

ROBERT NEWLAND PALMER

In placing the name of Robert N. Palmer before the reader as one standing in the front rank of the enterprising men of affairs and a leader of the bar at Bedford, Indiana, whose influence has tended to the up building of the city of his residence and the advancement of the affairs of his native county of Lawrence, simple justice is done a biographical fact, recognized throughout the community by those at all familiar with his history and cognizant of the important part he has acted in the circles with which he has been identified. His career presents a notable example of those qualities of mind and character which overcome obstacles and win success, and his example is eminently worthy of imitation.

Robert N. Palmer first saw the light of day on November 11, 1848, on the paternal homestead, about four miles east of Bedford, Indiana. His parents were James W. and Laura (Newland) Palmer, the former born in Farquier county, Virginia, on March 18, 1826, and the latter a native of Lawrence county, Indiana. The subject's paternal grandparents, Joseph and Elizabeth (Fuller) Palmer, came from the Old Dominion state in an early day and settled on a farm about seven miles northeast of Bedford, in Pleasant Run township, and there they spent the remainder of their lives, dying there at the respective ages of eighty-two and ninety-four years. James W. Palmer engaged in the mercantile business in Bedford in 1852 and for forty years he was numbered among the enterprising and successful merchants of this locality, being engaged actively in business almost up to the time of his death. To James and Laura Palmer were born two children the subject of this sketch and one who died in infancy. Mrs. Laura Palmer died on September 15, 1853, and in 1857 Mr. Palmer married Jennie Johnston, to which union were born five children, namely: Isaiah J., better known as Sida, of Bedford; James W., of Indianapolis; Edward (Jack), who is assistant book keeper for the Bedford Electric Company; Mary, wife of Charles H. Strupe, of Bedford, and Goldie Ann Palmer, who remains at home.

Robert N. Palmer was reared on the home farm and secured his elementary education in the public schools of Bedford, completing his general educational training in Indiana University. For a year or two he was employed at ordinary work of various kinds, and then entered the law office of Judge Francis Wilson, devoting the ensuing five years to the study of law, at the end of which time he was admitted to the bar of Lawrence county, and has been engaged in the practice of his profession continuously since. His success was assured from the start, for he early evinced those qualities which make for success in any line of effort—earnestness of purpose, persistent industry, undivided attention and inflexible integrity. During his professional career Mr. Palmer has achieved an enviable reputation in the branch of criminal law especially, having been prominently connected with many of the most important criminal cases tried in the local court, among which were the Towe and Beasley, Tomlison and Gaines, Shaffer, Deckard and Ira Cobb murder cases. He is counsel for the Stone City Bank and since 1893 has been counsel for the Baltimore & Ohio Railway Company. As a lawyer he is well informed in his profession and faithful to his clients and the law. He is an honest and fair practitioner, and the record of testimony is ample that he is a good citizen in the full sense of the term, worthy of all honor and public trust.

On November 6, 1879. Robert N. Palmer was married to Louisa LaForce, the

daughter of David R. LaForce, an old resident and prominent business man of Bedford. To this union was born one child, Craigie M. Palmer, who is at home. Mrs. Palmer died on March 4, 1887.

In political affairs, Mr. Palmer has for many years been a prominent figure. He has assumed an independent attitude, though nominally a Democrat, and in 1896 he supported the gold standard wing of the party, being a delegate to the national convention of the Gold Democrats and a presidential elector from the second congressional district. Recently he has been identified with the Progressive movement. Though never a candidate for public office, he served seven and a half years as a member of the Bedford school board, where he rendered efficient service in the interest of educational affairs. Fraternally, he is a member of the Masonic order. Mr. Palmer, in his life career, has honored the two family names which he bears, both of which have been prominent in the annals of the county. His maternal grandfather, William Newlands, was a prominent man in the early history of this section. With others, he established the Christian church in Lawrence county and helped to build the first church, known as Leatherwood church, in 1836. He died in 1854. Personally, Mr. Palmer is of a genial nature and a very agreeable companion, enjoying a large circle of warm and loyal friends, and it is safe to say that no man in the community enjoys to a greater measure the confidence and regard of the people than he.

(History of Lawrence and Monroe Counties Indiana , 1914 B. F. Bowen & Co. Inc. Indianapolis, Indiana pgs 547-549)