and thus became a separate municipality within the Town of Lake.

The early pioneers of the Bay View area, such as Enoch and Horace Chase, Joel Wilcox, Alexander Stewart, Uriel B. Smith, Elijah Estes, Alfred Morgan and James Howard, were by and large, with a few exceptions, Yankees or New Yorkers who came to Wisconsin lured by the reports of fertile land and by the promising commercial prospects at the mouth of the Milwaukee River. The first arrivals in 1834 had roads to build, land to clear and shelters to construct so growing crops was not a priority with them at first. Pioneer Enoch Chase recorded that "Nothing in the form of food was raised about Milwaukee in 1835. We procured our potatoes from Michigan, beef and pork from Illinois, and flour from Ohio." (Korn, p. 25) Some individuals such as the Chase brothers, Alexander Stewart and Joel Wilcox deliberately settled along the Kinnickinnic River south of the old harbor mouth in order to engage in commercial activities such as warehousing and selling wood to ships in the harbor as well as to do a little farming. This area came to be called Chase's Point. (Korn, p. 38) While subsistence farming helped to support their families in the early years, these men pinned their hopes on the Bay View area becoming the commercial center of Milwaukee. Unfortunately, the new harbor mouth cut assured that future commercial development would occur along the Milwaukee River, thus putting an end to these aspirations. Ultimately, however, Bay View did become an industrial village in its own right.

In the early days much of Bay View was devoted to agriculture, and there were considerable incentives to quickly clear and cultivate the land. The establishment of the Milwaukee Claimants' Union, organized at the Milwaukee County courthouse on March 13, 1835, was probably the greatest impetus to agriculture during this period. Settlers began pouring into the Milwaukee area late in 1834 and by 1837 had occupied all of what would be the Town of Lake. At first, these settlers, who were actually squatters, in a legal sense, simply parceled off their acres in a rough manner while waiting for the government to survey and establish legal boundary lines later. (Korn, p. 17) Technically, at this time, Bay View and the lands south of the Milwaukee and Menomonee Rivers were still in possession of the Native American groups and would not legally be ceded by treaty until 1839. No official government survey was even conducted in the region until 1836. (Korn, p. 17) The claim settlers lived in fear of speculators who might outbid them for their improved property once the land was put up for sale by the government in 1839. To combat the speculator threat, a settlers' group called the Claimants' Union was organized to establish rules and regulations governing settlement in the Milwaukee region, which at that time encompassed the area from Milwaukee north to Oshkosh, west to Madison, and south to the state line. The Milwaukee group patterned itself after the Pike River (Kenosha) group, a similar organization formed a year earlier. It was thought that a group in Milwaukee would supplement and strengthen the legitimacy of the Pike River agreement. (Korn, p. 18) Bay View settlers Enoch Chase, James Sanderson and Joel Wilcox were among the most active participants of the Milwaukee Claimants' Union meeting. When a committee was formed to establish a code for settlement, Bay View settlers comprised twenty-five percent of the committee: Alfred Morgan, James Howard, Thomas Olin, James Sanderson and Enoch Chase. (Korn, p. 19)

To ensure that the settlers had the right to retain their claims when the government land sales took place, certain improvements were required and the term "improvement" was clearly defined. A homestead had to be erected that could not be a temporary shanty, but had to be suitable as the permanent residence of a family. Likewise, in addition to building a dwelling, a certain amount of land had to be under cultivation; for those claiming an entire quarter section, this meant three acres had to be cleared and under cultivation; for those claiming a half section, it was ten acres; those who sought to claim a full section had to have at least one tenth of the total land claimed under cultivation. (Korn, p. 19)

When the Claimants' Union began in 1837 to register the claims of the settlers under the provisions they had established, Chase's Point was designated as the headquarters for the Bay View district and it was found that all the parcels in the township, except the school section, had been claimed and most individuals claimed a quarter section rather than the full section that the law allowed. This seems to indicate that the settlers were bona fide residents and people of modest means. When the government land sales began on February 17, 1839, the Claimants' Union was successful in securing the claims of all of its members. (Korn, pp. 15-23)

Another impetus to agriculture in the region was the attempt made in January of 1837 to organize an Agricultural Society. The society was intended to hold an annual exposition and to conduct an experimental farm to demonstrate the productivity of Milwaukee soil. It appears that the society never got beyond the formative stage, however, possibly as a result of the Panic of 1837, which plunged Milwaukee into a severe depression. (Korn, p. 27)

The local newspapers, the Advertiser and the Sentinel, were also a stimulus to farming by devoting many columns to agricultural topics. The Town of Lake featured prominently in articles about superior crops and Town of Lake farmers were noted for their industriousness. Stories about record size turnips (nearly two feet in circumference) and a giant rutabaga grown by Dr. Enoch Chase (over three feet in circumference) were notable examples extolling the rich soil of the region. (Korn, p. 27)

The territorial census of 1840 showed that the Town of Lake had a population of 229 males and 189 females of which 127 persons were engaged in farming, three in commerce, and nine in trade. (Korn, p. 25) Historian Bernhard C. Korn indicates that the Town of Lake always had a diversified agricultural base. This differed from other areas of Wisconsin where wheat grown for export superceded most other crops in importance through at least the 1860s. Korn attributes this to the fact that farms in the Town of Lake could not produce wheat on a large enough scale to make it profitable, since the densely forested areas along Deer Creek and the Kinnickinnic River required extensive clearing. The very earliest crops were raised primarily for family consumption and included wheat, oats, rye, potatoes and vegetables. Any surplus was sold at markets in Kilbourntown and Juneautown. By 1860, the average Milwaukee County farm was about 65 acres in size, of which 37 acres were cleared and cultivated. At that time, Milwaukee County only produced 1,100 bushels of wheat compared to the statewide production of 30 million bushels. (Korn, p. 42-43)

Bay View's development took a decided turn away from the agrarian character of the rest of the Town of Lake in 1867 when Detroit industrialist Eber Brock Ward chose a spot alongside Deer Creek on which to build his third iron mill. The Milwaukee Iron Company was incorporated on March 8, 1867, by which time it had already purchased 114 acres of farmland from S. K. Worthington (70 acres) and David McDougall (44 acres). Of the total acreage, 27.5 acres were reserved for the mill complex while the remaining 76.5 acres were platted into building lots for the hundreds of workers that would soon be employed at the mill. (Korn, p. 52).

As a direct result of the growth of the iron mill, slightly more than a decade later, when Bay View incorporated as a village, the community had spread over a square mile of land encompassing nearly 892 acres with a population of 2,592. (Korn, p. 71) Numerous subdivisions were platted by the mid-1870s with small undeveloped holdings scattered throughout the area. Presumably some small scale farming was still practiced, although the anticipation of urban residential development probably kept many parcels vacant.

By 1887 when Bay View was annexed by Milwaukee, maps show that development concentrated north of Russell Street on the west side of the Chicago North Western right-of-way, and north of Estes Street to the east of the railroad tracks. The large undeveloped parcels were occupied by brick yards or other manufacturers, with possibly some minimal farming conducted on small tracts just north of Oklahoma Avenue. West of Howell Avenue and south of Oklahoma Avenue, the Town of Lake maintained its agricultural character through at least the turn of the twentieth century. Watrous' Memoirs of

Milwaukee County (1909) features the biographies of numerous Town of Lake residents who were engaged in truck farming or who operated greenhouses and wholesale floral businesses in the immediate vicinity of Bay View. The region's proximity to the large urban population of Milwaukee made small scale truck farming a profitable venture until post World War II development pressures, airport expansion, and the growth of other municipalities within the Town of Lake and its own annexation by Milwaukee in the 1950s virtually eliminated all agricultural activity in the area.

Few specific extant sites or buildings remain in Bay View as reminders of the community's agricultural period. A number of residences of pioneer farmers, although these were often second or third dwellings on the site, survived into this century, only to be razed. For example, Alexander Stewart's residence stood at the corner of Kinnickinnic Avenue and Becher Street until the 1960s; Elijah Estes' Federal style house stood near the present location of the South Shore Park Bath House until it was razed in the 1920s; Joel Wilcox's Greek Revival style house was said to have been moved from the area of the Iron Company's rolling mill to a site along Howell Avenue; this site later became Humboldt Park and the house served as the residence of the park superintendents until it was razed in the 1960s. The Dilger greenhouses, erected by Frank Paul Dilger in 1888, stood at 1218 Pryor Avenue until after World War II. Dilger is said to have specialized in cut flowers for wholesale trade and in growing bulbs. (Watrous, Vol. 2, p. 664) The lot on Pryor Avenue is vacant today, but the rear of the property, which fronts on Seeley Street, has had a duplex built on part of the land.

A few sites do remain from Bay View's pioneer and agricultural past. The Uriel B. Smith house at 2418-2418A S. Howell Avenue (MI 411-3), an early brick Italianate house now covered with aluminum siding, is known to have been Smith's residence during the final period of his life, although it is unclear whether or not it was ever part of a farmstead. (City Directories) Smith had a tailoring business in Milwaukee's central business district in the early days of the city's settlement and later ran a real estate business. The Joseph Williams' house at 606-610 E. Homer Street (MI 347-22, 23) is probably the best preserved surviving farm residence from Bay View's pioneer agricultural period, although it is now surrounded by development and lacking any of its outbuildings. Williams settled in Bay View in 1836 and his farm once encompassed 160 acres, roughly the area between today's E. Russell, E. Linus, S. Williams and S. Greeley Streets. His first cabin was said to have been built at the corner of today's E. Linus and S. Woodward Streets but he eventually built his permanent residence atop a prominent hill on his land, a site bounded by Wilson, Homer, Kinnickinnic and Graham Streets. It is thought that the front or east part of his Italianate style house, which faces Kinnickinnic Avenue, dates from 1865, although the rear may be earlier. Williams continued to farm throughout his life although he gradually sold off acreage over the years until by 1876 he had only 34.41 acres remaining as a farm. Williams died in 1877. The property immediately around the Williams house remained unsubdivided until 1901 when houses were built to the west or rear of the house along the rest of the block. The most dramatic change to the property occurred in 1926 when a parcel encompassing the front yard facing Kinnickinnic Avenue was sold to developers for the construction of the Avalon Theater (MI 325-5). The theater building has since obscured the main facade of the Williams house from view from Kinnickinnic Avenue. The house, although

fairly intact, is now visible only from Homer Street. (Zimmermann, "Early Settler's Home Survives," October 3, 1971).

Another interesting reminder of agricultural activity in Bay View is the Keller Winery site along East Deer Place. The Keller family home at 318 East Deer Place (MI 426-21) was built in 1918, while the winery itself with a residence above it at 324 East Deer Place dates from 1910. The residence over the winery is said to have been an income property for the Kellers. (MI 426-20) A wine cellar between 318 and 324 East Deer Place was built in 1913. A native of Germany, Frederick Keller came to the United States in 1897 and lived in San Francisco and Kentucky before settling permanently in Milwaukee in 1902. Keller started with a small three-barrel winery as a side line while working for cooperage houses and delivering milk to earn a living. In 1909 he was able to acquire this property along Deer Place and went into winemaking full time. The hillside location was perfect for natural cooling, and his operation became quite successful. The cellars, built into the hill, contained numerous vats and casks and thousands of gallons of wine were processed here. Keller is said to have made fifty kinds of wine. Keller purchased most of his grapes although local lore has it that he also had a small vineyard on property west of the winery. The winery closed during Prohibition but reopened afterwards for a short time with Keller virtually operating the winery singlehanded. Keller died in 1943 at the age of 77. The wine cellar has remained vacant for years, and the two residences are now used as rental property ("A Bay View Winery," Historic Milwaukee Incorporated News, Vol. 7, No. 1, Winter 1989)

One final property may represent an early outbuilding from Bay View's early farming history. Bay View residents say that the small house at 2124 East Estes Street had been an outbuilding on the Elijah Estes farm (MI 384-25). The Estes farm house, as noted above, was razed in the 1920s when South Shore Park was created. There is no documentation to support this claim but permit records do show a long history of alteration to the building beginning in 1902 and no original permit exists for its construction. The Estes family also owned the buildings at 2136 East Estes Street (MI 384-24) and 2789 South Shore Drive (MI 413-7), and it is also possible that the house at 2124 East Estes may have been an outbuilding connected with one of these two houses.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bulk of this chapter on agriculture was taken from Bernhard C. Korn's The Story of Bay View which was published posthumously by the Milwaukee County Historical Society from a manuscript Korn had prepared in the 1930s. His research into census records and pioneer accounts make his work the most reliable published account to date on the early years of Bay View. Information on Joseph Williams was taken from H. Russell Zimmermann's "Early Settler's Home Survives" published in the Milwaukee Journal on October 3, 1971. Information on the Keller Winery came from an article, "A Bay View Winery" printed in the Historic Milwaukee Incorporated News, Winter, 1989. This article was based on research from city directories, building permits, and Keller's obituary. Information on the Estes, Wilcox and Stewart houses was gleaned from photographs at the Milwaukee County Historical Society as well as photographs published in Paul Gauer's book, The Gauer Story, A Chronicle of Bay View (1956). Jerome Watrous' Memoirs of Milwaukee County

(1909), Vol. 2, has numerous biographies of horticulturalists in the Town of Lake and Bay View area. Their accounts shed a great deal of light on the small truck-farming and greenhouse ventures that were once common in this area.

6. Commerce



COMMERCE

Bay View, in terms of its commerce, was a self-sufficient community by the late 1880s, and this independence helped to foster the village-like character that the survey area still has today. The commercial hubs of Bay View are clustered primarily in two districts along South Kinnickinnic Avenue which is the survey area's principal thoroughfare. South Kinnickinnic Avenue, because of its commercial character, has always functioned as the downtown of the Bay View survey area. Neighborhood commercial nodes, such as family-owned corner meat markets and bakeries, were also important to Bay View commerce, but most of these businesses have disappeared since World War II.

Historically, the area most important to Bay View commerce was the Five Points intersection of South Kinnickinnic, South Howell, and East Lincoln Avenues. The Five Points intersection developed into a bustling hub of retail and social activity between the mid-1880s and the turn of the century. The bulk of the commercial buildings in this area was constructed on two blocks of South Kinnickinnic Avenue north of the intersection. This two-block stretch of the avenue is flanked by two- and three-story brick and frame commercial buildings built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Architecturally, the Five Points intersection was originally a jumbled mix of small, late nineteenth century commercial and residential buildings. By about 1920 virtually all of the houses were razed or moved from the vicinity of the intersection to make way for large scale commercial development.

The Five Points area mainly served the Bay View community, but a few stores apparently attracted clientele from outside the survey area. Early

mass transportation was a key to the commercial vitality of the area. The Five Points intersection was a major south side streetcar transfer point, and a large passenger shelter, now demolished, was built in the triangular median formed by the intersecting avenues. By way of the city's extensive streetcar routes, access to the Five Points area was easy from the distant south end of the Bay View community as well as from other even more remote south side neighborhoods.

About one-half mile south of the Five Points intersection, two large churches anchor the ends of the other principal node of commerce along South Kinnickinnic Avenue. The towering steeples of St. Lucas Lutheran and Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic churches mark the respective north and south ends of the roughly two-block-long, late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial strip. Never as important or architecturally significant as the Five Points commercial area, the commercial strip between the two churches was primarily a neighborhood shopping area. It was common in the nineteenth century to cluster commercial development around major churches.

South of this strip, South Kinnickinnic Avenue assumes a predominantly residential character that is interrupted by scattered small commercial buildings and a few apartment houses. The two commercial districts on South Kinnickinnic Avenue are separated by a diverse mix of single family houses, duplexes, scattered small commercial buildings, and the survey area's largest movie theater, the Avalon (see arts and entertainment chapter). Although some historic commercial and residential buildings have been razed in recent years to make way for new commercial and multi-family residential development, South Kinnickinnic Avenue still retains much of its late nineteenth and early twentieth century character.

Many small nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings are scattered throughout the quiet neighborhoods of the Bay View survey area. Most of these, usually built at intersections, were family-owned businesses such as groceries, meat markets, bakeries and taverns, with the proprietor's flat over the store. With the advent of increased competition for large chain stores, many of these businesses have dissolved, and the buildings have been converted to apartments and small offices. A rare surviving example of the family-owned market is the G. Groppi Market, which originally catered to the area's Italian community.

Bay View's commercial areas have declined in importance over the years. Keen competition from large shopping malls and modern strip centers located outside of the survey area have lured many Bay View shoppers away from the historic centers of commerce in their community. Most of the small markets, bakeries and dry goods stores are gone from the survey area, but their places have been taken by new businesses offering a variety of goods and services. Commercially, Bay View is still alive and well, offering the community a diversity of goods and services.

## **HISTORY**

The survey area's early commercial history is well-represented by numerous buildings that are still standing and in good condition. It is difficult to track the tenants in these buildings over the years because of the scarcity of records for this part of the city, but following are histories of some of the area's early merchants.

MASONIC HALL BUILDING

The Masonic Hall building constructed in 1887, which is located at 2234 South Kinnickinnic Avenue (MI 320-14) in the Five Points area, is a three-story, frame, flat-roofed, Queen Anne style structure that originally included two street-level shops, a second floor dentist's office, and a third floor meeting hall for rental to social and fraternal organizations.

One of the early businesses on the north half of this building, Scott and Rigby Jewelers, was founded in September, 1891 by I. B. Scott and E. D. Rigby. The store interior was reportedly finished in an elegant decor of the day and displayed a tempting stock of gold and silver watches, clocks, and assorted jewelry. The firm also offered manufacturing jeweler services including watch repairing, diamond setting, and made-to-order rings, emblems, and badges. Custom-designed badges were frequently used by social and fraternal organizations of the period.

I. B. Scott, one of the founding proprietors, was born in Allegheny County, New York and entered the watchmaking trade about 1865. Prior to setting up his business in Milwaukee, Scott worked in Illinois for three well-known watch and clock makers which were the Aurora Watch Company, the Elgin Watch Company, and the Rockford Watch Case Company. His partner in Milwaukee, E. D. Rigby, was a Wisconsin native and a machinist by trade. His work experience included positions as foreman at the Wilins' Manufacturing Company and the Julius Andrea Co., manufacturers of bicycles and electrical supplies. Rigby's machinist skills were undoubtedly useful to create the delicate, finely machined parts necessary to repair clocks and watches.

The other shop in the Masonic Hall building was G. F. Kuehnel's drug store. Kuehnel, a native of Germany, was an 1885 graduate of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and started his Bay View business in 1886. He was registered by the Wisconsin State Board of Pharmacy. His store had about 1,200 square feet of floorspace in 1892, and he stocked most of the medicines and druggists' sundries in common use in the late nineteenth century. In the rear of his store he set up a small laboratory to make and fill doctors' prescriptions, much the same as a modern pharmacist would do. Kuehnel was active in a Masonic fraternal order, and it is possible that he was associated with the lodge that met on the third floor of his building.

These two early tenants of the Masonic Hall building are an excellent representation of the early ethnic mix of the survey area. Kuehnel probably catered to the large number of German immigrants that began settling in the Bay View survey area during the late 1870s and 1880s. Scott and Rigby, who were American-born and had English surnames (so-called Yankees) were representative of the large English, Welsh and Yankee population that initially settled the Village of Bay View and worked for the rolling mills on the shore of Lake Michigan.

The shops in the Masonic Hall building are currently vacant, and the main elevation facing South Kinnickinnic Avenue has been altered over the years. The sides and rear of the building still retain their original clapboard siding, but modern vinyl siding has been applied to the streetfront covering the original third floor windows. The most prominent original feature of the main elevation, a pediment that carried the construction date and name of the building, is still in fine condition but has been partly obstructed by the

application of aluminum shakes. Most of the changes to the main elevation appear to be reversible. (Milwaukee of Today, ca. 1892, p. 208)

#### EDWARD GROBBEN, HARNESS MAKER

In 1854 Edward Grobben founded what would become, by the 1890s, one of the oldest harness making establishments in the city. Grobben's store was located at 2210 South Kinnickinnic Avenue (MI 320-9) during the 1890s and featured a complete line of harnesses, saddles and related goods for horses. A long-established business such as Grobben's probably attracted clientele from beyond the Bay View survey area. Grobben died in 1891, but the business, which employed five workers during the early 1890s, was carried on by his son, George. The shop specialized in the manufacture of rubber-trimmed harnesses.

The building, as it stands today, is a simple, front-gabled, 2-1/2 story frame, asphalt-sided block. Research has not determined the construction date, but it appears to date from the early to mid-1880s. The original floor plan dimensions were listed as 20 by 65 feet with an additional workshop in the rear. Presumably the original wooden clapboards are still beneath the modern asphalt siding. The building is typical of the modest structures that were erected to house early Bay View businessmen and entrepreneurs.

(Milwaukee of Today, ca. 1892, p. 138)

#### FRED BAILEY'S MEAT MARKET

Fred Bailey was an English immigrant who came to Milwaukee about 1880 and in 1887 co-founded, with his brother, a meat market that was located at 2220-22 South Kinnickinnic Avenue (MI 320-12) near the Five Points intersection. In 1888 Bailey assumed sole control of the business.

The building is a two-story, cream brick, flat-roofed, Italianate style store with a second floor shopkeeper's flat. It appears to be of early 1880s vintage. It is well-preserved, retaining most of the character of a nineteenth century small commercial building and features a glazed storefront with cast iron piers and an iron lintel above the shop windows. The building is trimmed with sandstone sills and extensive ornamental brickwork including segmentally arched brick hood molds capping the second floor windows and a corbel table frieze cornice capped with a limestone coping. The focal point of the main elevation is a small, central, brick gable flanked by two brick pilasters. The building is well maintained and is a good example of a masonry store building of the late 1870s or early 1880s.

During the early 1890s Bailey employed two meat cutters who sold a variety of fresh fish, oysters, and game birds as well as staples such as beef and pork. Like many grocers of his era, he had a delivery wagon and accepted orders from all parts of the city. Bailey's shop occupied the basement and first floor of the building which measured about 20 by 80 feet in plan. Although Bay View was initially settled by English and Welsh immigrants who came to work at the nearby rolling mill, Bailey and other English immigrants represented only a minority of the Bay View population by the late 1880s following successive waves of German immigration to the community.

#### AUGUST HERMES, HARDWARE

The August Hermes hardware building, built in 1890, is still standing at 2235 South Kinnickinnic Avenue although it has been insensitively altered over the years (MI 323-10). The three story, red brick, flat roofed, Queen Anne style

structure originally measured about 30 by 100 feet in plan. The most prominent feature of the building was a second story bay window. The building was richly trimmed with stone lintels, stained glass transoms, and decorative, glazed terra cotta tiles. The building also originally featured a highly ornamented cornice that was peaked to a small gable over the south half of the facade.

Today, little remains of the original rich architectural character. The bay window and cornice have been removed, and the second and third floors have been refenestrated with modern contemporary windows. The street level glazed storefront has been obliterated by modern brickwork and a large asphalt shingle pent roof. One of the few remaining original features is the carved stone name and date plaque in the cornice which still clearly reads "Aug. Hermes 1890."

August Hermes sold an extensive line of hardware including stoves, ranges, furnace, paints, oils, brushes, window glass, lamps, and other common hardware stock. The basement and first floor were used for Hermes' retail trade and an upper floor contained Hermes Hall, a large meeting facility for the numerous social and fraternal organizations which thrived during the late nineteenth century. Rental of the hall probably provided Hermes with another income source. Hermes also had four employees to do custom sheet metal work, and he had a branch store on West Mitchell Street on the city's south side.

Architecturally, the August Hermes building was probably one of the most imposing in the Five Points area, but extensive alterations have robbed the building of that character. Today, the first floor is a martial arts school,

and the second and third floors have been converted to apartments. (Milwaukee of Today, p. 214)

CHARLES SCHMIDT, FUNERAL DIRECTOR

Charles Schmidt was yet another German immigrant who provided services to the large immigrant population in Bay View. Schmidt came to America in 1867 settling first in Cleveland, Ohio before coming to Milwaukee about 1880. Schmidt graduated from Clark's School of Embalming and in 1885 co-founded the undertaking firm of Herp and Schmidt. In 1889 Schmidt assumed sole control of the business which was located at 2214 South Kinnickinnic Avenue (MI 320-11) during the early 1890s. The two-story, cream brick, flat roofed, Queen Anne style building is typical of the better class of commercial buildings constructed in the Five Points area as it grew in commercial importance. Schmidt used the basement and first floor of the building which reportedly measures about 25 by 60 feet. The most prominent feature on the main elevation facing South Kinnickinnic Avenue is a large oriel capped with an ogee-shaped, flat-seamed, metal roof. The building is trimmed with limestone lintels and an unusual sandstone floral motif ornament at the base of a pilaster flanking one side of the oriel. The building appears to be largely original in appearance, but the cream brick facade has been sandblasted.

Like most funeral directors of his day, Schmidt and his two assistants arranged funerals that took place in the home of the deceased. Funeral homes with chapels as we know of them today were almost unheard of at that time. At his business address, Schmidt had a complete stock of caskets and funeral supplies, in addition to which he also sold home furniture, oil cloths,

curtains, bedding and children's buggies. It was common in those days for a funeral director (then commonly called an undertaker) to engage in a related or side business. Schmidt was active in the Knights of Honor, a fraternal organization. (Milwaukee of Today, p. 193)

#### WILLIAM T. BARKOW'S GROCERY AND MEAT MARKET

Many early Bay View residents bought their meats and groceries from William T. Barkow whose shop was located at 2131 South Kinnickinnic Avenue (razed) near the Five Points intersection. Barkow began his business in the same block in 1886 but moved to a large double storefront shop in 1890 to accommodate the growing volume of business. His new store measured about 50 by 75 feet in floor area and was fitted with an icebox refrigerator that accommodated five tons of stock.

The retail space in his shop was divided about evenly between grocery stock and the meat department. During the early 1890s, he reportedly employed six sales clerks and maintained three teams of horses for wagon deliveries to all parts of the city.

Bay View residents could select from a wide variety of meats including mutton, fresh beef, veal, smoked and potted meats, sausages, bolognas, and game birds in season. Barkow specialized in filling orders for kitchens aboard ships that restocked in the Milwaukee harbor. Barkow was born in Milwaukee County and took an active part in the community. He was a member of the Retail Grocers' Association, Iroquois Club, and the International Order of Odd Fellows, a fraternal organization. (Milwaukee: A Half Century's Progress, p. 143)

CHARLES WESTHOFEN HARDWARE

On the northeast corner of South Kinnickinnic Avenue and East Bay Street (demolished) Charles Westhofen operated a store that sold hardware, building materials, stoves, farming tools, and made sheet metal items to order.

Westhofen was born in Germany and came to Milwaukee in 1870. His background and education are not known, but he prospered in America becoming a stockholder and superintendent of the Milwaukee Brewing Association between 1879 and 1887.

In 1887 Westhofen opened his hardware store in the ground floor and basement of a building that measured 35 by 70 feet in plan. He lived in the flat over the store. His stock included a complete line of sporting goods, fishing rods and tackle, rifles, revolvers, pistols, and baseball supplies. Three employes worked in the sheet metal shop. (Milwaukee of Today, p. 183; Milwaukee City Directories)

GUSTAV SPLITT, HARDWARE

Howell Avenue was never a major commercial focus in Bay View except for the few buildings scattered immediately south of the Five Points intersection. One of the Howell Avenue merchants who profited from commercial traffic at the Five Points intersection was Gustav Splitt, who operated a hardware store at 2451 South Howell Avenue (MI 385-28).

Splitt's store was reportedly the largest of its kind in Bay View in 1895. The building is a large, two-story, frame, flat-roofed, Queen Anne

style store. The most prominent feature of the main elevation on South Howell Avenue are two large projecting oriels capped with ogee-shaped, flat-seamed metal roofs.

Like most hardware store owners of his day, Splitt sold wood burning stoves and ranges, gas stoves, tinware, paints, tools, and related items. He also provided his customers with custom sheet metal work such as rain gutters, downspouts, and flashings. This portion of his business thrived and required its own full-time staff. The building appears to have been built to have both the first and second floors used as retail space.

Today the building is a restaurant, and the second floor appears to have been converted to apartments. The original wooden clapboards are covered with asphalt siding, and the original store front windows have been covered with modern textured plywood siding. Much of the impressive, original Queen Anne style wooden cornice remains intact. (Milwaukee: A Half Century's Progress, p. 168)

#### **SOUTH KINNICKINNIC AVENUE COMMERCIAL STRIP**

The steeples of St. Lucas Lutheran and Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic churches tower over a strip of small commercial buildings that stretches between them. Most of the buildings date from the 1880s and 1890s and have been subsequently remodeled, but some buildings were constructed as late as the 1920s. This mix of frame and brick, one and two story commercial buildings functioned as the second hub of Bay View commerce by the turn of the century, and its years of development roughly paralleled those of the Five Points intersection several blocks to the north. During the 1890s, these

modest commercial buildings were the venue for small businessmen such as Gottlob Koch, a grocer; W. A. Kropp, a pharmacist; and H. P. Hansen, a dry goods merchant.

GOTTLOB KOCH, GROCER

One of the best-preserved Colonial Revival style frame commercial buildings in the survey area was built for Gottlob Koch, a grocer and dry goods merchant, at 2663 South Kinnickinnic Avenue (MI 325-30, -31). The building is a large, 2 1/2 story, clapboard-sided, front-gabled, Colonial Revival style structure designed by local architect John Van Roo with an upper shopkeeper's flat. Angove and Pierce were the builders. The estimated cost, according to the building permit, was \$3,000 and included a barn at the rear of the property. In form and massing, the building is similar to many others built in Milwaukee at that time, but it is trimmed with impressive carved wooden brackets and dimension cut wood shingles that add special distinction.

Koch was born in Germany and brought to Milwaukee as a child. Later he gained experience working in the G. Patek grocery store on the city's south side before opening his own business in 1888 at 2723 South Kinnickinnic Avenue (razed). In 1895 Koch built a new store at the northwest corner of South Kinnickinnic Avenue and S. Lenox Street to accommodate his growing business. In addition to a complete line of groceries, Koch also sold a line of dry goods including shoes, boots, fine cigars, and tobaccos. Koch employed several clerks at the time of his move in 1895, and he maintained a fleet of several horsedrawn delivery wagons. The frame barn where his horse and wagons were garaged still stands behind the store. Like many shopkeepers and businessmen of his day, Koch was active in local fraternal and social

organizations, the Druids and the Odd Fellows, both of which had active chapters in the Bay View survey area (see chapter on social and fraternal organizations).

Today, a fast-food restaurant occupies the first floor. The building is in a very good state of preservation with most of its original exterior siding and trim intact. The present glass store front is a 1921 remodeling according to building permits, but it is probably not significantly different from the original. The building is particularly important because it preserves intact both the store and the delivery wagon barn. Few such complexes are still extant in the city. (Milwaukee Building Permits, Milwaukee City Directories, Milwaukee: A Half-Century's Progress, p. 156)

WILLIAM A. KROPP, PHARMACIST

In 1884 W. A. Kropp established a pharmacy on Milwaukee's near south side at the northeast corner of South Eleventh Street and West Greenfield Avenue. Two years later, in 1886, he moved his business to Bay View to a building that still stands at 2654 South Kinnickinnic Avenue (MI 321-30). Research has not determined a construction date for this building, but it could have been constructed for Kropp the year he moved there. The building is a 2 1/2 story, frame, gabled block with an early twentieth century, commercial style, brick veneer store front with a stepped gable. Nothing remains on the main elevation facing South Kinnickinnic Avenue of the building's original 1880s architecture.

Kropp moved to Milwaukee in 1871 and gained business experience working as a clerk with F. Dohmen and Co., a wholesale druggist located in the city's

central business district. Kropp was typical of the industrious breed of early Milwaukee businessmen, and he used his talents to invent and manufacture the Excelsior Ink eraser which was apparently a liquid solution, but research has not revealed its chemical composition. (Milwaukee City Directories; Milwaukee: A Half Century's Progress, p. 194)

#### H. P. HANSEN, DRY GOODS

Bay View was never known to have had a sizable Danish immigrant community, but the survey area did house a prominent dry goods merchant, H. P. Hansen, who came to America from Denmark in 1869. In 1881 he opened a business in Michigan before moving to Milwaukee in 1886 to open a dry goods store on the city's south side at 163 South First Street. In 1888 he moved his business to the growing Bay View community at 822-826 East Potter Street (demolished). Hansen's store was large, by nineteenth century standards, measuring 50 by 100 feet in floor area. He employed ten clerks in 1895 and carried a large stock of read-made clothing and shoes for the entire family. With the emergence of large, well-stocked stores such as Hansen's, Bay View residents became increasingly independent of the retail and commercial establishments located much farther north in older parts of the city such as the central business district and Walker's Point on the south side. (Milwaukee: A Half Century's Progress, p. 167)

#### JOSEPH PIETTE GROCERY STORE

Among the neighborhood stores and markets scattered throughout the quiet residential areas of Bay View, the most architecturally significant remaining building is the Joseph Piette grocery store located at 2436-38 South Lenox Street (MI 344-20). Built in 1898 according to the designs of architect Peter

Brust, it is a large, 2 1/2 story, cream brick, gabled, Colonial Revival style building trimmed with extensive sheet metal work. The builder was Joseph Luetzgen who worked extensively in the Bay View survey area.

In 1889 Joseph Piette began his grocery business in an earlier building on the site that was moved or demolished in 1898 to make way for the present store with an upper shopkeeper's flat built at an estimated cost of \$3,000. The building is particularly significant because it represents the early design work of Peter Brust, a well-known Milwaukee architect, who in partnership with Richard Phillip in later years, designed many of the city's fine residences, churches and commercial buildings.

Architecturally, the building is significant as an exceptionally well-preserved Colonial Revival style brick commercial structure and an excellent example of the better class of commercial building built for Milwaukee's merchants at the turn of the century. Piette's building is truly a landmark in its neighborhood of one- and two-story working-class cottages.

In 1916 Richard Walsh assumed control of the store, but sold it in 1922 to another grocer, Max Lehmann. The following year, a new owner, Casper Hach, opened a neighborhood bakery in the building. By 1930 Hach had sold to another baker, Michael Wierzejewski, who operated the business until 1965. In later years, it was known as the Lenox Street Home Bakery. Wierzejewski retired and continued to live in the upper shopkeeper's flat until the 1970s when the building was purchased by the present owners and converted to a large single family home. Despite its change in use, the building is remarkably well preserved and exceptionally well-maintained. The only visible change to

the main elevation facing South Lenox Street has been the replacement of the original display windows with smaller aluminum double hung windows and textured plywood siding. (Milwaukee Building Permits; Milwaukee City Directories)

#### G. GROPPi MARKET

The G. Groppi Market located at 1441 East Russell Street is a rare surviving example of the family-owned markets that were once common in Bay View (MI 392-33). Founded in 1913 by Giocondo Groppi, an Italian immigrant, the meat market and grocery originally catered to the once-thriving Italian ethnic community clustered around the south end of the mammoth Bay View Rolling Mills. Still owned and operated by the Groppi family, it is one of the oldest surviving businesses in the Bay View survey area.

In the early days of the market, clerks spoke Italian and the shelves and display cases were well-stocked with Italian specialty foods. The store was also a social gathering point where Bay View Italians could spend a few minutes with a clerk or neighbor catching up on the latest news in the community. Today the Groppi Market is well-known for its homemade sausages and Italian specialties. Although it primarily serves the ethnically diverse Bay View community, it is well-known and patronized by Italians and others who live outside the community. An occasional conversation in Italian is still common at the store. At the core of the Groppi market complex are two double houses each composed of one-story, gable-roofed worker's cottages probably built by the rolling mill during the early 1870s. In 1923 the double houses were linked, a corner addition was built, and the storefront elevations facing East Russell Street and South Wentworth Avenue were veneered with red brick.

In 1961 the storefronts were again remodeled. Architecturally, the building represents no particular style, but it is representative of the emergence of a large Italian community in Bay View during the first and second decades of the twentieth century. The market expanded along with the Italian ethnic community. Since it was founded, the Groppi market has been an important node of neighborhood commerce in the northeast corner of the survey area.

(National Register Landmark Nomination, Bay View Historic District

7. Industry



## INDUSTRY

The industrial development of Bay View began in 1868 with the construction of the sprawling Milwaukee Iron Company plant along the shore of Lake Michigan. The Milwaukee Iron Company transformed Bay View from a quiet farming community to a bustling production center for steel. Jobs in the factory were filled by a flood of new immigrants -- Irish, English, Scottish, Welsh, and, later, Germans -- who built houses, stores and churches in the Bay View area. Other manufacturing firms soon followed, including a Pfister and Vogel Tannery, the Milwaukee Corrugating Company, which manufactured architectural sheet metal, and the Wisconsin Glass Company, which made bottles for the city's breweries. The industries clustered at the northern end of the survey area, particularly along the Kinnickinnic River where large ships could dock. Industry also developed along the railroad line that runs north to south on the western edge of the survey area.

By the turn of the century, Bay View's industry was at its peak, employing thousands of workers, many of whom lived in the survey area. Industry declined slowly in Bay View after that. The massive Milwaukee Iron Co. plant, which eventually became part of the United States Steel Corp., closed in 1929, and the factory was demolished. A few newer firms, most notably the Louis Allis Co., which makes electric motors, located in the area at the same time that some of the older companies were disbanding.

Bay View today is primarily a middle-class residential community that retains few traces of its industrial past. Following is a discussion of the major industrial firms, both past and present, that have existed in the Bay View survey area.

## The Milwaukee Iron Company

The Milwaukee Iron Company was founded in 1867 by Eber Brock Ward, of Detroit, who was one of America's early industrial magnates. In addition to Ward, principal stockholders and charter members of the corporation were Alexander Mitchell, Russell Sage, F. P. James, W. S. Gurnee, and Selah Chamberlain. When the charter of the company was granted by the Wisconsin State Legislature, Ward purchased a total of 114 acres of farmland in Bay View on which to build his sprawling iron mill and houses for his employees. The factory site was bounded by Lake Michigan, E. Bay, S. Superior, and E. Russell Streets. Ward selected the Bay View site because of its lakeshore location and proximity to the ore beds near Iron Ridge, Wisconsin, about forty miles northwest of Milwaukee. More than 70 acres of company land was platted into small building lots that became the Village of Bay View. The Village grew along with the iron works, and, within a few years, the company had built nearly one hundred cottages for its employees and at least as many more had been built by workers who had purchased vacant lots from the firm and built their own homes. A deed restriction placed on lots sold by the company prohibited the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors on any lots sold by the company, "so long as the said company or its successors continued to operated the iron mill." Because of this restriction, originally there were no saloons within the village where liquor was openly sold. By the early 1880s, however, the restriction was largely ignored.

The Milwaukee Iron Co. was incorporated on March 8, 1867, and construction began immediately thereafter on a large industrial plant in Bay View that was put in operation on April 8, 1868. The mill was built primarily

to produce steel rails for railroads. At first, the company was engaged mostly in the business of re-rolling steel rails that had been removed from service rather than casting new rails. Much of the early steel produced in America was inherently soft, and railroad rails required frequent reshaping. Eber Ward, however, wanted to produce high quality steel rails at the plant from raw iron ore and needed to construct state-of-the-art blast furnaces in order to do so. Ward found that he had to recruit workers for his business from other countries in order to produce high quality steel. America at that time could supply an ample number of laborers, but not the highly skilled tradesmen necessary to build blast furnaces and the workers, known as puddlers, who were skilled in the steel refining process. England had reached the highest point of development in blast furnace construction, and it was from there that Ward recruited men to construct his Bay View mill. The first blast furnace in the iron mill was put in operation on April 16, 1870, and at last the firm could begin the process of actually making steel from raw iron ore. It was through Ward's recruiting efforts that the early Bay View community assumed an English-speaking character, while the rest of Milwaukee was rapidly becoming a German-speaking city.

The firm suffered a setback following the Financial Panic of 1873 in which a nationwide economic downturn quashed the demand for railroad rails. Production at the mill decreased during 1873, but, remarkably, records indicate that employment actually increased slightly. During 1874, however, the effects of the economic depression took their toll on employment at the iron mill, and the payroll was apparently reduced. Eber Brock Ward, founder and leader of the company, died on January 2, 1875, putting additional pressure on the firm. In October of 1876 the Milwaukee Iron Co. was forced to

close. It reopened in January of 1877, and then operated under receivership for more than a year. On March 16, 1878, the company was purchased by the North Chicago Rolling Mills Company, another Eber Ward-owned plant, which had been more rapidly reorganized. The mill subsequently returned to production, and, by 1885, 1,500 men were working at the plant. In 1889 the mill was purchased by the Illinois Steel Company, which was subsequently purchased by the Federal Steel Company. In 1901 Federal Steel became a part of the mammoth United States Steel Corporation, one of America's largest producers of steel with manufacturing plants located primarily in the Great Lakes states and the eastern United States. The mill reportedly employed 1,600 workers in 1901. The mill began a gradual decline during the early twentieth century. In 1929, 62 years after it had opened, the iron mill closed permanently. The property was subsequently purchased by the City of Milwaukee, and the mill buildings were demolished during the 1930s. Today the site of the rolling mill is mostly vacant, except for a twisting system of roadways that serve the stub end of the city's "Hoan Bridge" freeway. (History of Milwaukee, John G. Gregory, Vol. 1. Milwaukee: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1931, pp. 555-556; The Story of Bay View, Bernhard C. Korn. Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1980, pp. 49 and following; History of Milwaukee, 1881, pp. 1616-1619)

## The Louis Allis Company

The beginnings of the Louis Allis Company can be traced to 1901 when Louis Allis invested in a small, new company, the Mechanical Appliance Company, that made electric motors. The firm had been founded by Allis' cousin, Tom Watson, an electrical engineer. The name of the company was changed to the Louis Allis Co. in 1922, many years after Allis was elected its president in 1903. Today, the Louis Allis Company, with its principal manufacturing facilities located in Bay View at 427 East Stewart Street, is a leading manufacturer of electric motors and related electrical goods.

Louis Allis was a son of Edward P. Allis, a pioneer Milwaukee industrialist and a founder of one of Wisconsin's former industrial giants, the Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company. There has never been any connection -- managerial or financial -- between the Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company and the Louis Allis Company.

Between 1901 and 1906 the firm was located in an old, one-story, wood frame, converted shoe factory, now demolished, that stood in the 1800 block of South Third Street on the city's south side. In 1906 the company moved to its present location, which had been the site of the Allis family's original homestead farm. The machinery, tools, stock, and work in progress were moved from the old plant to the new one in horsedrawn wagons. The company quickly found a market niche for itself by making specialized electric motors. In 1901 the firm began with 15 employees, but five years later had a labor force of 75 workers. The company's first motors were made to operate on direct current, but by 1908 alternating current motors were a specialty of the firm.

The Louis Allis Company prospered by supplying motors for the American effort in World War I. The company grew rapidly during the post-World War I years, but retrenched during the depression years of the early 1930s. Business rebounded, however, and beginning in 1935 a steady series of additions were built to accommodate the firm's increasing production levels. Factory space totaling 10,000 square feet was added in 1935 and 1938; 35,000 square feet in 1939; 62,000 square feet in 1947; 27,000 square feet in 1951; 26,200 square feet in 1954; and 150,000 square feet in 1957.

During World War II output at the plant was increased 700 percent. Most of the production was for the United States Navy. For combat equipment, the company designed and developed power supply units for radar, elevating and aiming anti-aircraft guns, control devices, gun directors, tower drives, and a variety of shipboard auxiliary equipment, such as elevators, ammunition hoists, pumps, compressors, fans, blowers, shipboard laundry and dry cleaning units, and other uses.

The Louis Allis Company today is the largest single employer in the Bay View survey area. The firm is now a division of Litton Industries Inc. with other manufacturing facilities located throughout the United States. (History of Milwaukee, John G. Gregory, Vol. 4. Milwaukee: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1931, pp. 146-151)

### Milwaukee Corrugating Company

The Milwaukee Corrugating Company was located on the east side of the 800 block of South Bay Street (razed). The firm was founded in 1902 to manufacture decorative, pressed metal ceilings for homes and businesses. The original officers of the company were Louis Kuehn, president; John P. Heggy, vice-president; and William P. Jahn, secretary. The firm grew rapidly, and its product lines included metal roofing shingles and tile, portable metal garages, metal door and window trim, metal lath and corner beads for plastering, metal cornices and skylights, as well as basic rain gutters and eaves troughs. The company published an extensive catalog of its elaborate pressed metal ceilings which were marketed under the "invisible joint" trademark. The firm's "milcor" line of expanded metal lath and corner beads were popular with architects and tradesmen. Many examples of the firm's products are probably still to be found in buildings throughout Milwaukee and around the country.

In 1912 the company moved to South 41st and West Burnham Streets on the city's southwest side. By the late 1920s the company had sales offices in Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Minneapolis, Boston, and Atlanta, as well as Little Rock, Arkansas; Kansas City, Missouri; and LaCrosse, Wisconsin. The collapse of the construction industry following the stock market crash of 1929 may have precipitated the close of the company or its merger with another firm late in 1929 or early in 1930. The firm's products were also manufactured in Canton, Ohio, by the Eller Manufacturing Company during the late 1920s. The firm's Bay View plant was demolished long ago. (Milwaukee City Directories; Sanborn's 1894 Insurance Map of Milwaukee)

Martin Davelaar and Sons Brick Manufacturers

The Martin Davelaar and Sons brick yard was located on a site bounded by South Delaware and South Pryor Avenues, East Iron Street, and the Chicago and North Western railroad right-of-way. Martin Davelaar was a Bay View mason and building contractor before beginning his brick manufacturing business in 1879 on a site along the Kinnickinnic River near West Lincoln Avenue. By the late 1880s Davelaar had moved his brick yard to a large site on the southwest corner of East Pryor and South Delaware Avenues. According to a turn-of-the-century insurance map, the brickyard included a large, wood frame kiln shed and a brick drying yard located on East Iron Street mid-way between the Chicago and North Western right-of-way and South Delaware Avenue. Davelaar brought his sons, George and John, into the business in the early 1890s. During the early twentieth century the demand for the Davelaars' cream brick began to ebb as the brick-making industry gradually became dominated by large, national and regional brick makers who made standardized brick from clays much harder than those found in the Milwaukee area. In response to market conditions, the Davelaars had apparently switched to the manufacture of concrete block by 1919. The company moved its operations to 2887 South Linebarger Terrace during the early 1920s before disbanding in 1923. George H. Davelaar, who operated the business at that time, then became a salesman according to city directories. Today the site of the brickyard on Pryor and Delaware Avenues is a residential area of early twentieth century homes and duplexes. No trace of the brickyard remains. The Linebarger Street site, where the company made concrete blocks, is a vacant lot today. (City Directories, Milwaukee; Sanborn's Insurance Map of Milwaukee, 1894)

Filer and Stowell Company

The Filer and Stowell Company is one of Milwaukee's oldest continuously operating manufacturing firms. The company's extensive shops are located at 147 East Becher Street. The firm was founded in 1865 by John M. Stowell, and the original manufacturing plant was located on the northeast corner of South First and West Florida Streets (now demolished) on the city's near south side. By 1890 the growing firm moved to a new, larger facility at 147 East Becher Street in Bay View where it is still in business today. The company specialized in the manufacture of machinery for the logging and woodworking industries such as saw mills, large band saws, and related wood processing machinery such as lath and wood shingle-making machines. Today the firm primarily manufactures saw mill machinery for both domestic and foreign markets.

During the early 1890s the firm employed about 100 workers and grew steadily in the early twentieth century, as reflected by enlargements of its manufacturing facility. In 1935 the officers of the company were James L. Monaghan, president; Everett C. Read, vice-president; Kenneth H. Read, secretary; and W. Raymond Read, treasurer. In 1989, W. Robert Read was listed as the chairman of the board. In 1990 the firm reportedly employed sixty workers in its 100,000 square foot manufacturing facility on East Becher Street. (Milwaukee City Directories; An Illustrated Description of Milwaukee. Milwaukee: The Milwaukee Sentinel, 1890, p. 100, 169; Wisconsin Manufacturers' Register. Chicago: Manufacturers' News, Inc., 1990)

Hoffmann, Billings, and Company

Hoffman, Billings and Company was a large brass and iron foundry located at 138 East Becher Street (demolished). The firm was begun in 1855 by J. C. Hoffman on a small site in downtown Milwaukee on West State Street between North Sixth and North Seventh Streets. Hoffman entered into a partnership with Charles F. Billings in 1870, and the firm was formally incorporated under the laws of Wisconsin in 1882. The firm manufactured a line of brass and iron fittings for steam, gas and water service, which were distributed both locally and nationally. The firm, known for its innovative design, manufactured cast-iron pipe, heating apparatus, radiators, tools, steam pumps, gauges, whistles, couplings, valves, expansion joints, boiler tubes, steam and gas fitters' tools and engineers', brewers', and plumbers' supplies.

By the mid 1880s, the firm's manufacturing facilities were located on West Kilbourn Avenue between North Sixth and North Seventh Streets in the city's central business district. Around 1886, the company began constructing a new facility on a three-acre site in Bay View at 138 East Becher Street. At that time the plant was equipped with extensive up-to-date equipment including a ten-ton traveling crane and a 40,000-pound boring mill for machining large castings. Three large brick buildings housed, respectively, a machine shop, an iron foundry, and a brass foundry. During the mid-1880s, the firm reportedly employed 200 workers.

The firm's treasurer during the late nineteenth century, Mr. Joseph W. Kalvelage, built an outstanding, German Baroque style house in 1897 that still stands on the city's west side at 2432 West Kilbourn Avenue. The richly

finished house, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is one of the city's finest examples of the exuberant, German-inspired architecture favored by Milwaukee's German-American businessmen at the turn of the century.

The Hoffmann and Billings Company apparently disbanded during the depression years of the 1930s when the firm no longer appeared in the City Directory. In the late 1930s the plant was in operation as the Kagel Brothers Company Brass Foundry. That firm disbanded by the early 1960s, and all the factory buildings have since been demolished. Today the site is completely vacant. (Industrial History of Milwaukee. Milwaukee: E. E. Barton, 1886, pp. 89-90; History of Milwaukee, John G. Gregory. Milwaukee: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1931, p. 558; Sanborn's Milwaukee Fire Insurance Atlas, 1894, 1910.)

Wisconsin Malleable Iron Company

The Wisconsin Malleable Iron Company, which was located on the northeast corner of East Bay and South Winchester Streets, was founded in 1879 by two Milwaukee businessmen, William H. Osborne and F. W. Sivyer. Osborne was the firm's first president. In its first year of operation, forty workers were employed to produce about 500 tons of castings for railroads, wagon building, and farm equipment. By 1890 the plant covered a five-acre site just north of the Sprawling United States Steel plant (a.k.a., the Milwaukee Iron Company). The Wisconsin Malleable Iron Company originally depended to a great extent on overflow business from the Milwaukee Iron Company.

During the early 1890s, the Wisconsin Malleable Iron Company was one of the largest industrial firms in Bay View, with a labor force of 500 workers producing seven thousand tons of castings annually. The firm closed in 1929, the same year as its next-door neighbor, United States Steel. At the time of the closing, William H. Osborne was the president, John G. Osborne was vice-president, and W. P. Westenberg was secretary-treasurer. The plant was apparently demolished during the 1930s along with the United States Steel plant. Today the site is mostly vacant except for a twisting system of roadways attached to the stub end of the city's Hoan Bridge freeway (Milwaukee City Directories; Sanborn's 1894 Insurance Map of Milwaukee; An Illustrated Description of Milwaukee; Milwaukee: Milwaukee Sentinel, March, 1890, pp. 48, 155-156)

Jerome B. Meyer and Sons, Inc.

Jerome B. Meyer and Sons, Inc., founded in 1913, is a family-owned business that hand-crafts organ pipes. This is a rare and unusual business that has preserved old-world craftsmanship while adapting to the modern marketplace.

Jerome B. Meyer, the founder, was born in 1872 in the Alsace-Lorraine region of Germany and came to the United States in 1888. He and his older brother settled in Ohio and learned the craft of organ pipe construction. In 1910 Jerome moved to Milwaukee to head the organ pipe shop at the Wangerin Pipe Organ Company, which was located on the south side of the 200 block of East Lincoln Avenue in Bay View. In 1913 Meyer began his own organ pipe manufacturing business to supply organ pipes for the Wangerin Company, as well as other organ builders throughout the country. Meyer had the present brick factory building at 2339 South Austin Avenue constructed in 1913 at an estimated cost of \$2,200 according to the designs of local architects Christiansen and Kemnitz. The mason contractor was Frank Szmanowski, and Edward Bates was the carpenter contractor.

The company grew in size and reputation, creating a need for an addition to the factory that was built in 1927 for approximately \$1,000. Since that time the exterior of the building has remained relatively unchanged.

Since its founding, the business has been operated by four successive generations of the Meyer family. In 1920 Jerome's son, Charles (born in 1900), joined him in the business. Charles' son, Gordon (born in 1927), is currently president of the firm, and his son, Anders, is now the fourth generation of the Meyer family to be active in the business.

Organ pipes can be made of various types of metal or of wood, but the firm specializes in manufacturing only metal organ pipes. A typical pipe organ is composed of many different sets of organ pipes that each have a distinctive sound of their own depending on the size, shape, and material of the pipe. Organ pipes range in length from just a few inches to more than 16 feet. One complete set of pipes is called a rank, and the largest pipe organs may have fifty or more different ranks of pipes.

Highly skilled craftsmen use many handmade tools to make the pipes in a process that has changed little over the past two centuries. The company makes its own sheet metal for the pipes from an alloy of molten lead and tin. The liquid metal is poured into a wooden "sled" or hopper with a small slot in its bottom. The sled is then drawn along by hand over a soapstone on which is formed a long, narrow sheet of glistening metal. Craftsmen then cut the metal and roll it around a wooden mandrel much like a baker rolls dough around a rolling pin. Each pipe requires hundreds of individual steps to complete.

When a rank of pipes is finished, Gordon Meyer "voices" each pipe, which is a process likened to tuning a piano. Voicing is an art that takes years to master, and Meyer is reportedly one of only two known craftsmen in the state who can properly execute this demanding work.

There are very few organ pipe manufacturers extant today in the United States. Jerome B. Meyer and Sons has a national reputation for building organ pipes of outstanding quality, and their products are constantly in demand. (Historic Milwaukee Inc. Unpublished research and script for Spaces and Traces Tour, 1989, prepared by Dorothy Riedl)

Klement Sausage Co.

Founded in 1956 at 207 East Lincoln Avenue, the Klement Sausage Company is a relatively new firm that has survived major changes in the sausage business and is now one of only two major sausage makers extant in Milwaukee. Approximately forty small and medium sized sausage plants have closed within a one hundred mile radius of the firm since it was founded.

The founders of the company, Jack, George and Ron Klement, learned the sausage making business from their father, Frank, who came to Milwaukee from Czechoslovakia in 1910 at the age of 19. He served apprenticeships in the meat business in his homeland. Frank Klement eventually became part owner of the Milwaukee Sausage Company, which is still in business at 1334 West National Avenue on the city's south side. Early in their careers, Jack, George and Ron Klement all worked at the Milwaukee Sausage Company.

The three brothers purchased the Badger Sausage Company in Bay View located at 207 East Lincoln Avenue on April 6, 1956, and continued to operate it under that name for three years. Later the name was changed to Klement's Badger Sausage Company and finally to Klement's Sausage Company, Inc. Some of the firm's products are based on recipes brought from Czechoslovakia by Frank Klement early in the century. The original small brick facility at 207 East Lincoln Avenue that was built in 1927 for the Badger Sausage Company was expanded in 1959 when an adjacent service station was purchased, razed and replaced with an office addition. The factory has been continuously enlarged and updated over the years with additions built in 1962, 1964, 1967, 1977 and 1983. During the 1970s, the firm purchased the former Uncle August Sausage

Company located on the city's north side at 3275 North Pierce Street and began making a new line of packaged summer sausage products there. In 1989 a distribution plant located on the city's south side at 2650 South Chase Avenue was completed.

Klement's Sausage Company is still a family-owned business and is managed by the original founders and their sons. The firm's Bay View plant has three separate kitchens that produce three different types of products: fresh sausage, cooked and smoked sausage, and summer sausage. Klement's initially sold its products on the city's south side, but the firm has grown to include selected markets nationwide including Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Missouri, Texas, California, and Arizona. (Building Permits, (City of Milwaukee; Histories of the Klement Sausage Company from company employee handbook and company files)

#### Standard Brick Company

The Standard Brick Company was located on the east side of the 2900 block of South Clement Avenue between East Idaho and East Dakota Streets. The business was established in 1883 by Messrs. Vogt and Herzberg and formally incorporated in 1888 with Otto Zielsdorf as president. By 1893 the company was producing between 12 and 14 million cream-colored bricks annually. Milwaukee's cream brick, which gave the city its "cream city" nickname, was prized for its soft, golden color made possible by the unusual chemical composition of the area's clay deposits.

The company dug clay for its brick from a pit that extended into the present-day Sijan Field baseball park. Clay from the pit was packed into molds after being kneaded in a special mill and was then fired in kilns that were located along East Idaho Street. At the turn of the century, the 15-acre brickyard consisted of six large brick kilns, brick sheds, and a building to enclose the brick-making apparatus. The demand for cream brick dwindled rapidly in the early twentieth century as architectural tastes changed and inexpensive, harder brick from other parts of the country became readily available.

By 1903 the firm had been purchased by the Burnham Brothers Brick Company, the city's largest brick manufacturer. Reflecting the new ownership, Charles T. Burnham became the president of the Standard Brick Company, and John Q. Burnham was its secretary-treasurer, according to the 1903 city directory. The Burnham Brothers Brick Company had acquired several other smaller brick manufacturing facilities around the city by the early twentieth century.

Until the early 1920s, the Standard Brick Company remained a division of the Burnham Brothers Brick Company. Brick making at the Clement Avenue site apparently ceased about 1923 when the Standard Brick Company disappeared from the city directory. The site was used between 1924 and 1926 by the Bay View Building Supply Company operated by Gustav Glowinski. After that, the land remained unused until the late 1930s when the eastern two-thirds of the site was purchased by Milwaukee County for a park, Sijan Field, which is used today primarily for baseball. A small brick pavilion on the grounds, addressed at 2821 South Kinnickinnic Avenue, was built in 1937 by the Works Progress

Administration. (See Planning and Landscape Architecture.) During the late 1940s and early 1950s, houses were built on the western third of the former brickyard bounded today by South California and South Clement Avenues and East Idaho and East Dakota Streets. (Sanborn's 1894 Insurance Atlas of Milwaukee; Milwaukee: A Half Century's Progress, p. 173)

## 8. Government



VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

The part of Milwaukee, known today as Bay View, was originally part of the Town of Lake, a political and geographical entity created out of Milwaukee County by the territorial legislature on January 2, 1838. It originally encompassed towns 5 and 6 north, ranges 21 and 22 east, and extended as far west as the Waukesha County line. Within a short time, the Town of Lake was parceled into smaller municipalities. Greenfield was created on March 8, 1839, Franklin on December 20, 1839, and Oak Creek on August 13, 1840. For most of the nineteenth century thereafter, the Town of Lake encompassed the area between Greenfield Avenue on the north, College Avenue on the south, South Twenty-seventh Street on the west, and Lake Michigan on the east. Over time the City of Milwaukee annexed land in the northern part of the town, thus further reducing its size. (Watrous, vol. I, p. 187; Aderman, p. 7)

What eventually became Bay View, south of the Old River mouth, was recognized as a distinct community soon after its initial settlement but was governed for many years by the government of the Town of Lake. The earliest town officials are not known, but the first recorded town meeting took place in April of 1842 at which time it was decided to elect three assessors and three constables. There also was a clerk and treasurer. Fees for various municipal services were determined and taxes were imposed to support schools. Basically, town governments, at that time, were political units created to handle such activities as road and bridge building, maintaining order through constables and justices of the peace, assessing and collecting taxes, conducting elections and keeping records. (Watrous, Vol. 1, p. 187, 188, 194; Aderman, p. 16)

With the establishment of Eber Brock Ward's Milwaukee Iron Company in 1867, the population in the northeast corner of the Town of Lake grew dramatically and soon outpopulated the remainder of the agrarian town. The specialized needs of the growing industrial community were soon at odds with the town form of government. By 1879 the settlement around the mill covered over one square mile or nearly 892 acres and numbered 2,592 persons. On April 28, 1879, ten residents of Bay View petitioned the circuit court for village status. It was accepted and subsequently passed by the required referendum vote on May 27, 1879, and formal incorporation took place on June 5, 1879. The move for incorporation was not opposed by the iron company and may even have been supported by the company since the rolling mill helped to fund the incorporation costs. Its company officers and employees served as village officials. (Korn, pp. 71-72)

Historian Korn indicates that the new village trustees and officers were somewhat at a loss as how to proceed with the village form of government but eventually established a framework of governance and provided for the village's fiscal needs through taxation. Throughout its seven year history as a municipality, Bay View struggled with increasing public demand for services and an inadequate income to meet those requests. The village board did pass 72 ordinances over its history, 53 of which dealt with street and alley openings, improvements, and the naming of streets. The remainder dealt with the restraint of stray animals; the establishment of a pound for stray animals; regulating the use of firearms; the isolation of contagious diseases; snow removal from sidewalks; and the sanding of icy walks. In 1882 the village board passed an ordinance giving the Cream City Railroad the right of

way for a streetcar line on Kinnickinnic and Russell Avenues. In 1884 an ordinance was passed requiring homeowners to number their property according to a newly drawn up plat. (Korn, pp. 72, 75-76)

Given Bay View's financial shortcomings, few structures were built to house village functions. For a number of years after incorporation as a village, village trustees conducted their meetings at the public school on Wentworth Avenue. The only other public meeting hall in the village at that time was Puddlers' Hall on St. Clair Street (MI 360-4), but the ironworkers' union refused to let the board meet there. The local barber shop of Charles Fricker served as the village polling place. No fire house was built during village days since village residents voted against the purchase of fire equipment. Bay View had to rely on the fire protection provided by the rolling mill which had its own equipment and which had fought neighborhood fires in the pre-village era. Bay View had also relied on Milwaukee's assistance until the city's Common Council put a stop to the practice of assisting suburban communities. A few street lights had been erected by the village board, but no water system or sewer system was initiated. Most people relied on backyard pumps for their water and, even into the 1890's, long after annexation and the extension of the city water system, many permits indicate that houses still had their own wells, even newly-constructed ones. (Korn, pp. 78-79, 113)

As far as can be determined, Bay View had only two structures associated with village government, the public well and adjacent hose house on Pryor Avenue (the well still extant) and the village hall, razed. The Pryor Avenue Well is located in the 1700 block of East Pryor Avenue between South Superior

Street and South Wentworth Avenue. (MI 383-30) Work on drilling the artesian well began in October of 1882. By January 6, 1883, the well had reached 1,275 feet and was flowing under its own pressure. Soon thereafter it reached its final depth of 1,500 feet. In April of 1883 a hydrant was placed over the well and a hose house was erected at the corner of Pryor and Wentworth Avenue to shelter the hose cart and 650 feet of recently-purchased hose. This length of hose was considered adequate to reach the school house a little further north on Wentworth Avenue as well as neighboring houses in case of fire. (Milwaukee Sentinel, 1883 April 8 3/3; Historic Site Designation Application, May 7, 1987)

After annexation, the Pryor Avenue well was connected to other satellite wells and hydrants in Bay View in 1888. This well continues in operation today, although the hose house has long since disappeared. By the 1920's the present exposed aggregate concrete monolith had been built in place of the original hydrant. By this time the neighborhood was serviced by the city water system, but the well has remained popular because of the excellent taste of the spring water. The twenty-inch-square well head has a drinking fountain basin on its north face, pipes spewing water into ground level basins on the east and west faces, and a wooden access panel on the south face conceals the plumbing inside. All but the north side have been covered with cement plaster in recent years; now the well is mechanically pumped. The well was designated a local historic structure on November 17, 1987. (Historic Site Designation Application; Pryor Avenue Iron Well Historic Designation Study Report)

The village hall, a modest brick structure with stone foundations, was constructed at the intersection of Kinnickinnic, Clement and Pryor Avenues in

1885-1886. The lower floor served as a jail and the upper floor housed the village offices. The village hall was used for only about a year until it was vacated after annexation of Bay View by the city. Milwaukee's interest in annexing Bay View dates back at least as early as 1875 when the city's common council members eyed the potential revenues to be gained from Bay View's large industrial base. A straw poll conducted by the Sentinel in 1880 showed, however, that public sentiment on both sides was overwhelmingly against annexation. Milwaukee politicians kept the issue alive, however, and the Sentinel again brought up annexation in 1883. By 1886, Bay View residents, despite concerns over higher taxation, had become more positive about annexation since they lacked most of the basic urban amenities that their Milwaukee neighbors enjoyed. On September 1, 1886, the village board passed a resolution in favor of being annexed by Milwaukee. A few weeks later on October 18, 1886, a resolution was introduced into Milwaukee's Common Council calling for the annexation of Bay View. After being voted down several times, the Common Council finally approved annexation on January 31, 1887. This was followed by a vote of Bay View residents at an election held on March 3, 1887. The old Village of Bay View thus passed out of existence. (Korn, pp. 112-114; Milwaukee Sentinel 1885 July 29 3/3)

The old village hall stood empty for a while but the city allowed James Carroll to occupy the building rent free until April 1, 1888, as long as he maintained the building. The structure was subsequently moved to the southwest corner of Russell and Logan Avenues and used as a private residence. It was razed in 1937, and a large A & P supermarket was eventually built on the site. Oak balusters and a plate dated 1885 were salvaged from the old village hall. The balusters were said to have been made into souvenir gavels.

The supermarket built on the village hall site was subsequently remodeled and occupied by Bay View State Bank, which has been taken over as a branch of the M & I Marshall and Ilsley Bank. M & I now occupies the site. (MI 425-11; Zillman, p. 28)

### City Government - Overview

In great part due to Bay View's vocal and aggressive aldermen and residents, Bay View received many of the civic improvements that were promised in return for approving annexation by the city. The installation of sewers and water lines and better street grading and paving took place relatively soon after annexation. Fire protection was also of immediate importance. In 1889 a firehouse was erected on South St. Clair Street, followed by a second station on Kinnickinnic Avenue in 1892. These, the two earliest symbols of the city government's presence in Bay View, have since been razed but a new station remains in operation at the Kinnickinnic Avenue location.

Bay View received its own police station in 1904 when the Fourth Police District was created to handle law enforcement in the Fourteenth and Seventeenth Wards and those parts of the Eleventh and Twelfth Wards south of Mitchell Street. After the district was consolidated with the Second District, Bay View's Allis Street station was razed in 1959.

Two large scale civic projects, not quite as visible as police and fire stations, have involved Bay View as well, and took advantage of Bay View's lakefront location. The Kinnickinnic River Flushing Tunnel, under

construction between 1898 and 1907, was routed below Russell Avenue and Dover Place. Water is still pumped from the lake to the Kinnickinnic River near South Chase Avenue to help create a current during the river's stagnant period in the summer months. Bay View is also the location of the Texas Avenue Pumping Station which was under construction between 1959 and 1962. The monolithic concrete structure houses pumps which pump raw water from an intake pipeline out in Lake Michigan to the Howard Avenue Filtration Plant at South Sixth Street and West Howard Avenue. The pumping station is located below the bluff at the south end of South Shore Drive near the east end of East Texas Avenue and is not readily visible to the residents of the neighborhood.

### Fire Department

#### Engine House No. 11/ Hook and Ladder Co. No. 6 and Chemical Engine 6

The newly-annexed Village of Bay View lacked adequate fire fighting facilities at the time of its absorption by Milwaukee. This matter became one of the first concerns the city addressed after annexation. As early as March of 1887, the Fire Department called the Common Council's attention to the fact that Bay View was in need of fire protection. As a temporary measure, the North Chicago Rolling Mills (formerly the Milwaukee Iron Company) gave the city their chemical engine and the use of a building for a firehouse. This building was located at 187 Ward Street (old number) near the intersection of Ward Street and Kinnickinnic Avenue. Repairs were made to the building at a cost of \$800 with some of the funds that had been allocated for Fire Department use in April of 1887. On March 12, 1888, a building next door to