DESTINATION LODI

A HISTORICAL JOURNEY

UNDERWOOD’S MARKET

As stated in another article, I am interested in the family history of our local residents. Janet Baker was my first to give information on the Robert “Bob” Underwood family now a fourth generation in Lodi. What I want to do is an ancestry chart of each family in our Lodi-Harrisville Historical Computer, another project. Moreover, we still need to buy the computer…

Bob was born in Sycamore, Ohio (July 11, 1905) to Benjamine (1873) and Florence (1871). He had two siblings, Thomas and Margaret.

Bob graduated and a year later married Magdalen Anna Seckel (January 29. 1905-May 1. 1939) from -Galion, Ohio. Her parent were William (1872-1950) and Catherine Boehm Seckel (1876-1955). They moved to Berea, working at Baldwin Wallace College with his mother. He left the job one year later to learn the meat business at Ohio Cash Markets of Northern Ohio.

Son James was born in Berea in 1929, and a year later Bob and his family moved to Lodi where he was sent to manage Lodi Cash Market. The family lived on Church Street, daughter Joyce was born in Lodi 1932.

In 1934, Bob moved his family to Creston, Ohio, when he took a job with Gerstenslager Packing Company.

In 1938, Bob moved his family back Lodi, when he purchased Young Meat Market from Nelson Harris, who owned the market.

Daughter Janet was born in Lodi in 1939 and later that year, wife Magdalene died. Bob married Bess Miller in 1940, and in 1941, they had a son Thomas.

The market was located in the Bartholomai Building, had some very trying years during World War II with food rationing, tokens, and very short supply of food products. In 1946, the store remodeled, adding new items such as frozen foods that were new at that time.

Person note, my parents lived in an apartment above the store with my brother Tom age two. I guess Tom would watch Bob chop heads off chickens in the back alley. Now that is fresh meat.

In 1954, the store moved to the Homan Building at the corner of Church and Wooster Street that doubled the store size. Bob joined the Betsy Ross Foods & Sparkle Markets of Akron. A&P was located next door. In 1963, Bob purchased the building from Mrs. Homan, and in 1964, A&P closed. The store was remodeled and doubled in size. In 1966 incorporated.

Bob was a generous dedicated family man, helping many families with their groceries. He was a member of the Lodi Methodist Church, director of the Lodi Auto Club, past Master of the Masons. He was past President of the Lodi Commercial Club and served three years on the Lodi Board of Public Affairs. During his time on the board, along with a vote from Bill Dunlap, purchased the Lodi Power Plant from Western Reserve Electric Company.