

# Laying the Foundation

## The First Century

By John S. Hart

In November 1834 Captain Gilbert Knapp established the first claim in the territory that would eventually become Racine. It consisted of 141 acres on both sides of the mouth of the Chippecotton River (now Root River). Eleven years earlier, in 1823, while in the U. S. Reserve Cutter Service, he anchored at the mouth of the river and explored the land on both sides, determining that it could support a settlement.

When a treaty was signed in September 1833 between the federal government and the Indians in what is now southern Wisconsin, in which the Indians relinquished their rights to the territory, Knapp made plans to return. In the spring of 1834 he journeyed from Chicago to the trading post at Skunk Grove (near Franksville), and with an Indian guide followed the Chippecotton River to its mouth. After several days of exploration, he returned to Chicago to seek financial backing for his venture. Later in the fall he brought back three men, who constructed a log building. It later served as a trading post and warehouse. To hold his claim, two of the men occupied the building as his agents during that winter.

The following spring, in 1835, Knapp, a widower, returned with his children and other family members along with many other settlers. Although the little community was initially called Root River, the early arriving settlers established the name Port Gilbert, in honor of its founder. This name did not last, and the town soon became known as Racine, which is French for "root," in reference to the "river with tangled roots."

In 1836 the downtown grid of streets was laid out (slightly askew from true north-south), and the following year, 1837, the first hotel, the Racine House, was built. A sizable building for that time, it was located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Monument Square and Fifth Streets (the site of the old Zahns store).

Oddly, both of these circumstances—the westerly cant of the downtown grid and the location of the hotel—come up later in our church's history. The grid for the streets to the south of downtown, starting at Seventh Street, rights itself to true north, causing a slight bend at Seventh, thus "squeezing" the lot shape at Seventh and Main Streets and possibly influ-

encing the design of the present church when it was later constructed at this corner. And by another quirk of fate the Racine House, as will be seen, played a part in the fire that destroyed St. Luke's first church building.

In *A History of Eighty Years: St. Luke's Parish* (1922), Dr. John G. Meachem, Jr., wrote of the first Episcopal activity in this area just a year after the founding of the settlement:

On December 7th, 1835, a missionary of this church in Chicago, the Rev. Isaac W. Hallam, wrote to the Domestic Committee in New York that in his judgment the interests of the Church would be advanced by their selecting Milwaukee as a missionary station without delay. But imagining, as it would seem, that the committee might regard Milwaukee as too insignificant a place for the entire services of a missionary, he named another, Root River (now Racine), twenty-five miles distant, which he thought might be united with it as a station. Fearing, as it would appear, that the committee might experience some difficulty in determining the exact location of Milwaukee, he stated for their information that it was "situated in the Wisconsin Territory, on the shore of Lake Michigan, about eighty



Sketch looking northwest from Seventh and Main Streets in 1841. St. Luke's first church was built in 1845-46 on the vacant block beyond the house on the right, between Fifth and Sixth Streets. The first house on the left was purchased in 1891 by St. Luke's for use as a parsonage, and was replaced in 1908 by a brick rectory, which later became the Parish Center. With no buildings at Sixth and Main Streets, the first courthouse, built in 1840, can be seen in the middle of the block on Market Square (now Monument Square). At far left is the site of St. Luke's present church.

miles from Chicago.” And (lest he might be regarded as a little wild in his recommendations, he added, in a sort of apologetic and prophetic way): “It is not so much what these places now are as what they will be in a short time, that makes it so important that they should be immediately occupied. Both Milwaukee and Root River have harbors, and where such is the case the increase of population is astonishingly great.”

This apparently produced results insofar as Milwaukee was concerned, but it was not until 1839 that the Rev. Dr. Hull of that city came to Racine to hold the first services. In 1840 services were held every two weeks by the Rev. M. Allison of Waukegan, Illinois. By this time the little settlement, just over five years old, had grown to a community of 337 persons. In 1841 three young missionaries came to the territory of Wisconsin and pitched their tent near Prairieville (now Waukesha) to begin an itinerant ministry for the scattered settlers of this northwest frontier. William Adams, James Breck, and John Hobart, Jr., traveled on foot and horseback throughout the area to hold services wherever the opportunity arose, frequently in schoolrooms or courthouses. Racine was one of the beneficiaries of their ministry, and the small group they served became known as the Episcopalian Society of Racine. This name is occasionally found in newspaper accounts long after St. Luke’s Church was established and persists even as late as 1900.

### PARISH FORMED

By the fall of 1842 the services had aroused sufficient interest for a small nucleus of people to form a parish and select the name St. Luke’s. In September 1842 the Board of Domestic Missions supplied as missionary the Rev. William Walsh, a deacon, who served until April 1843. The little church recorded two marriages in October solemnized by Mr. Walsh, and a baptism and confirmation of three persons—also in October—by Bishop Jackson Kemper. The services were apparently held in the new courthouse

that Knapp had built on the town square by 1842, along with a jail and a county office building.

The earliest vestry minutes, dated July 29, 1843, are properly described as being in the Village of Racine, which had been so incorporated earlier in the year. These minutes had been copied, along with subsequent minutes of the

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next few years, into a new record book that was started in 1846. In the August 1843 vestry meeting the Rev. F. W. Hatch of Kenosha was invited by resolution to officiate at St. Luke’s Church and is believed to have served half-time until September 1844.

### THE FIRST CHURCH

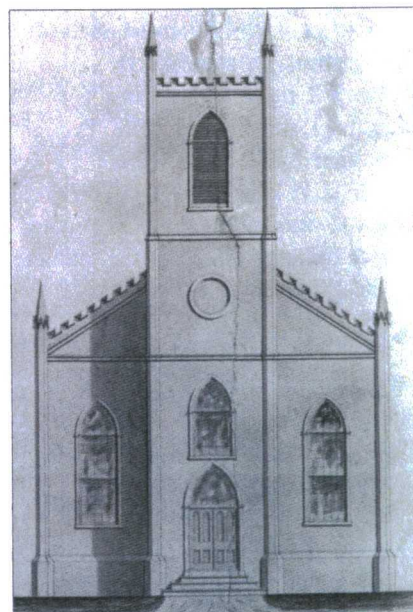
In early 1844 a building committee was appointed by the vestry to build an Episcopal church in the Village of Racine. Plans were drawn by Thomas Cadmus, a vestryman, and conditions established for the sale of slips (pews) to raise the necessary funds. In late August 1844, in anticipation of calling a new rector, subscriptions were solicited for “the support of the Rev. Ebenezer Williams.” In St. Luke’s archives is the original list of thirty subscribers who made signed pledges totalling \$203 in amounts from \$1 to \$16 and payable quarterly.

Accordingly, in September 1844 Williams was offered the position of “Pastor” of St. Luke’s Church and was promised a salary of “\$200 per year certain, or \$250 if it can be raised.” In October the Cadmus plans were abandoned (did Williams, perhaps, persuade the vestry to plan a larger or more imposing church?), and in early November subscriptions were solicited for the “erection of a church.” This list

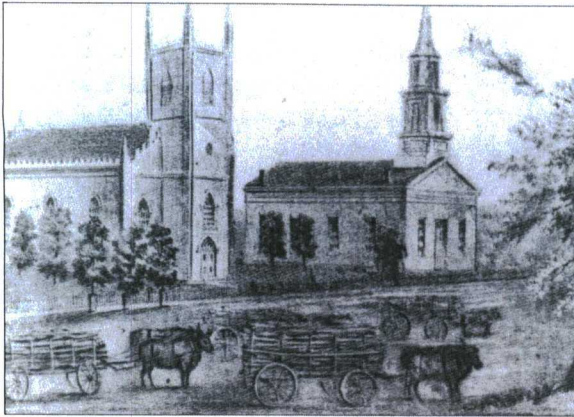
has also been preserved and consists of forty signed pledges in amounts ranging up to \$75, totaling about \$445.

By March 1845 “Mr. Williams” reported that he had also collected \$700, which was paid to the treasurer, and that he had “received for said church donations (from sundry individuals) in books etc., and from a lady in Philadelphia, \$30 and a set of silver plate for the communion service.”

Later that March plans submitted by Lucas Bradley for the new church were accepted. The front elevation drawing by architect and builder Bradley has been preserved and is reproduced here. At the same time the vestry authorized the sale of slips by auction to the highest bidders, but “not less than at appraised value, plus an annual rental that would be levied.” The church was designed in the Gothic Revival style, forty-four feet by sixty feet, and had a squared-off tower. It was to be located on the east side of Hay Market Square (also known as Market Square, now Monument Square) on land donated by Jacob



Front elevation drawing of first St. Luke’s church by Lucas Bradley, the architect and builder. It was the first building on the east side of Market Square (the 500 block of Main Street). The first services were held in the spring of 1846.



Sketch by Col. William Utley of first St. Luke's church (left) and the Universalist Church, built in 1852. St. Luke's was destroyed by the downtown fire of January 4, 1866. The Universalist Church survived, to be razed years later and provide the site for the first Hotel Racine.

Barker of Buffalo, N.Y. Barker and Gordon Hubbard of Chicago were friends of Gilbert Knapp, and the three formed a partnership to establish and develop the claim made by Knapp in 1834 that became the original plat of Racine. The church was the first building to be constructed on the east side of the 500 block of Main Street.

Although a vestry resolution in March 1845 commended Mr. Williams for his "valuable services in raising funds," no further mention of him is made in later minutes. In the 1922 *History* it is written that he left two months later, in May 1845, but with no explanation given (see "Eleazar Williams: The Lost Dauphin?" p. 17).

For the next year no vestry minutes were recorded, and the parish may have been without the services of a rector, but construction continued on the building.

By 1845 the Village of Racine had experienced more than a seven-fold growth over the preceding five years to achieve a population of 2,509 persons. Typical conditions, primitive by modern standards, included dirt (or mud) streets, fenced yards to exclude wandering cows and horses, and travel by foot, horseback, wagon (sleigh in winter), or ship. The Lakeshore Railroad between Chicago and Milwaukee would not arrive for

another ten years.

Communication was limited to the U. S. Mail transported by horseback, coach or ship. The telegraph had just been demonstrated with an installation in the East the previous year, but would not reach here for some years. The invention of the telephone would not occur for another thirty years. Most food was produced locally, with sirloin steak selling for five cents a pound and eggs for six cents a dozen.

### **THE REV. SAMUEL MARKS, 1846-1849, FIRST RECTOR**

By early May 1846 meetings were held in the vestry room of the new church, at which time a sexton was employed, and the Rev. Samuel Marks was called as the new rector with a salary of \$600 a year. He subsequently arrived by steamer from Cleveland, Ohio. Captain Sundy, who made no charge for the trip, was commended in a vestry resolution for his "polite and generous deportment" for transporting the rector, his family, and his goods to Racine. The new church was consecrated in the summer of 1846 by Bishop Kemper. The church finances became a continuing problem. Pew rentals lagged, forcing the vestry to institute a monthly collection. To help the struggling

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church, Bishop Kemper offered to contribute \$200 to the rector's salary.

In February 1847 the Legislature of the Territory of Wisconsin passed "An act to provide for the incorporation of the Protestant Episcopal Church and other religious societies in the Territory of Wisconsin." Accordingly, in June of that year, a group of twelve male members approved the filing of a Certificate of Incorporation establishing the official name as "St. Luke's Church of Racine." Taking the official action by male members only was not unusual. Many times at the annual meetings reference was made to the voting as being by the "male members of the congregation."

In October 1848 Father Marks submitted his resignation but was persuaded by the vestry to reconsider. He agreed to serve until June 1849 and, in a spirit of cooperation, at a reduced salary.

### **THE REV. AZEL D. COLE, 1849-1850, SECOND RECTOR**

The Rev. Azel D. Cole accepted the call to St. Luke's in December 1849. In the following months he inspired aggressive action that resulted in paying off \$2,100, leaving the parish free of debt for the first time since it embarked on the church building program. The church grew rapidly in membership during his brief ministry, and he started the mission on the north side of the river that eventually became Immanuel Parish. Nine months later, in September 1850, he resigned to become the president of Nashotah Theological Seminary. (He succeeded the Rev. James Breck, who left Nashotah to pursue itinerant missionary activity on the frontier in Minnesota. Cole continued as president of Nashotah until 1866.)

The vestry accepted Father Cole's resignation with regret and passed a series of resolutions that extolled his many contributions to the church and for "the spirit of peace, harmony, and Christian love which his example...shed abroad in this community."

## **Founding of Nashotah House**

William Adams, James Breck, and John Hobart, Jr. (the son of the distinguished bishop of New York), were students at General Theological Seminary in New York City in 1841 when they responded to a plea by the Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper to help form a school to train young missionaries at a site somewhere west of Milwaukee. Bishop Kemper had been consecrated in 1835 to the newly established position of "missionary bishop" of Indiana and Missouri and was stationed in St. Louis. The following year he also assumed responsibility for the Territory of Wisconsin when it was formed by an act of Congress in 1836.

The three young deacons were joined by the Rev. Richard F. Cadle, who had been asked by Bishop Kemper to serve as prior of the new school. Cadle had been serving as a missionary since 1829, originally in the Green Bay area, and later in the vicinity of Prairie du Chien, where his preaching extended as far as Galena, Illinois, and Dubuque, Iowa.

Over the next year the young men ranged far and wide, preaching and conducting services over a radius of fifty or more miles from their camp near Waukesha. On one journey from September 28 to December 25, 1841, Cadle crisscrossed the area from Racine to Madison to Green Bay, with stops in a dozen or more communities. At the end of the first year Hobart wrote that they "had conducted 101 services in seventeen different places, had traveled 1,851 miles on horseback, 736 miles on foot, a total of 2,587 miles."

Cadle left the group at the end of the winter to pursue his separate missionary work around Whitewater and Madison, later returning to the East. At the time of his leaving he received the highest praise from Bishop Kemper, who described him as a "real pioneer of the West," and many churches in the middle and western regions of Wisconsin trace their origins to his ministry. Hobart also returned to the East in late 1842.

In August 1842 Bishop Kemper acquired property on the Nashotah lakes and the first building was erected for the school. Several months later, in October 1842, he ordained Breck and Adams to the priesthood at Oneida in the first ordination ceremony in Wisconsin. The pair began the training of students for Holy Orders with Breck as the first president of Nashotah Theological Seminary. Thus Nashotah and St. Luke's share a common beginning with both celebrating their sesquicentennial in 1992. By 1850 the frontier had moved westward and Nashotah discontinued its itinerant ministry and concentrated on theological training with the Rev. Azel D. Cole as president.

## **THE REV. JAMES DEPUÏ, 1851, THIRD RECTOR**

After an interval of about four months, in January 1851 the Rev. James DePui became the rector, but in the following April an appointment as Chaplain in the U. S. Army led to his resignation. Until a new rector could be obtained, the Rev. John Bowman of Whitewater was employed to provide "clerical services."

## **THE REV. JOSEPH H. NICHOLS, 1851-1856, FOURTH RECTOR**

By November 1851 agreement was reached with the Rev. Joseph H. Nichols to be rector of St. Luke's with an unusual six-month trial period. In May 1852 vestry resolutions affirmed the parish's satisfaction with his officiating, and he was requested to continue as rector.

In that same year Racine College was founded. A college was offered by the Diocese of Wisconsin to the community along the lake shore that would first raise \$6,000 and provide six acres of land for a building. Under Nichols's leadership two of St. Luke's prominent members and early Racine pioneers, Dr. Elias Smith and Marshall M. Strong, were successful in securing a donation of the land and the necessary pledges to win the college for Racine. Although the appeal was citywide, almost half the pledges were from Episcopalians. Father Nichols was one of the fifteen incorporators, the majority of them Episcopalians, who obtained the state charter for the school. He also served as a professor of English literature in the College's early days while continuing as St. Luke's rector.

In the *Daily Morning Advocate* of September 9, 1854, the reopening of the church to occur on Sunday, September 10, was noted along with a description of improvements that had been completed just eight years after the building was finished. A new altar, pulpit, and font had been constructed with an elevated sanctuary, and the corners on either side of the sanctuary

## The Rev. Joseph H. Nichols *Instrumental in Founding Racine College*

Joseph H. Nichols was born August 20, 1805, in Newton, Connecticut. He studied at the Episcopal Academy at Cheshire, Connecticut, and graduated from Yale College in 1825. After studying law in the office of an attorney in New York City, he was admitted to the bar in Albany, New York, in 1828, but soon made the decision to enter General Episcopal Theological Seminary in New York. He graduated there in 1831 and was immediately ordained to the priesthood.

Over the next twenty years he served a number of parishes, mainly in Connecticut. While assistant minister of Trinity Church in New Haven, Connecticut, he married Louisa Rutledge of that city in 1844. He was rector of St. Peter's Church in Cheshire when he received the call in 1851 from St. Luke's in Racine. In 1852 he helped found Racine College, where he taught some of the first classes and was known as "an accomplished scholar and writer." As he served out his term as rector, his wife became St. Luke's organist.

In 1856 he resigned to resume teaching at Racine College. During this time he had preaching assignments at Elkhorn and Delavan. Later in 1862, with the nation divided in the Civil War, he was appointed chaplain to the Nineteenth Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers. That summer he, along with many others, was stricken with a fever in Norfolk, Virginia, where his regiment was stationed. A subsequent illness, possibly resulting from the fever, led to his hospitalization in Washington, D. C., where he died on December 13, 1862, at age fifty-seven. His widow continued to live in Racine until her death in 1915.

were partitioned off with wooden screens to form a robing room (sacristy) and a Sunday school/library room. The church walls and ceiling were stained

and the improvements were heralded as being "chaste and tasteful, and well becoming a place of sacred worship." In addition, reported the *Advocate*, "a rich oriental window of stained glass, manufactured by George I. Burns, of Buffalo, New York, is to be placed at the east end of the church, as soon as it is completed, or in about a month."

The complimentary article concluded, however, with a somewhat negative comment: "We hope that the whole parish, notwithstanding the hard times, will now unite and put forth their zeal in improving the outside of the church, both for their credit and [for] the reputation of the city, which certainly are seriously implicated by the present most uncomely aspect of the exterior of the edifice."

Nichols served the parish longer than any previous rector, about five years, until his resignation on September 1, 1856. Strangely, for the last four years he served there were seemingly no records kept of any parish or vestry meetings. The succeeding rector inserted a memorandum in the minutes book of the church which stated that after diligent inquiry, no records could be found.

## THE REV. ROSWELL PARK, D.D., 1856-1863, FIFTH RECTOR

The Rev. Roswell Park, D.D., accepted a call as rector and began serving in September 1856. In the first year of his busy ministry, he performed one hundred baptisms and prepared sixty-five persons for confirmation. In the summer of 1857, after raising \$1,800 in subscriptions "through the zealous efforts of Dr. Teegarden," the church was closed while it was remodeled to enlarge it from 62 to 88 pews. Upon opening in October 1857, it could then seat 500 persons, including the use of the gallery. However, at the next annual meeting the following spring a vote of the members established that the gallery would be reserved for the exclusive use of the choir. The cost of the

addition, including a new roof, was \$2,800, which again put the parish in debt in the amount of \$1,000.

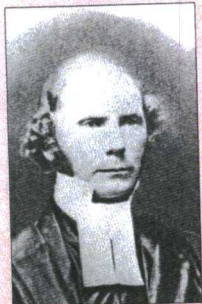
In the early days of the church, the annual parish meeting was customarily held on the Monday after Easter. Since only a very few members were typically reported in attendance, the affairs of St. Luke's appear to have been determined by a relatively small group out of the total congregation. The two wardens and all eight vestrymen were elected each year, but with usually little change in the makeup of the vestry from year to year. Some interesting observations on the customs of the time are found in the minutes of the annual and vestry meetings. For example, at the April 1857 annual parish meeting a resolution provided that "the Sexton be instructed to seat strangers in any unoccupied seats, unless requested to the contrary by the regular occupants of the pew."

In his sixth annual sermon, preached on September 7, 1862 (which was printed in the local newspaper and occupied three entire columns of fine print), Father Park gave a detailed account of the activities of the six years of his ministry. In this period there were baptisms of 467 children and ninety-six adults, with 252 confirmations by Bishop Kemper. Father Park made 6,000 pastoral visits, "including those to the sick and to strangers." These can be found duly recorded in a large ledger which lists the date, time, person, and topic of conversation. In addition, he meticulously maintained a separate file on each family in the church (and some nonmembers or prospects), organized by districts in the city and giving nationality, location of home, family composition, parish calls, baptisms, funerals, and so on. In respect to financial matters, his enumeration of all money

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## The Rev. Roswell Park *Greatly Increased Number of Communicants*

Roswell Park was born in Lebanon, Connecticut, on October 11, 1807, the eldest of six children and bore the name of his father, a Revolutionary War soldier and a seventh generation American who traced his lineage back to the time of William the Conqueror. He graduated from the military academy at West Point in 1831 at the



head of his class, and one month later enrolled in Union College at Schenectady, New York, where, after passing the requisite examinations, he immediately received a B.A. degree and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Commissioned as a lieutenant in the army, he served the next five years in the engineer corps on a number of large construction projects.

Deciding on a career change, he resigned from the army in 1836 to become a professor of chemistry and natural philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania. In December of that year he married Mary Brewster Baldwin, a descendent of Elder Brewster, who came over on the Mayflower. She was described as having "a personality equally rare with her distinguished husband." His scholarship was evidenced by contributions to periodicals and his authorship of a number of books on diverse subjects, the most notable being *Pantology: A Systematic Survey of Human Knowledge* (1841). He also published two books of poetry as well as texts for his courses.

In 1842 he resigned his professorship and began to prepare for a career in the ministry. In 1844 he was ordained to the Episcopal priesthood and became rector of a parish in Woburn, Connecticut, where he also established a private school. In 1852 the family moved to Racine where Father Park assisted in founding Racine College and became its first president. Tragically, two years later, his wife died at age forty, just eight days after the birth of their fourth child, a son who died a year later.

After accepting the call in 1856 to be rector of St. Luke's Church, he continued to serve as the college president. He received many scholastic honors and degrees, including an M.A. from Union College and a D.D. from Norwich University in Vermont. Because of Racine College's financial strain during a depression period, Dr. Park resigned as president in 1859 and a consolidation was affected with St. John's Hall at Nashotah. The Rev. James DeKoven, who was warden of St. John's, then became warden of the combined institutions and relocated to Racine. Dr. Park continued to serve the school as a professor, and a year later, in 1860, he married Elizabeth Niles of Waukegan, Illinois. During his tenure at St. Luke's the church experienced rapid growth, which was a testimony to his untiring efforts and spiritual example. After six years of his ministry he estimated the number of communicants had increased from 106 to 190.

Dr. Park resigned from St. Luke's in September 1863 to respond to a call to become head of Immanuel Hall, a church and military preparatory school for boys near Chicago. While there he died on July 16, 1869, at age sixty-two, due to "a congestion of the brain." After funeral services at St. Luke's Church he was buried on the grounds of Racine College (now The DeKoven Center).

Some years later, in 1883, Dr. Park's contributions to Racine were recognized when the city named Park Avenue (formerly Chippeway Street) in his honor.

His second wife, Elizabeth, died in 1877 and is buried in Mound Cemetery. Also buried there are his daughter, Mary, who died in 1921 at age eighty-one, his first wife, and two infant children.

His son, Roswell, received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Racine College and went on to a distinguished career as a surgeon at the Medical School of the University of Buffalo, where he established a cancer research laboratory in the late 1890s. Now known as the Roswell Park Cancer Institute, it has grown to a present-day complex covering eight city blocks and has 600 employees.

The son of the physician also bore the name Roswell, making him the seventh Roswell Park in his direct line.

raised and spent (including the building enlargement, local missionary and parochial activities, the purchase of the mission chapel in the Fourth Ward [Immanuel], and his annual salary of \$666) showed an average expenditure of \$2,050 a year for the six-year period. Expenditures included paying off the \$1,000 debt remaining from the building expansion.

Dr. Park's resignation a year later, in September 1863, was followed by several months of indecision in choosing the next rector.

## THE REV. ANDREW D. BENEDICT, 1864-1866, SIXTH RECTOR

The Rev. Andrew D. Benedict was called to be rector of St. Luke's in April 1864. At the annual meeting in March 1864, just prior to Father Benedict's arrival, Dr. John G. Meachem, Sr., was elected senior warden. He had not previously been a vestryman, so this was his first official involvement in the affairs of St. Luke's Church, but one that was to last until his death in 1896.

Several of the prominent vestrymen and benefactors of the church died in the next two years. Most notable among them was Isaac Taylor, who was born a poor boy in England and suffered an unhappy childhood as an orphan under conditions that left an indelible mark on his memory. As a young man he managed to get to America where he made his fortune in the lumber business. He settled in Racine in 1842. He was known to have expressed a desire to provide someday for poor and orphaned children. He died in November 1865 at age fifty-eight, to be followed in death by his wife a year later. She left a substantial part of her \$300,000 estate to found and maintain Taylor Orphan Asylum (now Taylor Home) in fulfillment of her husband's wishes. Taylor Hall at Racine College also resulted from a bequest in her will.

## **THE FIRE**

At four in the morning on Thursday, January 4, 1866, a fire started in a blacksmith shop on the north side of Fifth Street between the alley and Wisconsin Street to the west. The blaze quickly spread to small adjacent

wooden buildings, and soon the Racine House across Fifth Street at the north end of Market Square (now Monument Square) was engulfed in flames, along with Titus Hall, a large business block on the north side of Fifth Street between the alley and Main Street to

the east.

With the temperature below zero, a strong wind was blowing from the northwest. Soon embers from the Racine House were scudding across the Square and threatening St. Luke's Church (on the east side of Main, in the

## **Drs. Meachem: Leading Laymen**

For about the last three-quarters of St. Luke's Church's first century of existence, Dr. John Goldesbrough Meachem, Sr., and his son, Dr. John G. Meachem, Jr., played key roles as the leading laymen in the church's development and growth.

Dr. Meachem, Sr., one of five children (including four sons who eventually became physicians), was born in England in 1823. The family emigrated to America in 1830. Two years later the father was ordained an Episcopal minister in New York. In 1843 John G. Meachem graduated from a medical school in Vermont. He was the youngest in a class of 150 and achieved highest honors. He carried on his initial practice in several communities in New York State until 1862, when he moved his wife and son, John, Jr., to Racine to continue his practice as physician and surgeon. Two years later he was elected senior warden of St. Luke's Church, and remained in that position until his death.

During the Civil War he was a surgeon and head of the regimental hospital at Camp Utley, which was situated on seventy-five acres south of Sixteenth Street and north of Racine College. Some years later his prominence as a physician and surgeon and as a civic leader led to his election as mayor of Racine for three terms. In addition to being one of the founders of St. Luke's Hospital in 1872, he was a trustee of Racine College from 1874 until his death in 1896 at age seventy-three.

Dr. John Meachem, Jr., an only son, was born in 1846 in Linden, New York, where his father had started his practice. After receiving initial training under his father, he continued on to Rush Medical College in Chicago, where he graduated in 1865. Not yet twenty years of age, he was the youngest in his class. He subsequently received private instruction at Bellevue Medical College in New York. He set up practice with his father and was considered one of the preeminent physicians in Racine. He also participated in the founding of St. Luke's Hospital and devoted much of his time and energy to it over his lifetime.

From 1877 to 1895 he was a member of the Board of Health, and its chairman for seventeen years. He was instrumental in improving the poor sanitation conditions in Racine through the installation of a sewer system and the digging of artesian wells, which was the first step in achieving a modern water system.

After his father's death, he was elected junior warden at St. Luke's, replacing William Horlick, who became senior warden, and they both continued in those positions until 1908, when William Horlick decided to step down, since he was frequently out of town on business. Dr. Meachem, Jr., then became senior warden and held that position until his death at age ninety-six in 1942, just a month before St. Luke's centennial celebration.

Dr. John G. Meachem, III, born in 1873, followed in the footsteps of his father and graduated from Rush Medical College in 1897. After several years of internship and residencies in New York hospitals, he spent additional time gaining experience in Europe. Upon returning, he was engaged in various business enterprises, and for four years was a director and secretary of the Portland Cement Co. in California, where he resided. Returning to Racine in 1910, he began full-time practice, and, like his father, was involved in the affairs of St. Luke's Hospital and its expansions. There is no record of his being active in running St. Luke's Church, however. He never married and, after an extended illness, died in 1926 at age fifty-three.

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500 block) and the Universalist Church adjacent to the south. Although someone on the roof of each church was able to extinguish several small fires, when embers landed on the roof of the tower of St. Luke's Church they could not be reached and the building began to burn. The firefighting equipment consisted of hand pumpers, but the water lines froze and the wooden church was destroyed in an hour. Dr. Meachem rescued some of the church's books from the burning building but suffered a broken arm in the process. Newspaper accounts of the fire put the value of the church at \$10,000 to \$12,000. Insurance coverage was \$5,000.

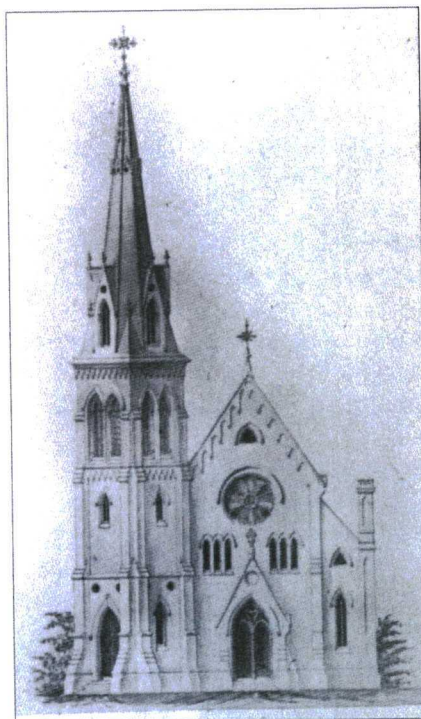
Before the day was over a vestry meeting was convened in the office of Dr. Meachem, and the members courageously began plans for the future. The next day the Presbyterian Church offered the use of its building for Sunday afternoon services. Later the courthouse was used for Sunday services for over a year.

In the next six weeks after the fire the original church property, consisting of four lots, was sold for \$3,000, and two lots on the corner of Seventh and Main Streets (the present site) were purchased for \$1,400. Oddly, negotiations were also subsequently conducted with Captain Knapp on other property at Seventh and Main Streets (presumably another corner) but without success.

## THE NEW CHURCH

On January 5, 1866, the day after the fire, a solicitation of the members was begun to raise funds to build a new church. The first and largest pledge was from Mrs. Isaac Taylor for \$1,000. A large number of pledges were for \$200 and were designated for "one first class pew." Many people gave an amount several times greater than the basic cost of a pew. In all there were about 100 pledges totaling nearly \$15,000, with payments, in some cases, spread over the balance of the year.

With funds assured, Edward T. Mix of Milwaukee was selected as the architect (see "Designed for Worship," p. 55) and Lucas Bradley was again chosen as the builder. James Corse, John Gallien, and Joseph Moon were the masons for the new church, which was to be constructed of yellow brick



Front elevation drawing of new St. Luke's church, Seventh and Main Streets, by architect Edward Townsend Mix. The cornerstone was laid in July 1866. The steeple, completed years later, incorporated round openings, anticipating a clock, in place of the lancet-shaped windows shown here.

(probably made locally) and stone. Its dimensions were to be fifty feet by seventy feet with an eighteen-foot-square corner tower.

The design of the church took advantage of the fact that the building lot is wider at the front than at the west end, due to the downtown street layout north of Seventh being somewhat angled from true north and south. Consequently, the tower was neatly fitted into the resulting wedge-shaped space at the southeast corner of the building.

Work began in the spring, and the cornerstone was laid in a ceremony held at 4 p.m. on Monday, July 9, 1866. The ceremony was publicized by a large handbill announcing the event. A copy was included in the box that was sealed in the cornerstone along with other items. The ceremony was conducted by the Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper, bishop of Wisconsin, assisted by the Rev. James DeKoven, along with faculty and students of Racine College. Other clergy came from Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Nashotah. (Father Benedict did not attend, as he had fallen ill the previous winter. The illness finally led to his resignation in September 1866.)

The ceremony began with a procession through the streets of all the clergy, led by the students, chanting the twenty-third Psalm. A lengthy and stirring address was given by the Rev. J. C. Passmore, D.D., professor of rhetoric, intellectual philosophy, and political economy at the college, and was carried in its entirety in a long newspaper account of the proceedings. (The original handwritten address by Dr. Passmore was given to St. Luke's in 1941 by Mrs. A. J. Rogers of Milwaukee, who probably had early ties to St. Luke's. The document is now in the church's archives.)

In his address (the original source of the present early history), Dr. Passmore described in detail the first thirty years of the church and projected a vision of what might be

accomplished in the next thirty years. He deplored the current state of society, finding that "Drinking, profanity, and gambling are largely on the increase. Robberies, murders, and violence of every sort crowd the columns of our daily newspapers. A cold hard materialism—a downright practical atheism—is taking possession of increasing multitudes." He challenged the parish: "Try to make Christians of these many people who never enter the house of God. Gather into your Sunday school the neglected children of your streets." He expressed a hope: "Let not this Christian city much longer have it said that the sick stranger without money can find no place to suffer or die in. Let a St. Luke's Hospital be among the dreams of the future one day to be realized."

### **THE REV. EDWARD CLARK PORTER, 1867-1875, SEVENTH RECTOR**

As work progressed on the new church through the fall and winter, the congregation had been without a rector since Father Benedict resigned the previous September. Probably services were conducted in this period by the clergy on the staff at Racine College.



West end of St. Luke's Church and adjoining buildings in the 1870s. The original windows above the altar are partially visible above the long, high roof of the chapel, which was converted from a firehouse in about 1872. The two-story building, once used as a saloon, was acquired from the estate of Jacob Schlig in 1902 and became the site of the Parish House (later called Parish Hall) in 1912.

On April 28, 1867, the Rev. Edward Clark Porter accepted the call to be rector, and on September 8, 1867, he held the first services in the new church, although it was far from being completed.

With the funds depleted, the tower lacked the spire and was roofed over at the top of the brick work (see "Designed for Worship," p. 55). The windows were boarded over, the walls stood unpainted, and stoves were used for heating. The vestry chose not to take on any substantial debt, but some of the more necessary work was completed over the next ten months as funds could be raised.

On July 20, 1868, not quite a year after the first services were held, the treasurer, H. G. Winslow, published a financial statement. The receipts totaled \$26,147, consisting mainly of insurance, \$5,000; sale of lots, \$3,000; subscriptions for pews, \$14,500; and Sunday School and Ladies funds, \$2,100.

A breakdown of all the expenditures showed that some painting had been done, the stained glass windows had been installed, and a furnace had been put in. There remained, however, a debt of \$2,600 payable mainly to the contractors. Payment of this obligation a few years later left the church debt-free. In 1869 the pipe organ was installed (see "Making 'a Joyful Noise,'" p. 32) and by about 1872 sufficient funds had been raised to complete the spire. In this same year the St. Luke's Guild was formed (see box, p. 11), and through its efforts money was raised to complete much of the interior decoration of the church.

### **The Rev. Edward Clark Porter**

#### ***Active in Forming St. Luke's Hospital***

Edward Clark Porter was born December 13, 1836, in Old Hadley, Massachusetts. He attended preparatory school at Hopkins Academy and graduated from Yale University in 1858. After a year at Andover Theological Seminary he embarked on a teaching career for eight years in several midwestern cities including Chicago. During this time he received an M.A. degree from Yale (1861). In March 1866 in Racine he was ordained deacon and, in September of that year in Chicago, he entered the priesthood. He married Julia Foster in October 1866.

After becoming St. Luke's rector in April 1867, Father Porter quickly became popular with the congregation and worked earnestly for the completion of the new church. He was active in forming St. Luke's Hospital and the St. Luke's Guild. His ministry was cut short by a number of years of failing health, which finally led to his resignation in February 1875.

Dr. Meachem, Sr., in his autobiography, described the devastating illness and the months of "untold agony" that preceded his death a year later on January 8, 1876, at age thirty-nine. The Yale class of 1858 obituary declared that "his liberality of mind, his religious fervor, his breadth of culture, his retentive memory, his poetic temperament seem to have combined to fascinate young and old." He left two sons, one of whom reached maturity. Mrs. Porter, who had become wealthy several years after her marriage upon receiving a large monetary gift from her father, Dr. John H. Foster of Chicago, donated the lots on Thirteenth Street and College Avenue for the original building constructed for St. Luke's Hospital and contributed to its support for many years. After her husband's death she moved back to Chicago, where she founded Children's Hospital.

The opening of St. Luke's Hospital on January 1, 1872, fulfilled the hope expressed by Dr. Passmore at the church's cornerstone laying a little over five years earlier. The hospital project was established owing to the efforts of Father Porter and Drs. Meachem, Sr. and Jr., in conjunction with the Rev. James DeKoven and others.

Father Porter's health had been poor for a number of years. In the hope of recovery he made a year-long trip to Europe in 1873. Soon after his return his condition worsened, necessitating his resignation in February 1875.

*The opening of St. Luke's Hospital on January 1, 1872, fulfilled the hope expressed by Dr. Passmore at the church's cornerstone laying a little over five years earlier.*

Thereafter his illness became even more serious, confining him to bed. He died a little less than a year later, on January 8, 1876. He was described by Dr. Meachem, Sr., as a "very bright, genial, pleasant man who had many friends both in and out of the church."

#### **THE REV. ARTHUR PIPER, 1875-1881, EIGHTH RECTOR**

The Rev. Arthur Piper became rector on April 1, 1875. He had previously been an instructor and head of one of the residence halls at Racine College for five years. He developed a strong interest in missionary work at the college and continued to pursue this interest while at St. Luke's. One result was the holding of services at Western Union Junction (now Sturtevant) in 1877 in response to a plea from the wife of the depot master. Initially the depot was used for services, but the next year a church was built, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church was formed as a mission. Father Piper and students from

#### **The Rev. Arthur Piper *Twice a Rector, Noted for Missionary Zeal***

Arthur Piper was born in London, England, on July 2, 1845, and at age twelve came with his parents to America, where the family settled in Cleveland, Ohio. Three years later he entered Racine College, where he completed three years of high school followed by four years of college, graduating in 1867. He received his theological training at Nashotah and was ordained to the priesthood in 1870.



Returning to Racine College, he was an instructor for five years until becoming rector of St. Luke's in 1875. After resigning from St. Luke's in 1881, he returned to Racine College, but was called again to St. Luke's in 1884 to resume the rectorship. Father Piper was again to become active at Racine College upon his election to the position of warden in 1888, at which time he took up his residence there while continuing as rector of St. Luke's.

In 1889 he received an honorary Doctor of Sacred Theology (S.T.D.) degree from Racine College and was thereafter addressed by everyone as "Dr. Piper." (Later use of the Doctor of Divinity degree, D.D., in various publications, including St. Luke's histories, is apparently incorrect; the biographical entry submitted by Father Piper in the 1929 *Stowe's Clerical Directory* does not claim a D.D. degree.) In 1905 he resigned from St. Luke's to become dean of Racine College and remained in that capacity until 1923, when he returned to his boyhood Cleveland. He died there on October 13, 1930, at age eighty-five.

In 1920, on the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination, a newspaper article described him as "an earnest, capable man, a Christian in every sense of the word" with "good executive ability and a broad spirit of generosity." In 1921 Father Piper was made rector emeritus of St. Luke's parish, and in 1927 the new reredos in the remodeled sanctuary was dedicated in his honor.

the college provided services and Sunday school instruction. Years later the church was destroyed by fire, but was eventually replaced in 1928 by a building, previously used by Holy Innocents, Racine, that was moved to the Sturtevant site and rebuilt. The church remained a mission throughout its existence and was served primarily by lay readers, one of whom, George Schurr, held that position for forty-one years. The church was finally disbanded in 1961.

Father Piper, who was unmarried, lived with his sister in a house rented by the parish near St. Luke's Church. After six years his dissatisfaction with the response of the congregation resulted in an announcement of his resignation on Easter 1881.

In a long letter to the congregation he described the parish as the largest in Wisconsin, but admonished

the members that their level of giving was inadequate and, furthermore, was small compared with the wealth of the parish. For the previous five years the church had been paying out more than it received and was in arrears on his salary, although he had returned a substantial part of it each year as a donation. He noted the lack of a rectory and a guild meeting room. The vestry tried to get him to reconsider with an offer described by a set of resolutions, but which included his leaving Racine College and discontinuing his missionary work. He countered their offer with a challenge for the giving of the congregation to be doubled from the existing \$2,500 to \$5,000 per year, through a spirit of "self-sacrifice." This increased giving apparently did not happen, and Father Piper followed through with his planned resignation and left in a few months.

## **The St. Luke's Guild**

The St. Luke's Guild was organized by the Rev. E. C. Porter in 1872 to provide oversight of virtually all the activities of the church. Committees covered the Sunday school, Bible class, choir, missions, and all other parochial work. Dr. John G. Meachem, Jr., was elected president in 1875, along with a secretary and treasurer. This very active organization raised substantial sums of money through various kinds of entertainment, social events, and fairs.

In 1888 the Guild was incorporated under the statutes of the State of Wisconsin by the Rev. Arthur Piper and Dr. Meachem, Jr. In this more formal state there were articles of incorporation, bylaws, directors, and a full slate of officers. Father Piper was the first president and Dr. Meachem the first vice president. Minutes were kept of the quarterly meetings (or oftener when required) along with financial reports. Membership was open to both men and women, but each applicant had to be approved by a vote of the members. The Guild functioned independently of the vestry.

The expanded activities of the Guild and church functions eventually indicated the need for a parish hall. In 1894 a lot on the north side of Seventh Street was purchased for \$1,400 from the Church of the Good Shepherd. This was just east of that church and north of the present courthouse. It was not until 1898 that the decision was made to construct the new building on this lot.

The large stone building, which was named Guild Hall, was constructed at a cost of \$11,200, with the money made up of accumulated Guild funds, a subscription drive, and a loan for \$6,000. For about twenty years it was the center of parish activities and musical performances (see "Making 'a Joyful Noise,'" p. 31), and under the direction of Dr. Meachem, Jr., revenue was obtained from renting out the hall to other organizations. With the addition in 1912 of the new parish house adjacent to the chapel, the need for the Guild Hall diminished, and it was sold in 1920 for \$26,000, to become the YWCA. Years later it was sold again and, with the addition of an aluminum exterior, was remodeled into the Professional Building.

The Guild gradually became inactive as the functions it once controlled were returned to the direction of the rector, the wardens, and the vestry. Finally, in 1927 the majority of its assets, totaling \$27,500, was set up as a permanent endowment fund, known as "St. Luke's Guild Trust," the proceeds to be used for the benefit of St. Luke's Church. At that time, in acknowledging the receipt of the fund, the vestry recognized "the moral obligation to continue the daily ringing of St. Luke's chimes and the constant upkeep of same." The Guild ceased to exist in 1938, and the remaining funds were disbursed to the church.

### **THE REV. INGRAM N.W. IRVINE, 1881-1882, NINTH RECTOR**

The Rev. Ingram N. W. Irvine followed as rector on November 26, 1881, but stayed only until September 1, 1882. In the words of Dr. Meachem, Sr., "He created trouble and discord almost as soon as he came." One notable event that did occur at this time was the creation of the surpliced choir. This was largely the result of the efforts of Dr. Meachem, Jr. The initial performance was on Easter 1882 by a group of forty men, women, and boys.

### **THE REV. JAMES F. CONOVER, 1883-1884, TENTH RECTOR**

The Rev. James F. Conover was the next rector, starting on March 11, 1883. He became displeased with dancing at a Sunday school party, which had been the custom for thirty years. In the resulting controversy the vestry supported the Sunday school superintendent. Its stand eventually precipitated Father Conover's resignation, on September 1, 1884.

### **THE REV. ARTHUR PIPER, 1884-1905, ELEVENTH RECTOR**

Father Piper responded to the call of the vestry and again resumed the rectorship, on December 1, 1884. Father Piper's second tenure began a period when, as Dr. Meachem, Jr., wrote in the 1922 *History*: "The parish increased steadily in strength, faith, and good works, many young men and youths being brought up in or drawn to the church through the agencies of the surpliced choir and the St. Luke's chapter of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew."

A major addition to the church, and what might be considered the final or completing step, was the gift of nine bells and the tower clock by Mrs. R. H. Baker in 1887 (see "Making 'a Joyful Noise,'" p. 39, and "Designed for Worship," p. 56). Although the cost

of this generous gift was not publicly disclosed, Dr. Meachem, Sr., in his unpublished autobiography, indicated that it was \$5,000.

During Lent of 1898 Father Piper became acutely ill with pneumonia, but with the faithful attendance of Dr. Meachem, Jr., and others, and the earnest prayers of the people in the church and the community, he was restored to health by Whitsunday.

Just west of the chapel was the Schlig property, which consisted of a small frame building once used as a saloon. In October 1902 William Horlick, Sr., then senior warden, purchased the property and presented it to the parish as his contribution to the sixtieth anniversary celebration that month. For this event the church was redecorated, and the observance extended over three days.

On June 26, 1905, Father Piper resigned as rector of St. Luke's to become dean of Racine College. He stayed on until Advent and the arrival of the new rector. This completed a devoted service to St. Luke's extending over a period of more than twenty-six years, far longer than any previous rector had served.

### **THE REV. WALTER G. BLOSSOM, 1905-1910, TWELFTH RECTOR**

The Rev. Walter G. Blossom of Evanston, Illinois, began his ministry at St. Luke's in December 1905. Since a house purchased in 1891 just north of the church was too small for his family, he was provided with an allowance to rent a suitable house. The vestry reacted to the need with some urgency (see "A Fit Dwelling Place," p. 25), and early in 1907 he was able to move into the new brick rectory that had been constructed north of the church.

St. Luke's Church was the scene of an impressive event on March 25, 1908, when the Rev. Henry D. Robinson, D.D., was consecrated

### **The Rev. Walter G. Blossom In Five Years Nearly Trebled Church Income**

Walter G. Blossom was born in Wakefield, Massachusetts, on June 23, 1873. His theological training was completed at Nashotah in 1895. From 1895 to 1897 he served as deacon at Merrill and Tomahawk, Wisconsin. He was married in 1897 to Julia H. Mills of Detroit and was ordained to the priesthood that same year. He served as parish canon of St. Paul's Cathedral in Fond du Lac from 1897 to 1899. This was followed by positions as assistant rector at St. James's Church in Chicago from 1899 to 1901, rector of St. Augustine Church in Wilmette, Illinois, from 1902 to 1904, and assistant rector of St. Mark's Church, Evanston, Illinois, from 1904 to 1905.



He accepted the call to St. Luke's, Racine, and began his ministry on the first Sunday in Advent 1905. At that time his family consisted of his wife and two children; available records make no further mention of this family. He resigned five years later on Advent Sunday 1910 and soon thereafter became archdeacon of Madison, serving from 1911 to 1913. He was archdeacon of Milwaukee from 1913 to 1916. While in Milwaukee he served as a trustee of Nashotah House, held

several diocesan offices, and was a deputy to the General Convention in 1916.

During World War I, he served at Camp Meigs in Washington, D.C., and Camp Kearney in California. In 1918 he returned to be rector of St. Stephen's Church in Milwaukee. In 1927 he married Ruth Anderson of Kansas City, Missouri, and by 1929 he had moved to California and was chaplain and superintendent of welfare work of Southern California Edison Co. in Los Angeles. In 1933 he was designated as priest-in-charge of three parishes in Southern California. Retiring sometime later in El Monte, California, he died there on October 27, 1942, at age sixty-nine.

missionary bishop of Nevada in a ceremony attended by the presiding bishop along with many other bishops from the midwest (see illustration, p. 25). He had been warden at Racine College prior to his consecration.

The November 10, 1909, vestry meeting saw the first indication of a desire to enlarge the sanctuary. Sketches by architect A. A. Guilbert proposed changes that were estimated to cost \$40,000, and plans were put on hold.

Father Blossom resigned on Advent Sunday 1910 on his fifth anniversary as rector. During that period the annual church income increased from \$2,267 to \$6,598. Father Blossom had been a member of the Racine Board of Education, and in St. Luke's Church's one hundredth anniversary booklet, *Centennial 1842-1942*, was described as having "endeared himself to his congregation and the community at large."

### **THE REV. FREDERICK S. PENFOLD, D.D., 1911-1919, THIRTEENTH RECTOR**

The Rev. Frederick S. Penfold became rector of St. Luke's in early 1911. Almost immediately work began on the renovation of the church but with a lower targeted cost for the extensive project than the earlier estimate. The west wall of the sanctuary was moved back five feet, the windows over the altar were removed and rebuilt in the east wall, the hot air heating system was replaced with steam, a white ceramic tile floor was installed in the sanctuary, and a slate roof was put over the church. The green and black tile that at some point had replaced the old carpeted aisles may have been put in at this same time. The walnut rail separating the chancel from the nave of the church was probably installed as part of the renovation, although an older history suggests it was done two years earlier, in 1909 (see "Designed for Worship," p. 61). The overall cost of

the project was reported as about \$25,000.

In 1912 the parish ambitiously embarked on another building program. (This date is confirmed by newspaper articles. An earlier history erroneously indicated it was 1915.) This project resulted in the new Parish House on Seventh Street, on the property acquired in 1902, just west of the chapel. It was completed in time for the seventieth anniversary celebration and incorporated a large two-story hall with a balcony on three sides that was used as the choir's robing area. The hall was also used as a gymnasium. A kitchen and other rooms were in the basement. Being adjacent to the church and connected through the north hallway, the Parish House provided a more convenient facility for church functions than the Guild Hall a block away. Furthermore, the Guild Hall, which was frequently rented out to other organizations, was not always available.

The practice of collecting pew rentals was discontinued sometime in the 1910s. Because of the absence of a book of vestry minutes from 1910 until the annual parish meeting of 1921, some events and facts in this period cannot be pinpointed. For example, there is no record of the cost of building the Parish House or of the details of funding it and the 1911 renovation. It is possible that the \$25,000 figure given above for the 1911 renovation may have actually been the total cost of both the renovation and the Parish House built a year later. Although there was known to be a building fund, there was a remaining debt on the Parish House, which was finally paid off in 1925 by the St. Luke's Guild.

The U. S. entrance into World War I was soon felt at St. Luke's when the rector took leave in order to serve as a chaplain in the armed forces. The Rev. Vivian Peterson conducted services in his absence. In all, thirty members of the church served in the war. Shortly after his return, Father Penfold resigned, on Easter 1919. In St. Luke's *Centennial* booklet the

description of his tenure, referring to the parish's place in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, concludes: "Father Penfold was an earnest and devout Catholic priest and the Catholic character of St. Luke's parish today owes much to his teaching."

### **THE REV. HARWOOD STURTEVANT, D.D. 1919-1929, FOURTEENTH RECTOR**

The Rev. Harwood Sturtevant, a priest younger than many of his predecessors, assumed the rectorship in 1919. Under his spiritual and temporal leadership the growth of the church somewhat paralleled the expansion and economic boom of the 1920s. The communicant strength steadily increased and all organizations were very active. Camp Webb was established as a St. Luke's camp early in that decade.

Over the years missionary giving expanded greatly. For many years it

was pledged separately and accounted for on the red side of a two-part envelope. A missionary treasurer handled the funds which were kept separate from the operating funds of the church. This was called "The Church's Program." A breakdown one year showed 55 percent was used within the Diocese and 45 percent throughout the church nationally and around the world. By 1928 St. Luke's was proud to be the only church of any size in the Diocese to accept and pay an amount greater than its quota. Most other churches fell woefully short of meeting their quotas. At that time there was in addition a relatively small diocesan assessment that was used only to fund the bishop's office.

In March 1927 a project to redecorate the church began with establishing a goal of raising \$10,000. An appeal for funds was made in a letter sent to the parishioners by the committee headed by the junior warden and

### **The Rev. Frederick S. Penfold *Helped Establish Catholic Character of St. Luke's***

Frederick S. Penfold was born on March 10, 1874, in New York City and subsequently graduated from General Theological Seminary there. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1900 and was married to Ethel Frisby in 1903. They were the parents of four children. He served several parishes in New York and Illinois before becoming rector of St. Paul's Church in Marinette, Wisconsin. During this period he published "Existence and Nature of Angel" in the Church Eclectic in 1902, in addition to other essays.



After four years at Marinette he became rector of St. Luke's, Racine, in 1911. While at St. Luke's he was a deputy from the Diocese of Milwaukee to the General Convention and received a Doctor of Divinity degree from Nashotah House in 1917. During World War I he served as a chaplain, returning to St. Luke's on Armistice Day 1918.

He resigned on Easter 1919 to accept the call to St. Stephen's Church in Providence, Rhode Island. In that parish's 125th-year history, published in 1964, Father Penfold was described as having a "keener intellect and more eloquent tongue than any previous rector at St. Stephen's."

In autumn 1925 he was afflicted with a nervous disorder and the following summer was given a two-month vacation abroad for rest and relaxation and in recognition of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination. In November 1926 at age fifty-two he suffered a severe nervous breakdown, later followed by a cerebral hemorrhage. He died the next day, Advent Sunday, November 28, 1926. The saddened vestry declared in a resolution that Father Penfold "brought the interior aspect of St. Stephen's and its devotional services to a high altitude of Catholic faith and practice, of which he was an ardent and intrepid champion."

### **The Rt. Rev. Harwood Sturtevant** *One of the Youngest Bishops of His Time*

Harwood Sturtevant was born June 30, 1888, at Ishpeming, Michigan. After attending the University of Michigan, he received his theological training (and later his Doctor of Divinity degree) at Seabury Western Theological Seminary in Chicago and was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Webb in 1915. From 1915 to 1917 he was rector of St. Luke's Church in Monmouth, Illinois. He was canon of All Saints' Cathedral in Milwaukee from 1917 until 1919.



When he was called to be rector of St. Luke's in Racine, he symbolically crossed the path of his grandfather seventy-nine years earlier. In 1840 five Sturtevant brothers landed in Racine from the east and then proceeded overland by wagon to Delavan, where four of them staked out claims in the nearby countryside. The fifth brother, Charles, who was Harwood's grandfather, remained in the village and later became president of Delavan's Citizens' Bank. His son Harry grew up there, later studied mining engineering, and was probably so employed in Ishpeming when Harwood was born.

In 1921 Father Sturtevant married Mary Williams, and they became the parents of three children. He was involved in work for the national field department of the church, which required occasional absences from St. Luke's, and he became associate secretary of that organization. In 1928 he assumed the additional position of warden of Racine College, which was nearing the end of its existence.

In 1929, just ten years after coming to St. Luke's, he was consecrated bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, thus becoming one of the youngest Episcopal bishops of that time. He advanced to bishop in 1933 after the retirement of Bishop Weller and served until retirement in 1956, at which time he received two honorary degrees from Nashotah House. His retirement years were spent in St. Petersburg, Florida, where he died in 1977 at age eighty-nine.

treasurer, and asked the people to make "a pledge from your 'capital' rather than from your 'income.'" Furthermore, it asked that the matter be considered "that evening and the pledge cards be returned TOMORROW MORNING," so that the drive could be completed in two days. The parish response assured that the goal would be quickly met, and an architectural firm was immedi-

ately engaged.

Work proceeded rapidly during the summer on the new walnut wainscoting and reredos in the sanctuary that highlighted the project. The church was completely redecorated and the two large central light fixtures were installed. A number of major memorial gifts were given at this same time (see "Designed for Worship," p. 60),

and the project was finished for the eighty-fifth anniversary celebration on St. Luke's Day in October 1927. It completed the work begun with the enlargement of the sanctuary in 1911.

In September 1929 Father Sturtevant, at the age of forty-one, was elected bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of Fond du Lac and on December 1, 1929, finished a ten-year service to St. Luke's. Although saddened by the loss of their beloved rector, St. Luke's parishioners were joyful at the recognition accorded him on his elevation to a higher office and many traveled to Fond du Lac for his consecration.

### **THE REV. HENRY W. ROTH,** **1930-1934, FIFTEENTH** **RECTOR**

The Rev. Henry W. Roth assumed the position of rector of St. Luke's Church on January 1, 1930, after leaving as curate of St. Paul's Church, Milwaukee.

Despite the nation's having started its plunge into the Great Depression, Father Roth was able, in his first year as rector, to inspire many people and organizations to make substantial gifts for the beautification of the church. His knowledge and love of church art provided guidance in the selection of the memorials and gifts. Many of the gifts were directed to a refurnishing of the chapel (see "The Chapel of the Holy Spirit," pp. 16, 68). The Parish Hall on Seventh Street

## **Pew Rentals**

Although weekly offerings were collected, most of the revenue was from pew rentals. Payment was a continuing problem, leading to a Finance Committee report in 1860 that proposed the following rules (the record does not say to what extent the rules were carried out):

Parishioners could own their pews and would receive a deed upon purchase. They would be assessed a yearly rental equal to 20 percent of the current estimated value of the pew. If delinquent in payment, they would be asked to sign a promissory note of short term and with interest. Delinquent payments became a lien on the pew, and when equal to three-fourths of the estimated value, the pew reverted back to the church. Pews owned by the church would be rented at 25 percent of their estimated value. Up to 10 percent of the pews in the church could, at the vestry's discretion, be rented at a lower rate or rent-free. A collector of rents, elected by the vestry, was to receive 5 percent of rents for his fee.

### The Rev. Henry W. Roth *Fostered Growth in Fine Arts at St. Luke's*

Henry W. Roth was born March 27, 1898, in Springfield, Ohio. He received a bachelor's degree in 1922 from Wittenberg University in Springfield and a master's degree in 1924 from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio. He also studied at Columbia University in New York and Oxford University in England. His theological studies were completed at General Theological Seminary in New York in 1928, and he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Ivins in October of that year.



After serving as curate at St. Paul's Church in Milwaukee from 1928 to 1930, he was rector of St. Luke's Church, Racine, from 1930 until 1934. He went on to become dean of All Saints' Cathedral in Milwaukee, serving from 1934 to 1940, and then dean of All Saints Cathedral in Albany, New York, from 1940 to 1944. Returning to Wisconsin, he accepted the call to become rector of Trinity Church in Janesville (1944-1958), after which he served as rector of St. John's-in-the-Wilderness in Elkhorn for five years until 1963.

Moving to California, he became assistant rector of St. Mark's Church in King City for a year before retiring in 1964, after which he was available for supply work. He died in Los Altos, California, on July 16, 1979, at age eighty-one. He never married. He was a member of the Medieval Academy of America and author of a volume on Chaucerian literature, *Lux Nova: A Study in Medieval Literature*. He had an interest in music and played the piano and pipe organ. He was a member of the American Guild of Organists.

(known before 1930 as the Parish House) was redecorated as a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Leon Clausen and William Horlick, Jr. The Parish Center was redecorated as a gift of St. Cecelia's Guild. A new kitchen in the basement of the Parish Hall was given by the women's organizations of the church. Two prie-dieux were given by the Choir Guild, and a walnut cover for the baptismal font was given by the Women's Auxiliary.

Gifts of art works included Della Robbia plaques given by Mr. and Mrs. Leon Clausen and Father Roth and a large oil painting given by Georgia Wustum Cushman and Marjorie Wustum Janes (see "Beauty for Holiness," p. 54). In 1933 the walnut crucifix, carved in Switzerland and mounted over the pulpit, was given by the Alpha Kappa Theta fraternity as a thank offering for the life and work of Father Sturtevant.

In the summer of 1934 Father Roth was called to be Dean of All Saint's Cathedral in Milwaukee and resigned from St. Luke's on September 30, 1934.

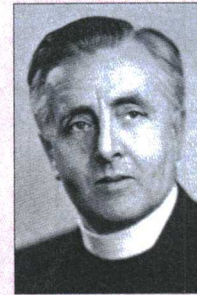
### THE REV. ALEXANDER SIMPSON, 1934-1962, SIXTEENTH RECTOR

On November 1, 1934, the Rev. Alexander Simpson began what would prove to be the longest term of any rector in St. Luke's history. With the nation now in the depths of the Great Depression, St. Luke's, although without significant debt, had a decline in income that forced a reduction in salaries. The Rev. George Schiffmayer, curate during the early 1930s, reminisced that over four years his salary had been reduced from \$150 to \$90 per month.

A number of improvements were made to the church during the Depression era. A bequest of \$5,000 from the will of William Horlick, Sr., in 1938, funded the remodeling of the downstairs of the Parish Hall into a large dining room, which was also used as a classroom. In 1940 Mrs. A. J. Horlick generously provided for the redecoration of the interior of the church, along with insulation of the ceiling. In anticipation of the 100th anniversary, the parishioners contributed to a fund to provide a new three-manual console for the organ.

### The Rev. Alexander Simpson *Revered for 27 Years of Devoted Service*

Alexander Simpson was born in Stow-on-the-Wold, Oxfordshire, England, on January 20, 1896. His first undergraduate studies were with private tutors at Loughborough College



in England, followed by work at College of the Resurrection in Mirfield, England, with plans to enter the seminary there. World War I interrupted his training, and he served in the

Medical Corps of the British Expeditionary Force from 1915 to 1919. In 1922 he emigrated to Canada and two years later entered Nashotah House Seminary. Ordained to the priesthood in 1927 by Bishop Ivins, he served several missions near Delafield for a year before becoming rector of St. Mark's Church in South Milwaukee in 1926, serving until 1933.

While at Nashotah, Father Simpson met Helen Keeler of California, who was visiting her sister and brother-in-law, the Rev. W. Freeman Whitman, professor of ecclesiastical history at the seminary. They were married in 1928 and had two children, Alexander and Geoffrey, who was ordained to the priesthood. After becoming rector of Trinity Church, Janesville, in 1933, he accepted the call to St. Luke's, Racine, on November 1, 1934. He was also a trustee and secretary of the Board at Nashotah House, which, in 1952, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination, granted him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree. He served on the Religious Education and Executive Boards of the Diocese of Milwaukee, and in 1955 was a delegate to the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Hawaii. In 1961 he received the honorary title of Canon of All Saints' Cathedral in Milwaukee.

After serving as St. Luke's rector for over twenty-seven years, he retired on December 31, 1961. He died in Racine on September 10, 1964, at age sixty-eight, and was buried on the grounds at Nashotah House.

As the church approached the end of its first century, the U.S. entry into World War II, precipitated by the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, forced the country into an expanding wartime economy. Less than a year later St. Luke's celebrated its centennial with special services, musical performances, and a banquet within the octave of

St. Luke's Day, October 18, 1942. The Rt. Rev. Harwood Sturtevant, bishop of Fond du Lac, returned to deliver the sermon on St. Luke's Day, and the Rt. Rev. Benjamin F. P. Ivins, bishop of Milwaukee, spoke at the banquet. For this occasion the church published its *Centennial* booklet with the text presumably written by Father Simpson.

Prior to the celebration the cornerstone was opened and the contents of its archival box were put on display. On November 11, 1942, the box was resealed and, along with some new items, was placed inside a larger copper box and put back under the southeast face of the cornerstone.†

## The Chapel of the Holy Spirit

In 1866 at the time of the fire that destroyed St. Luke's first church, along with Titus Hall, the Racine House, and other small buildings, there were three hand-pumper fire engine companies and a hook-and-ladder company, all in the downtown area south of the river. *Bailey's Racine Directory for 1866-1867* lists Fire Engine Company No. 3, Star of the West, on the north side of Seventh between Main and Wisconsin Streets. Because of citizen concern over the inadequacy of the fire-fighting apparatus in the disastrous downtown fire, a steam pumper was purchased in 1867, and a second one in 1871. These purchases diminished the need for the hand-pumper engines.

Sometime after 1868 Hand Pumper Company No. 3 was eliminated. When the building was offered for sale, Dr. Meachem, Sr., purchased it for \$600 for eventual use as a chapel. About three years later he converted it to a chapel for \$1,500, with the congregation contributing \$1,000 to the cost, and donated it to the church.

This long, narrow structure became a multi-purpose building. In addition to serving as a chapel it filled the need for space for meetings of the vestry and other small groups and as a choir room. (Some years later the church rented space in a second floor hall at Sixth and Main Streets for youth activities.) The chapel remained relatively unchanged until late in 1912, when, following the completion of the new Parish House with choir facilities, it underwent extensive renovation. This included shortening the chapel to extend the hallway to the new Parish House, installing the old modified altar that had been removed from the church in 1911, and equipping the chapel with new furnishings. It was reopened in January 1913 and was used exclusively from then on as a chapel.

In 1930 a complete redecorating of the chapel resulted from a gift by Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Horlick in memory of their grandson. Their gift included a "fifteenth-century carved oak credence table" and an electric pipe organ console for the chapel. The console could operate the main church organ, which could be heard in the chapel. Father Roth gave an altar cross and candlesticks carved by the Lang family in Oberammergau, Germany, and the Women's Auxiliary gave an oak altar rail. Red carpeting donated by Edward Zahn and bronze lanterns given by the Girls' Friendly Society completed the furnishings.

In June 1930 the vestry established its name as "The Chapel of the Holy Spirit." The *Centennial* booklet declared: "It is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful in these parts."

(The second complete remodeling of the chapel, in 1967, is described in "New Directions," p. 22.)



The Chapel of the Holy Spirit was reopened in 1913 after extensive remodeling. It was shortened to allow access through the hallway to the new Parish House. The altar had originally been installed in the church until it was replaced in 1911. This view, in 1942, shows the chapel as redecorated in 1930 from the gifts of Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Horlick and others.

## Eleazar Williams: The Lost Dauphin?

Eleazar Williams was born about 1785 and, according to his recollection, was brought up by the Indians of eastern Canada.

As a boy he came to New England and was educated under the influence of the Congregational Church. In the War of 1812, because of his Indian background, he had the special assignment of insuring the loyalty to the United States of the Indians along the border, and obtaining intelligence information from them on the movements of the British. For his success in these efforts he received official commendation.

***The basic question must remain unanswered:***

***Was the Ebenezer Williams of St. Luke's Church's early history in reality the Eleazar Williams of Indian missionary background (and Lost Dauphin fame), or was he the English priest, known as Parson Williams, who settled in western Wisconsin?***

After the war he became an Episcopalian, was confirmed in New York, and was assigned to missionary work among the Indians in central New York state. When the federal government decided to move the Oneidas further west, Williams negotiated a treaty with the Menominees, Potawatomies, and Winnebagos along the western shore of Lake Michigan to cede some of their lands to the Oneidas, and he accompanied them in 1821 when they resettled near what is now Green Bay. He was the pioneer Episcopal missionary and built the first

non-Roman Catholic church in the state in 1825 at Oneida. While initially functioning as a teacher of the gospel and a lay reader, he was ordained a deacon by Bishop Hobart of New York in 1826 and for many years continued to minister to the Oneidas. There is no record of his being ordained to the priesthood. He married a fourteen-year-old girl of French and Indian blood in 1823 and built a home on the Fox River near DePere. He owned this home for the rest of his life. He and his wife were the parents of one son.

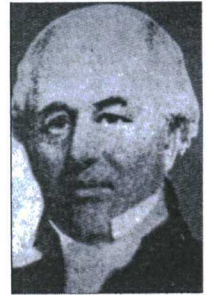
A completely different aspect of Williams's life centered around his claim to be Louis XVII, the "Lost Dauphin" of France, the son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, and heir to the French throne. A chance meeting with the Rev. John H. Hanson, who became convinced of Williams's story, resulted in the book *The Lost Prince* (1854) by Hanson, who supported Williams's claim. According to Williams's story, Louis XVII was spirited out of prison in France at about age ten, replaced by a surrogate who died soon after, and brought to America, where he was adopted and brought up by Indians. Described as mentally incompetent as a youth, he was restored to normal ability when he struck his head on a rock while swimming underwater. The accident, however, left him with no recollection of prior events. Believing only that he was a half-breed Indian, he did not learn his supposed royal identity until years later—about 1840—when he was visited by Prince de Joinville, the nephew of Louis XVI. According to this account, the prince also tried unsuccessfully to get Williams to renounce his right to the throne.

In the *American International Encyclopedia* of 1902 Williams and several others were mentioned among thirty people who claimed to be the "Lost Prince," but Williams was the only one who received a wide following

in this country as a result of the Hanson book. Although this story persisted for more than ten years and Williams petitioned Congress for recognition, neither the church nor the government accepted his claim. Later evidence disproved some of the arguments presented, and the belief in the validity of his claim gradually subsided.

Although the exact circumstances of Williams's birth have never been established, the Rev. Harold Wagner, in his book, *The Episcopal Church in Wisconsin 1847-1947*, cites two versions that have been advanced. In one, his parents were believed to be Thomas Williams, an Indian (from a village near Montreal) and his white-blooded wife; in the other, his mother was a Miss Williams of white or mixed blood and his father an Indian. Williams died on a visit to New York in 1858 and was buried there. In 1947 his body was exhumed and reburied at Oneida in recognition of him as "the great teacher and missionary."

In the 1922 *St. Luke's History* Ebenezer Williams, who officiated at St. Luke's in late 1844 and early 1845 before the first church was built, was characterized with the comment, "Said to be the Lost Dauphin of France." Later writers of St. Luke's histories picked up this reference and repeated it. The origin of this assumption, that Eleazar and Ebenezer were the same person, is not known. There is nothing in St. Luke's records to substantiate it. If it were nevertheless true, it would have been well known at the time and could have been passed on down by word of mouth until it was finally recorded in the 1922 *St. Luke's History*.



Eleazar Williams

Conversely, if Eleazar and Ebenezer were in fact two different persons, the erroneous assumption of identity could have resulted from someone's discovering the Hanson book many years later and jumping to the conclusion that St. Luke's Church's Ebenezer was the subject of the book. Evidence that would tend to support this latter possibility is contained in Wagner's book, in which he describes the career of Eleazar Williams. He makes no reference to his serving anywhere other than at Oneida, nor is there any mention of his using the name Ebenezer.

Furthermore, a Rev. Ebenezer Williams, who was described as an English priest, came to Mineral Point in western Wisconsin in September 1845, which would closely follow the departure from St. Luke's of the Rev. Ebenezer Williams that was reported in the August 19, 1845, *Racine Weekly Advocate*. While initially serving as rector at Mineral Point, he became known locally as Parson Williams, an "interesting character" who somewhat later built a small stone church on his own land where he held services for many years. He also ministered to a new church built in Lancaster in 1858. A Mrs. Elizabeth Horner of Philadelphia sent \$602 for the establishment of the church in Lancaster in 1852, since her daughter and son-in-law had moved there. Could this be the "lady in Philadelphia" who made the donation to St. Luke's in 1844 through Ebenezer Williams? (see p. 2).

The basic question must remain unanswered: Was the Ebenezer Williams of St. Luke's Church's early history in reality the Eleazar Williams of Indian missionary background (and Lost Dauphin fame), or was he the English priest, known as Parson Williams, who settled in western Wisconsin? †

## Bishop Sturtevant Returns



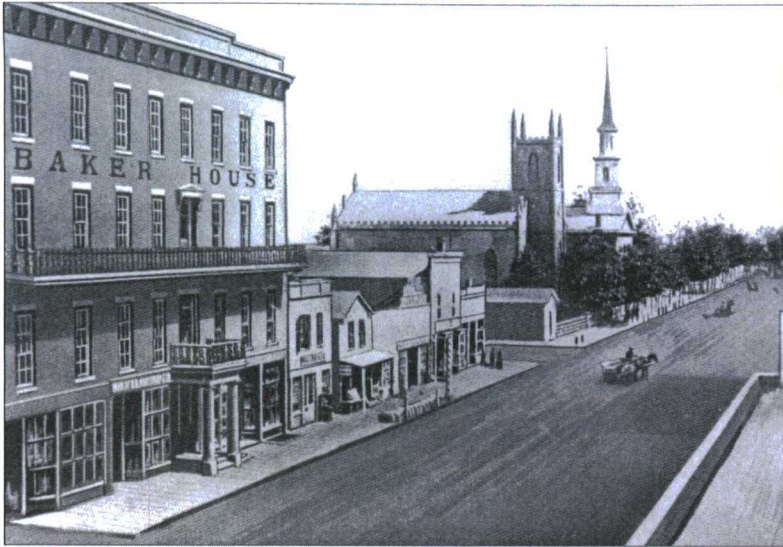
In 1971, forty-one years after leaving St. Luke's to be consecrated Bishop of Fond du Lac, Bishop Sturtevant is joined by some of his former parishioners: Clockwise from left they are Elizabeth Adamson, Mrs. Ozard, Mildred Nelson, Mrs. Heater, Harry Schaefer, Milo Cape, and Mrs. Hemmingsen.

## The First Hotel



Racine's first hotel was built in 1837 on the west side of Market (now Monument) Square at Fifth Street. It was destroyed in the fire of 1864, along with the first St. Luke's church, on the east side of the square.

## Views of Old Racine



Looking southeast in 1860 from about the middle of the 400 block of Main Street toward St. Luke's Parish's first church, of wooden construction, with a squared-off tower. Built in 1845-46, it was enlarged in 1857. It burned down in 1864. The Universalist Church next-door survived the fire.



Market Square (Monument Square) about 1870, as viewed looking south and slightly west. St. Luke's Church can be seen above and to the left of the pair of buildings at the southwest corner of Sixth and Main. The corner building was used by the First Baptist Church. St. Luke's Church, which was first used in 1867, lacks its spire, which was completed about 1872. The first courthouse, built in 1840, is on the right. It was replaced in 1877 with Racine's second courthouse on the same location.



The view looking southeast across Sixth and Main Streets from the courthouse roof in 1882. The building to the rear of St. Luke's Church, originally a firehouse, was remodeled in the early 1870s to become a chapel and choir room. The choir entered the church through a short hall and the sacristy. In 1889 the hallway was extended to the east, and two windows were removed to allow the choir to enter directly through opened arches. The building on the southwest corner of Sixth and Main Streets was built by the First Baptist Church to replace the Baptist Church that burned in 1862 at the same location. The Baptists used the upstairs hall for their services until 1877. St. Luke's rented this space for youth activities until 1898, when the Guild Hall on Seventh Street was built. The present building on Sixth and Main replaced the Baptist building in 1900.