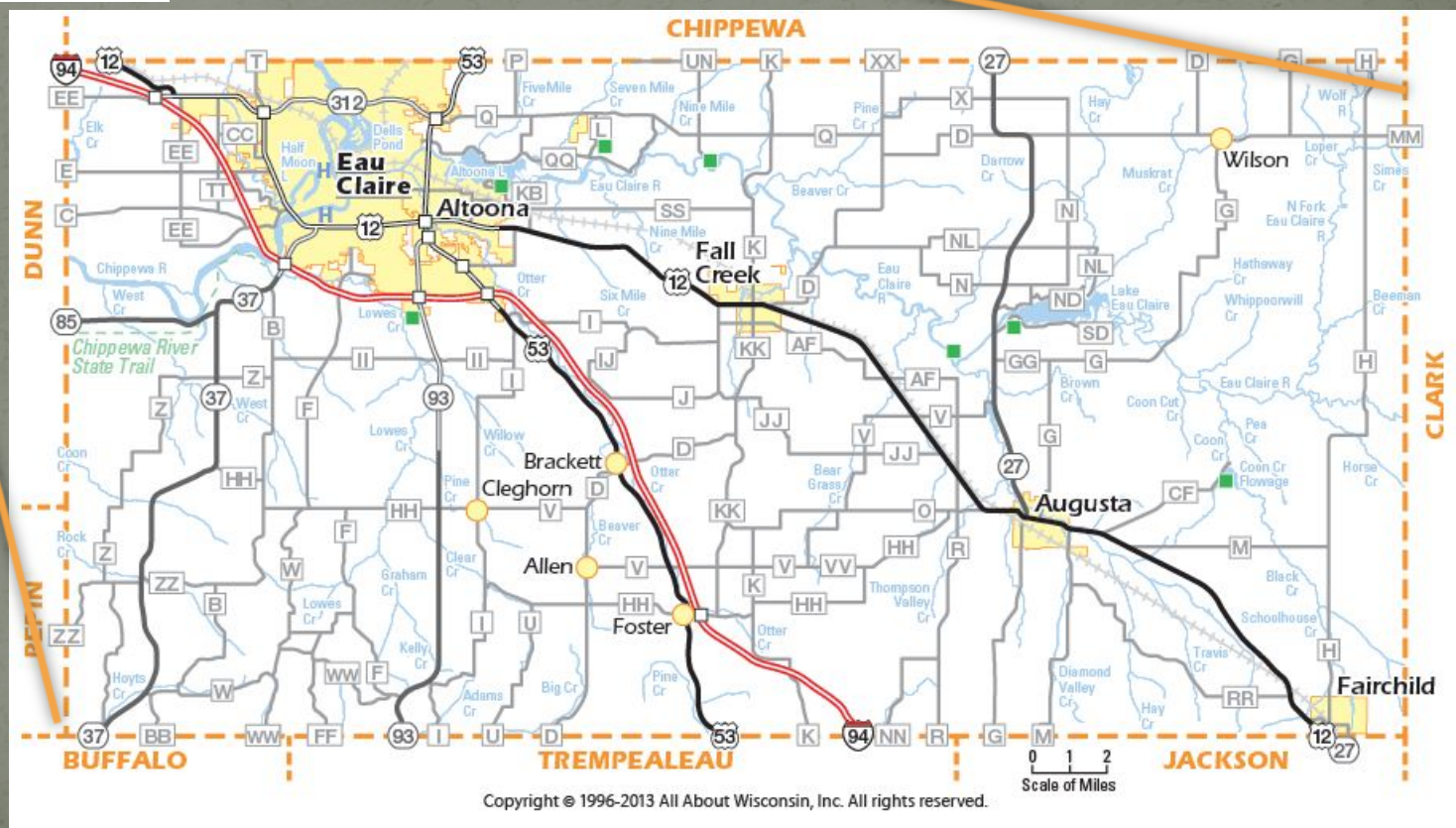


# The Public Land Survey System

An aerial photograph showing a vast, flat landscape divided into a precise grid of rectangular sections. The sections vary in shades of green and brown, indicating different land uses or vegetation. A network of thin, light-colored lines, likely roads or survey boundaries, crisscrosses the entire area, creating a clear pattern of land parcels. The perspective is from a high angle, looking down on the terrain.

Wisconsin's First Statewide Infrastructure







- Land Ordinance of 1785
  - Thomas Jefferson
  - Birth of the PLSS
  - Unique descriptions
  - Rectangular System
  - Payment for soldiers







### Creating a Patchwork Quilt

#### The Public Land Survey and the Point of Beginning

From above, southwestern Wisconsin looks like a patchwork quilt composed of neat rectangular farm fields. But it never takes you this way.

Before pioneers came westward in the 1800s, the land was owned by the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) people, who lived along nearby streams. All the began changing in the early 1820s, when southern and eastern entrepreneurs started land mining in southwestern Wisconsin.

Eventually, these newcomers all wanted the same thing—to purchase land and settle here. But they couldn't. Before they could, the Ho-Chunk had to sell their land, and the U.S. government had to survey and divide it.

In 1820, extreme pressure from land miners and the U.S. government prompted the Ho-Chunk to relinquish their land. Once done, the Public Land Survey began just one-half mile east of here at the "Point of Beginning" in 1831. The first land was sold in 1834 and by 1840, Wisconsin achieved statehood.

The "Point of Beginning" is the benchmark from which all lands in what would become Wisconsin were measured. With this benchmark in place, survey crews began laying out the first rectangular townships, each containing 36 one-mile square sections of 360 acres.

The map below shows the complete grid. It remains the foundation of our modern land system—a patchwork quilt of farm fields, towns, forests and wetlands.

#### A Surveyor's Legacy

What's getting it out from under a few decades from of Ben and Dick Bell.

Illustration of a surveyor using a theodolite to measure land.

Survey crews set posts every one-half mile using a 66-foot iron chain to measure distance. Surveyor Lucius Lyon was paid \$3 per mile, which he used to pay his crew members and to cover all expenses.

This exhibit was paid for by a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Village of Hazel Green.

### THE POINT OF BEGINNING

OFFICIAL MARKER

Late in 1831, when Wisconsin was still in Michigan Territory, Lucius Lyon, U. S. Commissioner on the survey of the northern boundary of the State of Illinois, set a post and erected a mound of earth 6 feet square at the base and 6 feet high, at a point 1/2 mile east of here to mark the intersection of that boundary and the 4th Principal Meridian. The Wisconsin public land surveys were begun here in 1832 and were completed "up north" in 1867. Lyon surveyed 16 townships in S.W. Wisconsin in 1832-33, which opened this Territory for settlement. In 1833 Michigan Territory honored this veteran surveyor by electing him their Delegate to Congress. The post and mound he erected at this point were obliterated by fence and power line construction long ago, but the point is now preserved by a new concrete surveyor's monument. Every section corner monument in the state; the boundaries of each county, city, village, township, farm and lot; the position of roads, lakes and streams, all were surveyed and mapped from this Point of Beginning.

Erected 1970

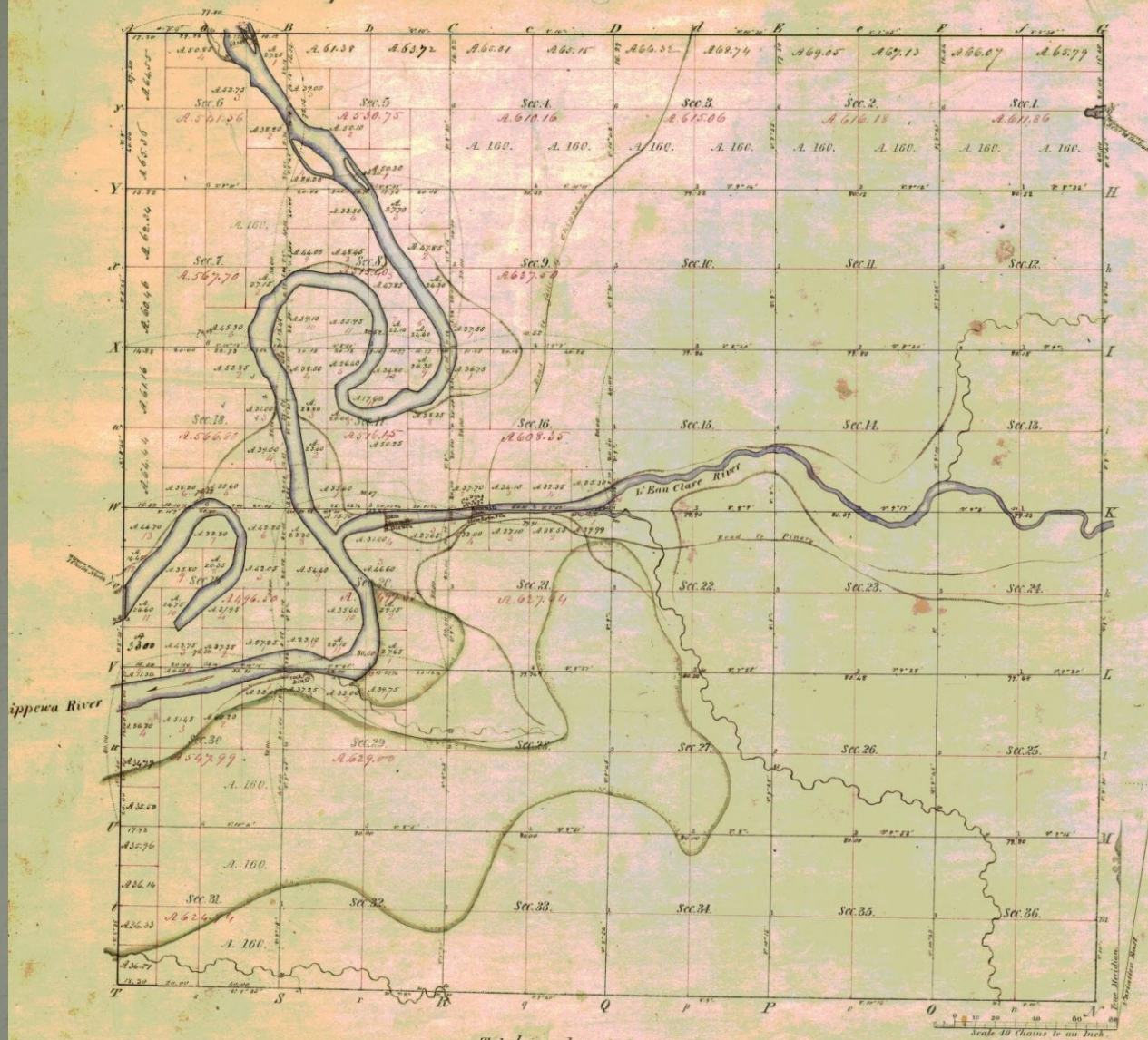


What did they leave behind?





*Township N.º 27 N., Range N.º 9 West, 4<sup>th</sup> Mer.*



|                   |                    |                            | Total number of Acres 21,850.89 |                   |      |                                                                                                        |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Survey Designated | By Whom Surveyed   | Date of Contract           | Amount of Surveys               |                   |      | When S <sup>d</sup> for and ch <sup>d</sup> in the Sur. <sup>s</sup> Gen <sup>l</sup> acc <sup>t</sup> |
| Township lines    | George C. Harris   | July 15 <sup>th</sup> 1828 | M.                              | Ch <sup>d</sup> . | Lts. |                                                                                                        |
| Subdivisions      | Alexander Anderson | July 19 <sup>th</sup> 1829 | 53.                             | 7%                | ac   | Sect. & Ch <sup>d</sup> . 1145                                                                         |
|                   |                    |                            | 82.                             | 2%                | 44   | July 2 <sup>d</sup> Aug <sup>6</sup> 1829                                                              |

The above Map of Township 12<sup>th</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> North, of Range 12<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> East of the Principal Meridian State of Wisconsin is strictly conformable to the field notes of the survey thereof on file in this Office, which have been examined and approved.

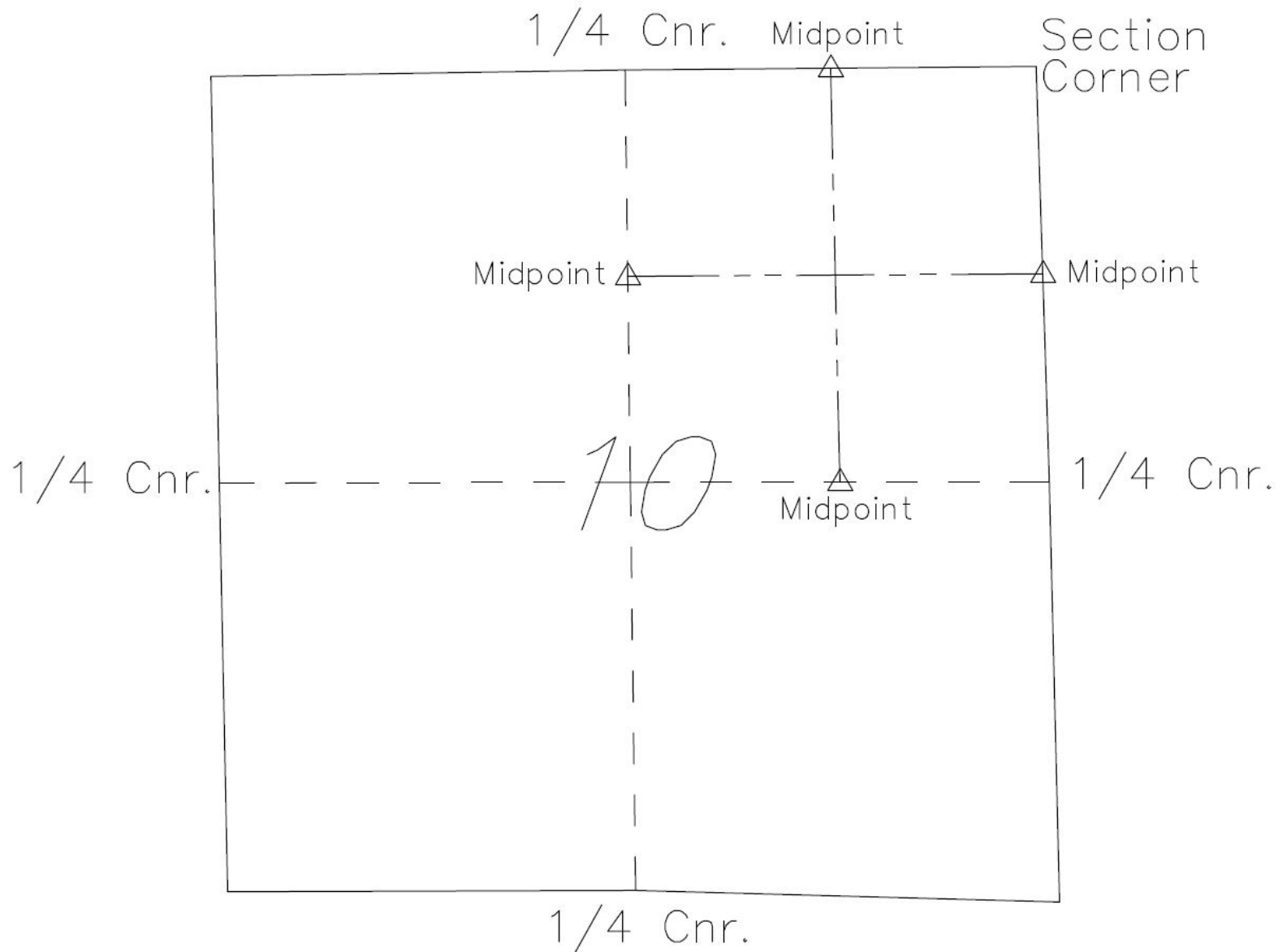
Surveyor General's Office,  
Pittsburg, Dec. 11, 1847

C. H. Beecher, Sur. Genl.

| Meanders of Chippewa |           | Double Courses (R-L) Pro |  |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------------------|--|
| Chippewa river       |           |                          |  |
| Eggsdale 96 stream   |           |                          |  |
| in sec. 36           |           |                          |  |
| 1                    | A 251 ft. | 5.50                     |  |
|                      | A 250 ft. | 7.00                     |  |
| 2                    | A 250 ft. | 5.50                     |  |
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|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 6<br>96<br>95  | 5<br>69<br>68        | 4<br>52<br>51        | 3<br>35<br>34        | 2<br>18<br>17        | 1                    |
| 94<br>93       | 92<br>91             | 67<br>66             | 50<br>49             | 33<br>32             | 16<br>15             |
| 7<br>89<br>88  | 8<br>90<br>87<br>86  | 9<br>65<br>64<br>63  | 10<br>48<br>47<br>46 | 11<br>31<br>30<br>29 | 12<br>14<br>13<br>12 |
| 18<br>84<br>83 | 17<br>85<br>82<br>81 | 16<br>62<br>61<br>60 | 15<br>45<br>44<br>43 | 14<br>28<br>27<br>26 | 13<br>11<br>10<br>9  |
| 19<br>79<br>78 | 20<br>80<br>77<br>76 | 21<br>59<br>58<br>57 | 22<br>42<br>41<br>40 | 23<br>25<br>24<br>23 | 24<br>8<br>7<br>6    |
| 30<br>74<br>73 | 29<br>75<br>72<br>71 | 28<br>56<br>55<br>54 | 27<br>39<br>38<br>37 | 26<br>22<br>21<br>20 | 25<br>5<br>4<br>3    |
| 31<br>70       | 32<br>70             | 33<br>53             | 34<br>36             | 35<br>19             | 36<br>2              |











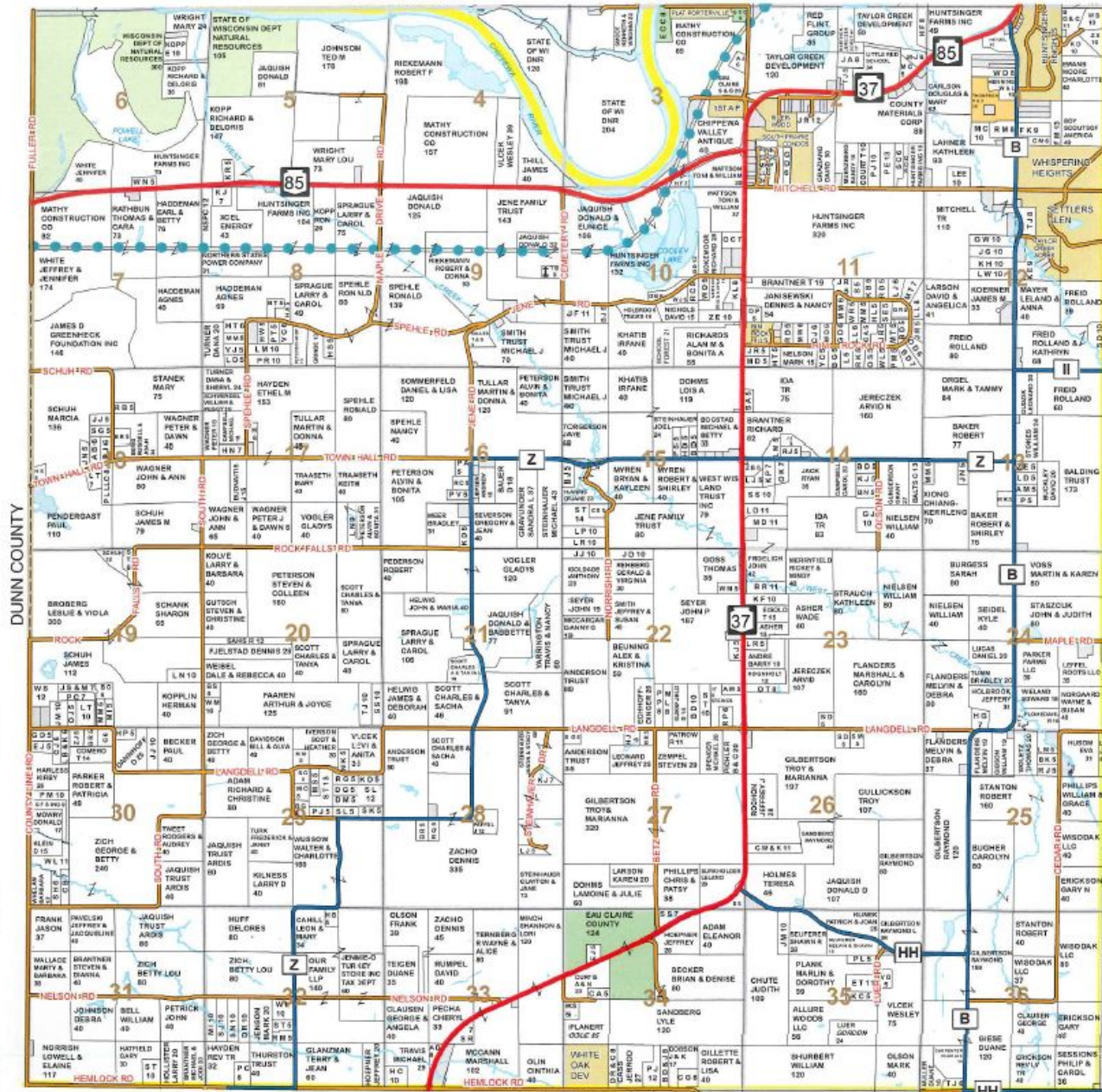
# Brunswick (S) & Union (S)

SEE PAGE 11

# Township 26N - Range 10W

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UNION A BRUNSWICK



W8000

W7000

W6000

SEE PAGE 35  
W5000

W4000

W3000

W2300







**Original notes, Henry Maddin, deputy surveyor; October, 1849:**

East corrected between Sections 30 & 31 variation 7°05' East.

35.80 Set 1/4 Section post

12" Tamarac N65°W 118 Links

10" Tamarac N86° 30'W 92 Links

**Wesley Baker; May, 1927:**

Square iron bolt in road running East, West, & South

**James Denzine; December, 1983:**

No Government evidence found. Dug 3' x 8' x 3' hole with backhoe. Found square bolt set by Baker.  
Set E.C. Co. Al. Monument.

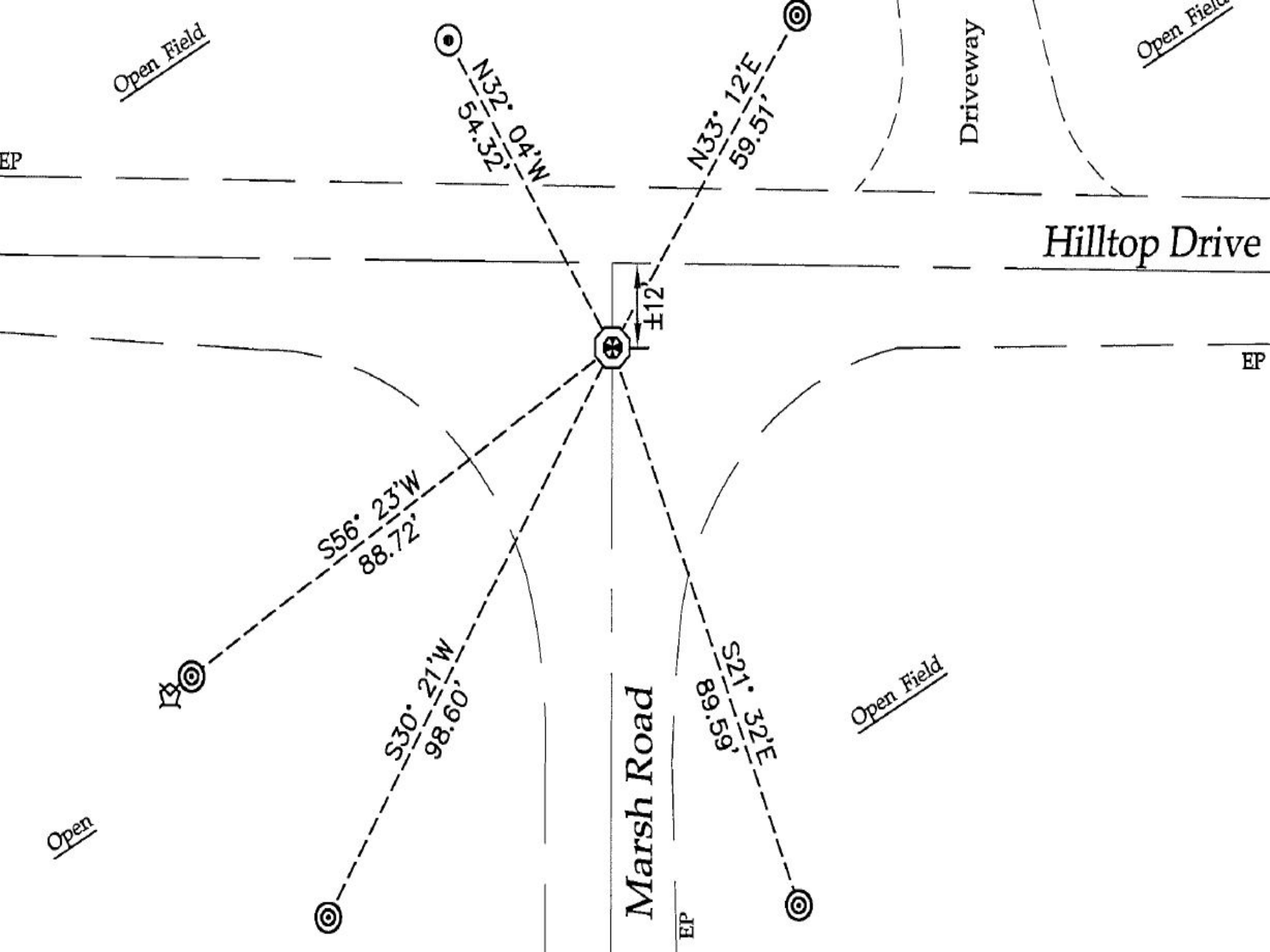
**Eau Claire County Surveyor's Office; September, 2013:**

Found monument and no ties intact. Set five new ties during road work. Set a 7/8" x 30" rebar with  
Eau Claire County Aluminum Monument after road construction was completed.

**Eau Claire County Surveyor's Office; June, 2016:**

Found monument and four ties as noted in 2013 remaining. Monument as found represents a perpetuation of a  
survey monument established by the County Surveyor in 1927 Of note: this position fits with single  
proportionate location by 0.4 feet for distance and 4.8 feet of line. Accepted the perpetuated location and set  
one new tie as shown on sheet one of this U.S. Public Land Survey monument record.











**PLEASE  
PROTECT  
NEARBY  
SURVEY  
MARKER**

**IF LOCATION OF  
THIS MARK  
IS ENDANGERED**

**PLEASE CONTACT THE  
EAU CLAIRE  
COUNTY SURVEYOR  
PHONE NUMBER  
(715) 839-4742**

CGCV • 1-888-900-4697

05/05

**PLEASE  
PROTECT  
NEARBY**

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| <b>U</b> | <b>A</b> |
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| <b>V</b> | <b>K</b> |
| <b>E</b> | <b>E</b> |
| <b>Y</b> | <b>R</b> |

**IF THE LOCATION OF  
THIS MARK IS  
ENDANGERED  
PLEASE CONTACT**



**THE EAU CLAIRE  
COUNTY SURVEYOR  
(715) 839-4742**



# Thank you!!



Dean Roth  
Eau Claire County Surveyor's Office