L. F. KORTENDICK

The L. F. Kortendick Market and Grocery traces its origin back to the village of Rochester. It is a direct descendent of a meat market operated in that village by William Kortendick, father of L. F. Kortendick andWill Whitley, son of Walker Whitley, Waterford’s first butcher.

Kortendick and Whitley, both Waterford products, purchased of AlbertWhite and Thomas Hankinson, now of Clinton, Wis., in 1891, the Rochester meat market. Mr. and Mrs. William Kortendick and family, which included Lawrence F. then less than a year of age, moved from this village to Rochester where they occupied the E. B. Adams house, now the office of the Burlington, Rochester and Kansasville Telephone Co., and the home of the superintendent, George Wallis. A year later Mr. Kortendick bought, of Fred Bishop, the hotel—Union House at Rochester.

In November, 1891, Will Whitley died and his father, Walker Whitley, who had a short time before sold his Waterford market on the west side to Henry Glueck, took over his son’s interest and assisted Mr. Kortendick in the operation of the market for several years when it was rented to Hanaford Bros. After their three years lease had expired Hanaford Bros. gave up the business, which was again taken up by Mr. Kortendick assisted by his eldest son, William, now of West Bend, Wis. About a year later the Rochester market was leased to Dyson Noble who operated it for three years, after which Mr. Kortendick took charge. Two years later he sold to August Schoebel and the hotel, which was rented for a short time, was later sold to William Forbes.

After giving up his business at Rochester, Mr. Kortendick looked around for several weeks for a good location for a business and finally decided to return to the home of his childhood and there to open a market and grocery store. The old Palmer and Moe store which had been destroyed in the fire of 1898 and not rebuilt, was purchased by Mr. Kortendick. Upon investigation Mr. Kortendick found that the old foundation and stone walls of the building could be used. He added a brick front and a second story, also of brick, which when completed gave to Waterford the fine large business and residence block shown in the accompanying picture.

It was in March, 1907, that the Kortendick Market and Grocery was opened in this building with William Kortendick, Sr., as proprietor, assisted by his son, William, Jr. The ten room apartment on the second floor was then, and is still, the Kortendick home.

The Kortendick plant at that time consisted of the store and apartment building, a concrete building housing the sausage kitchen and smoke house. During the last year a modern, up-to-date slaughter house with cooler in connection has been added, making the plant one of the best in this part of the state.

The methods used were very primitive. A herd of thirty of forty head in charge of three men, was driven along from camp to camp, grazing for feed as they traveled. At each camp enough cattle were killed to supply the table until the return trip was made. The territory covered was twenty-six miles long. Needless to add it was full of adventure. The men traveled on horseback and as there were no bridges it was necessary for men, horses and cattle to swim the McCloud river.

After two years spent in gaining valuable experience in Canada, Minnesota and Illinois, Lawrence returned to his father’s employ. About the same time William, Jr., and his brother, Edward, opened a market at West Bend, Wis. After a successful year there, Edward sold his interest to his brother and he, too, returned to Waterford.

As Mr. Kortendick’s older sons left home to seek fortune or experience elsewhere younger sons stepped in and took their places. The business was successfully carried on by him until 1912 when he retired selling to
his two sons, Lawrence F. and Edward W. Mr. Kortendick died about six years later. Three of his sons are operating markets of their own—William, at West Bend; Edward, at Lake Mills; Lawrence, now in the local market.

Under the firm name of Kortendick Bros. the business was carried on from 1912 to 1917, when Lawrence preparatory to entering the army, sold his interest to Edward, who conducted it for the two following years.

During his term of army service Lawrence, who was made a corporal, was buyer and manager of the meat end of the business in the Camp Mess Supply at Camp Grant, Rockford, Ill. The work came under what was termed “Detached duty.” Returning from the army in February, 1919, he entered the employ of his brother, Edward, in the home market. In June of the same year he bought the entire business and has been the sole proprietor since that time.

With the Waterford market as a supply base, Lawrence Kortendick opened a meat market at Clinton Junction with his brother, Robert, as manager ably assisted by Thomas Hankinson, a former resident of Waterford and former employee of William Kortendick, Sr., as well as a former proprietor of the Rochester market. Lawrence slaughtered the meat for both markets. The two towns were not at that time, as now, connected by concrete roads and the distance was found to be too great for economical operation and when at a little later time a good opportunity came to sell, Mr. Kortendick took advantage of it.

In the meat game, as in other lines, the concrete road and automobile has played an important part in revolutionizing business. The present proprietor, though of the younger generation, remembers when two wagons were daily used to make the delivery trips through the country, leaving the market at 5 a.m. and returning at 4 p.m. It would take two entire days to collect and deliver a load of calves in Milwaukee. Today one auto leaving the market at 7 a.m. and returning at noon does the work formerly done by two wagons. A load of stock can be picked up, delivered in the city market, and the return trip made in less than a half day. One day last summer, Mr. Kortendick, with his Reo speed wagon, make three round trips to Milwaukee between 5 a.m. and 5 p.m.

The “Old English Sausage” for which the Kortendick market is noted is made in the modern sausage kitchen. One of the most popular places for former Waterfordites to visit on their pilgrimages to the old home town is Kortendick’s. No one leaves without taking a ring of the special bologna—or if he should happen to go without it he always feels that his visit was incomplete.

In connection with the grocery and meat line, Kortendicks’ have always dealt in the buying and selling of stock. Between the time of selling the retail market and the buying of his present business at Lake Mills in the spring of 1922 Edward Kortendick dealt exclusively in buying and selling cattle. In order to do this successfully it was necessary to have a farm. Accordingly he bought of Mr. Beek a part of what was formerly the old Kortendick homestead. When Mr. Kortendick gave up his work here he sold the land including his house and lot to Andrew Bennett.

The present proprietor of the Kortendick Market and Grocery is maintaining in his operation of the business the high ideals of service of the founder. Furthermore, Mr. Kortendick takes a commendable interest in all propositions that further public improvements and he stands ready to aid in the expansion and growth of the community at all times. He is an active member of the Albert Essman Post No. 20, American Legion, of the Waterford Fire Department and of St. Thomas Catholic church. At the present time he is a member of the village council. Previous to holding this position of honor and trust he served as village treasurer. Mr. Kortendick is not a partisan in politics but gives his vote to the candidate who in his opinion is best able to fill the office regardless of party. He was married just before entering the army and now lives in a pleasant home on the west side overlooking the Fox river.

The Kortendick market and grocery is a place of business of which Waterford has reason to feel proud. Housed in a fine large building centrally located with a complete line of meats of all kinds including the famous Kortendick’s old English sausage, and groceries, it is a credit to the village.

The standard of the L. F. Kortendick market and grocery is today as it has always been—quality. Its policy has been honesty and service. That the public realizes and appreciates this fact is evident from the continued prosperity of the business.

One month after the above article was published in the Waterford Post, on February first, 1923, Lawrence F. Kortendick, proprietor of the Kortendick Market and Grocery and the manufacturer of the “Old English Sausage” which is helping to make Waterford famous, purchased the Kortendick building, the home of the business, of the heirs of the William Kortendick estate.

The building, as stated above, was erected by the father of the present owner in the early part of the year 1897. Building and business have been in the hands of some member of the William Kortendick family from that time to the present. The large ten room apartment above the store will continue to be the home of Mrs. William Kortendick.

The purchasing of this property by L. F. Kortendick, the owner of the market and grocery, gives greater permanency to the business and shows the confidence Mr. Kortendick has in the business future of Waterford.