

## CHAPTER XVII

### LODI VILLAGE

THE BEGINNINGS OF LODI—I. H. PALMER AND THE BARTHOLOMEWS—REV. HENRY MAYNARD—THE SUCKERS SETTLEMENT BECOMES FAMOUS—SETTLERS OF 1846—FIRST M. D. AND D. D.—OTHER PHYSICIANS—SOUTH VS. NORTH, BEFORE THE WAR—I. H. PALMER FOUNDS LODI—PROGRESS OF LOCAL SCHOOLS—VILLAGE CHARTER—WATER SERVICE AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING—THE METHODIST CHURCH—THE BAPTIST CHURCH—LODI LODGES—BUSINESS HOUSES—BANKS OF LODI—HERBERT PALMER, SON OF LODI'S FOUNDER

Lodi is one of the prettiest villages in the county, advantageously situated on Spring Creek, a tributary of the Wisconsin River. Although its site and the surrounding country are broken and picturesque, the territory tributary to it is productive and prosperous. The consequence is that Lodi is both a good residence town and the center of a solid trade. It is the largest center of population on the Chicago & North Western Railway in the county and has adequate transportation and banking facilities for handling both local and tributary trade.

#### THE BEGINNINGS OF LODI

The early history of Lodi and the surrounding country is thus told by a pioneer of the place: "After the lapse of more than half a century from the first settlement of Lodi, a new generation has sprung up, and new faces are thronging our streets.

"To these, perhaps, a few reminiscences connected with the first settlement of this place may prove interesting. Today there is but a remnant left of those who first staked their all on what is now the town of Lodi. Soon these, too, will vacate their places.

"The land in this vicinity was surveyed by the United States Government in 1833 and prior to 1835. The first entries from Government

were made by what is known as the Western Land Company, organized in Washington in 1836, for speculative purposes. Among the members of this company were John P. Hale, W. H. Seward and Daniel Webster—hence the name of Webster bluff.

“The land located for this company was done through agents and mostly from Government surveys, and was N. E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 33, known as the Dwinnell farm; N. W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 34, known as the Joe Riddle farm; the N. W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 27, known as the old Dunlap and Freye farm; the whole of Section 21, being the Chalfant and Narracong farms, the S. E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 20, the Frank Groves farm, and a few other forty acres in this town and some lands in West Point.

“The question may be asked why the high prairie land of the Dwinnell farm and some others were selected and the more desirable water powers along the creek were left vacant. The answer is, the creek was erroneously located on the Government plats, on Dunlap’s hill. Then came the financial crash of 1837, the like of which our country has not experienced—no, not to this day.

#### I. H. PALMER AND THE BARTHOLOMEWS

“The first to spy out the natural advantages of this section were I. H. Palmer, a noted Nimrod of that period, who made frequent incursions into this region in pursuit of choice locations, venison and bear pelts, but principally the latter; and M. C. and G. M. Bartholomew, sons of General Bartholomew of McClain County, Illinois, who represented the district in Congress in about 1824, and who distinguished himself in the Black Hawk War.

“These sons being bred to a pioneer life and fond of adventures, sought out this village for the purpose of making themselves a home, and securing a competence by the sweat of their brows, which failed to materialize (the competence), by selling calico, coffee, and codfish in Illinois. They, too, made strong claims to superiority in marksmanship and often tried titles with Judge Palmer. Who bore off the belt in these contests legend fails to record.

#### REV. HENRY MAYNARD

“In the spring and summer of 1845 the Messrs. Bartholomew were joined by Rev. Henry Maynard, who although not an expert with a rifle was noted for pouring hot shot into sinners—indeed, he made the atmosphere quite sulphuric at times. He was accompanied by his family, his wife being the first white woman in Lodi. The fall of this year the

families of the Messrs. Bartholomew arrived. The same fall W. G. Simons, from Sauk prairie, located up the creek and shortly after was joined by his brother-in-law, Joshua Abbot. Freedom Simons came to Dane and afterward to Lodi.

#### THE SUCKERS SETTLEMENT BECOMES FAMOUS

“In the spring of 1846 the fame of the ‘Suckers settlement in Spring Creek valley’ having spread abroad, emigrants from Illinois and other parts poured in.

“Simultaneously in the month of May came Joseph Brown, Jacob Hurley and their families; Messrs. Bowman and family, including her stalwart son Adam; and John Foote. About this time came the Strouds, four brothers, all bachelors except Morrill, whose wife died soon after and whose grave was decorated by the soldiers for years as being that of Thomas Bunker, Jr. Other arrivals from Illinois were John Chance, Horace Andrews, Johnson Sowards and John Newberry. James McCloud located a claim and built a shanty this year where the brick house now stands.

#### SETTLERS OF 1846

“In the fall of this year G. T. Simons, a youth of eighteen, came from New York. Nature had given him a good physical organization. He could split more rails in a day, and run twenty miles quicker than any other man in Wisconsin. His brother Joseph came earlier, with W. G. Simons. James M. Steel came about this time, and was followed by his brothers, Edward and John, in 1850. This year (1846) Mr. Thomas with a family of unmarried sons and daughters located near Chrystal Lake, and other emigrants came from Canada and the eastern states—Ira Polley, H. M. Ayer, Dr. Drew, Alonzo Waterbury, Harlow Kelsey, John Newman, and Mr. Baldwin.

#### THE BLACHLEY SETTLEMENT

“It was this year that the nucleus of what was known as the Blachley settlement started in Dane county and afterward spread into Lodi.

#### FIRST M. D. AND D. D.

“Dr. Eben Blachley was the first regularly ordained D. D. and M. D. combined in one, to administer Calvinism and calomel—the fumes of

brimstone and blue mass all worked out of the system by a small dose of spiritual consolation and a big dose of castor oil, followed by a Dovers powder to keep down internal disorders.

“But most of us survived, Herbert Eaton, two years old, a son of J. O. Eaton, a fine, delicate little boy, unable to withstand such potations, was laid away in the old cemetery at the corner of Section 27.

#### OTHER PHYSICIANS

“After a year or so other M. D.’s attempted to establish a practice. Dr. Cathcart, after failing to find a remunerative market for his pills and powders, sought to earn his living by the sweat of his brow. He took the job of building a hotel for Freedom Simons on the corner where Briggs house now stands, in payment for an already accumulated board bill, and, finding the place too miserably healthy to succeed in his profession, he packed his pills and lancet and sought other localities. In the course of time he was followed by other M. D.’s at intervals—Ingals, Warren, Lake, Heath, and G. H. Irwin, all reasonably successful in alleviating the ills to which humanity is heir, the latter bequeathing to his posterity a place he so eminently filled.

#### SOUTH VS. NORTH, BEFORE THE WAR

“The first settlers here were of Southern extraction, originally from Kentucky and Virginia; hence their trend of thought, their principles and ideas took their cue from the South, while those from the northern and eastern states were of Puritan extraction, with different views and habits. Having eeked a scanty subsistence on the rugged hills of New England, they fell into habits of most rigid economy, condescending to little things in business transactions which gave them the name of being ‘tight,’ ‘close’ and ‘picayunish.’ All through the South and West, before the War, the term ‘Yankee’ was the most opprobious epithet that could be applied to a person.”

#### I. H. PALMER FOUNDS LODI

In February, March and April, 1846, Mr. Palmer entered at the land office in Mineral Point various portions of Section 27 in the present Township of Lodi, on the western banks of Spring Creek. He found that the majority of the choice lands owned by the Government had been taken up by speculators. They had passed these by, and he knew they were choice because he had thoroughly canvassed the southwestern

portion of Columbia County in the summer of 1845, having found a fine water power at this point.

In April, 1846, Mr. Palmer arrived upon the ground and prepared to get out timber for a sawmill and a log house for his family. The sawmill was in operation by fall, his family having "got settled" in the previous June; consequently Mr. Palmer was the first actual settler within the present village limits and founder of its first industry. In 1847 he also petitioned for a postoffice and a ferry at the scene of his operations, both of which were granted. Mr. Palmer's commission for postmaster was signed April 17, 1848, and on the 25th of the succeeding month he recorded the first plat of the Village of Lodi. The founder of Lodi would have been accounted a hustler even today.

In the fall of 1848 Mr. Palmer completed a store building which was soon occupied by Thomas & Pinney, young men who had been engaged in general merchandise at Hanchetville, Dane County.

#### PROGRESS OF LOCAL SCHOOLS

In the summer of 1846 a log house was erected on Section 27, in which Miss Mary Yockey taught the first school within the limits of the present village. This house served until 1851, when a frame building was erected on the same section, the district being No. 1.

After various rearrangements of districts, as population increased, School Districts 1, 2, 6, 7 and a part of 3 were consolidated into a Union district, with the object of establishing a school of high grade which might accommodate all. A special school meeting was held October 8, 1864, when the board was authorized to move one or more of the schoolhouses to the point as would best subserve the interests of the consolidated districts.

Previous to this time Professor A. G. Riley had been teaching a select high school in the village, and had awakened considerable interest in higher education. As the professor had expressed his willingness to abandon his private school in case the districts united for the purpose mentioned, he did so when the change was made and was appointed first principal of the Union School, which was opened November 14, 1864.

In November, 1869, a \$10,000 union schoolhouse was completed with a seating capacity of 340. This was burned in the spring of 1878 and another thrown open to the scholars of the district in the following December. In 1873 the first superintendent of village schools was elected, John Foote, and since that time they have been organized under the graded system.

The 1878 building was also burned in 1886. In due time it was

replaced by the substantial brick structure occupying the same site, now used for grades and designated the Grade Building. As time passed the need for increased room became so apparent and urgent that the erection of a high school building was voted by the district, and the same was erected in 1898 on the beautiful and picturesque site, comprising about three acres of land, donated for that purpose by the Palmer sisters, near the head of Main Street.

To carry out Lodi's present system of public instruction, the school board, consisting of Director Dr. T. O. Goeres, Clerk C. H. Mandeville and Treasurer A. R. Reynolds, employs one supervising principal and eleven assistants. Five (including L. F. Rahr, the principal) are assigned to the high school and six to the grades. The present school year of 1913-14 has seen the largest enrolment in the history of the Lodi High School—134; in the grade school it is 207.

#### VILLAGE CHARTER

In 1872 Lodi obtained a village charter covering the area embraced by Section 27, and on June 20th of that year held its first election. It resulted in the choice of Horatio N. Cowan for president of the village board of trustees; E. Andrews, Alexander Woods, James McCloud, H. C. Bradley, William Dunlap and Leonard F. Wanner, trustees; Carlos Bacon, clerk; J. M. Pruyn, treasurer; H. M. Ayer, police justice.

#### WATER SERVICE AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING

The village owns its own waterworks plant. The water is stored in a reservoir fourteen feet in depth by forty feet in diameter, situated on a hillside overlooking the town. The water is of the purest and best, being obtained from two wells located at the foot of the bluff, one fourteen feet deep, the other an artesian well 253 feet in depth. The plant has a pumping capacity of 500 gallons per minute.

Lodi has also a good electric lighting system, the plant being owned and operated by the municipality. One hundred and twenty-five meters are now in use.

Both plants are operated by the same power, two boilers, one of fifty horsepower and one of 100 horsepower being employed for the purpose.

#### THE METHODIST CHURCH

Lodi has always been a quiet, God-fearing community and supports several strong churches, chief of which are the Presbyterian and Meth-

odist. The Methodists formed the first class for religious instruction, in the fall of 1845. This was before the village was platted by Mr. Palmer. G. M. Bartholomew, Catherine Bartholomew, M. C. Bartholomew, Mary Bartholomew, Christiana Bartholomew, Henry Maynard, Catherine Maynard and Harriet E. Maynard—in other words, the Bartholomews and the Maynards—got together, with the first-named Bartholomew as class leader, and formed an organization under Rev. L. Harvey. Services were held in the log cabins of the Bartholomews and the Maynards until the spring of 1846, when the log schoolhouse was built in Section 27, on the future village plat. As the population of the village increased and the log schoolhouse became too small, a house was obtained which accommodated the growing society for some years, and in 1857 a large stone church building was dedicated. The present society is in charge of Rev. G. R. Carver.

#### THE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Baptists have a society in charge of Rev. Joseph J. Bowman, son of the first settled pastor of the local church. The first meeting to consider organization was held at the house of H. M. Ayer in April, 1852, and in the following month articles were signed by Peter Van Ness, Cyrus Hill, William G. Simons, H. M. Ayer, Freedom Simons, William Waite, Matthias Warner, Ira Polly, Emma Van Ness, Caroline L. Simons, Almira Simons, Lucy Warner, Caroline Wait, Catherine Polly, James Cross, Laura Durkee and Betsy Hill. In January, 1853, the church invited Elder Joseph Bowman to become its pastor. This relation was continued until December 28, 1861. A church building was completed in 1867.

Lodi also sustains a Norwegian Lutheran Church and a small Universalist society, the latter being organized in 1872.

#### THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Presbyterians organized in June, 1852, the ten persons signing the articles of covenant being James O. Eaton and wife, A. P. Smith and wife, Robert Mann and wife, Mrs. Patridge, Mrs. Strangeway, Mrs. J. N. Lewis and Miss Eliza Steele. The first Presbyterian sermon had been preached in the preceding fall by Rev. J. N. Lewis, a missionary of the church, who became the settled pastor of the local society. In August, 1857, Rev. G. B. Riley, the widely known missionary and educator, commenced his labors as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Lodi, and during his six years of fine service a house of worship was

erected and the society placed on a substantial basis for future development. The church very early adopted the plan of a rotary eldership.



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LODI

The present building was erected in 1911, and the membership of the society is 200; Rev. Frank Zimmerman, in charge.

#### LODI LODGES

The villagers have a good Masonic lodge (Lodi Valley No. 99), which was organized in 1857, and has now a membership of fifty-eight; also, an Eastern Star auxiliary, with fifteen or twenty members; and bodies representing the Knights of Pythias and Modern Woodmen.

#### BUSINESS HOUSES

Lodi has a number of substantial general stores and other business houses. Its largest establishment is conducted by the Lodi Grain Company, which was established in 1909. The company conducts an elevator with a capacity of 12,000 bushels and a feed mill, and has large dealings in grain, flour and coal.

#### BANKS OF LODI

The State Bank of Lodi was organized November 26, 1897, with a capital of \$25,000. The first officers were: David H. Robertson, presi-



dent; William Folsom, vice president; E. F. Vanderpoel, cashier. William Caldow became president upon the death of Mr. Robertson, and at his decease was succeeded by A. R. Reynolds. W. A. Caldow succeeded Mr. Vanderpoel as cashier in January, 1909, and has so continued to the present. F. W. Groves is the present vice president.

The Columbia Bank, at Lodi, was organized November 14, 1906, with the following directors: John Caldwell, Sr., John L. Caldwell, James M. Caldwell, Robert Caldwell, Hugh S. Caldwell, Marion Caldwell and Wm. E. Lamont. The first officers were: John Caldwell, Sr., president; John L. Caldwell, vice president; H. S. Caldwell, cashier, and Marion Caldwell, assistant cashier. The officers have continued unchanged to the present. The capital stock of \$20,000 is also the same. Two additional stockholders, Isaac S. Caldwell, of Chicago, and William W. Caldwell, of Ashland, Ore., who were stockholders when the bank was organized, have since moved away and have resigned from the directorate. On November 4, 1907, the stockholders filed with the state commissioner of banking a declaration in writing, signed by each of them, acknowledging, consenting and agreeing to hold themselves individually responsible for all the debts, demands and liabilities of said bank, under the laws enacted in 1903. The bank has enjoyed the confidence of the public and is recognized as one of the most substantial and solid financial institutions of Columbia County. August 9, 1913, bank statement showed deposits aggregating about \$328,464.

#### HERBERT PALMER, SON OF LODI'S FOUNDER

Isaac H. and Ann Palmer, of Colonial New York stock, came to Madison soon after the capital of the state was located at that place, reaching Wisconsin in June, 1837. The family lived for a few years in and near Madison; while there Mr. Palmer was elected the first county judge of Dane County. They came to Lodi in the spring of 1846, and Judge Palmer, as he was always familiarly known, founded the village and laid out the first plat. The life of the family has been intimately connected with the progress of the community ever since.

Judge and Mrs. Palmer were the parents of ten children, of whom the subject of this sketch is the youngest. He was born in the beautiful Lodi Valley, on December 29, 1857.

He graduated from the Lodi High School, and afterward attended Beloit College; afterward taught very successfully for several years in the schools of Columbia and Dane counties. He read law, was admitted to the bar in 1894, and has since practiced his profession at Lodi. He has always been keenly interested in educational affairs, and was for a

number of years and until recently director of the Lodi High School Board.

For many years he has been prominent in the affairs of the Presbyterian Church; is an elder and clerk of the session; was one of the prime movers in the building of the fine church which the society erected in 1911. He was married in 1894 to Miss Nellie Pierce of Poynette. She died in 1899.

Mr. Palmer has two children, Alice, born in 1895, and Herbert, born in 1899. The family home is on the lands bought by Judge Palmer from the Government nearly seventy years ago.

It is quite appropriate that Mr. Palmer should be one of the advisory editors of this history.

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