

PIONEERS OF THE PINERY

Malcolm Rosholt



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Malcolm Rosholt lives in Rosholt, Wisconsin, a village named for his grandfather. He received his bachelor of arts degree from St. Olaf College in 1931 and sailed for China where he spent the next six years as a reporter and editor of an English-language newspaper published in Shanghai. He covered the Japanese bombing of the city in 1932 and again in 1937. In 1938 he returned to the United States where he lectured on his war experiences to schools and service clubs.

In 1933 he returned briefly to the United States to marry Margaret Njaa of Northwood, ND. They have one daughter, Mei-fei (Mrs. David Elrick), who was born in Shanghai. Rosholt studied the Chinese language and as a result of his background, he received a commission in World War II from the Army Air Corps. After training, he returned to China in 1943 and spent the next two years as a liaison officer under Claire L. Chennault, commander of the Flying Tigers. Since leaving the armed service, he has become deeply involved in state and local history.

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FOREWORD

Not many counties are fortunate enough to have someone who combines the interest and the ability to record their history in readable, accurate fashion.

Portage County is one of the lucky ones. It has Malcolm Rosholt, who wrote *Our County, Our Story*, an invaluable reference which relates the history of this county from the days of the Indians to the time of its publication, 1959.

No flash in the pan, he has continued to produce books and articles on state and local history.

The *Stevens Point Daily Journal*, of which I am city editor, has carried many of these articles. In fact this entire book is a reprint of Malcolm Rosholt stories that have appeared in the *Journal*.

While they center around Portage County, they cannot help but be of interest to people in neighboring counties. You cannot, for example, write about George Stevens, for whom Stevens Point is named, without bringing in Wausau and Marathon County. Nor can Cutting Marsh's story be told without crossing into other counties, especially Waupaca County.

Pioneers of the Pinery does not pretend to be a comprehensive history, but rather a series of stories about real people, their triumphs, their tragedies, their foibles and their perseverance.

As a warts-and-all historian, Malcolm Rosholt does not attempt to pretty up times past, but instead seeks to portray events as they happened and people as they were.

And that's history.

George Rogers

AUTHOR-PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

Since I wrote *Our County, Our Story*, a modern history of Portage County published in 1959 under the sponsorship of the Portage County Board of Supervisors, new facts and legends about the county have come to light.

The present volume, *Pioneers of the Pinery*, is, in a sense, a continuation of the first book, but it also covers a wider area of interest and dips into Marathon, Wood, Adams, Waupaca, Waushara, Green Lake and Winnebago counties. Some of the incidents touched on in the first book have provided the basis for a deeper study in the second, such as the Courtwright lynching, the Hathaway survey of the Wisconsin River valley, and the story of George Stevens' bold venture into the Pinery north to "Big Bull Falls."

In addition to the several story chapters, I have added a portion of a diary kept by the pioneer pastor and circuit rider, Cutting Moody Marsh, which also appeared in the *Stevens Point Daily Journal*. This diary may be one of the most remarkable documents held by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. It is a source of pleasure for me to bring this portion of the diary to the attention of Wisconsin readers, and it is also a source of pleasure for me to honor this intrepid man of God who rode so tall through the towering timber.

A number of people contributed documents, pictures or information to the present volume, namely, George Crowell, Menasha, Dr. Arthur Fish, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Joe Formella, Stevens Point, Ray Isherwood, Plover, Anthony Kiedrowski, Wisconsin Rapids, Clayton McLarky, Whiting, Malcolm McLean, Ashland, Jim Pierson, Stevens Point, Philip Poullette, Wautoma, Edith Rothman, Stevens Point, Paul Schultz, Waupaca, Ray Specht, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Bayard Wenworth, Stevens Point, the late Ben Redfield of Whiting and the late Welton Johnson of Amherst.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to Pat Manske, staff artist at Palmer Publications, Inc., Amherst, for the cover which she designed for this book.

Malcolm Rosholt

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