

though entertaining a high opinion of its ultimate usefulness. In the Fall he returned, with Mr. Kilbourn, to Cincinnati, and soon entered into a contract with the Surveyor General to survey for the Government, towns 7, 8 and 9 of ranges 18, 19 and 20, and town 7, Range 21, being the present towns of Delafield, Pewaukee, Brookfield, Wauwatosa, Merton, Lisbon, Menomonee, Erin, Richfield and Germantown in the present counties of Milwaukee, Waukesha and Washington. In January, 1836, he started his party to execute the contract. Their route was down the Ohio and up the Wabash, by steamer, to Lafayette, Ind., and thence with teams. He proceeded across the country on horseback, meeting the party at Lafayette, and from that point accompanied them. In this party came George P. Delaplaine, who had been strongly recommended to Mr. Vliet by General W. H. Harrison, subsequently President of the United States.

The survey was completed during the season of 1836. In the Fall Mr. Vliet returned to Cincinnati by way of the lakes to Cleveland, the Ohio Canal to Portsmouth, and down the Ohio River, to inspect the route for the removal of his family. In the Spring of 1837 he went to Dubuque, and began the laying out of that town site, for which, together with four other towns on the Mississippi, and Mineral Point, in Wisconsin, he had taken a contract of the Government. What at the present time would be called a "ring" had been formed with reference to the towns on the Mississippi, and they wished to control the survey and procure an order suspending his work, which was done. This suspension and annulling of his contract entailed upon him a considerable loss, for which he obtained but partial and tardy indemnity.

Returning to Cincinnati he closed up his affairs there, and on the 25d of August, 1837, started with his family for their new home in Milwaukee. Retracing the route he had followed the previous Autumn, and making close connections, he arrived in Milwaukee Bay on the evening of September 5, and came ashore the next morning. After a few days at the Bellevue House (on the northeast corner of Broadway and Wisconsin street), during which time he had built an addition to his house, he moved into his home for the Winter, being a log house on the southwest slope of the hill in Schlitz's (formerly Quentin's) Park. The timber had been sufficiently cut away between this hill and the edge of the bluffs that encircled the lowlands of the town to demonstrate that the Lake would be visible from the summit of the hill; but, unfortunately, the splendid grove of large maples that originally covered the hill had also been girdled.

For many years Mr. Vliet lived in Milwaukee, respected and loved, but avoiding any act which would tend to bring him into public life, though he was a member of the first Constitutional Convention, in 1846. As the city grew, he was in hearty sympathy with all public improvements that tended to build up his adopted home. He died a quiet and painless death, August 5, 1877.

HARVEY BIRCHARD, one of the early settlers of Milwaukee, was born in the Town of Bridgeport, Conn., in 1800; received his education in the schools of his native county, and afterwards for several years was in business with an elder brother, in Carmel, Putnam County, N. Y. Subsequently he made his residence in Philadelphia, where he met his friend, Mr. Welsch, and became largely interested in the traveling menagerie business, being a member of the celebrated firms of Welsch, Birchard & Co. and Welsch, Howe & Co. During his connection with this business, he made several voyages to Europe to receive elephants and other animals for the caravans in which he was interested. He imported the first polar bear and the first horned horse that were ever exhibited alive in this country.

He came to Milwaukee in 1838, in company with Lewis and Harrison Ludington, with whom he formed the co-partnership firm of Ludington, Birchard & Co., and opened a general store on the northwest corner of Wisconsin and West Water streets, in a building occupying the site on which Ludington's Block now stands. The firm was successful, the Ludingtons continuing the business established by themselves and Birchard till 1851, when they voluntarily gave up that business. In 1840 he retired from the business, and with his available means, perhaps \$20,000, which was considered a large amount in those days, commenced dealing in real estate and money-lending in the city and surrounding country. He followed this business till the time of his death, and accumulated a large property. During the later years of his life he had commenced building on his lots, which he would doubtless have continued had he lived. His work completed in that direction was as follows: Birchard's Hall, corner of Grand avenue and Spring street, rebuilt by him in 1860, and again rebuilt by his heirs in 1880, now a part of the Plankinton House, of uniform height and style of architecture; five brick tenements, built in 1858, on north side of Grand avenue, between Eighth and Ninth streets; six brick stores, built in 1862, on the west side of West Water street, a few doors south of its intersection with Grand avenue. Prior to the building above mentioned, he had built a large wooden dwelling still standing on the lot at northeast corner of Ninth street and Grand avenue.

Mr. Birchard was a man of marked eccentricity of character and an independence that amounted almost to contempt for the opinions of the outside world. This forced his faults, which were not peculiar to him alone, into undue prominence in the eyes of strangers, from whom unfortunately his palliating virtues were hidden. After the lapse of many years, his old partners and intimate friends speak of him with a kindly affection which bespeaks for him the possession of those higher and endurable traits of character which alone could keep his memory green so many years in the hearts of those that knew him long and well. Mr. Birchard was a man of fine personal appearance, with a remarkably intelligent face, and his appearance did not belie him, since his great business success is entirely attributable to his unerring judgment of human nature.