

Original Linton

With almost a certainty, in November 1898 Williamsport would lose the county seat to section 7, 132-76 where as yet no town existed. Three months earlier W. E. Petrie, who owned the land, had the new site surveyed by H. W. Allen, county surveyor. Blocks 1 to t between Schley and Sampson Avenues were platted into lots, streets and alleys, and were dedicated. J. W. Westcott's general store was the first building moved to the new town. As yet no name had been dedicated: Petrie, Lynn and Muench all refused to have it named for them, and finally Allen's suggestion, "Lynn" and "Town" were shortened to "lin-ton", and the plat was filed with the register of deeds on December 30, 1898.

Charles Patterson purchased a strip of land north of Schley Ave., from Petrie and platted it into five blocks. His hotel was built in block 5, and to it he attached a lean-to containing a vault for the county records. The hotel opened with a Grand new Year's Ball on December 31, 1898. Patterson received the first commission as post master on March 18, 1899. Here too he published the EMMONS COUNTY REPUBLICAN, formerly the WINONA TIMES, from January 1, 1899 until Streeter bought him out three months later.

It did not take long for merchants, county officials and professional men to establish themselves in Linton, and a business section rapidly grew up along both Hickory and 2nd Street. On Hickory, in the block west of our present courthouse were the Hogue drug store, Heaume land office, Britts barber shop, and several residences. In the next block west were the Wescott store, livery barn, the Valley Hotel, the post office (now under James Corgin since March 1900), and the Petrie store, in that order. The Valley Hotel, a 2 story house still stands on the original spot. On 2nd Street were the RECORD office, land office of Edward Braddock and that of Frank Irvine, Crain, and Horton Bank, Patterson Hotel, Honstain Hall and a "blind pig".

New Linton

The railroad companies who preferred to make their own towns and not aid and abet existing ones planned to turn their line east of the platted area. H. F. Hunter, General Passenger Agent for the Milwaukee Railroad, bought a strip of land from John Bartu and Platted Hunter's First Addition. The plat was filed August 30, 1902 after an auction sale of lots had been held in Eureka, South Dakota. The new business section along Broadway sprang up almost overnight with moving of buildings.

The Linton House, Patterson's Hotel, led the move up the hill on October 17, 1902 and located north of the site of the present Fidelity State Bank, until destroyed by fire on the morning of December 14, 1962.

Crain and Horton's Bank, across from the Patterson Hotel was moved October 31st and became the First Bank of Linton. It still stands today and is known as the Dietz barber shop. Other businesses rapidly followed in a short time Original Town now called "Old Town" became purely residential.

On the northwest corner of 1st Street and Hickory, the new Ott and Delger Town Hall was built the following May. It was a 2 story L shaped building, the main part being 40' by 60'. It had a bowling alley and billiard room on the first floor and a dance hall on

the second. On October 27, 1903 this town hall burned when a fire began in a pile of refuse close the east end of the building.

This hall was replaced when popular subscription built the Linton Opera House in block 5 on East Broadway. It opened with a dance June 16, 1905. it was used for all public meetings, roller skating, declamations and readings (James Foley, north Dakota Poet Laureate, read his poems there in 1911), graduations and plays, later for movies. It was always financially in the red and was under several managers, the last being Adam Thomas. It burned November 17, 1920 taking several nearby buildings with it.

Some very early day business, besides those which moved from Original Town were Clayton's blacksmith, Arlington Hotel (Still standing), Pfeifle's machine and feed store, Patterson land office, Rowerdink's Jewelry, Obermeier bakery, W.G. Carley restaurant. Linton Leader. Small buildings changed hands and locations so often it was almost impossible to keep track of them. Several illegal saloons (blind pigs) that began in the new county seat were rapidly put out of business by arrest of the proprietors who then took off for more lucrative fields. By March 1903 the population was 245.

By late 1902 about a mile southeast of town, the stone quarry was already operating. The dark gray building stone could be bought for 25 cents a load and could be easily worked with stonemason tools. The fact that all these buildings erected in the early days are still standing, attests to the durability of our native sandstone.

Linton was incorporated as a village on April 26, 1906 and divided into three wards, the two dividing lines being Broadway and the railroad tracks. Later, because of the population shift and growth, the two dividing lines became 1st Street Northwest and 4th Street, Northeast. Originally Linton's north-south streets were numbered from 1st Street, on the west side of Original Town, and progressing numerically east. In 1952, the American Legion, with the consent and cooperation of the City Council, re-numbered the streets. A bit of confusion occurs in discussing the location of early day buildings: i.e., the stone hotel, built on the corner of Hickory and 8th Street, is now located at Hickory and 1st Street northwest.

Linton incorporated as a city on April 6, 1914.

In June 1909 street lighting came to the village in the form of three gas lights, followed by four more two years later, all on Broadway. The council determined to replace the expensive gas lights with electric, and what was then known as the "White way" was built in 1917. The lights were in the center of Broadway, until 1933 when, at the request of the State Highway Department, they were moved to the side. Highway 83 had been constructed in 1930, its route built along Saint Paul Avenue.

As the years passed business began, changed hands or folded up. Structures were erected, grew old and dilapidated, were remodeled or torn down, and replaced by modern and larger structures.

People were born, matured, and finally laid to rest in Saint Anthony, the Lutheran or the city cemetery. Rural residents moved to town for the winter and back to the farm for the planting and growing season. And through all this, Linton continued to grow and new sites were added to the city plat.

Taken from Last of the Pioneers and Odyssey of the Pfaff and Harr family and other relatives by Ralph E. Wiseman 1984.

Contributed By Cynthia Maier.