

Why Did They Name It That?

by Jimmie Close

This is a “Please, don’t kill the messenger” story!

Heinrich von Manse was among the trappers who settled on the Red Axe River in Wisconsin. To work their trap lines, the trappers relied primarily on canoes for transport. The trappers would often overload the canoes, which would make them unstable and subject to capsizing. So, Heinrich designed and built a flat bottomed boat that had greater capacity than the canoe.

There was one drawback, however, The new boat was much more difficult to propel, especially when fully loaded. Often, when von Manse would return from tending his traps, struggling to get his overloaded craft to shore, the citizens of the settlement would rush to the river bank to offer encouragement with the chant, “Row, Manse! Row, Manse!”

What became known as the “Row Manse” place evolved into the town of Romance, Wisconsin.

...and that’s the way it was!

