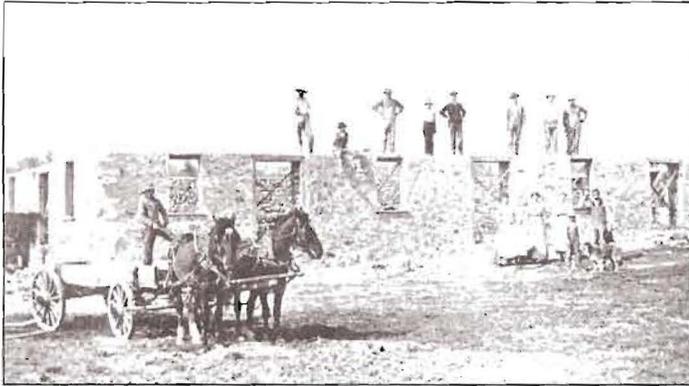


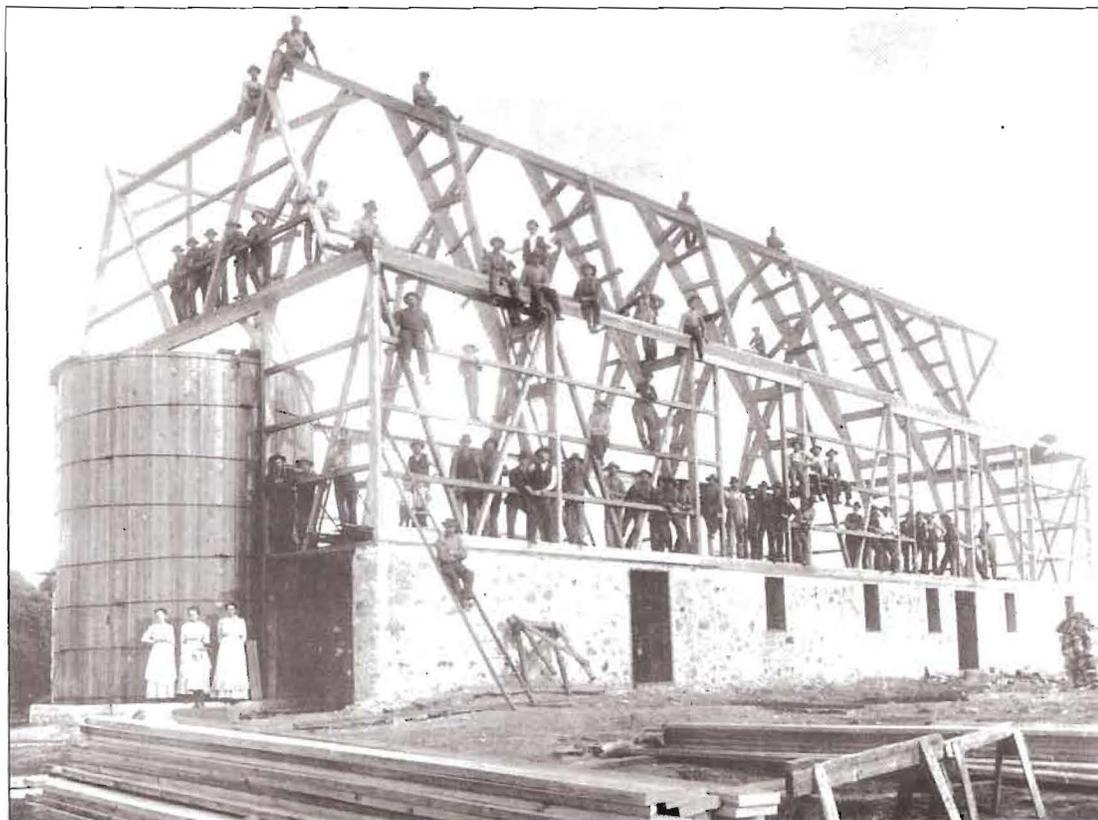
Barn Building



Building a barn foundation took about three weeks

Barn building was an important occupation in the early years of the township. A barn took approximately three weeks to build after the stone foundation was completed. The size of the crew varied between 4 to 8 men. Barns were usually built in spring before the haying season would begin. Barn builders worked from April to November and in 1914 would earn \$0.12 an hour. They worked six days a week and ten hours a day, and usually would walk to work carrying their tools.

One such barn builder was Reiny Siebert from Wayside, who started building barns and houses in 1914. He



Fred Lemke's barn

worked with Henry Wertel, Herman Siebert and Ferdinand (Nanny) Griepentrog. Between 1914 and 1930 he helped build 42 barns. Other barn builders in the area were Art Loppnow, Helmuth Ihlenfeldt, Antone Kruse and August Krause.

Some tools of the barn builder were a carpenter's axe, log hook, wooden hammer, corner chisel, dog, mallet (usually made from a large wooden knot), boring machine, broad adz, hand saw, pin iron, cross-cut saw, and slick. In the early years of barn building, beams were hewn by hand. Later all lumber was sawed, kiln dried and trimmed at Wendland's Saw Mill in Wayside.

The most exciting time came when it was time to raise the barn. All the neighbors came to help, usually around 35-45 men. Posts and beams were all marked, sections were laid out, sleepers (floor timbers) were put on first, then roof boards were temporarily put on the sleepers so the men could walk on the floor, posts were put on beams and all pins were laid down. Everything was driven together with sledge and the sections were raised using pike poles.

The day of the barn raising the neighbor women came to help prepare the meals. Long tables would be set up on the lawn filled with food to feed the hungry crew. There was always an ample supply of beer for thirsty workers.

After the barn was raised there often was a barn dance with music provided by the neighborhood musicians, playing a fiddle and accordion, etc. Reiny remembers one time in particular when the farmer asked them at 2:00 in the afternoon if they could be finished with the barn floor by evening because he wanted to have a barn dance. They finished by 8:00 and by 9:00 the barn was filled with people and music.