
**Miss L. Perrine Writes to Historian Reuben Thwaites about the Founding Site of
the Republican Party in Ripon
1899**

Miss L. Perrine wrote this letter to inform Reuben Thwaites, a historian at the Wisconsin Historical Society, about the historical significance of her home in Ripon. The town of Ripon claims to be the birthplace of the Republican Party. Townspeople gathered together to discuss the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. This act enabled settlers to decide if their territories would allow slavery. Wisconsin residents protested this new act and decided to form a new party. Although the founding city of the Republican Party has been disputed, Ripon is generally considered the birthplace of the idea for a Republican Party. —Lindsay Simonsen

Sources: Reuben Gold Thwaites Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society; “Wisconsin and the Republican Party,” <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/tp-022/?action=more_essay>.

Ripon Wis
Sept 14, 1899

Hon. R. G. Thwaites

Dear Sir

I have been directed to write you in regard to an historical building here in Ripon.

It is the house in which the Republican [P]arty had its birth[,] also the first home ever owned by ex governor G.W. Peck[.] It was the first school house built in this city[.] Major A.E. Bovay[,] who is still living[,] called the first meeting which assembled in the congregational church[.] The other meetings which followed were held in the said school house and here is where the GOP[?] was born[.] This is well known to the citizens of this city. The school house with but [a] few changes was converted into a dwelling house. In the year of 1866 [it] was bought by G.W. Peck wh[ich] in the year of [18]69 was sold to my father J. Perrine who died over a year ago aged 93[.] My sister who is an invalid and myself own it now and as we have but very little of this world[']s goods[,] would like to dispose of it if we could get enough to take care of us in our old age as we have nothing as [we have] no one else to look to. I[']ve thought [the house] might be made use of as an historical relic therefore have written to you[.] I can send you a newspaper with an article taken from the St. Louis Globe Democrat to prove this is true as well can refer to prominent citizens of the place.

Yours with respect – Miss L. Perrine

[This text was created by Lindsay Simonsen as part of the “Documenting Wisconsin History” project, supervised by Professor David Voelker at the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay. This project had support from UWGB’s Research Council.]



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