

Credit River Is on the Map, But Can You Find It?

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On the map of Minnesota is a place called Credit River.

I like places with unusual names. I'm only guessing, but I'd be surprised if you can find another place in the United States named Credit River.

Picking an unusual name on the map isn't a bad way to start a weekend tour. It gives you a question to ask when you get there, an excuse to talk to people.

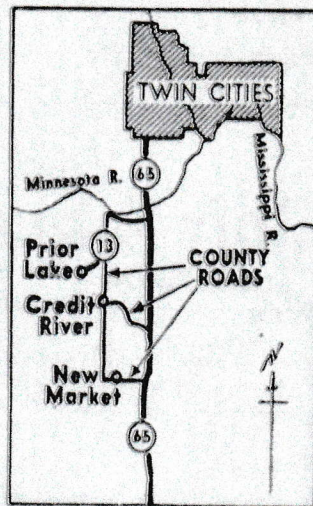
Let me warn you that Credit River isn't easy to find, if you've never been there, but that's a plus, too.

My map placed Credit River in eastern Scott County. The road going through it was unnumbered. It appeared to branch southward off Hwy. 13, but 13 didn't turn south on the side of Savage where my map showed it turning, so I took Hwy. 65 south and looked for a road leading west into Credit River. The map showed it going west at the same place that it went east to Lakeville. When I came to a crossroad with a Lakeville sign on it, I followed it in the opposite direction. I reasoned that it would take me right into Credit River.

It didn't. It wound around considerably until I saw a church steeple and a water tower in the distance. I managed to get there, all right, but it wasn't Credit River. It was New Market, which isn't a bad name, either.

I was glad I found it, because it was an interesting place with a big Catholic church on the edge of an impressive stand of Norway pines. A little automobile trail leads through the trees to the stations of the cross.

A look at the map showed me that I had to go straight north about seven miles from New Market to find Credit River. This time I was right. In just seven miles I came to a crossroads. Three corners were occupied, one with a farmhouse, another with a tavern and a third with a building labeled "Credit River Store."



Upon investigation I found Ervin E. Bistodeau, not in the store but in its basement running an auto body shop. He converted the building to this purpose two years ago. The only storekeeping was being done across the street in the tavern. The tavern owners, likewise Credit River residents of only two years' standing, sent me across the street to the farmhouse for my historical research.



Bistodeau

This was the home of Mr. and Mrs. John F. Casey. Here I struck pay dirt. Casey said his maternal grandparents, named Faricy, came to the county 108 years ago. He has been farming there all his life.

"I didn't found the cemetery," he said, "but I helped put the sign on it." The sign says, "Credit River Catholic Cemetery, Founded 1858."

The Casey farm, tidy and prosperous, is diversified. The income is mostly from dairy farming. The Credit River is a small stream that works its way through rather flat bottom land to the Minnesota River in dairy country.



Donald Casey



John Casey

Mrs. Casey, their son Donald, and Casey's brother, Robert J., sat down in the living room and listened while Casey, who keeps a scrap book of Credit River memorabilia, ran through the three versions of how Credit River got its name. "None of them makes much sense," he said.

(1) At a boat landing where the Credit River meets the Minnesota was a general store where early pioneers shopped. One day the storekeeper gave credit to one from up the river without getting his name. Thereafter his wife referred to the river as "Credit River."

(2) An early missionary priest, while delayed at the river by high water, happened upon a dying man and administered the last sacrament. When the man's wife thanked him, he replied, "Give the credit to the river."

(3) It's named after a river in Ireland.

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