

Souvenir and Illustrated History of Palmer Park



The famous log Cabin

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LAKE FRANCES AND LIGHT HOUSE

Souvenir History of Palmer Park

Detroit, Michigan

AND SKETCH OF

Hon. Thomas W. Palmer

Sage of Log Cabin Farm



BY

Crocket McElroy

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PALMER PARK

HISTORY

PALMER PARK, is so named in honor of Hon. Thomas W. Palmer who gave it to the city of Detroit. It is located in the township of Greenfield, Wayne County. The entrance is on Woodward Avenue, six and a half miles north from the City Hall and about two miles beyond the city limits.

The land embraced in the park was formerly a part of the Log Cabin Farm. It was first owned by the French Government, next by the English government and then by the United States. In April 1825, the E. $\frac{1}{2}$ of the S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 11 in T. 1 S. of R. 11 E. was patented by the United States to Francis Browning. This patent was signed by "J. Q. Adams" then the president. In the year 1827 this 80 acres was deeded by Francis Browning to James Witherell the grandfather of Mr. Palmer. In June 1833 the W. $\frac{1}{2}$ of the same quarter section was patented to James Witherell. This patent was signed by "Andrew Jackson" the president, in a plain bold hand.

This 160 acres of land became the property of Mr. Palmer's mother by descent from her father James Witherell and became his property by descent from his mother Mary Amy Witherell Palmer in the year 1874.

About the year 1870 Mr. Palmer began buying land adjoining the 160 acres and this continued until he had between 700 and 800 acres. About 140 acres of this land was laid out into a park by Olmstead & Elliot, celebrated landscape gardeners of Boston, Mass., under the general directions of Mrs. Palmer. The plan includes two lakes, several islands, pathways and between five and six miles of roads.

Mrs. Palmer designed the Log Cabin and caused it to be built. She then furnished it with "olden time" furniture 50 to 130 years old. She caused the lakes to be dredged and built a windmill to supply them with water obtained from wells made in the sand banks. The lakes are now supplied by the city water works although the windmill is kept in running order and occasionally used. Mrs. Palmer also built the warder's cottage and the stable and made many other improvements in the park.

In the year 1893, the park was deeded unconditionally to the city of Detroit by Thomas W. Palmer and Lizzie M. Palmer his wife, except that the use of twelve acres including the Log Cabin and the right to take ice from the lake was reserved to Mr. Palmer while he lived. Some years ago this reserve was released to the city and



WOODWARD AVENUE ENTRANCE

since then the city has been the exclusive owner of the land and the buildings, including the Log Cabin and its contents.

Previous to the destruction by fire of their elegant home located on the entire block bounded by Woodward Avenue, Frederick, John R. and Farnsworth streets, in the year 1894, Mr. and Mrs. Palmer occupied the Log Cabin a short time each summer. In the fall of 1897 while the present large composite house on the farm was being finished, they made their home for three months in the Log Cabin.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PARK.

From its entrance at Woodward Avenue to its northern end the park is about one and a half miles long and the width varies from 600 to 1200 feet, except that at the entrance it is narrowed to about 250 feet. It runs in a northwesterly direction and is irregular in outline. In laying it out no attention was paid to compass lines. The boundary lines are curved and swell near the center in length to its greatest width. The north end is round like the end of one's finger. There are no square corners and no straight lines, except at the connection with Woodward Avenue.

At the entrance there is a comfortable waiting room built by the city, of small tamarack logs with the bark on. It is about 24 feet by 36 feet in size and has a covered porch on the Woodward Avenue side. Near the waiting room is a drinking fountain made of porous limestone brought from Ohio. A broad asphalt walk leads to the Log Cabin. A good graveled roadway runs along the southwest side of the park to the Casino. Elm shade trees, clusters of pine and sumac, rows of flowering shrubs and beds of flowers beautify this part of the park.

LAKE FRANCES

One of the most attractive things in the park is this beautiful lake, named in memory of Mrs. Palmer's mother, Mrs. Frances Merrill. It is large for one of its kind and its irregular shape gives it the appearance of a natural lake. It lies just east of the Log Cabin. It contains five small islands the larger one being named "Duck Island." These islands are ornamented with native and evergreen trees. On one of the smallest which lies in front of the Log Cabin is a light-house built on a stone foundation, which gives it an air of solidity and usefulness. It was formerly lighted with an oil lamp and showed a beautiful red, white and blue, flash light. The oil lamp is now out of use, but the park commissioner contemplates putting in an electric lamp; when this is done the light-house will be a unique ornament to the park.



LAKE HAROLD AND PONTIAC CASCADE

On the east bank of this lake the city has recently built a commodious resthouse where several hundred people can find shelter, the sides of the building are composed mostly of windows arranged to be hoisted and afford a free circulation of air. On the west bank of the lake stands a substantial and picturesque windmill (heretofore mentioned) with a pump-house and an elevated tank. Surrounding the lake are a number of mounds and pretty little grass covered hills made by the ingenious disposal of the earth obtained in excavating the lake. These elevations add materially to the beauty of the locality.

A goodly number of park seats are placed in the vicinity of the lake. A rustic bridge crosses a narrow neck of the lake on the direct path to the Log Cabin. In the words of Senator Palmer, "the lake is a perfect breeding pond for goldfish." Many thousands of these aquatic beauties have their home in the lake and they multiply rapidly, living there the year round; not only this, but they grow to an unusual size approaching two pounds in weight. Sometimes swarms of them give the surface of the water a reddish cast like clouds reddened by a setting sun. The overseer states that he placed 66 goldfish in the lake eight years ago, that he has since taken out 50,000 and there are thousands left.

Much pleasure is afforded little children visitors, when crumbs of bread are thrown into the water to attract the fish, and then to see the fish disappear like a flash when the ducks come rushing over the top of the water to get the bread.

The white house near the Log Cabin is the overseer's residence and is not open to the public. A little north of the Log Cabin is a rustic drinking fountain and two buildings for the convenience of visitors. A pen of fence rails surrounds three venerable beech trees scarred with the names or initials of many persons cut into the bark. The fence was built to save the lives of the trees. Sixteen electric lamps light a portion of the park. Improvements are being made slowly as the Park Commissioner thinks they are called for. In the south part of the park are some apple trees that were formerly in the Log Cabin Farm orchard.

There is a rustic shed and poultry house with bark roofs near the stable. In the poultry yard is a fine flock of large white Wyandotte hens and a beautiful peacock of the common variety that spreads a tail eight feet wide as he struts through the yard. Two beautiful white peacocks purchased lately in the city of Washington are among the attractions. There is a pigeon house and a fine assortment of pigeons, white ducks called Pekins and colored ducks called Rouens, also black and white turkeys.



THE FAMOUS LOG CABIN

A fine liberty pole adorns the lawn south of the Log Cabin from which often floats the—Star Spangled Banner.

Near the western entrance to the Log Cabin is a large bell hanging in a rustic frame, this bell was designed and cast by Paula Gomez, a founder, in Spain in 1793. It was taken to Mexico more than 100 years ago. The late William A. Moore, and the late Senator McMillan and a few other friends raised a fund and bought the bell and presented it to Senator Palmer, who gave it to the city of Detroit. The weight of this bell is 1015 pounds.

On the Log Cabin lawn is a large boulder of light gray granite that was found on the Log Cabin Farm. A brass sun dial about eighteen inches in diameter has been placed on the top of this stone.

It never tells the time at night,
But when the sun shines tells it right.

No shooting is allowed in the park and wild birds are not afraid to come there. Red squirrels are the only kind kept in the park. They are banished from Belle Isle Park because of a peculiar vicious habit which inclines them to exterminate the other squirrels.

Under a shed at the pump-house is a plow and ox yoke such as were used in Spain in 1492. The yoke is made of wood in the usual form, the bows or collars are made of corn husks or similar leaves plaited; they are left open at the bottom it is supposed so they can be tied. The plow beam is made of a natural crook of wood of the right size and shape, to the top of the beam is attached a pole left round as it grew, which runs between the oxen and enters a mortise in the yoke. There is an iron point on the plow; that and a few bolts constitute nearly all the iron that is used. These things were found in the dining room of the convent of La Rabida, an institution made famous by the fact that Christopher Columbus in 1490 applied there for food for his little son Diego. He was kindly treated by the prior Juan Perez who had been the queen's confessor and through whose influence the queen was induced to give Columbus the means to start on his voyage which led to the discovery of America. Many Americans hold a reverent feeling for the famous convent. Senator Palmer purchased the plow and the yoke in Spain, brought them to the Log Cabin and gave them to the city of Detroit.

THE BIG LOG.

In the yard near the stable is a log cut from a spruce tree in the state of Washington; it is 36 feet long, was nine feet in diameter when cut and has shrunk to eight feet two inches. The log was cut 65 feet up from the butt of the tree to get where the diameter was small enough for it to pass through the railroad tunnels. It was exhibited at the World's Fair in St. Louis and in many other cities throughout the country. There is a bear's cage in one end, some shelves and seats in the other end forming a sort of cabin. The inside of the log has been mostly cut away. The city of Detroit paid one thousand dollars for the log. It was kept for some time in Belle Isle Park and then transferred to Palmer Park.

THE FOREST.

A large portion of the park is covered with a forest of thrifty native, deciduous trees, of all sizes from tiny shrubs and saplings to high and stately trees three feet and more in diameter. The trees average small, stand close together and thus afford to people who know little of the wild woods, the charm of a thick forest.



THE NATIVE FOREST

The trees are in great variety, there being more than seventy kinds. There are seven kinds of oak, eleven kinds of willow, five kinds of thorn and the trees common to this section of the country, such as elm, maple, beech, hickory, ash, basswood, tamarack and birch. Among the rarer trees are sassafras, walnut, butternut, balm of gilead, slippery-elm, plum and cherry. There is claimed to be a greater variety of trees in Palmer Park indigenous to the soil than there is in the whole of Europe with its millions of acres of forests. At a convention of park commissioners held at the park a few years ago, it was agreed that there was no other such a primeval park, as Palmer Park, within thirty miles of any city in the United States.

If the reader will halt here and give his mind time to grasp the grandeur of this unique forest, and the charming features of the improved portion of the park, he will be thrilled with admiration for the grand work of nature as beautified by the ideal handiwork of man, and his heart will swell with gratitude for the generosity of Hon. Thomas W. Palmer and the liberality of the people of Detroit, by whom this famous producer of health and happiness is made free for the enjoyment of everybody.

Mixed with the trees and native to the park there are more than forty kinds of shrubs and plants, including flowering dogwood, hazelnut, wintergreen, huckleberry, raspberry, blackberry, honeysuckle, poison ivy, gooseberry, currant and rose.

In the wooded portion of the park not many improvements have been made. There is a small section cleared in which are a few swings, a teeter board, a merry-go-round, a may pole, lunch tables and seats for small parties and long tables and seats for large parties. There is an open pavilion on the east side large enough to shelter 500 people. It has a refreshment stand attached where soft drinks, cakes, fruit, ice cream and other refreshments are sold at moderate prices. Several paths and roads meander through the woods.

LAKE HIGINIO.

Near the west side of the wider portion of the park is a beautiful small lake bearing the above name, it contains one island called "Inselruhe," which is connected with the main land by two rustic bridges. There is a high mound on the north side with a rocky face toward the lake broken into pools and dams. When the water is turned on it gushes from a small hole in the top and falls into pool after pool and over dam after dam on its way down to the lake, forming a beautiful miniature cataract. This fountain has been named—Pontiac Cascade. This lake is now called "Harold" in honor of Mr. Palmer's son.



THE CASINO

THE CASINO.

On the east side of Lake Harold is a large and handsome Casino, two and a half stories high with porches on each side. It has a commanding view and stands on high and beautiful grounds.

THE NURSERY.

In the north end of the park is a large nursery used for starting the growth of the various ornamental trees, shrubs and plants used in beautifying all the parks owned by the city of Detroit. Thousands of shrubs and plants and hundreds of trees having a value of six thousand dollars and upwards, are taken from this nursery yearly, thus proving it to be a very important adjunct to the park system of Detroit.

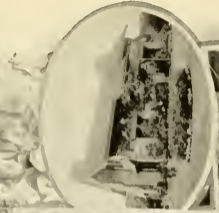
HOT HOUSES.

About 1000 feet east of the Casino are the hot houses and glass sheds where thousands of flowers are got ready for transplanting in the many flower beds of the park. The hot houses co-operate with the nursery.

THE LOG CABIN.

This building is about 30 feet wide and 45 feet long, besides a large chimney at each end built outside and a frame addition on the west side called the kitchen. The house is two stories high, it is built of round logs with the bark on, most of them are oak and one foot in diameter. The house rests on a brick foundation, the chimneys are made of logs four to six inches in diameter, above the roof the logs in the chimneys are four inches thick, the wooden shades over the windows are made of sticks three inches in diameter. The house has a shingle roof.

On the outside, the Log Cabin looks like a substantial, genuine log house, on the inside it comes pretty near being a very good modern house. The inside walls and ceilings are plastered, the floors are laid with white maple and walnut, in places with alternate strips of each. The finishing wood is oak throughout, carved in some places. The house is well planned; on the first floor a wide hall runs through the house, with a substantial oak staircase at one end. On the north side is a large dining room with sliding doors between it and the hall, on the south side is a large parlor also provided with sliding doors. In each of these rooms are large fire-places built of pressed red brick. Over the front door outside, is a pair of large elk's horns.



LOG CABIN AND INTERIOR VIEWS

THE LOWER HALL.

In this hall is a good large portrait of Senator Palmer and small portraits of Charles Merrill, Thomas Palmer and James Witherell, also large portraits of Mr. and Mrs. James Witherell, Senator Palmer's grandparents. A picture of the battle of Lexington hangs on the wall. There is a pen portrait of Senator Palmer in very fine writing, it being his biography. A stuffed elk's head is fastened to the wall. A stuffed blue heron rests on a table. On a high shelf are three leather fire buckets reminders of the days when every householder was required to keep a fire bucket and bring it to every fire. There is an oak cabinet containing curiosities, glassware, ornamental tableware, pipes, moccasins &c. &c. There is also an old writing desk. Hanging to the ceiling are two large old style square lanterns. Hanging on the wall is a group picture of Senator Palmer and his three sisters, it was taken when he was seventeen years old, one sister was younger and two were older than he.

On the landing of the stairway is a clock that stands eight feet high which has an interesting history. A brass plate attached to the clock bears the following inscription:—

“Purchased by Benjamin Palmer
1762,
Descended to his son Benjamin Palmer.
Taken from the house where his son
Thomas Palmer was born, by his grandson
Thomas W. Palmer, Aug. 11, 1885.”

THE DINING ROOM.

Fastened to the ceiling are strips of wood (log cabin style) to which are hung a birch bark canoe, bunches of herbs and other things. In the fireplace is an iron crane with an iron pot and iron tea kettle hanging on it and andirons on which to lay the wood. There are several primitive cooking utensils and a warming pan made of two copper bowls about ten inches wide united with a hinge and having a handle of wood about three feet long. This pan was formerly used for warming beds; hot coals were placed in the bowls which were then tightly closed, then the hot bowl was pushed back and forth across the bed under the covering until the bed would be quite warm.

A dinner table covered with a white spread has on it a set of old style blue dishes placed ready for use. There are several kinds of old chairs, a wooden high chair that Senator Palmer occupied before he could say "doughnuts," and a similar high chair that Mrs. Palmer occupied when she was cutting teeth. On the mantel are several brass girandoles with glass pendants. Over the mantel hanging to the chimney is a flint lock musket, such as the early pioneers used to rely upon when threatened by savage beasts or savage men, and which was frequently used to down a deer to supply fresh meat for the family table. There is a common spinning wheel, a reel, a flax spinning wheel, a bed ready for use, a dash churn, a cherry sideboard, a bellows, a sword, an Indian bow, quiver and arrow, some Indian baskets, a brass coffee pot, sugar snips for crushing loaf sugar, two silver casters, six ivory napkin rings, a stand of candle moulds, and hanging to the wall are portraits of George Washington, Martha Washington and John Quincy Adams. The chairs painted red were brought from Vermont by Judge Witherell in 1808. They were rudely constructed, but were strong.

THE KITCHEN.

This room is fully equipped with a cooking stove, cooking utensils, sink and all necessary conveniences.

THE PARLOR.

In this room is a very old piano; in front of it is a stool the four legs of which are in one piece, braces run from leg to leg, the whole being a natural growth and a real and useful curiosity; the seat is made of slats of wood. There is a large bureau, a book case, several old rocking chairs, high, low and small. Lying on a table is a large flint lock pistol. Poles are fastened to the ceiling from which hang ears of corn and bunches of herbs. In pioneer days apples cut to be dried were strung on threads and hung to such poles, also seed corn and bunches of herbs, such as our good mother doctors knew so well how to use in making medicine. Peppermint, catnip, sage, boneset, thyme, smartweed and sweet flag were among the common varieties. Hanging on the wall of the parlor is a picture of Mary Palmer church.

There is a comfortable old style bed in one corner on a high-post walnut bedstead. Rag carpets and rag rugs are on the floor. A substantial old style low cradle, good enough for a modern baby, adds to the attractions. The use of this cradle began about 1822. In it were rocked all of Senator Palmer's mother's nine children and three of her grandchildren.

On the mantel over the fireplace are several handsome brass girandoles with glass pendants. There is a Mexican saddle and spurs, several sword-fish swords, a pair of snow shoes, a fancy stand with drawers, on top of which is an old curly maple writing desk. A large mahogany cased clock, standing about seven feet high, is an object of much interest; this clock was bought by Mr. Palmer's grandfather, James Witherell, in 1787 and kept good time for more than 100 years. When Mr. Witherell moved from Vermont to Michigan in 1808 the clock was left behind. It was recovered by Hon. Thomas W. Palmer in 1876.

The following verse written by an unknown poet some years ago and since printed, is attached to the clock:

"I am old and worn as my face appears,
For I've walked on time for a hundred years;
Many have fallen since I begun,
Many will fall ere my course is run;
I've buried the world with its joys and fears,
In my long, long march of one hundred years."

Lying on a table in the parlor are seven brass chains with brass plates attached on which names are engraved. For several years Senator Palmer would honor United States senators who visited the Log Cabin by allowing them to plant a tree. A brass chain was put around the tree and the name on the plate showed who it was planted by. The plates bear the following names:—Blair, of New Hampshire; Hiscock, of New York; Harris, of Tennessee; Reagan, of Texas; Sawyer, of Wisconsin; Conger, of Michigan, and McMillan, of Michigan.

SECOND FLOOR.

This floor has a large hall in the center and a bedroom in each corner. The bedrooms are much alike; the two on the north side and the two on the south side are connected by double sliding doors. There is a bed in each on high-post mahogany bedsteads. Each bedroom is well furnished with substantial, old style furniture and there is a wood stove in each one. In the southwest chamber are silver candlesticks and in the northwest chamber candlesticks of china and pewter. There are pictures on the walls in the hall and in the bedrooms.



PATHWAYS AND ROADWAYS

In the hall in a frame hanging to the wall is an excellent specimen of needle work done in 1820 by a girl twelve years old, named Eliza Bowdoin Pitts, who afterward became the aunt of Mrs. Palmer. She died in 1855.

THE LOG CABIN GROUNDS.

The location of the Log Cabin is very beautiful, the ground is high and is adorned with beautiful shade trees, fine fruit trees, beds of flowers, flowering shrubs, a fine lawn and nicely rounded banks bordering Lake Frances. The view to the south and east is both picturesque and charming. Before the eye of the visitor lies the pretty lake with its dolly islands, beyond are the little hills, the rest-house, the pathways and roadways leading to Woodward Avenue with its busy traffic and street cars nearly always in sight. Throngs of happy visitors going and coming give animation to the scene.

Directly in front of the Log Cabin a path leads down stone steps to a little dock with a railing around it where children may go to look at the goldfish and the ducks.

At the main entrance to the Log Cabin Grounds is a well of excellent drinking water, where the visitor can draw for himself a cool drink with an "old oaken bucket."

THE VISITORS.

To the great credit of the tens of thousands of people who visit Palmer Park, it must be said that they are respectable, orderly and law-abiding in an unusual degree. The overseer has only been required to use his police powers twice in ten years to maintain order. A majority of the visitors are women, young people and children. Frequently whole families come, especially on Sundays. Church picnics, Sunday School picnics, teachers and their classes, and various benevolent and social organizations are among the patrons. As many as 15,000 persons have occupied the park on a Sunday afternoon.

THE OFFICERS.

Palmer Park, as well as all the other public parks of Detroit, is under the care and management of Hon. Philip Breitmeyer, Park Commissioner.

The Commissioner has an able assistant in his secretary, M. P. Hurlbut.

The Overseer of Palmer Park is R. A. Hollister, who lives in the white cottage. He has held his position for ten years and has thus demonstrated his efficiency.

HOW TO GET THERE.

Passengers coming from the north on interurban cars can alight at the park. Passengers on other interurban lines can ask for transfers for Woodward Avenue. Passengers by any line having transfer tickets, on arriving at Woodward Avenue, must be careful to get on only those cars that have on the front end the sign—LOG CABIN.

Passengers arriving by the steam railroads or by steamboats have only to board the Woodward Avenue cars directly, or by transfer lines, to be conveyed to the park for five cents.

Citizens of Detroit living in any part of the city, whether one mile or ten miles from the park, can reach it at a cost of five cents by following the above directions.

The Woodward Avenue car line has a double track all the way to Palmer Park. It does not cross over any steam railroad track or bridge. The tracks are smooth, the cars large and strong, frequent service is given, and taken as a whole, the road is one of the safest, most comfortable and best managed electric railways in the world.



MERRY GO ROUND

PALMER PARK.

Come all who enjoy the country breeze,
Or odor sweet of the forest trees;
The fragrance of the pretty flowers,
Or feel the need of idle hours.

Come you venerable sires and dames,
And teach the children at playing games;
Join heart and soul in the merry throng,
And let happy hours your lives prolong.

You men who bear the burden of toil,
Come here and rest on your own free soil;
And freed for a while from care and strife,
Drink your heart's full of the joys of life.

Come here you weary mothers and rest,
Lay your burdens down on Nature's breast;
And watching your children romp and play,
Let your cares and sorrows fly away.

Come boys and girls you are welcome, too,
The whole of this park is free to you:
You can jointly play games that are mild,
Or roam as deer through the forest wild.



HON. THOMAS W. PALMER



MRS. PALMER

HON. THOMAS W. PALMER,
Sage of Log Cabin Farm.

Having in view his broad knowledge of the affairs of the world, his keen insight into the motives that actuate his fellow-creatures, his extensive reading fastened in his memory by travel and contact, his culture, buoyancy and amiability which enable him to drop from his lips opportune epigrams of wit and wisdom, and his philosophic mind which gives him the power to apply the rule of reason to events that occur from day to day affecting his business and his happiness, it seems to the writer that the Hon. Thomas W. Palmer justly deserves the distinction of being called: "The Sage of Log Cabin Farm."

Senator Palmer, as he is known to many of his friends, was born in Detroit, January 25th, 1830. His father was Thomas Palmer, a man of genial qualities and large business capacity. His mother was Mary Amy Witherell, daughter of Judge James Witherell, of Detroit, a woman of many noble qualities, held in very sacred remembrance by her distinguished son. In 1808 James Witherell, then living in Vermont, was appointed a United States judge for the territory of Michigan by Thomas Jefferson, then president, and he removed to Detroit the same year. Amy Hawkins, wife of Judge Witherell and Senator Palmer's grandmother, was a descendant of Roger Williams, the famous Puritan minister who founded the commonwealth of Rhode Island, and was one of the earliest, bravest and ablest advocates of liberty of conscience and the absolute separation of church and state. Senator Palmer is justifiably proud of his relationship to this great man.

In the year 1818 Senator Palmer's father and mother (then Miss Witherell) had the unique experience of being passengers on the steamer Walk-in-the-Water, the first steamboat that ever navigated Lake Erie, on her first round trip between Buffalo and Detroit; and again when on their bridal tour, on her last trip, when she was wrecked, in the fall of 1821.

At the age of twelve years Mr. Palmer was sent to St. Clair to attend Thompson's Academy. During his stay in St. Clair, he formed the acquaintance of men, women, boys and girls of whom he has retained ever since a remarkably vivid recollection.

After leaving the Academy at St. Clair, he attended the University of Michigan a year and a half, when trouble with his eyes caused him to leave the University before graduating.



SENATOR PALMER'S HOME

In the fall of 1848, with five others, he made a voyage to Spain. He landed at Cadiz and traveled on foot for two months, visiting the famous Alhambra and other places of interest. From Spain he went to Rio Janeiro, South America. After spending three months in South America, he returned to his home, spending two months in the southern states on the way. While in Spain and South America he learned to speak the Spanish language to some extent.

After a short experience in the mercantile business in Wisconsin, he returned to Detroit in 1853. In 1855 he engaged in the lumber trade and in a few years was heavily interested in the manufacture of lumber and the purchase and sale of pine lands. This business enabled him to amass a large fortune. He is now the owner of much valuable real estate in Detroit and has other important interests. He is entirely out of the lumber business, except that he still has some lands for sale.

In the year 1855 he was married to Lizzie P., daughter of Charles Merrill, of Detroit, a wealthy lumberman. No children came to bless this union. Later Mrs. Palmer dropped the P. and substituted M. in her name.

For a number of years Mr. Palmer took an active interest in stock-raising and kept on his farm the finest breeds of horses and cattle. He was for a time president of the State Agricultural Society. While taking a lively interest in agricultural matters he employed his friend, Hon. Eber W. Cottrell, to go to Europe and buy for him an Arabian stallion and other horses. Mr. Cottrell found the desired Arabian horse near Damascus, in Palestine. He also bought for the Senator, in France, between sixty and seventy thousand dollars' worth of Percheron horses. He has gone out of horse raising, but still retains on his farm a large herd of cows all of the Jersey breed.

Mr. Palmer has been a consistent member of the Republican party ever since it was organized in the year 1854. In the year 1878 he was elected a state senator and served one term. He was popular, faithful to his duties and was justly regarded as a leading senator. In 1883 he was chosen by the legislature a senator of the United States. In that body he was respected for his solid acquirements and his amiability. Although not much given to speech-making, he can, when occasion calls for it, make an able speech and express his views in the choicest English words. He did some good work in the United States senate and served one term of six years.

In the year 1889 he was appointed by President Harrison Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Spain. This was the first appointment made by President Harrison after he had selected his cabinet. He served one year in this position.

Just after his return from Spain, in 1890, he was appointed by President Harrison, commissioner at large of The World's Columbian Commission. He was chosen president of the commission by its 126 members. In this high office Senator Palmer acquitted himself with great credit. Sometimes differences arose among the fair managers which he reconciled by the exercise of diplomacy and strong common sense. He labored for harmony and helped materially to make the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893 the grand success that it was.

When the Infanta Eulalia, a member of the royal family of Spain, arrived in Chicago, President Palmer was able to converse with her in her native tongue, much to her delight. He served an elegant breakfast to Eulalia and her husband, Prince Antonio, which was spread at 1 P. M. in the Administration Building.

By reason of the high positions he has filled and his extensive acquaintance, Senator Palmer must be regarded as Detroit's most distinguished citizen. His popularity is based on his intelligence, his wit, his adaptability, his social nature, his excellent mastery of the English language, and his generosity. He is the pet of Detroit, and the man who is first thought of for chairman of public meetings when some famous person of national or foreign reputation is to be introduced.

As a philanthropist the Senator works quietly and without ostentation. He has contributed liberally to the needy for many years. Among his public donations may be mentioned \$15,000 given to help build a Methodist church on McDougall Avenue, named the "Mary Palmer Church," in memory of his mother. He gave \$17,000 to the Museum of Art; \$5,000 to the Masonic Temple; \$10,000 to the Superannuated Preachers' Aid Society, and has helped in many similar benevolent enterprises.

Mrs. Palmer's liberality should not be overlooked. Besides the large sum spent on Palmer Park, she expended more than \$20,000 in building the beautiful white marble Humane Fountain on the Campus Martius, as a memorial to her father.

Senator Palmer has met many eminent people, among them Emilio Castelar, the most distinguished Spaniard; the Queen Regent of Spain, and all the presidents from Hayes to Roosevelt.

He likes the good things the earth produces and yet is a moderate eater and lives mostly on plain food. When in political life he was fond of entertaining his friends with elaborate dinners, choice cigars and sometimes with music. As a host he is nigh to perfection as he has the rare faculty of making each of his guests feel that he is receiving special attention.

He is fond of poetry and carries a good deal in his memory. Of the American poets he places Oliver Wendell Holmes at the head of the list. Of the older British poets his favorites are Addison, Pope and Goldsmith.

In his business affairs the Senator has shown unusual capacity. He manages so adroitly that his business gives him very little trouble. He does the planning and trusts the detail work to his agents and clerks. He doesn't believe in worrying, or in wearing life away by hard work.

Asked what his motive was in donating Palmer Park to the people of Detroit, his answer was: "The good of everybody."

Senator Palmer holds the view that Heaven is on earth to all who know how to make a Heaven of the earthly life. He thinks that a man's spiritual life is progressive and continues to grow after it passes out of the animal body, and that the further advanced it is when transition takes place the higher will be its starting point in the spirit world. Hence it follows that the time spent in cultivating and building up the spiritual life while on earth will not be lost.

The Senator's favorite pastime is auto riding with one or two intelligent and jovial companions. He keeps a fine auto-carriage and a careful driver.

When in Spain Mr. Palmer adopted a Spanish boy only three years old, brought him to Detroit and gave him the name of Harold Palmer. This boy is now twenty-one years old and, to the credit of his adopted parents, is a fine young man.

Mr. Palmer also adopted a daughter and brought her up in the way that girls should grow; she is now Mrs. Rice, and is a robust lady of intelligence and refined manners.

LOG CABIN FARM.

Except at its junction with Woodward Avenue, Palmer Park is entirely surrounded by Log Cabin Farm. The farm contains about 600 acres of land of which 120 acres are leased to the Detroit Golf Club. The remainder is used as a farm, but it embraces considerable forest. The farm is managed by a competent superintendent who lives on it. Houses for the farm help, a large barn, several stables, sheds and the other necessary buildings are located a short distance from the main residence. These buildings constitute a considerable settlement.

SENATOR PALMER'S HOME.

The family mansion is a composite building with a dressed stone foundation, capped with dressed sandstone, a steel frame, cement walls and cement floors covered with quartered oak. The outside walls are made of pressed red brick. It contains three finished stories, although its appearance is that of a two and a half story house, there being dormer windows in the roof. The finishing wood is black walnut throughout and is liberally used. The door frames, window frames, mirror frames and mantels over the fireplaces are all of black walnut. The style is massive and the work is adorned with round columns with carved caps, heavy cornices richly carved, and is partly veneered with beautiful light-colored French walnut. There is a heavy paneled wainscoting thirty-four inches high in the main sitting room and main stairway.

The house is located diagonally across the line of longitude so that the corners point to the north, south, east and west. This wise idea gives the house a southeast front, the most desirable one to be had, and permits the sun to shine on every room in the house. The house has a double front, one to the northwest and one to the southeast. The center rooms on the first and second floors are used as reception and sitting rooms. The parlor is in the south corner, the dining room in the east corner, the library in the west corner, and the kitchen in the north corner. The house is nearly fire-proof and is regarded as one of the most substantially built houses in the state of Michigan.

On the southeast side is a wide porch inclosed in glass, where one can enjoy a sun bath without being exposed to cold wind. A large steam radiator warms this room when heat is needed. The house is heated by steam, but there are fireplaces in the sitting rooms, parlor, dining room and other rooms, there being eight in

all. The fuel used in the fireplaces is wood; in cold or damp days a brisk fire brings warmth and cheer to the visitor. A fire is made every night in the main sitting room fireplace, winter and summer, as the suction created carries off the vitiated air and adds to the comfort of the occupants.

The house is square in form and about 42 feet by 60 feet in size, with a one-story addition to the northeast end. It is approached by paths and roadways from Walnut Lane on the north and from the Six Mile Road on the south.

The grounds are large, contain statues of historic characters and statues of deer. There are many handsome shade trees, flower beds, ornamental shrubs and so forth, a pond and a hothouse.

Mr. Palmer's library is large and contains many rare and valuable books. There are many fine paintings and articles of interest in the house which want of space prevents being mentioned. An excellent full-length portrait of the Senator, painted by Eastman Johnson, adorns the parlor.

REFLECTIONS.

The adornment of the Log Cabin grounds will not be complete until a life-size statue of Mrs. Palmer is placed therein, showing her with hand extended in the act of directing some work of improvement.

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