

Horner, Mapes & Silver Creek

HORNER HAD THE LAND AND MAPES HAD THE ENERGY AND EXPERIENCE TO KNOW WHAT WAS NEEDED

Captain David P. Mapes (1798-1890) came west to Wisconsin in 1845, bringing with him building and financial experience acquired in NY & PA. He had heard that the former Secretary of Wisconsin Territory, John Scott Horner (1802-1883), was the earliest purchaser of a ¼ section of land on Silver Creek. In 1849, Mapes discussed the idea with Horner, former Register of the Green Bay Land Office. Both men knew if a mill were built a new village could certainly start up.

THE DEAL

- John Scott Horner made the requirement in his agreement with Captain David Mapes that he, Horner, should name the village. He wished to call it Ripon after his ancestral home of Ripon, England.
- Mapes agreed and set about to fulfill Horner's other requirements that a dam, a mill pond, and a mill be built.
- Additionally, Horner's sharing of his land with Mapes required that Mapes build a hotel near the mill and that both the mill and the hotel operate for a minimum of one year by Mapes. The purpose of the hotel was to house prospective customers and lot buyers.
- With these agreements Horner split ownership of his land giving alternate lots to Mapes.

THE FIRST RIPON DAM & MILL

- The first dam for the new city of Ripon was built at present-day Eureka Street, creating a mill pond that stretched towards present-day Jackson Street. The mill was built about an eighth of a mile west of the pond, which is the present day location of the Ripon Public Library.
- The water from the pond was piped in wooden pipes to the mill.
- Above the mill, near where the City Hall now stands, Mapes built his hotel. Mapes fulfilled all of Horner's requirements for their agreement: the dam, pond, mill, and hotel.

IN 1849 THE VILLAGE OF RIPON, WISCONSIN
WAS FOUNDED HAVING ITS START BY THE
WATER OF SILVER CREEK.

THE TWO COMMUNITIES OF CERESCO AND
RIPON UNITED IN 1853 AND WERE OFFICIALLY
CHARTERED AS THE CITY OF RIPON IN 1858.

Below: Mill Pond from the tracks, looking
east on Jackson St., 1909.

Right: Horner's ¼ section is circled.

