

In the winter of 1838-39, John De La Ronde and Judge Silas Walsworth, both at that time engaged in trading with the Indians, and living at or near Fort Winnebago, hired a small crew of men, and proceeded to get out square timber on the Lemonweir River, a few miles above its mouth. After the timber was disposed of the ensuing spring, La Ronde returned to the Lemonweir, and built a trading-post on the site of the present village of Mauston. This was the first settlement or improvement made by the white man at that point, even for a temporary purpose. At that time, La Ronde had in his employ a young Canadian, by the name of Norbert St. Germaine, who was left in charge of the trading-post, when completed, during the remainder of that season, and the greater part of the next.

This was the only settlement made at the point mentioned until the year 1842. In the summer of this year, J. B. McNeil, and two men named Elmore and McAlister, after making an exploration of the river, and finding sufficient pine timber on the stream to justify it, entered into a co-partnership to carry on the lumber business. Accordingly, procuring the necessary crew of men, and a supply of provisions, &c., they commenced the erection of a dam and mill, which were completed; and the mill put in operation early the ensuing season. After running the mill and lumber business in company for three years, McNeil and McAlister sold out their interest in the claim and improvements to Joseph Hewlett. The company now consisted of Hewlett and Elmore; but the latter dying two or three years subsequent to the purchase by Hewlett, and not having any relations in the country, Mr. Hewlett became sole owner of the property, and continued in the business in his own name until the time of his death, which occurred in the year 1848, or 1849.

During the time Hewlett was operating the mill, he became connected in the lumber business with Gen. M. M. Maughs, of Galena, Ill., and at the time of Hewlett's death, Gen. Maughs came into full possession of the mill property and other improvements, and subsequently became the proprietor of the original village of Mauston—the village taking the name of the proprietor.

After taking possession of the mill and premises, Gen. Maughs