

As a member of the commission, he went with Samuel Chase, also of Maryland, and Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, to Canada to try to convince the Canadians to join the 13 colonies in their revolt against mother England. - - But they were not successful as our history books tell.

Charles Carroll sat on the Board of War in the Continental Congress from 1776 to '79. After the war was won, as well as the subsequent War of 1812, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, as he always signed himself, was the last surviving signer of the Declaration. He died in 1832 at the age of 95.



## “ . . . IF HE WILL ONLY QUIT DRINK . . . ”

A SESQUICENTENNIAL STORY *By Douglas T. Hennig*  
Copyright 1986



While this is a story about Andrew Schofield, a pioneer of the town of Eagle, it is necessary to include as a preface a most singular event involving Ahira R. Hinkley.

On September the 20th of 1836 Hinkley cut his initials into a tree - thereby claiming acreage in sections 11, 12 and 14 in the present town of Eagle. The land was well-watered by a spring and “. . . there was timber for a cabin. . . and clearings (oak openings) south and west provided fields for many crops without labor for clearing the lands.<sup>1</sup>”

There is considerable dispute as to whether or not Hinkley was indeed the first permanent white settler of Eagle. Few dispute the words of his companion on that occasion. “Thee is quick with thy knife, Ahira!” So said Andrew Schofield, a Quaker gentleman, in response to Hinkley’s haste; clearly the latter knew a good thing when he saw it. And so it was that Hinkley, not Schofield, came to be recognized as the pioneer settler of Eagle township.

Schofield nonetheless received his share of recognition: the 1880 *History of Waukesha County*, as a litany of “firsts” typical of the genre, cites Andrew Schofield’s house in Eagleville as the place of the first town meeting. He built a fine gristmill - the first in the county, and kept the first store in the town (1844). He is also credited with being the first Postmaster.<sup>2</sup>

“The ‘in-fair,’ held . . . in honor of the marriage of his adopted son (was) well remembered by the oldest inhabitants. On that occasion, in the autumn of 1841, nearly all of the inhabitants within a radius of six

miles were invited and were present, and were entertained with all the jolly old-time hospitality. Rachel Scofield (sic) and Andrew... did nothing by halves; and Rachel being a most excellent cook, it may be easily believed that there was fun and feasting without stint. Here the young couple sat in a corner bolt upright, with their backs against the logs, and maintained the dignity of the occasion, and received the compliments and respects of their many friends. . .<sup>3</sup> ”

In spite of all of this, Andrew Schofield was not “larger-than-life;” he was, in fact, little different from you or me in most respects. Even so, early histories rarely offer insights into the humanity of Wisconsin’s pioneer settlers.

It is true that Schofield “. . . did nothing by halves,” but not without paying a price - in terms of mental and physical health, the esteem of his neighbors, and the well-being of his family. Far greater insights into the character of this pioneer and the travails of life on the frontier are to be found in a letter from Samuel Marshall (1820-1907) to his (Marshall’s) brother:

(NOTE: Samuel Marshall was Milwaukee’s pioneer banker and founder of the Marshall & Illsley Bank. He was a Quaker, as was his old friend Andrew Schofield. His papers, including correspondence, diaries and genealogical information are preserved at the Milwaukee Area Research Center, UW-Milwaukee, Golda Meir Library.)

“Milwaukee, Wis. Oct. 27, 1847

Dear Brother:

. . . I arrived home (from Janesville) I found a letter sent in to me from Eagle ville, stating that Mr. Schofield was very sick and his head man wished me to come out; I hired a horse and buggy and got to Eagle in the afternoon, and found a sick house, Andrew, Rachel, and her sister all sick with Billious (sic) fever, the last two getting better but Andrew had been very bad and there was still some doubt of his recovery; I found that he had made no will. . . I thought that he had better have a will made and spoke to him about it. he (sic) seemed well pleased and his man and myself rode some 5 miles and got a friend of his and in the evening made one, read it to him. it would not do and on Monday morning another (was made) which was satisfactory; he would have us three as executors and I suppose we were the only ones in Wisconsin that he would have; but he is getting better and not much doubt but he will get well; I examined into his affairs as he wished, and if he will only keep on his back for a few weeks (I) think that it will be of benefit to him; we intend trying hard to get him to sell his mill and store and go to farming again, for it has been a bad thing for him. he is not at all calculated for a business man and building his mill and opening a store he had to run in debt and that worried him and to drown his sorrows he used to take too

much liquor; but until that time there was no man that stood as high as Andrew Schofield in the township of Eagle. Everyman respected him and his credit was unlimited; and that also has been an injury to him; for his word was always considered as good as his bond and any man that had money would lend it to him. it is a great pity; for he is a fine man and that his only failing; I have frequently talked with him, but he firmly believed that he did not take any (liquor) to injure him; but it was increasing on him fast; but we all hope that while he is on his sick bed and before he fully recovers he may be able to see his error and be once more Andrew Schofield; I shall use every exertion that I possibly can to get him to give his word that he will niehter (sic) touch, taste or handle the unclean thing and if he says no he will stick to it certain. . .<sup>4</sup> ”

Although financially over-extended, Schofield’s holdings were undoubtedly impressive: “Andrew has his farm of 640 (acres), mill and 80 acres, 120 in the village; land at Clinton, Madison, over 100 acres near Milwaukee. Some \$400 credited out. He had enough wheat to make 1000 barrels of flour; if he will only quit drink he can soon get out of debt. . . this is a great country for drinking liquor as the people think it keeps off the ague and so on. . .<sup>5</sup> ”

Life was not easy, even for one “that stood as high as Andrew Schofield.” For many, hard drink was seen as the only relief (albeit temporary) from an endless cycle of labor fraught with the added dangers of disease and loneliness. Such realities seldom made their way into the histories that were printed after the frontier was settled and the earliest pioneers - along with their many sorrows - had passed into memory.

<sup>1</sup>Alice Baker, *Records, Risibilities, and Ruminations Concerning the Hamlet of Jericho and the Village of Eagle* (Waukesha County Historical Society: unpublished Ms., 1962), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>*The History of Waukesha County, Wisconsin* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1880), pp. 735-736.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 737

<sup>4</sup>Letter from Samuel Marshall to his brother, Milwaukee, 27 October 1847 (Marshall Papers. Milwaukee Area Research Center; Golda Meir Library: unpublished Mss.).

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

