

The Lodi Oak

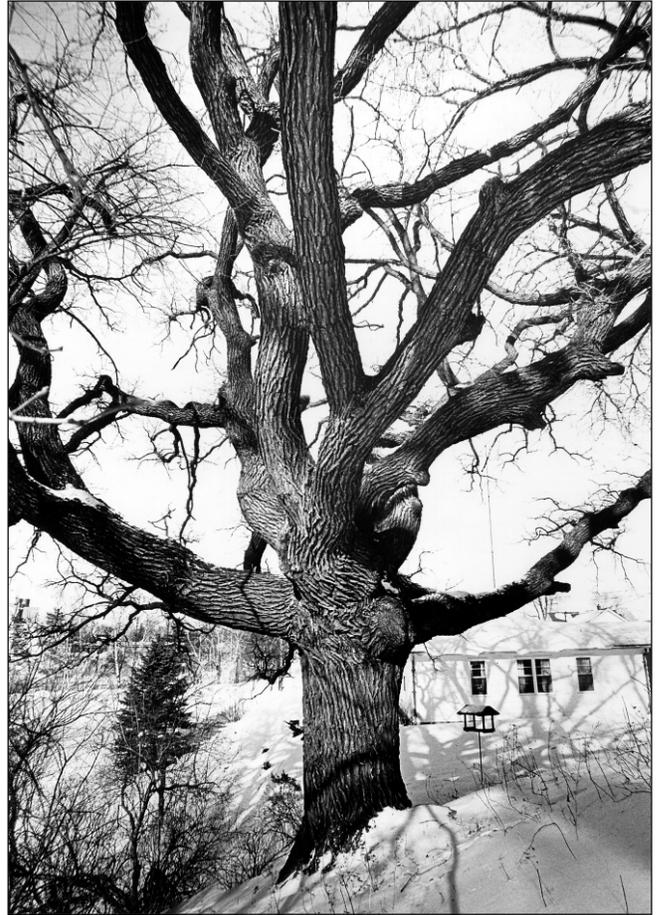
There's a huge, picturesque old white oak on the former Carberry place on Millston Avenue in Lodi which, its owner firmly believes, should have won an essay contest as "My Favorite Tree." The Lodi Parks Commission, in cooperation with the Lodi *Enterprise*, sponsored the 1977 contest to inspire people to plant more trees. In the process, the *Enterprise* won an award for public service offered annually by the Wisconsin Association of Manufacturers.

The Carberry tree came in third in the contest. It is a tree that "everybody in Lodi knows," and many generations of children have climbed up into its capacious branches and built tree houses there. A boy with a new ax once tried to cut the tree down. Luckily, Mrs. Carberry was home and heard him. The scar healed.

The property on which the oak grows was purchased 50 years ago by Mr. and Mrs. Carberry and is still in the family. They bought it because they liked the tree, estimated to be about 300 years old. Their son, as a child, used to climb the oak. Mrs. Carberry herself climbed the tree into middle age.

William Sparks, who started the phone company in Lodi, once owned the tree, and his daughter Catharine remembered playing and eating sandwiches under it. When a tree becomes so firmly a part of people's nostalgic memories, it doesn't have to win first prize in essay contests. As Mrs. Carberry concluded her contest entry: "May it live on, and when we are gone, may others enjoy it as much as we, and as much as scores of people have in the past."

Sources: Mrs. Robert Carberry, Lodi
David Skoloda, Lodi
Robert Guethlein, grandson of Mrs. Carberry, Lodi



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B-Wolfgang Hoffmann (1982)