

BARRY TOWNSHIP

The beauties of nature as presented by this township to Rev. David Edwards

and Mr. Hadley, the first settlers of Barry, must have been magnificent.

Prior to their coming not even a furrow of its virgin soil or even a spadeful of its earth (except by United States surveyors) had ever been turned by man; nor even a shanty erected except the rude wigwam of the Indians, who had for many years roamed free and undisturbed over these fertile prairies and through the pleasant groves. Such was the condition of the face of Barry township when visited by the above named gentlemen in 1824. Mr. Hadley settled on sec. 21.

Soon after these men came there appeared Rev. Wm. M. Blair and his sons.

Those who afterward took an important part in the history of the county, were John N., Harry, Samuel, Montgomery and William Blair, Hezekiah McAtee, Alfred

Grubb and Elijah L. McAtee. Other early pilgrims here were Hull, Talcott, Josiah and William Lippincott, and old man Peabody, who died shortly after he came. Also, Stephen R. Gray, old man Rush, Burton Gray, John Millhizer, Levi McDaniels and many others whom we mention during the personal sketches. Most

of the above mentioned came prior to during the year 1836. Besides the foregoing there were Benj. Barney, who came to Atlas in 1826, Michael and Alonzo Gard, who came the same year, as also did W. L. Chrysop. A. C. Baker came in 1827, Esq. Joseph McIntire in 1831, Wm. McDaniel in 1835, N. P. Hart in 1838, Elisha Hurt and J. L. Gilmer in 1839. These were all excellent settlers, men of more than average ability, as shown in the subsequent career of most of them.

Wild game was in great abundance when the pioneers first came. Mr.

McDaniels tells us he has seen as many as 45 deer in one herd. We were told that deer were so numerous and tame that they were known to enter the cabins of settlers, and were killed with axes and cudgels.

These pioneers were employed, as were all pioneers of the day, in subduing

nature, building cabins, clearing land, breaking prairie, etc., but with all this labor they were social and happy, having a care for the morals and education of their growing families, and making for the time one of the pleasantest settlements in the new and growing State. There were displayed among the settlers more than the usual amount of warm-hearted friendship and neighborly affection. All were equal in social station and dignity. Fashion

was not then the inexorable goddess we are accustomed to meet in these modern days. The pioneers were proud to be attired in homespun woven by the busy housewife of the period, while such a thing as a carriage or buggy was unknown in Barry. Mr. McDaniels tells us that from his place there was a pathway across the prairie, but for a time after he came not the track of a wagon could be seen, --indeed, there was no such vehicle in the township. Husbands went to church on foot. The wives rode the horses, carrying with them such of the children as were too young to make their way by walking. If the good wife was clad in a calico of durable texture and fast color, she was as happy as the fine ladies of to-day, robed in velvets and seal-skins. The religion of the time favored a very rigid and severe adherence to plain and unadorned attire, and made, as it would almost seem to us, rather a virtue of a necessity, although a few years later, with the rapid accumulation of wealth, display was rendered a matter of easy accomplishment. We now find, however, large numbers of pioneers, from motives of principle, refraining as carefully from any vain show or unnecessary ornament as they did in the primitive times of which we are now writing.

The earliest pioneers, those who came prior to 1830, could not obtain a legal title to their farms, as the General Government did not offer the land for sale before that. Before that time all the land was held by "claims." The settlers had an agreement among themselves by which they allowed a man to "claim" about as much timber land as he might need, generally not over 160 acres, upon which he might build his cabin and make his other improvements; and woe unto the speculator or new-comer who should attempt to "claim" land already occupied by a bona-fide settler. Much of the land in Barry was taken by those claimants before the land came into market. These claims were bought and sold, the purchaser coming into possession of the improvements, together with whatever rights were considered appertaining thereto. Many quarrels ensued from this state of affairs, as might naturally be expected.

When the land sales came off in October, 1829, at Vandalia, there was a gathering of pioneers from the township offered for sale, at which no speculator was allowed to purchase until all settlers had made their selections, --rather a high-handed proceeding, as it would now appear, but one which was justified by the existing circumstances.

The first person visited by the cold hand of death in this township was Mrs. Amanda Davis, who died in 1831, a daughter of Rev. Wm. Blair. The first birth was a daughter of Samuel and Lucy Blair, the first couple married in the township.

Barry is settled by an excellent class of agriculturists, many of whom

we
made personal mention of, further on in this sketch. The township is
beautifully divided between prairie and timber, well watered, the soil
fertile and rich, and is both an excellent grain and stock country.

A doctor named Ludley, who lived in the bottom, was the first physi-
cian in
the township. The earliest doctors were about all Thomsonians.

BARRY

This city is beautifully situated on the north half of sec. 25, and upon an
eminence commanding a fine view of the surrounding country. For miles either
way there is presented to the eye a grand panorama of nature's beauteous
handiwork, changed, it is true, by the hand of man from what it was half a
century ago, yet a charming scene it is to-day. Where once grew the tall, verdant
prairie grass the eye now beholds waving fields of corn, wheat and other cereals.
The wild flowers that gave to the dead monotony of undulating grass a charm,
and a beauty unrivaled in grandeur by any of the fine scenes now presented by
growing fields, have long since faded away. These only exist in the memories of
the pioneers yet surviving. These tell us that the magnificence and beauty of
the prairies as seen in their native condition, can never be adequately pictured
by language.

During the period of the great internal improvement system of Illinois,
which we have so frequently alluded to, and during which time so many towns
were platted in this county, as well as all over the State, the city of Barry sprung
into existence. Fortunately, it has fared better than many of the other towns
projected, even in Pike county, for it has assumed rank among the small cities
of this part of Illinois, while many have been long since pronounced dead, or
that they had obtained their greatest growth. Barry was laid out by Calvin R.
Stone, of the firm of Stone, Field & Marks, of St. Louis, and christened
"Worcester." Mr. Stone was killed by the explosion of the boat "Montezuma," on
the Mississippi. It was found that there was another town by that name in the
State, so Worcester was changed to Barry. Mr. Brown, who had lived in Barre,
Vt., suggested that it be called after that town. A petition to this effect was
drawn up by Dr. Baker, who printed the name Barre in large Roman letters,
but the enrolling clerk spelled it with a final y, instead of an e. That was the
name, however of the Postmaster-General under President Jackson, so it was
accepted and has since been known by it.

Bartlett & Birdsong, who laid out Barry, as the agents for Stone,
the owner of the land, kept the first store in the place. This was in a little log

cabin. Stone, Field & Marks erected a mill here to grind the grain for the settlers. This was sold to Brown & McTucker, in 1836. In 1837 a grist mill was run by Mason & Edwards. It was a little overshot water-mill, located in a log building where the woolen factory now stands. The next one below it, on Hadley creek, was by Wm. Lippincott. B. D. Brown and Josiah Lippincott erected a saw-mill in 1838, northeast of the Public Square, which was burned. The second mill was erected by Isaac Israel in 1845. He ran it three or four years. He also packed pork, and it was surrounded by 18 dwellings, a pork house, 3 large stores and a saw mill. He mortgaged it and it passed into the hands of J. Clines, and finally Brown & McTucker owned it. In a cave, located where the woolen factory was built by Wike Brothers, the skeleton of a human body was found in 1841, when the cave was opened. Water-power was secured from the water that came from this cave. It is a natural curiosity, and has been entered for about 300 yards. The source of the water above mentioned was always unknown. It is affected by the rise and fall of water in the streams. John Grubb and Mr. Wike while improving the factory, were quarrying rocks and came across a den of rattlesnakes of the largest kind, of which they killed great numbers, from which fact this place is called "Snake Holler" to this day. The first tavern in Barry was kept by Johnny DeHaven. The first postmaster was Stephen R. Gray.

The Methodists were the first denomination of religious people to become established here, and erect a house of worship. The Baptists were second, who built a church about the same time. The building is now torn away. The Christians were third, and the Congregationalists fourth.

In the fall of '37 a camp-meeting was held near Levi McDaniels' farm-house, which lasted 12 days. This, it is said, was supported by people of all denominations, and all were united in the great work. Quite a number joined the Church during this meeting. In 1838 another was held in the same place. Settlers came from a distance of 30 to 40 miles to attend these meetings.

The first school was taught in the Methodist church by Deacon Mason. Then there was a little frame school-house erected north of Bright's saloon. It was moved several times afterward, and a difference of opinion exists in regard to its original location.

Barry grew and prospered at times, and again, like other towns, it suffered seasons of stagnation. To-day it is a beautiful little city with fine church edifices, large, magnificent school buildings, good business houses, neat and beautiful residences, and indeed a live, enterprising city. The high grade of society existing here is something worthy the boast and pride of its residents. The courtly Southerner, the careful Easterner and the thrifty New Yorker are met here, and it is therefore natural that a social system should be established which is culled from the high standard of the sections named. These, taken with the enterprising spirit and practical character of the Westerner, give origin to a new society, more pleasant than either, with the best social ethics of all,

mingled in one common fountain, from which flow the elements of the best society.

In education matters no city or town in the county takes a greater interest. In religious teachings and Christian morality

Barry compares favorably with those towns having a larger number of church spires pointing heavenward. In those movements to raise the fallen and degraded, to help the poor, to encourage the weak, the good people of Barry are over engaged. Some grand efforts have been made in the temperance cause by the noble people of this city. The cause of temperance is like that of Christian religion in this respect, that it is found in great variety of shapes and methods. In other words, it has taken upon itself the most remarkable forms in the way of organizations. But, unlike Christianity, which is historically traced though the narrow sects and societies, the cause of temperance seems to run through the most wonderful changes. As soon as one particular form of labor has lost its interest to the public, the friends of temperance re-organize, and are found laboring in a different manner. Hence we find it impossible to trace properly, in the short space allotted, the history of the different forms and shapes in which the friends of temperance have been organized.

With the enterprise characteristic of the city, an artesian well was begun to be put down during the month of October, 1879. The city agreed to pay two dollars and fifty cents per foot for the first 1,500 feet, and after that depth was reached, if not a sufficient flow of water, the contractors were to receive three dollars per foot for the next 500 feet. The city has appropriated, up to March 20, 1880, \$5,000 to carry on the work. The site of the well, which is in the park in the Public Square, is the highest point of ground in the county, and therefore a great depth will necessarily have to be reached before an abundant supply of water is obtained. At the present writing water does not yet flow, and work still goes on. The city, we are told, will undoubtedly go 2,500 feet in order to obtain a supply. The top cutting is six inches in diameter, diminishing to four and five-eighths and three and one-half.

Barry was incorporated as a town in 1856. An election was held Jan. 14 of that year to vote for or against incorporation, when 92 votes were cast for, and none against the measure. The following Trustees were then chosen and held their first meeting Jan. 31: A. Grubb, John Watson, N. Cromwell, J. M. Dabney and C. S. Allen. These were sworn in by Justice M. Blair, when they elected John Watson as President and John Shastid, Clerk.

Nov. 18, 1872, Barry was organized as a city. The present City Council is composed of the following gentlemen: E. R. Burnham, Mayor; J. R. Roward, J. Weber, T. Davis, Matthew Peterson, S. Mors and James Watson, Aldermen; C. C. Roasa, City Clerk; W. J. Klein, City Attorney; J. C. Brown, Treasurer; John Whettleton, Marshall, and J. E. Haines, Street Commissioner.

SCHOOL, CHURCHES AND SOCIETIRS

The fine brick school-building of the city was erected in 1874, at a cost of \$15,000. It was built by Wm. T. Mitchell, of Barry. It is beautifully situated, and presents to the stranger as he enters the city by rail a most magnificent view. The School Directors in 1863 were Calvin Davis, N. P. Hart and J. H. Mallory. The present Directors are E. A. Crandall, N. P. Hart and Alexander White. There are enrolled 401 scholars. The principal is Prof. J. F. Clark. The teachers are, first assistant, Miss E. Greene; first grammar department, John M. Woodby; second grammar, Prof. Geo. W. Smith; intermediate, Miss Ella McMahan and Wm. Triplett; primary, Ida Luthey and May Poling.

Rev. A. M. Danely is Pastor of the Methodist Church. There is connected with the congregation a good Sunday-school, which meets at 9:30 am.

Rev. William Greene is Pastor of the Baptist Church. Services are held on the second and fourth Sundays in each month. Elder W. E. Berry is Pastor of the Christian Church. Services are held every Sunday morning and evening. Sunday-school at 9:30 am.

Barry Lodge, No. 34, of the Masonic order, was organized Aug. 29, 1845. Michael Gard was the first grand Master; Jos. Jackson, Sen. W., George Wike, Jr. W.; W. J. Alkire, Treasurer; Elisha Hurt, Secretary; Eli Longnecker, Sr. Deacon; Joseph Alkire, Jr. Deacon; Joseph Lippincott, Tyler. Those constituted the original officers, only two of whom are now living, namely, E. Hurt and W. J. Alkire. The present officers are, D. W. Greene, W. M.; A. R. Gray, Sr. W.; George Wike, Jr. W.; John P. Grubb, Sr. Deacon; R. D. Osborne, Jr. Deacon; B. McConnell, Treasurer; M. G. Patterson, Sec'y; M. Lane and John Palmer, Stewards; J. F. Phillips, Chaplain, and J. L. Terry, Tyler.

Barry Lodge, No. 336, I. O. O. F., was organized Oct. 9, 1866. Alexander White, E. M. Call, Alexander Easley, J. B. Keever, R. B. Higgins, W. B. Clancy and J. Rosenburgh were its charter members. The present officers are -- J. W. Mitchell, N. G.; C. C. Roasa, V. G.; J. N. Widby, R. Sec'y; Thomas Retalic, Financial Sec'y; W. Chrysap, Treasurer. The present membership numbers 116.

The Evening Star Lodge, No. 21, Daughters of Rebecca, was organized Oct. 11, 1870, with 14 charter members. The present officers are - Alexander Easley, First N. G.; Miss Nellie Bingham, N. G.; Mrs. G. W. Doyle, V. G.; Miss Ella Furniss, Rec. Sec'y; G. W. Smith, Financial Sec'y; Miss Lizzie Furniss, Treasurer. This Lodge has a membership of 72.

Progress Encampment, No. 162, I. O. O. F., was organized in October, 1876, with 18 members. At present the officers are-G. D. Mayes, C. P.; Z. B. Stoddard, Scribe; James Smith, Treasurer. Membership 45.

Goodwill Lodge, No. 1,791, K. of H., meets on the first and third Mondays of

each month. J. Weber, D., and J. S. Gorton, R. Barry Chapter, No. 88; R. A. M., meets Monday night on or before the full moon in each month. J. J. Topliff; H. P.; F. M. Dabney, Sec'y.

- from History of Pike County, Illinois (Chicago, Chas C Chapman, 1880)