



**Diamond Jubilee St. Stanislaus Church, Hofa Park,
Wisconsin. 1883-1958, p. 11-83. CAP at Orchard Lake.**

The Settlement

The history of Saint Stanislaus Church at Hofa Park, Wisconsin, would lack the proper background if nothing were written about John J. Hof after whom this village in northeastern Wisconsin was named. Hofa Park was the beginning of a movement conceived by Hof to settle northeastern Wisconsin, particularly the counties of Shawano, Outagamie, Brown and Oconto, with Polish immigrants. His humble beginning here was crowned with the settling of over one thousand Polish families at Hofa Park, Pulaski, Sobieski, Kosciuszko and Krakow between the years 1877 and 1900.

Who was this man, John J. Hof? Whence did he originate? What was his interest in Poles and Catholics? This is particularly interesting since he himself was a Norwegian by birth and professed the Lutheran religion until shortly before death, when he became a Catholic.

Born in 1842

Little is known about Hof's early life, the years he spent in his native Norway and the exact year when he came to the United States. We know that he was born in 1842 at Domaas, Norway. This is definitely supported by evidence today contradicting earlier writers (Fr. Venceslaus Kruszka and Fr. Francis Manel, O.F.M.) who claimed that Hof was a Swede. The events of the next thirty-three years in Hof's life are shrouded in silence.

In the pamphlets which he later published in the Polish language advertising his land sales to the Poles of America, Hof wrote of his extensive travels throughout the United States. His purpose was to find suitable farm land upon which to settle Polish immigrants, or so he claimed. Although this statement must be taken with a grain of salt because every land agent praised his territory as the best, nevertheless the biographical element offered is all that we have until we find Hof in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, about the year 1875. At least, it indicates Hof's early interest in land sales. Before undertaking this career, he carefully investigated the prospects and opportunities which existed in the country at the time for settling immigrants on farms. His choice fell upon Wisconsin.

Began Career as Land Agent in Milwaukee

As far as is known at present, Hof began his career as a land agent for the General Land Office at Milwaukee in 1875. It was located at 117-119 West Water Street (near today's intersection of N. Plankinton and W. Clybourn Streets). No further information has thus far been discovered which

would indicate more precisely the name of the land company in whose employ Hof labored.

At the outset, it was not to Poles but to his own Norwegian countrymen that Hof first sold land in and around Seymour, in Outagamie County of northeastern Wisconsin. This he did for a period of two years, from 1875-1877. But he did not enjoy a great success with his own countrymen, many of whom left the Seymour area. It was then that Hof turned to the Poles.

His Plan to Settle Poles on Farms

In the summer of 1877, he began to contact Polish families in Milwaukee, urging them to settle on the cutover land near the future village of Hofa Park in the town of Maple Grove, Shawano County. He assured them that this would be the beginning of his plan to settle many Poles on the lands he was selling. If he were successful, more Polish colonies, as he loved to call the Polish farm settlements, would follow.

Hof openly professed his intention to the pioneers of Hofa Park that he would sell land only to the Poles. Later he also included the Lithuanians and other nationalities. However, in the case of the Lithuanians, they also spoke Polish because of their union with Poland for over five hundred years in one of Europe's earliest commonwealths. Nevertheless, Hof sold the vast majority of his lands to the Poles and thus remained true to his promise.

First Four Polish Families at Hofa Park

Hof's salesmanship was so convincing that four Polish families sold their homes in Milwaukee to him in exchange for land in the Hofa Park area. In September, 1877, the families of Valentine Peplinski, Frank and Michael Lepak, and of Valentine Zygmanski arrived in the northwestern section of the town of Maple Grove. A beginning for the establishment of Polish colonies by Hof was now a reality.

Some of Hof's Polish Aides

To assure himself of greater success in settling Poles in northeastern Wisconsin, Hof engaged Polish assistants, such as interpreters, secretaries and part-time agents. The earliest known of these Polish aides to Hof was Theo M. Helinski. It was who served as a contact between Hof and the first four Polish families which came to Hofa Park. Helinski was a notary public in Milwaukee. He also served in this capacity for Hof as is proven by the early deeds.

Next, there was Miss Helen Różański, who served as secretary to Hof handling all Polish correspondence between the years 1877 and 1900. Other Poles serving as interpreters and agents for Hof at different times during the years 1877 to 1910 were Leo Gabryszek, Stanley B. Liberski, Edward Koldrowicz, Stanley Piotrowski and A. S. Dominiczak.

Non-Polish Associates, Remembered by Poles

Prominently associated with Hof and well-remembered by the early Polish settlers in Hof's colonies were such non-Poles as Thorace Thompson, who also operated a sawmill at Hofa Park from 1885 and John N. Kurtz, notary public for the Hof Land Co. from 1889. Hof also employed his own surveyor in the person of William E. Weeks.

Although the above-named Poles were more prominently associated with Hof in his contact with the Polish immigrants, almost every Polish family which was settled in the early years by Hof in this area served as individual agents for him in his Polish colonization program. The means used was correspondence of the early settlers with their relatives and friends in other parts of the United States and even in Poland. An insatiable hunger and love for the soil which they could call their own as well as life among their own countrymen attracted many more to Hof's colonies.

Huge Advertising Campaign of Land Sales to Poles

Hof played masterfully upon this yearning of the Polish immigrant. Beginning with the year 1881, he organized a tremendous campaign advertising the formation of his Polish colonies in the farm regions of northeastern Wisconsin. In lots of five thousand copies at a time, he published Polish land maps and pamphlets gloriously describing the opportunities which his lands offered for Polish agricultural communities, markets for farm products, transportation by rail and water. In one edition, he assured the prospective settlers of the ultimate provision of a large river which would flow between Hofa Park and Green Bay!

Knowing the persuasiveness of correspondence, Hof printed thousands of letters listing the names of settlers already occupying land in his colonies. In these letters, the settlers praised the favorable conditions of life on the farms or land which Hof sold them.

The land sales advertising material of land maps, pamphlets and letters was written and printed first by the Smulski Publishing Co., of Chicago, Illinois, and a few years later (1888) by the Kuryer Polski Publishing Co., of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Records of copies surviving today attest to this fact.

Finally, Hof advertised extensively in the Polish weekly and daily newspapers of Milwaukee, Chicago and the cities of Pennsylvania and New York where greater groups of Polish immigrants were massed. The peak of this pamphlet and newspaper campaign existed between the years 1885 and 1900 although Hof still advertised in newspapers till 1905.

Brother Augustine Zeitz and Hof

From the years 1886 to 1900, Hof also advertised his land sales in the Lithuanian newspapers of the country. This was done mainly through the advice and help of Brother Augustine Zeitz, O.F.M., founder of the Franciscan Monastery at Pulaski in 1887. Most of the ad copy as well as articles on the progress of settlement in Hof's colonies were written in the Lithuanian language by Brother Augustine himself.

Again, the language barrier was not great since most Lithuanians also spoke Polish. For this reason, even Brother Augustine in advertising the foundation of a Franciscan Monastery opened its doors to Lithuanian as well as to Polish candidates for the priesthood and brotherhood.

Various Surnames Used by Hof

An oddity occurs in Hof's use of various names during his early years as land agent. Up to 1881, he generally used the name of John J. Hof although that was not his true name. After Hof's death in 1910, the surviving correspondence between his brother Matthias in Norway and John N. Kurtz, the

executor of Hof's estate in America, reveals that Hof's real name was Hofhaug. Matthias Hofhaug, who did not change his name, informed the executor that his brother John shortened the name to Hof after coming to the United States.

To this shortened form Hof added the name of Johnson in 1881 (probably sooner). On August 3, 1881, the Green Bay Daily State Gazette reported that "Mr. J. Hoff Johnson, of Milwaukee, spent last week in town (Angelica). Mr. J. is in the land agency. He has located a number of settlers in this town and Lessor." Some of the early settlers, such as John Lepak and John Peplinski, also testified to the author of this history that Hof used the name of Johnson at random in his early days as land agent.

Three Periods of Hof's Activity in Land Sales

From the above, it appears that Hof used both names interchangeably during the years 1875 to 1881. This may have been a holdover from his first attempt to settle Norwegian immigrants in the Seymour area. But from the year 1881 to his death, his land records, advertising material, stationery and deeds list only the name of Hof or the John J. Hof Land Co.

In conjunction with the use of various names, three periods of Hof's activity in land sales may be distinguished. The first extends from approximately the year 1875 to 1881. During this time, Hof was predominantly a land agent in the employ of the General Land Office of Milwaukee. From the commission which he made on land sales, he purchased tracts of wooded and semi-wooded, cutover land for himself.

During the second period extending from the years 1881 to 1889, Hof operated as the sole owner of the land he sold. He stressed this fact in 1883 to Bishop Francis X. Krautbauer, of Green Bay, to whom he donated land for the Hofa Park Catholic church. Again, in a letter dated May 10, 1886, and written to Bishop Frederick Katzer, successor to Krautbauer in the diocese of Green Bay, Hof repeats that he is the sole owner of the land he sells.

The John J. Hof Land Company

In 1889, Hof became president of the newly organized John J. Hof Land Co., incorporated in the state of Wisconsin. William Mariner served as vice-president and John W. Mariner as secretary-treasurer. John N. Kurtz was the notary public for the company.

The Mariner brothers, whose realty company still exists today in Milwaukee in the building named after them (at 411 E. Mason St.), previously owned the Northern Colonization Co. up to the year 1887. Affiliated with them also were A. C. Conn, Howard C. Gardner and William Herman, all of whom owned large amounts of land in the Little Suamico, Sobieski, Krakow and Seymour areas. It was from them that Hof purchased much of his land prior to 1889. The formation of the Hof Land Co. in 1889 together with the Mariners may possibly hint that Hof worked as a land agent for their Northern Colonization Co. during the 1875-1881 period. But no conclusive evidence exists to establish this fact without doubt.

Strong Attachment of Poles to Catholic Faith

Besides playing up to the patriotic sentiment of the Poles in forming Polish farm colonies, Hof catered to their strong attachment to the Catholic Faith. Knowing that ninety-five per cent of the

Polish immigrants were Catholics, he printed architectural sketches of churches on his early land maps to show that Catholic temples of worship were located in central positions of his rising settlements. In 1887, similar sketches appeared on succeeding maps depicting the first Franciscan monastery and church at Pulaski. It was variously labeled as "Church at Hofa Park and Pulaski," "Convent at Hofa Park and Pulaski," or simply "Pulaski Convent." All of Hof's land maps, circulars, booklets, deeds, stationery and other official papers bore this name of the churches from 1887 to 1897. From the latter year on, churches at Sobieski and Krakow were added to the maps and advertising literature.

Although Hof advertised the presence of churches in the five colonies he founded, the fact is that the settlers had to build these churches themselves generally about five years after their arrival in each settlement. In each case, however, Hof donated the land and most of the timber for these churches.

Disappointment of Early Settlers

Not only were the early settlers disappointed with the lack of churches when they first arrived in the Hofa Park, Pulaski, Sobieski, Kosciuszko and Krakow areas. Many were also disillusioned by the condition of the land Hof sold them. Meeting their gaze upon arrival was still quite dense forests and brush, deep swamps or low and sandy soil. The glorious picture painted in Hof's circulars appeared quite different upon personal examination.

Though their disappointment was heart-rending at times and their life very primitive and rugged at the very outset, these pioneers never lacked the will to work hard and to make sacrifices despite a life of almost abject poverty. Their love of the land and the sense of ownership conquered all difficulties as they dug in to clear the land and to begin farming on a modest scale.

Whatever claims and promises were overstated by Hof, he was generous to the settlers in other ways. He donated land, timber and money towards the building of their churches. In his transactions with the poor Polish immigrants who wended their way to these settlements, he was patient and reasonable. Selling his land at ten to fifteen dollars an acre, he would wait beyond the term of payment of the principal, often canceling the interest. He aided the settlers personally after the terrible forest fires of 1886 in these areas. Thus, with encouragement and help from Hof, these pioneers gradually prospered, built the first roads, constructed churches and schools and developed their farms to the efficient state which meets the eye of the visitor to these settlements today.

Settlements Named after Polish Heroes and Cities

With the exception of Hofa Park, which he named after himself, Hof reached into the past history of Poland to select national heroes and cities for the names of his settlements. He did this with the aid or at the suggestion of his Polish agents. Pulaski, Kosciuszko and Sobieski were military heroes and defenders of freedom either in Polish or both Polish and early American history. Krakow was once the capital of Poland in her greater days of glory. These national heroes and the former capital of Poland were dear to the hearts of the Polish immigrant who, settling on soil far from his native country, felt more at home in a Polish-named though modest farm community.

After meeting with complete success in colonizing and firmly establishing Polish settlements at

Hofa Park and Pulaski, Hof opened a branch land office of the John J. Hof Land Company at Sobieski in 1894. This was done to spur land sales in the Sobieski, Kosciuszko and Krakow areas. The main office of this company still remained in Milwaukee.

Direct Railroad Transportation to Sobieski

Following the opening of a branch office at Sobieski, Hof succeeded in persuading the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad to transfer its scheduled logging train stop from Gardner to Sobieski, a distance of one mile and a half to the north. Shortly thereafter, a depot was built at Sobieski. Thus, all the Polish settlers from various parts of the United States henceforth came directly through Chicago and Milwaukee to Sobieski. Previously, the settlers of Hofa Park or Pulaski detrained at Green Bay or Seymour and either walked or were driven by horse and wagon a distance of twenty to twenty-five miles to their newly-purchased land! Before 1894, the nearest railroad stop for Sobieski settlers was four miles further east at Little Suamico, Wisconsin. The Sobieski railroad station thus considerably shortened the distances of foot or wagon travel for the Sobieski, Kościuszko and Krakow settlers.

This marked the earliest direct transportation by railroad to Hof's Polish settlements. Later, in 1906, similar transportation to Pulaski and Krakow was provided by the Chicago and North Western Railway. Hofa Park was never as fortunate. Although attempts were made as early as 1870 to provide railway transportation from Green Bay through Angelica, near Hofa Park, and though Hof optimistically advertised that trains would roll through Hofa Park, nothing ever materialized in this regard. Later, transportation by auto and shipping of farm products by truck lines decreased the importance of a railroad in Hofa Park and other farm communities.

Over 160,000 Acres of Land Predominantly Settled by Poles

Both the branch land office and direct railroad transportation to Sobieski represent Hof's final success in populating over 160,000 acres of land with predominantly Polish farmers. His dream of establishing Polish farm colonies was well realized even before his death. The initial success he had with luring four Polish families to Hofa Park in 1877 was followed by similar modest beginnings of new Polish settlements at Pulaski in 1883, Sobieski in 1892, Kosciuszko and Krakow in 1895. Kosciuszko, however, never developed into a thriving community.

Within five to ten years after the first settlers arrived, churches were built in Hofa Park (1883), Pulaski (1887), Sobieski (1897) and Krakow (1903). Previous construction of essential places of business and trade contributed to the gradual formation of villages that now dot this area. Pulaski, the most prosperous and progressive of Hof's Polish settlements, became an incorporated village in 1910. The thirty-five years (1875- 1910) which Hof spent in attracting predominantly Polish immigrants to these communities in northeastern Wisconsin were thus rewarded with more than a modicum of success.

Franciscan Fathers Come to Pulaski in 1887

Through his generous grant of 120 acres of land to the Polish Franciscan Fathers in 1887, Hof assured the early settlers of spiritual care and attention in all of his settlements. This grant of land was made at Pulaski where the headquarters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Province of

these Fathers exist to this day. Through their missionary and educational activities emanating from Pulaski to all parts of the country and beyond the seas, these faithful sons of St. Francis have given Pulaski and the rest of Hof's Polish settlements not only nation-wide but even world-wide publicity.

Hof's Conversion to the Catholic Faith

To the Catholic reader, the final chapter of Hof's life is probably the most interesting. Though a member of the Lutheran faith, Hof dealt predominantly with Catholic Poles in his most active period of land sales. During his last years, he became more intimately interested in the Catholic religion.

When St. John Cantius Parish was organized in 1897, Hof, in addition to donating land and materials for the church, became one of its regular dues-paying members. Though this may be viewed as a move advantageous to the spurring of Hof's land

business, nevertheless it ultimately led to the moment when Hof began to take instructions in the Catholic religion. As a patient at St. Vincent's Hospital, Green Bay, and six months before his death, Hof was instructed by Father Ulrich, chaplain of this hospital. Indoctrinated in the Catholic religion, Hof was baptized by Father Francis Nowak, pastor of the Sobieski church.

Hof's Personal Life and Misfortunes

The life and activity which Hof spent as a land agent and owner and finally as president of a land company was quite successful. His personal life, however, bore scars of tragedy. As far as can be established by evidence, Hof was married twice. His first marriage ended with the premature death of his wife. He then married Maria Von Hoverden in 1886, but she divorced him in 1890. Both marriages were childless. Thus, Hof did not enjoy the happiness and stability of his own family and home though he was instrumental in aiding others to establish theirs.

A final evaluation of Hof's character and role among the Poles would result in the following portrait. First and foremost, he was the typical, aggressive land agent of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. As such, he was primarily seeking his own financial interests. But his secondary purpose was to sell his lands to the hardy, thrifty and staunchly Catholic Polish immigrant and thereby to form what he called "his beloved Polish colonies."

Although overstating his claims in describing actual conditions, prospects and conveniences in the settlements which he founded, Hof nevertheless was kind, sympathetic and generous to the Polish settlers. Appreciation of Hof's generosity is still remembered and frequently mentioned by the children and grandchildren of the early settlers. His interest in them even resulted in his ability to speak the Polish language to a limited degree.

His love for the Polish farmer and his interest in the daily life and problems of the Polish immigrant also led to a closer investigation of the Catholic religion. A more proximate motive was his desire to be buried among his settlers at Sobieski. Furthermore, to aid the Polish settler, Hof periodically published booklets on good farming, the elimination of noxious weeds, etc. His agricultural, social philosophy of life, as advertised in his Polish booklets, was that the farm was the best place for the family to stay happy, living and working together. His generosity in providing land, timber and money for the first churches in his settlements reflects his sound attitude toward religion and God.

His Death in 1910 and Burial at Sobieski

For a period of about eighteen months before he died, Hof's health gradually began to wane. Despite constant medical attention and care at various hospitals and sanatoria, he passed away at St. Vincent's Hospital in Green Bay on Monday, October 10, 1910, at the age of sixty-eight years. His body was shipped by rail to Sobieski on the following day.

The Green Bay Gazette (October 11, 1910) referred to Hof as "the man who established a large colony of Polish farmers in Sobieski and vicinity." It also credited him with building a large number of homes for the Polish settlers, a fact that is recorded in no other source.

Hof's funeral took place on Thursday, October 13, at St. John Cantius Church in Sobieski. Father Francis Nowak was the celebrant of the solemn Requiem Mass and was assisted by the Franciscan Fathers and other neighboring clergy. An overflowing crowd of Polish settlers from Hofa Park, Pulaski, Krakow and Sobieski attended final rites and bid the last farewell to the founder of their settlements. Interment took place in the cemetery, a short distance beyond the church. To this day, the monument standing over the grave of John J. Hof is the largest and most prominent of all at the Sobieski Catholic Cemetery.

Dissolution of Hof Land Company in 1917

Hof was survived by only one relative. It was his brother, Matthias Hofhaug, still living in Hof's native village of Domaas, Norway. Matthias was named by Hof in his last will as the sole beneficiary of his estate. John W. Mariner and John N. Kurtz, Hof's last partners in the John J. Hof Land Co., purchased his stock in the company. After all medical, hospital and funeral expenses were paid and other sundry claims settled, the final proceeds of Hof's estate, amounting to a little over \$6,000, were transmitted to his brother through the Norwegian Consulate at Chicago, Illinois.

The John J. Hof Land Company continued to operate under the management of Mariner and Kurtz until it was dissolved by them in 1917. Final legal dissolution came about in 1922. In 1920, it was supplanted by the John W. Mariner Land Co., which in turn was dissolved on December 31, 1952.

In 1927, the John W. Mariner Realty Co. was organized and originally operated both in the county and city of Milwaukee.

LOCAL HISTORY:

The unincorporated village of Hofa Park, Wisconsin, is located in the township of Maple Grove, in Shawano County. According to a Menominee Indian legend, the term Shawano (pronounced: Sha-no) means "To the South." Traveling south, along the Wolf River in search of food, these Indians came to a large lake where they found an abundance of wild rice. They called it "Sha-Wah-No-Nay-Pay-Sa," or Lake-to-the South. Later, the county and city of Shawano were named from the lake.

Shawano County was organized by the Laws of 1853 (Chapter 9) and was approved by Act of the Wisconsin Legislature on February 27, 1854. At first, the name of the county was spelled Shawanaw, but by the Laws of 1864 (Chapter 411) it was changed to the present Shawano.

Town of Maple Grove

In the very southeasternmost corner of Shawano County lies the township (also called town) of Maple Grove. It is bounded by the town of Angelica, Shawano County, on the north; by the town of Lessor, Shawano County, on the west; by the town of Seymour, Outagamie County, on the south; and by the town of Pittsfield, Brown County, on the east.

The name "Maple Grove" was probably descriptively given to this township because of its great amount of maple forests. Though other types of trees were found in this township and surrounding area, the Polish settlers claim that these were mostly cut when they arrived at Hofa Park in 1877. But still standing was a great supply of maple forest because hard wood then did not seem to command as great a price as other types of lumber, especially pine.

Hard Wood and Lack of a Railroad

Further proof of this is offered by Anton Klaus, a buyer of logs and lumber from Green Bay in the 1870's, He openly claimed in the Daily State Gazette (March 19, 1872) that "the quality of hard wood through the towns of Hartland, Angelica and Maple Grove was far better and greatly in excess of any part in this section of the state."

He also expressed the opinion that hard wood will eventually be worth more than pine ever was. Listed as found in the above townships was the following hard wood: maple, beech, basswood, poplar, elm and ash. Klaus suggested that "a railroad is only needed to make every foot of this wood valuable."

In 1872, there were twenty-three million feet of logs cut in the above three towns. With railroad transportation assured from this area to Green Bay, more saw mills could be built and lumber could be manufactured right in these towns and then shipped to Green Bay. As a result, the populations of the towns in question would increase tenfold and every acre of land would be trebled in value. At one station of the Green Bay and Lake Pepid Railroad, Klaus paid out in the winter of 1872 over \$18,000 for hard wood whose quality was inferior to that found in Hartland, Angelica and Maple Grove townships.

But the railroad never came and wagon loads of logs were slowly hauled by teams to Green Bay. Thus, the greater prosperity of the above towns was hindered.

First Officers of the Town of Maple Grove

The town of Maple Grove was formed in 1870. William Crofoot was the first Town Chairman. Other officers to first serve this township were Oley Olson and Hans Lausten, Supervisors; Tom Bradock, Assessor; Martin Keating, Treasurer; Niel McKinnon, Town Clerk; O. B. Stevens, Justice of the Peace; and John Hallam, Constable. Most of these men as well as the Miles Lutsey, Ole Knutsen and Nels Nelson families, which came in the years 1874-1875, settled along the Old Military Road, now Highway 29.

Polish settlers arrived later. A group of four Polish families was induced by John J. Hof to settle in the town of Maple Grove in 1877. Though the Poles came later, today over eighty-five per cent of the farmers living in this township are of Polish descent.

First Stores, Schools and Saw Mills

In 1876, Ole Knutsen built the first general store in the town of Maple Grove at Laney. It was situated more or less on the spot where the Mastej Store is found today. In 1881, this store was owned by C. Blackfeldt who operated a similar business at Lessor at the same time.

The Laney store also served for a number of years as a post office for the Hofa Park and Pulaski settlers until they obtained their own.

At Laney, too, Captain William Powell owned an inn where it is recorded that very good meals were served. Laney was the half-way stop on the stage coach route between Green Bay and Shawano. Powell's Inn, however, was destroyed by fire on February 7, 1874.

An early effort was made by the first townspeople to provide for an elementary education for their children. In 1876, the first school building in Maple Grove was constructed at Laney.

Some of the first saw mills in the town of Maple Grove were those owned by David McCartney, John Abby, Olesen and Peters, Charles Kessler and Robert Brighton. They manufactured lumber and shingles of a superior quality and had a high rating on the market.

David McCartney's saw mill at Laney, for instance, employed about 150 men on the premises and in the woods. In January, 1875, it had four million feet of logs in the yards with a prospect of ten million feet by the end of the logging season. Suspending operations for a few years, the McCartney mill started up again in 1881.

Farming Draws Settlers to Maple Grove in Late 1870's

The Green Bay Daily State Gazette (May 20 and 27, 1879) reported that "farms in Laney were in good demand this spring." Settlers from Milwaukee were arriving in good numbers and more were forecast to come. Agents selling land in this area besides John J. Hof were Morris Thomas and William B. Hutchinson. A farm of eighty acres commanded a price of \$920 in 1879 at Laney, or about \$11.50 an acre.

Having cleared the land, these settlers immediately began sowing wheat and oats followed by the planting of corn. In 1879, Shawano County produced more oats than wheat, the latter being sown mainly to provide the settlers with bread for the year.

Also in 1879, more corn was planted than ever before and a greater number of hog's were fatted. Potatoes had been planted for a number of years already but were plagued by the potato bug, Deer were also so plentiful that they were destroying crops. Yet state laws forbade shooting them out of season. Nevertheless, this problem was gradually solved.

By 1888, dairy farms increased to such a point that John Leonard opened the first cheese factory at Laney in that year.

Town and Village of Angelica

Intimately connected with the history of Hofa Park and Pulaski was the village of Angelica. Settled earlier, it is about four miles northeast of Hofa Park. The village is located in the township bearing

the same name. Like Maple Grove, Angelica township was formed in the year 1870 while the village "sprung up in the forest openings" about 1872.

In the spring of the latter year about forty families were settled in and around the village of Angelica, drawn there primarily by the logging and lumber interests. As a result, Angelica at the turn of this century had a greater number of and more impressive buildings than meet the eye today.

Besides the considerable building of dwellings there during the years 1872-1873 and later, two hotels were also found in Angelica at this time. These were the Angelica House and the Wescott House, the latter owned and operated by H. H. Wescott. At the same time, Robert McLaren built a commodious store. All three of these business establishments were having "a good run of customers" according to a contemporary Green Bay newspaper.

First Town Board and Railroad Prospects

The first town board of Angelica consisted of R. W. Button, Chairman; W. H. Upham and Talbert Prickett, Supervisors; and Robert McLaren, Treasurer.

Once again, the prediction was made that "with a railroad and a depot in the midst of the settlement, there is no reason why it (Angelica) should not become a village of considerable importance" (Green Bay Daily State Gazette, Jan. 16, 1873). During the last week of March, 1873, E. D. Clinton, of the Milwaukee and Northern Railway, visited Angelica and paid up all dues of the road for right of way, clearing, ties, wood, etc. Everyone was certain that there would be a railroad going through Angelica during the following summer.

Again in July, 1877, D. H. Pulcifer, former mayor of Shawano, and R. W. Button, chairman of Angelica township, interviewed railroad officials at Green Bay in regard to a proposed narrow gauge railroad from Green Bay to Shawano. Both Shawano and Angelica citizens were willing to support this project, but their efforts met with no success.

Saw Mills at Angelica

A number of saw mills were built at Angelica in 1872 and spurred the growth of this village. Work was thus provided for the settlers who labored in the mills or fanned out into the surrounding forests and logging camps. In the year 1872, the following mills operated at or near Angelica: William E. Upham and Bros., J. P. Laird & Co., Smith and Packett and Olesen and Peters.

The two largest of the above saw mills were those owned by the Uphams and Laird. The Upham mill was located about a mile from the stage coach road passing through Angelica. As much as 280,000 feet of logs were hauled to it in four days in March, 1873.

In the same year, the Uphams built an addition and installed a new lath and shingle mill and edger. Nearly all of the lumber from their mill was delivered to Seymour. Together with John Russell, they also conducted a trading post and a grist mill on the Menominee Reservation and were proprietors of a large lumber yard and store in Shawano. About 200,000 feet of lumber and a corresponding amount of shingles from Angelica supplied this lumber yard annually. In May, 1878, the Uphams closed their saw mill at Angelica and moved to Marshfield, Wisconsin.

Laird, who also owned saw mills in northern Minnesota, manufactured pine and bass lumber besides shingles and laths and filled large orders for the S. Bullock Chair Factory in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin. A boiler explosion at the Laird mill on December 21, 1873, caused the death of six men and injury to one. The loss to the mill itself amounted to \$15,000.

For a time it was thought that the mill would not be rebuilt. But the owners decided to remain in Angelica and a completely new mill was in operation by March 1 of the following year.

It had a capacity of manufacturing 25,000 feet of lumber and 100,000 feet of shingles per day. In 1875, this mill employed 140 men and turned out ten million feet of logs. It was still running at top speed in 1882.

Temperance Influence at Angelica

Despite the logging and lumber boom, Angelica was under good temperance influence from its very beginning. No traffic in intoxicating drinks was allowed. When someone proposed to convert the Angelica House in 1879 into an inn and liquor saloon, the plan was met with great opposition. The town chairman, who was described as a temperance man "from his boots up," resisted the granting of the license. The Angelica correspondent to a Green Bay newspaper of the day commented that "hardly a greater misfortune could befall that town or any other than the establishment of a dram shop within its limits."

Establishment of Congregational-Methodist Church

Aided financially by the Congregational Church of Appleton and by the Presbyterian Church of Green Bay, the settlers of Angelica built the first church in the village in 1875. The modest structure, measuring 26x36 feet, was dedicated on Tuesday, September 14, 1875. It was called the Union Congregational Church. Gifts of articles for the church were donated from as far as Milwaukee and Racine, Wisconsin.

From 1879, the Methodists, whose element was growing stronger at Angelica, also used this church and worked toward a permanent agreement on this score with the Congregationalists.

Later Places of Business and Trade

In 1880, Andrew Spence purchased the store at Angelica and managed it with the aid of Casper Iverson. By 1890, the Fisher brothers, Harry and Albert, succeeded Spence and are reported to have had a booming business.

A post office was located at Angelica since it was on the stage coach delivery route. A guide board on the road before the post office indicated that Green Bay was then 21 miles, Shawano 18 and Seymour 11 miles away from Angelica. Postal service from Angelica was discontinued in 1906 when this area was served by rural carrier from Pulaski as it is today.

Very important to a farm community in the horse-and-wagon days was the blacksmith. The wagon and blacksmith shop at Angelica was owned in 1881 by Rasmussen. His was the only place within ten miles where a farmer could get any wood or iron work done.

Military Road from Green Bay to Lake Superior

From the very beginning and into the first decade of the twentieth century, transportation from Green Bay or Shawano to Angelica was directed over the Old Military Road, now State Highway 29. This was also the stage coach route which brought mail to the villages along the way as it discharged or picked up passengers.

Although the Old Military Road was established by the Act of Congress in 1863, it was first on June 20, 1868, that Governor Fairchild received patents for 72,000 acres of land from the Federal Government. This was a grant given for construction of "a military wagon road" extending from Green Bay to the Michigan state line at Lake Superior. The J. W. Babcock Co. was hired as contractor for the construction of the road. It received three sections of land for every mile of road built.

In 1875, a Green Bay newspaper reporter who rode the length of the road criticized that it was "nothing to brag about for smoothness even in the winter season." The section from Green Bay to Shawano was in a better condition. But from Shawano to the state line it was only a narrow passageway, cut through the dense woods with a few stumps grubbed out and the most formidable boulders removed. The accusation was made that the Babcock Co. "cared more for pay than for accomodation, reputation or road."

Stage Coach Route and Operator in 1875

The stage coach run from Green Bay to Shawano was owned and operated in 1875 by John Hendricks. "Modern" improvements in his stage coaches included a stove and a passenger fireman. The route from Green Bay ran past the Duck Creek and Oneida reservations. The first stop was made at Mill Center which had a post office and four saw mills at the time. Then came Owego, four miles beyond Mill Center and possessing a post office and the Foster mill.

Next on the route was Laney, the half-way station between Green Bay and Shawano. Here a longer stop was made. A Mr. Rudd owned the Half-Way House in 1875 and served excellent meals. Here, too, fresh teams of horses were exchanged for the balance of the trip to Shawano.

Leaving Laney, the stage coach made its next call at Angelica, where activity was centered mostly at the Upham and Laird mills which employed the most men. All in all, the stage coach passed through, twenty-three saw mill towns on the Green Bay-Shawano trip, each with a capacity of producing from two to ten million feet of lumber per year.

Stage coach travel from Green Bay to Shawano was discontinued in 1906 when the North Western Railroad began passenger service from Green Bay through Pulaski to Shawano. Besides the stage coach, the early settlers traveled on the military road by oxen-and-cart, horse-and-wagon, or simply walked. Their limited funds did not always allow them the luxury of a stage coach ride.

On a lighter note and despite the rigors of a primitive life, Angelica had a representative baseball team as early as 1888. Calling itself the Angelica Harrison Club, it played such rivals as the Frazer Cleveland Club and teams from Rose Lawn, Seymour and Green Valley.

Frazer's Corners

Closely connected with the history of Hofa Park and its first settlers is the hamlet of Frazer, or Frazer's Corners as it is more popularly called.

It is situated in the town of Lessor, about two and one-half miles northwest of the village of Hofa Park. This hamlet was named in honor of George Frazer, its first settler, who came there in the early 1870's. He was also the first chairman of the township of Lessor.

Since their farms lay in the northwestern corner of Maple Grove township, the first Polish families came through Frazer's Corners to reach their new homes in 1877. They also usually bought most of their supplies at George Frazer's Store, a little over a mile away, until a store was opened at Hofa Park in 1883.

First Settlers at Hofa Park, 1877

All the villages and greater or smaller parts of the townships mentioned above constitute most of the territory of St. Stanislaus Church at Hofa Park today. Into this booming saw mill and early farming territory came the first Polish settlers of the town of Maple Grove and the village of Hofa Park in the year 1877. They came as a group of four families. These were the Valentine Peplinski, Valentine Zygmanski, Michael and Frank Lepak families.

Having traded their homes and possessions in Milwaukee to John J. Hof for eighty to one hundred acres of cutover farm land and forest at Maple Grove, the men of the above families came first to Hofa Park in August of 1877 to build homes for their families. They constructed two frame buildings which one of the early settlers described as "rough shelters."

During the first week of September, 1877, the wives and children of these pioneers arrived at Green Bay on the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad. They were met at the depot by their husbands, who hired a team of oxen and a wagon from Joseph Wanier, a farmer near Laney, to transport their families and few possessions from Green Bay to Laney.

Trip by Oxen and on Foot to Hofa Park

Mrs. Valentine Peplinski, who was with child, and the other women rode in the wagon. The men and boys walked for about four miles out of Green Bay. They were then kindly offered a ride by a logger whose team of horses had just hauled a load of logs to Green Bay and was returning to Laney for more of the same. Thus transported by oxen and horses, the four families rode as far as Laney on the Old Military Road.

From there on, they all walked to Angelica, arriving at this village late at night. Here they slept overnight on the hay in the barn behind the Angelica House. The final leg of the trip was completed on foot from Angelica to Frazer's Corners and then to their newly built homes, about a mile and one-half away. Here the Peplinski and Michael Lepak families occupied one home while the Zygmanski and Frank Lepak families lived in the other.

At the time, John Lepak, son of Michael, and John Peplinski were eleven and seven years old re-

spectively. It is to them that the author is indebted for much of the information about their early years at Hofa Park.

John Lepak died in 1956 at the ripe age of 90, while John Peplinski just died in July of this, the diamond jubilee year of the Hofa Park Catholic parish, having himself reached the venerable age of 88 years. Both men, however, died at Pulaski. The Peplinski family had moved there from Hofa Park in 1887 and opened a general store. In time, John Peplinski developed a prosperous hardware business which is still in the hands of his family today.

Harry Peplinski, First Polish Child Born in Maple Grove

A few weeks after their arrival at Hofa Park the Polish settlers welcomed a newcomer into this budding settlement. On September 28, 1877, Mrs. Valentine Peplinski gave birth to a son, who was the first Polish child born in the town of Maple Grove. He came into this world on the feast of St. Jerome and was therefore named after this saint. During his lifetime, however, he was better known as Harry Peplinski.

The four families lived in the two primitive homes until they cleared sufficient land. With common effort they built two more dwellings in time and then each family settled on its own property. The Valentine Peplinski farm was located on the land now owned by Frank Wozniak. Valentine Zygmanski occupied what is now the Emil Lepak farm. Julius Tyczkowski's land is the site today where Michael Lepak first settled, and the original Frank Lepak farm is now owned by Joseph Jarosinski.

Who can adequately describe the privation and primitive conditions in which these early settlers lived at Hofa Park? Hard work, very strenuous work, was their daily lot in clearing the land and in cultivating the first farm acreage to eke out a living at Hofa Park. When needing a bag of flour or other supplies, they would walk a mile and a half through the woods to Frazer's Corners and return to their homes carrying the supplies on their backs!

Money was a scarce item. Only by working in the sawmills and logging camps could the men earn some ready cash. In the beginning, the small farms of these pioneers produced only food sufficient for their families. After more land was cleared, farming would gradually support them as a means of earning a living.

With their small savings, the first settlers purchased oxen to help in clearing and tilling the soil. Horses were purchased later when these pioneers prospered a little more. The raising of a dairy herd also came gradually. Then the older children of the early settlers could be seen hurrying with pailfuls of freshly churned butter to sell it in trade at Knutsen's Store in Laney. Lack of refrigeration and speedier transportation always created the problem of the butter melting before it was delivered at Laney, particularly in the warmer weather.

More Settlers Arrive at Hofa Park

However humble and unpretentious, this was the beginning of Hof's Polish settlement at Hofa Park. In the spring of 1878, other Polish families arrived. They were the Valentine and Andrew Holewinski, Joseph Kasza, Anton Sobieszczyk, Joseph Holewinski, John and Michael Sznieta, Frank Mucha and Simon Kielpinski families.

Within the next five years they were followed by such as the Joseph Baranczyk, Joseph Ziarek, Alexander Sawicki, Joseph Kosmicki, Theophil Krygier, Joseph Bruskiewicz, Lawrence Naidul, Jacob Jaskolski, Jacob Kozlowski, Albert Gorecki, Jacob Radecki, John Miller, Joseph Swiecichowski, John Wawrzon and other Polish families, all too numerous to be completely listed here.

Most of these early settlers were born in the northwestern region of Poland, in the Cassubian, Pomeranian and Posen territories. Many of them thus spoke German in addition to Polish. Coming to the United States, they first settled for a few years in such Polish centers as Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Chicago, Illinois, as well as in the various cities of Pennsylvania and New York. Hof's advertisements in the Polish newspapers of the country drew them to Hofa Park. Once here, they corresponded with their relatives and friends and thus attracted more of their countrymen to this area.

Hof's Temporary Office at Hofa Park

The first settlers lived about two and one-half miles from the heart of the present village of Hofa Park. Believed to be the first building in the village was the temporary land office of John J. Hof. Standing south of today's church and beyond the present Stanley Swiecichowski Store, it was a simple frame building constructed of rude boards.

Sloping down the hillside and into the valley beyond were some eighty acres of the finest white pine. Whenever visitors at Hof's office admired the tall, sturdy pines, he smilingly remarked: "They are too fine to be sold. They will be used for the new church at Hofa Park!"

Polish Influence in Name of Hofa Park

In both editions (1905 and 1937) of his History of Poles in America, Father Venceslaus Kruszka claims that the Hofa Park territory was first named Bislawek, after the town near Posen, Poland, from which the first settlers of Hofa Park originated. However, none of the children of the early pioneers (especially John Lepak and John Peplinski) remembered that this village and area was called anything but Hofa Park from the very beginning. Neither do any of the early sources on the history of Hofa Park mention Bislawek as being the first name of this village. Thus, Father Kruszka stands alone in his claim.

The earliest church and secular records refer to this area as Maple Grove or Hofa Park interchangeably. The central portion of the village stands prominently elevated above the land surrounding it. In the late 1870's and early 1880's, it was still generously wooded. Here Hof used to arrange family picnics on Sundays to acquaint the growing number of settlers with each other. He often furnished the food and beverages at his own cost. Thus, because this section had an appearance of a park, Hof and the settlers referred to it as Hof's Park. This descriptive term was then used in regard to the village and the surrounding area.

Pulaski, Krakow, Kosciuszko and Sobieski are completely Polish names. Hofa Park is not. It is composed of non-Polish words, but it bears the influence of the Polish language. In English, the name of this village should have read Hof or Hof's Park. In fact, in the early years, this form spelled with a single or double f appeared in the English newspapers whenever any news were reported on Hof's first settlement. But the Poles speaking among themselves would use the term Hofa Park, "Hofa" being the Polish equivalent of "Hof's," or the Polish possessive case of Hof formed by adding a to

the English word.

Thus, by constant reference to this area as Hofa Park by the Poles, this polonized form of the settlement won over the term Hof's Park. Hof immediately accepted it and printed "Hofa Park" on his maps, circulars, stationery and other advertising literature. Thus it also appears on maps and road signs today.

First Store, Church, School and Saw Mill at Hofa Park

For the first six years (1877-1883), as their settlement was growing and as they developed their own lands, the Poles bought necessary supplies at Frazer's Corners, Laney, Angelica and Seymour. During the winter months the men worked in the saw mills of these villages and in other places for the wage of 50 cents a day! At that time, this was considered good pay. They also hauled logs to Seymour and Green Bay, which cities served as a market for their other products, too.

In 1883, the village of Hofa Park saw the beginning of its own business enterprises. In that year, Matthew and Joseph Kosmicki built the first general store in the village. It also served as the first post office. The building stood approximately on the site of today's Stanley Swiecichowski Store and Tavern.

With the aid of Hof's generosity and the equally generous labor of the first settlers, the first log church or chapel was built in 1883, a short distance from the above store. The first church was dedicated to St. Adalbert and was located about forty feet north of the present rectory.

The claim is made that the first school was erected at Hofa Park in 1885, but it is also known that the log chapel was used as a school on week days from the year 1883. This was not a parochial but a district public school, although catechetical instructions were given in its confines, too.

Miss Catherine Dillett was one of the first, if not actually the first, teachers. Her father was then Justice of the Peace of Maple Grove, lived at Rose Lawn, and later became a judge in Shawano.

Thorace Thompson, one of Hof's assistant lands agents, built a saw mill at Hofa Park in 1885 and manufactured a superior quality of lumber, shingles and laths. Tradition has it that he also learned to speak the Polish language to quite a degree because of his daily contact with the Poles. His saw mill was later owned and operated by Vincent Krygier, then by August Lepak during whose ownership it burned down.

Poles Aid in Maple Grove Roadbuilding

Soon after their arrival in the town of Maple Grove, the Polish settlers were active in that township's road building projects. Minutes of its town meetings indicate that by April, 1881, Valentine Holewinski was elected overseer of "highways" for District No. 2. Money was raised to improve the east end of the "Poland Road" the "Peplinski Road," the "Holewinski Road," the "Tyczkowski Road" and others.

Jobs were let to "the Polanders" to cut and clear 140 rods long and 3 rods wide and to clear 16 feet in center of road and put in 32 rods of corduroy (logs) for specified amounts of money repeatedly. Between 1881 and 1885, some of the Poles receiving these jobs were Valentine Peplinski, Frank

and Michael Lepak, Valentine Zygmanski, Valentine and Andrew Holewinski, Michael Smith, Joseph Kasza, Frank Mucha and Joseph Tyczkowski.

John J. Hof Also Financed Construction of Roads

On December 16, 1884, the town boards of Maple Grove and Angelica met at the Angelica Store "pursuant to notice for the purpose of laying out a highway on the town line between these two townships." John J. Hof was present at these and other meetings. He himself contributed to the building of numerous roads in Hofa Park and his other settlements. In 1899, the Green Bay Gazette (Feb. 3) credited Hof with the construction of about 100 miles of roads in the neighborhood of Hofa Park, Pulaski and Sobieski as his share of the "good roads movement."

On April 25, 1885, the town board of Maple Grove resolved to build a road west of Hofa Park (beginning practically at the doorstep of today's St. Stanislaus rectory) to the town line of Lessor and Maple Grove. The Polish settlers aided in these and many other road building projects.

First Poles, Holders of Town Offices

During the April, 1884, town elections, Valentine Peplinski was a candidate for the Justice of the Peace of Maple Grove. He was defeated however by Martin Keating. The year 1885, on the other hand, was a banner year for the Poles. On April 7, 1885, Joseph Tyczkowski was elected to the office of the Justice of the Peace in Maple Grove for a term of two years. He was overseer of roads in District No. 2 in the same period, while Lawrence Naidul was elected overseer of roads in District No. 7 in the same year.

In 1885, too, Theophil Krygier became a supervisor on the town board and was appointed to the Board of Health of Maple Grove township. Finally, on April 25, 1885, Walter S. Gratski was elected town clerk of Maple Grove. Not all the names of Poles who served on the town or county boards or held town offices can be listed here, but from the year 1885 till this day the Poles of Hofa Park have always been generously represented.

Tragic Forest and Prairie Fire of 1886

Just when the Hofa Park settlers were beginning to reap a modest harvest of success in their settlement, a tragedy occurred which caused untold losses and suffering and nearly started a frantic wave of migration back to the cities. Reminiscent of the Great Forest Fire of Peshtigo in 1871 was the conflagration which swept through the forests and prairies of northeastern Wisconsin from Kewaunee County west and northwest through Brown, Shawano and Oconto Counties as far north as Coleman.

Reports on the damage done in Hofa Park, Laney, Angelica and Pulaski were made to the Green Bay State Gazette (August 21, 1886) by John J. Hof and Thorace Thompson. According to these reports, a large forest fire started on Monday, Aug. 16, on the south side of section 20, town of Maple Grove. The wind blew fiercely from the southwest and the fire crossed into Laney and then attacked John Russell's saw mill, formerly known as Olsen and Peters, on section 36, Angelica township. The mill burned together with about 100,000 feet of timber. A boarding house, store, barn full of hay, four dwellings and a blacksmith shop succumbed to the fire at Angelica. It made a clean sweep across

the towns and villages of Shawano County taking houses, barns, grain, fences, cattle, horses, everything in its path. Because of a dry season, this area was on fire all summer, but no great damage was done till now. At the height of the fire, the settlers slept at night in the doorways of their home so they might be able to leave at a moment's notice.

Poles Suffer Heavy Losses

At Pulaski, then composed of parts of Maple Grove, Pittsfield, Chase and Angelica townships, the farmers lost all they possessed. They were mostly Poles, new settlers (this settlement began in 1883), and were in "small circumstances," as the Green Bay newspaper describes their financial position. They had no funds toward rebuilding their homes and farm buildings. With winter approaching, all the clothing they possessed was on their backs. Those who were fortunate to save their herds had to sell them because without feed they could not keep them through the winter.

Hof surveyed the damage and reported that most of the burned out houses of settlers were located about two miles west and two to three miles northwest of Laney. He persuaded all the settlers to stay and rebuild. However, none of them, with the exception of John Boncel, had insurance.

Twenty-six, predominantly Polish families in the towns of Maple Grove and Angelica, lost buildings, bedding, clothing, money, tools, oxen, mules, horses, cattle and crops. Among these were the following Poles of Hofa Park, Angelica and Pulaski: John Behmka, Frank Podulski, Michael Sentowski, Michael Stec, Felix Kielinski, Anton Sobieszczyk, Joseph Jarek, Albert Gorecki, Lawrence Naidul, Joseph Baranczyk, Michael Bresinski, Frank Boruski, Alex Sawicki, John Degor, Joseph Klemens, Mrs. Dudek, Louis Krog, John Swensen, Martin Jankowski, Louis Peterson, two unnamed Danish families, Valentine Zywicki, I. Knapowski, M. Wusniak and John Boncel.

At Pulaski, John Boncel, one of its first settlers, lost a large saw mill, boarding house, residence, barn with contents, many smaller buildings, and a large supply of lumber and shingles. At the time, the Pulaski settlers also had 50,000 feet of lumber at the mill with which to build their first Catholic church. All this lumber burned and was not insured. It must be remembered that from 1883 to this time the Pulaski Catholics were members of the Hofa Park parish.

Hof's Relief Activity Aids Polish Settlers

At the time of the fire, Hof sent word to Hofa Park to let no settler leave for want of food and clothing. He gave orders to the Kosmicki Bros. Store at Hofa Park to furnish supplies to the amount of \$2,000 and to charge it to his account.

Next, he went to Green Bay to see what could be done to relieve the present necessities of his burned-out settlers. He spoke to the relief committee in that city but received very little help because the losses were great in Brown County itself.

From Green Bay Hof went to seek help among his friends in Milwaukee. During the first week of September, 1886, he arrived at Seymour with a few carloads of supplies from Milwaukee for the sufferers of the fire at Hofa Park. Included were plows, drags, hoes, spades, clothing, bedding and cooking utensils, furniture and stoves, all mostly new. Donations were also made to Hofa Park people from Shawano and Appleton.

Bishop Katzer Initiates Program of Relief

Bishop Katzer of Green Bay also organized a relief committee for the fire victims of the diocese. Included on the committee for the townships of Maple Grove and Angelica were Walter Gratski and John J. Hof. Money collected for the benefit of the stricken people was to be handed directly to Bishop Katzer or his attorneys.

Despite the relief given, many farmers of Maple Grove and Shawano County were absolutely destitute of necessities for winter comfort. Walter Gratski, town clerk of Maple Grove, visited Green Bay as late as December 4, 1886, still seeking aid for the victims of the past summer's forest fire. He reported that temporary structures which served during the warm weather were insufficient for winter protection. Again he emphasized that the most destitute were the Polish settlers who spent all their money in purchasing land from John J. Hof. But no aid was offered Gratski at Green Bay. He was assured that help would come as soon as the state legislature would meet. Since the call for aid came from outside the county, there was nothing that the Fort Howard or Green Bay relief committees could do under the old instructions.

City of Shawano Contributed Its Share

On the other hand, the city of Shawano had done all it could for the relief of suffering, but could not supply all the needs. The problem was: to whom should these settlers look for aid? Gradually, steps were taken to ascertain on whom the responsibility rested for relief to these unfortunate people. In the meantime, they suffered patiently.

The most heart-rending incident was that reported by the Green Bay Daily State Gazette on December 14, 1886. On the previous Sunday, December 12, a Polish woman from Hofa Park, whose name is not given, was in Green Bay soliciting aid because her home had burned as late as in November. Her appeal was certified by Father Maczynski, then pastor of the Hofa Park Church. She had walked twenty miles to Green Bay and went about the city in the rain seeking help. She had left a husband with an injured leg and three children at Hofa Park.

Notwithstanding their great losses and the prolonged suffering and need, these hardy Polish settlers survived the fire, particularly because of Hof's help and encouragement. Curiously enough, neither the log church nor the business establishments in the village of Hofa Park perished during the fire.

Places of Business at Hofa Park, 1890-1958

Around 1890, the number of business places in Hofa Park increased. In addition to Kosmicki's Stove, Theophil Krygier opened a general merchandise store in the early 1890's. It stood more or less on the spot where the home of Thomas Palubicki is located today. Towards the turn of the century, Krygier built the first cheese factory in Hofa Park. It was a frame building and stood on the same spot as the Roger Faken cheese factory stands now. In 1923 a brick building replaced it. Roger Faken purchased this factory from Joseph Lubinski, remodeled it and introduced additional improvements.

At the turn of the century, Vincent Krygier, son of Theophil, owned and supervised three different businesses: a saw mill, grist mill and saloon. Together with Andrew Holewinski he also covered the Hofa Park, Pulaski and Krakow areas with a steamer tractor and threshing machine harvesting grain

for the Polish settlers. John Lepak, Jeffery Vandermoss and other Hofa Park and Angelica farmers also threshed grain for themselves and others.

Hofa Park Settlers Open Businesses in Other Polish Settlements

Recognizing enterprise among the Hofa Park settlers, Hof induced some of them to transfer to his other settlements to begin business places there. Thus, he encouraged the Valentine Peplinski family to transfer to Pulaski in 1887. Valentine and his son John opened a general store there and later John pioneered in a successful hardware trade which endures to this day.

In 1892, Frank Peplinski answered Hof's call to build and manage the first store, hotel and saloon in Sobieski. Finally, in 1897, Hof donated three lots to Theophil Krygier at Krakow if the Krygier family would begin a general store in the latest of Hof's colonizing efforts. Krygier's sons, Vincent and Stanley, were sent to Krakow to open the first store in the village.

Andrew Borlik had the first blacksmith shop in Hofa Park around the 1890's. John Hernet, who worked for Borlik, married his employer's daughter, moved to Krakow and later to Sobieski, serving as the first blacksmith in both villages.

In the early 1900's, Joseph Kurowski owned a general store just about on the site of the John Piotrowski Tavern of the present day.

In 1915, Vincent Matecki began a harness shop at Hofa Park. He was succeeded in this business by Edward Bluma. When Xavier Czajkowski purchased the property from Bluma, he converted it into a garage and tavern, which today is owned by Norbert Hendricks.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Stefaniak purchased the Kosmicki Store from the two brothers in 1920. Next to the store, Stefaniak also built a grist mill which burned together with the St. Stanislaus frame church on June 15, 1934. In 1945, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Swiecichowski purchased the Stefaniak Store and Tavern and operate it to this day.

Many of the old photos of the early buildings, church, stores and so forth were taken by cameras owned by the Spaulding King Store in Rose Lawn, the Angelica Store or by an enterprising photographer from Seymour. Later, in the first quarter of the twentieth century, Walter (Ed) Piotrowski and other Hofa Park people could afford the luxury of a camera and used it to capture festive and happy moments in the lives of the Hofa Park farmers.

FOUNDING OF THE PARISH:

For the first three years after their arrival in the town of Maple Grove in 1877, the first Polish settlers did not see a Catholic priest in Hofa Park. Until the number of families increased, there could be no consideration of building a church of their own. Furthermore, before the settlers could afford to do this, they were in the meantime busy laboring strenuously for their daily bread and the support of their families. Thus, six years elapsed before anything resembling a church was constructed at Hofa Park.

Hofa Park Settlers Attend Seymour Church, 1877-1880

As a result, the early Hofa Park Poles at first attended the nearest Catholic church in the vicinity. This was St. John the Baptist Church, then composed mostly of German parishioners, at Seymour. Since the pioneers of Hofa Park originally came from western Poland, most of them understood the German language used in the Seymour church.

With today's improved outlay of roads, Seymour is only nine miles distant from Hofa Park. But in 1877 and for some years before any resemblance of good roads was constructed, the distance was much longer and the round trip usually took three days. The Hofa Park Catholics would leave their homes on Saturday morning, some walking, some (mostly women and children) riding the ox cart. They would have to by-pass deep swamps or ford the shallower ones carrying their women and children on their backs. For some, this roundabout trip amounted to twenty-four miles one way.

Route of Travel to Seymour

The first route taken, according to John Lepak, started from their homes to Frazer's Corners, then to Angelica and on the Military Road to Laney. Here they followed the higher land wherever possible on to Seymour. The record time, at least for the Michael Lepak family, was made when they left their home mid-Saturday morning and arrived at 5 o'clock in the afternoon at Seymour. Taken along on such trip was the following equipment: a sharp axe, a hay fork (used against bears and wolves), a saw, a supply of food for the settlers and fodder for the oxen.

Attending Mass, receiving the sacraments and taking part in the Vesper services on Sunday, they usually returned to their settlement on Monday. However, when weather conditions were bad, the settlers would remain at Seymour longer. On one occasion, during a siege of heavy rains, they remained in Seymour five days!

Gracious Hospitality of Seymour Pastors

Having a filial devotion to the Queen of the Holy Rosary, the first families at Hofa Park made their initial trip to Seymour on the first Saturday of October, 1877. Because of the long trip and the difficulties entailed, they could make this trip but once a month. When they did, they were graciously hosted by the pastors of St. John's Church, particularly Father Schoell, of whom all the old-timers of Hofa Park spoke with high respect, love and praise.

His genial hospitality included housing the women and children overnight in the extremely large rectory at Seymour while the men and boys slept in the spacious hay barn. In the morning, breakfast was served to all in the rectory. Father Schoell and his elderly and kind housekeeper would offer helpful hints in preparing the meal. Hofa Park men never forgot how Father Schoell taught their wives how to stir fresh eggs into the coffee in order to enrich its taste and value.

Religious Services at Private Homes

On the other Sundays of the month, the settlers would gather in one particular home. There they recited the rosary, litany and other prayers, and sang the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary (called "Godzinki" in Polish) which they all knew from memory. After this, they listened attentively

as the teen-aged John Lepak, who completed the third reader at St. Hedwig's School in Milwaukee, read the Gospel in Polish. Following this, these pious pioneers watched whether the sun was directly overhead in the skies. Judging that it was then high noon, they would complete their Sunday services with the singing of the Angehis.

Still preserved in the Lepak family is a small, wooden Calvary shrine, about 20 inches high. Beneath the crucifix, in a box-like structure, there were enclosed miniature stations of the Way of the Cross with English titles. The stations revolved on a turntable. During the years before the first church was built and a resident pastor provided, these Polish settlers would place the shrine on a table in a large room of their homes, meditate on each station and recite the prayers of the Way of the Cross. These were their private, Lenten services.

Mass Once a Month at Hofa Park

Once-a-month attendance at Mass in Seymour and religious services at home on the rest of the Sundays continued thus for the first three years. Towards the end of the third year, in 1880, Bishop Krautbauer was present at Seymour to confer the sacrament of confirmation. He saw a group of people coming into the churchyard with oxen, and supplies laden in the ox carts. Surmizing that they came from a distance, the good bishop asked the pastor who these people were. After receiving the reply that these were the Poles of Hofa Park and that they made the long and difficult journey to Seymour every month, Bishop Krautbauer instructed the pastor of St. John's Church to ride to Hofa Park once a month and celebrate Mass there in a private home for these settlers.

At first, Mass was celebrated in the home of the Michael Lepak family. When this home became too small, the Valentine Peplinski residence was selected. Then, according to the testimony of the late John Peplinski, he and other children of the settlement received their first Holy Communion from the hands of Father Schoell in the Jacob Jaskolski home in 1882.

After the Ziarek family moved from Hofa Park, their unoccupied home was temporarily used for Sunday Mass and services. Finally, services were also celebrated for a time in Hof's temporary land office. Thus, from 1880 to 1883, Hofa Park was a station of the Catholic parish at Seymour.

Building of a Log Church in 1883

During the latter part of 1882, Valentine Peplinski, Michael Lepak and Michael Schmitt traveled to Green Bay to petition Bishop Krautbauer for permission to build a church at Hofa Park. Private homes and Hof's land office were becoming too small to accommodate the growing number of settlers. The bishop of the Green Bay diocese promised to grant his permission when there would be sixty families at Hofa Park. He added that at such a time he would also personally donate \$60 towards the building of the first church.

Evidently the required number of sixty families was reached in the early part of the year 1883, for on Jan. 11 of that year Bishop Krautbauer accepted the grant of twenty-three acres donated by John J. Hof for a church site. Three acres of this grant was temporarily reserved by Hof for a mill site.

With a grant of land from Hof and permission from the bishop, the settlers now prepared to build their first church. Hof also donated the timber and Bishop Krautbauer contributed the promised sum of \$60.

St. Adalbert, Name of First Church at Hofa Park

The first church at Hofa Park, built in the spring of 1883, was actually a log chapel sufficient to accommodate the number of families there at the time. It was located about forty feet north of the present rectory. The limited financial means of the Hofa Park Poles did not allow them to build a larger church as yet. How little money the parishioners possessed is proven by the fact that the pew rent assessed upon them was \$3 a year, yet not all could afford to pay this amount.

Father Michael Schoell now celebrated Mass once a month in this log chapel. From a station, Hofa Park now became a mission of Seymour.

According to Father Kruszka, the first church at Hofa Park was dedicated to St. Adalbert. Furthermore, the parish is listed under the name of this patron in the Catholic Directory until 1889 inclusive. On the other hand, the church records at Hofa Park, beginning with the year 1884, are entered under the name of St. Stanislaus Church.

Here a few explanatory remarks are necessary to clear up the confusion. Father Luke Pescinski succeeded Father Schoell as pastor of Seymour and Hofa Park in 1884. In the Hofa Park record books, Father Pescinski noted that he began to keep separate records for Hofa Park in 1886. However, before doing so, he first copied the baptisms, marriages and burials covering the years 1884 to 1886 from the Seymour records into the new Hofa Park books. Thus, it was sometime between the years 1884 and 1886 that the name of the parish was changed from St. Adalbert to St. Stanislaus. The Seymour records never listed the names St. Adalbert or St. Stanislaus, but simply state "Hofa Park" or "Maple Grove."

Evidently the change of patrons of the Hofa Park parish was not reported to the editors of the Catholic Directory until 1889. Therefore, they continued to list it under the title of St. Adalbert.

Another odd fact is why Father Pescinski copied the records at Seymour only from the year 1884 and not 1883? The testimony of the early settlers, Hof's grant of land to Bishop Krautbauer, Fathers Kruszka, Stanislaus Jeka and Francis Manel, the latter two being some of the earliest Franciscan pastors at this parish — all claim that the parish was founded in 1883. There appears to be no logical reason why the records of Hofa Park should not have been copied from the year 1883, except perhaps that Father Pescinski chose to copy them from the year in which he came to Seymour, namely 1884.

Log Church Used as School

No other direct information has survived in regard to a more precise description of the first log church at Hofa Park. Personal interviews among the older parishioners today disclose contradictory information as to size, seating capacity, etc. In addition, some claim that the log chapel was used on week days as a school from the year 1883; others claim that the log chapel served as a school house after the second church was built in 1888. There is no doubt but that it served as a school from the years 1888 to 1902. All are in agreement on this fact. The log chapel was also used for catechetical instruction of the children of the parish.

In 1902, the log school was converted into a utility building for the pastor after a new brick school-house was constructed. In the early 1930's, the first house of worship at Hofa Park was sold at an auction to Stanley Maroszek, a parishioner, and was later dismantled.

A photo of this log chapel and school was in the possession of the Frank Gorecki family in the parish. Unfortunately it was loaned to a relative whose home burned three years ago and the photo of the historic chapel perished with it!

Pulaski Settlers, Temporary Parishioners of Hofa Park Church

The construction of a church at Hofa Park spurred the growth of the parish. Hearing that a temple of God was now in the midst of the settlement, more Poles were willing to come to the Hofa Park area. By the end of 1884, 104 families were members of the growing congregation.

In addition, Poles settling in the Pulaski area in 1883 joined the Hofa Park parish until they could afford to build their own church. They paid their share of the pew rent and contributed to the upkeep of the church and pastor. For this reason, Hof advertised the Hofa Park church as the "Hofa Park-Pulaski Church or Convent."

From the beginning it was planned that only one large church should be built for both of these settlements. Hof himself was in favor of this idea. But the Pulaski people desired a church of their own and refused to belong permanently to Hofa Park. They began to gather materials and funds for their own church at Pulaski. But the forest fire of 1886 destroyed the lumber for the first Pulaski church, which oddly enough was also to be named after St. Adalbert.

After this tragedy, Hof offered his land office in Pulaski as a temporary chapel for the Pulaski settlers. After the necessary permission was granted by the bishop, services were held in this chapel once a month. Fathers Luke Pescinski from Seymour and John Maczynski from Menasha celebrated Mass for the first time on Pulaski soil. In between these times, Brother Augustine Zeitz, O.F.M., held religious services consisting of the rosary, the Little Office, and a homily on the Gospel, until two Franciscan Fathers arrived in April, 1888.

Father John Maczynski, Next Pastor at Hofa Park

On February 28, 1885, John J. Hof and Maria von Hoverden Hof, his wife, conveyed to Bishop Kraut-bauer and the Hofa Park parish an additional three acres. These were reserved by Hof in the original grant of 1883 for a possible mil site. Since Hof's agent, Thorace Thompson, built a saw mill at Hofa Park, further south of the church grounds, Hof released the three acres to the bishop and the parish. It is interesting to note that Hof, being a widower, listed as single in the warranty deed of 1883, was married again sometime before 1885.

In November, 1886, Hofa Park parishioners welcomed their new pastor in the person of Father John Maczynski, who was also pastor of St. John's Church in Menasha. Father Pescinski's successor at Seymour was again a German priest. And while the first Poles at Hofa Park understood German, many of the more recent Polish settlers originated from other sections of Poland and did not understand the German language. Thus, Bishop Katzer appointed Father Maczynski, the better to administer to the religious needs of the Poles at Hofa Park.

Father Maczynski was an ex-Franciscan from the Polish Reformed Province of Western Poland. Forced to leave his native land because of religious persecution by the German government, then occupying that section of Poland, Father Maczynski came to the United States and served in a number of

Polish parishes as a diocesan priest. He is remembered by the Hofa Park and Pulaski parishioners for his good-heartedness and pleasant disposition. Joseph Mencikalski usually drove by horse and buggy to Menasha to transport the affable pastor to Hofa Park for religious services on Sunday.

Hof Collects for New Hofa Park Church

In the meantime, during the first half of the year 1886, Hof was collecting money for a new and larger church at Hofa Park. This money was deposited with Messrs. Kosmicki and Galanski in the village. In a letter to Bishop Katzer, dated May 10, 1886, the founder of Hofa Park wrote that "120 Polish families have bought land in Hofa Park proper; in other words, have bought land west of the Green Bay and Shawano (Military) Road. West of the Park are small and large bodies of nice farming land and many small improved farms so that if a good Polish Church is built in the Park, several hundred Polish families will patronize that Church and School."

Evidently it was the intention of the bishop and the Pulaski people already at this time to build separate churches: one for Hofa Park (a larger one) and another for Pulaski. On this account, Hof continued in the above letter:

"However, I would have been financially better off if only one church could have been made to answer, because it costs immense outlays of money to do what I have done in these two centers (Hofa Park and Pulaski) ; but surely there are no helps for it. Pulaski will be content for the present with what you promised me."

Thus, Hof and the Hofa Park settlers resumed raising funds for a larger church to replace the overcrowded log chapel.

Contribution from Poles of California

Nevertheless, both Hof and Brother Augustine Zeitz who came to the Pulaski area in early 1887 advertised the Hofa Park-Pulaski settlements as a unified site for a Franciscan monastery and church in the Polish and Lithuanian newspapers of the country. It was not until Hof donated 120 acres of land for a monastery and church to Brother Augustine and the Franciscan Fathers in April, 1887, that the problem of two separate churches was definitely solved.

An unusual result of the publicity given to Hofa Park by Brother Augustine was a donation sent to him as late as January, 1888, by the Polish Society of California. It was earmarked "for the benefit of the Convent at Hof Park, Wisconsin." Nineteen Polish men and women from San Francisco, California, gathered and sent a modest sum of \$26 for this purpose. Though a small contribution, it was a touching fraternal gesture of help. The secretary of the Polish Society of California who sent the money and list of donors was Alexander Bednawski, 1235 Market St., San Francisco.

This contribution was made towards the building of a Polish Franciscan monastery in the Hofa Park-Pulaski area. The monastery was finally built in Pulaski, not Hofa Park, during the latter part of 1888.

Dedication of Second Church at Hofa Park

Father Maczynski and the Hofa Park parishioners decided to build a larger frame church in the spring of 1888. True to his promise, Hof offered the choice white pine he had saved for the construction of the new church. Again the settlers furnished all the labor for excavation, hauling of logs to the sawmill and lumber to the site of the church. Substantial donations were also made by their relatives and friends of Milwaukee and Chicago.

The new church was built in an east-to-west direction, with the front entrance facing west, and stood closer to the corner of the two streets which intersect at the site of the present church.

By April, 1888, the scaffolding was up and around the rising church building at Hofa Park. In the meantime, two Franciscan Fathers from Poland arrived at Pulaski in the latter part of April, 1888. They were Fathers Erasm Sobocinski and Stanislaus Jeka. Bishop Katzer appointed Father Erasm pastor of the Pulaski and Hofa Park parishes while Father Stanislaus was sent to administer Sacred Heart Church at Polonia, Wisconsin. Father Erasm thus succeeded Father Maczynski at Hofa Park and supervised the completion of the new church.

On Sunday, December 2, 1888, and by delegation of Bishop Katzer, Father Sobocinski blessed the new church and bell, then celebrated Mass during which Father Jerome Schneider, O.F.M., who had arrived at Pulaski in July of the same year, preached the sermon.

The new church bell was donated by Mrs. Walter Dyniewicz, wife of the publisher of Polish books in Chicago. It weighed 560 lbs. and was christened in honor of St. Hedwig.

St. Stanislaus Church, a Mission of Pulaski

Due to the fact that the parishioners at Hofa Park could not as yet build a rectory and support a resident pastor, St. Stanislaus Church became a mission to Pulaski. Father Erasm, who was also superior of the Pulaski monastery and the first Commissary Provincial of the Franciscan Fathers, visited Hofa Park twice a month to celebrate Mass and extend other spiritual care. In addition to the offices mentioned above, Father Erasm was also Master of Novices, served as a missionary and solicited funds among various Polish parishes of Wisconsin to complete the building of the Pulaski monastery and church. He succeeded in partially achieving his goal by September, 1888.

Next there was the task of clearing the brush, pulling stumps and preparing the land around the monastery for cultivation in order to provide food for the Fathers and Brothers. Aiding their pastor as well as the Franciscan Brothers in this work were the parishioners of Hofa Park, besides the settlers of Pulaski.

Father Erasm's Death and Father Jerome's Succession

Overwork, financial worries, extremely primitive living conditions in the first monastery at Pulaski and the resulting illness brought Father Erasm to an early grave. On the morning of February 4, 1890, Hofa Park and Pulaski lost their beloved Pastor, who died in a saintly manner surrounded by his brethren in St. Francis in the Pulaski monastery. He was buried on February 7 in the Pulaski parish cemetery.

On his deathbed, Father Erasm delegated Father Jerome Schneider to succeed him as Commissary Provincial, local superior and pastor of the Pulaski and Hofa Park parishes. The Most Reverend Father General of the Franciscan Order and Bishop Katzer confirmed Father Schneider in his various offices.

Father Jerome celebrated Mass two or three times a month at Hofa Park as conditions would allow him. With Father Jeka still at Polonia, Father Jerome was the only Franciscan priest at Pulaski. On his pastoral visits to Hofa Park, he taught catechism to the children of the parish, prepared them for Holy Communion and for confirmation. He also initiated the movement for the building of a rectory at Hofa Park in the hope that more Franciscan priests would soon be available and that Hofa Park could have a resident pastor. The fund-raising for a new rectory began in 1890. With the generous help of the Hofa Park parishioners, Father Jerome's efforts were successful and a rectory was finally built in June, 1892.

Father Stanislaus Jeka Becomes First Resident Pastor

With the provision of a rectory at Hofa Park, Bishop Sebastian G. Messmer of Green Bay replaced Father Jeka at Polonia with a diocesan priest and together with Franciscan authorities appointed Father Stanislaus as the first resident pastor at Hofa Park. St. Stanislaus now became a parish in the full, canonical sense of the word, and received full-time spiritual care. Mass and other devotions were celebrated every Sunday for the first time in the history of the parish! Given to aid in domestic work at the rectory was a religious brother from the Pulaski monastery.

The first rectory, supplanted by the present one in 1915, stands slightly remodeled but still used as a home by the Urban Drella family today. It is the fourth house south of the Swiecichowski Store.

Bishop Messmer Defines Status of Franciscan Fathers and Parish

Although the Franciscan Fathers offered spiritual care to the parishioners of St. Stanislaus Church since April, 1888, they only served as administrators of the parish. The church, rectory and the 23 acres of land belonged to the bishop of Green Bay. St. Stanislaus Congregation was not as yet incorporated in the state of Wisconsin until 1902 and therefore legally could hold no property.

Financial arrangements for the support of the Franciscan pastors were therefore established by Bishop Messmer on July 15, 1892. St. Stanislaus Parish was to pay a salary of \$600 a year to its pastor and furnish free board both to him and the religious brother. Parish meetings were to be held under the supervision of the Franciscan Fathers and trustees elected at these meetings needed the approval of the bishop in writing. Prior to this the parishioners were wont to meet under the leadership of a president elected by themselves, and this did not always make for smooth relationships between the people, the pastor and the bishop of the diocese.

Improvements and Payment of Debts

After relations between the bishop, the Franciscan Fathers and the parish were clearly defined, Father Jeka seriously delved into his pastoral work. Obtaining the good will and cooperation of the 133 families in the parish in 1892, he immediately exerted his efforts towards clearing the heretofore outstanding debts incurred in the building of the new church and rectory.

Next the pious Franciscan furnished the sacristy with beautiful new vestments and sacred vessels. His report for the year 1893 lists the sponsoring of the first parish picnics in the history of Saint Stanislaus Church. The market value of the parish property in 1893 was revealed to be \$7,980 at a time when wages were low and the value of the dollar high. Parish property then included the church, rectory, log school, cemetery which Father Jeka blessed, and twenty-three acres of land.

Further improvements to the church were made in 1894 in the form of oil paintings of St. Stanislaus and St. Joseph, more new vestments, candelabra and other articles conducive to more devoted performance and attendance at religious services. These articles were principally the donations of the Holy Rosary Society.

Vicar-General Fox Praises Polish Colonies

Returning with Bishop Messmer from Hofa Park and Pulaski where the sacrament of confirmation was conferred, Father Joseph J. Fox, Vicar-General and later Bishop of the Green Bay diocese, gave the following glowing report to the Green Bay Gazette on October 10, 1894, in an article entitled "3000 Persons and No Saloon":

"Can you imagine a settlement of nearly 500 families, which means about 3000 persons, without a saloon or public drinking place?... Bishop Messmer and I returned from a visit to Pulaski and "Hofa Park and there we found this anomalous state of things.

"Pulaski and Hofa Park are two settlements in Shawano County (Pulaski was not yet a village. The southwest and northwest portion of the present village were then in the towns of Maple Grove and Angelica, Shawano County), closely adjoining each other, and were founded by a Milwaukee real estate man. He had some land up there and conceived the idea of colonizing it. The colonists all came from Poland (originally), and the result of their labor can now be seen in the fact that they are all happy and prosperous people. Their small farms are in good condition, their homes are tidy and neat, and an air of health and prosperity permeates everything."

Healthy and Prosperous Conditions Due to Absence of Saloons

"Much of this, I have no doubt, is due to the absence of saloons. The men have no opportunity of squandering their money for nothing, except a probable and natural injury to their health, and the other baneful influences of the dramshop are likewise rendered impossible. The men, old and young, take their money instead and improve their farms, increase their stock, expend more for clothing and furnishings of their homes, pay more attention to the education of their children, and so forth. This state of things, I am glad to say, goes far to disprove the truth of many of the allegations that have been made concerning the Polanders. Give people an opportunity, follow it up with advice and direct help, and you will soon rejoice at the results.

Franciscan Fathers Do Grand Work

"These Poles there, however, are no total abstainers. I understand that, off and on, they have their little jollifications when they club together and purchase some beer which is then consumed by them in a rational manner. I know that to wish that even this would be done away with, would be too radical. The cure and change from long established customs must be gradual, and with that in view the Franciscan Fathers, who are the spiritual advisers in the settlement, conduct their work among the people.

"The Franciscans came from Poland, joining the colonists, and have done really grand work since they have been there."

Although there were no saloons in Pulaski and Hofa Park in 1894, these were established there eventually. Today, the village of Hofa Park has three and Pulaski has thirteen taverns.

Father Lopatto Administers Parish for Brief Period

During the last two years (1895-1896) of Father Jeka's first term as pastor, the church was repainted, more pews were added, a new furnace was purchased and the debt on the church and rectory completely cleared. Father Stanislaus had indeed administered the parish to the universal satisfaction of all parishioners. He was to them in truth "a good shepherd."

For a brief term of six months, from January 1 to July 1, 1897, Father A. Lopatto was administrator of St. Stanislaus Church. The Franciscan Fathers at Pulaski were in great need of priests. Father Stanislaus Jeka, who left Hofa Park in December, 1896, was the only priest at Pulaski and served from January 1, 1897, as superior of the monastery and pastor of the Pulaski parish.

Bishop Messmer had appointed Father Jerome Schneider as chaplain to the Felician Sisters and St. Mary's Hospital and Orphanage at Manitowoc, Wisconsin. In return, the bishop supplied Hofa Park with one of his own diocesan priests for the time being until two young Franciscan clerics would be ordained to the priesthood in June, 1897.

First Mass of Newly Ordained Priest Celebrated at Hofa Park

The parishioners of St. Stanislaus Church were treated to a preview of their next pastor who succeeded Father Lopatto. On June 12, 1897, Fathers Francis Manel and Anthony Wisniewski, Polish Franciscans, were ordained by Archbishop Kain at St. Louis, Missouri. After ordination they came directly to Pulaski where on Thursday, the feast of Corpus Christi, Father Anthony celebrated his First Mass.

On the following Sunday, Father Francis Manel celebrated his First Mass at Hofa Park where the external observance of the feast of Corpus Christi was transferred to that day. Thus, the parishioners of Hofa Park witnessed for the first time in the history of St. Stanislaus Church the celebration of his First Mass by a newly ordained priest. Unknowingly, they gazed at the saintly priest who would begin his ministry as their pastor in a few weeks.

Hofa Park, First Field of Labor for Father Francis Manel

Father Francis Manel became the new shepherd of souls at Hofa Park on July 8, 1897. He administered to his flock in a zealous manner, both spiritually and materially. He strengthened the spiritual life of the parish with the organization of six new societies. Up to this time, only the Holy Rosary Society, founded in 1884 by Father Pescinski, was active. The Third Order of St. Francis fraternity begun in 1890 by Father Jerome Schneider was dormant.

In 1898, Father Francis introduced the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the societies of St. Cecilia (for choir members), St. Stanislaus Kostka (for young men) and the Sacred Heart of Mary. He recognized the Third Order fraternity and helped to found a benevolent society, St. Joseph's, which issued sickness and death benefits.

Church Property Very Much Improved

During his pastorate, the church property was very much improved. Wooden sidewalks were laid on the church premises which were also encircled with wire fences. He also planted a beautiful fruit orchard between the rectory and the church. With the arrival of more families at Hofa Park, more pews were installed in church by Father Francis and a new furnace purchased.

Father Francis loved sacred music and was a talented musician himself. Apparently low Masses were predominantly celebrated at St. Stanislaus Church up to this time because in 1897 Father Francis hired the first organist in the history of the parish in the person of Anton Lulewicz. A new reed organ was purchased for him for the sum of \$136.50.

Franciscan Novitiate Planned at Hofa Park

In January, 1899, plans were made to reopen the novitiate of the Franciscan Fathers which had been discontinued at Pulaski in 1894. Since both Bishop Messmer and the Franciscan Fathers were in need of Polish priests, it was proposed that land be purchased from the Hofa Park parish by the Franciscan Fathers and a larger building be constructed. This would accommodate the Franciscan pastor and the novices of the Polish Franciscan Commissariat. In this manner, Father Francis, who was proposed as Master of Novices, could double in that capacity and as pastor of St. Stanislaus Church.

However, the parishioners of Hofa Park were undecided in their attitude towards this proposal, once approving, then rejecting it. As a result, the novitiate was reopened in the frame monastery at Pulaski on September 17, 1899. Father Francis was impelled by circumstances to leave Hofa Park and assume his duties as Master of Novices despite a petition by the people of St. Stanislaus Parish to Bishop Messmer to retain the saintly Franciscan.

Father Romuald Byzewski, Next Pastor

Fortunately, a new member entered the Franciscan Commissariat at Pulaski in the person of Father Romuald Byzewski. He succeeded Father Manel at Hofa Park. Father Byzewski was a former member of the Reformed Franciscan Province in Poland. He came to the United States as a refugee from Chancellor Bismarck's Kulturkampf and May Laws promulgated against the Catholic Church in Germany and Western Poland.

Having served as pastor of St. Stanislaus Church in Winona, Minnesota, from 1874-1890, and then shepherding two other Polish parishes in Detroit, Michigan, in the capacity of a diocesan priest from 1890-1899, Father Byzewski came to the Franciscan monastery at Pulaski at the request of His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII.

At this time, he was approaching the 60th year of his life. A veteran of twenty-five years of spiritual labors among the Polish immigrants of America, he drew the parishioners of St. Stanislaus Parish to himself with his kindness, sage advice and ready wit. He resided at Hofa Park for only one year. Thus, he could not accomplish much in regard to the temporal affairs of the parish which were in very good condition anyway.

Father Byzewski is remembered also as a very eloquent preacher, being one of the foremost Polish Franciscan missionaries in the United States in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He was

called another Chrysostom by the Polish clergy of the country. In addition to this, he was a very educated man, having received a doctorate in sacred theology at Louvain University in Belgium, and having the command of seven different languages.

Father Jeka Returns for Second Term

In September, 1900, Father Manel replaced Father Jeka as superior of the monastery and pastor of the Pulaski parish. Father Stanislaus was in turn again appointed pastor of St. Stanislaus Church at Hofa Park, the parish which held a beloved place in his heart. But his second term at Hofa Park lasted only thirteen months. Events of the past two years effected his transfer elsewhere.

Already in December, 1899, Bishop Messmer had offered the Pulaski Franciscans a Polish parish at Green Bay in exchange for Hofa Park. St. Mary of the Angels, then composed of about one hundred families, had just been organized in 1898. As the local superior of the monastery, Father Stanislaus rode by horse and buggy from Pulaski to Green Bay and administered to this temporary mission from December, 1899, to September, 1900. With the Green Bay offer came another from the Bishop of Green Bay, namely, the care of St. John's Church, a Polish parish at Menasha, Wisconsin. Before definite arrangements were completed, Father Jeka remained at Hofa Park from September, 1900, to November, 1901. He then was appointed pastor of the Menasha parish.

First Parochial School Built at Hofa Park, 1902

Thus, the Franciscan Fathers again left Hofa Park in 1901, this time for a longer period than before. Bishop Messmer supplanted them at St. Stanislaus Church with diocesan priests. Father Theophil Malkowski, who had organized St. Mary of the Angels Parish at Green Bay in February, 1898, came on November 1, 1901, to Hofa Park after Father Jeka's departure. A very energetic man, Father Malkowski made many improvements in the church and rectory and continued Father Manel's avocation by planting more fruit and other trees on the parish property. In the early months of 1902, a fire damaged the chimney and roof of St. Stanislaus Church. However, the \$650 received from the insurance company covered the cost of repairs.

But the greatest project undertaken by Father Malkowski was the building of a parochial school. This matter had already been previously broached by Bishop Messmer and the Franciscan Fathers but with no success. In 1902, Father Malkowski convinced the parishioners of the importance of a Catholic education for their children and a two-classroom school building was constructed before September, 1902, at a cost of \$4,000. It had a basement and a second floor auditorium for parish meetings and social affairs.

This was still not the ideal parochial school which was then generally found in other Catholic parishes. For the next twenty-one years, there was no community of Sisters teaching in this school. Instead, a layman, usually the organist, conducted classes in secular subjects while the pastors instructed the children in religion. One classroom was used by the parish, the other room was rented to the local district as a public school. Whatever its merits or drawbacks, this was the beginning of a Catholic school, a quasi-parochial school, at Hofa Park. More will be written in reference to this institution in the chapter on schools at St. Stanislaus Parish.

Incorporation of Parish in State of Wisconsin

Next in importance was the final incorporation of the parish in the state of Wisconsin. This took place on August 28, 1902. The Hofa Park parish was incorporated as "St. Stanislaus Congregation, village of Hofa Park, town of Maple Grove, Shawano County, state of Wisconsin." The incorporation papers were notarized on September 3 and recorded at the Register of Deeds Office, Shawano, on September 4, 1902.

Appearing as the first officers of the newly incorporated parish were: Bishop Sebastian G. Messmer, president; the Rt. Rev. Joseph J. Fox, Vicar-General and member of the corporation; Rev. Theophil Malkowski, vice-president; John Politowski (succeeded in the same year by John Lepak), secretary; and John Czajkowski, treasurer.

First Mission Held at St. Stanislaus Church, 1903

Stressing the spiritual as well as the intellectual and material welfare of the parish, Father Malkowski scheduled the first mission ever held at Hofa Park. Lasting for a week, this mission was conducted during May, 1903. Records of the parish fail to disclose who preached the mission. In all his undertakings, Father Malkowski had the wholehearted support of his parishioners. Evidence of greater prosperity enjoyed at this time by the Hofa Park Poles is seen in the fact that many of them now made loans to the parish. Amounts of from \$500 to \$900 were loaned to St. Stanislaus Church at a time when "a dollar was dollar and no less," as the old-timers love to recall. Wages were about a dollar a day in those years! Such sums of savings loaned to the parish therefore represented a fair measure of wealth in the farming community of that day.

There is no doubt but that Father Malkowski gave St. Stanislaus Parish the proverbial "shot in the arm" which it needed. He accomplished very much in the three short years of his tenure as pastor.

In October, 1904, Father Stanislaus A. Elbert arrived as the next pastor. He barely had time to become acquainted with his new parishioners when he was transferred to St. Adalbert Church, Marinette, Wisconsin. His stay at Hofa Park covered the period of October, 1904, to January, 1905. Nevertheless, Father Elbert, who is still alive and is approaching the 90th year of his life, holds many pleasant memories of his three-month pastorate of St. Stanislaus Church. He was the last of the diocesan priests who were pastors at this parish.

Coming of Franciscans

After Father Elbert departed from Hofa Park, the parish remained without a permanent pastor for a period of approximately two months, January to March, 1905. On weekends, one of the Franciscan Fathers would come from Pulaski to attend to the spiritual needs of the Hofa Park people. In the meantime, Bishop Fox had succeeded Bishop Messmer (who became archbishop of Milwaukee) in the diocese of Green Bay.

It was Bishop Fox's wish that the Franciscan Fathers take over the permanent care of St. Stanislaus Church in Hofa Park. Before the Franciscan Fathers would accede to the Bishop's desire, they wanted to be assured that the parishioners of Hofa Park would be agreeable to the permanent arrangement. For this purpose, on Sunday, February 19, 1905, a meeting under the supervision of

Father Francis Manel was called at Hofa Park to determine the attitude of the parishioners.

Father Manel explained to the assembled Catholics of Hofa Park that if the Franciscan Fathers accept the parish, it will be only its administration similar to that of any diocesan parish. All parish property will continue to belong to the congregation at Hofa Park. The Franciscan Fathers will enjoy only the use of the necessary buildings and land for the pastor's upkeep. The matter was then put to a vote and all but three of the families present favored the permanent return of the Franciscans to Hofa Park.

Diocesan Consulters Agree to the Canonical Transfer of Parish

Previously, on February 1, 1905, Bishop Fox sent copies of a letter to his diocesan consulters in which he urged the canonical transfer of St. Stanislaus Church to the care of the Franciscan Fathers. He reminded the consulters that Bishop Messmer before his departure for Milwaukee promised to convey St. Casimir Church at Krakow to the Franciscan Fathers in 1903. Since both were Polish parishes and were indebted for almost constant spiritual attention to the Polish Franciscans at Pulaski, Bishop Fox stated that he was very much in favor of giving over the Hofa Park parish along with Krakow to them.

All of the diocesan consulters were in complete agreement with their bishop. Sending in their favorable reply were the Revs. W. J. Rice, Stevens Point ; E. De Wilt, Wrightstown ; A. Seubert, Appleton; N. July, Stockbridge; A. Cipin, Cano, and J. Czarnowski, Berlin, Wisconsin, then a part of the Green Bay diocese.

Apostolic Beneplacitum for Hofa Park and Krakow to Franciscans

Bishop Fox then again approached the Franciscan Fathers. Urged by the bishop, the diocesan consulters as well as the almost unanimous number of Hofa Park parishioners, the Pulaski Franciscans agreed to the perpetual care of St. Stanislaus Church. All necessary documents were then sent to Rome by the bishop of Green Bay and on May 16, 1905, the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith granted the Beneplacitum Apostolicum, or permanent transfer, of both the Hofa Park and Krakow parishes to the Franciscan Fathers of Pulaski.

Addition Built to St. Stanislaus Church, 1905

The issuance of the Beneplacitum Apostolicum was a mere formality. Prior to this document's arrival at Pulaski, Father Stanislaus Jeka was already at Hofa Park since the first days of March, 1905, beginning his third and final term as pastor.

By his initiative and encouragement, an extensive addition was built to the rear of the frame church in the same year. Actually, the old church itself was raised and a new concrete foundation poured. The addition consisted of a large sanctuary and sacristies on either side. The church was thus enlarged by one-third of its original size. Together with these improvements, the whole interior of the enlarged church was covered with galvanized sheeting and tastefully redecorated. A new pulpit and confessional were procured and more pews added to accommodate the growing number of parishioners. The cost of the addition to and renovation of the church amounted to \$3,000.

By special delegation from Bishop Fox, Father Jeka blessed the new addition on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M., December 8, 1905. A large crowd of parishioners and people from neighboring churches attended the blessing ceremonies. St. Stanislaus Church now looked as if it were newly built.

Archbishop Symon of Poland Visits Hofa Park, 1905

In 1905, Archbishop Symon of Poland visited the Polish parishes of the United States at the behest of His Holiness, Pope St. Pius X. Coming to Wisconsin, the Polish archbishop celebrated a Pontifical High Mass and visited with the Franciscan Fathers at St. Mary of the Angels Church, Green Bay, on July 26, 1905. The following Sunday he was driven to Hofa Park, where he delivered an inspirational sermon to the parishioners of St. Stanislaus Church. This was the first time since they left Poland that many of these people saw and heard a Polish bishop speaking to them in their native language.

Testifying to the growth of the parish as well as to the cooperation of the parishioners with Father Jeka was the fact that the pew rent collected in 1906 (\$2,300) was the highest in the history of the parish up to that year. On January 7, 1907, Bishop Fox by a quit-claim deed formally transferred all parish property here-tofore held by the bishop to St. Stanislaus Congregation as a legal corporation.

Anti-Clerical Attacks of Kuryer Polski

With the year 1907, the Kuryer Polski, a Polish liberal newspaper of Milwaukee, began its anti-clerical attacks upon the Polish clergy of the United States. Under the guise of a demand for Polish Bishops in America and the teaching of the Polish language in public schools, this and other Polish newspapers of its kind in the country urged Polish Catholics to refuse financial support to their pastors.

Even after Pope St. Pius X provided Polish American Catholics with bishops of Polish descent in 1908 and 1914, the attacks of Kuryer Polski did not cease. Instead, it further intensified its divisive campaign of religious confusion by forming a Federation of Polish Catholics to further split the ranks of the Catholic Poles. The super-nationalism fomented by Kuryer Polski and its kind reached its peak during the second decade of the twentieth century.

Bishop Rhode Confirms St. Stanislaus Parishioners

In 1908, "Father Paul Peter Rhode, pastor of St. Michael's Polish Parish in South Chicago, was elevated to the dignity of a bishop by His Holiness, Pope St. Pius X. The Chicago priest, who was born in Poland but ordained to the priesthood in the United States, became the first Polish bishop in the country. He was appointed at first as an auxiliary to the archbishop of Chicago, a post he held from 1908 until 1915.

As such, at the invitation of the Franciscan Fathers and with the permission of Bishop Fox of Green Bay, Bishop Rhode visited St. Stanislaus Church at Hofa Park on Wednesday afternoon, October 17, 1909, to confirm its parishioners. On this occasion, Bishop Rhode, who was to succeed Bishop Fox in the Green Bay diocese in 1915, preached an elevating Polish sermon and urged the Poles of Hofa Park to remain loyal to the faith of their ancestors.

Illness and Death of Father Jeka

Ever striving to improve the appearance of parish property, Father Jeka replaced the wooden with cement sidewalks between the parish buildings in 1909. He also planned to install an iron picket fence to replace the deteriorating wooden one, when illness overtook him. On November 17, 1909, the sixty-three-year-old Franciscan left the parish he loved so well never to return again.

Father Stanislaus came to Pulaski to spend the last months of his life in the monastery to which he and Father Sobocinski first came in the spring of 1888. At Pulaski, he became steadily weaker. On May 1, 1910, he celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the last time. After that day, he was only able to receive Holy Communion. Preparing himself well for his departure from this world, Father Jeka died on the feast of Pentecost, May 15, 1910, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

Funeral Attended by Parishioners of Surrounding Churches

His funeral took place on May 18. It was attended not only by the parishioners of Hofa Park, but also by the people of Pulaski, Krakow, Sobieski and Green Bay whom Father Jeka served at different times in the past. Former confreres and friends came from Milwaukee in the persons of Monsignor Hyacinth Gulski and the Revs. B. Celichowski and M. Domachowski. Green Bay diocesan clergy were represented by the Revs. Joseph A. Marx, secretary to Bishop Fox, who was away; C. Ulrich, chaplain at St. Vincent's Hospital; J. Machnikowski from Eaton, Frank Nowak from Sobieski, Casimir Shippy from Flintville, and Abbot Bernard Pennings and Father De Vries, Norbertines from De Pere. Franciscan Fathers from Hofa Park, Krakow, Green Bay and Pulaski completed the list of the clergy attending the funeral.

Father Frank Nowak was the celebrant of the solemn requiem Mass, and was assisted by Fathers Celichowski and Shippy as deacon and subdeacon respectively. Msgr. Gulski, an ex-Franciscan confrere of Father Jeka's from the Reformed Franciscan Province in Poland, preached the funeral sermon.

After the sermon and final services in church, the funeral procession wended its way to the monastery cemetery. The cross-bearer and two altar boys leading the procession were followed by the Holy Rosary Society of Hofa Park, the school children of Assumption Parish, Pulaski, the students from St. Bonaventure College, St. Isidore and St. Stanislaus Societies of Pulaski, St. Joseph Society of Hofa Park and the Young Ladies Sodality of Pulaski clothed in white dresses and black sashes. Then came the Franciscan Brothers, the Franciscan and diocesan clergy and three little girls carrying a wreath. Six Brothers carried the coffin after which came the Sisters of St. Joseph and a crowd estimated by Father Francis Manel, an eye-witness, of approximately 1,500 people.

At the cemetery, the last religious rites for Father Stanislaus were performed and his body lowered into the grave for its final rest. Last farewells were silently muttered in prayer by the Hofa Park, Pulaski, Sobieski, Krakow and Green Bay faithful to one of the pioneer Franciscans whose life of apostolic labor was mostly spent among them.

Long Pastorate of Father Fridolin Rinkowski

Although Father Jeka had spent nine years at Hofa Park, his successor was to outlast him by three additional years. Upon the illness and departure of Father Stanislaus, Father Fridolin Rinkowski took

over as pastor of St. Stanislaus Church on November 17, 1909. After becoming acquainted with his new parishioners, the energetic young pastor immediately solicited their good will and generosity.

During the years 1910-1911, he saw to it that two side altars were built and installed in church. One was dedicated to the Sorrowful Mother, the other to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The high, Gothic-shaped main altar was remodeled and a statue of St. Stanislaus was placed within a niche reserved in this altar for it. Additional statues of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Anthony were also placed in the sanctuary.

Next the floor of the church, sanctuary and both sacristies were carpeted. A new vestment case was built in the sacristy and the latter itself was redecorated. A set of new stations of the Way of the Cross was obtained at a cost of \$350. More new vestments and sacred utensils were purchased. All these improvements were accomplished at an expense of approximately \$1,700, completely covered by the generous donations of the parishioners.

In addition, a new iron picket fence was erected in front of the church and rectory at a cost of \$138 and the balance of a \$600 parish debt was cleared by the end of the year 1910. As a reward for his aggressiveness and good management, St. Stanislaus Parish raised the pastor's salary from \$600 to \$700 a year from January, 1911.

Effects of Kuryer Polski

Threatening the good relations between pastor and parishioners at Hofa Park was the anti-clerical campaign of Kuryer Polski and Gazeta Wisconsiniska of Milwaukee and the Federation of Polish Catholics of America. Some of the effects of this diabolic campaign were felt in the Hofa Park Parish. In his annual report of 1911, Father Fridolin informed Bishop Fox that one-third of St. Stanislaus Parish refused to pay the 25-cent assessment per family for the seminary, orphans and the cathedralium.

This rebellious spirit, however, was overcome in time by the pastor, the Franciscan Fathers and by the Catholic Bishops of Wisconsin. The reading of Polish anti-clerical newspapers was forbidden by the Assumption Commissariat of the Franciscan Fathers in May, 1911. A year later, the Catholic Bishops of Wisconsin also forbade all Polish Catholics to read this anti-clerical material under pain of refusal of absolution in Confession. Although fought bitterly by the publishers of Kuryer Polski, who sued the Catholic Bishops for damages in the amount of \$100,000, the Catholic Bishops won in a State Supreme Court decision.

No statistics are available in regard to the reading of Kuryer Polski by Hofa Park parishioners between the years 1907-1915. However, between the years 1915-1919, their number varied from 15 to 20 families. An attempt was also made to establish a Polish National Church at Hofa Park or to draw Hofa Park parishioners to such a church established already at Pulaski. Nevertheless, it is to the credit of the St. Stanislaus Parish that both attempts failed to gain any great impetus among its parishioners. The reading of Kuryer Polski trickled off to a handful of Hofa Park people in the late 1920's and its influence gradually disappeared.

Franciscan Seminary Aided by Hofa Park Pastors

Despite the onslaught of propaganda which tended to undermine the authority of pastors in Polish parishes, Father Fridolin managed to keep the majority of his parishioners loyal to the Church during this turbulent period. His program of ever improving the material conditions of the parish plant also was predominantly successful. Although he had planned in 1912 to build a new church tower and install two additional bells in its belfry, the cost of this project amounted to \$2,000 and was thus prohibitive. Instead he repaired the old tower and repainted the church in 1912.

Interesting to note is the fact that at the June 11, 1913, congress of the Assumption Commissariat, it was decided by the higher authorities of the Franciscan Fathers to earmark income accruing from the salary and stole fees of the Hofa Park pastors for the support of the students for the priesthood at the Franciscan major seminary in Green Bay. This arrangement lasted until the year 1928. It alone did not suffice, but it surely helped in those trying years of the Polish Franciscan Commissariat.

In addition to being pastor at Hofa Park, Father Fridolin was appointed on August 20, 1913, to teach the Greek and Hebrew languages at St. Bonaventure College in Pulaski. Being a very talented priest, he doubled in this capacity of pastor and professor for a number of years.

Plans Made to Build New Rectory

As early as 1911, it was felt by both the pastor and parishioners of St. Stanislaus Church that the original rectory at Hofa Park was too small and lacked many necessary conveniences and accommodations for the pastor and for visiting priests on the greater feasts of the year, during the Forty Hours' Devotions, etc. In the days of the slower, horseand-buggy transportation, priests who came from a distance to aid in hearing confessions, preaching, etc., needed overnight quarters.

For this reason, Father Fridolin appealed to his superiors on March 18, 1911, presenting the need of a new rectory and requesting permission to build. The parishioners were in favor of this project and eighteen families alone had already pledged a total of \$700 towards the new rectory fund. A favorable reply was received from the Franciscan superiors at Pulaski who also approved initial plans and donated the first \$100 towards the project.

Nevertheless, the project was postponed until January 23, 1915, when a contract for the building of the new rectory was let out to J. W. Patterson of Clintonville, Wisconsin. W. E. Reynolds of Green Bay was the architect. Signing this contract on the part of the parish were Father Fridolin, John Lepak, secretary, John Bluma, treasurer, John Januszewski and Andrew Borlik, witnesses.

New Rectory Dedicated, August 15, 1915

In the spring of 1915, work began in earnest on the new rectory. The former priest's house was transferred to a different location on the parish grounds and foundations for the new building were dug. In the meantime, Father Fridolin circulated among his parishioners, gathering funds for the new rectory. He succeeded in collecting over \$1,800 by June, 1915. Because this amount was insufficient, a parish meeting was held that month and loans were authorized both from parishioners and from banks. Parishioners alone were given notes for loans to the amount of \$3,500! The Holy Rosary Society donated an additional \$120 and St. Joseph Society, \$20.

The total cost of the new rectory approximated \$6,000. Included in this was the installation of a combined gas and electric lighting in the rectory, eighty per cent of the cost of this modern improvement being covered by the Franciscan Commissariat. With furnishings, the new rectory was insured for \$7,500. The old parsonage which now served as a home for the organist-teacher and his family was insured for \$2,200.

The new, two-story building with a full basement and attic, a stone foundation and a brick-veneered upper structure, was blessed on August 15, 1915, the feast of the Assumption of the B.V.M. Franciscan and diocesan clergy from neighboring parishes and Father Peter Banka, the newly ordained son of the parish, attended the blessing, together with an overflowing crowd of parishioners and Poles from surrounding settlements.

Calvary Shrine on Cemetery Built in 1918

In 1917, an enclosed rear porch was added to the rectory and new cement walks were laid from the parsonage to the church. Loads of ground fill were hauled to level out the parish grounds, new fences circled the parish property and repairs were made on the organist-teacher's house.

The following year, an additional furnace was installed in church and a small recreational hall (used for picnics and other socials) was built on the parish grounds. Also in 1918, a beautiful Calvary shrine or chapel, constructed of red bricks and enclosing the statuary with glass, was built on the parish cemetery at a cost of \$400. This shrine still stands today, prominently visible to all who pass in front of the cemetery on the main street of the village.

In the fall of the same year, Father Fridolin set off the southern portion of the rectory basement for a chapel during the winter months. There Masses were celebrated on weekdays and confessions heard on Saturdays in order to conserve on fuel and to provide for the greater convenience of the parishioners. This chapel was used until 1947.

Contribution of Parish to World War I Effort

Forty-seven men from St. Stanislaus Church served in the armed forces of the United States during World War I. One Hofa Park parishioner sacrificed his life in defense of his country.

The parish as such bought over \$80,000 in Liberty Bonds, \$21,000 in War Stamps, and contributed \$1,450 toward Red Cross Relief. Added to this, St. Stanislaus Parish organized a Red Cross branch of the Shawano County Chapter and raised approximately \$200 by entertainments and collections for the above chapter. Over 200 lbs. of clothing and shoes were also donated for overseas relief. This does not include the work performed by the Red Cross women in providing bandages, aid kits, etc. A Junior Red Cross was also established in the village district school. The total war effort in terms of money alone on the part of the Hofa Park parish amounted to \$103,312.

Besides this work for the benefit of the United States as a testimony of their patriotism, St. Stanislaus parishioners formed a White Cross group for aid to the victims of war in and outside of Poland. Records are not complete in this regard, but St. Stanislaus Parish contributed at least \$527 at a single instance for the National Fund for Poland on January 13, 1918. This was part of a ten million dollar fund raised in the United States to aid in the reconstruction effort of Poland. On June

20, 1920, the Hofa Park parish purchased over \$3,000 in Polish Bonds after a meeting at which Congressman John Kłeczka and A. L. Chrzanowski of Milwaukee spoke in the parish hall. The local committee which aided in the selling of Polish Bonds was composed of Frank Adamski, Frank Stefaniak and John Lepak.

Tragic Fire at St. Stanislaus School

Apparently for a period of the first thirty years (1888-1918), St. Stanislaus Church had the ordinary, trans-parent glass windows which shed plenty of sunlight into its interior. In 1918, eleven new stained glass windows were purchased at a cost of \$1,075 to lend a more religious at-mosphere to the church. All the windows were donated by parishioners.

A year later, the remodeling and decoration of the interior of the church plus the purchase of a new sanctuary carpet cost approximately \$2,500. In 1919, too, the parish ended the era of horse-and-buggy transportation for its pastor by donating to him a brand new Ford auto.

Tragedy struck St. Stanislaus Parish when its school burned to the ground on March 9, 1919. Details on this sad event appear in the school section of this history. Suffice it to remark here that the more tragic result of the burning down of the school was the subsequent clash and disagreement between pastor and parishioners in regard to the rebuilding of the structure as a parochial school in the full sense of the word, with Sisters in the role of teachers. The ultimate outcome of the next turbulent three years was Father Fridolin's resignation as pastor of St. Stanislaus Church.

New School Building Completed in 1923

Thus ended the twelve year pastorate of Father Fridolin Rinkowski. His tenure as pastor is the second longest in the seventy-five year history of the parish. It is exceeded only by that of the present pastor, Father Edward Jagodzinski, who came to St. Stanislaus Parish in July, 1945. Considering the rebellious, anti-clerical attacks of Polish newspapers, World War I, the tragic school fire of 1919 and the indecision of the parish in regard to a truly parochial school, Father Fridolin had nonetheless accomplished much and managed the parish admirably.

His successor was appointed at the congress of the Assumption Commissariat of the Franciscan Fathers on April 14, 1921. He was Father Dennis Babilewicz, who was ordained as a priest in December, 1919. His first major task was of course to rebuild the school and to persuade a majority of parishioners to consent to the engagement of Sisters to teach in it. His trials and final success in this matter will be more fully treated in the following chapter. For the moment, it can be noted here that through the tactful efforts of Father Dennis classes in the new school were begun in the fall of 1923 with two Sisters of St. Joseph in the role of teachers.

Sisters' Convent Built in 1924

Although electric lighting was provided for the rectory in 1915, it was first in 1922 that electricity was installed in St. Stanislaus Church itself at a cost of \$225. Special assessments were also levied on the parishioners in that year to cover the cost of the construction of the new school. In addition, picnics, ice cream socials and other benefit affairs were frequently held by the societies of the parish to aid in raising adequate funds.

With all attention centered on the building program in the parish, Father Dennis nevertheless did not neglect to maintain the existing buildings in good order. In 1923, the rectory was plastered and redecorated at a cost of \$315. In the same year, proceeds of the various benefits and other parish income were used to liquidate the sum of over \$3,000 in loans made to the parish.

When the Sisters of St. Joseph came from Stevens Point, Wisconsin, to teach at Hofa Park in August, 1923, a normal farmhouse was rented for them to serve as a temporary convent until a more appropriate building could be constructed. With one building project completed in 1923, Father Dennis very energetically turned his attention to provide suitable permanent quarters for the Sisters. This building was erected in the fall of 1924 at a cost of \$6,000. The total debt of the parish at the end of 1924 was \$7,700.

The Pastorate of Father Celestine Wisniowski

As may be easily gathered from the above account, Father Dennis spent four busy years as pastor of St. Stanislaus Church. All this time was almost totally consumed in replacing the old school with a new structure and adding another building to the parish plant with the construction of a well-planned Sisters' convent. Father Babilewicz remained in pastoral work after leaving Hofa Park. On January 17, 1925, he was appointed pastor of St. Mary of the Angels Church at Green Bay.

His successor at St. Stanislaus Church was the genial Father Celestine Wisniowski, who was formally installed at Hofa Park on January 29, 1925. Due to his amiable disposition and keen resourcefulness. Father Celestine immediately won favor with his parishioners. What is more, he succeeded in bringing back into the

fold those parishioners who were misled by the insidious propaganda of the anti-clerical Polish newspapers. Year by year, more of them began to see the error of their ways and were reconciled with the Catholic Church through the truly fatherly efforts and influence of Father Celestine.

On the financial side, Father Celestine gradually cleared the debt on the parochial school and Sisters' convent. Since the old rectory was vacant after the parochial school was opened in 1923 and the lay organist-teacher was no more needed, it was used both by Father Celestine, and even his predecessor, Father Dennis, for various committee meetings and similar purposes.

Hofa Park Parishioners View Archbishop Cieplak at Pulaski

In December, 1925, the first Catholic bishop to be imprisoned by the Russian Communists after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 visited the Polish parishes of the United States, warning America and the world of the threat to world order and peace posed by atheistic Communism. Although this Polish prelate, who was named archbishop of Vilno during his sojourn in the United States, spoke at the Franciscan parishes in Green Bay, Pulaski and Krakow, his heavy schedule did not allow him to honor St. Stanislaus Parish with his presence at Hofa Park.

For this reason, the Poles of Hofa Park traveled to Pulaski on Sunday evening, December 13, 1925, to hear the staunch opponent of Communism preach at the Assumption Church and to attend the reception in honor of the saintly bishop in the school hall. At present, the process for the beatification of Archbishop Cieplak, who died at Passaic, New Jersey, in February, 1926, is under way in Rome.

Prosperity Strengthens Financial Condition of Parish

For the years 1925, 1926, 1927 and 1928, Father Celestine cleared the parish debt by the sums of \$2,884, \$2,450, \$1,500 and \$1,000, respectively. Furthermore, repairs on the church in 1926 amounted to \$538. In 1927, a new cedar shingle roof replaced the old one on the church. In unison with this project, the exterior of the church was redecorated in a color scheme of green for the roof and white for the balance of the church exterior, thus presenting a beautiful view of a typical country church.

Since the country at large enjoyed great economic prosperity and low taxes in the middle and late 1920's, this condition reflected itself very noticeably upon the greater financial success of the picnics and other socials at St. Stanislaus Parish. Gross returns on these church benefit affairs now reached unprecedented totals in the history of the parish, ranging between \$1,400 and \$1,500 between the years 1925 to 1929.

In 1927, Hofa parishioners, encouraged by their pastor, made a very neighborly gesture in contributing towards the building of a superstructure upon the St. Casimir basement church at Krakow. The following year, Father Celestine turned his attention to the parish cemetery and made necessary improvements and beautifying features to the tune of \$487.

Father Celestine thus proved to be an able administrator, a truly Franciscan peacemaker and a fatherly shepherd of his flock. Being an eloquent missionary prior to his coming to Hofa Park, he preached the word of God so effectively that his sermons are still remembered among older parishioners today.

Great Economic Depression

A parish debt of only \$500 appeared on the parish financial books when Father Celestine ended his pastorate at St. Stanislaus Church. The kind, ever-smiling Franciscan was transferred in August, 1929, to another Polish parish at Painesdale, Michigan.

Hardly had Father Paul Weissmann accustomed himself to his new parish at Hofa Park when the great economic depression overtook the whole country in Oct., 1929. Nevertheless, Father Paul applied himself unstintedly to his pastoral duties and continued to preserve the policy of his predecessor to the general satisfaction of the parishioners.

His first term as pastor at St. Stanislaus Church lasted about eighteen months. In February, 1931, he was transferred to St. Casimir Church at Krakow. Testifying to his popularity at Hofa Park is the fact that the parishioners drew up a petition, supported by signatures of practically the whole parish, appealing to the Franciscan authorities to have Father Paul remain at Hofa Park. Although it was impossible to fulfill the wishes of the St. Stanislaus Congregation at the time, the Franciscan superiors promised that the petition would be kept in mind at the next occasion of transfers in the Franciscan Commissariat.

Major Repairs on School

Father Daniel Wisniewski succeeded Father Paul on March 1, 1931. He immediately undertook the project of making major repairs and improvements in the school building. The total cost of these

alterations amounted to the sum of \$3,340 in 1931. In addition, purchases of new furnishings for the school totaled \$1,150.

The installation of a new water system in the parish buildings also took place during Father Daniel's administration. To cover the cost of these projects, which now indebted the parish to the amount of over \$5,000, notes for loans were given to some of the wealthier parishioners for the above amount at 5 per cent interest. Father Daniel circulated in the parish on a house-to-house collection in order to raise funds to liquidate the parish debt.

Effects of the depression upon the financial condition of St. Stanislaus Church are further demonstrated by the fact that fifty per cent of the salaries of the pastor and Sisters were unpaid for the year 1931. In order to pay their pew rent in some way, many parishioners worked out their church dues by laboring on the church grounds in the school and new water system projects.

Father Paul's Return to Hofa Park

After fourteen strenuous months at St. Stanislaus Church, during which Father Daniel felt the full brunt of the economic depression upon the parish, he was transferred to St. Francis Monastery and College at Burlington, Wisconsin. True to their promise, the Franciscan Fathers now complied with the wishes of the Hofa Park parish and, on April 14, 1932, appointed Father Paul Weissmann for a second term at St. Stanislaus Church. His appointment was met with the complete satisfaction of the parishioners at Hofa Park.

Since economic conditions continued to be poor, Father Paul managed only to pay the interest on the parish debt. Pew rent, parish picnics and other benefit affairs produced less revenue but helped at least to meet current expenses. This condition did not perturb Father Paul, who showed every consideration and manifested a sympathetic attitude towards the economic plight of his parishioners.

Father Paul's second term as pastor of St. Stanislaus Church ended on March 12, 1934, when Father Cyril Piontek succeeded him. Father Cyril was a doctor of church law and taught at St. Mary of the Angels Seminary in Green Bay for twenty years prior to his coming to Hofa Park. He was a graduate of the School of Canon Law at Catholic University at Washington, D.C.

Silver Jubilee of Father Piontek's Ordination

St. Stanislaus Parish had the rare privilege of witnessing the silver jubilee of ordination to the priesthood of its pastor on Sunday, June 3, 1934. At 9:45 a.m., Father Cyril was led in procession from the rectory to the church where he celebrated the jubilee Mass, assisted by Father Marian Siwik and Daniel Wisniewski as deacon and subdeacon. Father Arcadius Krzywonos was master of ceremonies. Seated in the sanctuary was the Most Rev. Paul P. Rhode, bishop of the Green Bay diocese since 1915, who preached the jubilee sermon.

After Mass, Bishop Rhode was celebrant for the Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament, and was assisted by Monsignor Joseph A. Marx, Vicar-General of the diocese, and the Rt. Rev. Bernard Pennings, Abbot of the Norbertine Fathers. Thirty-five priests from Upper Michigan and northeastern Wisconsin took part in the ceremonies.

A jubilee banquet after the church ceremonies was attended by 150 parishioners, clergy and other guests of Father Cyril. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a jubilee program, prepared by the Sisters of St. Joseph, was rendered by the school children of the parish in honor of the jubilation in the school hall.

Church Levelled to the Ground by Fire

Scarcely two weeks after the jubilee celebration of its pastor, St. Stanislaus Parish was visited with a tragic calamity. On Friday afternoon, June 15, 1934, fire completely destroyed the venerable frame church at Hofa Park. About 2 o'clock in the afternoon, two young girls of St. Stanislaus School entered the church for the purpose of cleaning it. While performing their task, they suddenly noticed that the main altar was in flames with jets of blaze also shooting from the electric light fixture. Defective wiring apparently was the cause of the fire.

The girls immediately summoned Father Piontek, who, with Xavier Czajkowski, a parishioner, rushed into the church with fire extinguishers. Before they arrived a large section of the church interior was already ablaze. Seeing that they could do nothing to control the fire, they called the Pulaski and Seymour fire departments. Pulaski firemen appeared first on the scene followed closely by the Seymour fire department.

By the time the two fire units arrived, the Frank Stefaniak grist mill also caught on fire. According to witnesses, this second fire originated not from flying sparks from the church, but from the terrific heat of the blaze, which caused the roof of the mill to burst into flame with a terrific explosion.

Entire Village Endangered by Fire

For a time, the entire village of Hofa Park was endangered, but firemen worked frantically to save it. The Pulaski firemen ran a hose a quarter of a mile long from the farm of Stanley Jach, and managed to control the fire. The Stefaniak Store near the mill and across the street from the church caught fire no less than ten times, but was extinguished quickly every time with no great damage to the building. A blacksmith shop, about a block down the main street of the village, also caught fire, but was immediately watered down with no resulting extensive damage.

According to the villagers, it was the efficient work of the Pulaski and Seymour fire departments which saved the small community. Otherwise, the blaze aided by a good breeze would have consumed the entire village in a few hours. But the church and Stefaniak's grist mill were burned to the ground. The loss of the church amounted to \$35,000, while Stefaniak's loss of the grist mill amounted to \$1,200. Insurance of \$25,000 partially covered the loss of St. Stanislaus Church, but Stefaniak carried no insurance on his building. No lives were lost, no one was hurt, but everything in both buildings perished.

Thus the beautiful, forty-six-year-old frame church built in 1888 was destroyed, and Hofa Park was without a formal temple of worship. With the permission of Bishop Rhode, Masses and other religious services were celebrated in the hall on the second floor of the school building.

Plans for Rebuilding of Church

Immediately after the tragic fire, a building committee was formed by Father Cyril and plans were made both for the new church and for the raising of funds. The committee was composed of the

following persons; Father Cyril, John Tyczkowski, secretary, John Rozmiarek, treasurer, Frank Stefaniak, Frank Maroszek, Frank Rudziński and Frank Bluma. At the July 1, 1934, meeting, Mr. Frank J. Stepnowski of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, was selected as the architect and was instructed to draw up the plans for the new church. In July, 1934, also, the Catholic Mutual Relief Society of America, of Omaha, Nebraska, made the full payment of \$25,000 as coverage by insurance of the fire loss.

Supplementary fund-raising included the picnic and chicken dinner church benefit held on July 29, 1934. Despite their own loss, the parishioners of St. Stanislaus Church extended a helping hand to the victims of floods in Poland by sending their contributions to the latter in September, 1934.

Three Proposals for Building of New Church

At a parish meeting held on Sunday, October 7, 1934, in the school hall, the building committee reported three separate proposals in regard to the construction of a new church. The first was to accept the already prepared plans of the architect, which called for a church complete with basement at a cost of \$48,115. The second proposal was to accept the same plans, but to leave the church unfinished in some details for the sum of \$33,582, as estimated by Mr. Charles D. Smith, contractor of the Tom Filnor Brothers, Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Finally, it was also proposed to have different and new plans made for a cheaper-costing church, without the basement, extra-projecting sacristies, baptistery and stairs, thus erecting a plain rectangular building for the cost of \$34,803.

After a lengthy discussion, a motion was made, seconded and unanimously carried to adopt the first proposal, but to leave the basement unfinished, simplify other items, and thus to erect a structure for the sum of \$40,165. All parishioners present also agreed to postpone the building operations until the following spring.

Although Father Cyril's brief pastorate was marred by the loss of the church plus continued economic depression in the country, nevertheless he managed to have the parish pay \$1,450 in back salaries to the former pastors and \$1,230 to the Sisters. An initial sum of \$950 was also paid to Mr. Stepnowski, the architect. The benefit church picnic grossed the highest total thus far in the parish (\$1,567), a proof of the good will, generosity and sacrifice of the parishioners despite the financially difficult times. In 1934, too, some of the old buildings standing on the parish grounds were sold for \$125.

Father Piontek Leaves Hofa Park for Rome

While in the midst of making plans and gathering funds for the new church, Father Cyril Piontek received an appeal from the Minister General of the Franciscan Order to come to Rome, Italy, and to teach at the Antonianum, the Franciscan university of the Eternal City. Complying with the wish of his highest superiors, Father Piontek left Hofa Park on November 12, 1934. He served St. Stanislaus Parish for eight brief months.

On November 15, 1934, Father Marian Siwik, famed author of the Life of St. Therese, the Little Flower of Jesus and compiler of a dozen Polish prayer books, succeeded Father Cyril as pastor of St. Stanislaus Parish. Father Marian continued the building fund drive. In order to draw greater blessings of God upon the parish and its building program, Father Marian began novena services in honor of St. Anthony.

Two Midnight Masses, Christmas, 1934

Due to the cramped quarters of the school hall which was used as a temporary church, a unique event in the seventy-five year history of St. Stanislaus Parish took place on Christmas, 1934. By special permission of Bishop Rhode, Father Siwik celebrated two midnight Masses to accommodate his parishioners. The first Mass began at 12 o'clock sharp. A second Mass followed immediately after the school hall was cleared of the attendants at the first Mass.

By agreement made on January 9, 1935, and followed by a warranty deed on April 23, 1935, St. Stanislaus Congregation and Mr. and Mrs. John Swiecichowski, parishioners, exchanged real estate mutually which somewhat affected the boundaries of parish property. St. Stanislaus Parish conveyed to the John Swiecichowski family four acres of land "in the NE corner of the SW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 17 adjacent to and contiguous to the land owned by him and south of said land." In return John Swiecichowski sold to St. Stanislaus Congregation "two acres of land in the SE corner of the SW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 17." Thus, the parish decreased its land holding by two acres in this transaction.

New Contract Let on Building of New Church

In January, 1935, a misunderstanding arose between Frank Stepnowski, the architect, and the St. Stanislaus building committee. Although the contract called for building a church costing no more than \$40,000, it appears that the building committee considered \$32,000 as the ceiling for the type of church that would be built. In view of the \$40,000 estimate, an attempt was made to nullify the contract.

The matter was submitted by the building committee to Attorney Fischer of Shawano, who gave a legal opinion in favor of the committee. When the architect in turn produced the contract, signed by the pastor and trustees of St. Stanislaus Congregation, to Bishop Rhode, the latter instructed the Hofa Park parish to reimburse Mr. Stepnowski for the preparation of the plans for the new church. This was subsequently done in the amount of \$325.

On March 2, 1935, the board of directors of St. Stanislaus Church met at the rectory. Present were Father Marian, vice-president, John Tyczkowski, secretary, and John Rozmiarek, treasurer. Bishop Rhode and Monsignor Joseph A. Marx were present by proxy and authorized Father Marian to cast their votes. It was decided to enter into a construction contract with the Hutter Construction Co., Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, for the building of a church in accordance with the plans and specifications prepared by G. W. Stoeckel, the newly hired architect. The cost of the construction of the church was not to exceed \$33,000. All five members of the Board voted unanimously in favor of the new contract.

As soon as weather permitted, work on the construction of the new church began. By the following September, the exterior of the church was completed. This even was celebrated with a benefit picnic on Sunday and Monday, September 1 and 2. A previous successful picnic was held on July 12. It featured, as an added attraction, boxing matches, which included A1 Kubiak, Pulaski's contribution to the heavyweight division, thus drawing a large crowd of boxing fans. Revenue of both picnics added substantially to the church building fund.

Description of Exterior of New Church

The new church, an example of Gothic architecture, was striking in its simple beauty. Built of ashler stone hauled from the Hamilton quarries at Fond du Lac, it presents a rather impressive sight with its colored asbestos plate shingle roof and its copper-sheeted belfry tower on which rests a ten-foot steeple with a three-foot Gothic cross rising from it. Both steeple and cross were goldleafed.

Work had begun on the interior of the church in September. It was expected that the church would be ready for dedication at the end of October or the early part of November, 1935.

Dedication of Third Church at Hofa Park

On Sunday, November 3, 1935, Bishop Rhode dedicated the new St. Stanislaus Church, third such structure at Hofa Park in its seventy-five year history. After the dedication of the church, Mass was celebrated at 10 a.m., followed by the conferring of the sacrament of confirmation upon the members of St. Stanislaus Parish. A dedication picnic was held after the ceremonies and throughout the day.

The new St. Stanislaus Church, built without a full basement, was fashioned to some extent after the Elsfeld Church at Oxon, England, with its steep roof and Irthlingborough buttresses. It is a perfect example of the rustic architecture found in rural England. A soft, harmonious color scheme dominated the interior of the church. The main altar, with a liturgical canopy above it, was built of natural stone and rests on a floor of mastic tile. On the huge tapestry behind and above the main altar, there was depicted the inspiring and artistically beautiful Calvary scene.

The side altars were constructed of wood with composition fibre ornament. A statue of the Blessed Virgin, Queen of the Holy Rosary, was placed in a niche in the wall on the Gospel side of the sanctuary above the side altar. On the Epistle side, a statue of St. Joseph graced the niche in the wall behind the other side altar. Entrances from each side of the sanctuary led into the priest's and altar boys' sacristies of rather small proportions.

Texture Finish Decorated Walls of Nave

A texture finish decorated the walls of the nave, and a ceiling in gold and blue scrolls with ribs of gold and black covered it. Columns rising from the floor support the ceiling, while oak polychrome pews were so placed that the large pillars would in no way prevent the worshippers' view of the main altar.

To the rear of the church, on the Gospel Side, a confessional was built into the wall beneath the choir balcony. On the Epistle side, in the rear of the church, the baptistery was located. Near the confessional, in a small alcove, a shrine to Christ the King was placed.

The stained glass windows contained deeply colored paintings of the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Crowning with Thorns, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension of Christ into Heaven, and the Assumption and Coronation of the Blessed Virgin in Heaven. Above a screen of leaded glass between the vestibule and nave hung the shield of St. Stanislaus, Polish martyr and bishop and patron of the Hofa Park Church. Quaint Gothic lamps suspended from the ceiling ribs furnished the light for the nave, while lights above the canopy and on either side of the main altar illuminated the sanctuary indirectly yet brilliantly.

Financial Condition of Parish, 1935

Thus within sixteen months after the old frame church burned, St. Stanislaus Parish was provided with a new stone church which is its pride and glory. It is one of the finest looking rural churches, accommodating approximately 150 families. The total cost with furnishings (pews, stations, etc.) reached the sum of \$39,153. Over \$8,000 was raised by assessments on parishioners and net receipts from the three picnics held during the summer and fall of 1935. Approximately \$23,000 of the original \$25,000 fire insurance coverage was converted for the payment of the construction of the new church.

As a result, a loan of \$9,000 was made in order to pay the balance of the cost of the church. This latter sum, plus the still outstanding debt of \$3,500 in notes to parishioners made prior to the church fire in 1934, left a total debt of \$12,500 upon the parish at the end of the year 1935.

In addition to routine repairs and maintenance of the other parochial buildings, Father Marian managed to recover \$1,825 in payment for back salaries of the previous pastors. Considering that this was all accomplished during the depression years, both Father Marian and St. Stanislaus parishioners deserve a special word of praise for their excellent cooperation, generosity and sacrifice.

Father Marian Appointed to New Post

After the new church was dedicated, Father Marian expended all his efforts towards the gradual reduction of the parish debt. On August 26, 1936, he was transferred from St. Stanislaus Parish to Pulaski, where he was appointed Commissary of the Third Order of the Assumption Commissariat. Under his care, he had supervision and direction of over 350 Polish Third Order fraternities in the United States and Canada.

Father Marian was followed at Hofa Park by the Very Rev. Louis Kania, ex-Commissary Provincial of the Assumption Commissariat. Father Louis came to Hofa Park on August 27, 1936, bringing with himself a rich experience of thirty-one years in the holy priesthood. Nevertheless, because of poor health and a nervous condition, Father Louis did not enjoy his pastorate for a longer period at St. Stanislaus Church.

New Recreational Hall Built, 1936

On November 22, 1936, Father Luke Pedtke replaced Father Kania. Begun in the summer and completed in the fall of 1935 was a new and larger recreational hall. It was built on the picnic grounds of St. Stanislaus Parish by the Hutter Construction Co., at a cost of \$640. Peaceful relations were apparently resumed with Mr. Frank Stepnowski, because he drew the plans for the new recreation hall. In addition, the parish succeeded in lowering its debt by \$3,000 in 1936.

The new recreational hall was first built at the cost and direction of a number of parishioners independently of the parish as a whole. On February 18, 1937, a release was signed by these men in favor of Bishop Rhode and St. Stanislaus Congregation for adequate value received and relinquishing all claims to the new parish building. The release was signed by the following men: Frank F. Stefaniak, Frank S. Krumrai, Frank Bluma, Frank Baranczyk, John Tyczkowski, John Rozmiarek, Frank Rudziński and Xavier Czajkowski.

Much remained to be done around the new church building in regard to landscaping and beautifying the church grounds. St. Stanislaus Parish owes Father Luke Pedtke an eternal debt of gratitude for the efforts which he personally spent on this project. Being a lover of outdoor life, trees and shrubbery, Father Pedtke sacrificed long hours and many weeks of labor in planting trees and shrubbery in the area around the church, presenting such a pleasant and tasteful view to the eye today.

Father Weissmann Returns for Third Time

Having made a lasting contribution to the parish during the ten short months as pastor, Father Pedtke left the Hofa Park scene in September, 1937. He was succeeded by Father Paul Weissmann, who began his third and final term as the spiritual shepherd of the Hofa Park flock. The special blessing of God is evident at St. Stanislaus Church during these financially difficult times in that the parish managed to liquidate another \$2,000 of its debt in 1937, and an additional \$1,500 in 1938.

Besides the spiritual attention which Father Paul faithfully showered upon his parishioners, he also kept a watchful eye on the parish plant, supervising necessary repairs on the rectory and Sisters' convent during his final term at Hofa Park.

Another School Fire, 1939

A third major fire of the parish in a period of twenty years occurred at St. Stanislaus School on Monday, January 23, 1939. It began in the boiler room of the school basement, and almost entirely burned out the section of the first floor occupied by the first to fourth grades. No lives were lost or injuries received among the eighty pupils attending the school at the time. But the damage to the school amounted to \$1,850. Classes were held in the school hall on the second floor while the lower section of the building was being repaired.

Father Weissmann received a pleasant surprise when he was given permission by his superiors on May 3, 1939, to visit his family in Silesia, Poland. He had left his home thirty years earlier, and came as a student to St. Bonaventure College at Pulaski in 1909. During Father Paul's absence, St. Stanislaus Parish was administered by Father Victor Krzywonos, who had just completed his theological studies at St. Mary of the Angels Major Seminary in Green Bay.

World War II

Upon his return from Poland, Father Paul learned that he had been elected as the superior of the newly established St. Paul monastery at Pulaski as well as pastor of two mission churches, St. Joseph's at North Chase and St. Pius at Little Suamico, Wisconsin. Thus ended Father Paul's five and one-half years of service to Hofa Park parishioners in three distinct terms of office.

A native of another Franciscan parish at Krakow, Father Urban Konopka, came to administer St. Stanislaus Parish on August 24, 1939. The early days of his pastorate were overshadowed by the outbreak of World War II. On September 1, 1939, the whole world, and people of Polish descent in particular, was saddened by the attack of Nazi Germany upon Poland. Three weeks later, Communist Russia invaded the eastern boundaries of Poland, despite a non-aggression pact concluded earlier with the Polish government.

St. Stanislaus Parish, as well as other Polish parishes in the United States, responded generously to the plight of the War Refugees of Poland by contributing to a fund initiated to aid homeless Poles. Although the United States was still technically not at war, it speeded up its militarization program. A universal military draft of men for the armed forces was begun in the early months of 1940. When the United States forces were attacked by Japan on December 7, 1941, at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, America formally entered World War II. The draft of young men for military service increased heavily, and St. Stanislaus Parish contributed a large number of its men and women towards the defense of the country.

A complete list of those who served in World War II, the Korean War, and who are in the armed forces at present is given in a later chapter. During World War II, the names of Hofa Park servicemen and women were posted on an honor roll, which was placed in the church vestibule.

Throughout the war, St. Stanislaus Church and its parishioners demonstrated their patriotism by purchasing War Bonds and War Stamps on a large scale. No definite study had been made, however, to give a complete report on this parish's contribution to this feature of the war effort.

Bishop Rhode's Silver Jubilee in Green Bay Diocese

In 1940, the Most Rev. Paul Peter Rhode celebrated his silver jubilee as bishop of the Green Bay diocese. Oddly enough, his appointment to this diocese occurred in 1915, shortly after World War I had begun. His first twenty-five years of service to the diocese thus spanned two World Wars. St. Stanislaus Parish, together with other parishes in the diocese, contributed towards a silver jubilee gift for the venerable first Polish bishop of the United States.

In 1940, lightning struck the St. Stanislaus School at Hofa Park and caused damages to the extent of \$385. In the same year, Father Urban supervised improvements and repairs upon the rectory, cemetery and picnic grounds.

Mission at St. Stanislaus Church

In order to bolster the spiritual life of the parish, Father Urban engaged Franciscan missionaries from Pulaski to conduct a week's mission at St. Stanislaus Parish in May, 1941.

During the years 1941 and 1942, the parish debt was lowered from \$11,500 to \$7,500. Revenue from picnics and other social entertainments sponsored by the parish now rose to heights unprecedented in the history of St. Stanislaus Church. The outbreak of World War II ended the economic depression in the country. The industrial plants of the United States were converted into the production of goods for the military effort, while farming communities now produced greater amounts of food for the American troops in and out of the country and for export to American allies in the war. These factors brought about financial prosperity in the United States, clouded, however, by the suffering and tensions of war.

A Series of Temporary Pastors

Father Urban Konopka concluded a fruitful three-year term as pastor of St. Stanislaus Church on September 1, 1942. At the Provincial Chapter of the Franciscan Fathers, held from July 15-18, 1942,

he was elected superior of St. Joseph Friary at Sturtevant, Wisconsin. Appointed to succeed him was Father Damien Krawczyk, till then superior of St. Leonard Friary at Saginaw, Michigan.

However, Father Damien was never to set foot as pastor at Hofa Park. Suffering from a chronic ailment, he was taken ill while still at Saginaw in the late summer of 1942. He died at St. Mary's Hospital in that city on November 29, 1942, at the tender age of thirty-three years.

Since Father Damien's condition did not allow him immediately to assume his pastorate after appointment to the Hofa Park parish, Father Irenaeus Targonski was named as his temporary substitute and came to St. Stanislaus Church on September 2, 1942. After Father Damien's death, Father Irenaeus stayed on at Hofa Park as administrator. On February 6, 1943, Father Clement Barczak received the permanent appointment as pastor of St. Stanislaus Parish.

Father Barczak's formal installation as pastor took place on Sunday, March 7, 1943, at the parish high Mass. Father Irenaeus introduced the new pastor to the parishioners, and welcomed him in their name. Though Father Targonski's term of office was brief, nevertheless he served the parish unstintedly and to the complete satisfaction of the people of Hofa Park.

Father Barczak Becomes ill

Father Clement had barely taken over his duties as pastor when he was struck down by illness. Despite his condition, the hardy Franciscan devoted himself conscientiously to all of his pastoral duties, spiritual as well as material. He managed to stay at his post until after the parish picnic in July, for which he expended his final effort.

However, his health was failing noticeably, and on Aug. 10, 1943, he was sent to a hospital in Chicago, IL. There it was discovered that Father Clement was ill because of a brain tumor. A great devotee of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he died on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 1944, at the age of fifty-one years.

With Father Barczak's departure from Hofa Park, Fathers Ronald Zgodzinski and Dismas Treder, both of Pulaski, successively administered St. Stanislaus Parish from August 10 to November 1, 1943. Father Ronald had been appointed as a Navy Chaplain at the Provincial Congress of the Franciscan Fathers on July 14, 1943. While awaiting his call to the Navy and while Father Clement's condition of health was not certain, Father Ronald devoted himself to the care of St. Stanislaus Parish. When he left during the first week of October, Father Dismas Treder attended the Hofa Park congregation for three Sundays until the end of the month.

Religious Attention Parish to Servicemen

The unfortunate turn of events, which saw five successive Franciscans appointed as pastors for St. Stanislaus Church within a period of fifteen months, ended with the coming of Father Crispin Nowakowski to Hofa Park on November 1, 1943. Father Crispin, who had been a curate at Assumption Church, Pulaski, since 1942, extended his efforts to liquidate the debt on the parish. With parish socials continually bringing rising revenues during the war years, the parish debt of \$7,500 was cleared by the end of 1945.

The spiritual welfare of parishioners who served in the armed forces of the country was dear to the heart of Father Crispin. In 1944, he persuaded members of St. Stanislaus Parish to contribute towards a gift fund for the soldier sons of the parish. From this fund the pastor purchased rosaries, prayer books and other spiritual articles of devotion, and forwarded them, as well as other gifts, to the men and women in the various services. He personally corresponded with all of them.

Going further in establishing a spirit of prayer in the parish, Father Crispin initiated the Novena to Our Lady of Victory, praying for peace, blessings upon the parish, its soldier sons and daughters, and the safe return of the latter to their homes. Adding a patriotic atmosphere to religious services during the war, Father Crispin purchased and placed American, Papal and Polish flags in church.

A parish committee forming a group of the "Catholic League for Religious Assistance to Poland" was begun at St. Stanislaus Church on February 23, 1944. Since then to this day, St. Stanislaus Parish has contributed approximately \$1,600 in aid to the country of its forebears.

Formation of Holy Name Society in Parish

To weld the men of the parish into a strong force for good, and a salutary influence in regard to proper respect for the name of God, the affable Franciscan pastor organized a group of the Holy Name Society at St. Stanislaus Parish in 1944. Initial membership reached the promising number of eighty-nine men.

Next in his program for the providing of greater spiritual morale in the parish, Father Nowakowski scheduled a week's mission in the fall of 1944. It was conducted in the English language by the Norbertine Fathers of West De Pere, Wisconsin.

Father Crispin's active pastorate at St. Stanislaus Church ended on July 26, 1945. Anxious to exhibit their appreciation for the very fine work and cordial relation with them, the parishioners of St. Stanislaus Church arranged a farewell program at the parish hall for their departing pastor. This program was emceed by Father Constantine Klukowski, O.F.M., pastor of St. Joseph and St. Pius parishes at North Chase and Little Suamico, Wisconsin, respectively. Gifts on behalf of the parishioners were given to Father Crispin.

Record-Breaking Pastorate of Father Edward Jagodzinski

Before the evening of July 26, 1945, was over, word spread throughout the parish hall that the newly appointed pastor, Father Edward Jagodzinski, had arrived at Pulaski. Transportation was immediately arranged for him, and farewells to the retiring pastor were mixed with a welcome to the incoming one.

Father Edward brought with himself fifteen years of varied experience as a missionary, curate, superior and other responsible duties in the Franciscan Assumption Province. His coming as pastor to Hofa Park, therefore, forecast a promise of increased spiritual and material welfare in the parish.

Thus far, the present pastor's record-breaking thirteen years in the administration of St. Stanislaus Church have eminently given proof of his excellent work as a fatherly yet firm shepherd of his flock. When he will finish his present term in 1960, Father Edward will have served St. Stanislaus Church for almost a fifth of the entire existence of the parish.

End of Winter Services in Rectory Chapel

Shortly after his arrival, Father Edward purchased a fuel stoker for the church in August, 1945, at a cost of \$400, donated by the Holy Name Society. It was installed by Gehl Brothers Stoker Manufacturing Co. This new equipment brought to an end the use of the basement chapel in the rectory on weekdays during the fall and winter months. This chapel had been used for services during these months on weekdays since the pastorate of Father Fridolin Rinkowski.

During the month of November, 1945, Father Jagodzinski took up a census of his parishioners, getting acquainted with each family and blessing their homes. The combined pastorates of Fathers Crispin and Edward brought about the complete liquidation of the parish debt by the end of 1945. Extending their charity beyond the limits of the parish, St. Stanislaus contributed money and food supplies for the poor victims of war in Europe during the next few years.

English Sermons Preached at 8 o'clock Mass on Sundays

Since St. Stanislaus was organized as a Polish parish, and is still predominantly Polish in membership, Polish sermons were the rule at the 8 and 10 o'clock Masses on Sundays and Holydays of obligation. Prior to Father Edward's pastorate, the Gospel was read in English at one Mass already from the early 1900's at Hofa Park. Occasionally an English sermon was also heard at one or the other Sunday Mass. However, since Sunday, February 10, 1946, Father Edward has established the 8 o'clock Mass for the English speaking or understanding members of the parish, and an English sermon has been preached consistently since that day. Not only has this been of spiritual advantage to the non-Polish parishioners, but also to the younger generations of Polish parishioners, whose knowledge of the Polish language is limited.

Since 1946, too, the religious brother, who attends to the domestic work of the rectory, has received a special salary from the parish for the first time in its history. A list of major improvements and repairs in the parish plant during Father Edward's long years as pastor would prove monotonous and repetitious. Suffice it to say that each year necessary repairs and improvements were made. Only the more outstanding ones can receive a mention here.

More Real Estate Purchased by Parish

On July 7, 1947, St. Stanislaus Parish purchased land from Mr. and Mrs. John Hajducki for the sum of \$861. This real estate constituted lots 1 and 4-11 in Block One of the village. Sold by the parish was an old building on the parish grounds and one lot for the price of \$155.

New cement sidewalks were laid on the parish property during the summers of 1946 and 1947 at an approximate cost of \$1,000. To afford more convenient living conditions for the Sisters, an electric range, frigidaire and water softener were provided for them in 1947. Major repairs to the church, school, Sisters' convent and rectory, at a cost of \$5,533, were accomplished in 1948. Better accommodations were provided on the parish picnic grounds in 1949 for the sum of \$728.

New Statue of St. Stanislaus

Through the gracious generosity of Dr. and Mrs. Alvin Brusky, former parishioners, a statue of St. Stanislaus, made of white marble and imported from Italy, was placed in the exterior niche above

the front entrance of the church in 1950. This niche had been provided when the new church was built in 1935, but no statue had been purchased or donated for it until Father Edward appealed for donors. The cost of the statue, its installation and lighting amounted to \$753.45.

A minor fire in the church in 1950 resulted in damages totaling \$350. Further improvements costing \$4,880 were made in the church, school, convent and rectory in the same year.

New Mass Schedule Introduced

His Excellency, the Most Rev. Stanislaus V. Bona, bishop of Green Bay, raised the pastors' salaries from \$1,- 200 to \$1,800 a year in 1951. Responsible for this action was the rising cost of living, which the previous salaries could no more cover adequately. The salaries of teaching Sisters were also increased from \$40 to \$50 a month at this time.

Up to the year 1951, the general schedule of Masses at St. Stanislaus Church in summer was at 8 and 10 a.m., and 8 and 10 a.m. in the winter months. Since June, 1951, Father Edward henceforth accommodated his parishioners with the celebration of 5 and 8:30 a.m. Masses from June to September, and 8 and 10 a.m. from October to May of each year.

Mission in 1951

Ever mindful that a renewal of the spirit is necessary from time to time even in the best of parishes, Father Edward arranged for a mission at St. Stanislaus Church. It was held in October, 1951. Father Cyprian Gmerek, a Franciscan missionary, conducted this mission in the Polish and English languages.

During 1951, too, a Church Redecorating Fund was begun, and reached the total that year of \$2,163. In the same year, statues of the Infant Jesus of Prague (and shrine) and St. Therese, the Little Flower, were newly purchased and serve to increase the devotion of parishioners.

Church Redecorated and New Heating System Installed

A new building for St. Joseph Orphanage at Green Bay was planned by Bishop Bona in 1952. For this reason, all the parishes in the Green Bay diocese received proportionate assessments to aid in financing the construction of this new structure. The quota placed upon St. Stanislaus Parish was \$1,700 and was liquidated during the same year.

After seventeen years, the interior of St. Stanislaus Church was in need of renovation. Together with this various difficulties occurred periodically with the old heating system in church. For this reason, during the summer and early fall of 1952, a new heating system was installed, and the interior of the church was tastefully redecorated, at a total cost of \$7,367.

All these expenses were smoothly sustained by the splendid financial cooperation of the parishioners in paying their assessments for the church redecorating fund. Extremely helpful, too, were the annual picnic and recreational hall revenues which, at an average of \$7,000 per year, topped all previous records in the history of the parish.

New Stations and Cushions for Kneelers in the Pews

Following the redecoration of the church, Father Edward obtained donations from his parishioners in the sum of \$975 with which he purchased in February, 1953, a new set of artistic Stations of the Way of the Cross. These new Stations blended more harmoniously with the redecorated interior of the church. Also in February of the same year, rubber cushions for the kneelers in the pews of the nave of the church were installed at a cost of \$850. This total sum again represented donations from the parishioners. In May, 1953, a picture shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was donated by a certain parishioner. It was evaluated at \$125.

Assessment for Sacred Heart Seminary at Oneida

In 1954, St. Stanislaus Parish was assessed \$3,000 by Bishop Bona for its share in contributing towards the building of Sacred Heart Minor Seminary at Oneida, Wisconsin. One third of this amount had been paid each year from 1954 to 1956.

A statue of Our Lady of Fatima and a votive stand for the altar of Our Lady of Perpetual Help were donated to the church by parishioners, through the influence of Father Edward, in 1954. Repairs in the amount of \$2,000 to the school, rectory and picnic grounds in the same year raised the market value of the parochial buildings to \$150,000. The parish real estate was priced at \$4,000.

New Furnace for Sisters' Convent

In 1955, a new furnace and stoker was provided for the Sisters' convent at a cost of \$1,098. Representing donations to the church were velvet drapes for the canopy of the main altar (\$280, donated by the Holy Rosary Society), heavy-gold Mass cards (\$150), statues of St. Maria Goretti (\$150) and St. Agnes (\$182), and a large electric clock (Holy Name Society).

Father Edward's Silver Jubilee of Priesthood

Twice during its history has St. Stanislaus Parish been fortunate to commemorate the silver jubilees of priesthood of its pastors. In 1934, Father Cyril Piontek marked the silver milestone of his priestly life while he was pastor at Hofa Park. In June, 1955, Father Edward Jagodzinski observed the same jubilant moment of his life.

It was altogether appropriate that the celebration of Father Edward's silver jubilee as a priest should fall upon his days as pastor of St. Stanislaus Church. Two-fifths of his twenty-five years as a priest of God were spent at the Hofa Park Parish. On Sunday, June 19, 1955, Father Edward was honored by the presence of His Excellency, Bishop Bona, in the sanctuary of St. Stanislaus Church.

Assisting Father Edward at the altar as he celebrated his silver jubilee Mass at 10 a.m were Fathers Fulgence Masiak, O.F.M., and Melvin Wierzbicki, O.F.M., as deacon and subdeacon. Present also in the sanctuary were the Very Rev. Theophane Kalinowski, Provincial of the Franciscan Fathers, the Rt. Rev. Monsignor Chester Ropella, Chancellor of the Green Bay diocese, and a large number of Franciscan Fathers. Father Fulgence preached the jubilee sermons in the Polish and English languages during the Mass, while Bishop Bona offered congratulatory words to Father Edward and the congregation after Mass.

Over 275 parishioners, relatives and friends attended the jubilee banquet in the parish hall after Mass. Father Fulgence once again did the honors as toastmaster of the banquet, at which various members of the Franciscan and diocesan clergy as well as members of the laity contributed choice bits of congratulations to the silver jubilarian. In the end, Father Edward uttered grateful words of thanks to all who had honored him so graciously on this day.

A Polish and English one-week mission, in gratitude to God for the innumerable graces received during the past seventy-five years, was held at St. Stanislaus Church from Sunday, Aug. 24, to Sunday, Aug. 31, 1958. Rev. Victor Krzywonos, O.F.M., conducted this mission.

The diamond jubilee celebration will take place on Sunday, October 12, 1958, with His Excellency, the Most Rev. Stanislaus V. Bona, presiding in the sanctuary. Bishop Bona will also preach the jubilee sermons. Representing the longest-termed pastor in the history of the parish, Father Edward Jagodziński will be the celebrant of the jubilee Solemn High Mass coram Pontífice.

A sumptuous jubilee banquet will be served by the ladies of the parish after Mass for approximately 400 parishioners, clergy and guests in the parish hall on the picnic grounds. The diamond jubilee banquet committee appointed for this occasion is composed of the following ladies: Mrs. Joseph Aesmann, chairman, Mrs. Roman Krumrai and Mrs. Louis Adamski, assistants.