

## Segment One: Early History

### Wisconsin Social Studies Standards

B.4.1, B.4.2, B.4.3

B.8.1, B.8.4, B.8.7, B.8.12

**Essential Question:** Why did Nathan Myrick come here? Why did others follow him and settle here?

#### **Grade 4 Activity: Traveler's Trunk "Junk"**

**Directions:** As a class, discuss what early La Crosse settlers might have brought with them. Brainstorm items that would have been necessary during this time period. You might want to include tools, clothing, household items, memorabilia, books, seeds, etc. Have students create a "Traveler's Trunk." They may illustrate the items or actually include the items in a small box designed to resemble a trunk. Justify in writing why the item is necessary. If the trunk gets too full, decide as a class which items should be left behind.

Consider the following reasons for bringing certain items:

- to remind someone of home
- to remind someone of family
- to entertain someone on a trip
- to be useful
- to tell other people about who someone is.

**Resource:** <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/teachers/lessons/elementary/packing.asp>

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#### **Grade 8/10 Activity: Why Come to La Crosse?**

**Directions:** Have students develop an 1800's era advertisement for the city of La Crosse beckoning new residents to settle here. Students should include a slogan, a drawing and/or picture, and three stated reasons for coming to town (for example, the wealth of jobs in the lumber industry).

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#### **Grade 8/10 Activity: Early La Crosse Time Line**

**Directions:** Using the photographs from the HTS-La Crosse Web site ([http://www.ecb.org/hometown\\_stories/LaCrosse/Slideshow/](http://www.ecb.org/hometown_stories/LaCrosse/Slideshow/)) students will create a timeline of early La Crosse, Wisconsin by arranging the photographs in chronological order. Students can then be assigned into small groups for research on the specific buildings or events that appear on the timeline, such as:

The Flood of 1965  
The Gund Brewery  
Rubber Mills  
Funke's Chocolates  
Logging Industry

Railroads  
Zephyr Train  
Old Courthouse/New Courthouse  
Old Post Office/New Post Office  
Cargill House

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**Grade 8/10 Activity: Migration Patterns**

**Directions:** While viewing segment one of Hometown Stories La Crosse, write down reasons why people migrated to Western Wisconsin. What drew people to our city?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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**Grade 8/10 Activity: Migration Pattern Changes**

**Directions:** Using the city growth data and primary sources, have students write a short essay on why population growth has plateaued in La Crosse over the 20<sup>th</sup> century while other parts of the state continue to expand.

**Resources:** Lists of Wisconsin's biggest cities in 1900 and 2000, primary source documents.

**Wisconsin's Biggest Cities in the year 2000** (Source: US Census, 2000):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Milwaukee, WI<br>Population: 596,974 | 7. Waukesha, WI<br>Population: 64,825           |
| 2. Madison, WI<br>Population: 208,054   | 8. Oshkosh, WI<br>Population: 62,916            |
| 3. Green Bay, WI<br>Population: 102,313 | 9. Eau Claire, WI<br>Population: 61,704         |
| 4. Kenosha, WI<br>Population: 90,352    | 10. West Allis, WI<br>Population: 61,254        |
| 5. Racine, WI<br>Population: 81,855     | 11. Janesville, WI<br>Population: 59,948        |
| 6. Appleton, WI<br>Population: 70,087   | <b>12. La Crosse, WI<br/>Population: 58,818</b> |

**Wisconsin's Biggest Cities in the year 1900** (Source: US Census, 1900):

- |                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Milwaukee 285,315       | 6. Madison 19,164    |
| 2. Superior 31,091         | 7. Green Bay 18,684  |
| <b>3. La Crosse 28,895</b> | 8. Eau Claire 17,517 |
| 4. Oshkosh 28,284          |                      |
| 5. Sheboygan 22,962        |                      |

## YEAR 2000 Documents/Data

### Resource:

[http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFacts?\\_event=&geo\\_id=05000US55063&\\_geoContext=01000US%7C04000US55%7C05000US55063&\\_street=&\\_county=la+crosse&\\_cityTown=la+crosse&\\_state=04000US55&\\_zip=&\\_lang=en&\\_sse=on&ActiveGeoDiv=&\\_useEV=&pctxt=fph&pgsl=050&submenuId=factsheet\\_1&ds\\_name=ACS\\_2006\\_SAFF&ci\\_nbr=null&qtr\\_name=null&reg=&keyword=&industry=](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFacts?_event=&geo_id=05000US55063&_geoContext=01000US%7C04000US55%7C05000US55063&_street=&_county=la+crosse&_cityTown=la+crosse&_state=04000US55&_zip=&_lang=en&_sse=on&ActiveGeoDiv=&_useEV=&pctxt=fph&pgsl=050&submenuId=factsheet_1&ds_name=ACS_2006_SAFF&ci_nbr=null&qtr_name=null&reg=&keyword=&industry=)

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/55/55063.html>

### Census shows slow growth

by REID MAGNEY / *La Crosse Tribune*

**Thursday, March 22, 2007 Reprinted with permission of the La Crosse Tribune**

After a decade of strong growth in the 1990s, La Crosse County's population hasn't risen much in the new century. So far this decade, the county's population has increased by 1.6 percent, according to Census Bureau estimates released today. The county's population in July 2006 was 109,404, compared with 107,120 in April 2000.

In the 1990s, the county's population rose 9.4 percent.

"From a planning perspective, it's not a bad thing," said La Crosse County Planner Charlie Handy. "People say in surveys that they like things the way they are."

This kind of slow growth makes change "easier to control," said Handy, who is in the midst of preparing a new comprehensive plan for the county. Wisconsin overall grew by 3.1 percent, but the population in its fastest-growing county, St. Croix near the Twin Cities, gained by 22.3 percent.

### Growing companies face challenge finding qualified workers

By STEVE CAHALAN / *Tribune business editor*

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Firstlogic Inc. has become one of the La Crosse area's most successful high-tech businesses and continues to grow in employment and sales. Firstlogic provides software that helps companies manage their databases, and provides software and services for use in print-and-mail operations to maximize postage discounts and reduce production costs. Three years ago, Firstlogic had about 200 employees in La Crosse and about 50 elsewhere in the United States. Company officials said then that Firstlogic had about \$35 million in sales in 1997. Today, the La Crosse-based company has about 310 employees in the city and about 120 employees elsewhere.

Although the company doesn't announce its annual sales figures anymore, "We have said the company has had roughly a 30 percent compounded annual growth rate over roughly the last five years," said Paul J. Byrne, executive vice president and chief executive officer. Firstlogic is a leader among a cluster of software and information systems companies that have developed in the area.

But, while the area's quality of life is cited as a positive factor in the growth of high-tech jobs, industry officials say the competition for high-tech workers in a smaller market is a critical challenge.

"You can go out in the Silicon Valley and sit in a traffic jam forever," he said. "And here, somebody may have a 10-minute commute and be angry because it took so long. And they are able to go and do the things that they like to do that make life worth living, at the end of the day." For people who love rivers, hunting and other outdoor activities "it's just wonderful, it can't be beat," Lieberman said of the La Crosse area.

But Lieberman said the area needs more high-tech companies. "One thing we may be lacking in La Crosse by not having more high-tech companies is more of an opportunity for people to network, to interact with people doing other things, and learn about new and exciting things," he said. "And stopping down at the local bar and talking to somebody that's working on a project from another company, that maybe you can relate to. By not having more companies, you maybe miss those opportunities that you get in a more urban setting."

The area's population size means finding qualified job applicants is "certainly more of a challenge than you might have in a larger metropolitan environment," said Rich Petro, Firstlogic vice president of human resources. "So you have to do more work to access the talent." He said most Firstlogic employees in La Crosse come from within about 200 miles.

"Finding this kind of skilled workers is a little more work than finding other types, just because they are in demand and there isn't a huge supply to begin with," Petro said. "But we're managing."

### **High-tech clusters in La Crosse 2000**

Jan Gallagher, director of the Business Development Center at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, said six high-tech industry clusters have developed in the greater La Crosse area:

- Health care and allied health services.
- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning manufacturing.
- Software and information systems.
- Printing.
- Natural sciences and the environment.
- Composites.

High-tech describes manufacturing and service companies that use science and technology, commit to research and development and hire highly-trained specialists, a La Crosse-based task force concluded in an October 2000 report on the area in preparation for the first Wisconsin Economic Summit. The report from the Western Wisconsin Task Force estimated about 120 high-tech companies employ about 3,500 people in the counties of La Crosse, Buffalo, Jackson, Monroe, Trempealeau, Vernon and Houston (in Minnesota). It said some of the largest are CenturyTel, Dura-Tech Inc., Empire Screen Printing, Firstlogic, Chart Heat Exchangers, Dairyland Power Cooperative, and Inland Printing Co.

Although it wasn't included in the estimate of 120 companies with 3,500 employees, Gallagher said The Trane Co. is a leader in technology and product innovation worldwide. It has about 3,150 employees in La Crosse. "We've seen quite a few spin-offs from Trane," Gallagher said, including ALTEC International (now Chart Heat Exchangers). In addition to Firstlogic, several other area high-tech companies have made the most news in the last few years:

### **CenturyTel**

One of the fastest-growing high-tech companies in the La Crosse area has been CenturyTel, whose new Midwest Region headquarters building in downtown La Crosse was dedicated in June. The telephone company has about 675 employees in La Crosse, including the 535 who work in the new downtown building, CenturyTel spokesman Cary Heyer said. CenturyTel had about 265 employees in La Crosse when the \$25 million downtown project was announced in October 1998. The company has added more than 400 jobs in the city since then, mostly because of the acquisition of a number of local telephone exchanges (including 77 former GTE exchanges in Wisconsin) and increased product sales

### **Sagebrush Corp.**

Sagebrush Corp., which is based in Minneapolis, has about 112 employees at its facility in Caledonia, Minn., and about 48 at its Onalaska office. Sagebrush bought Caledonia-based Winnebago Software Co. in January 2000, and has trimmed the number of employees at the Caledonia and Onalaska offices since then by eliminating duplication and making other organizational changes. Jeb Griffith of Caledonia, who founded Winnebago in 1982, said Winnebago had about 210 employees in Caledonia and about 60 in Onalaska when he sold it. Winnebago was a developer of circulation and online public access catalog software and Internet products for libraries. Sagebrush offers library automation systems, books for school libraries, cataloging services, Internet products and other educational resources.

### **Electronic Data Systems Corp.**

Electronic Data Systems Corp. of Plano, Texas, opened a La Crosse office with 19 employees in January 1999 at a temporary location in the U.S. Bank Place building, and had hoped to have 100 employees in a permanent La Crosse office by the summer of 2001. EDS moved into its permanent office in part of a new building at Second and King streets in March 2000, but still has only 22 employees there. EDS went through a restructuring in 1999 that has affected the local office's growth timetable, Mike Hirner, an EDS project manager, said last year. EDS is an information technology company that provides software development, software maintenance and other services to customers. Altmeyer said La Crosse was chosen for a satellite office because of the availability of skilled workers, its proximity to institutions of higher learning, high quality of life and lower costs of doing business compared with a large city.

### **Earthlight Technologies Inc.**

In July 1999, Earthlight Technologies Inc. officials said they had designed a high-definition scanner that would do subsoil exploration to find such things as oil, water, gas, hazardous waste and precious metals, and said they hoped to have 500 employees in La Crosse within two years. But in November 2000, La Crosse County officials ordered the company to vacate its offices on the third floor of the La Crosse County Administrative Center because it failed to pay overdue rent. County Board Chairman James Ehram said only nine or 10 people had been working in the Earthlight office that fall, and said he believes the number of Earthlight employees peaked at about 60 in early spring 2000.

### **Gensler**

The Gensler information solutions office that opened in 1994 at 308 Buchner Place has outgrown that space, and will move by mid-October to the fourth floor of the former La Crosse Plow building at 300 Second St. N. Sixteen people work in the current office, said Thomas Houlihan, a Gensler vice president who heads it. "We expect in the next year to at least double that," he said. The company will have room for 50 employees in the new space. Gensler is an architecture, design, planning and program management firm based in San Francisco. Its La Crosse office provides information management services to clients to help them manage their resources. It gathers facility and real estate data into a computer program that clients can use - or that Gensler can administer - for facilities management, spotting space-use patterns, and for making strategic decisions.

## YEAR 1900 Documents/Data

	1881	1891	Increase
Population	14,505	26,000	79.25
Value of goods manufactured	\$6,367,538	\$17,271,225	171.24
Value of merchandise sold	4,619,975	22,118,389	378.56
Aggregate deposits in banks	13,248,000	34,417,528	169.79
Money orders issued and paid at post office	35,000	253,367	623.90
Railroad tonnage	176,640	557,675	215.71
Water mains-miles	9.5	24	152.63
Revenue of water department	\$5,000	\$20,653	313.06

That nature has done much for La Crosse who can deny? Located in a sheltered valley, with ample room for a large population, it offers inviting facilities to the manufacturer and the army of skilled and unskilled workmen which carries out his projects. Situated at a point on the western border of the State through which all the products of the East must pass on their westward way, or else make a long and time-consuming detour, it naturally attracted the capital ...of those engaged in that gigantic industry (of shipping).

### La Crosse has:

\*Thriving manufactories of Plows, Agricultural Implements, Boilers and Heavy machinery, extensive Carriage Works, Cracker and Knitting factories, Glass Works, etc., three large Flour Mills, Woolen Mills, a large Tannery, five large Breweries, affording a market for 150,000 bushels of barley and 100,000 pounds of hops per annum; extensive Cigar Manufactories, and various other Industries.

\*Has 20 miles of macadamized streets, 24 miles of water main and 10 miles of street car tracks-to be operated by electricity in the spring.

\*Has three daily and six weekly newspapers and two religious monthlies with an aggregate circulation of 24,000.

\*Has forty-five Churches, Model Common Schools, and a first-class High School and course.

\*Has six Public Halls, and its two new Opera Houses are acknowledged to be the most convenient and tastefully embellished it's the North-west.

\*Has a Free Public Library with over 10,000 volumes, placed in a handsome building, erected in terms of a bequest of the late Hon. C. C. Washburn.

\*Is close to the hard timber forests and immense pinerles. Rates on coal and ore are always low, and for steam power its saw-mills furnish fuel at almost nominal cost.

\*Has in its vicinity an inexhaustible supply of iron ore waiting development.

\*Has the Mississippi river and eight railroads reaching in every direction, giving unsurpassed facilities for transportation.

\*Has for a market the whole of Western Wisconsin, Northern Iowa, Middle and Southern Minnesota and the

newly admitted twin States of North and South Dakota, a field which is practically unlimited.

\*Has a large and increasing Jobbing Trade with these and oilier sections of the country, and the Country Storekeeper can have his wants as fully and cheaply supplied as in the Eastern markets.

\*Is essentially the Home of the Workingman, with exceptional facilities for procuring cheap homes. As a result the laboring classes are mostly all freeholders, and a steady supply of labor can always be relied upon.

**Resource:** <http://murphylibrary.uwlax.edu/digital/lacrosse/LaxAdvantages/0001000A.htm>