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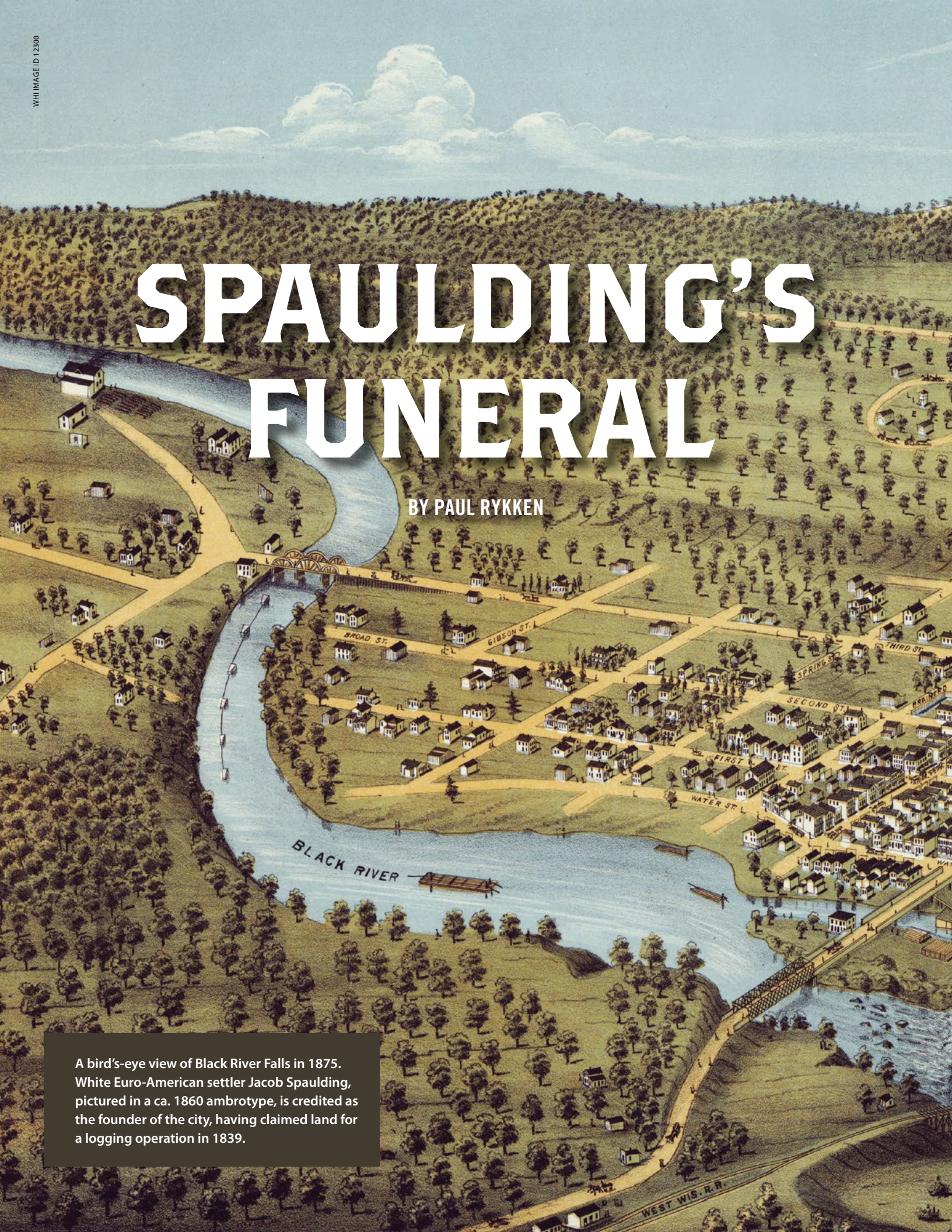
SPAULDING'S FUNERAL

BY PAUL RYKKEN



A bird's-eye view of Black River Falls in 1875. White Euro-American settler Jacob Spaulding, pictured in a ca. 1860 ambrotype, is credited as the founder of the city, having claimed land for a logging operation in 1839.

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Our wives and our children now seated behind us, are dear to us, and so is our country, where rest in peace the bones of our ancestors. . . . Do you want our country? . . . Why, Fathers, what can be your motive?

—Little Elk (Hoowanecka), 1829[1]

Echoes of the small city's founding years whisper through the cemetery trees on the river's west side. Originally called "Spaulding's Place" by second-wave New Englanders arriving in 1839, the settlement later became known as Black River Falls. The Ho-Chunk people, who inhabited the region for thousands of years prior to Euro-American settlement, refer to the place as *N'įoxawanį eeja* ("where the water disappears"). The community carries the imprint of 180 years of a shared and often contentious history, not unlike any number of communities in the Old Northwest where a polyglot of Euro-Americans comingled with Indigenous peoples in a complex process of acculturation. For most residents, however, that history remains largely unknown.

PAUL RYKKEN

Jacob Spaulding's grave in Riverside Cemetery stands beside markers for his three wives. A Masonic square and compass, signifying honesty and self-restraint, adorns his headstone.

Jacob Spaulding's unassuming headstone and the markers for his three wives could easily be overlooked at Riverside Cemetery.[2] I began my search for the village founder after stumbling on his obituary while foraging around in newspaper archives, reading an account of his grand funeral service from January 1876. For local historians, obituaries breathe life into the dry bones of the past, and the account of Spaulding's funeral hints at his significance to the local community and beyond. More than one thousand people attended his memorial at the newly built Freeman House on Water Street in the lower city, including his Masonic lodge brothers, prominent civic leaders, and forty Ho-Chunk men who were seated at the front of the hall, joined by their interpreter and fellow tribal member John St. Cyr.

According to the *Wisconsin Independent*, the procession to Riverside Cemetery was "the most imposing ever witnessed" in the city. At the behest of Spaulding's widow, Eliza Van Scoyke, the Ho-Chunk men led the group of marchers, which included the city's silver cornet band, sixty-five Freemasons, and a horse-drawn hearse followed by family, friends, and acquaintances.[3] Civil War veteran and civic leader W. S. Darrow directed the solemn burial, mixing Universalist rites and Masonic funeral traditions. As mourners surrounded the grave at the close of the ceremony, local attorney Carl C. Pope shared a series of resolutions adopted by the Masonic Lodge, including several references to Spaulding's nearly forty-year relationship with the Ho-Chunk. Amidst the flowery language, Spaulding was memorialized as an "unwavering friend . . . when white friends were sorely needed . . . as true to them as the cord is to the bow."[4] The presence of those Ho-Chunk men honoring a white city founder on that winter's day 145 years ago offers a complicated counternarrative to our conventional understanding of frontier Wisconsin. Who was this character, and why does his story matter?

Spaulding's biography reads like a chapter from a James Fenimore Cooper novel. Born in 1810 in New Marlborough, Massachusetts, less than thirty years after the close of the American Revolution, Jacob Spaulding represented the eighth generation of an English family that first arrived in New England in 1619. He was the sixth of nine children born to Jeremiah and Wealthy Bennett Spaulding, whose story of migration and settlement mirrored the growth and westward expansion of the new nation. Coming of age in the confident, postwar "Era of Good Feeling," Spaulding spent his formative years within the contradictory confluence of the reforms spawned by the Second Great Awakening, frontier expansion motivated by the belief in Manifest Destiny, and the ethnic cleansing and forced removals of Indigenous people. When Spaulding was twenty, he moved with his parents to Saratoga County, New York, and three years later he married Nancy Jane Stickney, the first of his three wives. In 1836, Jeremiah and Wealthy Spaulding, along with other family members, including Jacob, Nancy, and their two-year-old son Dudley, moved to Hancock County in western Illinois. Joining thousands of second-wave New Englanders who relocated to the Northwest Territory as part of the land rush resulting from President Andrew Jackson's aggressive and violent Native removal policies, the Spaulding family settled in Warsaw, Illinois, a town on the east side of the Mississippi River, and began their second fresh start in six years.

It was from Warsaw that Jacob Spaulding traveled north into the newly established Wisconsin Territory in search of

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A patriotic parade passes north along Water Street in Black River Falls, taking the same route as the one used for funerals of community members, ca. 1880.

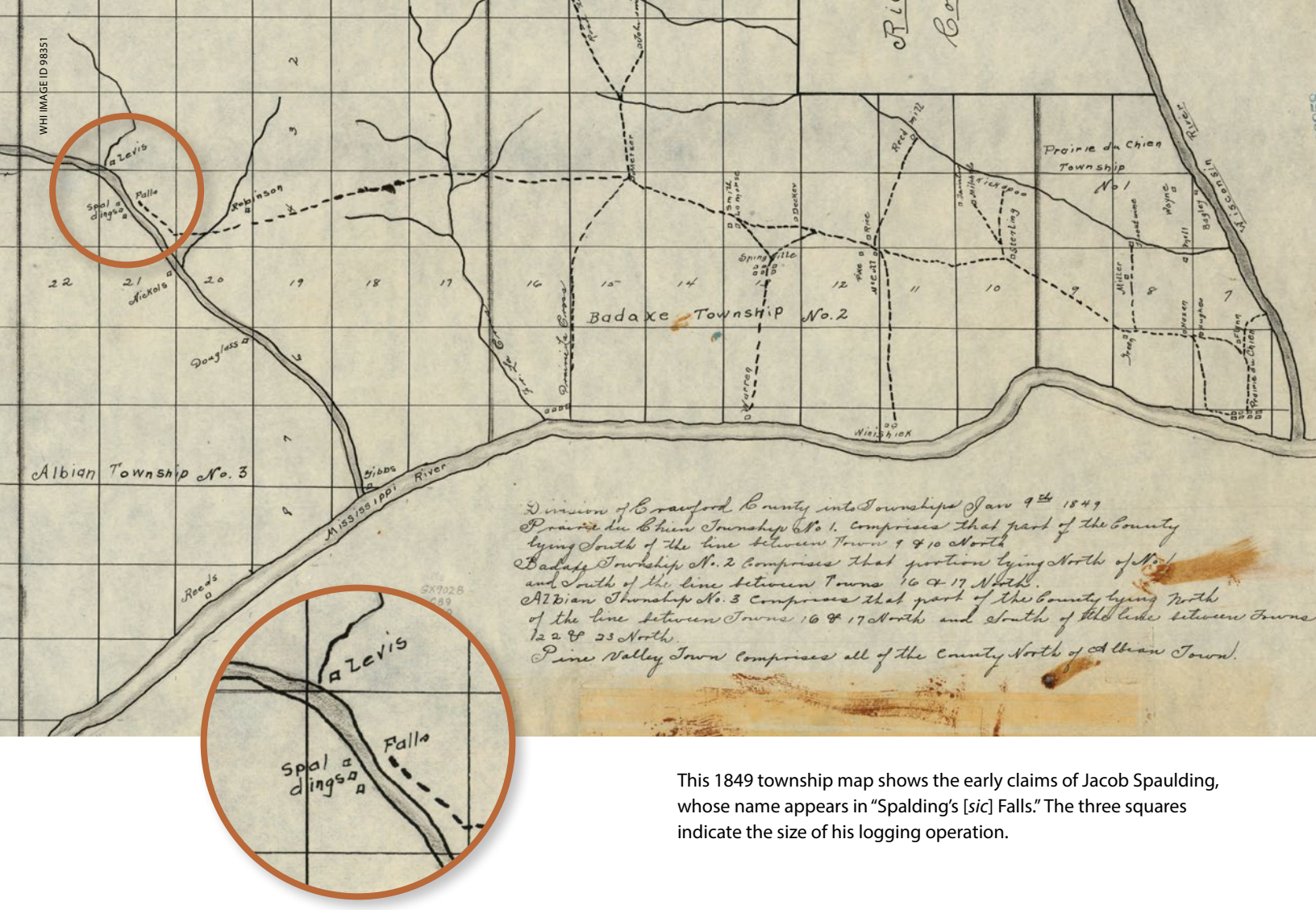
timber. Arriving at Prairie du Chien in the early summer of 1839, Spaulding helped lead a party of seventeen Euro-American settlers who took a steamer up the Mississippi to Prairie La Crosse (present-day La Crosse), where they navigated a series of bayous known as French Island, ultimately making their way thirty-nine miles north and west on what the French called the Rivière Noire, owing to its black color. Traveling by keelboat, they arrived at the falls of the Black River.[5] Spaulding and his companions hoped to settle the area and take advantage of its natural resources, establishing water-powered mills to process white pine and prepare it for markets downstream. We do not know what Spaulding knew of the Native people who lived in the Black River Valley, but he and his companions were likely aware that the land had recently been opened to white settlement. Only two years earlier, the area had been ceded to the US government by the Ho-Chunk Nation (known in historical documents as the Winnebago) in a controversial and divisive treaty.[6] By staking claims, these Euro-Americans were among the first drops in a tidal wave of people that ultimately transformed the Northwest Territory.

The likelihood of success for Spaulding's venture was tenuous at best, and it is surprising that he and his fellow travelers persisted. Beyond the significant challenges related to the physical environment, their initial encounters with Native nations were tense and sometimes hostile. For the Ho-Chunk nation and other Nations that inhabited the area, Spaulding and his fellow settler colonists represented an existential threat leading to an uneasy coexistence.[7] According to one account of the period, in 1841, after the settlers had begun work on a second mill near the falls, "Indians made an attempt to drive [the settlers] off, but Spaulding succeeded by a ruse in driving them off without a clash."[8] Another source elaborates, saying that the Native men

> demanded that Spaulding and his comrades should vacate their claims and leave. [Spaulding], however, had made up his mind to stay, and managing to get the Indians in one part of the double log-cabin, by strategy, armed his companions and ordered [the leader] with his band to evacuate, which he did without delay, and was afterward a firm friend of his whilom foe.[9]

In both accounts, Spaulding appears convinced of his and his companions' right to settle the land, willing to threaten by force and subterfuge, but also somehow able to avoid a "clash" and become a "firm friend." Today, we can't help but question an account that makes the white man at the center of the story the arbiter of both colonial force and friendship and gives the displaced Indigenous men, who are not identified by their tribe or nation, no agency in regard to the land or to the outcome.

Spaulding also sparred with his business partners Andrew and Robert Wood over land claims. The Wood brothers arrived with Spaulding's party in 1839, and territorial disputes lingered in the courts for eighteen years, finally resolving in his favor. And in the early 1840s, Spaulding clashed with Mormon lumbermen who traveled north from Nauvoo, Illinois, in search of white pines. At one point, Spaulding and his associates forced the Mormons off the land at gunpoint, though they later resolved their differences and did business together for a period.[10]



This 1849 township map shows the early claims of Jacob Spaulding, whose name appears in "Spalding's [*sic*] Falls." The three squares indicate the size of his logging operation.

Ultimately, the Mormons, like the Wood brothers, left the area of the falls, and Spaulding became one of the most influential white men in the region. In 1860, at age fifty, Spaulding transferred most of his considerable business enterprises to his twenty-six-year-old son, Dudley.[11] For the remaining sixteen years of his life, Spaulding continued to make his mark as a lumberman, keelboat operator, millwright, businessman, surveyor, justice of the peace, and real estate agent. His death from a stroke on January 23, 1876, sent shockwaves through the small community.[12]

The origin story of Spaulding as a town founder rings familiar with hundreds of similar stories from throughout the Upper Midwest in the mid-nineteenth century. Beneath the predictable story of white settlement and the displacement of Native people, however, lies a bit of a mystery related to Spaulding's relationships with Indigenous people. His arrival in the region in 1839 intersected in complex and nuanced ways with the bitter conflicts between the Ho-Chunk Nation and the various government entities that sought their removal. As early as the 1820s, the Ho-Chunk Nation dealt with land loss at the hands of an increasing volume of settlers coming into the lead-mining region of southeastern Wisconsin. In 1836, the same year that Wisconsin became a territory, the Ho-Chunk people suffered a devastating smallpox epidemic. The following year, two years prior to Spaulding's arrival, the Nation signed the fourth in a series of eleven treaties with the US government—an agreement that was dubious at best due to several factors, not the least of which being that the Ho-Chunk signatories lacked authority to negotiate a land transfer on behalf of the Ho-Chunk Nation. In addition, and portending a period of chaos and confusion, US authorities deliberately misled their Ho-Chunk counterparts concerning the time frame of the proposed removal from their ancestral lands; what the Ho-Chunk signatories understood as eight years was in fact eight months.[13] Spaulding's first encounters with the nation occurred about a year after these eight months had passed, when the US government's pressure to remove the Ho-Chunk and increase white settlement was high.

Between 1837 and 1874, one faction of the Ho-Chunk Nation honored the treaty, while another refused, based on the belief that they had been deceived in the negotiation process for the 1837 treaty. The abiding faction endured a series of removals and relocations ever farther from their homeland, while the nonabiding resisters (sometimes called the "disaffected bands" or "renegades") avoided removal through purposeful

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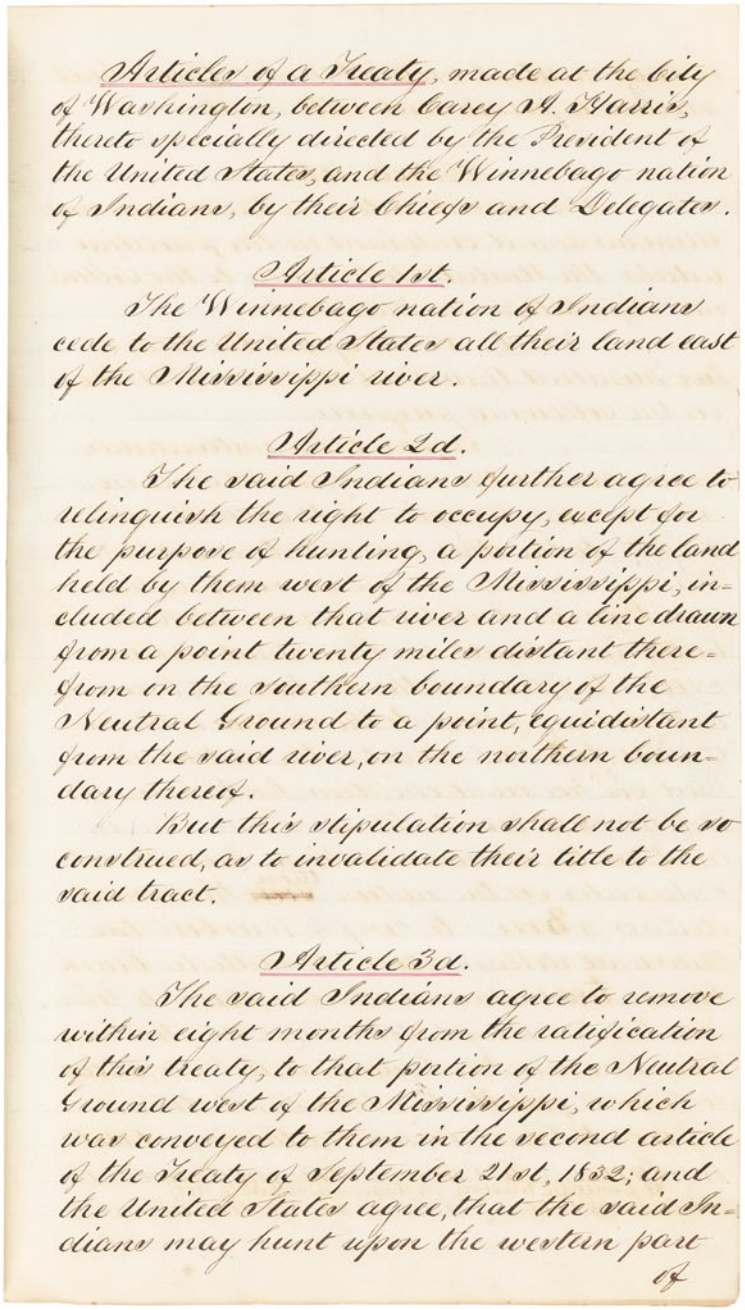

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Articles of a Treaty, made at the City of Washington, between Lucy W. Harris, thereto specially directed by the President of the United States, and the Winnebago nation of Indians, by their Chiefs and Delegates.

Article 1st.

The Winnebago nation of Indians cede to the United States all their land east of the Mississippi river.

Article 2d.

The said Indians further agree to relinquish the right to occupy, except for the purpose of hunting, a portion of the land held by them west of the Mississippi, included between that river and a line drawn from a point twenty miles distant therefrom on the southern boundary of the Neutral Ground to a point, equidistant from the said river, on the northern boundary thereof.

But this stipulation shall not be so construed, as to invalidate their title to the said tract.

Article 3d.

The said Indians agree to remove within eight months from the ratification of this treaty, to that portion of the Neutral Ground west of the Mississippi, which was conveyed to them in the second article of the Treaty of September 21st, 1832; and the United States agree, that the said Indians may hunt upon the western part of

Above: The 1838 Wisconsin Territorial Seal included an image of a Native American walking west, signifying removal, and a white settler plowing land. The Latin phrase *Civilitas successitt [*sic*] barbarum*,—"Civilization succeeds barbarism"—appears at the top. **Right:** The 1837 treaty stipulated among many demands that the Ho-Chunk Nation "cede to the United States all their land east of the Mississippi river" and "agree to remove within eight months from the ratification of this treaty."

resistance to US governmental authority.[14] Among the various arguments against removal and relocation, Ho-Chunk leaders like Wakąjaega (Chief Dandy), Yellow Thunder, and Short Wing Winneshiek (also known as Old Winneshiek) powerfully asserted that it was unconscionable to force a people to leave the land of their ancestors.[15] In a compelling message to Governor Lucius Fairchild in 1870, Old Winneshiek stated his desire to "stay in Wisconsin and pick huckleberries . . . and to die and lay bones with [my] father."[16]

Though scattered in several areas of the state, many resisters congregated in the northern region of the 1837 land cession, securing their livelihoods while intermittently interacting with Euro-American settlers in the Black River Valley. As a result, Spaulding and other residents developed relationships with Ho-Chunk people, connections that ultimately led to his vigorous actions in opposition to removal.[17] Though we have little concrete information about his relationship to the nation in the decades after he settled, we know that by the end of his life Spaulding had gained a reputation, as one town historian put it, for being a "firm friend" to the Ho-Chunk as well as a "counselor in the hour of trouble."[18] That "trouble" became most pronounced in the early 1870s, when the US redoubled its efforts to remove the Ho-Chunk from Wisconsin. Spaulding spent the last five years of his life publicly opposing the Ho-Chunk removal and appealing to his fellow settlers to join the effort.

The story of that opposition has as its backdrop incidents surrounding the Dakota War of 1862 in neighboring Minnesota and the resulting hysteria gripping Wisconsinites.[19] Responding to urgent calls for removal by white settlers, Ho-Chunk tribal members faced yet another removal from the Blue Earth Reservation in Minnesota to Crow Creek, South Dakota, in the winter of 1863. More than 550 Ho-Chunk died along the way. In response to these devastating losses, more than 1,200 of the survivors sought refuge with the Omaha Nation in Nebraska.[20]


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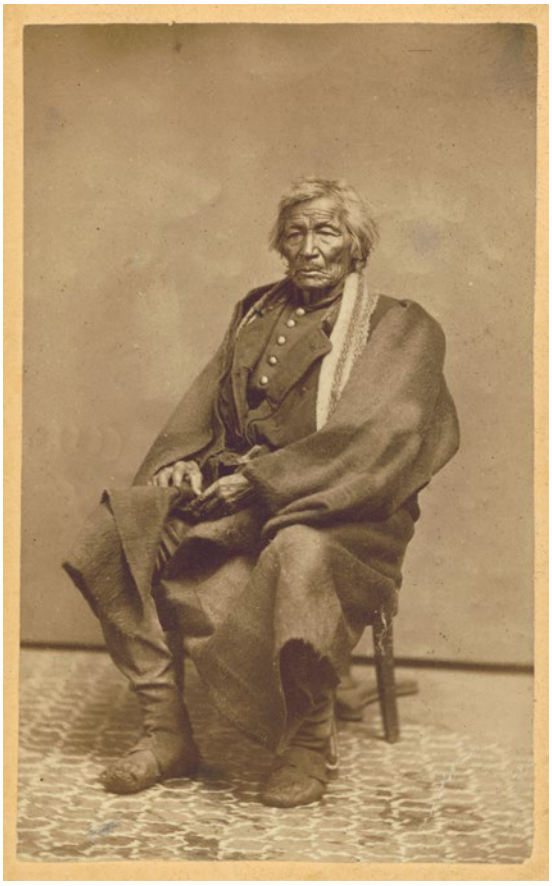
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Right: Ho-Chunk tribal chief Wakąjaega, also known as Chief Dandy, ca. 1866. Born the same year as Spaulding in 1810, he spent much of his adult life fighting the removal of his people from Wisconsin.
Far right: Studio portrait of Yellow Thunder taken in 1880 by Samuel Ridgway, Portage, Wisconsin. Yellow Thunder was among the Ho-Chunk delegation at the 1837 treaty negotiation in Washington, DC.

Throughout the Civil War period and beyond, tensions increased, and, by 1870, in part due to pressure from the white populace, state and local officials lobbied both in Madison and Washington, DC, for the government to remove the remaining Ho-Chunk to Nebraska. An 1865 treaty between the Ho-Chunk Nation and the federal government stipulated that all Ho-Chunk people would ultimately relocate to the Nebraska reservation designated for them. The Ho-Chunk who remained in Wisconsin, however, were forthright in their opposition and argued vehemently against removal as they had done before. Enlisting the help of attorneys and civic leaders, Ho-Chunk leaders resourcefully made their case with state and federal authorities. It was within this context that the elder Spaulding assumed a prominent role opposing the removal. Joining forces with several influential Euro-American civic leaders, including attorneys Henry Lee of Portage and Horace Beach of Prairie du Chien and prominent local politician William Price of Black River Falls, Spaulding sought to delay the removal through a variety of tactics. Beginning in 1873, he met directly with Governor Cadwallader Washburn, wrote to President Ulysses S. Grant, and enlisted support among county residents for nonremoval in the form of written petitions presented to the Wisconsin Legislature and the US Congress. In addition, Spaulding traveled to Washington, DC, to meet directly with federal leaders and went to Nebraska to inspect the region, ultimately arguing that it was unfit for the Ho-Chunk.[21] This position put him at odds with many of his contemporaries.[22]

As envisioned by aggressive proponents who wished to push out all Indigenous people living in the state, the Ho-Chunk removals failed. After nearly forty exhausting years, the resilience and fierce stubbornness of the Ho-Chunk people and the creative agency of their leaders ultimately proved successful in halting future removals. That several non-Native individuals like Spaulding acted as mediators in that effort adds another layer to the story. In 1875, the US government extended the provisions of the 1862 Homestead Act to Indigenous people, making land claims available to "any Indian who was a head of family, twenty-one years old, and had abandoned tribal relations."[23] The Ho-Chunks' ability to meet the latter requirement was ironically made feasible by the lack of a reservation within the state of Wisconsin; it was easier for Indigenous people who did not live on a reservation to claim they had left tribal connections behind. That this law had up to this point been used as justification for that same group's displacement reveals a tacit admission of failure on the part of state and federal authorities. As historian Stephen Kantrowitz asserts, the complexities of land ownership and disavowal of tribal ties created confusion for all parties, and the constitutional status of Ho-Chunk people

remained elusive, confined within the assimilationist paradigm of the late nineteenth century even as Ho-Chunk people held on to the sovereignty of the Ho-Chunk Nation.[24] While far from an equitable resolution, the 1875 Indian Homestead Act, further solidified by the US legislature in 1881, enabled more than six hundred Ho-Chunk families to secure forty-acre homesteads east of Black River Falls and across fourteen counties in Wisconsin, where descendants remain today.[25]

These Indians I have known personally for 34 years and believe them to be honest and that they tell the truth. . . . Now what these Indians desire, and what any good citizen within my acquaintance, and that is by no means limited, is to be fairly dealt with, paid what they are justly and legally entitled to.[26]

—Jacob Spaulding, letter to Ulysses S. Grant, 1873

At its core, studying history should lead to an enriched appreciation of the diverse stories that comprise the American mosaic, including greater empathy for those whose stories have been largely ignored. And while historians attempt to formulate a reasoned reconstruction of the past, we are often left with a dimly lit version of events.[27] As we honor the tentative evidence that textual sources offer in Spaulding's story, we must also remain open to the inherent silences in the record, "unfathomably deep" silences of pain, fear, and exclusion emanating from a people experiencing injustice. Historian Greg Dening referred to this as the application of "creative imagination," a necessary part of the process if we hope to arrive at an interpretation of history that recognizes the European Americans who settled the land and those who, like the Ho-Chunk, were forcefully dispossessed of the land by the US federal and state authorities.[28]

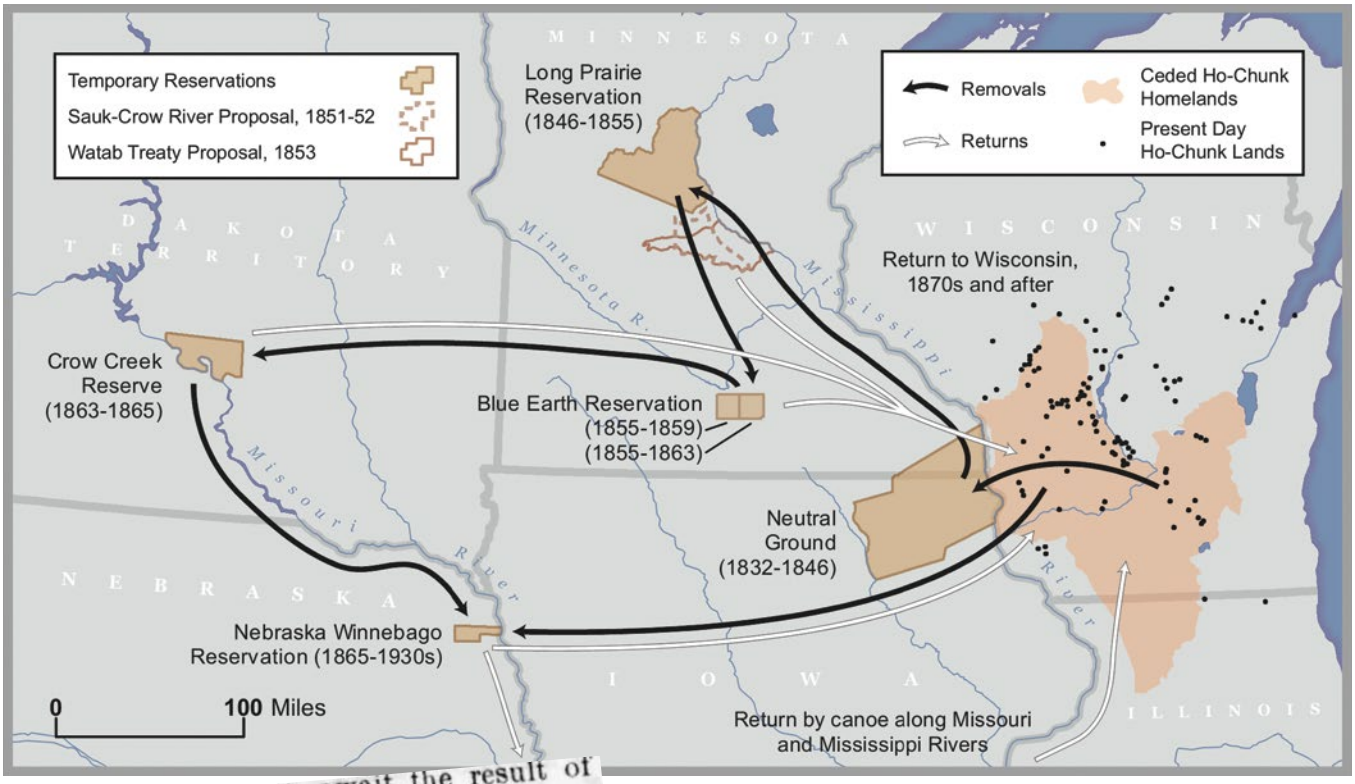
Additionally, Spaulding's relationships with various Ho-Chunk individuals and advocacy of the Ho-Chunk Nation during the final years of his life provides a good example of what Sigurður Magnússon refers to as microhistory, an approach to social and cultural history that focuses on individual counternarratives that challenge commonly accepted versions of the past.[29] Read through this lens, Spaulding's actions opposing the removals add nuance to our understanding of the complex relationships between Euro-American settlers and Indigenous people in this period, making him somewhat of an outlier. Yet this must be understood within the context of settler colonialism—the system of power that stripped Native nations like the Ho-Chunk of their homeland, allowing settlers like Spaulding to purchase land and use it for their own benefit.[30]

Throughout my research, I hoped to find a clearer line between the beginning and end of Spaulding's story, a defining event to explain his seeming change of heart from outward ambivalence to the situation of the Ho-Chunk to advocating on their behalf. Because that clear line is elusive, however, we are left with the complicated reality that Spaulding, as one of the founders of Black River Falls, was complicit in the removal policies he later tried to resolve. At least on the surface, his earnest efforts on the Ho-Chunk's behalf during the latter years of his life leave us wondering. What motivated Spaulding to take on this cause? Why did he dedicate so much time and effort to resisting the juggernaut of government-led removal efforts? The answers are complicated, requiring creative imagination.

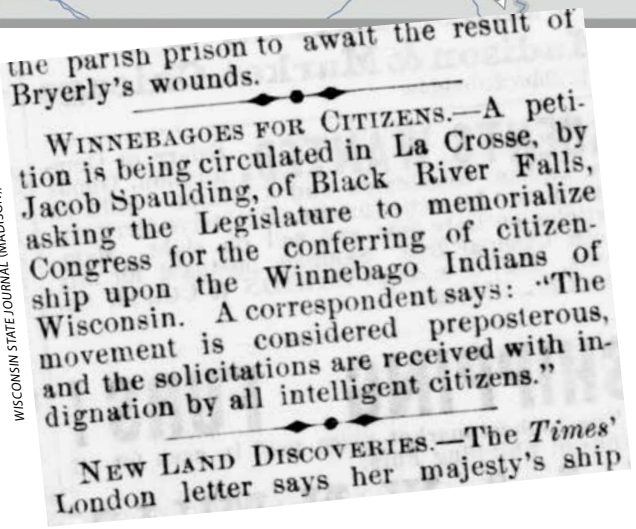
One way to understand Spaulding is to place him in the context of the nineteenth-century spiritual movement known as the Second Great Awakening and the race-related debates that took place during the Civil War era and beyond. Arguments surrounding Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act of 1830, for example, illustrate the impact of Christian activism in the public square. Motivated by what they viewed as a repudiation of the founding ideals of the Republic, Senator Theodore Frelinghuysen, missionary Jeremiah Evarts, and social activist Catherine Beecher fiercely opposed the law and feared the devastating impact it would have on Native people. Such non-Native dissenters of the period stubbornly stand in the way of those who today wish to minimize the impact of the removals or apologize for those that engineered them.[31] Spaulding's reform-oriented contemporaries included Catherine Beecher's sister Harriet Beecher Stowe, William Lloyd Garrison, and Susan B. Anthony, all members of the so-called Transcendental Generation. Coming of age during a spiritual awakening, these idealistic young people reached their elder years fighting moral battles against a variety of injustices.[32]

Though I could find no clear evidence of religious motivation on Spaulding's part, it is worth noting that J. M. Gatchell, a Universalist clergyman, presided over his funeral. With roots in early nineteenth-century New York, the Universalist Church was associated with social reform movements of the period. In eulogizing Spaulding, Gatchell clearly highlighted Spaulding's humanitarian concern for his Ho-Chunk neighbors.[33] In addition, during the latter years of Spaulding's life, which coincided with the final removal period, contentious debates about Black citizenship rumbled in Congress and within state legislatures. The correlation between Black and Native experiences following the Civil War was not lost on northern Congressmen. Some who spoke against Ho-Chunk removals in Wisconsin were active in the abolitionist movement prior to the Civil War, and it is possible that Spaulding shared their sentiments.[34] Finally, and notably, it was in this atmosphere in 1881 that Helen Hunt Jackson published her classic expose, *A Century of Dishonor*, five years after Spaulding's death and the same year that Ho-Chunk resisters gained homesteads in Wisconsin. Jackson's scathing indictment of US federal Indian policy, sent at her expense to every member of Congress, laid bare the atrocious treatment of Native people.[35]

Ho-Chunk Removals, 1832–1874



MAP BY COLE SUTTON



the parish prison to await the result of Bryerly's wounds.

WINNEBAGOES FOR CITIZENS.—A petition is being circulated in La Crosse, by Jacob Spaulding, of Black River Falls, asking the Legislature to memorialize Congress for the conferring of citizenship upon the Winnebago Indians of Wisconsin. A correspondent says: "The movement is considered preposterous, and the solicitations are received with indignation by all intelligent citizens."

NEW LAND DISCOVERIES.—The *Times'* London letter says her majesty's ship

WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL (MADISON), DECEMBER 28, 1874

Due to Jacob Spaulding's numerous interactions with US federal authorities during the final removal episode, it is reasonable to assume that he was aware of the humanitarian debates regarding the treatment of Native people. But his reasons for fighting removal were likely more complex and personal, influenced by more than thirty years of interaction with Ho-Chunk tribal members. As a business owner, Spaulding interacted with Ho-Chunk people as a matter of daily commerce and certainly profited from their presence in the region. In a letter from Spaulding to President Grant in 1873, we learn that Ho-Chunk men "worked in the pineries" and that Spaulding applauded Ho-Chunk contributions to the local economy, primarily through the sale of berries and other products.[36] His critics charged Spaulding with exploiting the Native people for economic gain, something that no doubt did occur throughout frontier Wisconsin.[37]

Nevertheless, I am pursuaded that economic motives were not the driving force in Spaulding's case. We learn from Spaulding's obituary that Ho-Chunk people saved his life during his early years in the Wisconsin Territory, although no details are offered.[38] Based on the dangers that Spaulding and others encountered as they came into the Black River Valley, this seems entirely plausible, and that Spaulding reacted with gratitude is not surprising. We also have clear evidence that Spaulding associated with Ho-Chunk individuals on a personal level, traveling with them on trips to Nebraska and Washington, DC. on their behalf, as well as inviting them into his home. One such interaction that bears mention is the relationship between Spaulding and William and Betsy Thunder, Ho-Chunk healers who were well known in the region. Both were guests of Spaulding, along with Old Winneshiek, on several occasions.[39] In 1859, the Thunders were credited with saving the life of John H. Mills, the infant son of Hugh and Mary Mills, when he contracted diphtheria. The episode, recounted in a family letter, provides a window into one relationship between Native and non-Native people within a frontier community. John Mills eventually married Alice Jones, Jacob Spaulding's granddaughter.[40] The grateful Hugh Mills, for his part, later joined Spaulding

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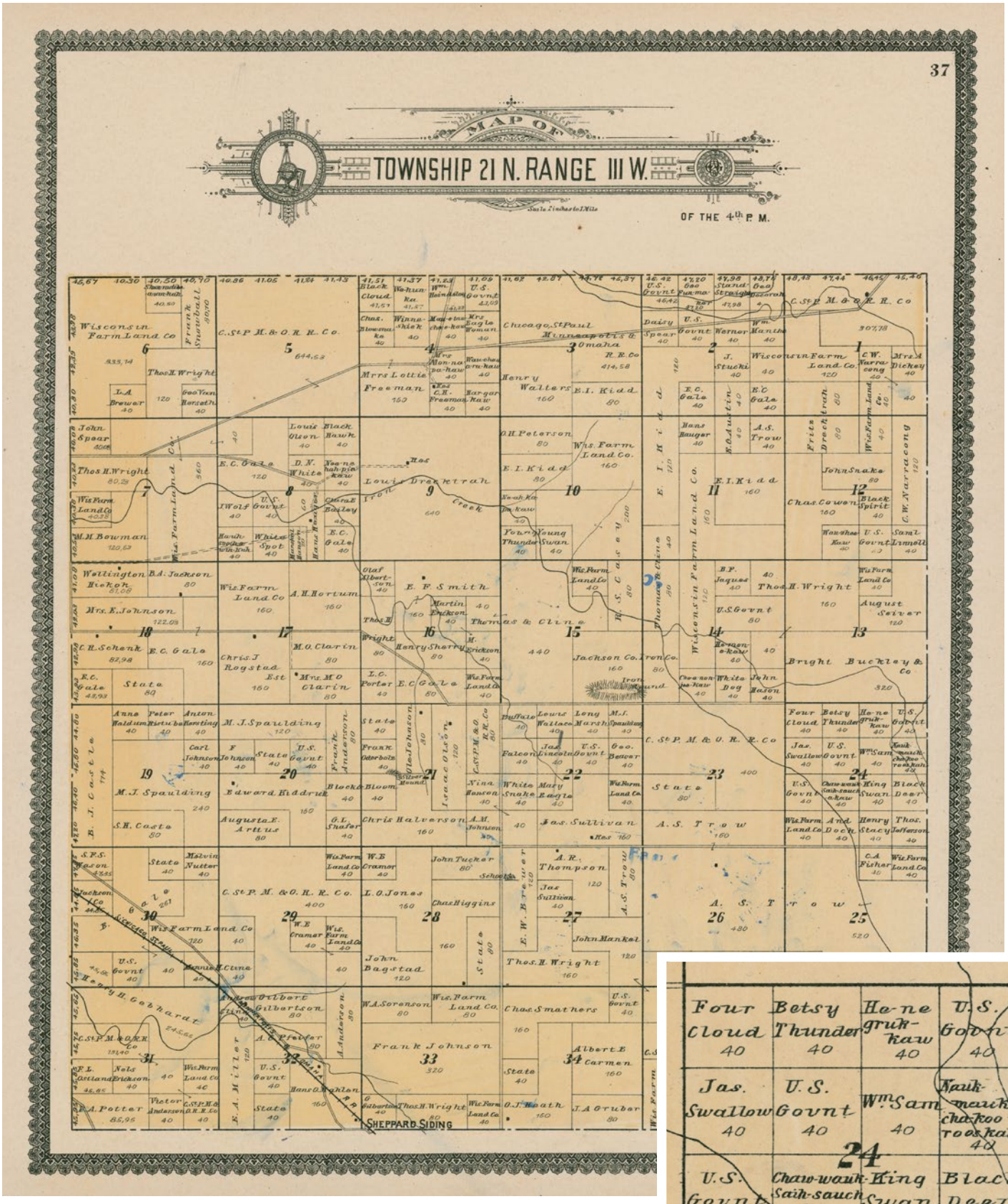
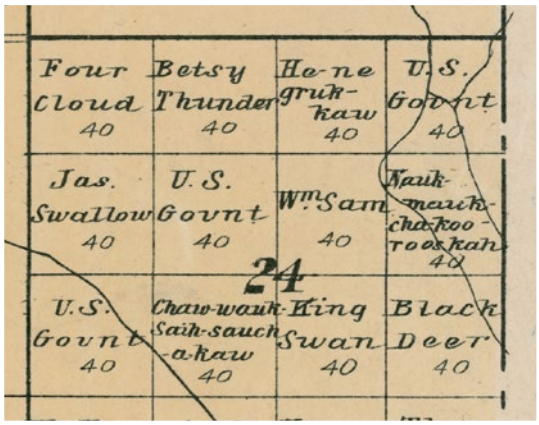
Above left: After changes were made to the Homestead Act in 1875, many more Ho-Chunk settled in or near Black River Falls. Some continued to wear traditional clothing while others dressed in nontraditional clothing. In this ca. 1900 studio photograph by Charles Van Schaick, George Monegar (EwaOnaGinKah) stands behind two women identified as relatives of Ho-Chunk tribal members John Stacy and George Lowe. **Above right:** Ho-Chunk healer Betsy Thunder, photographed by Van Schaick in 1895, was an acquaintance of Spaulding and visited his home on many occasions.

and Henry Lee in urging Ho-Chunk people who relocated to Nebraska to return to Wisconsin, assuring them there would be no further removals and that they would "get their annuity and a reservation in Wisconsin."[41] Such personal connections provide clues to Spaulding's willingness to circulate petitions among county residents in support of the Ho-Chunk people during the 1870s removal crisis. Despite intense criticism from state and local officials due to his persistent agitation, he apparently had the credibility to sway hundreds of Jackson County residents to offer their support of the Ho-Chunk people. At one point, in fact, federal and military authorities investigated reports from Assistant Removal Agent Phydelus Poole that citizens in Black River Falls were organizing armed resistance to the removal.[42]

In his book *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America,* Dartmouth historian Colin Calloway suggests that the clash of cultures occurring in frontier America produced complex societies and that "the mingling and mixing of peoples produced new kinds of people and societies different from what had existed in North America and in Europe. . . . The new societies of North America were ethnically and tribally mixed."[43] Frontier communities with adjacent Native Nations like Black River Falls illustrate Calloway's assertion. In 1870, for example, it would not have been unusual to hear multiple languages spoken within the daily commerce, including English, Ho-Chunk, German, Norwegian, and Bohemian. Photographs and documentary evidence provide a glimpse of the environment.[44] We must try to imagine that complicated world through the experiences of the various actors, including Spaulding, Old Winneshiek, and Betsy Thunder. Though it is hard to fathom owing to the inherent tragedy of the removal period, erstwhile enemies surprisingly found areas of accommodation in a fragile middle space between their separate worlds.

Throughout my research I have been wary of overromanticizing Spaulding's role in fighting for the right of Ho-Chunk people to stay in Wisconsin. Clearly, however, Spaulding's perceptions changed between his arrival in 1839 and his death thirty-seven years later. And even though it is tempting to apply twenty-first century sensibilities concerning race relations to a long-ago pioneer and community founder,





Plat map of Jackson County, Wisconsin, ca. 1875, showing the land holdings and allotments held by both white settlers and Ho-Chunk tribal members. Often, allotments were grouped together so that several Ho-Chunk were neighbors. Allotments were marked with their acreage, most often forty acres. Those marked "U.S. Govnt" were not yet claimed. The land belonging to the Spaulding family in squares 19 and 20 makes up 360 acres.

the weight of historical evidence overwhelmingly supports the brutal facts of the removal story. That Ho-Chunk people were forced from their ancestral lands and faced unjust and negligent treatment by state and federal authorities is beyond dispute, and their stubborn survival and resilience remains an important part of the Nation's modern collective memory. Nevertheless, we are left with that image of forty Ho-Chunk men leading that impressive funeral procession up the hill in 1876. Their powerful presence and silent witness within the story capture a part of our past that seems to have been hidden from view, that of Native and Euro-American people coexisting, albeit tenuously, in and around frontier communities. It is an American story worthy of further exploration.

Notes

1. Little Elk (Hoowanecka), addressing treaty commissioners in 1829 in Prairie du Chien, quoted in Caleb Atwater, *Remarks Made on a Tour to Prairie du Chien* (Columbus, OH: Isaac N. Whiting, 1831), 119. The 1829 treaty represented the first of three land cessions by the Ho-Chunk Nation to the US government.
2. Spaulding remarried twice after the death of his first wife, Nancy Jane Stickney.
3. "The Funeral Services of the Late Jacob Spaulding," *Wisconsin Independent* (Viroqua, WI), February 2, 1875.
4. "Jacob Spaulding—Founder of Black River Falls," *Banner Journal* (Black River Falls, WI), June 28, 1939. The Masonic Lodge #74 of Free and Accepted Masons was chartered in 1856 and was an important part of the community's social fabric. Its funeral rituals would have been familiar to local residents.
5. "Story of Old Lumbering Days," *La Crosse Tribune*, n.d., rep. in *Augusta (Wisconsin) Eagle-Times*, January 9, 1930.
6. The Algonquin people referred to their Ho-Chunk neighbors as the Winnebago, a term meaning "people of the stinky waters," referencing the area near Green Bay where Ho-Chunk people lived. The French picked up on what they heard and spelled it "Ouenibegous," and the term came into common usage. The word "Hochungra" means "people of the sacred voice," or "people of the parent speech," and is what Ho-Chunk people called themselves. In 1994, with the adoption of their revised Constitution, the Wisconsin Winnebago returned to the use of the term "Ho-Chunk." The Nebraska Winnebago, a separate federally-recognized nation, retained the use of "Winnebago." For more information on the Ho-Chunk Nation, see https://ho-chunknation.com/about/.
7. The term *settler colonialism* refers to "a distinct type of colonialism that functions through the replacement of indigenous populations with an invasive settler society that, over time, develops a distinctive identity and sovereignty." For a more complete discussion, see https://globalsocialtheory.org/concepts/settler-colonialism/.
8. "Story of Old Lumbering Days."
9. A. T. Andreas, ed., *History of Northern Wisconsin* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881), 397.
10. Andreas, *History of Northern Wisconsin*, 396–98.
11. Born in New York in 1834, Dudley Spaulding spent sixty years in Black River Falls and ultimately overshadowed his father in terms of the breadth and depth of his imprint on the city. The younger Spaulding died in 1900.
12. Spaulding died while visiting with Ojibwe leaders near Worcester, Wisconsin. The nature of his visit remains unclear, but we may surmise it had something to do with his lumber operations.
13. Amy Lonetree, "Visualizing Native Survivance: Encounters with My Ho-Chunk Ancestors in the Family Photographs of Charles Van Schaick," in Tom Jones et al., eds., *People of the Big Voice: Photographs of Ho-Chunk Families by Charles Van Schaick, 1879–1942* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2011), 18.
14. Lawrence W. Onsager, *The Removal of the Winnebago Indians from Wisconsin in 1873–74,* (Master's thesis, Loma Linda University, 1985), accessed at https://works.bepress.com/lawrence_onsager/46/. Onsager's thesis provides a detailed account of the 1837 treaty, including an analysis of its most controversial aspects. See also Lynne Heasley, *A Thousand Pieces of Paradise: Landscape and Property in the Kickapoo Valley* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 173–194, and Patty Loew, *Indian Nations of Wisconsin: Histories of Endurance and Renewal*, 2nd ed. (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2013), 49–51.
15. Mark Diedrich, *Ho-Chunk Chiefs: Winnebago Leadership in an Era of Crisis* (Rochester, MN: Coyote Books, 2001), 113–125. Dandy objected to the controversial treaty negotiations in 1837–38 and refused to travel to Washington, DC, as part of the negotiation entourage. His resistance to removal continued until his death in 1869.
16. Onsager, *The Removal of the Winnebago Indians*, 130.
17. Grant Arndt, *Ho-Chunk Pow Wows and the Politics of Tradition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 37–40.
18. Minnie Jones Taylor, *History of Black River Falls to 1940*, 8–9, unpublished manuscript available in the Jackson County History Room at the Black River Falls Public Library.
19. Onsager, *The Removal of the Winnebago Indians*, 103–118.
20. Loew, *Indian Nations of Wisconsin*, 50.
21. Onsager, *The Removal of the Winnebago Indians*, 204–205; Jacob Spaulding to U. S. Grant, September 1, 1873, M234, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Roll 944, Microfilm copy, Record Group 75, National Archives, Washington, DC.
22. Editorial, *Badger State Banner*, February 7, 1874. Spaulding and other white opponents of the removal were accused of seeking to profit from the Ho-Chunk people, "fleec[ing] them out of what little money they may happen to have," and further arguing that "nine-tenths of the people in northwestern Wisconsin favor their removal."
23. Onsager, *The Removal of the Winnebago Indians*, 177.
24. Stephen Kantrowitz in "'Not Quite Constitutionalized': The Meanings of 'Civilization' and the Limits of Native American Citizenship," in Gregory P. Downs and Kate Masur, eds., *The World the Civil War Made* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2015), 75–105.
25. Loew, *Indian Nations of Wisconsin*, 50–52. See also Libby Rose Tronnes, *Corn Moon Migrations: Ho-Chunk Belonging, Removal, and Return in the Early Nineteenth-Century Western Great Lakes* (Dissertation, UW–Madison, 2017), 419–420.
26. Spaulding to Grant.
27. David Blight, introduction to *Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory, and the American Civil War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002). Blight provides an excellent analysis of the confluence of history and memory, and I am drawing on his analysis here.
28. Greg Dening's discussion of "creative imagination" is richly explored in his essay, "Empowering Imaginations," *Contemporary Pacific* 9, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 419–29. See Tronnes, *Corn Moon Migrations*, 21–22, for further discussion of Dening within the context of the Black Hawk War and the challenges of Ho-Chunk visibility related to contemporary understanding of the war.
29. Sigurdur Maggnusson, "What is Microhistory?" *History News Network* website, accessed at https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/23720.
30. Settler colonialism is a global phenomenon that involved many nations, including Cananda, the United States, Australia, and South Ameria as prime examples. See also note 7.
31. The debates surrounding the passage of the Indian Removal Act of 1830 illuminate the various divisions within the non-Native population in the first third of the nineteenth century. The final vote in Congress was surprisingly close. See Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848* (Oxford: University Press, 2007), 348–352.
32. William Strauss and Neil Howe, *Generations: The History of America's Future, 1584–2069* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1991), 195–205. Reform movements from this period included abolition, women's suffrage, treatment of the mentally ill, worker's rights, and temperance.
33. Jacob Spaulding obituary, *Badger State Banner*, January 29, 1876.
34. Onsager, *The Removal of the Winnebago Indians*, 137–40. Prairie du Chien businessman Horace Beach and Congressman J. Allen Barber of Lancaster worked with Ho-Chunk leaders during this period and had been vocal abolitionists prior to and during the Civil War.
35. Helen Hunt Jackson, *A Century of Dishonor* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1881). Jackson highlighted seven Nations in her copious book: the Delaware, the Cheyenne, the Nez Perce, the Sioux, the Ponca, the Winnebago (Ho-Chunk), and the Cherokee.
36. Spaulding to Grant.
37. Mark Wyman, *The Wisconsin Frontier*, 218.
38. Spaulding obituary, *Badger State Banner*, January 29, 1876
39. Taylor, *History of Black River Falls to 1940*, 8–9. Taylor's account of the relationship of the Thunders and Old Winneshiek to Spaulding is corroborated by my interview of Gene Krohn, a descendant of Spaulding who lives in Black River Falls, August 15, 2018, in Black River Falls, Wisconsin.
40. Gene Krohn interview. Among other things, Dr. Krohn shared a copy of a family letter chronicling the John Mills healing story.
41. Onsager, *The Removal of the Winnebago Indians*, 270–71.
42. Onsager, *The Removal of the Winnebago Indians*, 226–27.
43. Colin Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1997), 182.
44. Tom Jones, "A Ho-Chunk Photographer Looks at Charles Van Schaick," in Jones et al., eds., *People of the Big Voice*, 23–31.

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