

Palestine is located about seventy-five miles north of the junction where the Ohio and Wabash Rivers meet. It is around two or three miles west of the Wabash River.

Palestine is fortunate in having the natural resources that it does. It is a farming community and has good rich soil. As we said before, a river is close by. There is some lumber which is not used too much. Also the wild animals were here.

The Indian tribes that we find were here were mostly the Kickapoo Tribe. However, some people say there were also some Shawnee. All the Indians were friendly toward the settlers until after the war of 1812.

Captain John LaMotte, a Frenchman, is the first known white man to have come here. LaMotte was originally with LaSalle's party in 1678. It is said he got lost from the party and ended up where Palestine now is. As LaMotte looked over the prairie to the north and the woodland to the south he said, "It reminds me of the land of milk and honey; this must be Palestine." This is how Palestine got its name.

LaMotte was later killed and was thrown into what is now LaMotte Creek by the Indians. This happened because he was going to sell a tract of land to the U. S. Government which he had bought from the Indians.

Fort LaMotte was established for protection. It was located southeast of where Palestine now is. The Eatens, a group of people there, couldn't get along with the rest of the people so they established another fort where the gravel pit is now. It was called Fort Foot because the Eatens are said to have had big feet.

There is some disagreement as to when the first settlers came here, however, they all agree that it was between 1809 and 1811. The first families here were the Eatens, Boatrights, and the Cullons, three families from Tennessee. A little later other families followed them.

In 1818 Joseph Kitchell and Ed Cullon sold land to the settlers without a land grant which they received in 1823. Palestine was laid out near the southern line of LaMotte Prairie. Sugar Street was the northern boundary and LaMotte Street was the southern boundary. The eastern boundary was Jackson Street and Pike Street was the western boundary. It was laid out in lots and there were 160 lots and the public



square was donated by Kitchell and Cullon. It contained 2.07 acres. Here is a

list of some of the stores and their owners at that time:

H. H. Haskett	- - - - -	grocer
A. Salesbury-	- - - - -	General store
John Overholser	- - - - -	grocer
H. T. Beam	- - - - -	grocer
A. A. Newland	- - - - -	city cafe and grocer
J. A. Anderson-	- - - - -	city cafe and grocer
J. L. Woodworth	- - - - -	hardware and undertaker
A. D. Foreman-	- - - - -	boot and shoe maker
A. Purcell	- - - - -	harness shop and boot and shoe repair
A. Miesenhelder and Co.	-	flouring mills
John T. Bathe	- - - - -	Kaywood Mills
G. A. Fox	- - - - -	Flour & Meal Exchange
R. B. Newland	- - - - -	Meat Market
N. Vane	- - - - -	Drug Store
Mrs. M. A. Gogin-	- - - - -	Milinery & Dry Goods
Mrs. Kate Griffin	- - - - -	Milinery & Dry Goods
B. H. Garrard	- - - - -	Livery Stable & Garrard House proprier.
Bob Richards-	- - - - -	Artist
Isaac Robiason-	- - - - -	Tin Shop
Jerry Caley	- - - - -	Blacksmith
Hope Beecher-	- - - - -	Blacksmith
Karl A. Erfft	- - - - -	Blacksmith
William Green	- - - - -	Blacksmith
J. A. Martin-	- - - - -	Doctor
N. Steele	- - - - -	Doctor
J. S. Thompson-	- - - - -	Doctor
A. Malone	- - - - -	Doctor
A. B. Corbin-	- - - - -	Carpenter
T. C. Alexander	- - - - -	Carpenter
F. M. Martin-	- - - - -	Carpenter
N. J. Murphy-	- - - - -	Carpenter
J. S. Wilson-	- - - - -	Grain Dealer
M. W. Curry	- - - - -	Grain Dealer
John Hill-	- - - - -	Grain Dealer
Miss Kate Purcell	- - - - -	Dress maker
Rhoda Harper	- - - - -	Dressmaker
Emily Edgington	- - - - -	Hat Shop

Palestine was Crawford County's first county seat in 1818 and continued as such until 1843 when Robinson was designated.

In 1818 David McGaughey was elected Probate Justice of the Peace. J. S. Woodworth was Sheriff; Edward C. Pifer, Circuit Clerk; Joseph Kitchell, State Senator; and David Porter, State Representative. Palestine has furnished many officers of the state. It had delegates in every consitutional convention, except in 1848. It had the majority of state senators and representatives for more than 50 years. It had a judge of the circuit court elected for 2nd term and an attorney general of state for one term. A. C. French was twice elected governor of the state. Many more great and intelligent men came from Palestine.



The first courthouse, which was never entirely completed and was struck by lightning three times and practically destroyed the building, was erected in 1820 at Palestine. A second courthouse was built in Palestine in 1832. On the night before it was to have been turned over to the county authorities, it was destroyed by fire. Another courthouse was then erected and this was used for that purpose until the removal of the county seat to Robinson, Illinois.

The first county jail was built in Palestine in 1818, the same year that Illinois became a state. It remained in use with a few repairs and improvements made on it until the summer of 1844, when Elizabeth Reed, who was in jail charged with the murder of her husband, set fire to it and seriously damaged it. It was never repaired, probably for the reason that the county seat had a few months before been changed to Robinson and there would soon be one built there.

A land office was established here in 1820 which made Palestine the most important town in Illinois at that time. The Land Office sold land around Palestine for \$2.50 an acre and it is now worth 100 times that and more. The tract of land that is now Chicago was bought from the Palestine Land Office in 1833 for \$1.25 an acre. In 1855 the Land Office was moved to Springfield, the state capital.

Since Palestine is said to be the oldest settlement in Crawford County, and since one of the first things the pioneers did when they settled a new territory was to make provision to teach the "Three R's" it was here that the first schools were established. Their beginnings were very meager, the first ones using very crude facilities, using first the vacant cabins, empty stables, etc., and later building primitive log cabins with clap board roofs, crude fireplaces, slab desks, puncheon floors, and glassless windows. In 1840 a teacher was examined by the board of directors and most of them could not even write their names.

The log cabin was the only home of the pioneers which had furniture of the crudest sort. They were made up of one room which had to answer for the kitchen, dining room, sitting room, bed room, and parlor, and many families consisted of six or eight persons.

The housewife of pioneer days knew nothing of the modern conveniences for preparing meals. Her gas range was an iron kettle hung over a large fire. The long-



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handled frying pan was used for cooking meat. The best thing for baking bread was the flat-bottomed bake kettle known as the "Dutch Oven."

While the pioneers in Palestine toiled hard they were also due some amusement. Among the more general forms of entertainment were the "quilting bee", "corn husking", "apple paring", "log rolling" and "house-raising". The pioneers "flappers" and their beaux managed to have a good time by "corn husking." These affairs were when both sexes united in work in a large barn that had been decorated for the occasion. When a lady found a red ear she was entitled to a kiss from every gentleman present and visa versa.

The first church to be erected in Palestine was the Methodist in 1820. Rev. John Dolliphan, who like all other preachers traveled on foot and horseback, was the first Methodist to preach in this county. A few years after the erection of the Methodist Church was the Presbyterian Church.

Three years after the opening of the Land Office, the first important highway was begun to link Palestine with Vandalia, the state capitol, presided over by Ninnian Edwards as Governor.

Some of the earliest roads in Crawford County followed the Indian trails, crossing streams at fords where the condition of the banks and bottoms were suitable for the Prairie Schooner or Conestogo Wagon, which was the type of wagon used by the earliest settlers.

The first step in the improvement of the roads was to build covered wooden bridges over Hutson Creek, LaMotte Creek, and Big Creek. The springy spots were overlaid with poles, or corduroy, which made them very rough and bumpy, but the pioneer settlers did not mind the bumps. At that time, in the year 1835, every able-bodied man was required to give five days per year for work on the roads. For fifty years roads did not improve much except that wooden bridges and culverts were built. About that time there were earth moving machines being built and improved for the construction of railroad grades which were later put to use on the improvement of roads. About 1885 steel bridges began to replace the old wooden structures and by 1905 it was decided to try out some hard roads in the county, but this was brought about against the best judgement of a lot of the people who could see no need for it.

ROADS

Joh Looker, a Revolutionary soldier, was an officer in General George Washington's



army. In his declining days he came to Palestine in 1844 and he spent his last days with his daughter, the widow of Joseph Kitchell. At a Fourth of July celebration in 1845 he delivered a short address to the people. He died this same year and is buried in an old Palestine cemetery.

An old newspaper reported a ball held July 3, 1852, at the Wilson Tavern. Guests, dressed in full dress suits and silk plug hats and beautiful evening gowns and sparkling jewels, drove from Hutsonville, Darwin, York, and Larenceville in rigs decorated in green corn. The eighty-one couples paid \$5.00 a plate (plus extras) for dinner, which featured nine large turkeys and a great iron kettle of chicken. Dancing was in progress all night in an upstairs ballroom. Many of the stores wishing to welcome the guests, kept "open house," with whiskey barrels and tin cups near at hand for the thirsty. Those who were able, enjoyed breakfast at the Tavern before starting on their homeward journey.

An opera house was once located upstairs of the Fife Furniture Store which is now owned by Jim Goodwine. We heard some of the scenery is still up there.

In 1854 work commenced on the Wabash Valley Railroad Project. The funds amounting to \$60,000 disappeared faster than the enterprise progressed. Nearly enough money had been subscribed along the line to have built the road, had it been judiciously and economically used. Instead it was squandered and the project of building the Wabash Valley Railroad was abandoned in 1855.

Many hogs were raised around Palestine. They ran all over the streets until 1877. The two pumps along Main Street were favorite gathering places of both animals and people. Hogs found it particularly enticing and had a very nice hog wallow directly in front of it. For years Palestine was the only place in a large area where pork was bought, packed, and shipped.

Some very unusual ordinances were put into effect in Palestine in the early days. The first ordinance was written in 1877 and had to do with keeping swine off the street. If the swine were caught running on the streets, they were arrested, and the owner had to pay so much a day for room and board. It was against the law to sell cigarettes in Palestine and this law has never been repealed to this day. Spitting on the sidewalks, playing marbles or games on the sidewalks, and driving on Main Street on Sunday were



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also against the law. In 1906 children had to be off of the streets by 8:00 P.M. during the months of April through September and at 7:00 P.M. from October through March. If children were found on the streets after these times they were fined from \$1.00 to \$5.00. In those days whiskey was about as free as water. Enormous quantities were bought at the prices of 12½¢ a quart and from 35¢ to 40¢ a gallon. Saturday afternoon was considered a holiday in and around Palestine. Everyone went to town to trade, talk, and have fun. If you will look around, some people still keep this custom.

On Saturday, September 23, 1887, about 4:20 A.M. flames were discovered in a hall above Overholser's grocery. The fire spread rapidly to the post office building next door, and then on to Dr. Steele's office, which also housed the Enterprise (the name of the local newspaper). The flames were not stopped until they reached Goodwin's Exchange, which was partly torn down to save other buildings. One Palestine resident who was an eye witness of the fire remembers that William Alexander, postmaster, made a valiant effort to save postal matter from the office, and was nearly suffocated in his attempt. The first edition of the Palestine Enterprise which followed the fire had to be printed in the office of the Robinson Argus, because, according to the account, "nearly everything was destroyed but a few pounds of type." Half of Palestine's business section was destroyed in two hours. "By united efforts of our citizens the east side was prevented from catching fire. At one time it seemed that H. H. Haskett's store must burn but this was prevented by wet blankets and plenty of water. Some record books and papers were carried from the post office." That is how one old newspaper read.

The first records of the post office in Palestine date back to 1887. From July 1, 1892 until June 6, 1895, H. H. Haskett was postmaster. In 1925 the first city mail delivery was started and the first mail carrier was Edgar McCain, who is still delivering mail. Since 1892 several people have had the job of postmaster. At the present time Harry Shaw is postmaster. In 1901 there were 240 call boxes in the postoffice. At the present there are no call boxes but instead lock boxes.

On April 14, 1906 J. W. Leaverton gave to Palestine 14.64 acres of land for a park. On August 8, 1914, a committee was elected from the park board to have more hitchracks and seats installed for the Fourth of July celebration, and a specialist