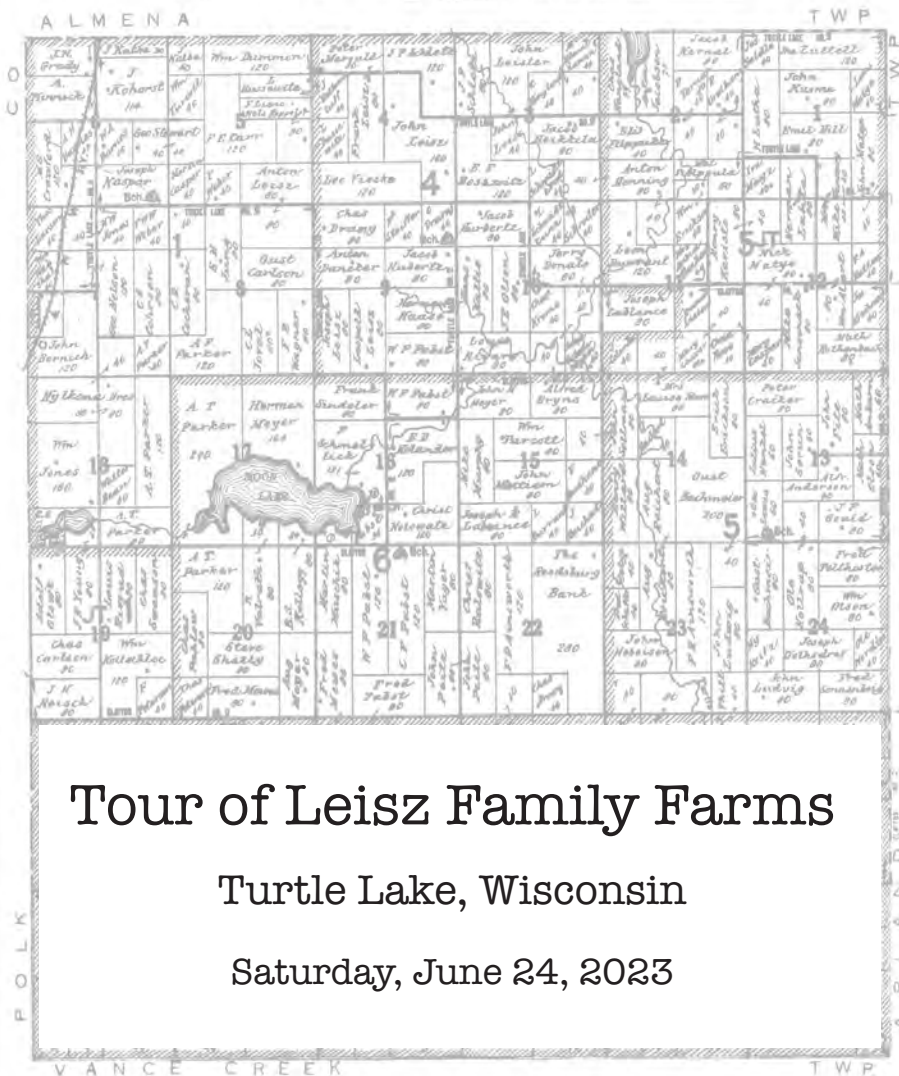




Rural Routes shown thus: ———— Churches shown thus: ————
 School Districts: ———— 2 Cemeteries: ————
 Schools: ———— Corporation Limits of Cities shown thus: ————



Tour of Leisz Family Farms

Turtle Lake, Wisconsin

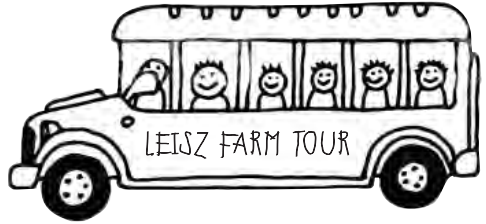
Saturday, June 24, 2023

List of Small Property Owners in this Township Shown on Map by Numbers

No.	Name	Acres	No.	Name	Acres	No.	Name	Acres
1	M. M. M. M. M.	22	18	A. T. Parker	8	19	C. H. H. H.	24

All aboard!

Early settlers of Turtle Lake in 1894, the Leisz family made its mark on this area and its farmland, a mark that persists today. As the Turtle Lake Times reported in 1939 upon the death of



Leisz Brother John (1861-1939), *"In his passing the community loses one of its builders, a pioneer citizen who overcame the hardships of the wilderness and became a respected and valuable citizen."*

Pioneers. People who overcame wilderness. Wow! These are our ancestors.

Leisz family members arrived in Turtle Lake in April 1894, one year after arriving in the United States and living in a slum tenement in Chicago while the Leisez brothers worked on the grain docks. Matriarch Anna Maria "Mary" Schmidt Leisz was 53 years old, widowed the year before. Others coming with her were John, then 33 and his wife and three children; Joseph, 26; Frank, 18; Anton, 13; and Michael, 11. Their sister Mary Leisz Minnichsoffer and family would follow in 1900. And brother Leopold Leisz and his family would join them in 1902.

By June 20, 1895, the Wisconsin State Census shows all the Leisz's who immigrated in 1893 living in the same household: According to census, 6 males and 4 females were in the household: males John, Joseph, Frank, Anton, Michael and John's baby Joseph; females mother Mary, and John's wife Agnes plus daughters Julia and Mary.

Land records show the property they lived on was owned by a couple in St. Paul until Mary could finally purchase it in 1900. In years to come her children would follow suit, each purchasing about 80 acres of land for themselves and their families, then adding to their property—and their prosperity—over time.

NOTE: Spellings of names in this document, if varied, are not typographical errors, but are taken from source documents, such as Leisz being spelled Leiss.

DISCLAIMER: While we have taken rigorous steps to ensure the information in this booklet is accurate, there may be errors in portions of this content. Our sources are Barron County land records, the exhaustive research of the late Roberta Meyer Lombardino, personal interviews with living Leisz family members, and notes and audio recordings of deceased family members. Thank you for your understanding, and if you find any errors, please reach out to Denise Leisz Pazur at dpazur@me.com or 920-207-8747 so she can make corrections to this booklet.

Meet your tour guides



JENNIE LEISZ NITCHEY

Jennie lives in nearby Clayton, where she grew up on her parents' farm. Her father John "Huntz" Leisz. Huntz is a great-grandson of Leisz Brother John (1861-1939). Jennie is shown here with an inset photo of her great-grandpa John Franklin Leisz Jr. (1895-1977). A genealogy buff, Jennie knows much about our extended Leisz family, the people who live in this area today, and Leisz farms from more than a century ago.



DENISE LEISZ PAZUR

Denise is a walking trivia buff of Leisz history. Since 2001 she's dug deep into genealogy records and discovered a lot about our ancestors. Here in 2018 she displays a piece of her grandpa's original log cabin on the Joseph Leisz farm, owned today by Michael and Sondy Merth. Denise is from Cleveland and lives today in Sheboygan, WI.



The six Leisz Brothers, all born in Eastern Europe in the 19th Century and early pioneers of Turtle Lake, Wisconsin: (clockwise from upper left) Joseph (1868-1942), Michael (1882-1944), Anton (1880-1942), Leopold (1863-1925), Frank (1875-1949) and John (1861-1939). Their sister Mary Leisz Minnichsoffer (1862-1903) and her family also farmed in the area. Photo circa 1915 taken at Geerts Photo Studio in Barron County.

What was Turtle Lake like in 1894 when the Leisz family first arrived? The village wouldn't be officially incorporated for four more years. It was a "wilderness" that "pioneer citizens" such as the Leisz's found—a land of lumberjacks, sawmills, fishermen and trappers of wolves, lynx, beaver, racoon and other animals. Some of the area's residents had fought in the Civil War. Indigenous peoples camped and fished nearby, and worked in the local sawmills. What a difference from urban Chicago they had left, and the Eastern European village of Peregu Mare, Arad, Romania that they immigrated from!

A note about “cutover” land

While living in Chicago, the Leisz family read advertisements in German newspapers promising “riches and happiness” through the “sure existence” that would come with purchase of farmland in Northern Wisconsin.

Problem was, these advertisements were a lie. Many were sponsored by logging companies, anxious to unload cutover lands that had been cleared of timber in the second half of the 19th Century.

Much of this land was simply not ideal for farming as it was highly acidic from years of supporting pine forests. Plus the ground was very rocky and nearly all of it was covered in stumps, the clearing of which was a slow, extremely labor-intensive undertaking.



To survive the frontier conditions of their first years on Cutover farms in Turtle Lake, the Leisz's relied heavily on family labor. Clearing the land of stumps and rocks, like all other farm work in the Cutover, was a family activity.

Often the children were charged with “picking rocks” from farm fields and stacking them along property lines. The Leisz men removed stumps by hand or with teams of horses—and later, using explosives.

When they first arrived in 1894, it's likely the Leisz's needed two or three summers of shared work to build a rough house and a small barn, dig a well, clear a plot of land for a subsistence garden, and clear a few acres of stump pasture for a milk cow and a team of horses. Once these necessities had been completed, the family's focus could turn to activities that served as Cutover farms' most reliable sources of income, primarily dairying.

Mother Mary Schmidt Leisz

DATE:	March 7, 1900
ACREAGE:	80 more or less according to govt survey thereof
PRICE:	\$440 (\$15,671 in 2023)
SELLERS:	Harold J. & Maren Lohrbauer of St. Paul, MN
BUYER:	Maria Leisz of Turtle Lake, Barron County, WI
LOCATION:	The North east quarter of the North east quarter of Section Number 8 and South east quarter of the South west quarter of Section Number 4 in Township Number 33 North of Range Number 14 West.

It appears that Mary Schmidt Leisz and her family lived on this land when first arriving in Turtle Lake in 1894 after spending one year in Chicago. The clue? An obscure notation on this Barron County Land Deed that states as follows:



Anna Maria "Mary" Schmidt Leisz (1840-1918), mother of the six Leisz Brothers and their sister Mary Leisz Minnichsoffer

...sellers "are free and clear from all incumbrances whatever, except such which may have been inferred or created thereon through any other person but said first parties since April 18, 1894 also subject to any unpaid taxes assessed since Jan 1894."

The Upshot? Through this Barron County record—the Land Deed for purchase of the first property in Turtle Lake by our family—we learn that the Leisz's arrived in April 1894, just after burying their youngest member Julia in Chicago on March 6, 1894. Her death from rheumatic fever likely spurred the Leisz's to leave filthy immigrant tenements in Chicago and head north to the Northwest Wisconsin area. There they moved to a farm three miles southeast of Turtle Lake in 1894, which they apparently rented from its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Lohrbauer of St. Paul until Mary purchased it in 1900.

76
50/75
4

This Indenture, Made this Seventh day of March, in the year of our Lord, one thousand Nine hundred _____, between Harold J. Lohbauer and Marion Lohbauer, his wife of St Paul, Ramsey County, State of Minnesota part of the first part, and Marion Lohbauer of Turtle Lake Barron County, State of Wisconsin part of the second part,

Witnesseth, That the said parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of

Four Hundred and Fifty Dollars.

to them in hand paid by the said parties of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby confessed and acknowledged, have given, granted, bargained, sold, remised, released, aliened, conveyed and confirmed, and by these presents do give, grant, bargain, sell, remise, release, alien, convey and confirm unto the said parties of the second part, their heirs and assigns forever, the following described real estate situated in the County of Barron and State of Wisconsin, to-wit:

The North east quarter of the North east quarter of Section Number eight (8) and South east quarter of the South west quarter of Section Number Four (4) in township Number thirty three (33) North, of range Number fourteen (14) West, containing eight (8) acres more or less according to Government survey thereof.

(One 50¢ U.S.R stamp cancelled)

Together with all and singular the hereditaments and appurtenances thereto belonging or in any wise appertaining; and all the estate, right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever, of the said parties of the first part, either in law or equity, either in possession or expectancy of, in and to the above bargained premises, and their hereditaments and appurtenances.

To Have and to hold the said premises as above described, with the hereditaments and appurtenances, unto the said parties of the second part, and to their heirs and assigns FOREVER.

And the said Harold J. Lohbauer and Marion Lohbauer for themselves heirs, executors and administrators, do covenant, grant, bargain and agree to and with the said parties of the second part, their heirs and assigns, that at the time of the executing and delivery of these presents they are well seized of the premises above described as of a good, sure, perfect, absolute and indefeasible estate of inheritance in the law, in fee simple

and that the same are free and clear from all incumbrances whatever, except such which may have been suffered or created thereon through any other person, but said first parties since April 15, 1900, subject to no such incumbrances, and that the above bargained premises in the quiet and peaceable possession of the said parties of the second part, their heirs and assigns, against all and every person or persons lawfully claiming the whole or any part thereof, they will forever WARRANT AND DEFEND.

In Witness Whereof, the said parties of the first part have hereunto set their hands and seal, the day and year first above written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in Presence of

J. Lohbauer
E. J. Mellum

Harold J. Lohbauer 

Marion Lohbauer 

Minnesota
State of Wisconsin,

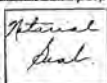
County of Ramsey do hereby certify that on the Seventh day of March, A. D. 1900, personally before me the above named

Harold J. Lohbauer and Marion Lohbauer, his wife

to me known to be the person who executed the foregoing deed, and acknowledged

the same to be freely and lawfully executed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Received for record the 9 day of March A. D. 1900, at St. Cloud Minn.

W. J. Parton  Johannes Lohbauer
Register of Deeds. Notary Public Ramsey Co.
Minn.

John Leisz Farm

DATE: January 1, 1900
ACREAGE: 80 more or less according to govt survey thereof
PRICE: \$1,000 (\$35,196 in 2023)
SELLERS: Frank & Adella Partlow of Barron County, WI
BUYER: John Leiss of Barron County, WI
LOCATION: The South west quarter of the North east quarter (SW 1/4 of NE 1/4) and the North west quarter of the South east quarter (NW 1/4 of SE 1/4) all of Section 4, Township 33 North of Range. 14 West.

Eldest Leisz Brother John (1861-1939) must have tired of living with his mother and siblings since 1894 on the original Leisz family farm about three miles southeast Turtle Lake. By 1900 John, 39, had purchased land. He had five children with wife Agnes, 33, and one more on the way: Julia, 11, Mary, 8, Joseph, 6, John Franklin, 4, and Anna, 3; their last child Theresa "Tess", would be born in Sep 1901.



The John Leisz farm, circa 1940s after John Sr. had passed and his son John Jr. and wife Stella had taken over. Their son Vernon, wife Dotz and child Dennis were living in the upstairs of John and Stella's farmhouse at right. The little house across the driveway was built by Vernon's father-in-law and still stands today, but this original barn burned down years ago.

No 49953
10
This Indenture, Made this First day of January, in the year of our Lord, one thousand Nine hundred, between Frank A. Castlow and Adella B. Castlow his wife of Tarron County Wisconsin parties of the first part, and John Leiss party of the second part,

Witnesseth, That the said parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of

One thousand Dollars Dollars, to them in hand paid by the said party of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby confessed and acknowledged, have given, granted, bargained, sold, remised, released, aliened, conveyed and confirmed, and by these presents do give, grant, bargain, sell, remise, release, alien, convey and confirm unto the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns forever, the following described real estate situated in the County of Barron and State of Wisconsin, to-wit:

The South west quarter of the North east quarter NW 1/4 of T6 1/4 and the North west quarter of the South east quarter NW 1/4 of T6 1/4 all of Section Four (4), township thirty three (33) North, of range Fourteen (14) West, containing eighty (80) acres more or less according to Government Survey

(One \$10 Ad. R. Stamp)
Cancelled

Together with all and singular the hereditaments and appurtenances thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaining; and all the estate, right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever, of the said parties of the first part, either in law or equity, either in possession or expectancy of, in and to the above bargained premises, and their hereditaments and appurtenances.

To Have and to hold the said premises as above described, with the hereditaments and appurtenances, unto the said parties of the second part, and to his heirs and assigns FOREVER.

And the said Frank A. Castlow and wife for their heirs, executors and administrators, do covenant, grant, bargain and agree to and with the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, that at the time of the executing and delivery of these presents they well sold of the premises above described as of a good, sure, perfect, absolute and indefeasible estate of inheritance in the law, in fee simple

and that the same are free and clear from all incumbrances whatever,

and that the above bargained premises in the quiet and peaceful possession of the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, against all and every person or persons lawfully claiming the whole or any part thereof, will forever WARRANT AND DEFEND.

In Witness Whereof, the said parties of the first part have hereunto set their hand and seal the day and year first above written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in Presence of

Frank Leiss
Julius Hoffmann

Frank A. Castlow SEAL
Adella B. Castlow SEAL
SEAL
SEAL

State of Wisconsin,

County of Tarron

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the 16th day of February,

A. D. 1900, personally came before me, the above named

Frank A. Castlow and Adella B. Castlow his wife to me known to be the persons who executed the foregoing deed, and acknowledged the same to be their free act and deed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Received for record the 17 day of Feb
A. D. 1900, at 2 o'clock P. M.

W. L. Barton
Register of Deeds.

L. H. Colver Public Justice
Village of Tarron, Tarron County
Wisconsin.

John Leisz Farm (continued)

DATE: April 16, 1901
ACREAGE: 40 more or less according to govt survey thereof
PRICE: \$650 (\$23,150 in 2023)
SELLERS: Joseph & Delma Perrault of Oneida County, WI
BUYER: John Leiss of Barron County, WI
LOCATION: The North East quarter of the South east quarter (NE 1/4 SE 1/4) of Section Number 4 in Township. Number 33 North of Range. Number 14 West.

In April 1901 John Leisz bought 40 more acres. And by 1914 he owned 200 acres at R2, sec 3, 4 with wife Gertrude, whom he wed in 1909 after his first wife Agnes died in 1904; this is according to the 1914 Farmers' Directory of Turtle Lake Township (see map on back cover).

John's 1939 obituary reads: *"After selling his farm to his son John in 1919, he moved to Turtle Lake. He purchased another farm in 1920, which he owned up to the time of his death. It also is located three miles southeast of Turtle Lake. From 1920 to his death in 1939, John alternated his residence between the farm and the village."*



Circa 1931—John Jr. with sons Bud (b 1925) and Vernon (b 1927) on the John Leisz farm.

Second generation John Franklin Leisz (1895-1977) was a bachelor farmer who worked hard side-by-side with his dad John Sr. A typical day? John Jr. would rise at 3:30 a.m. to milk the cows, then travel six miles to Almena where he sheared 102 sheep that same day, working until 6 p.m. After returning home, he milked the cows again. His

day's wages? \$10.20, or \$216 in 2023 dollars. John would then follow this 18-hour work day with a ride in a friend's new Overland automobile and go to dances to socialize. (Source: Notes from Muriel Leisz Klingelhoets, John Jr.'s daughter)

No
55188
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t

This Indenture, Made this 16th day of April, in the year of our Lord, one thousand
Nine hundred and One, between Joseph Alfred Perreault and
Delima Perreault his wife of Oneida County, Wisconsin
parties of the first part, and
John Lister of Barron County Wisconsin
party of the second part,

Witnesseth, That the said parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of

Five Hundred Fifty

Dollars,

to them in hand paid by the said party of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby confessed and acknowledged, he do
given, granted, bargained, sold, remised, released, aliened, conveyed, and confirmed, and by these presents do give, grant, bargain,
sell, remise, release, alien, convey and confirm unto the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, forever, the
following described real estate situated in the County of Barron and State of Wisconsin, to-wit:

The North East quarter of the Southeast quarter (N E 1/4 S E 1/4)
of Section Number Four (4) in Township Number Thirty
Three (33) North, of Range Number Fourteen (14) West
Containing Forty (40) acres, more or less, according to the
Government survey thereof

Together, with all and singular the hereditaments and appurtenances thereto belonging or in anywise appertaining; and all
the estate, right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever, of the said parties of the first part, either in law or equity, either in
possession or expectancy of, in and to the above bargained premises, and their hereditaments and appurtenances.

To Have and to Hold the said premises as above described, with the hereditaments and appurtenances, unto the said party
of the second part, and to his heirs and assigns, FOREVER.

As to the said Joseph Alfred Perreault and Delima Perreault his wife
for themselves their heirs, executors and administrators, do covenant, grant, bargain and agree to and with the
said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, that at the time of the encasing and delivery of these presents
Joseph Alfred Perreault of the premises above described as of a good, sure, perfect, absolute and indefeasible estate of
inheritance in the law, in fee simple

and that the same are free and clear from all incumbrances whatever.

and that the above bargained premises in the quiet and peaceful possession of
the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, against all and every person or persons lawfully claiming the
whole or any part thereof, they will forever WARRANT AND DEFEND.

In Witness Whereof, the said parties of the first part have hereunto set their hand and seal the day and year
first above written.

Signed, sealed and Delivered in Presence of

D. H. Walker

Laura Perreault

Joseph Alfred Perreault Seal

Delima Perreault Seal

(Seals and Stamps)

State of Wisconsin,

County of Oneida ss.

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the 26th day of April

A. D. 1901, personally came before me, the above named

Joseph Alfred Perreault and Delima Perreault

himself to me known to be the person do who executed the foregoing deed and acknowledged
the same to be their free act and deed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Received for record the 30th day of Apr
A. D. 1901 at 3 o'clock P. M.

W. J. Carter
Register of Deeds

Notarial Seal

D. H. Walker

Notary Public Wis.

John Leisz Farm (continued)

John Jr. wed local school teacher Stella Paul (1895-1974) in 1919, and in August 1922 he signed a land-contract agreement with his father and John Sr.'s second wife Gertrude in the amount of \$12,000.

John Jr. and Stella had four children, and their youngest, Vernon (1926-1982), would carry on the farming tradition with help from his wife Dorothy "Dotz" and their nine children. All were raised in the a small farmhouse across the driveway on the John Leisz property, a house that Dotz's dad built for her in the 1940s.

John Jr. and his son Vernon ran a very successful dairy farm together until 1974 when John Jr.'s wife Stella died; his health began to fail shortly after her passing and in 1977 John Jr. followed his wife in death.

The success of their farm is due in big part to the work commitment of Vernon's three oldest sons Dennis, Steven and John "Huntz", who were responsible for much of the milking chores and fieldwork through their childhood and into their late teens. Huntz recently stated that at their "best farming time", his father and grandfather *were farming approximately one thousand acres of land* owned south and north of Turtle Lake! This included three farms plus the home place.

Their farming success meant that the Vernon Leisz family never went without. Huntz recalls weekly grocery money that his mother Dotz used to prepare excellent meals, and always having the "latest" toys and guns.

Besides farming, Vernon was quit the entrepreneur, and owned the New Frontier Restaurant in Turtle Lake when he and Dotz were first married. He also owned and operated a milk hauling business, and owned and operated the "50-50" bar in

Almena. Today Huntz and wife Kathy continue to farm on their land in nearby Clayton.



John Leisz Jr. (1895-1977) would farm with his father before eventually take over the farm and expanding it with son Vernon and his children.

John Leisz Farm (continued)



Third-generation Turtle Lake farmer Vernon Leisz rides a tractor with his firstborn child Denny, circa 1950. In years to come, Denny and his brothers Steven and John "Huntz" were responsible for much of the farm chores. The success of the John Leisz farm is due in big part to them.



Vernon and Dotz Leisz with their nine children (clockwise from littlest boy): Tim (b 1964), Greg (b 1962), Brad (b 1961), Colleen (b 1957), Denny (b 1948), Steve (b 1951), Trish (b 1952), Cheryl (b 1956) and John "Huntz" (b 1953).

Frank Leisz Farm

DATE:	January 2, 1901
ACREAGE:	80 more or less according to govt survey thereof
PRICE:	\$898.35 (\$31,606 in 2023)
SELLERS:	Frank & Adella Partlow of Barron County, WI
BUYER:	Frank Leisz of Barron County, WI
LOCATION:	The East Half of the North West Quarter (E 1/2 NW 1/4) of Section Number 22 in Town- ship Number 34 North, of Range Number 14 West.

Leisz Brother Frank (1875-1949) married in February 1900 and by year's end he and wife Barbara Donaker (1877-1950) had the first of their six children. By 1901 they would purchase 80 acres owned by Frank & Adella Partlow—the same sellers from which John Leisz acquired his farm the year prior.

The 1905 Wisconsin Census lists Frank, 28, as head of household and a farmer, living on land he owned under mortgage with wife Barbara, 27, and children Frank, 4, Tony, 3, and Mary, 2. Three more children were born in coming years: Joseph in 1906, Michael in 1907, and Louise in 1912.



Frank and Barbara Leisz on their farm, circa 1924 with daughter Louise (1912-1998), Barbara's relative Mary Donaker, Frank Leisz Jr. (1900-1931), and Joseph Frank Leisz (1906-1962).

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This Indenture, Made this 2nd day of January, in the year of our Lord, one thousand
thousand and one (1901), between Frank A. Carlisle and Adella
C. Carlisle his wife of Barron County Wisconsin
parties of the first part, and
Paul L. Lee of Barron County Wisconsin
party of the second part,

Witnesseth, That the said parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of
Eight Hundred Ninety eight and 5/100 (195.55) Dollars.
 in hand paid by the said party of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby confessed and acknowledged, have
 given, granted, bargained, sold, remised, released, aliened, conveyed, and confirmed, and by these presents do give, grant, bargain,
 sell, remise, release, alien, convey and confirm unto the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, forever, the
 following described real estate situated in the County of Barron and State of Wisconsin, to-wit:

The East Half of the North West Quarter (E 1/2 NW 1/4) of
 Section Number Thirty Three (33) in Township Number
 Thirty four (34) North, of Range Number Fourteen (14)
 West, containing eighty acres more or less according
 to the Government Survey thereof

Together, with all and singular the hereditaments and appurtenances thereunto belonging or in anywise appertaining; and all
 the estate, right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever, of the said parties of the first part, either in law or equity, either in
 possession or expectancy of, in and to the above bargained premises, and their hereditaments and appurtenances.

To Have and to hold the said premises as above described, with the hereditaments and appurtenances, unto the said party
 of the second part, and to his heirs and assigns, FOREVER.

And the said Frank A. Carlisle and Adella C. Carlisle his wife
 for their heirs, executors and administrators, do covenant, grant, bargain and agree to and with the
 said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, that at the time of the executing and delivery of these presents
they were well seized of the premises above described as of a good, sure, perfect, absolute and indefeasible estate of
 inheritance in the law, in fee simple.

and that the same are free and clear from all incumbrances whatever.

and that the above bargained premises in the quiet and peaceful possession of
 the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, against all and every person or persons lawfully claiming the
 whole or any part thereof, they will forever WARRANT AND DEFEND.

In Witness Whereof, the said parties of the first part have hereunto set their hand, and seal, the day and year
 first above written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in Presence of

A. H. Thompson

Walter Sanford

State of Wisconsin,

County of Barron

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the

2nd day of January

A. D. 1901, personally came before me, the above named

Frank A. Carlisle and Adella C. Carlisle his wife

to me known to be the person or persons who executed the foregoing deed and acknowledged
 the same to be their free act and deed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Received for record the 5th day of Jan
 A. D. 1901 at 2 o'clock P. M.

W. T. Carter
 Register of Deeds.

Notarial
Seal

J. F. H. Long
 Notary Public Barron Co.
Me.

Frank Leisz Farm (continued)

It appears the original Frank Leisz farm is today at 239 11-3/4 Ave in the Town of Turtle Lake (according to the 1914 land/plat map on back cover).

Like his brothers, Frank acquired more land over the years. A May 2023 Barron County land records search spanning years 1890-1920, reveals the following (not all-inclusive):

15 Apr 1903: Mortgage, which is then fully satisfied 22 May 1914.

28 Jul 1903: Land Contract between Chas. and Anna Sindelar and Frank Leisz.

5 Jan 1907: Satisfaction of original mortgage from 2 Jan 1901.

5 Aug 1910: Indenture shows Frank Leisz purchases land from the Rivards, Bunkers and Richardsons for \$740.

30 Sep 1912: Indenture shows Frank Leisz purchases land in Turtle Lake Township from Karl and Anna Sindelar of Ballantine, Montana for \$3,000.

28 Oct 1912: Indenture shows Frank and Barbara Leisz purchase land from Andrew and Marion Hansen for \$5,350.

29 Oct 1912: Satisfaction of mortgage from 5 Aug 1910 .

7 Aug 1915: Warranty Deed shows Frank and Barbara Leisz sell property to Leopold Leisz for \$6,800, clear of all encumbrances except \$5,250 mortgages.

28 Jun 1918: Satisfaction of mortgage dated 28 Oct 1912 for \$5,350.

6 Oct 1919: Deed record shows Frank and Barbara Leisz pay \$2,800 to John and Mary Winkels for Lots No. One and Two Block Three Original Plat of Village of Almena, and are given full possession of above premises by 14 Oct 1919.

Post-1920 land transactions made by Frank and Barbara Leisz are yet to be identified through the Barron County Register of Deeds. We did, however, find a newspaper clipping from late fall 1938: *Home in Lower Turtle area owned by Frank and Barbara, but with son Mike and family living there, burns to ground. Located 3 mi SE of Turtle Lake, 1/2 mi E of County Trunk K. Large 8-rm structure, about 25 years old, modernized with running water, basement and electric wiring. Cause believed to be short circuit. Only kitchen stove, some bedding and table and chairs were removed. Summer's preserves, about 400 quarts, were lost, along with practically all clothing. Insurance covered loss of building but not household effects.*

Farm Life by Anton's daughter

"Chickens were the main work for our mother. Each spring she bought lots of baby chicks, some for egg laying, others for mighty good meals. Since we also had ducks, feathers and down were used in our pillows and feather ticks. Every Saturday evening our mother would take clean eggs she had gathered that week to Borkon's store so she could barter for items we didn't have on the farm, such as flour, sugar, etc. Occasionally, we did have geese (meanies), sometimes we also had a few turkeys, but they were difficult to raise.



Mary Magdalena "Marion" Leisz Hammang, youngest of 11 children of Anton, on their family farm. Marion shared these memories with us before her passing in 2022.

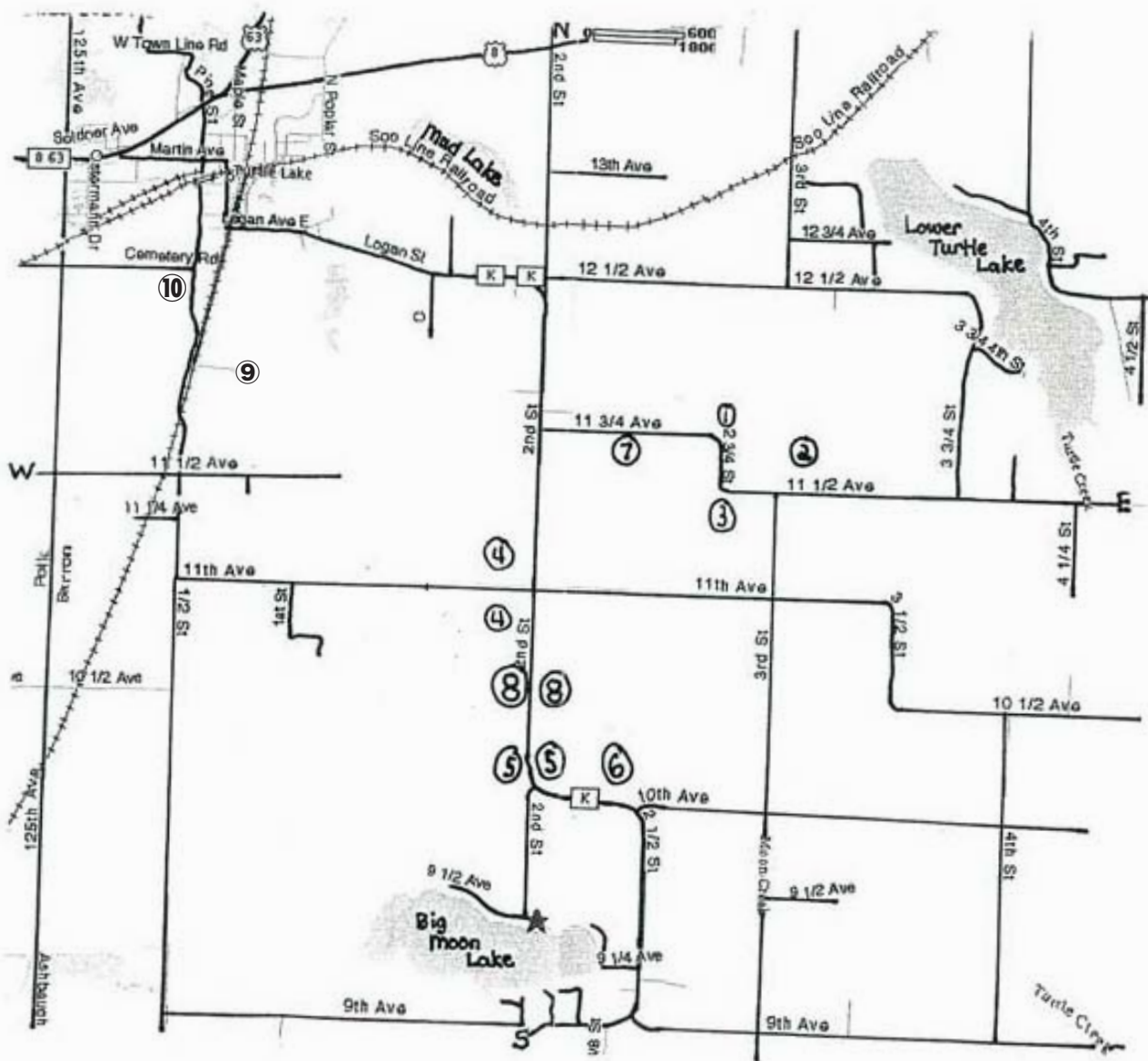
Certain chores required strength and speed, so these were always relative-assisted: threshing, haying, slaughtering of hogs, etc. Usually, once a year, we'd gather with relatives to slaughter a large pig. That was a very busy day... the kitchen had every inch of space in use, while the women and men were utilizing all the parts of the pig... sausage was made, lard was rendered, brains, liver, heart were all used quickly because we had no refrigeration. Many trips were made to the cellar, where the damp, cold earth did keep perishable items cold. All parts of the pig were used, including feet, skin, etc.

The Holstein cattle gave us abundant milk and cream. Our mother made her own cottage cheese and butter...later butter was bought at the creamery where our milk was delivered, but dad made sure we didn't use too much! Yet with the delicious homemade bread we had, spreading on the butter was mighty easy.

In addition to all the work of dairy cattle, our dad also raised bees, which necessitated removing the cones from the hives, placing them in a special unit to turn the handle fast and remove the honey...this was our job! Dad also had purple grape vines which produced a delicious wine he would prepare. Unfortunately, some of his sons liked it so much, he had to build a special vault in the basement to keep the supplies locked up!

How organized and self-sufficient we were in those days! Nearly all our food was grown or raised, except for flour, sugar, spices, citrus fruits, salt, fabric for sewing, thread, shoes, overalls, etc. Our mother had a huge garden each year, and we had fresh produce daily in summer. Excesses were always canned...a big job. On our farm, it seemed the norm was WORK, EAT, SLEEP!"

Leisz Family Farms



Key to map

1. FRANK LEISZ FARM
2. FRANK LEISZ FARM
3. JOHN LEISZ FARM
4. ANTON LEISZ FARM
5. JOSEPH LEISZ FARM
6. LEOPOLD LEISZ FARM
7. LAND OWNED BY ANTON LEISZ
8. ANTON AND JULIA DONAKER FARM
9. MARY LEISZ MINNICHSOFFER LAND
10. MICHAEL LEISZ FARM

1-8: Identified approx. 20 years ago by our cousins Roberta Meyer Lombardino (1932-2018) and Lorenz Leisz (1935-2013).

9: Identified by Denise Donaker Tornio, great-granddaughter of Mary Leisz Minnichsoffer.

10: Identified by Michael Leisz's grandchildren Michael H. Leisz (b 1950) and Rafflesberger sisters Janice, Nancy and Debra as the former Hellstern farm where their parents lived and farmed while in high school in the 1930s.

Joseph Leisz Farm

DATE:	June 11, 1901
ACREAGE:	80 more or less according to govt survey thereof
PRICE:	\$1,050 (\$30,882 in 2023)
SELLERS:	Denise & Adolph Turcott of Barron County, WI
BUYER:	Joseph Leisz of Barron County, WI
LOCATION:	The West Half (W 1/2) of the South West quarter (SW 1/4) of Section 9 Township 33 North of Range 14 West.
CURRENT OWNERS:	Michael & SONDY Merth

Since arriving in Turtle Lake in April 1894, Joseph Leisz and his younger brothers likely lived on their mother's property (see pp 5-6). After his first wife died in 1898, Joseph wed again in November 1900 to Louisa Haspray, 19. By the following June, he had purchased 80 acres and a log cabin for \$1,050. Joseph built his farmhouse around the cabin, and their mortgage was satisfied by 1913.

"...houses, barns and many smaller buildings were built with the assistance of relatives nearby," says Joseph's niece Marion Leisz Hammang (1928-2022). Most of the major buildings required much strength and speed, and were always relative-assisted. Family ties were very strong in those days."



70
55866
04

This Indenture, Made this 11th day of June, in the year of our Lord, one thousand Nine hundred and One (A D 1901) between Denise Purcott and Adolph Purcott her husband of Barron County, Wis.

Joseph Lising _____
parties of the first part, and _____
part of the second part,

Witnesseth, That the said parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of _____

Ten Hundred Fifty Dollars,
to them in hand paid by the said part of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby confessed and acknowledged, have given, granted, bargained, sold, remised, released, aliened, conveyed, and by these presents do give, grant, bargain, sell, remise, release, alien, convey and confirm unto the said part of the second part, their heirs and assigns, forever, the following described real estate situated in the County of Barron and State of Wisconsin, to-wit:

The West Half (W 1/2) of the South West quarter
(SW 1/4) of Section Nine (9) Township Thirty three
(33) North of Range Fourteen (14) West

(Six 50 US 22
stamps cancelled.)

Together, with all and singular the hereditaments and appurtenances therunto belonging or in anywise appertaining; and all the estate, right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever, of the said parties of the first part, either in law or equity, either in possession or expectancy of, in and to the above bargained premises, and their hereditaments and appurtenances.

To Have and to Hold the said premises as above described, with the hereditaments and appurtenances, unto the said part of the second part, and to their heirs and assigns, FOREVER.

And the said Denise Purcott and Adolph Purcott her husband for themselves and their heirs, executors and administrators, do covenant, grant, bargain and agree in and with the said part of the second part, their heirs and assigns, that at the time of the enrolling and delivery of these presents they shall and lawfully shall cause to be duly and lawfully seized of the premises above described as of a good, sure, perfect, absolute and indefeasible estate of inheritance in the law, in fee simple.

and that the same are free and clear from all incumbrances whatever,

and that the above bargained premises in the quiet and peaceful possession of the said part of the second part, their heirs and assigns, against all and every person or persons lawfully claiming the whole or any part thereof, they will forever WARRANT AND DEFEND.

In Witness Whereof, the said parties of the first part have hereunto set their hand and seal the day and year first above written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in Presence of

J. H. McKeen

J. H. Pender

Denise Purcott

Adolph Purcott
husband

State of Wisconsin,

County of Barron

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the 11th day of June

A. D. 1901, personally came before me, the above named

Denise Purcott and Adolph Purcott, her husband

to me known to be the person who executed the foregoing deed and acknowledged the same to be their free act and deed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Received for record the 18 day of June
A. D. 1901 at 12 o'clock P. M.

N. J. Carstensen
Register of Deeds.

Notar
Seal

J. H. McKeen
Notary Public Barron Co.
Wis.

Joseph Leisz Farm (continued)



Joseph and Louisa Leisz, August 1918, in their farmhouse kitchen. Louisa is pregnant with their eighth child, whom they would name Josephine.

The 1905 Wisconsin Census shows Joseph's mother, 66, living with him and his wife plus their children Marie, 4, and Anna, 2. They would go on to have seven more children, all born in their Turtle Lake farmhouse except for their youngest.

On February 2, 1918 tragedy struck when two of their children died of diphtheria in the same night—Tracey, 9, and Franky, 4. That spurred the family to sell their farm to Joseph's eldest brother John and move to Cleveland to live closer to Louisa's family and enjoy more city conveniences including better health care. Joseph sold his farm to his brother John in November 1919, and shortly thereafter the Joseph Leisz family left Turtle Lake and their beloved farm for Ohio.



Joseph Leisz Farm (continued)



Joseph's eldest child Marie (b 1901) works hard on the family dairy farm in August 1919, shortly before she left farm life behind and moved with her parents and siblings to Cleveland.

Disposition of Joseph's farm is found in land records as follows:

1919 Nov 17: Warranty Deed \$12,000 Joseph Leisz to J. Bunker & L. Richardson.

1920 Mar 15: Bunker & Richardson to John Leisz, covenants clear excepting a mortgage for \$7,000 which John Leisz assumes as part of the purchase price.

1922 Aug 22: John and Gertrude Leisz to John Franklin Leisz \$12,000 Land Contract.

1942 Nov 3: Sale to Frank J. and Frances Merth by John Franklin Leisz and wife plus his siblings.

1956 May 7: Fire in farmhouse—
Remembering the fire:
<https://tinyurl.com/bdf8x2cx>

1973 Oct: The Merth's son Michael purchases livestock and farm machinery.

1978 Sep 11: Frank and Frances Merth to son Michael Merth on Land Contract.

2001 Jun 11: Tornado takes barn, new shed, and wire corn cribs.



Joseph Leisz on his farm with dog Pal, circa 1910.

Land owned by Anton Leisz

DATE:	May 1, 1901
ACREAGE:	40 more or less according to govt survey thereof
PRICE:	\$450 (\$13,325 in 2023)
SELLERS:	Frank & Adella Partlow of Barron County, WI
BUYER:	Anton Leisz of Barron County, WI
LOCATION:	The South east quarter of the South east quarter (SE 1/4 of SE 1/4) of Section Number 4 in Township. Number 22 North, of Range Number 14 West.

In April 1894, Anton Leisz arrived in Turtle Lake at age 13. We know that in 1895 (according to that year's WI State Census), all members of the Leisz family who immigrated in 1893 were living together on the same property (see pp 5-6). By 1900 the Federal Census shows Anton living in his mother's household with brothers Joseph and Michael.

But like his brothers, the land-buying bug must have bitten Anton. Still single, he purchased 40 acres of farmland in 1901 for \$450. By this time his brother John



By 1924 the older children of Anton and Sophia Leisz had moved off the farm. Remaining were the younger children including Augie (b 1914), Al (b 1916), Helen (b 1919) and Millie (b 1922).

No 5304
 This Indenture, Made this 1st day of May, in the year of our Lord, one thousand Nine hundred and One, between Frank A. Carlton and Adella his wife of Dareau County, Wisconsin parties of the first part, and Antoni Leier of Dareau County, Wisconsin party of the second part,

Witnesseth, That the said parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of Three Hundred Fifty Dollars,

to them in hand paid by the said party of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby confessed and acknowledged, have given, granted, bargained, sold, remised, released, aliened, conveyed, and confirmed, and by these presents do give, grant, bargain, sell, remise, release, alien, convey and confirm unto the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, forever, the following described real estate situated in the County of Dareau and State of Wisconsin, to-wit:

The South east quarter of the South east quarter (S. 1/4 of S. 1/4) of Section Number Five (5) in Township Number thirty three (33) North, of Range Number Fourteen (14) West containing Forty (40) Acres more or less, according to the Government survey thereof

Together, with all and singular the hereditaments and appurtenances therunto belonging or in anywise appertaining; and all the estate, right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever, of the said parties of the first part, either in law or equity, either in possession or expectancy of, in and to the above bargained premises, and their hereditaments and appurtenances.

To Have and to Hold the said premises as above described, with the hereditaments and appurtenances, unto the said party of the second part, and to his heirs and assigns, FOREVER.

And the said Frank A. Carlton for himself his heirs, executors and administrators, do covenant, grant, bargain and agree to and with the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, that at the time of the executing and delivery of these presents he well seized of the premises above described as of a good, sure, perfect, absolute and indefeasible estate of inheritance in the law, in fee simple.

and that the same are free and clear from all incumbrances whatever, except acts of second party since November 22nd, 1899

to and that the above bargained premises in the quiet and peaceful possession of the said party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, against all and every person or persons lawfully claiming the whole or any part thereof, he will forever WARRANT AND DEFEND.

In Witness Whereof, the said parties of the first part have hereunto set their hand and seal the day and year first above written.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in Presence of

A. H. Thompson

J. H. McKenzie

Frank A. Carlton

Adella C. Carlton

(One so called stamp cancelled)

State of Wisconsin,

County of Dareau

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the 1st day of May

A. D. 1901, personally came before me, the above named

Frank A. Carlton and Adella C. Carlton

to me known to be the person who executed the foregoing deed and acknowledged the same to be their free act and deed for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Received for record the 2nd day of May A. D. 1901 at 2 o'clock P. M.

W. L. Carlton

Register of Deeds.

Notary
Seal

J. H. McKenzie

Notary Public, Dareau Co.
Wis

Anton Leisz Farm (continued)

owned 120 acres, Frank owned 80, and Joseph would buy 80 acres a month after Anton's purchase. In April 1903 Anton Leisz, 22, wed Sophia Donaker, 18—the sister of his brother Frank's wife Barbara.

Recent 2023 research by family members suggests that the Anton Leisz farm and homestead are the original 80-acre parcel purchased by his mother on March 7, 1900 (see pp 5-6). In April 1894 when the extended Leisz family first arrived in Wisconsin from Chicago, they moved to this farm three miles southeast of Turtle Lake which they apparently rented from its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Lohrbauer of St. Paul until Mary purchased the land in 1900.

Fast forward to 1905, when, according to the Wisconsin Census, their mother is residing with her son Joseph on his farm, while Anton, 25, is head of his own household and a farmer, living with wife Sophia, 19 and firstborn of 11 children, Sophia, 2; also living with them was Anton's single brother Michael, 23, a farmer.

Like his brothers, Anton continued to acquire more land over the years. A Barron County land records search, conducted in May 2023, and spanning years 1890-1920, reveals the following (not all-inclusive):



View of the Anton Leisz farm, which is likely the original 1894 land where the first Leisz family members to immigrate rented and lived on until matriarch Mary purchased this 80 acres in 1900.

Anton Leisz Farm (continued)

30 Jan 1906: Satisfaction of mortgage from 20 Feb 1904.

12 Nov 1907: Indenture shows Anton and Sophia Leisz purchase 40 acres from the H. Lohrbauer Land Company for \$385.

23 Jan 1908: Satisfaction of mortgage from 20 Feb 1904.

23 Jan 1908: Indenture shows Anton Leisz purchases from Christina Stricker of Taylor County for \$140 the following: Lot 4 in Block 5 in the Village of Turtle Lake.

9 Dec 1909: Satisfaction of mortgage from 2 Jan 1903.

21 Feb 1910: Satisfaction of mortgage from 3 Mar 1905.

24 Jan 1911: Land record shows Anton Leisz buys property in Turtle Lake Township from Karl and Anna Sindelar of Yellowstone County, Montana for \$450.

Post-1920 land transactions made by Anton and Sophia Leisz are yet to be identified through the Barron County Register of Deeds. We did, however, learn the following in our research:

Electricity wasn't installed until 1928, the year their youngest child Marion Leisz Hammang (1928-2022) was born. She lived on the farm for 13 years before her parents retired in 1941, moved to town, and sold the original farm to their son Tony Jr. (1906-1997).

Anton Leisz died in 1942, but his son Tony stayed on the home farm until 1956. He then sold it to his son, Raymond A. "Bruno" Leisz (1936-2010) who farmed the land with his three sons. Meanwhile Anton's son August Leisz (1914-1998) purchased land near Lower Turtle Lake that Anton had bought during the Great Depression and farmed there with his six children.



Helen Leisz (b 1919) was the 4th youngest of Anton and Sophia's 11 children. Once she reached adulthood, Helen left the farm to become a hairdresser in St. Paul, then in the mid-1940s moved with sister Millie to Southern California.

Leopold Leisz Farm

DATE:	November 17, 1902
ACREAGE:	120
PRICE:	\$1,700 (\$59,138 in 2023) on land contract
SELLERS:	William & Adell Turcott
BUYER:	Leopold Leisz of Barron County, WI
LOCATION:	The East Half (1/2) of the South West quarter (1/4) of Section 9 Township 33 North of Range (14) West.
CURRENT OWNER:	Marge Frederick

Leopold Leisz and his family didn't arrive in the U.S. until June 24, 1902. By November 1902 he purchased property on land contract from William & Adell Turcott. The land was adjacent to his brother Joseph's farm. Leopold paid \$200 up front and \$150 each November 17th from 1904-1913, at 8 percent interest.

Leopold was at a disadvantage for running his farm, as he and wife Anna had lost their first four children in infancy or early childhood. This meant they were up in years when their surviving children grew old enough for farm work.



This Article of Agreement, Made and concluded this 17th day of November, one thousand nine hundred and ten (1910), by and between William Tinscott and Adella Tinscott his wife parties of the first part, and Leopold Leiszy party of the second part,

Witnesseth, First, That the said part of of the second part hereby agree s and binds himself legal representatives, to pay, or cause to be paid, to the said party of the first part, their heirs or assigns, the sum of seventeen hundred (\$1700.00) Dollars, in the manner following: two hundred Dollars, at the ensembling and delivery thereof; one hundred and fifty dollars per year from the 17th day of November and followed 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, with interest payable annually at the rate of 8%

The said payments to be made to the part of of the first part, in person, or their legal representative and the same being intended to apply, when fully completed, as the purchase money of the following tract, piece or parcel of land, situate in the County of Bacon and State of Wisconsin: The East one half (1/2) of the South West 1/4 quarter (1/4) of Section nine (9) Township thirty (30) North of Range fourteen (14) West

The said part of of the second part Further Agree s and Covenant s that he will pay all taxes special or general, which have been assessed on the above described premises since the first of January, 1910 and also all such as may be hereafter assessed thereon, whenever such taxes shall become due and payable by law, until the aforesaid purchase money shall be fully paid, in the manner above stated; and also to hold the said premises, from the date hereof, as the tenant of sufferance of the said part of of the first part, subject to be removed as the tenant holding over, by process under the statute in such case made and provided; whenever default shall be made in the payment of any of the installments of purchase money above specified; and also to keep the buildings, fences and improvements on said premises in as good repair and condition as they now are, except ordinary wear and decay, and damage by the elements.

Second. That the said part of of the first part, hereby agree s and binds himself legal representatives, heirs, executors and administrators, that in case the aforesaid sum of seventeen hundred (\$1700.00) Dollars, with the interest, shall be fully paid, at the times and in the manner above specified, he will, on demand, thereafter cause to be executed and delivered to the said part of of the second part, or his heirs or legal representatives, a good and sufficient Deed, in fee simple, of the premises above described, free and clear of all legal liens and incumbrances, except the taxes herein agreed to be paid by the part of of the second part. And it is distinctly agreed and understood by and between the parties hereto, that if the said part of of the second part shall fail to make any of the payments of purchase money above specified, at the times and in the manner above specified, in such case this agreement shall be henceforth utterly void, and all payments thereon forfeited, subject to be revived and renewed only by the act of the part of of the first part, or the mutual agreement of both parties.

In Testimony Whereof, the said parties have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

IN PRESENCE OF

William Tinscott [SEAL]
Adella Tinscott [SEAL]
Leopold Leiszy [SEAL]

Leopold Leisz Farm (continued)



Leopold and Anna Leisz in front of their farmhouse in Turtle Lake, circa 1915.

Eldest son Leo Jr. had a severely injured foot. Daughter Mary Ethel had polio which made it tough for her to work on the farm. Son Lewie died of diphtheria in 1918. Other boys Andrew, Anton and Fred were joined by sisters AnnaMarie, Louise and Kay.

Like his brothers, Leopold continued to acquire more land over the years until his death in 1925. A Barron County land records search, conducted in May 2023, and spanning years 1890-1920, reveals the following (not all-inclusive):

17 Nov 1902: Indenture shows Leopold Leisz acquires 120 acres on land contract from William and Adell Turcott for \$1,700.

27 Mar 1904: Satisfaction of mortgage from 17 Dec 1903.

7 Aug 1915: Warranty Deed shows Frank and Barbara Leisz sell property to Leopold Leisz for \$6,800, clear of all encumbrances except \$5,250 mortgages.

28 Dec 1915: Satisfaction of mortgage from 5 Nov 1906.

20 Dec 1919: Indenture shows Leopold and Anna Leisz sell land to Leopold Leisz Jr. and wife Cecelia for \$6,000.

30 Jan 1926: Original Leopold Leisz farm is sold to Edward Meyer, a single man, for \$4,750. He would go on to marry Leopold's eldest daughter AnnaMarie Leisz.

Leopold Leisz Farm (continued)

Bill of Sale

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That *Leopold Leisz Sr.* of the County of Barron and State of Wisconsin, party of the first part, in consideration of the sum of One Dollar to him in hand paid

by *Anna Leisz, his wife* of the County of Barron and State of Wisconsin party of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, does hereby grant, Bargain, Sell and Convey unto the party of the second part, his heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, forever, the following described Goods, Chattels and Personal Property, to wit:

- 12 Cows of various breeds and ages
- 1 Balding Bull about 3 years old
- 4 Black and white Calves from weaners to one year old, Etc.
- 100 Chickens
- 1 Farming binder, 1 McCormick mower, 1 McCormick Hay rake
- 1 Sugar, 1 Hay Tedder, 1 S.H.P. Gas Engine,
- 1 Potato digger, 1 Potato Planter, 1 Potato Sifter,
- 1 Farming Mill, 1 Cutter, 1 Corn Planter, 1/2 interest in Corn binder, 1-2 Horse Cultivator, 1 Spring tooth harrow, 1 smoothing harrow, 1 1/2 H.P. Gas Engine, and all other implements and small tools now on my farm and not otherwise disposed of.
- all household and Kitchen Furniture, beds, bedding and supplies,
- all feed and hay now on farm,
- one share in White Cloud Cheese Factory,
- one twentieth interest in Threshing Co.,
- 1/3 interest in Silage Cutter.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, THE SAME, unto the said party of the second part, his executors, administrators and assigns, Forever. and the said party of the first part, for himself, his heirs, executors and administrators, covenants and agrees to and with the said party of the second part, his executors, administrators and assigns, to Warrant and Defend the sale of said Goods, Chattels, and Personal Property hereby made unto the said party of the second part, his executors, administrators and assigns, against all and all and every person and persons whomsoever, lawfully claiming or to claim the same?

IN TESTAMONY WHEREOF, The said party of the first part has hereunto set his hand and seal this 29th of November 1924

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in the Presence of

J.H. Brumfer
J.M. Wright

Leo Leisz Sr.

Many bills of sale such as this one were found among paperwork of Leopold Leisz Sr., saved by his granddaughter Roberta Meyer Lombardino. In 1924 when Leopold became ill, he began transferring assets to family members, often for the nominal sum of \$1. He died in 1925.

Michael Leisz Land

Michael Leisz's land ownership and farming in the Turtle Lake area is unclear. His older grandchildren have some memories, but putting together a full picture of Michael's land acquisitions is a challenge. Grandchildren Michael H. Leisz and sisters Janice Rafflesberger Warner, Nancy Rafflesberger Kelly and Deb Rafflesberger Avery remember their grandparents living at the old Hellstern farm on Cemetery Street. Michael's son Bernard "Bruno" Leisz (1913-1994) would be kept home from school each August-November to pick potatoes, recalls his son Mike. Bruno's sister Margaret Leisz Rafflesberger (1915-2007) was farming while in high school, where she was a star athlete, recall her daughters Janice, Nancy and Deb. So it is the old Hellstern farm that we've marked as No. 10, the Michael Leisz Farm, on page 17 of this booklet. Additionally, here are some land transactions from a Barron County land records search, conducted in May 2023, and spanning years 1890-1920 (not all-inclusive):

17 Apr 1903: Mortgage, made and executed by Maria Leiss, a widow, and Michael Leiss, a single man.

8 Mar 1905: Indenture of \$200 for 40 acres, between Maria Leiss, a widow, to Mike Leisz, except Maria Leiss reserves life lease of said premises during the period of her natural life.

7 Nov 1906: Satisfaction of mortgage from 17 April 1903 made and executed by Maria Leiss, a widow, and Michael Leiss, a single man.

4 Nov 1912: Satisfaction of mortgage made and executed by Mike and Rosalia Leisz to Otto Bremer.

4 Nov 1912: Warranty deed for \$4,400 to Herman Fay and Katherine Fay, his wife, in hand paid by Mike Leisz.

19 Jan 1916: Indenture of \$5,850 between Ray and Bessie Winter, and William and Nellie Stokes to Mike and Rosalia Leisz; "excepting two mortgages for \$5,000 and interest".

22 Aug 1916: Partial satisfaction of mortgage: Rosella Leisz to Bank of Turtle Lake, a mortgage to secure the payment of to the bank of \$1,379.50. She requests the bank to release from lien of said mortgage all of said premises except South east Quarter of 33-34-14.

4 Feb 1919: Satisfaction of mortgage dated 14 Oct 1911, executed by Michael Leiss and Rosalia Leiss his wife, and Maria Leiss, a widow to L. M. Richardson, who releases all his right, title and interest to the premises.

12 Dec 1919: Warranty Deed for \$18,645 to J.H. and Katie Bunker, and L.M. and Frances Richardson, in hand paid by Mike Leisz. Free and clear of all encumbrances excepting a mortgage for \$6,800 which Mike Leisz is to pay as part of the purchase price.

24 Mar 1920: Satisfaction of mortgage dated 22 Aug 1916, executed by Rosella Leisz to Bank of Turtle Lake.

Regarding Michael Leisz's occupation over the years, records show he owned The Corner Saloon in Turtle Lake. When Prohibition became law in 1919, he ran the saloon as a restaurant.

In 1930 when Anton Leisz purchased the Fisk Hotel in Turtle Lake, he hired his brother Michael and wife Rosalia to manage the business for him. In 1931, Anton's son Hank Leisz took over the Fisk Hotel's management duties.



When the Leisz family came to the U.S. in 1893, youngest son Michael was just 10 years old.

1900: Michael, 18, is a laborer living with brothers Joe and Anton in the household of their mother.

1905: Michael, 23, is living with his brother Anton. In September he weds Alvina Wabschall and their son Herbert Walter is born in 1906.

1908: Michael, now divorced, marries his 2nd wife Rosalia Prosser.

1910: Michael, 27, is living on a farm noted as owned with his wife, 18, and son, 4 months.

1920: Michael, Rosalia and their five children are living on Church Street in Turtle Lake.

1930: Michael, Rosalia and their six children are living in a home noted as owned in Turtle Lake. Michael's occupation is listed as farmer.

1940: Michael, 57, and Rosalia, 48, are living in a rented house in Turtle Lake. Occupation field on Federal Census is left blank.

1942: Michael's WWII draft card lists his employer as Hank Leisz (his nephew, son of his brother Anton) and working as a bartender.

Mary Leisz Minnichsoffer Land



Only ruins are left today of the Mary Leisz Minnichsoffer homestead just outside of the Village of Turtle Lake. Photo taken in 2018 by Mary's great-granddaughters.

Mary Leisz Minnichsoffer, sister of the six Leisz brothers, arrived in Turtle Lake with her family in April 1900 after immigrating through Canada. It appears the family had few assets, as immigration records show her mother had to send them money for transport from Quebec to Wisconsin. The Minnichsoffers had seven children—two sons and five daughters, the two youngest born in Turtle Lake.

Mary's husband John was a stone mason by trade, but was a farmer when he arrived in the U.S. It's unclear if he worked for the Leisz brothers on their farms, or if his mother-in-law helped in purchase of land for the Minnichsoffer family.

But tragedy struck on February 13, 1903 when Mary died of pneumonia at age 41; her youngest child Annie was just four months old. Two years later, the 1905 Wisconsin Census shows widower John, 40, as head of the household with children Joe, 16, Katie, 13, Mary, 11, Tracy, 7, John, 5, and Anna, 2. Eldest child Julia, 18, had married a man named Anton Donaker (see next page), who happened to be the brother of her maternal aunts Barbara and Sophia Leisz. Three years later John Minnichsoffer would be dead as well. Eldest son Joe would marry in 1915 and farm in Lindstrom, Minnesota. Katie wed Anton Hellstern in 1911 and they farmed in Turtle Lake. Tracy went to live with her Uncle Joseph on his farm. John went to live with his eldest sister Julia. And youngest, Annie was raised by her Uncle Anton.

Julia Minnichsoffer Donaker Farm

After her mother died in 1903, eldest child Julia (1887-1960) was working as a housekeeper for Anton Donaker, whose farm was adjacent to Joseph Leisz farm. They married in about 1905 and had five children: Julia (b 1905), Sophie (b 1907), Jacob (b 1909), Marie (b 1917) and Anton Jr (b 1920).

By 1950 Anton, 70, and Julia, 62, were living off the farm on Martin Street in town. Meanwhile the Donaker's youngest child Anton Jr. had purchased the family farm from his parents. He and wife Frances, whom he wed in 1951, had five daughters, all raised on the Donaker property—a working dairy farm. In May 2023 daughter Marlene Donaker Long (b 1957) recalls that the farm had 160 acres, 29 cows, and woods from which logs were harvested to heat the house. In fall the sisters and mother did a lot of canning and freezing from their large garden. They also sold pickles to the pickle factory in Turtle Lake. The Donaker farm had a lot of buildings, recalls Marlene: garage, machine shed, pigsty, horse barn, chicken coop, barn, pumphouse, milkhouse, grainery, corn crib, smokehouse, wood shed and house.

When the Anton Jr. family couldn't keep up the farm, it was auctioned and the land sold to Rickard Fick before Anton Jr. died in 1986. Today the Donaker farm is owned by Tom Merth, whose brother Michael Merth and wife SONDY own the original Joseph Leisz farm next door.



Anton and Julia Donaker on their farm in Turtle Lake, circa 1915, with three of their five children Julia (upper left), Mary and Jacob.



Anton Donaker Jr. with wife Frances, whom he wed in 1951. Anton Jr. took over the original Donaker farm in Turtle Lake for ~35 years.

