



Hanerville Oak

Norris Linderud (1955)

The Hanerville Oak

A large handsome bur oak tree, called the Hanerville Oak, used to loom like an impregnable traffic cop in the very center of an intersection, halfway between Stoughton and Edgerton in the Town of Dunkirk in Dane County. It stood across from the old stone Hanerville School, now closed, and the children who went there accepted the tree matter-of-factly, not realizing the effort it took to prevent the tree's destruction in 1934 when County Highway N was being rebuilt. The tree grew in the center of the proposed road. A man named Tharon Miller led the fight to save the oak because it had been a witness tree, a section marker used by surveyors in 1833. After all, the oak had seen the early settlers pass be-

neath it on their way from Janesville to Madison, and it had no doubt noted the arrival of Luke Stoughton as he neared the site of the town he would found.

The Edgerton Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution agreed with Miller. Their sentiment prevailed, and the DAR marked the tree with a bronze tablet that called attention to its historic importance.

Now, unfortunately, the tree is no longer standing. While this means that motorists unfamiliar with the area will not need to worry about bumping into a tree growing in the middle of an intersection, it also means that they will never be made aware of an interesting bit of history along the route.

Source: Norris Linderud, Hanerville