

the C. M. & St. Paul system and was known as the Racine & Southwestern division. The depot was located south of the present station. I well remember Chauncey Lathrop and R. M. Telfer, two genial gentlemen who served the road well for many years. In 1882 or 1883 the two roads jointly put in the system of industrial switch tracks which was a great boon to all the factories served.

In 1901 the Rockford, Beloit & Janesville Electric road was put through and had a good run of business until the coming of automobiles finally put them out of business. And the same thing happened to the Beloit local street car system.

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I find one of the most interesting phases of this old time "recollection" work, is trying to recall the names and locations of the business places and merchants of that period between 1860 and 1900. I light my pipe and sit down to think and am surprised how many of the old names come back to me little by little. Of course, I cannot remember all of them but I will enumerate as many as possible.

Let us begin with the hotels. One of the oldest hotels was the Mansion House. This was a three story stone building on the corner of Bridge street and Third street. This building was bought by my father in 1886 and in 1893 the present Thompson building was erected on the site.

The Bushnell House was erected in 1855 by Professor Bushnell of the college. In 1865 the name was changed to the Fenwick House. About 1870 the property was bought by S. J. Goodwin and the name was changed to the Goodwin House. It remained the leading hotel till 1903 when the Hilton Hotel was built. The Good

win House entertained some distinguished people, Abe Lincoln in 1859, and Ole Bull in the early sixties, and many other celebrities.

Another old hotel was the American House, a frame building on the corner of Broad and Pleasant streets (now an oil station). It was run by Al Wood, quite a character in his day. Then there was the Salisbury House. It was burned in 1860 and when the C. M. & St. Paul R. R. built the new passenger station, the main line was relocated to accommodate the new station. Two other old timers were the Central House on the east side of State and the Grand on the west side of State, both now a thing of the past.

Before the Bushnell House was built in 1855 there stood on this corner a big frame building known as the Rock River House. To make room for the new hotel, it was moved north to the corner of State street and Public avenue. I can remember it as an unsightly old building. They say it was used at one time as a seminary. Later it was rented for commercial purposes, but finally it was torn down and replaced by the one story building now occupied by Sears Roebuck & Company.

The old Beloit House was located at the corner of State and St. Paul ave. and here the old stage coaches stopped for passengers.

When the C. & N. W. built the little red brick depot at Grand avenue, A. B. Carpenter built a frame hotel building across the street called the Commercial House. It was run by a man by the name of Sperbeck. The hotel burned down in 1884 and was replaced by a skating rink building. When C. B. Salmon took over the property he pulled the rink down and erected the present Salmon building.

Chapter 12

I can remember the following old time grocery stores: On the east side the leading store was Stiles & Rogers who were in business at least 40 years. Then there was John Clinchy and Chelsea

Thompson. George Sanger ran a store corner of State and East Grand, where George Bros. store now is. On the west side there was Smith & House, B. C. Rogers, T. W. Laramie, the Springen gro-

cery on the north side of the street, and later on the Ed Hodge store, the Meehan store, Charlie Jones, C. F. Hardy and others.

In those days some of these grocery stores became a kind of working men's club. The stores were open evenings and the proprietor was never very busy. So after supper the men would come in and sit around the stove, smoke their pipes, talk politics and spin their yarns. And this was repeated night after night. In a way this was a fine thing. Imagine such a way of doing grocery business in 1941.

The old grocery of the sixties, seventies, and eighties was a rather primitive establishment compared with a modern chain store. Most commodities in the grocery line were sold out of bulk stock, weighed or measured by hand. Sugar, salt, molasses, vinegar, kerosene, crackers came in barrels. Rice and coffee came in burlap sacks, coffees were designated as Mocha, Java, or Rio, and came green. All coffee was roasted at home in the oven and ground in a little hand mill. Codfish came in full length slabs, American cheese in big round discs.

Dried fruits, such as apples, peaches, prunes and raisins came in bulk boxes. Flour came in paper sacks, a few package and bottle goods on the shelves such as corn starch, silver gloss starch, vanilla, ketchups, etc. There were no fine displays of shipped in fresh fruits and vegetables. Winter apples came from New York in barrels, peaches from Michigan in the season. There were no canned fruits, juices and soups and no breakfast cereals except oat meal. Butter was sold from a crock and lard from a tub. When a dozen eggs were purchased, the grocery man rolled up a cornucopia from a sheet of wrapping paper, placed the eggs inside for you to carry home.

In this section devoted to the ancient storekeepers of Beloit, there is one store that deserves special mention. It was known as Day & Andrews ice cream parlor, in which ice cream was served at small tables in the back room, at 10 cents "per dish." In the front room they kept a small stock of oranges, apples, candies and nuts,

especially peanuts, and a big bunch of bananas was hanging from the ceiling. We youngsters gazed in awe at those bananas and wondered what they were and what they tasted like. Bananas in those days were not the everyday commodity they have since become, and we could not spare five cents to buy one banana, as that was the price.

Mr. Day also kept a stock of toys and marbles, etc—"commies" were rated six for a penny, while "allies" rated from five to 10c apiece, depending on how many stripes there were around them. Of course, an alley with four to six stripes was much more valuable than one with only two or three stripes. Glass aggies were very precious. In the summer time the front window was raised up on hinges, leaving the front counter open to the sidewalk. Mr. Day would sit by this counter ever ready to serve the public that might happen to stop. A very interesting place for kids.

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I recall the following meat markets. On the east side John Burger, Blazer Bros., and John Ritcher. On the west side were Rouse & Bibbins, Janvrin's market, and Sheibel and Witte. Cattle were slaughtered out in the old slaughter house on Madison Road, two miles out. (This was torn down long ago.) The carcasses were brought in to the markets and hung on hooks in the open air—no protection from flies. Beef steak was a "shilling" a pound, (12½), no distinction as to cuts. The front and hind quarters were displayed on the blocks with only a red mosquito net spread over them. The butcher cut off the slices as purchased. The floor was covered with saw dust. We have greatly improved in sanitary arrangements since them.

Abbott Brothers is the first dry goods store I can remember. Later on Jim Carpenter and then Carpenter & Baumes and Bort, Bailey & Company. On the west side Towles Store was an old timer and E. Lipman ran a store for many years. In those days the women all bought yard goods and dressmakers made the garments. Some dressmakers, Miss Ingleby for in-

stance, had a clientele of customers who had to wait their turn.

In the shoe trade I remember the A. A. Green Store—later the George Cram place, now Murklands. In the nineties we had Lou Raubenheimers's across the street. About the oldest shoe store on the west side was Gesley Bros., where the Main Meat Market now is. Then there was Hall & Nichols up near the bridge. There were also shoe makers who made custom made shoes by hand.

In the drug trade I believe the old Fenton store was the oldest standby. It was there as far back as I can remember and was located where Smith Brothers Jewellery Store is. In the eighties and nineties J. M. Farnsworth for many years ran a store on the west side. On the east side, there was the Dr. Strong and the Charlie Smith Store, Charlie Emerson on the corner and Frank Foster's where J. C. Penney is now located. Ed Smith also ran a store for 40 years.

In those days the sign and symbol of a drug store was the big glass globe in the front window, the globes filled with red, blue or yellow liquid. They were so pretty to look at. Inside there were shelves with rows of big glass bottles all labeled in gold letters to show the contents. There were also patent medicines in paper cartons, and perfumes and toilet articles in the show cases, but the store was not littered up with all kinds of general merchandise. A soda fountain was customary and a cigar counter.

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Before the water works were put in, the plumbing trade was unknown in Beloit. But in 1885 and 86 several firms opened up. There was Holcomb Brothers, Franz & Newton, Carroll Gregory, and Zimmerman & Osborne. When inside bathrooms became an established institution there was plenty of work to do.

The oldest hardware store I remember was A. P. Waterman's, later Waterman & Gordon. John Gordon and his three sons continued to run the store for several decades and even after they died, the store continued to be called Gordon's Hardware. There was al-

so Winslow and Rosenberg across the street and old John Burr was an old timer on the west side. Burr's store was an antique shop, everything in it from the year one. Ed Watson bought him out in the 1880's.

The jewelry business has had an interesting record in Beloit. Probably the first watch and clock man was Mr. Hamlin who came over from Sweden in pioneer days and settled in Beloit. He was an excellent workman and a good friend of my father. I remember well as a child how he would come up to our house in Third street on a Sunday to clean and overhaul our big Seth Thomas clock. He would take it all apart to brush the wheels and pivots and then we children would wonder how he could ever put all those wheels back in place again. But he did. This Seth Thomas clock is still in active service, keeping good time and is a prized possession.

When the old man died his son, William Hamlin, succeeded to the business. He bought the block at the west end of the bridge, and continued the business in partnership with Frank Race and later on as Hamlin & Still.

Now the store is operated by a grandson of the original Hamlin. This is quite a record.

Another record just about as unique is that of the Sherman jewelry store. Sherman came to Beloit in 1854 and opened business in the little narrow store at what is now No. 316 State street. When he died his son, Harry Sherman, ran it for many years. Then A. L. Howard took it over and it has been a jewelry store for at least 80 years. It is remarkable how a tradition clings to a place.

I must not forget to mention my old friend, Sol Larson, by far the most expert watch and clock man we have ever had in Beloit. He learned his trade in Sweden and after graduation went to Switzerland and worked in the famous Longine Watch Works. He arrived here from Sweden in 1887. For a number of years he worked for William Hamlin, then for many years he ran a jewelry store of his own in East Grand avenue, which he discontinued after 50 years of active service. He is still working on his jeweler's bench.