

FACTS FOR THE IMMIGRANT

CONCERNING

BARRON COUNTY,

WISCONSIN.

BY ORVILLE BRAYTON,

County Clerk.

Prepared and Published by Order of the
Board of Supervisors.

MENOMONIE, WIS.

FLINT & WEBER, BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS.

1871.

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BARRON COUNTY, WIS.

Barron County—so named in honor of H. D. Barron, a distinguished citizen of the northwest—is situated in the western portion of the State of Wisconsin. It is in the form of a square. Its northern boundary is about seventy-five miles south of Lake Superior; its western is twenty-four miles east of the St. Croix river; its southern is fifty miles north of Lake Pepin, on the Mississippi. It has an area of nine hundred square miles—being nearly three-fourths as large as the State of Rhode Island.

Its numerous streams appear on the map like a vast net-work, intersecting it throughout. These, unitedly with thousands of smaller brooks and rivulets flow in a general southerly direction as affluents of the Menomonic, its principal river, to be discharged through the prairies of Dunn, and the Valley of the Chippewa into the Mississippi, sixty miles below St. Paul. Fed mainly by springs, with which the country abounds, and flowing in channels of sand, gravel and stone,

with rapid or gentle currents according to the alternations of upland and meadow, timber and openings through which they pass, these waters are remarkably cold, clear and pure. Its lakes and ponds are also very numerous and beautiful. They are scattered alike through the uplands and lowlands. Here, they are found separately reposing in the heart of great forests, coldly isolated from all other waters; there, as on the Menomonic, several are connected in close succession by a river, like the beads of a rosary. Their endless varieties of form—some exhibiting in their shores the artist's "line of beauty;" others so regularly bent to a circle as to suggest having been struck by the sweep of a compass; others still, angular and broken, indented with many small half-hidden bays, and thrusting out long narrow points, that almost disavow the main waters—these are features that cannot easily be described. And when viewed, especially as they appear in mid-summer—surrounded by wooded promontories and gentle slopes; sandy beaches covered with deer tracks, agates, porphyry and carnellians; dotted with green islands, fringed with rice-beds, perfumed by lilies; loons gliding over their still surface with wild notes, and, at night, perchance a dusky native spearing pickerel or hunting deer by torchlight in his birch canoe—it may be claimed without reservation that these lakes cannot be surpassed in romantic interest and natural beauty.

This wonderful water system of Barron County is obviously of the greatest account in forming an estimate of its agricultural advantages. It is singular how the great tide of immigration has for years been flowing past this favored spot into some regions almost as arid as the Great Desert. Many of the most magnificent prairies of Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota and Dakota, are comparatively valueless for want of water. It is found necessary to build large cisterns, and dig wells of amazing depth, and transport water long distances in barrels for supplying the most ordinary domestic demands; while in seasons of unusual drought, these expedients often prove fearfully insufficient. Of course, under such conditions, the stock and dairy business is impracticable. But, in marked contrast to all this, are the transparent lakes, sparkling ponds, gurgling brooks and living springs of Barron

County. Here scarcely a farm of 160 acres can be selected, that has not, within its limits, an abundant supply of pure water.

The surface of this region is generally undulating; so much so in some places as to be described as hilly, while in others, there are broad tracts of comparatively level land. In these irregularities, however, the declivities are usually so gentle, and the altitudes so low, as merely to produce that variety and proportion of highland and meadow necessary for general agricultural purposes, and may be cultivated with ordinary facility throughout. The lands of more level surface are denominated openings and prairies, and are situated in small valleys or in narrow belts along the course of the larger streams. Of the latter there are about 32,000 acres; of the former perhaps 64,000. They have the same essential characteristics—are alluvial formations, with out-cropping gravel, pebbles and small boulders of granite here and there—hints of the drift period it may be—yet mainly covered with a rich vegetable mold, mixed in some places with sand, and in others with clay. To the eye, the one are small sunny spots, smooth and clear, without tree or shrub; the other have a less even surface, a stiffer soil, brushy thickets, straggling oaks and clumps of pine—a sort of middle term between the prairie and the timber, embracing somewhat of each.

Nearly all the experiments in farming that have been made thus far, have been on lands of this character; and in every instance where they were conducted with ordinary intelligence and industry they have been followed with the most gratifying results. Even those few localities that exhibit a growth of black pine, elsewhere so commonly associated with barrenness of soil, are here found to be endowed with extraordinary fertility. Indeed, for many agricultural purposes these prairies and openings are considered the best lands in the County. Grass may not succeed so well; but all other crops that can be produced in the clearings of timbered land, will flourish in these; while corn, hops, buckwheat, tobacco and such tender fruits and vegetables as grapes, melons and tomatoes, requiring for their growth and maturity a light, dry, warm soil, will succeed much better here than in those lands where clay predominates.

But the far greater portion of Barron County is covered with more or less dense forests. The principal varieties of timber adapted to the farmer's use are sugar maple, white and red oak, white ash, pine, linden and elm. Old Indian sugar-bushes are numerous on sunny slopes and lake shores. They yielded the Chippewa one of his chief means of subsistence. His bark utensils are still there. Healed and hidden, the trees contain marks of the hatchet fifty years old. They are healthy now. What invaluable sugar works might not the white man open here. Everywhere through the woods are scattered thrifty maple trees and groves, not one whit inferior to those so famous on the hills and mountains of Vermont. With a little preparation at first—digging troughs, whittling spiles, constructing reservoirs, arches and pans, all of which need not involve a cash expenditure of five dollars—his laboratory for evaporating, crystalizing and refining is built; and he is henceforth enabled, by a few days labor every spring, to manufacture sugar sufficient not only for his own consumption, but also to produce a considerable cash revenue for general domestic use. And all this at a time when no other work can be advantageously done; a transition time, when it is neither winter nor spring—when the snows are going, and the roads breaking up, and the frost lingers in the ground; when, in short, if he were in the midst of a great prairie he would be a victim of compulsory idleness almost as completely as if bound with a chain.

To the pioneer of a new country, who generally goes forth with but limited means, the importance and worth of these vast wooded areas cannot be overstated. It would be a grievous burden for him to be obliged to purchase lumber for a house, and barn, and fencing for a quarter section at \$20 per thousand, besides paying from \$8 to \$10 per cord for every stick of fuel consumed. It might fill him with absolute melancholy, if, upon reaching his destination in the West, he were to find himself in the midst of an immense expanse, where only one solitary clump of trees is visible, like an island far off in the distance, and learn that even this is carefully divided into square acres, and sold at the figures of village lots. Such an experience, which is by no means

uncommon, would help one to a just appreciation of the magnificent forests of Barron County; and to rejoice to make his home where the elm, the oak, and the maple interlock their branches over his head, Wood and water—twin essentials of all healthy agricultural enterprise—are here found without money and without price.

Large portions of these forests are comparatively free from underbrush; and their surface, throughout all seasons, in winter as well as in summer, is clothed with the verdure of an abundant growth of grass. This natural pasturage possesses nutritious qualities of the highest order. Sheep, horses and cattle will soon fatten upon it, and keep in excellent condition at all seasons except when the deep winter snows cover the ground. And during even this period it seems to be renewed rather than destroyed; for as soon as the snows are gone it reappears fresh and green, and becomes succulent and superb grazing after a few of the first warm days of early spring. Thus, the abundant growth of "buffalo grass" renders the whole range of forest exceedingly valuable for pasturage, and forever obviates the necessity of any special cultivation for this purpose.

The natural meadows constitute a very attractive feature of this region. Some are quite extensive, but they generally range from five to ten acres, and are scattered along river bottoms and creeks throughout the entire County. Their present available area can be doubled by a little labor in clearing the margins of brush and burning the ground. The principal varieties of grass are the flat-leaved, red-top and blue-joint. All are of good quality and luxuriant growth, particularly the blue-joint, which often attains the height of four or five feet, producing a marvelous yield of coarse but very sweet and excellent hay. Being indigenous, they exhibit but little tendency to run out. Some of these meadows have been mowed by lumbermen for twenty years without any perceptible diminution of the crop.

Although the improvements are as yet confined mainly to the openings and prairies, it is acknowledged on all hands, that when cleared, the timber lands are much more valuable for general farming purposes. The hills and ridges have a soil of dark, mellow, clay loam; the valleys a soil of sandier loam and deeper vegetable mold, with a

sub-soil of friable clay. Tame grasses of every kind flourish and attain perfection. Blue-grass, hungarian-grass, and white and red clover yield enormous crops; while timothy, with no care or cultivation except to sow the seed after the ground has been simply cleared and burnt over, has been known to produce two and a half tons per acre. Taken as a whole these lands are especially adapted to stock-raising and dairy purposes; yet experience has conclusively demonstrated, that for all the leading root and cereal crops, they are equal in productiveness to those of any country. To the growth and maturity of wheat, oats and potatoes, both soil and climate have a peculiar adaptation. An average yield of oats is fifty bushels per acre, reaching a maximum in some localities of seventy-five. Potatoes average three hundred bushels, and barley ranges from thirty to sixty. Spring wheat will average twenty-five bushels. Winter wheat is a very successful crop; the size of the kernel is superior; it attains more than the ordinary weight per bushel; it makes the finest quality of flour; and is free thus far from any liability of failure whether from winter-killing, the ravages of insects, rust or blight. Although farming here is still in its infancy, all the products of the field and garden, common even to the more southerly latitudes of this State have been cultivated with bountiful returns. Even corn is a reasonably sure crop. Untimely frosts appear to be less common than in the open counties to the south. However we may account for it—whether the forest growth retains the warm atmosphere of day for diffusion at night, or whether by some subtle chemistry it elaborates humidity from the air which is breathed as a protecting vapor over the fields before the frost-killing goes forth—it is certain that corn ripens here, while smitten in open regions elsewhere.

A large variety of the small fruits, as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries, huckleberries, cranberries, grapes and plums, are native to the soil. Of the larger fruits, peaches and pears may not mature; but that this region is well adapted to apples there can be no reasonable doubt. It has become a well known fact, that by starting orchards from native stocks, fruit-growing can be successfully accomplished almost anywhere in the Northwest. By due regard to

the adaptabilities of this peculiar climate, thousands of bushels have come to be raised in Wisconsin, every year. It is believed that in Barron County the conditions favorable to this interest are completely met. The influence of its wilderness of lakes and forests on the atmosphere, by promoting and equalizing its humidity, softening the asperities of its temperature, checking the force of winter blasts, and ensuring a mantle of deep snow for the protection of the delicate shrubs and roots against the effects of severe frosts, has already attracted the attention of pomologists, and led to the opening of nurseries, and transplanting of trees in localities where settlements have scarcely commenced.

As might be inferred from the foregoing, the climate of this region is not exactly the same that it is in general throughout the State. Such is the fact. We find here the climate for which Minnesota and Wisconsin are so justly famous everywhere, with this difference—moister summers and milder winters. The extremes of temperature are less remarkable. The rain and snow fall is greater, producing a more luxuriant vegetation in the warm weather, and better sleighing and milder days in the cold. To the laboring man, even in the most rigorous weather, the calm of the woods, is like the comfort of the fireside. He works with his coat off—literally fulfilling the mandate “in the sweat of thy brow,” though the frost has turned all things into crystal. Nor are the winters lengthened because of the more abundant snow. Spring opens as early as in the prairie country to the south, and cattle may be turned out for independent subsistence before any green vegetation elsewhere appears. With these favorable modifications, due to local causes, the climate is the same as in the Northwest generally—dry, pure, equable, electric and invigorating. Malarious diseases are impossible; epidemics are unknown; and the glorious Indian summer through which autumn glides into winter, and which in some sort reappears when winter melts into spring—the absence at all seasons of moist chilling winds and sudden atmospheric changes, must always insure to those who shall people this region unusual immunity from rheumatism, bronchitis and pulmonary complaints.

The facilities which here exist for water-power, as might be inferred from views of its topography already given, are practically inexhaustible. Taking into account only such as can be cheaply utilized, they are more than sufficient to turn the wheels of all the manufacturing establishments in Massachusetts. And considered in connection with the fertility of the soil, the great quantity of timber adapted to mechanical purposes, and certain other conditions, real and possible, that render this region favorable for the development of large manufacturing interests, this vast water-power assumes a peculiar importance. With the rich iron mines of Superior lying in close neighborhood on the north, and the prairies and bottom lands of the Mississippi valley bordering on the south, only a few miles of railroad are necessary for the profitable employment of labor and capital in foundries, woolen-mills, wagon-factories, and all the wood and iron-working shops for the manufacture of farming implements and domestic furniture, demanded by the greatest agricultural region in the world. As yet but little has been done for the improvement of these extraordinary advantages. Influenced however by their attractions, and believing in the promising future of Barron County, a few enterprising capitalists and business men, have erected several fine mills for providing the settlers with lumber for building purposes, and converting their grain into flour and feed. At Rice Lake, nearly in the centre of the County, a saw, shingle, lath, planing, and grist mill, all occupying the same site, have recently been completed. The building contains a rotary saw having a capacity of 15,000 feet in twelve hours; the shingle mill will cut from 15 to 20 M. and the lath about 15 M. in the same time. The planing and grist mills are of the ordinary capacity and kind. At Prairie Farm on Hay River in the southern portion of the County, an establishment containing mills of substantially the same character throughout, is also nearly constructed. Besides these there are several smaller mills, mostly for the manufacture of lumber to supply the home demand, in process of construction in various eligible localities. These and other improvements that might be mentioned, as large hotels and stores, are manifestly somewhat in advance of the present immigration; but they are made in the faith that the thrift and enter-

prise of the pioneers now here, are but a hint and promise of that which is to come, and which will at no distant day not only change the forests into fruitful fields, but will vex the streams with countless water-wheels, and fill the solitudes with the clang of a manifold handiwork in oak, iron, and steel.

Another great material interest more peculiar to this region than any other, consists in extensive beds of Catlinite, or Indian pipe stone—a sort of red clay formation, found in stratified deposits of various thicknesses convenient for quarrying, in the eastern portion of the County. According to the analysis of Dr. Jackson, of Boston, as reported in Silliman's Journal it is composed of, in 100 grains :

Water,	8.4 grains.	Perox. Iron,	5.0 grains.
Silicia,	48.2 do	Ox. Manganese,	0.5 do
Alumina,	28.2 do	Carb. Lime,	2.6 do
Magnesia,	6.0 do	Loss,	1.0 do

The practical importance of this singular compound cannot easily be overrated. It is of a brownish crimson or mahogany color, exceedingly fine grained, susceptible of a high polish, and when first taken from the quarry is so chalky and soft as to be easily cut with a knife or dressed with a plane, yet after a few days exposure to the air and light assumes a flint-like tenacity and hardness which resists the action of moisture, heat and cold. For centre-tables, counters, chimney-pieces, tessellated pavements, facings of buildings, columns, monuments and busts—for everything in which it is necessary to unite the beauty of marble with the strength of granite, it possesses an adaptation of qualities which need only to be known to create a demand that even the exhaustion of these beds may not supply. Its exquisite richness and beauty, the great ease with which it can be wrought, together with the fact of its scarcity—geologists having reported its existence at but one other point on the whole continent—will render it a source of wealth to this County in generations to come, which might not be surpassed by mines of silver and gold. Only about thirty miles of a long contemplated railway need be constructed for the shipment of this material; and whenever this is accomplished, these quarries will afford profitable employment for hundreds of men.

But the most vital and immediate interest to be considered by the immigrant, in connection with Barron County remains to be set forth. It has been stated that this region is chiefly covered with timber. Perhaps one-third, making a rough estimate, is entered for the pine. Fortunately, very large portions of these lands are owned not by foreign speculators, in whose hands they are of no advantage to the settler other than the mere tax he is authorized annually to impose, but by active and reliable lumbermen, backed by large capital, whose enterprise has established an industry here of the most extensive and beneficial character. One firm that has been operating here upwards of thirty years, furnishes constant employment to nearly twelve hundred men; their force alone in the woods for the last logging season was one thousand; and their transactions, by affording profitable labor, and putting in circulation immense means, have begotten manifold independent interests around them, and always been to the more southerly settlements and communities a fountain of prosperity and life. Largely interested in the agricultural development of this County; having extensive lands for sale and great quantities of produce to buy; they are not repeating what lumbermen are so commonly doing elsewhere—plundering the forest of its pine simply to enrich themselves in foreign places with the spoilation; but every log is manufactured on the waters where it is cut, and the profits are returned in a multitude of home improvements.

Now, to the robust man who is without much money and is willing to work, the superior advantages of a homestead in this County, where remunerative employment awaits and invites him at all seasons, are manifest. Especially to the hardy Norskman or German, whose old home has perhaps afforded him but a bare and comfortless subsistence, and who has been obliged to spend the savings of years of economy and toil in reaching this Western World, it must be a welcome fortune, to find in the very neighborhood where he locates and begins to build a home, the privilege of working for fair wages at such intervals as his needs in the outset may require. He wants fourteen dollars for the entry of his homestead; he wants food and clothing till he can clear land and raise the first crop; he wants farming implements,

a team, a pig and a cow—in short, this is to him a *period of universal and supreme want*; but it is not necessarily of long duration here, where his labor is the peer of capital, and he can hire for money, and be paid on demand. Scattered all over the older settled portions of the country are those who came in extreme destitution a few years since, but who now own fine houses, large farms, costly merchandise, government securities and railway stock; and who will bear cordial witness that their first step on the road to success was taken in the employ of this company, whose unblemished reputation is almost coeval with the history of the Northwest. It is impossible to present a schedule of wages suited to all times, but at the present (October, 1871), when money is high, and grain and merchandise cheap, teamsters, choppers, sawyers, farm hands and all unskilled laborers, are paid from \$16 to \$30 per month. Skilled laborers, as carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers, machinists, filers and head sawyers, command from \$1.50 to \$3.50 per day. Settlers having teams, oxen or horses, can obtain profitable wages with them during the winter when there is little or no work to be done on the farms. Several enterprising men who devote themselves considerably to the improvement of lands and growing of crops, also engage extensively in lumbering as jobbers, receiving from \$2.50 to \$4 per M. for logs delivered on the banks; and as handled by them the two interests are very successfully driven abreast.

In determining where he will settle, let the immigrant give careful attention to these facts. He should avoid, if possible the hazards of a location where but one interest—one industry—one employment—awaits him. If he choose a prairie region, where the exclusive reliance is upon farming—i. e. upon the wheat interest—let him consider the debts, the despondency, the sufferings, which are inevitable whenever there is a failure either in the crop, or in its market value. The result, in few words, is—no money, no wages, no employment; and it is especially disastrous to the man who finds himself among strangers, and has nothing to depend upon but his hands. In Barron County, the pinch of these "Western Hard Times," will never be felt. If one crop fail, it will be supplemented with the success of twenty others;

and even if all fail, and barn, garner and cellar are found empty in autumn, still, by reason of the gigantic lumbering enterprises which nothing can interrupt, the settler is master of valuable resources and can handle a hundred expedients.

Owing to the large number of men and teams employed by the lumbering establishments, and the limited quantity of land under cultivation, no surplus of farm products has ever found its way out of the country; and when we consider the immense territories of pine that spread out, westward, northward and eastward, into regions not adapted to agricultural purposes, it is evident that for generations to come, farmers will here have a home market for all they can produce. The distance from the south line of the County to the nearest railroad points being only eighteen and twenty miles, it would not be unusually expensive to market a crop in that direction; but since the local demand necessitates the importation of enormous quantities of supplies every year, prices rule higher here than elsewhere, and in this respect renders remoteness from railroads an advantage to the farmer rather than a loss.

The facilities for popular education in this County are worthy of consideration. The schools are under the management of a Board, consisting of the clerks of the several districts, who among other duties, organize new districts, build school houses, employ teachers, and determine if any, and what amount of, moneys are necessary to be levied for school purposes, after the usual apportionments and appropriations by state, county and town, have been made. No especial "district tax," often so distressingly burdensome in new settlements, is levied here. No freeholder is impoverished by the building of a school house in his neighborhood; but every dollar of assessable property throughout the County, pays an equal share. Thus, the great wealth of the entire pine entries being laid under tribute, it becomes practicable to levy a tax sufficient to procure all the advantages of thoroughly qualified teachers and numerous schools, usual in the oldest and most populous rural districts of the state.

Let it therefore be understood, that in immigrating to this new region, no man thereby deprives his children of the means of education.

Rather, as a general thing, will they be increased and improved. It is believed that no county in the state ever expended so much for common school purposes, in proportion to the number of pupils, as did this during the last year. Capital is here paying its debt of education to the rising generation, before it is due. School houses plentifully dot the prairies and are hidden in the woods. But little has the prattle of children's voices been heard within their walls. Like the stores, hotels and mills, they are built largely in anticipation of a need sure and soon to come. The danger to be apprehended is that in the hands of irresponsible and unscrupulous men the work will be overdone. The system is new and an experiment; but it is believed to be greatly superior to the old, under which schools instead of being in the van of immigration lag slowly behind; and that if no mismanagement or abuse should necessitate its repeal, it will develop a degree of popular education and intelligence which will elevate the future communities of Barron County to that height of civilization which is the New Englander's pride and boast.

All varieties of game native to the Northwest are here found in rare abundance. Most of the brooks and streams abound in speckled trout. All the larger lakes and ponds teem with pike, pickerel, bass and muskallonge of the largest size and most delicate quality. So plentiful are these that they have contributed the principal article of food for the Indians of the country from immemorial time. Ducks and wild geese are found in all the rivers and lakes; and are especially numerous during Autumn in those sequestered shores and bays where the rice-beds drop their ripened seed among reeds and leaves upon the placid waters. This is their home—the place where they nest and brood and thrive, and to which, high in air, like tired battalions, we see the wanderers in these autumnal days returning. As usual throughout the West, prairie chickens and partridges abound in their native haunts. For a few years past the latter have not been usually plentiful, because of a wet period which deluged and destroyed their nests in the river bottoms; but the large broods that startlingly flutter up before the traveler's footsteps, and fill the woods at night with

their muffled thunder, show that they have quite recovered from the disaster. Of larger game, and kinds of more staple value to the hunter, as deer and bear, there have been at all times a remarkable abundance; but at the present, when this region has become almost neutral ground between the Indians and the whites, it is observed that they are rapidly increasing. The spectacle of the roe and the buck, leaping from their beds and bounding airily away through the forest, or of certain black, ursiform shadows withdrawing slowly from the open pathway into the obscurity of rustling bushes, is very common, and, it may be added, naturally thrills the traveler unaccustomed to the woods with peculiar sensations. Wild bees fill the air with their humming, bringing sweets to their lofty homes from linden blossoms, sunny openings, and flowery dells; mink and muskrat burrow and play along alder bottoms and banks; beaver, with their wonderful industry practice their engineering in countless improvements on outlets and streams; otter perform their trips by river and lake, and land, neglecting none of the well-worn "slides" or regular "dives;" martin, fisher, wildcat, lynx, wolf, fox, coon—almost everything, in short, that can interest the trapper, as also the hunter and fisherman, can be found in the shadow and silence of these old woods.

Entered lands in Barron County, are worth from \$1.50 to \$5 per acre. About 65 per cent. of the whole county still belongs to the government, of which nearly 172,000 acres are not in market, having been withdrawn for a railroad grant, but which will doubtless soon become available for settlement either as homesteads or by purchase at cheap rates. The lands still vacant and subject to purchase, or to be taken under the homestead or pre-emption laws, amount to about 200,000 acres, or nearly 33½ per cent. of the 900 square miles which comprise the whole area of the county. Only about 20,000 acres or 3½ per cent. have been taken as homesteads up to the present time.

All persons can take a homestead of 160 acres of vacant lands anywhere outside of railroad limits; and lands of this class lie in the eastern portion of the county. All can obtain the same, but only in the even numbered sections of lands within the 20 mile railroad limit;

which embraces a diagonal, angular-sided strip, ten miles wide east and west, and thirty miles long north and south in the central portion of the county. All persons who served either in the army or navy of the United States ninety days during the late war can take 160 acres, and others but 80 acres of the vacant lands in the even numbered sections within the ten mile railroad limit; and this includes a strip on the west side of the county.

Immigrants, in examining lands, should avail themselves of the assistance of a reliable guide. Many such are to be found among the settlers already here. Unable to name all, it is with pleasure that the writer refers to one in whose company he has explored the whole region hereinbefore described—the most true-hearted and accomplished woodsman he ever knew—

BAPTISTE QUARDERER,

—or—

RICE LAKE,

DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF BARREN COUNTY;

who has corrected plats free for the inspection of all; and will show lands and give descriptions to persons seeking homesteads, at moderate charges.

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MENOMONIE, WIS.

This map is published for the benefit of men of small means, desiring to obtain lands for occupancy and improvement by purchase, or under the homestead laws, and is intended to supplement the survey of a pamphlet issued by order of the Supervisor of the County in 1871 for the encouragement of immigration. The railroads who were thus induced to settle here will testify to the fact that the conditions are in no respect overrated; and that all who follow them will find good crops, good soil, good water, good climate, good schools, roads, and all the other advantages of a good home waiting them. Since the commencement of that year, the advancement of Barron County is all that makes a prosperous people here. The population has probably doubled. Wild land has been rapidly brought under cultivation; large numbers of money have been expended in private and public improvements; the beginnings of new towns have been made; and all interests have entered into a course of prosperous development.

Thus far the settlements have been confined to the southern and south-eastern portion of the County, but this is the result of its accessibility, rather than its superiority. Township 35, Range 10, has about 11,000 acres of vacant government land, well watered and timbered, and at least two-thirds of it will make good arable farm. The remainder, being stony, is valuable only for timber and pasture. T. 36, R. 10, has about 4,000 acres of excellent land, well watered, and timbered; T. 35, R. 12, has 5,000 acres—very rich soil, surface gently rolling, watered by many small streams not shown on the map, with considerable wild meadow here and there; T. 36, R. 12, contains about 5,000 acres—light growth of timber, clay and vegetable loam, gently rolling, richly watered, and a little meadow; T. 34 and 35, R. 14, have about 10,000 acres, suitable for all kinds of agriculture possible to this climate, but peculiarly adapted to grain and hay; T. 35 and 36, R. 14, have nearly 8,000 acres of good farm and timber land, of peculiar value on account of lying on the route of the proposed railroad; T. 34, 35 and 36, R. 14, also have about 8,000 acres, mostly watered by Turtle Creek and its tributaries, very fertile, easily cleared, abounding with springs and meadows, good for all purposes, but in their adaptability to the stock and dairy business cannot be surpassed. The remainder of the County is more or less settled, but even in the vicinity of the Prairie Farm, where the earliest improvements were made; in Dallas, the garden of the County; in Stanford, where wheat waves in summer far as the eye can reach; in Sumner and Chetek, where the large population, enterprise and prosperity compare favorably with the old settled towns of Chippewa and Dunn, there are many valuable tracts still available to the homesteader, either because forfeited by a previous claimant, or yet remaining in possession of the government. It is certainly safe to assert that there are at least 100 excellent farms, of 160 acres each, subject to entry and ultimate ownership under the provisions of the homestead law.

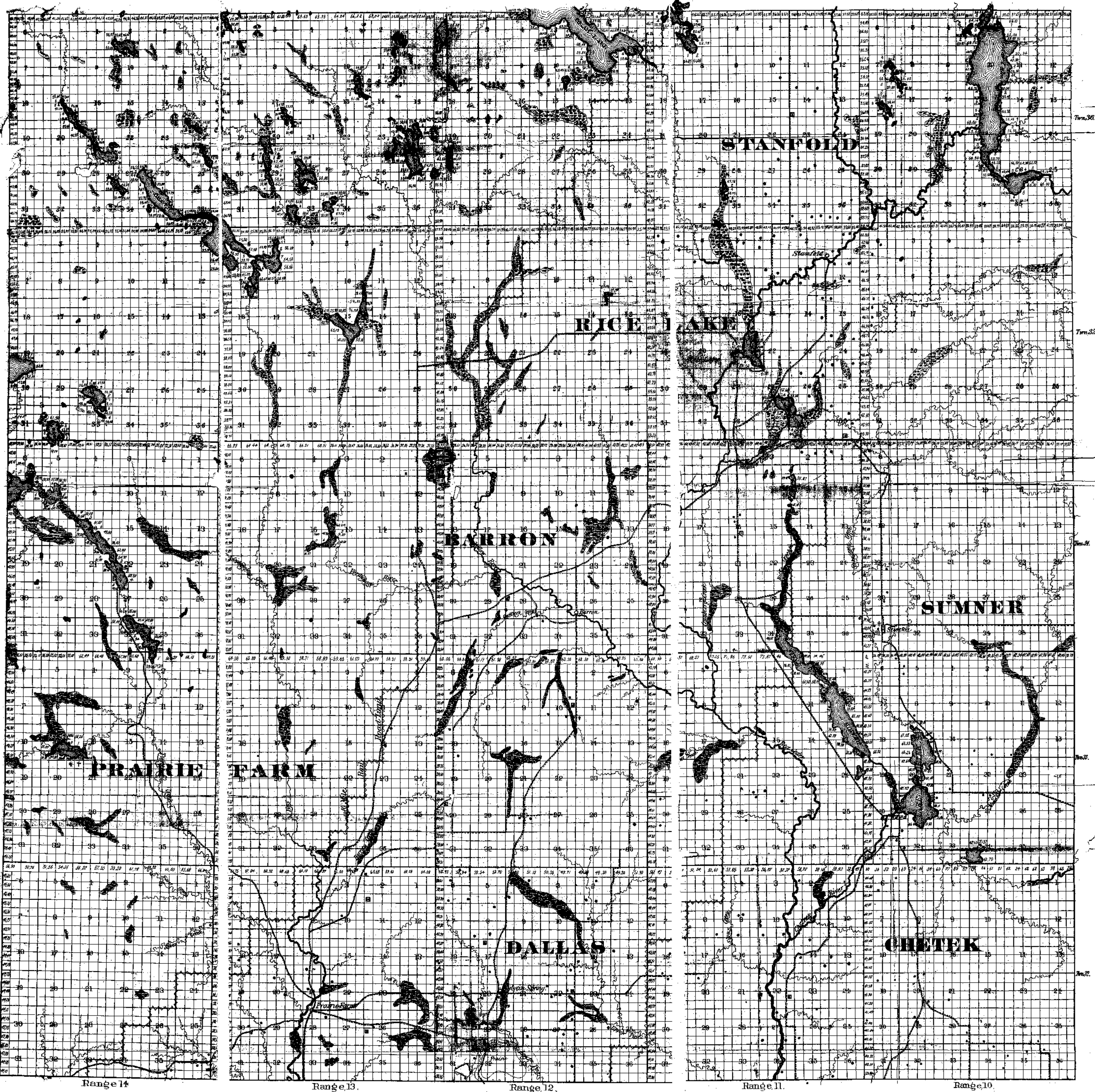
There are also in this County about 172,000 acres of railroad lands, of the best quality for farming purposes, or covered with forests of magnificent Pine. It is the policy of the Company receiving them to render the farming lands speedily available for settlement by purchase at cheap rates, and also by selling the timber in small lots, to open encouraging opportunities to lumbermen of moderate means. With this there dawns a better day for the settlers of this region. Nearly the whole agricultural portion of the County will be open to improvement; the lumbering business will be increased; wages will be faced by the free competition of the many; the Wisconsin will flow for the industrious and enterprising, whether their capital be small or great; and the vast natural resources of the country will contribute to the development of a common prosperity hitherto unknown.

In view of these facts, we again commend Barron County to the favorable consideration of those intending to cast their lot among the settlers of a new country; substantiating the claim, that with its intelligent and enterprising population, its rapid and healthy material growth, its industries and boundless resources, and its magnificent profile of five hundred free homes, it is, beyond all doubt, the most desirable locality in the State for every thing usually sought in Westward immigration.

BARRON COUNTY.

STATE of WIS.

COMPILED & PUBLISHED by ORVILLE BRAYTON for the COUNTY.



EXPLANATIONS
Post Offices
School Houses
Houses
Swamps
Flour Mills
Saw Mill
Roads

Map of
Barron Co.

