

gines were discarded, and were replaced by a fire wagon drawn by horses to carry the hose, ladders and fire extinguishers to the fire. The first fire wagon was built in the Thompson shop in Third st. under the supervision of Ald. Frank Race. He carefully planned all the features he wanted. It was painted bright red and ornamented in gold leaf and cost, I believe, \$400. After the water works were installed, fire pumps were not considered necessary as hydrant pressure was depended on. However, sometimes it failed. In parades the firemen wore red jackets and the old style leather helmets. They marched through the streets and pulled their apparatus by means of the long ropes.

The red horse drawn fire wagon served the city for many years, but in 1911 the first motorized service was installed and now we have a fully equipped department with two stations, five motor engines, 72 alarm boxes, and a force of twenty-two men. Since the fire department was organized as a paid department we have had the following fire chiefs: Geo. Donner, Charlie North, A. J. Macey, A. Goss, John Nygren, Paul Roth, Robert Moses, and Elmer Fairbert.

The old volunteer company I remember Simon Smith, Lance and Bob Moses were leading members.

When the city was young and

small the police force consisted of one man called the City Marshal. We old ones can recall City Marshal Janvrin, who died from the result of an injury received in the Burr Robins circus riot. We also recall that fearless man, City Marshal Charlie North, who for many years kept the tougher element in Beloit in fear of the law.

The first jail or "jug," as it was called, was a wooden building with a heavy door, located at the lower end of Broad st. near where the C. & N. W. freight house now stands. In it city drunks and other offenders were locked up and there is no record of any escapes.

The present jail and police station was built in 1900 by Al Dearhammer and has been improved and remodeled at various times. The following men have served as chief of police, Charlie North, Rhoda Scheibel, Geo. Appleby, Wm. Appleby, Charles Qualman, Lieut. L. J. Williams, Frank Lanphear, Stanley Dietz, Dan Torrisi and our present chief, Robert Blumer. There are now 29 men in the police department with a modern radio system hooked up with Rock and Winnebago counties.

The title, "city marshal" was abolished 40 years ago as being too countryfied, and we blossomed out with big town stuff. It is now chief of police, if you please.

Chapter 8

Two years ago I made a summary of my 18 years experience on the School Board, as I was opposed to the plan of moving the central high school to a new site. When I was elected to the board in 1907, we had four grade schools on the west side, Parker, Royce, Hackett, and Gaston. On the east side we had three, Strong, Merrill, and Wright. We also had the old central high school built in 1869. During the 18 years I was on the board we built the present high school in 1908, followed at intervals by the following: on the west side, the Burdge, the Cunningham, the Gaston addition, and the Lincoln junior high and on the east side, the Waterman, Todd, and Roosevelt junior high.

When I was in No. 2 grade school, Professor Alexander Kerr was principal at the high school. In my four years at high school I was under Professor Eastman, Professor Paine, and that grand teacher, Professor Beach. Professor Converse came to Beloit in 1897 and served the city 35 years as city superintendent. Mr. Converse was one of my best and most loyal friends. He passed away in 1939.

The Masonic Temple was built in 1913. Prior to that, for 20 years the Masonic hall was on the third floor of the Thompson block. Perhaps the ghost of the famous goat may still be roaming around up there for all that I know.

The Odd Fellows have also been

in Beloit at least 80 years. They own property down in Broad street.

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In the whole period from 1860 to 1880 Beloit was a small town. It had a very slow growth. The population, I think, was not over 5000 by 1880. They always used to say this was due to the load of old railway bonds that Beloit was saddled with. These bonds were issued in 1856 or 1857 to promote the Racine and Southwestern R.R. company which was putting through a road from Racine to Savanna. The name of the road was later changed to the Western Union and they had an ugly old depot which stood south and east of the present St. Paul passenger station. This road is now a part of the C. M. & St. Paul Railroad system. The present brick passenger station was built in 1900 or 1901.

It was not till after these bonds were paid off that the town began to grow. In 1880 Beloit was certainly a "hick town." The down town stores were shabby, many of them wooden construction. But fires now and then gradually eliminated the old wooden buildings. The streets were unpaved. They were either all mud or all dust.

The sidewalks all over town were made of wooden planks laid on stringers. In many places, especially down town, they were set up on posts or stilts, two feet or more above the street level. Hitching posts were placed at close intervals as it was all horse traffic.

I must not fail to mention the street sprinkler wagon. When the streets were dry and dusty it was terrible. So the merchants clubbed together and each agreed to pay a small amount monthly to maintain a sprinkler service.

The wagon was run by George Donner for many years. In the rear of our factory property in Third Street Donner installed a water wheel with water buckets. The lower part of the wheel was submerged in the stream and the current revolved the wheel, bringing up the buckets filled with water. From the elevated tank he filled his wagon tank. As the wagon passed up and down the

streets it would throw a wide spray but it did not last long. In an hour it was all evaporated and dry as before.

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The street department now and then "improved" the streets by a coating of gravel which did but little good. It was not till 1896 that we began our paving program in a very small way. The first streets paved were Grand avenue from the C. & N. W. station to State street, and State from Bort's corner to Broad. The so-called paving consisted of a strip of brick paving 10 feet or so wide on each side to form the gutters at the sidewalk and the center of the street for traffic was paved with crushed limestone. This was only the beginning. After that the paving program continued to expand year by year, until all city streets were fully paved. At first various types of paving were tried—brick, asphalt, wooden blocks and cement. Now nothing but cement is used.

The old wooden sidewalks were a snare and delusion. They rotted out and became dangerous and unsightly. The first change for the better was the so-called "tar" walks. Then some brick was laid. Now cement sidewalks are universally accepted as the only good sidewalk.

In those early days every residence lot had to have a fence around it to keep out the cows, dogs and children who were roaming the streets. A real swell place had a white picket fence and they really looked very nice. The gate posts were boxed in with a suitable cap on top. Other places had board fences, the boards running longitudinally. They were much easier for the boys and girls to climb on and the flat board placed on top was fine to sit on and practice walking on. The kids today don't have all this fun.

When C. C. Keeler built his fine new house, corner of Broad and Prospect, he removed his fences and set a new style. At first everybody thought it was terrible, but gradually, little by little, others adopted the new style when their old fences became rotten and rickety.