

The Early Pioneers at that First Town Meeting in May 1855

As the minutes of the first recorded meeting for the Town of Stockton read "the meeting was held at the house of John Shannon in the town of Stockton, County of Portage, State of Wisconsin on the twenty-eight day of May, 1855." Malcolm Rosholt found **John Shannon** listed on the 1858 Stockton tax roll, but he is not listed in the 1860 Census. He either moved from Stockton or had died sometime between those years.

In Stockton's early year's terms of office were one year. **J. C. Maxfield** was elected Chairman of that first meeting and also was elected Justice of the Peace. Years later, he was elected to the positions of Supervisor in 1865 and Assessor in '66 & '67. Jonathan C. Maxfield was born in New Hampshire and his wife Anne was born in Pennsylvania. He farmed in the southwest quarter of Sec. 31 Tn 23 of Stockton. The County Plat of 1876 shows his property being south of Morrill Cemetery.

Amasa Yease was elected Inspector that evening. Only one man with the given name *Amasa* is recorded in Portage County around that time and not with the surname *Yease*. The surname could have been incorrectly recorded, incorrectly transcribed from those original hard to read records, or he might have been a lumberman that had soon after moved on.

Also elected Inspector of the meeting was **Jeremiah Bennett**. Bennett was a farmer. He was born in New York and his wife Emmaline was born in New Hampshire. The 1860 Census records four children but his name seems not to appear in the 1870 Census.

The Stevens Point Journal writes, "**O. H. Lamoreaux** came to Wisconsin in 1849 prospecting." He left briefly and returned with his wife Elizabeth in 1851. They settled in Stockton and lived in the town until 1859 when they moved to Plover. His interests were law and farming. He is noted as the First Elected Chairman, organizing the Town of Stockton in 1855, and again being elected as Chairman in 1858.

Elected Supervisor was **Evelon H. Crosby**. Wisconsin Land Records hold the only documentation found thus far for Evelon H. Crosby. Recorded in his name at Stevens Point's land office on December 15, 1855, was a land parcel of 40 acres in Section 12 Town 23 of Stockton. This was one of the six Sections of Stockton that were annexed to Amherst in 1875.

Also elected Supervisor was **William Bremmer**. Records indicate he was born in Vermont. The 1860 Census lists him as a farmer. Information found shows he served both his town and his country. Besides being elected to the first town board in 1855, he was elected Treasurer in 1857, '58 and '59, and elected as Assessor in 1861. As Captain in the 18th Regiment of the Wisconsin Infantry, he fought in the Battle of Shiloh in 1862. Elected Supervisor in 1864, he was again called into service. He served as captain in the 5th Regiment of the Wisconsin Infantry and was wounded in the Battle of Petersburg.

Geo. W. Morrill was born in New York and his wife Sylvia was born in Maine. The Stevens Point Journal reports "they came to Wisconsin and took up a claim on the unsurveyed Indian land in 1851." He served two years as Town Superintendent of Schools and had been a resident of Stockton for forty-three years. Their home was near the Morrill School House located on the corner of today's Kennedy Avenue and 2nd Street on the town's western boundary.

Wm. B. Wadsworth attended that first meeting but did not receive enough votes to serve as Justice of the Peace; however, no other information on his life in Stockton or Portage County has been found.

Peter McMillan was elected as Town Assessor. The Stevens Point Journal of February 15, 1908 sums up information neatly. "Peter McMillan was born at Alburg, Vt. on September 20, 1824, and spent his youth in his native state. He came to Wisconsin among the pioneers of forty-nine and soon afterwards took up a homestead in the south part of the town of Stockton. In 1850 he married Miss Miranda Diamond and for nearly 50 years they continued to make their home on the old farm." He was Assessor in 1855 and '56 brought in a tie vote for Assessor between McMillan and W. H. Sherwin. Beginning in November of 1861, he served nine months as a Corporal in E Company in the 18th Regiment of the Wisconsin Infantry.

Not getting enough votes for town assessor was **Daniel Baker**. Town assessment rolls record Daniel Baker as a sheep farmer living in Sec. 30 Tn 23. That property is midway on Stockton's 2nd Street between J and Kennedy. Baker, who was born in New York, was elected Supervisor in 1862 and '63 and elected Town Chairman from 1867 to 1870.

Also elected Justice of the Peace was **Wm. Richmond**. He and his family had lived across County J south of the Municipal Building. One parcel was along J and another parcel of property was on the south side of the road just east of Lions Park in Sec. 20 Tn 23. He had been a resident in this area for 32 years settling here in approximately 1852. The 1860 Census states he was a farmer, 60 years of age, and was born in Canada.

Wm. Noble(s) was also one of the first Justices of the Peace 1855 and in 1856 he was elected Supervisor. Later, according to the 1860 Census, he and his family are living in the city of Stevens Point.

A young man in his late twenties at the time, **Horace (Harry) Richmond** did not receive enough votes that day in May to serve as Justice of the Peace, however his name is in the record. Town records reveal his property was where the Lions Park is today. The Stockton Census of 1860 does not list him because he died at an early age of thirty-three years and is at rest in the Arnett Cemetery. This cemetery was also referred to as the Richmond Cemetery in years past, and is located near the Lions Park.

James E. Lytle came to Wisconsin at age 6, two years before it was admitted to statehood. He was elected town Treasurer in 1855 and re-elected in '56. He also was elected town Assessor in 1858 and '62. The 1860 Census states he was a forty-four year old farmer. He was born in (Richmond) Virginia, and his wife Francis (Diamond), forty-three, was born in Canada. At that time they had five children ranging from eight months to nine years of age.

Nelson Blodgett, elected Constable that day, was born in Ohio and was forty years of age in 1860. The Census also notes his occupation as *Tavern Keeper*. The Stevens Point Paper writes his wife Sarah was born in Orange County, New York. Malcolm Rosholt found that in the early years of Stockton, Blodgett had operated a hotel called *Stockton House* where he had also served as Postmaster. His tavern-house was located in the southwest corner of Sec. 31 Tn 23, along Shady Drive near the southwestern boundary of Stockton, southeast of Morrill Cemetery.

Also according to the 1860 Census, five years after that meeting, **Calvin Richmond's** age was thirty-three, and he and his wife were both born in New York. The 1876 County Plat shows his property on the northwest side of Arnett's County B and J intersection. Besides being elected to the positions of Constable and Sealer of Weights and Measures in 1855, Richmond was also Chairman in 1866 and Supervisor in '68, '69, and '70. The 1870 Census lists four children ranging from three to twenty-one years of age.

Henry Benson, elected Constable, owned property in the west half of Sec. 18 Tn 23. That location is west (Bluff Road) of the Town Municipal Building. In 1860 he was thirty-four years old and he and his wife Marion were both born in New York. He is listed as a farmer with three children. Beginning in August of 1864, he served nine months as a Private in F Company in the 5th Regiment of the Wisconsin Infantry.

(Sources Town Historical Records, Malcolm Rosholt s Our County Our Story, Stevens Point s Journal & Gazette, UWSP Archives, U.S.Census Records, Ancestry.com)

Sue

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