

BETHANY

Jonathan K. Barlow was a well respected citizen of Bethany who practiced medicine in the town for 30 years (1818-1848). His passion was electricity. He lectured about thunderstorms and how magnetic telegraph worked. He also had his audience experience electrical shock. In 1832 he donated the land to the Methodist in Bethany to build a church which later became the Old Town Hall. Dr. Barlow moved to Illinois around 1849 and possibly died there.

Submitted by Lee Hendershott, Bethany Town Historian

Ira Edwin Leonard was born 1832 in Yorkshire, Cattaraugus County and by 1850 was living in Batavia. He married Maria Louise Shepard on Christmas Day in the family sitting room by her uncle, the Rev. Charles Putnam. Maria's father was James Shepard and her mother was Amanda Putnam both established families in the Town of Bethany. Ira graduated from the Albany Law School and for health reasons; he suffered with bronchitis and asthma, relocated out west and practiced law. In 1879 he was a Las Vegas attorney and was hired as an aide to William Rynerson, prosecuting attorney against the legendary out-law Billy the Kid. Two years later he was Billy the Kid's Defense Attorney and got his case dismissed, but within months of the trial Billy the Kid was shot to death by Pat Garrett.

Ira died in 1889 and is buried in Columbia Cemetery, Boulder Colorado, and Maria died on September 2, 1921 in San Bernardino, California.

Submitted by Linda Shepard, History Department patron