



## History of Washington and Ozaukee County 1881

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For a period of seven years, from 1854 to 1861, the people of Ozaukee County, all past grievances being at an end, set about in earnest to advance their interests. Improvements of all kinds were begun and carried to completion...Affairs remained in this tranquil and prosperous state, nothing transpiring to mar the good feeling, until the spirits of the people were ruffled by the warlike sounds of 1861. This, indeed was a surprise, especially to the foreign-born citizens, many of whom had left their native lands to escape the demands for military service so common in European countries. To have similar vexations thrust upon them in a land where they had thought to find only peace and good-will, was indeed a new phase of American life, which, as yet, had been kept in the background as far as they were concerned...puzzling questions (arose) for the Luxemburgers and Germans to solve. Their information...was limited...few of them could read English at that time, and the German papers most generally read by them contained articles of such a rebellious character that, had they been published in the English language, would have been silenced by the authorities...they shielded themselves (the newspapers) behind a foreign language as champions of slavery, suggesting to their readers that a resistance to the draft was by no means a crime. To this source may be attributed one of the principal causes leading to the feeling of opposition...which finally culminated in an outbreak known as the "Draft Riot" which took place in Port Washington November 10, 1862. As near as can be ascertained, the open opposition to the draft was brought about more from the manner in which it was conducted than any desire on the part of the foreigners to oppose the will of the Government...When it became known that a draft was to be made in the county...a meeting of the prominent citizens of Port Washington and adjoining towns was held, at which the foreigners were largely represented. A.M. Blair was thought to be the man best fitted for the office of Draft Commissioner and Dr. H. W. Stillman that of Examining Surgeon. A petition was circulated and largely signed...requesting the Governor to appoint these two men to the offices...The petition was sent to Gov. Salomon, but he appointed William A. Pors, Commissioner (and) Dr. S. Hartwig, of Cedarburg, a particular friend of Pors' (as) surgeon. ...Considerable dissatisfaction was engendered by the manner in which the examinations were made, many claiming that position and wealth had great weight in procuring exemptions. This feeling grew stronger as the work progressed until the lists were completed and the day appointed for the draft was at hand. Then public sentiment burst forth in violent opposition, assuming the shape of a lawless mob...(On) November 10 Mr. Pors...repaired to the court house and was about to begin the draft, when he was seized by the crown, which had congregated to the number of nearly a thousand, variously armed, and inflamed by whisky. The rolls were destroyed, and Pors was dragged to the door and thrown down the court house steps, sustaining considerable injury. It was not until he had been pelted severely with rocks that he made his escape by running to the post office...and concealing himself in the cellar. The rioters followed to the door, and failing to gain entrance, proceeded to his residence, a handsome well-furnished dwelling, and destroyed furniture, pictures, and everything else moveable, completely demolishing the interior. By this time the mob had become

furious, and seemed bent on the destruction of both life and property. Dividing into squads, one division proceeded to the store of John Droecker and compelled him to paint them a banner with the words, "No Draft." With this motto floating to the breeze, they continued their wanton course, destroying property as they went. The residences of H. H. Hunt, H. W. Stillman, A. M. Blair, J. C. Loomis and one of two others met with a fate similar to that of Pors. The anti-draft faction, being composed principally of Catholics, had got the order of Masons mixed up in the affair, and a general onslaught was proposed on any and all persons known to be connected with that order. At this juncture the mob had become divided on the question of destroying property, the better and more intelligent portion being opposed to any such lawlessness, while the rougher and more ignorant were still bent on anything that would satisfy their imagined grievances. This latter faction, having made the rounds of the saloons, and become crazed by drink, rushed up and down the streets yelling, "No draft! Burn the public buildings," etc. On one of their raids they met L. Towsley, a lawyer...They pelted him with stones, beat him severely about the head with clubs, and doubtless would have killed him had it not been for the expostulations of Alexander Zastrow, proprietor of the American House...John R. Bohan, editor of the Ozaukee County Advertiser...was collared by that portion of the mob opposed to the destruction of property, and compelled to print a motto in large letters, "No draft; no destruction of property." This compulsory piece of job printing came near costing (Bohan) two months imprisonment at Madison...The rioters now had possession of a four-pound cannon, which had been used ...for firing Fourth of July salutes. This they loaded with the only ball that could be found, dragged it to the wharf, mounted it on a pier, and bid defiance to Uncle Sam or any force he might send to arrest them....Pors procured a carriage and escaped by the lake shore to Milwaukee. Information was telegraphed to Gov. Salomon, who immediately ordered Col. Lewis...to send a detachment of troops to quell the riot. Eight companies...were dispatched by steamer...(a portion of which disembarked at Ulao) and marched to the rear of the...village, while the remainder were landed at the pier where the riot existed, thus surrounding the scene of disturbance, and, at the same time, preventing the escape of the rioters. The mob was soon dispersed....About 120 arrests were made. Prisoners were at first taken to Camp Washburn, in Milwaukee, and were shortly afterward removed to Camp Randall, at Madison...after a confinement of several months (most) were informally released. Gov. Salomon issued a proclamation to the citizens of Ozaukee County, warning them of the danger and folly of further resistance, after which there was no further disturbance...Had it not been for egregious blunders made by a few unscrupulous leaders, the riot of 1862 would not have taken place....Notwithstanding these serious disturbances, the war record of Ozaukee County will compare favorably with that of larger counties.