

R-024

Early History of the Village, by H. Wrucke Present Businesses Traced to Origin, Some 50 Years, by Henry Weld

History of the Schlaefer Hardware Store Building

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Note: This article was written in 1952.

Fifty years ago Campbellsport Main Street presented a different picture than it does today. There were no cement sidewalks, no electric lights on the street, and no convenient water or heating systems in the buildings. Many of these buildings were razed and have been replaced by new modern buildings since the turn of the century. Others which were built by some of our first settlers are still being used for business purposes. Among the latter is the brick building on the corner of Main and Railroad streets. It was built by Mr. Degenhardt who operated a saloon and hotel there until the time of his death. This building is now occupied by Walter Luedtke, who operates a tavern.

Next in line is the Kohler building which was built by the late L. O. Kohler, who used it for a shoe store, cobbler chop, and home until old age forced him to retire from active business. This property is now owned since 1946 by Harlow Roate, who modernized by adding a new front and remodeled the interior into 4 apartments and a press room and office in which to edit the Campbellsport News.

In 1879 William Wedde a young tin smith came from Chicago to go into business in a small town. He bought a tin shop from a Mr. Howard, and a lumber yard from a Mr. Martin. A few years later he enlarged his shop, and used the new part to establish a hardware store. This business was operated by Mr. Wedde, and his son-in-law, Mr. A.L. Schwandt until the latter's death. Mrs. Olga Schwandt ran the business until she sold it to Joe Schlaefer who in turn sold it to his brother Wm. Schlaefer, who conducts the Hardware store at the old stand today.

At the site of the present Matt Schlaefer building the Campbellsport Mutual Fire Insurance Company had its office, and occupied this until 1913 when the present office was erected. Mr. Matt Schlaefer is a practicing optometrist, and the second storey is occupied by Atty. Arthur G. Brandt who began here in 1937 and the beauty center run by Mrs. Marcella Alderton. The building now occupied by the C.J. Kleinhans Implement company was the residence of the late Ignatius Klotz Sr., who at one time was State senator from this district. The present building with recent additions was erected by the late Jake Kleinhans, Sr., and sons, Clem and Jake Jr., about 1910.

The original McCullough store was at the site of the present Ben Franklin Store and Bartottis Bakery. This building had quite a history at various times being used as the post office, pool room, sweet shop and bakery. The old building was razed by the late F. J. Bauer, who built the present modern structure in 1937.

Herman J. Paas has the distinction of being the only business man in town whose father was in the same business and the same stand 50 years ago. The firm at that time operated under the name of Durand and Paas. Dr. H. J. Weld rented the room over the drug store for his office. Mr. Paas has changed the appearance of the building by adding a new front and modernizing the interior.

The next business place was built by the Jacob Schlaefer and was originally used by him for a jewelry store. After his death, Mrs. Schlaefer opened a millinery store in the room facing Main Street and the predecessor of the First State Bank occupied the corner rooms. This building was unoccupied for some time until the late Mr. F. J. Bauer razed it and erected the present modern super service station on the corner. Mr. Bauer operated this station at this site until he erected the new building on the corner of Fond du Lac Avenue and Sheboygan Street.

John Meyer and James Ketter, now operate the station, under the name of Ketter-Meyer Sales and Service.

The building on the northeast corner of Main and Fond du Lac, was originally built by a Mr. Soeller, who operated a saloon. The late Phillip and Eliz Damm remodeled the structure and operated a hotel and bar at the site for many years. They sold *[it to]* Michael Thelen, who still owns the property. At the present time the bar is operated by Walter Krug and the barber shop by Oliver Hensen.

Fifty years ago the Weyer Meat Market was operated by the late Joe Meixensperger. A few years later he sold the market to Henry Powers and entered the stock buying business with Michael Farrell. Mr. Powers had charge of the market for many years and upon his retirement sold to Mr. Wm. Kleist. Kleist in turn sold to Wm. Jaeger, who later sold it to Otto Heldt. About 1926, George Kleiber purchased the business from Heldt and he and his son Robert operated the shop until 1951 when it was purchased by James Weyer.

The building now occupied by Reimers bar, has nearly always housed a tavern. About fifty years ago the operator was Jacob Braun. During prohibition the late Frank Enfelt used the building as a harness shop. With repeal Mr. Enfelt again opened a tavern and operated it until the time of his death. The business was then purchased by Rudy Kolafa who in turn sold it to Joe Reimer.

The next building has been completely remodeled by Frank Hubert who operated the Melody Inn Restaurant and Minor bar, it formerly was used as a tavern some of the past owners being Frank Nolan and Frank Helfling. E.W. Kloke operated an electrical store at the site for some years and later took on the Gamble agency.

Meritt Helmer operated a grocery store at the site of the Know-Mahl Store. He sold the business to E.F.Messner, who operated the grocery until he purchased the elevator from Matt Alterhofen. George C. Wach ran the store for about twenty years, selling out to Florian Butschlick. In 1948, Giles Knowles and E. Mahlberg purchased it. This year Mr. Knowles has remodeled the store into a super market with the meat department being operated by Robert Kleiber.

The building now occupied by Lester's Paint and Glass shop originally stood at the site of the Campbellsport Auto Body Shop. It was built by Paul Tillock who operated a hardware store in New Cassel, a Mr. Thresher also operated a store in the building at one time. In the early 1920's it was purchased by R.F. Messner, who moved it to its present location. In those days that was quite a tedious process the power being furnished by horses and mules owned by Al Jewson. Since then, the building has been used for various purposes housing a tire store, pool hall, and the News Office. Mr. Butschlick has completely remodeled the structure and has also built a large garage in the rear in which he houses his school buses.

In the early winter of 1901, one of the Campbellsport's biggest fires occurred, destroying the Odd Fellows hall and the residence to the east of it. The Odd Fellows rebuilt and the building has been occupied continuously by the Postal Department. Postmasters in charge since the Office has been in this building have been Platt Durand, Tom Curran, Wm. Margin, R.L. Raymond, Wm. Sullivan, James Farrell, Acting and Richard Koenigs. This building will always be remembered by any child growing up in Campbellsport as part of that process in getting the mail at five o'clock p.m. The second floor of the building was formerly used as lodge rooms but has been remodeled into apartments.

The Campbellsport Mutual Fire Insurance Company building was erected in 1913. For many years H.A. Wrucke served it as Secretary. Cully Van de Zande started working for the firm as a clerk and as the present Secretary. His brother, Alfred, is the President. The Van De Zande agency also has its office in the building.

The Gremminger Meat Market building was erected by Wm. Kloke, Sr., who operated a shop there for sometime. He sold to Thill and Little, the firm later changing to Till and Rauch. In 1928, it was purchased by the Gremminger Bros., Leo and Benno; in 1933 Leo purchased his brother's interests and has run the shop since then.

Just before the turn of the Century the Brittingham and Hixon Lumber Company took over the Ernst F. Martin lumber yards west of the Railroad tracks. They enlarged the yards and office and appointed P.M. Schlaefer as manager and he has served continuously since November 1, 1901.

Bauer Bros. Inc. was originally the Jim McCullough elevator. Later it was operated by Curran and Schmidt, Math Altenhofen and Messner and Ketter. In 1933, Joe Bauer Jr., and Floyd Bauer purchased the Feed Mill and Warehouse from the equity; in 1935 the brothers purchased the Messner and Ketter elevator and incorporated as Bauer Bros. Joe Bauer has charge of the Eden Elevator which was bought in 1945. Bauer Pontiac was built in 1950. Floyd Bauer also operates the Trucking service which he purchased in 1946 after the death of Frank Bauer.

The original owner of the Bauer hotel was Gerhard Schoofs who operated a saloon and housed his family in a small building until 1890 when he enlarged the building adding a hall upstairs which for many years served the public for dances and other entertainment. He sold [it to] Henry Braun and in 1911 sold to Joe Bauer, Sr., who with his family came to this vicinity from Mauston the previous year. Mr and Mrs. Bauer turned their efforts to building up the Hotel business, in which they were so successful that the Bauer Hotel became famous for miles around for its hospitality and culinary art. The business is now owned by his parents. He is now in the process of having major

remodeling job done to the interior of the building and will be ready to serve the public in the near future.

The building occupied by Guenther's IGA store was originally John Schlaefer's Jewelry. Mrs. Eva Ullrich operated a bakery and confectionary here for many years. Buying coffee cakes from Mrs. Ullrich on Saturday mornings was a ritual for many towns people for years. In the early 1930's A. W. Guenther IGA opened his store at this site.

The present Ford Garage site was formerly used for a blacksmith shop by Adam Pesch, who with his son John took over the Ford Agency in 1913. They erected a new building east of the shop in that year. In 1918 the shop was torn down and the present show room erected. That year also saw the start of the firm of Pesch and Beisber. They conducted one of the most successful Ford agencies until 1945, in which year they sold to Glen Varbrick. Mr. Stuart Ogle purchased the business from Verbrick in 1948.

The Clarence Kudek home and shoe repair shop was formerly the home of the Van De Zande family and also served Mr. Van De Zande as an Insurance office and photograph gallery. Many of the pictures he took are still in existence today. He also was the originator of the C.H. Van De Zande Insurance Agency, which is now being conducted by his sons Alfred and Charles. Mr. Van De Zande also served this district as Assemblyman. His son, Alfred, has been State Senator the past four years and also Assemblyman for eight years.

In 1902, Philip Guenther operated the saloon at the site of Weis's tavern. Henry Weis purchased the property in 1913 and operated it until the time of his death. His Widow then continued the business until 1947 when her son took over. This is another building which has a new look, it being completely remodeled in 1951.

The furniture store was owned and operated for a number of years by John Becklinger with whom Ed. Senn went into partnership in 1898. About five years later James P. Gilboay purchased the Becklinger interests and the business was carried on under the name of Gilboay and Senn. In 1911, the old building was torn down and replaced by the brick building. In 1916, Joseph Smith entered the firm and in 1929, he purchased Senn's interest; the firm being know as Gilboay and Smith. In 1929. he purchased the remaining stock and in 1926 he purchased and tore down the old Degenhardt bulding east of the furniture store. He then added the present funeral home; before this completed Mr. Smith was killed in an auto accident. The firm was then purchased by A.E. Bergs, who sold it to its present own David Twohig in 1949.

The 1908 another large fire hit the village and this destroyed the Loeb's and Knickel building which stood at the present bank corner. The directors of the bank then purchased the property and the present building erected in 1909. The interior of the building was remodeled in 1949-1950.

The Southeast corner of Fond du Lac and Main Street was originally the site of a hotel owned by a man names Zeigelbauer; this building was destroyed by fire. The McCullough brothers firm which was operating a general store at the present site of the present Bertotti building then purchased the lot and erected what was then one of the most modern general store on the site. For years this firm was well known through out the territory. Upon the death of the McCullough brother, Henry Seering and his brother purchased the business moving here from Shawano. John and Henry Seering ran the business for about two years when John Seering's interest was purchased by Frank

Curran, and the firm did business under the firm name of Seering and Curran; on the latter's death, Charles Seering entered the business with his father. After Charles Seering's death and the retirement of Hy. Seering the building was vacant for sometime. C.P. Schill purchased the property in 1946 and remodeled completely. It now houses Koenigs Apparel and the Schill Electric and the Sport Shop.

The large modern garage and filling station housing the Schill Motors firm was built by C.P. Schill in 1947. Mr. Schill entered the automotive field in 1922 in Ashford where he owned and operated the Ashford Service garage. At first he held the dealership for Hudson and Essex automobiles and in 1932 received the Chevrolet dealership and later added the Buick car to his line. Increased business called for expansion resulting in the erection of the new building.

Mr. Wm. Dreikosen purchased a lot from the McCullough estate in 1925, and erected his garage upon the site. He has held various automobile dealerships and at present he is conducting a general garage business assisted by his son Gilbert.

The present Luckow Electric shop fifty years ago housed the Wm. Theisen implement business. Later on Geo. Foerster operated his well digging business out of this building; still later it was converted into a barber shop, by Gregor Ullrich, who ran his shop there until 1947, when it was purchased by August Sabel. Mr. Luckow established his appliance shop there in 1948.

The site of Barnes' grocery was formerly a blacksmith shop owned by Marvin Barnes' father, James, Sr. Upon his retirement Marvin Barnes remodeled the building into the present grocery store. In 1902. the building now housing the Barnes Appliance store was the Campbellsport Auto Livery Owned by A.J. Pesch and Lloyd Braun. When this firm was dissolved Michael Jaeger took over the property and operated his garage and implement business there until the time of his death.

In 1900, the late M.R. Boeckler established the Boeckler Hardware store now owned by Charles Romayko. Mr. Boeckler was one the real veterans of the village. Before entering the hardware business he was employed by the Railroad as baggagman and messenger. Many telegraphs were delivered by him on foot regardless of the kind of weather or number of miles he had to walk. Mr. Boeckler also built the old Opera House which stood at the side of the present Gampo Theatre. This bulding was torn down by W.C. Fischer in 1945 and the present modern theatre erected.

The Campo Grill building was erected by Arnold Bechler in 1947, and at present is owned and operated by James Balzer.

Some of Campbellsport's oldest buildings are located in lower town which was originally called New Cassel. The Campbellsport's Locker Plant building was formerly Findeisen store. After this firm went out of business, Kilian Beisber and Michael Jaeger operated a general store in the building. About 1940 Simon Hoffmann established the locker plant where David Loehr is the present manager of the plant.

The tavern now operated by Adolph Flitter also has an historical past. It was built by a man name Holzhauer, who operated a tavern and hotel. After several other people had owned the business, it was purchased by John Naughton, who operated it as Eagle Hotel for many years, and sold the property to Mr. Flitter. Flitter's son-in-law, Syl Volm, uses part of the building for his shoe store.

The Glass harness shop now houses Bud's Dry Cleaning establishment who began in 1945.

In 1903 Wm. Warden came to the village and established his soda water factory. Through the years, "Billys Pop" has become famous throughout the territory. The Poole store and dwelling has been remodeled into a modern apartment building by C.P. Schill.

Two other landmarks which were used as active business places fifty years ago have since been torn down, the old mill which was operated by a Mr. Williams, and the Foltz veterinary office which was occupied by Dr. Fenstermacher.

Business establishments which have been established in later years, but which have played an important part in the community's development include Hensens' tin shop. R.J. Hensen established in the old McCullough building in 1936, his present modern store and shop was built in 1940.

In 1951, Harvey Kippenhan completed the building of his modern garage and filling station on the corner of Fond du Lac and Sheboygan streets. Kippenhan came to the village from Kewaskum being employed by F.J. Bauer as a mechanic. Upon Mr. Bauer's death he managed that filling station. He is the distributor for Chrysler-Plymouth automobiles.

Also in 1951 Floyd Bauer erected his garage after he had taken on the dealership for Pontiac cars and GMC trucks.

Campbellsport's most important recreation spot, the King Pin alleys was built by Geo., Sam and Steve Salaja in 1949. The Salajas had taken over the former Maurer Tavern and operated that until the alleys were completed.

Midway between upper and lower town is the site of Raymond's Red and White grocery owned by Gordon and Edna Raymond; this firm was established in 1936.

On May 24, 1927, Edgar Romaine was appointed agent for the Standard Oil company and this year marks his twenty-fifth anniversary with that company. Irvin Rusch assists him as driver of one of the two trucks. Former agent was Edwain Harder. The Cities Service agency is held by Henry Kraemer who has also been in the oil business since 1927-28. Ed Bauer was the former agent for this company.

One of the newer businesses in the village is that of Jackson's Tite-on Roofing and Siding Company making its first appearance here as the J.T. Roofing and Siding Co. in April, 1948. Originally from Milwaukee Fred Jackson bought out his partner's interest in 1949 and moved to the village in October 1950. Recently a new line has been added with the company handling Alumi-lite storm and screens, Rondel Awnings and Sun Verdikal blinds. It employs 4 men at present.

Two of Campbellsport's newest businesses are the Time and Jew Shop established by Herbert Wehner in 1951 and the Karoses Sheet Metal firm built by Joe Karoses III in 1949.

The garage and filling station now run by Don Howard and Joe Klotz was established after the first World War by I.J.Klotz and Al. Van De Zande, the firm was known as the Campbellsport Auto Sales Co. Fifty years ago this building was Utkes Blacksmith shop.

The building now being remodeled by A. W. Guenther into a super market was built after the original Knickel and Loeb's store was destroyed by fire in 1908. when Mr. Loeb's became Cashier of the First State Bank, the firm was operated by Knickel and Straub, and later by Knickel and Kranz. E. W. Martin, then purchased the property and operated a general store there for many years. He in turn sold it to E. W. Kloke who ran a gamble store there until this Spring.

The community has been served by several doctors in its history; Dr. Steven Stack, who is noted for his founding of Sacred Heart Sanatorium. He was followed by Dr. P.A. Hoffman and son Math who was killed in 1913. Dr. Leo Hoffman practiced with his father, Dr. P. A. Hoffman, and took over upon his retirement and is still serving the community today. In 1896, Dr. O. J. Orivs sold to Dr. H. Weld and in 1902 Dr. Frank Russel took over Weld's practice until his return in 1906. In 1926, Dr. O. F Guenther came to town and continued here to this day. There was also a Dr. Walters here about 1914-1916 who just recently died.

The first remembered veterinarian was Dr. Fenstermacher who was followed by Drs. Rudolph, A. L. Wright, Lawler, Key P. Nulph, C. Orton, M. Houston, and Dr. Eugene Nehmer who has been here since about 1948.

The Keil Woodenware company once made cheese boxes here in a building still standing on Railroad Street. Ray Hendericks was foreman. The S.J. Stevens Co. had a cheese warehouse at the site of the present Stella Cheese Warehouse.

Two home-town boys have returned to establish their professional businesses in town, namely Dr. J. F. Pesch and Arthur W. Guenther, Jr. Dr. Pesch began his dental practice here in 1947 and has his office in his home on North Fond du Lac Avenue. Attorney Guenther came here in June, 1951, and has his office in the Weld home on Main Street. Another dentist of long standing is Dr. Leo Uelman who began here in 1924 and has his office in the bank building.

The local John Deere agent is held by L. Jacak who erected a new building last year on West Main Street. He bought out former Buechel Implement company which occupied the now vacanyt bulding on Nother Fond du Lac Avenue. Also new on that street is Ellie Schaefers Beer Warehouse which was built in 1950.

Ed Spoerl has conducted a blacksmith shop and farm implement repair shop since 1927 when he came here, buying out Henry's Spoerl's shop. His place is located in the rear of his home on Forest Street where he built in 1929. Henry Spoerl re-entered the blacksmith business after several years farming, at practically the same location on South Fond du Lac Avenue.

EARLY HISTORY OF VILLAGE TOLD BY H. WRUCKE

The original old village in the town of Auburn, was built on the main branch of the Milwaukee River which rises about nine miles Northwest of here in the town of Byron. Ludin Crouch, a New Yorker and John Howell of Waukesha first settled in this territory in 1845. At a celebration in 1846 the place was name Crouchville, and in 1856 was re-named New Cassel by an early settler, Emil Brayman.

There was a grist mill established at the river which was dismantled a few years ago, and John Husting had a brewery which burned about 1889. There were two stores there when I came in 1894, one owned and operated by William Pool, Jr., and the other owned and operated by F. M. Findeisen, built in 1874, now operated as a locker plant. There were two physicians there, viz. Dr. Eidemuller and Dr. Zimmerman, and also a veterinarian, Dr. Foltz. A Catholic convent was founded about 1874. It is a home for aged and ill nuns, and a five story building built in 1933, has been added.

The first hotel in New Cassel, the Adams House, was built in 1859.

The population of the village was about one hundred fifty when I came in 1894, 58 years ago.

Campbellsport, the new village, was built after the Airline railway (C and NW) was built up through here in 1872 in the town of Ashford. The land on which Campbellsport was built was owned by a farmer, Stuart Campbell, who lived one mile west of the village. The village was named after him. The railroad station was still called New Cassel and changed to Campbellsport in 1873. There was a large space between the two villages.

I came here in 1894 and served six years as principal of the Campbellsport school. There was a one room school in New Cassel, or "Lower Town" as we called it. I helped incorporate the village of Campbellsport comprising the villages of Campbellsport and New Cassel under the name Campbellsport in 1902, and I served as the first village clerk for ten years. M. L. McCullough was the first president. I organized the Campbellsport Mutual Insurance Company in 1895 and served as its secretary for thirty-eight years and later served as treasurer and vice-president.

James McCullough had the first store up here and was the first postmaster. Later, Platt Durand became postmaster. He had a drugstore and William Wedde had the first hardware store. L.C. Kohler owned the first shoe store and E.F. Martin had the lumberyard. There were two physicians at the time I came; Dr. P.A. Hoffmann and Dr. E.J. Orvis. The Wisconsin Power and Light Co. had an office here and the Theresa Union Telephone Co., of which I was a stockholder, built a line in here and mine was the first phone installed about 3 blocks from the station. We got the first electric lights from water power at Long Lake, near Dundee, in 1907 and my house was the first house wired for electricity. A bank was established here in 1902 called the First National Bank, later changed to the First State Bank, still in operation.

The main street runs one mile from west to east. The first high school building was built in 1895 and was razed in 1938. The high school three year course was established about 1907 and my eldest daughter was one of the first three graduates in 1911. She was Edna Wrucke and the other two girls were Margaret Paas and Lillian Van De Zande.

There was a peculiar feature of our little town that we had two post offices, the Campbellsport Office and the New Cassel office, until about twenty-five to thirty years ago, when the New Cassel office was taken up after William Pool, the postmaster died.

The population of the town today is about 1250 and it is located about fifteen miles southeast of Fond du Lac. Sewer and water works were constructed in 1935 and 1936. State Trunk Highway 67 runs through the village from east to west. There are the following churches in town: Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist and Methodist. The Stella Cheese company, a large manufacturer of Italian cheese, started here about thirty years ago and is still in operation. The new shoe factory started here about five months ago making infants and ladies shoes. We have a movie theatre operated by Mr. and Mrs. Fischer. It was started in 1943. There are also many television sets in the village. An oddity of the village is a 6 hundred pound man, "Mush" Bauer, who operates a hotel-tavern. The largest broom factory in Wisconsin is operated here by Fred Elwing.

We are located about eight miles west of the now famous Kettle-Moraine regions and lakes territory, known as the diamond territory since the Glacial period. Several diamonds were found there years ago. It is now a summer resort area operated by the state.

Dr. Nicholas Senn, the noted surgeon, was born and grew up in the little hamlet of Elmore, two and one-half miles southwest of here.

I was eighty-four on February 29, 1952, it being my twentieth birthday. [*Clarification: He was a leap year baby.*]

H.A. Wrucke
March 24, 1952
Campbellsport, Wis.

HISTORY OF SCHLAEFER HARDWARE STORE BLDG.

In 1879 William Wedde came from Chicago and bought a tin shop from a Mr. Howard and a lumber yard from a Mr. Martin. A few years later he enlarged his shop and established a hardware store. He operated the business with his son-in-law, A. L. Schwandt until the latter's death in 1924. His widow, Olga Schwandt, ran the business until 1928 when she sold it to Joe and Gretchen Schlaefer. They in turn sold the building and business to his brother, William Schlaefer. Bill and his son Mark continued in business until the former's death. Mark continued in business until July 1991 when the building was sold to _____. An auction had been held previously to clear out the hardware equipment.

At one time there were two buildings which were combined with a full tin roof. The building also had two apartments occupied by the Schlaefers and their six children downstairs and an apartment upstairs tenanted by several different people.