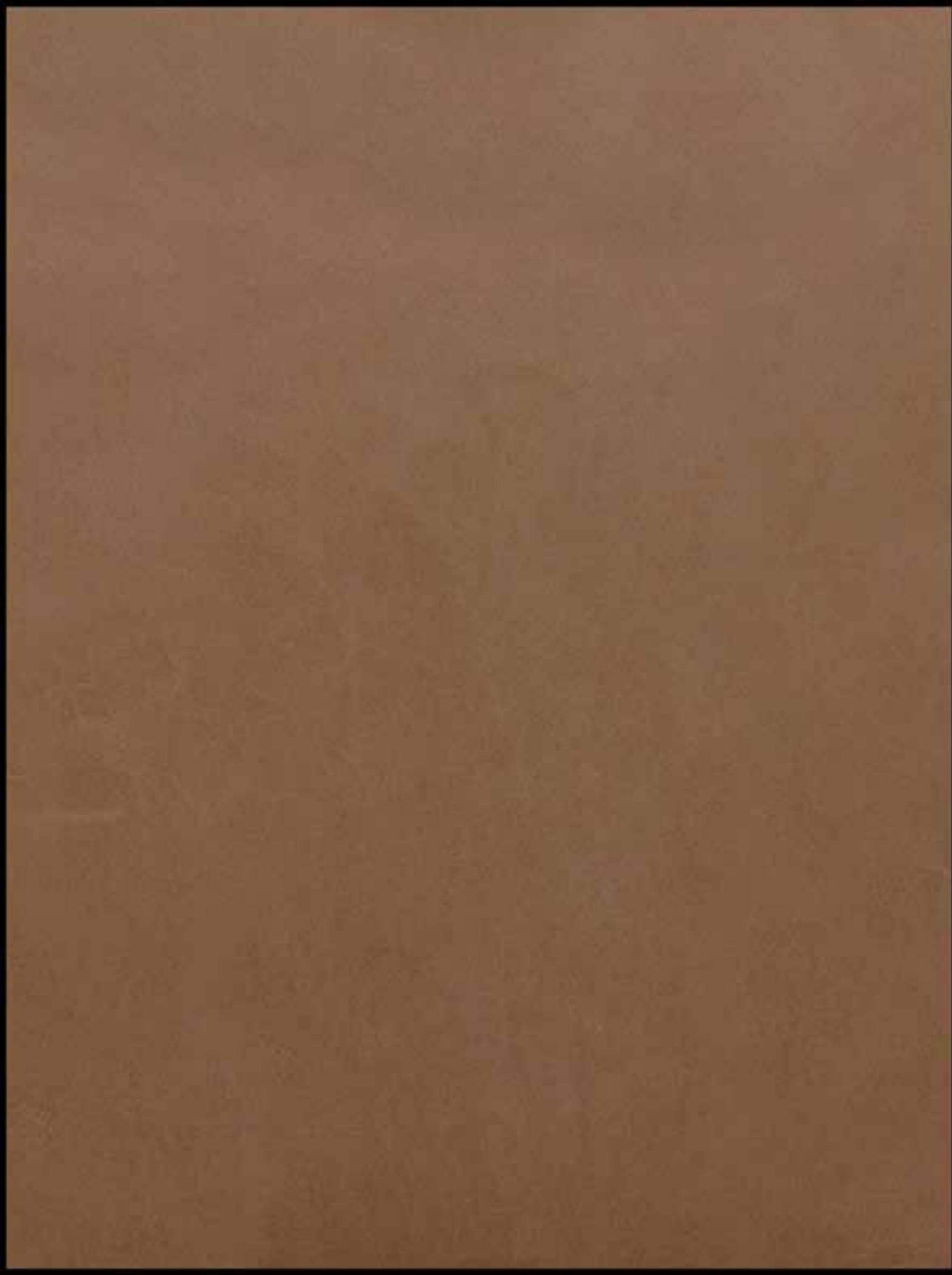


*Independence:  
The Way We Were*



*by Ken D. Brown*



September 1911

The Greyhound

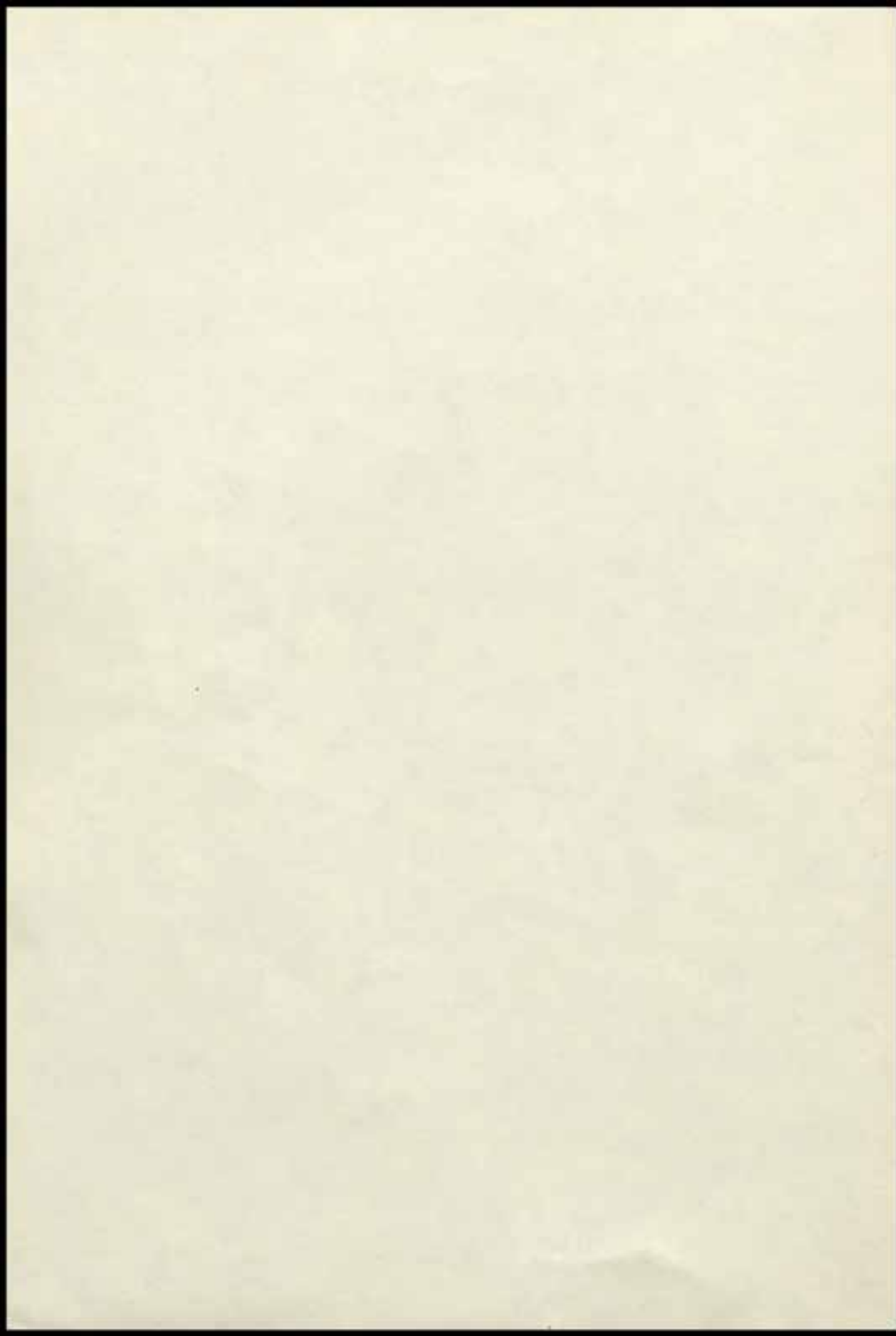
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1911

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The Way We Were

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Chairman,  
Historic Preservation Committee  
of the  
Independence Arts Council, Inc.

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## PREFACE

"Look up the main streets of Independence this Saturday night; and observe how they are thronged with well dressed people from all the walks of life; see those streets lined with two and three-story brick blocks, bright with gas and electric lights, and here and there flaming out with rhythmic signs, and you will agree with me that a real city is growing up here in this marvelous section. Or wait until the morrow and ride over our paved streets and note the hundreds of modern residences and comfortable homes from which the crowds are wending their ways to our churches and Sunday schools, and you will further agree that the material wealth that is being multiplied here with such bewildering rapidity is not entirely dwarfing our spiritual natures or leading us to forget that there is nothing a man can afford to take in exchange for his soul." — *Times*, p. 23

Many a time I have wished I could look up and down the main streets of Independence at various times in our history just to see "the way we were." That notion prompted me to investigate our interesting local heritage. The product of this research, no doubt, does not include all the significant and/or quaint structures in Independence, nor does it pretend to be a comprehensive history of our town. Rather, the only criteria for inclusion in the book was that the structure could no longer be standing. Consequently, this is a localized *Lost America*.

The purpose of such a book is two fold: first, and most obvious, is the historical relevance. A great deal of Independence history is contained within these pages and this endeavor illustrates how the aspirations and achievements of our forefathers shaped our past. As many of our older citizens share their memories, history comes alive and "facts" are given the needed human touch. Second, and most hopefully, this will have a preservation effect. Preservation calls for the recognition of significant historic structures and the protection of their integrity. Too often preservation is plotted against "progress" as a mutually exclusive question. However, preservation does not mean that everything old must be preserved, and, likewise, progress does not mean that everything old must be razed. I hope to write another book like *Independence: Our Historic Homes* which recognizes many of our old significant homes and prominent citizens of the past; but I hope that another book like *Independence: The Way We Were* which salutes our lost heritage will never have to be written.

There are many people who contributed to this project and it would be impossible to list them all but it would be remiss not to recognize and thank



Georgia Brown, Wilma Schweitzer, Fanny McAdams, Leon Sherwood and Gary Mitchell for their kind help and suggestions. The many other people who contributed their recollections, booklets and technical help are also greatly appreciated. A special thanks should also be given to those who were of considerable help in finding old photographs, viz., Marion Boner of the **Reporter**, Charles Howard with the Montgomery County Museum, Roland Fouts of the **Tribune**, and Rita Cooper with the Public Library.

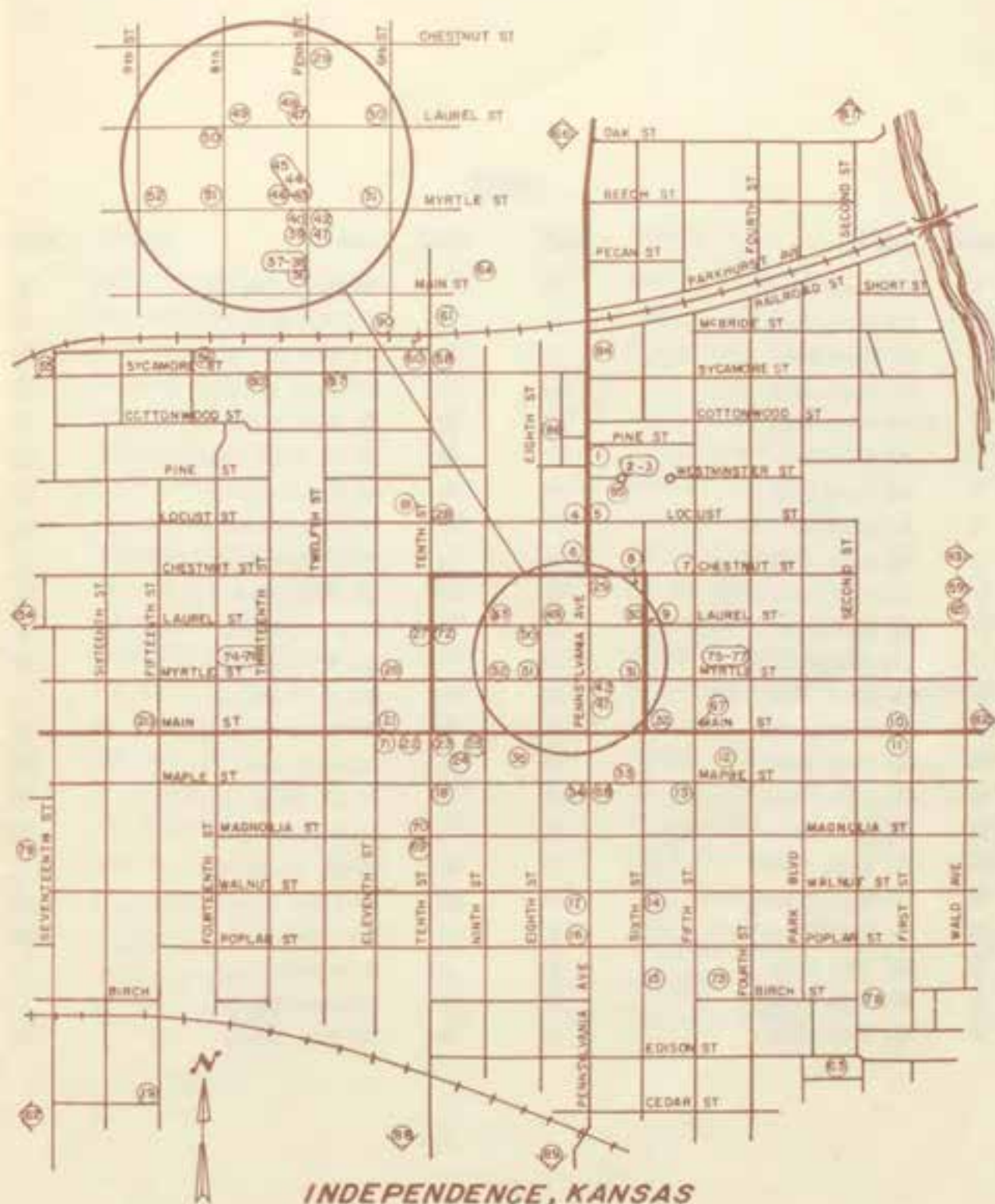
To ascertain the "facts" of our history I used a multitude of booklets written about Independence. Specifically: 1) a 1901 **South Kansas Tribune** which contained some history of our city plus a sketch of the leading businesses of that year. It is noted (1901 **Tribune**) throughout the text. 2) a 1903 **South Kansas Tribune: Industrial Edition** which is similar to the earlier edition but more detailed. It is referred to as (1903 **Tribune**). 3) a microfilmed newspaper in Independence, **South Kansas Tribune**, at various dates between 1870 and 1942 are merely noted (**Tribune**, date of publication). 4) a "Special Proclamation Edition" of the **Independence Daily Reporter** dated August, 1904. This paper was published "to publicly announce that the city had experienced an era of prosperity and progress and was on the eve of the brightest era of its history." This is noted (**Proclamation**) in the text. 5) "Oil and Gas Magazine" supplement to the **Independence Daily Reporter**, hereafter noted (**Oil and Gas**), of which half contained a comprehensive report on the oil boom and the other half concentrated on business enterprises in Independence. 6) "Independence: The Heart of Kansas Gas and Oil Field" which was a "Souvenir Edition" of the **Weekly Times** and is merely noted (**Times**) in the text. This was published by Southwest Directory and Publicity Company in Amarillo, Texas, in 1907. 7) **History of Montgomery County, Kansas**, which is a 1903 sketch of nearly every resident in the county before that time. It is designated (**MG History**). 8) **Southwest Developer** is another publicity booklet published in 1900 and is noted (**SW Developer**). 9) a "Booster Train" booklet used to "sell" Independence to citizens throughout the United States. This positive analysis of Independence is noted (**Booster Train**). 10) the **Official Centennial History of Independence, Kansas**, was quite useful in pinpointing many significant dates. It is noted (**Centennial**). 11) a Carthage, Missouri Printing Company's booklet entitled **Kansas Oil and Gas**. This was published in 1896 and is noted (**Carthage**) in the text.

Thank you for your interest.

April, 1980

Ken D. Brown





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## Homes



"By saving what we can from the past, we give our surroundings a richer diversity. We give ourselves and our children a sense of where we are and where we came from. If we continue to demolish history and to build over it, we lose a quality from our daily lives that we can never put back. We lose the past. We lose the sense of being at home . . ."

National Trust for Historic Preservation



Mr. Harry Jiencke was "... a man who is known as a 'hustler' in connection with everything in which he takes an interest. When (he) puts his shoulder to the wheel there's bound to be something doing. He is of that thrifty German type that gets there in spite of the most trying obstacles." Mr. Jiencke was the president of the Kansas Cracker and Confectionery Company (see p. 76). Furthermore, he took "... advantage of the opportunities offered by the oil and gas field developments of the county, and has been fortunate in acquiring holdings that bid fair to yield handsome returns. He has also been an active promoter and boomer, and the community has benefited largely through his efforts." In 1903, he had A. E. Todd build "... one of the handsomest and palatial residences of our city" on North Penn Avenue about where Locke Real Estate is located. In that home, "Mr. and Mrs. Jiencke are prominent in social circles, and are hospitable and frequent entertainers." (All quotes are taken from 1903 Tribune.) The residence was torn down in 1954 by King Construction Company to build an ice cream store.





One of Independence's early political names was George Chandler—a district judge. The *MG History* remarked that Judge Chandler "... made a fine reputation as an upright judge, but was noted for being especially harsh and severe with applicants for divorce, having no patience with men and women who had found their matrimonial bonds irksome, and were endeavoring to sever them. His incisive questions going down to the most sacred privacies of the marriage relation and his bullying manner came to be dreaded by all such unfortunates, and the procuring of divorces grew unpopular. Probably there were far fewer divorces in the district during his term on the bench on account of this idiosyncrasy of his. . . (I)n March, 1889, Judge Chandler was tendered the position of Assistant Secretary of the Interior, which he accepted, resigning the judgeship to do so. After some years in Washington his family returned to Independence, but he still remained there. . . Subsequently, in the year 1895, Mr. Chandler became the defendant in a suit for divorce brought by the mother of his children. He did not contest this suit and consented to a decree by which his property in this county was settled upon his wife. Subsequently came the news that he had married a woman who had been a stenographer or typewriter in his office while he was still living with his family at the national capital. In view of these occurrences many people thought it a great pity that he could not himself have profited by the lectures on conjugal constancy that he had been so free to give those who came to his court asking for divorces." (*MG History*, pp. 69-70)

Judge Chandler had built "Ridgewood" on North Penn Avenue in 1884 which was "... one of the most elegant in the state, being modern in every particular and situated in the midst of a beautiful park of five acres, with ample shade from scores of fine elms." (1903 *Tribune*) In 1901 Chandler sold the property to George T. Guernsey and it was described in the *Tribune* at that time as "... modern in style, and fitted for hot and cold water, and for natural gas for heat and light. Each room is finished in different native woods, and furnished throughout in elegant style and is a delightful resort for a host of friends from near and far, who are always made to feel 'at home' by Mrs. Guernsey who entertains in a most hospitable manner."

In 1910, Guernsey had the house "rebuilt" to be an even more spectacular one (see p. 12-13).



524 NORTH PENN





"Ridgewood" was the home of Mr. and Mrs. George T. Guernsey and was described by the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Illustrated Weekly Magazine, *Index*, as "... the handsomest house in Kansas." Mr. Guernsey owned the Commercial National Bank (now the Professional Building) which in 1930 was the sixth largest bank in Kansas with over \$6,000,000 in assets. The *Reporter* paid tribute to Guernsey in 1924 which marked his fiftieth year in Independence as a banker: "Today he can look back with considerable satisfaction, and without any semblance of egotism or self-glory, and feel that in all this marvel of wonderful advancement and the development of vast enterprises as reflected in the city's growth, no man contributed a greater share, a more potential influence or more direct benefits." (December 2, 1924) Mrs. Guernsey also had a notable career as "... one of Independence's most prominent citizens, who was nationally known and who brought distinguished honor to the state of Kansas." She was the first president of the Daughters of American Revolution to come from west of the Mississippi River, and was later made honorary president general of the national organization. (Obituary in *Reporter*, 1939)

History has recorded the famous social and business feud between bankers A. C. Stich and Guernsey—the fifteen year feud purportedly started in Paris between their touring wives concerning the French pronunciation of "baggage." The Stich mansion was built in 1900 at a cost of \$75,000 (see p. 24). The Guernsey mansion was "rebuilt" by A. E. Todd from the original "Ridgewood" (see p. 11) in 1910 at a reported cost of \$150,000. A granddaughter (Bonnie Bell Guernsey Hengerer) stated, however, that her "Guernsey grandparents would chortle at having Ridgewood called a mansion—they were essentially direct unpretentious people who were kind beyond description. . . ."

The *Index* credited Mrs. Guernsey with most of the planning and the superintending of the work on Ridgewood. The article stated that "it is the result of years of thought and is an achievement to be proud of. It was not a case of choosing a plan and watching it carried out under someone else's supervision; but the plans were drawn under her direction; she selected the materials and saw to it that they were obtained. It took many months to complete the house, but now the stately brick building with its graceful columns is a show place and the grounds surrounding it are notably attractive. Inside it carries out still further the ideals of its mistress and is filled with a wonderful collection of beautiful things. . . . It is a home in every sense of the word, and a very united family enjoys its beauty and comfort."

Mrs. Hengerer reiterated this warm feeling by stating that "behind Ridgewood running to Fifth Street, was what was called the 'back grove' (about four acres I think) with walnut trees and cows and the walk connecting the home of George T. Guernsey, Junior, at 200 East Locust Street. . . . Fronting that walk was a playhouse for my sister and me, built by Mr. Todd, naturally! It all was a wonderful compound to grow up in!"

Guernsey sold the home to liquidate his assets when the bank failed in March, 1930. It was then made into apartments until 1965 when it was razed (see p. 9) in order to construct the apartments behind the Garrison-Hey APCO station on North Penn Avenue. The columns that graced the front of the home were transported to North Eighth Street.



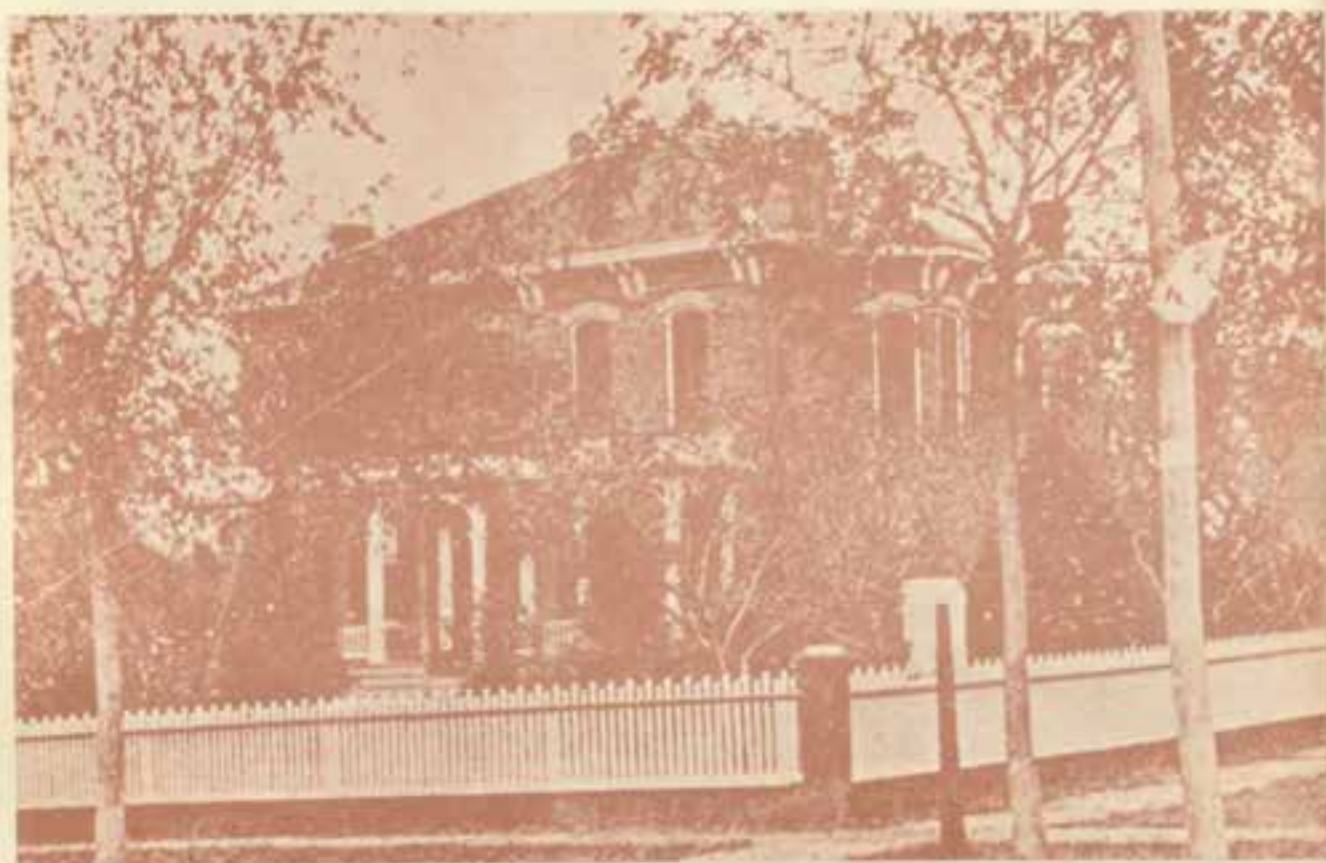
507 NORTH PENN





Albert Walter ("Al" or A. W.) Shulthis was an important pillar in the Independence business community for many years. His "primary" occupation was president of the Citizens National Bank. "Now get a good long breath! 'Al' is president of the following other companies: Western States Portland Cement Co.; Coffeyville Vitrified Brick Co.; Western States Paving Brick Association; Texas-Oklahoma Investment Co.; Southwestern Oil, Gas, and Coal Co.; Continental Oil and Refining Co.; Rhode Island Oil Co.; Durango Oil Co.; Springs Oil Co.; Greis Oil Co. Now breathe deeply. Here we go again—"Al" is a farmer with a 500-acre farm of the best wheat land in the county; a dairyman, with good cows kept clean; Treasurer of this Club (Commercial Club); on its Board of Directors; a Baptist, and a grandfather! **Some man!** He is also a Republican and a good fellow—that's 'Al'." (Commercial Club card for Shulthis)

The original Shulthis home (above) was constructed prior to 1900 and was located about where Independence High School is today. This "plain-looking" home was moved to the northwest corner of Penn and Locust between 1901 and 1904. At that time the large columns, porches, balcony and the portico were added to make the home (below) blend in with the rest of the large majestic homes on North Penn Avenue. Shulthis also owned much of the property in that vicinity and built large homes for his two daughters as wedding presents: Beatrice who married Clarence Stewart (parents of the late Mary Green and Eloise Walker) received the home at 525 North Eighth, and Muriel who married R. M. Noonan received the home at 505 North Eighth. The Shulthis home was leveled in the 1950's to build Foodtown (now the location of the new Independence State Bank).



In 1883 John W. Baden purchased land on the corner of Penn and Locust (now the location of Foodtown) for "... the erection of a very fine two story residence." (Tribune, April 11, 1883) He contracted John P. Filkins and Milt Chenoweth to construct the 42 x 42 red brick home at a cost of \$6,000. A year later Mr. Filkins developed a "... brick machine (which) works to perfection, grinding out 36 brick per minute, on an average speed of the horse. He had it so arranged that everything is convenient, and no handling of brick by hand until ready to be placed in the kiln. The bricks are subjected to 6,000 pounds of pressure while soft, pressing out all the water and making them perfectly hard." (Tribune, April 20, 1884) The home was razed in 1954 to construct a Safeway store which stood until the recent Foodtown store was constructed.

Mr. Baden was in business with his brother, Henry Baden (see pp. 26, 54, 55). Baden had married Mary Becker in 1879 and "ten years later he was cut down in the prime of life by a stroke of apoplexy, leaving Mrs. Baden and five children, viz.: William, Mayme, Fred, Maggie, and Edward. They were left in comfortable circumstances, however, and are beneficiaries of the mammoth business now carried on by Henry Baden, the foundations of which the husband and father helped lay." (1903 Tribune)





This "large and attractive residence on North Pennsylvania Avenue" was built around the turn of the century for Mrs. Minnie Zaugg, the widow of Benjamin Zaugg. She was "a worthy representative of the many good women in Independence who have survived husbands and become by force of circumstances their own business managers. In this regard none has shown more tactful energy than Mrs. Zaugg. . . . She is of pure German stock, coming to America from the Fatherland at an early age and with her husband became one of the pioneer residents of this city. . . . Mrs. Zaugg always lends a friendly ear to the cause of public enterprise and has freely aided all worthy objects." (All quotes are taken from 1903 Tribune.)

The home was razed in 1958 to construct Eddie Bo's Texaco service station. The corner now houses Town and Country.



"One of the most prominent oil men in the district is Mr. John F. Overfield. . . He was one of the first men to secure leases in the Territory and located the Cudahy Oil Company's properties, which have been developed under his management. Mr. Overfield is a Kansas product and has spent most of his life in Montgomery County, having been raised on a farm in Drum Creek Township. . . Possessing sound business judgment and being full of energy, Mr. Overfield is the type of man who is bound to succeed in any line of business. Withal he is a wholesouled, jolly good fellow, a firm believer in a 'square deal,' and has made a host of friends throughout the oil country. He occupies a comfortable residence at the corner of Fifth and Chestnut Streets . . ." (Times, pp. 50-51) Mr. Overfield was later elected to the Kansas State Senate and bought the Ziegler home (see p. 27).

In 1961 O. E. Rodrick moved his Funeral Home one block east from Sixth and Chestnut (see next page) by razing this Overfield home and constructing a new one which was recently converted into the Tri-County Special Education Cooperative School.



This home is obviously still under construction in this picture with part of the work crew on the front porch and cloth over the windows where leaded glass was to be fitted. The home was built about 1910 for the family of Joseph Chandler, a brother of Judge George Chandler (see p. 11). Joseph Chandler, an early settler in Independence, had studied law under his brother, George, and was admitted to practice law in 1875.

In 1936 O. E. Rodrick and E. Paul Amos converted the old Chandler home into their funeral home. Mr. Rodrick explained to the *Reporter* in 1956 that "funeral homes of today are a far cry from those of our forefathers. The first undertakers were usually the owners of the local livery stable due to the fact that they had the horses and carriages needed." (*Reporter*, "Historic Edition," September 23, 1956) The Rodricks used this as a funeral home until they constructed a new one at Fifth and Chestnut in 1961 (see p. 18). The Chandler home was razed in 1963 for parking at the new Post Office (see p. 43).





One of the most majestic homes ever constructed in Independence was on the corner of Sixth and Laurel and belonged to Mrs. J. E. Thibus. The Thibus family ran a hardware store in Independence for nearly one hundred years. The store, now Coldwell Drug Store, was "... one of the oldest business houses in the city ... and has attained its present popularity through courteous treatment and a thorough knowledge of the business." (Oil and Gas, p. 61)

The grand old home was built in 1907 by A. E. Todd at the unbelievable cost of \$12,000 which included solid mahogany woodwork and staircase. There were several leaded-glass windows and curved glass windows in the turret. The home "... went down in ruin Monday afternoon (July 10, 1967). ... Using a bulldozer, workmen chipped away at the very solid old home until the foundation gave way and the main structure was pushed over into a crumbled heap. Saving of the lumber had been overruled for the sake of speeding up the operation." (Reporter, July 11, 1967) The office building now housing Scovel, Emert and Heasty Attorneys and Yerkes and Michels Accountants was constructed on the site.



The first brick residence in Montgomery County was constructed by Sam Vangundy for Capt. Lycurgus C. (L. C.) Mason. The "homestead (was) on the east bluff, overlooking the valley of the Verdigris, (and) is one of the handsome places in the city." After Capt. Mason had served with distinction in the Indiana Volunteers during the Civil War, he journeyed to Kansas. He met Lyman U. Humphrey, prominent citizen and later a Kansas Governor, who enticed him to move to Independence. Besides being vice-president of the First National Bank and an elected public official, he carried the title of being a "pioneer, patriot and honored citizen." The home was razed in 1915 for the construction of Bill Watson's home at 624 East Main. (Quotes are taken from MG History, pp. 383-386.)





A. C. Whitman was "very public spirited and gives unselfishly a great deal of his time to municipal affairs. He has served six years as councilman, being president of the council at the present time. Thus is his good business judgment and integrity given public recognition." Mr. Whitman ran a mercantile store specializing in "farm implements, wagons, buggies, harness, seed, tools, etc." And his "reputation for fairness and liberality in his business relations with customers that, more than all else, has built up the splendid volume of trade his stores enjoy." (All quotes are taken from 1903 *Tribune*.) The Whitman home was razed in 1939 to construct the home now occupied by Steve Sayers at 623 East Main.





C. R. Crawford was acclaimed to be a "hustling real estate" man in 1905. He was originally successful as a "Knight of the Road" in the mercantile business at Cherryvale. He then went in to the oil and gas business for Consolidated Oil and Gas and later Kansas Natural Gas (see p. 46). In those capacities he "... claims to have leased more land than any man in the country for oil and natural gas purposes." (All quotes are taken from *Oil and Gas*, p. 63.) His elegant home was located at Fourth and Maple and was built about 1904.

In 1906 Mr. Crawford sold the home to R. S. Litchfield who was "... president of the First National Bank and one of the prominent oil operators of this district. ... (He) came to Independence in 1904 ... (and) became interested in oil development and mining and is today rated as one of the wealthiest oil men in the Kansas-Indian Territory field. ... In the business world and in the social life he has a host of friends. As a banker he is conservative, but is always ready to advance funds to develop a proposition that has a sound business foundation, and a number of the fortunes that have been made in the oil business in this field have been made on capital furnished by Mr. Litchfield." (*Times*, pp. 31-33)

The house was razed about 1930 and the lot remained vacant until Dr. E. E. Brann built his home there in 1950.



"Among the men who have had faith in Independence and have worked for its advancement and prosperity through foul weather as well as fair, no man has been more persistent, or untiring, and to none have the material rewards that have accompanied its growth come in larger measure than to Adolph Carl Stich. Of a sturdy fiber and energetic temperament, he has secured results for himself, as well as for his city, and although he has made some enemies, as every man who hews his way through obstacles in this world is bound to do, there are none who will question that he stands today the foremost citizen of Independence." (Times, p. 25)

Mr. Stich came to Independence in 1872 and went into the merchandise business with his brother John. After a prosperous eleven years in that business, he, with Henry Foster, bought the Hull Banking House and "rechristened" it the Citizens Bank, and later the Citizens National Bank (see p. 53). Business competition grew between Stich and George T. Guernsey as the two were involved in the notorious "feud" (see p. 13). Mr. Stich helped to finance the bonding of the railroads, furnished McBride, Bloom and Nickerson with "the means" to successfully drill the first oil well in the Independence area, sponsored the Vitrified Brick Plant in Independence which patented a unique paving brick, promoted the Western States Cement Plant, and erected the Carnegie Public Library. As the Times noted: "In short, whenever any enterprise that would push Independence forward has been proposed, Mr. Stich has always been ready to lend a hand and help finance it." (p. 27)

The Stich home was one of the most ornate homes ever erected in Independence, and is featured on the cover of this book. "In Mr. Stich's magnificent home it is his pleasure to dispense a lavish hospitality, making the guests of the city his own and going all in his power to send them away with a good impression of the city, its people, its industries and its future." (Times, p. 27) Built in 1900 at a reputed cost of \$75,000, the red brick and white limestone structure was razed in 1928 when none of the Stich descendants wanted to occupy the home. The Presbyterian Church was erected on that site in 1929.





Mr. E. T. Mears, with his brother E. S. Mears, started one of the pioneer abstracting firms in Independence. The Tribune praised E. T. Mears as: "a life-long office man, and has served the people as county clerk, and in the treasurer's and register of deed's offices, and as assistant postmaster. . . . (He) is careful and accurate in all his work, and his abstracts are models in every respect. He has an elegant cottage home, which himself and wife greatly enjoy." (1901) The Proclamation added the accolade that he was "active in church work and a great singer." His home was located at the corner of Sixth and Walnut. It was replaced with a modern ranch style home in the late fifties.





One of the most significant developers of Independence was Henry Baden (see pp. 54-55). The *Times* said: "Mr. Baden has always taken a prominent part in the affairs of the city and is most prodigal in giving from his time and ample means for the benefit of the community." (p. 55) He had this large brick home, in the Baden tradition, constructed for himself. He also built similar brick homes for his sons at 201 South First, Fifth and Poplar, and on 58 Road. His brother, John, also had a large brick home on North Penn (see p. 16).

The *Independence News*, as it surveyed some of our lost landmarks, noted in September, 1955: "It is with some regret that we watched the destruction of this old landmark as the wreckers and bulldozers leveled it to the ground to make room for more modern homes. This once proud 'castle' of a once proud and ambitious mercantile prince is gone but the legend of his rise from 'rags to riches' was as true as any of the stories that Horatio Alger ever wrote."



After J. B. Ziegler sold his majestic home at 401 South Penn (see pp. 28-29), he had an even larger one constructed on the site directly to the south. Mrs. Ziegler was the daughter of Mrs. A. C. Stich (see p. 24). The home was sold to John F. Overfield, a noted attorney and State Senator (see p. 18), in 1912 for \$8,000. In 1919 Marvin Truby, a local jeweler, bought the home. During World War II when housing was scarce, the home was converted into apartments. The old home had fallen into bad condition and repud and it was demolished in the mid sixties by its then owner, James Gilmore. Penn Terrace now occupies the location.



401 SOUTH PENN





Edgar Hull was the younger brother of Charles Hull who organized what is now the Citizens National Bank. The notorious kidnapping "Hull Baby" case (see p. 53) resulted as two brothers competed for a \$5,000 prize from their father to produce the first grandson in the family. Edgar had this beautiful home built by C. Miner some time between 1873 and 1882.

The Ladies Library and Art Association was founded in this home on February 3, 1882. In 1883, Hull sold the property to J. B. Ziegler, a local attorney. In 1903, the *Tribune* stated that "although carrying three-score years of useful life to his credit he seems but a young man still, and is in his prime. Mr. Ziegler has made a specialty of commercial law . . . (and) has achieved eminent success. He was in the Kansas Legislature for two terms as representative from this district and has served the city as councilman and city attorney." Also in 1903, Mr. John Smith came to Independence prospecting for oil and gas. "He was wise enough to see almost at a glance the great future of this field and among the first things he did was to anchor here by purchasing one of the most elegant homes in the city. . . ." (1903 *Tribune*) Will and Edna Scott (see p. 49) bought the house in 1919 and sold it in 1924. Mrs. Winifred Griffin, a niece, suggested that the Scotts owned many properties in town from time to time because "Aunt Edna loved to move around." Dr. Chester W. DeMott—a "highly successful physician and surgeon . . . (with) a large practice . . . to which his entire time is devoted" (1903 *Tribune*)—bought the home in 1924. DeMott's daughter, Dorothy, married James Gilmore and they bought the property in 1939. Mr. Gilmore sold it and the empty lot from the old Ziegler home (see p. 27) to the city in 1976 for the construction of Penn Terrace (see p. 99).

The home was described in a *Reporter* feature story at that time: ". . . as spacious inside as it appears on the outside. There are ten rooms in all, including a living room, library (formerly used as a music room), dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms, an enclosed sleeping porch, a room formerly used as the maid's quarters, and three and one-half baths. Another porch downstairs was converted into a family room in the 1960's and opens out onto a large patio that Gilmore added at the same time. Many people mistakenly believe the house is constructed of stone but the exterior is actually a unique wood siding said to have been copied from buildings at Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington. Hull engaged an architect from the East to design the house. . . . The ceilings of the rooms are eleven feet high and . . . the woodwork is reminiscent of old homes of the era and is carved. . . . Every room except the dining room and kitchen has a fireplace . . . converted to gas. . . . A magnificent walnut staircase leads from the front entryway to the second floor." (February 6, 1976)



W. T. Yoe, at "the age of thirteen years . . . went into a print shop, from which, as a business, he has never been separated. . . In the winter of 1870, he founded, with others, the *South Kansas Tribune* . . . in the new town of Independence. . . Little that has been of general interest to the county has not known his hand, or felt the influence of his voice or pen; and the confidence he thus inspired warranted the conferring of public honors and the bestowal upon him of public trusts. The practical character of his views, his mature judgment and the evident sincerity of his purpose are traits which have commended him through life and marked him as one of the prominent citizens of his city and county. . . He has a single standard of honesty and applies it in business, religion and politics, alike." (MG History, pp. 311-312)

The Yoe home was constructed about 1900 at Tenth and Maple. It remained in the Yoe family until the Church of God bought it in 1969. At that time they "remodeled" it by removing all the downstairs interior walls for a sanctuary, keeping only the kitchen as it was originally. Then in 1975 the church decided to construct a new building on the same site. While the structure was in the process of being torn down, the unique round stained glass window was stolen.





Robert S. Kerr ranks as one of the most popular and successful politicians ever in Oklahoma history. "Born in 1896 in a fourteen-foot-square, windowless log cabin in the Chickasaw Nation, he grew up in poverty. His parents sacrificed to give their children an education, religious heritage, and a strong sense of civic pride. As a young boy, Kerr told his father that he wanted three things in life: a family, a million dollars, and the governorship, in that order. He had fulfilled the first two ambitions by the mid-1930s, and he was elected governor in 1942. The tall, impressive millionaire with an attractive family and a ready wit was popular. Oklahoma shared his pride at rising to wealth. He was also a realist with a streak of romance in the soul. 'I'm just like you,' he often told crowds, 'only I struck oil.' He was the founder of the Kerr-McGee Oil Company. Later he served fourteen years in the U. S. Senate. "Unlike other Oklahoma leaders, Kerr was neither an eccentric personality nor the champion of a single interest. Though endowed with ample flair, he presided over the end of Wild West politics. He brought a sense of maturity to state government and steadily educated the public in the complexities of modern living. . . He consciously helped restore Oklahomans' sense of pride and place, and he gave them a feeling of involvement in large national affairs." (Quotes are taken from H. Wayne and Anne Hodges Morgan, *Oklahoma*, pp. 134-135.)

Kerr was married to Grayce Breene (pictured above at about age sixteen) who was the daughter of Harry Breene, an Independence oil man. The Breene home was located on South Fifteenth and burned in the early 1930's. Robert and Grayce Kerr had four children: Robert, who is currently running for the U.S. Senate in Oklahoma; Breene, who is a director of the Kerr-McGee Oil Company; Kay (Adair), who is a joint trustee with her brothers of the Kerr Foundation; and William, who is a director of the Cowboy Hall of Fame.



# GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION.

## \$2,000 REWARD

### State of Kansas, Executive Department.

WHEREAS, several atrocious murders have been recently committed in Labette County, Kansas, under circumstances which fasten, beyond doubt, the commissions of these crimes upon a family known as the "Bender family," consisting of

JOHN BENDER, about 60 years of age, five feet eight or nine inches in height, German, speaks but little English, dark complexion, no whiskers, and sparsely built;

MRS. BENDER, about 50 years of age, rather heavy set, blue eyes, brown hair, German, speaks broken English;

JOHN BENDER, Jr., alias John Gebardt, five feet eight or nine inches in height, slightly built, gray eyes with brownish tint, brown hair, light moustache, no whiskers, about 27 years of age, speaks English with German accent;

EATY BENDER, about 24 years of age, dark hair and eyes, good looking, well formed, rather bold in appearance, fluent talker, speaks good English with very little German accent;

AND WHEREAS, said persons are at large and fugitives from justice, now therefore, I, Thomas A. Osborn, Governor of the State of Kansas, in pursuance of law, do hereby offer a **REWARD OF FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS** for the apprehension and delivery to the Sheriff of Labette County, Kansas, of each of the persons above named.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name, and caused the Great Seal of the State to be affixed.

[L. S.]

Done at Topeka, this 17th day of May, 1873.

THOMAS A. OSBORN,

By the Governor

W. H. SMALLWOOD,

Secretary of State

Governor

Historians can only speculate on the final disposition of the "Bloody Benders" of Cherryvale because the posse "looking" for them took an oath never to tell anyone what really happened. (See Edith C. Ross, "The Bloody Benders," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, XVII, p. 14.) One member of that posse was E. R. Pavey who lived at 900 West Main. Georgia Brown, as a "little neighbor kid," would inquire of Mr. Pavey: "Did you kill the Benders?" She recalls his stark reply: "Child, I told you the Benders would never kill any more innocent people."

Pavey had come to Kansas after serving in an Ohio company cavalry during the Civil War. He built the home at that time which stood until its recent demolition.



In the notorious Guernsey-Stich feud (see p. 13), Guernsey never competed for elective office but he did "pick" candidates to challenge Stich. In 1908 the voters had accepted the commission form of government and in the first election of such in 1909, Frank C. Moses, a former mayor and with the backing of Guernsey, defeated incumbent mayor Stich in "... a hotly contested election. . . (A) lot of campaigning against him (Stich) caused his defeat." (Centennial, pp. 47-48)

The 1901 *Tribune* described Moses as "a gentleman of high standing in business circles, and possesses the confidence of the people of all classes. He is proprietor of the Stone Livery and Feed Stables; owns a fine residence, and is public spirited. He has served the people as deputy sheriff, deputy register of deeds, sheriff for two years, and represented his ward in the council for two years, and is now proving an energetic mayor, and if liberally sustained by the public, will be able to accomplish much for the city during his administration."

His home was on the northeast corner of Eleventh and Main where he had "erected a gas street light . . . at his own expense." (Centennial, p. 36) The home was razed in 1976 and the Ceramic Art Studio was constructed on that site the same year.





Charles Yoe came to Independence "soon after he attained his majority," and with his brother, W. T., (see p. 30) founded the *South Kansas Tribune* in February, 1871. "(H)e has successfully promoted the interests of the leading Republican newspaper of the county and thus, indirectly, has contributed, in no uncertain way, to the material advancement in all lines of local industry. Town building, at the county seat, has been fostered and the unbroken and fertile prairies have been filled with virtuous and industrious people, many of whose settlements were prompted by the columns of the zealous and loyal *Tribune*. . . While Republicanism has been chief in the heart of Mr. Yoe, he has eliminated politics from his life, as a business, and has demeaned himself as a party worker, and not as an aspirant for public office. . . As a man, his citizenship is unalloyed and his influence carries weight in his party and in his county." (MG History, pp. 400-401)

Mr. Yoe's large two-story home was constructed about 1910 at the corner of Tenth and Main. He owned a rental home around the corner at 408 West Maple which was built by A. E. Todd in 1903. The Yoe home was razed in 1958 for the construction of the Phillips 66 service station located there now.





An elegant home for E. B. Skinner was constructed by A. E. Todd in 1903 at the corner of Tenth and Main—currently the location of Mr. Quick. Mr. Skinner came from Colorado in 1885 and located himself in Caney until he was elected Montgomery County Treasurer—by a majority of only fifteen votes as the candidate of the "Fusion forces (a Democrat)—and moved to Independence." He was easily re-elected in that capacity in 1900 and then "... he secured a franchise for supplying Caney with natural gas. Fine wells had been bought ... by a prospecting company in which Mr. Skinner was interested and ... (he became) the general manager of the company." (1903 *Tribune*) The *MG History* stated: "His material connection with the affairs of the county has been prominent from his advent and ... he (was) at once a leader and prominent man-of-affairs. ... His frankness and honesty ... and his personal popularity made his candidacy for a county office a formidable one, and, when the test came, it proved to be a successful one." (pp. 708-709)

The ten room home had three leaded-cut-glass windows—one of which was installed in L. E. Losey's home. The front parlor had golden oak woodwork while the rest of the home had dark oak woodwork. There were fireplaces on both floors of the home. It was razed in 1958 for the construction of a Sinclair gas station.



Abe Gottlieb was a pioneer clothier having located in Independence in 1870. Mr. Gottlieb had "the reputation of being a good judge of fine clothing, and has a large trade among those who desire the best." His store, located at 117 North Penn, was "one of the few which has stood the test of many hard times in the past, when Independence was not so prosperous as now." (*Oil and Gas*, p. 59) The *Tribune* distinguished him by saying "he has a nice home, keeps out of politics, and is enjoying life." (1901) Mr. Gottlieb's home was located on West Main Street and was razed in 1971 for Webb-Rodrick parking.



L. S. Heckman was one of the early hotel proprietors in Independence. He was in charge of the "Heckman House" (see p. 48) for some time "... and with the aid of his good wife, was unusually successful." Mr. Heckman also owned the Commercial Hotel on the corner of Ninth and Main which burned to the ground in 1896. He then built his "elegant home" on that site which stood until 1929 when it was razed to build the Firestone Store. In 1901, Mr. Heckman got out of the hotel business and into the telephone business "with toll lines to the other towns of the county." (All quotes are taken from 1901 Tribune.)





"'BROWN'S IN TOWN' and evidently intends to stay as he has had a handsome concrete block residence built for his family, and you know these blocks grow harder and harder for 40 years, instead of disintegrating as other building materials do. Mr. (George T.) Brown also intends to protect his family from the heat in summer, and the cold in winter, as the blocks are hollow and add these two virtues to their great durability and artistic appearance. He does not intend to be bothered with repainting from year to year as this is unnecessary with this style of house." (Times, p. 21)

W. M. Griffith was the architect who designed the house and it was constructed in 1905 by the American Concrete Company with A. M. Lind the contractor. "Mr. Griffith's field of activity is not confined to Independence, but extends throughout Southeast Kansas and Oklahoma. . . (he) is a thorough master of his profession and the buildings designed by him combine beauty and convenience, and embody all the features approved by modern practice." (Times, p. 93) "Mr. Lind makes it a rule to employ none but the most skilled mechanics and gives close personal supervision to every detail of the work and the selection of materials. . . (which prevent) . . . those minor defects of workmanship and material which so often ruin the appearance of what would otherwise be a handsome job of interior finishing." (Times, p. 23) Lind was also the contractor for Harry Sinclair's home (215 South Fifth), while the American Concrete Company was responsible for the building of Nees Hall (see p. 98), and Longfellow and Willard Schools (see pp. 96-97).

As the new Safeway store was being constructed on this site, the Reporter wrote the following description of the home: "The three story mansion has 15 rooms, including eight bedrooms, one and one-half baths and a full basement. The entryway has a hand-laid marble floor which opens into a 'greeting' hall with a large fireplace. A parlor with double doors opens off the main hall, featuring a nine and one-half wide and eight-foot tall optically perfect, hand cut plate glass window. It weighs 175 lbs." (November 10, 1974) The six unsigned Tiffany windows and Tiffany chandeliers plus the leaded and beveled glass windows were salvaged by Bob Plummer who owned the house in 1974.



Independence's first doctor, B. F. Masterman, built this elegant home sometime between 1871 and 1873. Dr. Masterman not only was actively engaged in the practice of medicine in Independence nearly all his life, but also started a medical college here and was the professor of surgery. "He has maintained at a high standard his reputation in an honored profession and today has all the practice he can attend to." (1903 *Tribune*) Dr. Masterman served in the Civil War (Fifth Indiana Cavalry) prior to coming to Independence.

Dr. Masterman borrowed \$2,500 on the home which was foreclosed by the bank in 1892. In 1928 the house was made into three apartments until 1945 when Ned Masterman, a son, bought the home at the insistence of his sister, Mrs. Franc Dougherty. Mrs. Dougherty "scoured the country for furniture of the late 1800's to restore the home to the way it was when they had lived there as children." (*Reporter*, November 10, 1974) Both died in the home and Al Cranor bought it in 1959.

The home—with lots of gingerbread decoration—was well constructed with 2x6's used for the entire framing. The beautiful woodwork and curved staircase highlighted the home. Mr. Cranor, who owned the home until 1972, stated that the staircase "... is solid walnut, ornately carved and is put together with only wooden pegs, no nails." (*Reporter*, same) Before the home was razed, the staircase was purchased by Jim Tillotson of Towanda with the intent of putting it in a new home he was planning to build. The space where the home was located—corner of Tenth and Laurel—is now parking for Safe-way.





Probably the first structure in Independence was "Bunker's cabin" situated about where the Junior High is located, known at that time in 1869 as "Bunker Hill." The cabin was built for Frank Bunker, "whose name will be indissolubly connected with the early history of the city and who, perhaps, did more than anyone else to promote its welfare in those pioneer days." (MG History, p. 92) His obituary in the *Independence Kansan* on August 12, 1876, stated: "His vivacity, brilliant wit, dash and droll anecdotes made him sought after in society. When disposed, few men were more entertaining than he could be and none was warmer hearted."

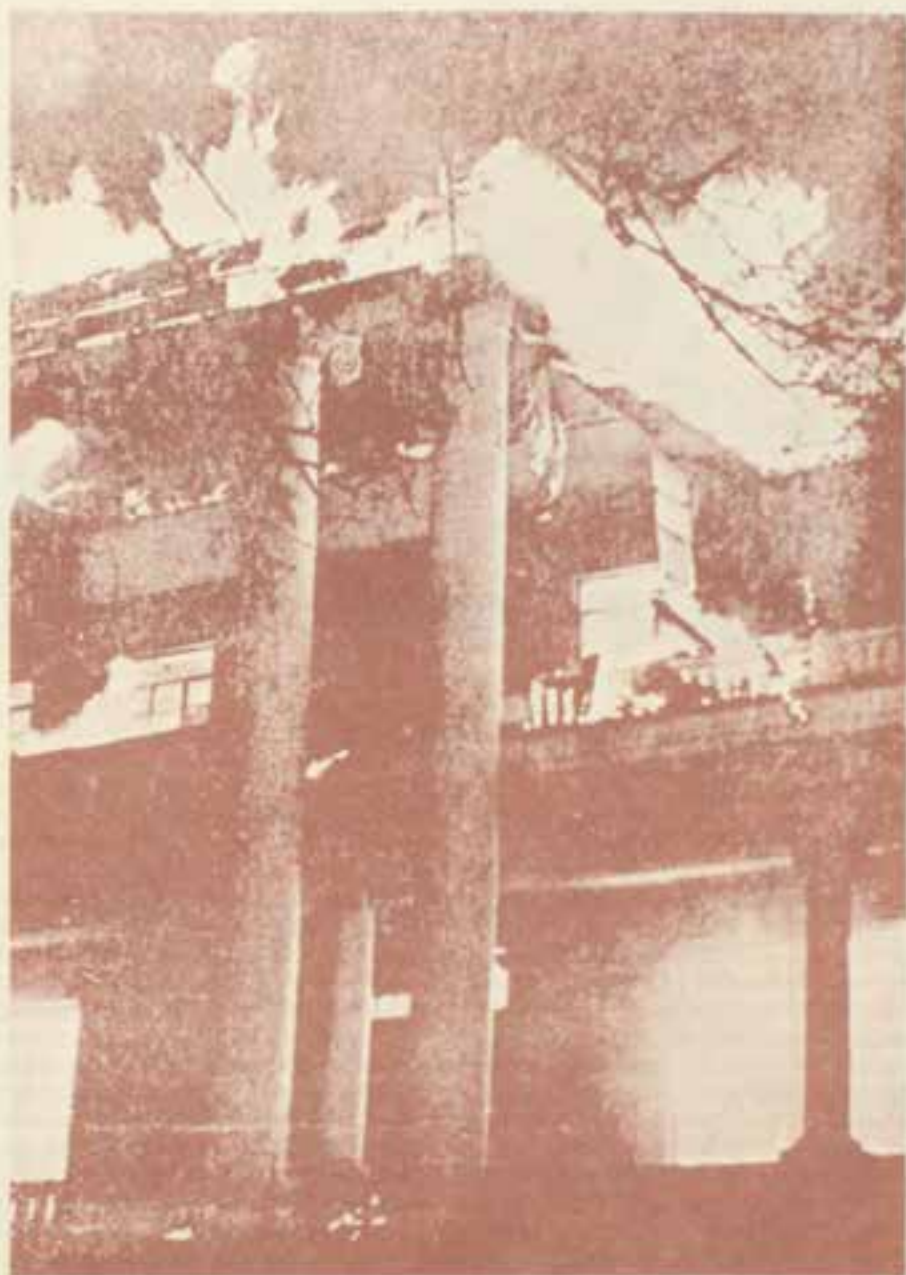
The Pugh home (now at 316 North Tenth) was built on that location in 1873 and the cabin eventually "rotted down." (Centennial, p. 66) Before that time, Bunker facetiously complained to E. E. Wilson, a leading historian of the pioneer days, that this first cabin in Independence "instead of being treasured . . . like other landmarks, has been prostituted to the vile instincts of domestic fowls and beasts that perish." In other words, it was converted into a barn for chickens and cows. (MG History, p. 83)

The 1901 *Tribune* put Bunker's cabin in perspective to the development of Independence by stating that: "until very recently the little cabin of round logs . . . still stood, and was preserved in affectionate remembrance of those gallant spirits by one who was more than friend, but, alas! That Messenger, who never parleys or dissembles, hath long since touched Frank Bunker, and that friend, with beckoning finger . . . has transformed his (Bunker's) peaceful pasture into a fretful mart of trade and commerce."

Pictured left to right are: (front row) B. F. Masterman, Fred Bunker, Star Stephenson, L. T. Stephenson, W. H. Hays, R. S. Heady, John McCullaugh, E. E. Wilson, Jont. DeBruler, (second row) J. H. Pugh, J. H. Concanon and son, O. P. Gamble, H. W. Conrad and Geo. C. Ernsberger.



## Businesses



Should we look back at American landmark losses in anger? And with whom should we be angry? And what will we be angry enough to do about it? Our most direct course is to look back, even in anger with our known and unknown adversaries and with ourselves, and to be so sufficiently angry as to forward new preservation programs with enthusiasm and vision which brings success.

National Trust for Historic Preservation



The Independence Theatre Company was formed in 1906 by A. C. Stich (see p. 24), A. W. Shulthuis (see p. 15) and others. They incorporated and bought the lots on the southeast corner of Penn and Chestnut Streets to construct the Beldorf Theatre—"one of the finest opera houses in the state—pronounced a gem by all who have seen it." "The magnificent four story structure of ample size for a city of 20,000 people" was constructed in 1907. With a lower floor, a first balcony, and a second balcony affectionately known as "peanut heaven", the theatre had a seating capacity of one thousand people and "all the sittings have a fine view of the stage." "The interior is of the latest model . . . and the ventilation and accoustics properties are good. The finishing and decorations are in the latest style and all harmonizes, making it a credit to the owners as well as to the city. Independence now has as fine a play house as Topeka or Wichita and is able to accommodate any of the large troupes coming West."

After the opening night, the *Tribune* stated "the attendance was all that could be desired and never before in our city was seen such a display of fine elegantly dressed ladies and gentlemen. This improvement places our city under still further obligations to Mayor Stich whose love for Independence is only equaled by his faith in its future, and who backs his faith by his money." (All quotes are taken from *Tribune*, September 18, 1907.)

In 1915 Victor L. Wagner purchased the theatre and ran it until his death in 1918. His son, William H. Wagner, then operated the theatre, except for the years 1925-1935, until it closed in December, 1956. The building had a costly remodeling and "modernizing" in 1935. The building was leveled in 1965 and the lots remained vacant for some time before Shoes by Cotterill and Heritage Realty were constructed on the site.

Directly south of the Beldorf was an open-air theatre called the Airdome. Also owned by William H. Wagner, the Airdome was used only in the summer months and in case of bad weather the cast, scenery and audience would be moved into the Beldorf. The stage was at the back of the lot so the audience was facing east. The Airdome was closed in 1925 when Wagner moved to California for ten years. In July, 1913, it was stated that "the people are packing the Airdome where Elizabeth Morrell Stock Company is playing this week." (*Centennial*, p. 53) Sayers Hardware is on this location now.



"Throughout the southwest is no better known firm in the lumber business than the Long-Bell Lumber Company. . . . Seventy-five branches of the Kansas City firm were located in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. Don R. Bodwell was the manager of this plant located at Sixth and Laurel. "The stock embraces everything in the line of lumber, lime, cement, mill work and building material, and is one of the largest stocks of the kind in Eastern Kansas. . . . (T)he Independence branch does a large business, and has supplied the lumber and material for a large number of the most important buildings, among the recent contracts being the new opera house (see p. 56), DeMott flats (at 207 South Penn) and Joe Darrah residences (at Ninth and Maple)." The brick building which had been constructed in 1920 was razed in 1963 for the construction of the Post Office. (All quotes are taken from *Times*, pp. 65-66.)





This quaint-looking gas station was built in 1920 at the corner of Sixth and Myrtle. It was one of the very early Sinclair stations and was "... the finest in the West. . . Thousands found available space at the band concert and dedication services. Some of the Sinclair officials were here from various offices to attend the affair." (Centennial, p. 63) This particular corner operated a station until the company merged with Atlantic Richfield in 1969. After that the modern station on that corner and two of the other three Sinclair stations in town closed. Shortly thereafter, the station was razed and used for parking for several years before the new First Federal Savings and Loan was constructed.



Many a livery stable flourished before the advent of automobiles. Frank C. Sands' "Right Here in Our Town" column in the *Reporter* surveyed several of the more popular ones in Independence and concluded: "Sunday was the big day for livery stables, when families and courting couples rented rigs for a drive. When the oil boom first came here, that also brought the livery stables a lot of business. Lense hounds and scouts made much use of rented rigs. Many oil men also boarded rigs of their own at livery stables." (*Reporter*, May 10, 1951)

The pictured Court House Livery Stable was located at Sixth and Main and was operated by G. W. Waggoner and his son, E. D. The stable was built in 1904 by W. L. McCarthy, a leading brick mason in Independence, who also built the Baden Dry Goods Store (see p. 53). The Livery Stable was "... two stories in height and of fireproof construction, modern in equipment, (with) room for seventy-five stalls. . . It is one of the finest stable buildings in the state. The success of Waggoner and Son is due to the excellence of their rigs. Their horses are all in fine shape, splendid livery animals, and their carriages, buggies and harness fairly shine as a result of the attention which is always bestowed on them." (Proclamation) Later the Dukewitz-Jenkins Ford Agency was housed in the same building before it was razed in the early 70's to construct the Sonic Drive In.

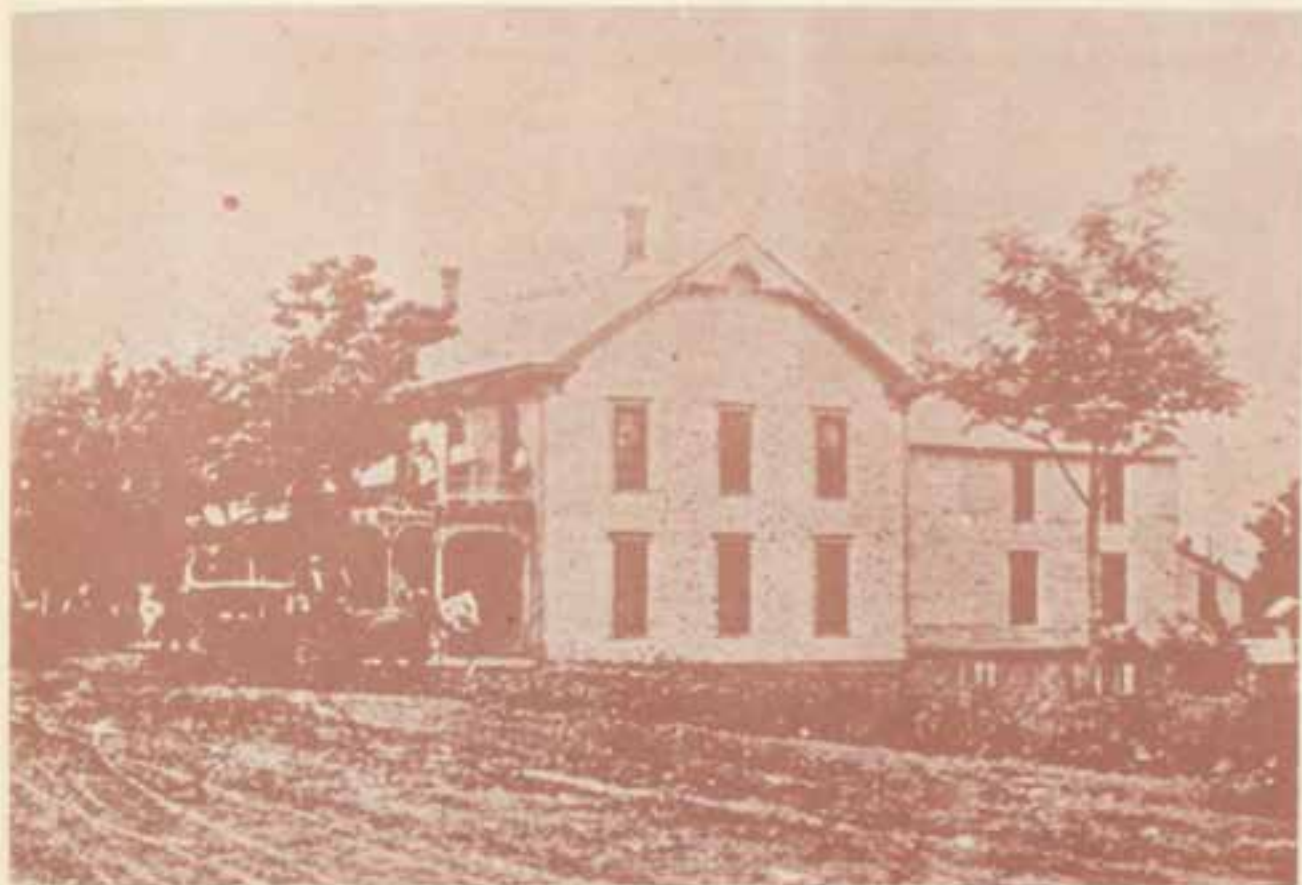




The Kansas Natural Gas Company was formed in 1903 by the consolidation of "the three largest concerns in the Kansas gas belt"—including a New York oil company, the Independence Gas Company, and the Barnsdall-O'Neill oil interests from Pennsylvania. The company had a natural gas daily aggregate of 625,000,000 cubic feet capacity which was "two-thirds of the daily output of the entire state." "The men who are back of this company have made immense fortunes in the gas business and were quick to see the value of the seemingly inexhaustible supply of natural gas stored in this part of the State. . . This company represents the largest amount of capital invested in the county, and its interests should be the interests of the citizens of Independence. The company gives evidence of this by furnishing free gas to the city for lighting the streets and public buildings." The men who primarily ran the Company were R. S. Litchfield (see p. 23) and John Landon, the father of Alf Landon.

The Company constructed their two-story office building at Sixth and Maple in 1909. A. E. Todd and Harry B. Smith were the contractors for this red brick with standstone trim structure. The Kansas Natural Gas Company merged with Union Gas in 1926 and were accommodated on the top floor of the Commercial National Bank (now the Professional Building) before moving to their present building. The Reporter bought the Gas Building in 1926 which served as its home until 1973. The building was leveled in 1975 and the lot is now vacant. (All quotes are taken from Proclamation.)





The Hotel Le Grande was an early-day inn located at Penn and Maple. In 1894, J. J. Price, the proprietor, "... refitted and refurnished (it with) ... the idea that the best was none too good for his guests. ... The furnishings throughout are not only comfortable, but elegant ... (which) makes it an inducement to the traveling public who appreciate a first class hostelry. The fame of this house has spread into nearly every section of the country. ... It is a cheerful and attractive place of rest and comfort, where all the wants of the guests are anticipated and no obnoxious feature is thrust upon them." (Carthage)

By the end of 1896, however, the Hotel "... closed its doors as such and continued as a rooming house." (Centennial, p. 30) The "pretentious" building burned down in 1899.



The "Hoover House" was erected in 1887 for Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Hoover who were also the managers of the "Caldwell House" (see p. 61). The hotel, on the corner of Eighth and Main was later re-named "Heckman House" after L. S. Heckman (see p. 37) who owned it for a short time before the turn of the century. By 1900 Will Owens was the proprietor and "... built for his hotel a splendid reputation, with the result of a constantly crowded house. It is the only \$1.00 per day house in the business section of the city, has been recently thoroughly renovated, is lighted and heated by natural gas, and has good sample rooms for the commercial men. The table is first-class, and guests of the hotel are accorded the very best treatment." (SW Developer) The hotel was razed in September, 1910, for the construction of a finer, larger one—the Booth.

## SCOTT BRO'S.



The Scott Brothers grocery store was a popular market in Independence for many years. The main store was located where K.G. & E. is presently and the smaller one pictured was located near the cement plant. The stores handled "... a big stock of groceries, both staple and fancy, and Queensware. Their grocery stock includes a splendid line of canned goods of finest brands. Their store is known as 'the place where the good things to eat come from,' and their trade extends all over the city, as well as includes many customers from the surrounding country." William M. Scott was the senior member of the firm and their traveling salesman while R. L. "Bob" Scott managed the firm here in town, and James "Jim" Scott ran the one at the cement plant. Ten people were employed by the business which sold over one hundred thousand dollars worth of groceries in 1904. The stores were "always well filled with fresh, seasonable goods bought direct from the best refineries canneries and mills, for cash, in carload lots, to be sold direct to the consuming trade." (Quotes are taken from *Proclamation*.)

The Scott Brothers moved their main store, after forty years in the same location, to 115 West Laurel when their original location was razed to construct the present K.G. & E. building in 1940. An incomplete listing of the people pictured includes: 3) Wille Garrison; 4) Mrs. J. M. Scott; 5) Leo Young; 8) Fred Randall; 9) Jim Scott; 10) Boyd Reason; 11) Mrs. Cheslin; 12) Jess Wilson; and 13) Ben Taylor.





Central Drug Store was erected in early 1900 for Charles H. Kerr who had studied pharmacy while being paid \$10 per month by a local pharmacist, O. J. Moon. "Although the hours of a druggist's apprentice do not afford much time for application to books, Charles Kerr found sufficient time, somehow, and attained his registration by passing a most creditable examination before the Kansas State Board of Pharmacy in 1897." A picture of his drug store "... is as but a faint shadow in comparison with the real beauty of the store itself. It is safe to say that the fixtures of this store surpass in cost and artistic design those of any drug emporium in Southern Kansas. The show cases are all of heavy plate glass from the floor up and are surrounded with granite bases. The shelving and wall cases are of golden oak, ornamented with gold. The prescription case is the same, having three large plate glass mirrors, and in working equipment it is a veritable pharmacist's dream. The floor is of tile and of a very handsome pattern." (1903 Tribune)

Kerr, who was also interested in the oil business, did not run the Central very long. In 1909 he, in partnership with Martin Johnson, converted this store into the Snark Theatre (see next page).



In 1900 Charles Kerr and Martin Johnson remodeled the Central Drug Store (see p. 50) into the "Snark," an "amusement house-theatre" named after the thirty-five foot boat Johnson and Jack London sailed in the South Seas. The narrow drug store lent itself to a remodeling which duplicated that boat, with the front of it sticking out over the sidewalk at 107 North Penn. The Snark was "our finest movie picture show" and proved "a money maker from the start." This "sure winner" had twelve hundred people in the audience the first day!

The Snark not only showed movies but a main attraction was the "Travelogue" offered by Mr. Johnson. He would show pictures from his world travels and would "... give one a finer idea of the country and the scenery which is new to all and Mr. Johnson personally gives little incidents in the dangers of such an undertaking. After illustrating a shark story he passed through the audience the backbone of one of those sea monsters. Mr. Kerr gives the lectures on the other scenes and adds considerable humor in describing some of the pictures." (All quotes are taken from *Tribune*, November 1 and 15, 1939, *Thirty Years Ago* Column.)

Later the Snark changed hands and became the "Best Theatre." In 1939 it was purchased by William H. Wagner (see p. 42) who then owned the other three theatres in Independence. He closed the Best Theatre that year and it was torn down in 1940 to construct the new K.G. & E. building.



One of the very few sandstone buildings in the downtown area was built for Allen Brown's "Stone Front Studio" photography shop which operated on the top floor. The "... richness and life-like effect about Mr. Brown's work (is) seldom seen outside a metropolis." (Carthage) Brown, who was a brother of W. P. Brown, the owner of Coffeyville's Brown Mansion, sold his business to Hannah Scott in 1898.

The bottom floor of the stone-fronted building was divided into three small stores. The smallest section was the northern part which housed a restaurant; the middle section, which was the largest, was a drug store; and the southern section was a barber shop where many prominent men kept their shaving mugs. I. G. Fowler ran the drug store. "No store in southern Kansas is better stocked with all the staple as well as the rare drugs and medicines of all kinds, or better equipped for filling physicians' prescriptions and family recipes. These are always filled with scrupulous exactness, no substitutes, imitations or fakes of any kind ever being allowed in this store. It is a cardinal rule that everyone who comes into the store from the wealthiest lady who wishes expensive perfumery to the raggedest child who timidly asks for a cent's worth of alum or a postage stamp, shall be waited upon with the utmost courtesy and prompt and careful attention. . . (The) Store is also headquarters for Peerless Corn Cure, the only corn and bunion cure that is absolutely warranted. It cures in nearly all cases. In the few instances of failure the only instructions are, 'come back and get your money.' No grumbling, no hesitating, no hard feelings. Your good will is worth more than the money." (Proclamation)

Case Book Store was housed in the building when Harvey and Opal Wilson (pictured with daughter Judy) bought the store in the 40's. Wilson's Gift Shop operated in the middle and northern section until 1978. For a number of years, Kruger and Rouse operated a men's clothing store in the southern section of the building. Citizens National Bank razed the stone building in 1978 and the lot is currently used for parking.





Charles A. Hull organized the Hull Bank in 1871 and had this two-story building constructed in 1872. In 1877, he was involved in the notorious "Hull Baby" case. Latham Hull, his father and also a banker, had offered \$5,000 to his two sons, Charles and Edgar (see p. 29), a standing prize for the first grandson in the family. "Charles, the elder one, was a bachelor, but he fell a victim to the wiles of a clever adventuress and married her. No sooner was this former 'schoolmarm' installed as the mistress of the banker's home than she . . . itched to get hold of that roll, and she procured, from an orphans' home at Leavenworth, a young infant of the requisite sex, to which she pretended to have given birth. The fraud was too transparent to impose long on the parties interested, and her husband disowned the brat and began suit for divorce." (MG History, p. 97)

The Hull Bank became the Citizens Bank in 1883 and was directed for the next forty years by A. C. Stich (see p. 24) and A. W. Shulthis (see p. 14). This building at Penn and Myrtle was razed in 1916 to construct the present five-story Citizens National Bank.



"A history of the rise of Henry Baden in the mercantile world—from the smallest possible beginning in 1871, to that of a merchant prince of his city today—would make an entertaining business romance; could its various chapters be here chronicled. . . Mr. Baden has pursued an upward course until the business of his wholesale and retail establishments have reached figures approximating three-quarters of a million dollars annually. . . Although assiduously devoted to business, he always takes time to attend to his duties as a citizen, serving the public with zeal, and many enterprises have been greatly aided by the personal and financial aid he has rendered." (1903 *Tribune*)

In 1903, Henry Baden had W. L. McCarthy build a new dry goods store to replace an older wood structure on North Penn. The Proclamation stressed "if the buildings be solid, substantial structures, visitors are impressed with the city's importance, and if old, ramshackle affairs adorn the streets, not much of an impression can be made. . . W. L. McCarthy is one of the leading contractors of Independence, and one of the men responsible for her good buildings. He is in the brick-and-stone contracting business, and one of the most expert at figuring as well as constructing stone or brick work." The 1903 *Tribune* described the new Baden store as "a handsome new building of two stories, modern in all particulars. . . The first floor of this building will be one grand salesroom for the retail dry goods, notions and boots and shoes department. It is one of the handsomest business buildings in the city and is an ornament to Pennsylvania Avenue."

After the Baden's Dry Goods store closed, the building housed Messenger Furniture until the spring of 1978 when it was razed to construct a new Drive-In Bank for Citizens National.



Henry Baden was one of the most prominent men in the development of Independence. Arriving in Kansas City from Germany, it is rumored that Mr. Baden, as a fairly young lad, walked from Kansas City to Independence. In 1870 Baden started the first cigar and tobacco store in Independence at Penn and Myrtle and then spread his business in many different fields. He had built several "Baden Buildings" in the downtown area, including the one shown above and the Baden Department Store (see p. 54). This building was constructed in 1908 to house not only some of Baden's business but also the State Bank of Commerce. It later "... housed the Cozy Corner known to all of the young people. At one time it was occupied by a candy kitchen." (Centennial, p. 46) The building was reduced to "... only a pile of aged bricks and old lumber" when it was razed to construct Citizens National Bank Drive In (Reporter, June 8, 1967)





In 1883 C. E. and Hugh Payne erected Payne's Opera House for \$18,000 on the northwest corner of Penn and Myrtle Streets. They sold the enterprise in 1893 to William Dunkin and George T. Guernsey "who keep the house thoroughly equipped with all accessories required in the theatrical business." The auditorium was "one of the finest play houses in any Kansas city of 5,500 inhabitants. It is furnished throughout with modern opera chairs, and has a comfortable seating capacity of 750, and is heated and lighted with natural gas. . . . The building is one of the prominent and substantial business blocks of the city. The house is under the management of Mr. B. Blossier, with office at the Commercial National Bank, who is very popular with theatrical managers with whom he has had dealings. Mr. Blossier represents the younger and progressive element of the city, which is fast taking the lead in Independence, though none too soon." (All quotes are taken from *SW Developer*.)

Dunkin and Guernsey had the building extensively remodeled by A. E. Todd (see original building pictured on p. 58) into a business building (thereafter usually called the "Dunkin and Guernsey Building") sometime after 1904. The "Opera House Pharmacy" (see p. 57) and the "Egyptian Massage Parlor" (see p. 58) were two such businesses housed in this building. Mr. Guernsey had the structure razed in 1920 for the construction of his new bank building—the Commercial National Bank, now the Professional Building.



Among other businesses housed in the "Dunkin and Guernsey Building" (see p. 56) was the "Opera House Pharmacy." This firm was composed of Charles, Joyce and E. C. Fair, Dr. C. C. Surber and Dr. B. F. Masterman (see p. 39). "Their stock consists of drugs, toilet articles, etc., high grade wall papers, and (they) are agents for Sherman-Williams Co. paints. They also manufacture Joyce's Sarsaparilla and Dandelion Compound for the blood, on which they have an extensive trade. Especial attention is given to the correct compounding of physicians' prescriptions." (SW Developer) The building was razed in 1929 for the construction of the Professional Building.



"Among the ancients it was a recognized fact that vapor baths and manipulation of the muscles of the body were of great importance in maintaining physical and mental perfection. Today it is universally admitted that in cases of nervous disorders and many physical ailments nothing is of greater benefit than a course of treatment at the hands of an experienced and scientific masseur. . . No better institution of this kind can be found anywhere than the Egyptian Massage Parlors, conducted by Mrs. A. E. Alford, in suite 6, Old Opera House building. Mrs. Alford is assisted by experienced operators, and those who have never experienced the relief afforded to tired nerves by these treatments should give method a trial." (*Times*, p. 59)

The Old Opera House (see p. 56) was located on the site of the Professional Building which was constructed as George T. Guernsey's Commercial National Bank in 1920.





Rumor has it that there was fierce bidding between A. C. Stich and George T. Guernsey for the new Post Office. Stich was offering the area behind his Citizens National Bank (see p. 53) while Guernsey was offering the area directly across the street which was behind his business building (see p. 56). In April, 1900, Guernsey's lot was accepted and construction began immediately. Stich nevertheless extended his bank building to the alley and leased it to a steam laundry. The new Post Office served that purpose until a newer one was constructed at Eighth and Myrtle (now the Independence Museum). The old Post Office was razed along with the Dunkin and Guernsey building in 1920 to construct Guernsey's new Commercial National Bank (now the Professional Building).



Shortly after George A. Brown purchased a tract of land between Rock Creek on the south and Elk River on the north, the Verdigris River on the east and Table Mound on the west for \$50 from the Osage Indians, the Independence Town Company was formed. A treaty was signed which stipulated: 1) each party was to promote peace between the two races; 2) Brown could build all the houses he wanted at the customary tax of \$5 each; and 3) Chetopa, the Indian chief, got free pasturage for his ponies. L. T. Stephenson soon took over the Independence Town Company and immediately began the erection of "a double log hotel" known as the Judson House. Later that fall a celebration was held to welcome all the early settlers. The refreshments consisted of barbecued ox, four kegs of beer, and two barrels of bread "imported" from Oswego. While crossing the Verdigris "the team became unmanageable and dumped the outfit into the river. No time was lost in fishing it out, and of course, especial care was taken to save the beer, which came out undamaged." (MG History, p. 86)

The Judson House existed only about a year as it gave way to the frame Caldwell House in 1871 (see next page).



The Caldwell House was built in 1871 on the corner of Penn and Laurel, replacing the Judson House (see p. 60). It was named after one of Kansas' early U. S. Senators: "Alexander Caldwell, a wealthy Leavenworth banker, contractor, railroad man who had lived in Kansas less than ten years and was virtually unknown to the general citizenry, bought the election (1871) for \$60,000, including a \$15,000 payment to his chief rival ex-Governor (Thomas) Carney just before Carney withdrew from the race. This bribe was exposed when popular revulsion against a seemingly endless series of sordid political scandals, national and state, forced the 1872 legislature to investigate . . . the senatorial election of 1871 . . . (and) Caldwell was forced to resign his senate seat." (Kenneth Davis, *Kansas*, p. 91)

The 1901 *Tribune* states: "This popular Hotel has long been under the management of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Hooper, (who also owned the Hooper House see p. 48) than whom none are better qualified to cater to the demands of the traveling public. 'The Caldwell' is always kept in repair, elegantly furnished, and its accommodations first class. It is heated and lighted by natural gas, and its cozy parlors, office and sample room, contribute to make it popular. Mrs. Hooper gives personal attention to the cuisine and looks well after the hospitable entertainment of guests, and at no other hotel in the west is there a greater effort made to contribute to the welfare of its patrons."

In October, 1903, Mr. George B. Thompson of Sistersville, West Virginia, bought the furnishings and business but not the building. "Mr. Thompson . . . has made it a special business to cater to oil-field workers and prospectors. . . . Therefore, the Caldwell House has been turned into a veritable home for this class of people. The lobby accommodations of the house have been enlarged to about three times that formerly required, a cafe added, and the European plan adopted in connection with the American method. . . . His every effort in the management of his 'home for the oil people' is directed toward their welfare and comfort." (1903 *Tribune*) By 1904, Mr. Thompson had arranged to put a powerful gas engine and electric plant in the building. This new "electricity" being generated, it was reported, ". . . has many advantages but will not replace gas in many houses." (*Centennial*, p. 40) That enterprise burned about 1906 and the Kress Building which presently houses Westco was constructed on the site in 1908.





This spacious Elks Club "... of large proportions, broad verandes and full length columns ..." was built in 1906 at a cost of between \$30,000 and \$50,000, with the lot costing \$6,000. (1911 Tribune) The building was constructed of brick and cement and was "modern" throughout with steam heat, electric lights and an electric elevator. The Tribune vaunted that: "They are going to build themselves a home of which not only they may themselves be proud, but to which all the city may point with pride as one of the architectural adornments of the city."

"The first floor will be for stores and the second for offices. ... On the third floor will be the lodge rooms and club house. These apartments will be handsomely finished and furnished. When completed the Elks expect to have one of the finest club houses in the state. They will spare no pains in fitting it up and making it as attractive, convenient, modern and cozy as it can be made. The entire fourth floor, with plenty of windows and ventilation, will be converted into an ideal dance hall. It will be 45 by 100 and will have dressing rooms and parlors. It is not improbable that the top of the building will be arranged for a roof garden where the dancers may go warm summer evenings between dances to enjoy the cool breezes. There is some talk also of keeping this open evenings for the general public in the summer. There is now no place of the kind in town and it would certainly prove popular and a money maker if ice cream and soft drinks were obtainable. Such a place would be cool and just what the people want."

The Elks Club burned in 1957 (see p. 41) and was then demolished. The present Elks Club was erected on the same location shortly thereafter. (All quotes except where noted are taken from Tribune, May 2, 1906.)



The Rock Island Lumber and Coal Company started in business in Independence in 1882. "... One of the largest and best equipped establishments of the kind in Eastern Kansas" was located at 219 North Eighth Street. "Everything in the line of lumber, lime, cement, and building material of all kinds is carried in stock and the growth of the business has kept pace with the rapid development of the city and surrounding country." Contracts handled by this concern included Longfellow and Willard Schools (see pp. 96-97), residents of George T. Brown (see p. 38); the Thomas Booth home at 501 West Myrtle; the John Cramer home at 418 West Laurel; the Henry Dittmer home at 401 South Fourth; and the H. H. Galbraith home at Twelfth and Main. At one time the company boasted of having supplied all the building needs for all the homes constructed by A. E. Todd.

The company quit business in 1969 and the city purchased the property for downtown parking. (All quotes are taken from *Times*, p. 92.)





Independence's first "class" hotel—the Carl-Leon—was built in 1902. It was claimed "... to be the finest hotel in the State of Kansas. Certain it is that no other city of the size in the West has a hotel anywhere near approaching it in beauty and comfort." (*Times*, p. 87) The four story building was constructed by Frank D. Brewster (see p. 95) of ornamental red pressed brick from the Vitrified Brick Company in Independence (see pp. 70-71) with white sandstone trimmings. The "work of art" cost \$50,000 to build and was "modern in every particular. It has beautiful tile floors in the office, lobby, dining room, writing room, billiard room, wash rooms, etc." The Hotel had one hundred guest rooms, twenty-five with private baths. The plumbing attracted special advertising by the firm doing the work—Whitman and Wood Supply Company. "There is not a contract in plumbing line that is too intricate or stupendous in its specifications for this company to undertake. One of (their) notable achievements ... was the work for the Carl-Leon Hotel, embracing gas-fitting and fixtures, hot and cold water connections, sewer connections, bathroom furnishings, etc., all of which was executed throughout the big building in the most satisfactory manner, requiring far more material and labor than has been performed in any building in this part of Kansas." (Quotes except where noted are taken from 1903 *Tribune*.)

The Hotel was built in memory of the only sons of the builders, Carl Stich (son of A. C. Stich—see p. 24), and Leon Carpetner (son of G. M. Carpenter, vice-president of Stich's Citizens National Bank, from Elgin). "Nothing can speak more eloquently of the refinement and material prosperity of any community than the establishments which cater to the palates and physical wants of the public. In this respect Independence has the Carl-Leon Hotel, under the management of Mrs. E. J. and Mr. H. H. Hines. . . (A) most magnificent and imposing hostelry, calculated to produce a favorable impression on any stranger. It is the only hotel in Independence possessing proper facilities for the accommodation of the 'knights of the road,' and consequently it enjoys a monopoly of their patronage." (*Oil and Gas*, p. 58)

The Hotel was razed in 1963 and is now the parking lot for Greaves Nu-Way.





In 1904 with "... no blare of trumpets, no receptions and no bonuses, but quietly and without stir of any kind the Prairie Pipe Line Company (actually Prairie Oil and Gas) moved bed and baggage from Neodesha to Independence. . . . The move from Neodesha to Independence was in a box car drawn by a freight engine over the Missouri Pacific road. In that car were all the household furnishings, personal effects and the men themselves (22), and here was plenty of room in the car. . . ." (Reporter, August 6, 1929) They moved into the Carl-Leon Annex, a three story red pressed brick building with an architecture style harmonizing with the main building, also constructed by the same contractor, Frank D. Brewster. There was, in fact, a passageway on the third floor joining the two buildings. The Annex, as it was generally called, had twenty-five hotel rooms, and Prairie Oil and Gas rented twenty-four other rooms for their office space. The building cost \$20,000 to build. The building was later the Chalmers Hotel and housed Independence Automotive until 1978. A fire in 1977 severely damaged the structure and it was razed by the late Charles Clark in the fall of 1978.

OF THE  
**Parkhurst Mineral Springs Company,**

DEPENDENCE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, KANSAS

Capital Stock, \$50,000. Shares, \$5 each

THIS CERTIFIES THAT, *W. J. Yoe,*  
is the owner of *One (1)* Share of the Capital Stock of

**The Parkhurst Mineral Springs Company,**

Independence, Kansas, fully paid, non-assessable, and transferable only in the books of the Company in person, or by attorney, on the records of this Certificate of Stock.

WITNESS the Seal of said Company, and the signatures of the President and Secretary, at their office in Independence, Kansas,

on *2nd* day of *February*, A. D. 191*8*

*Wm. C. Mulholland* Secretary

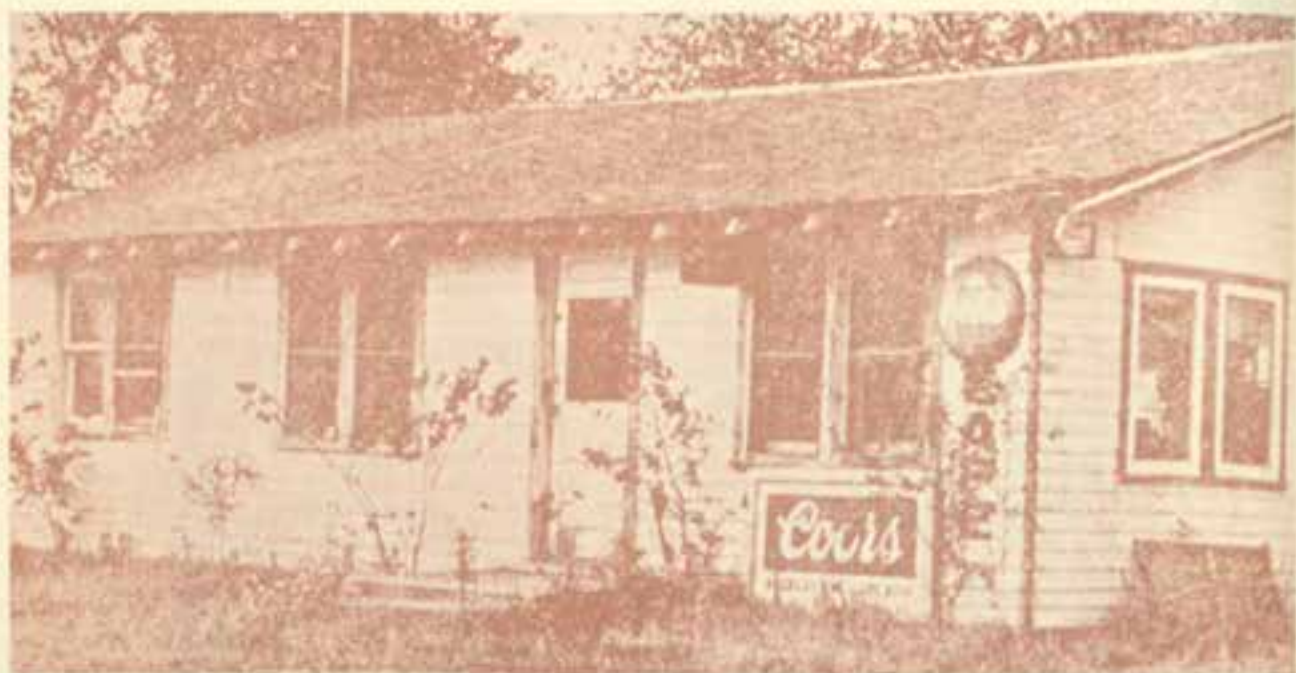
President

In the mid 1880's Dr. B. F. Masterman and W. P. Brown had the "sanguine opinion that wealth of some character was beneath the surface (of Independence). . . Its discovery would be beneficial alike to all. . ." A drilling exploration at Ninth and Laurel was undertaken in the hopes of discovering coal. Masterman and Brown contracted a man name Swan from Paola, Kansas, to drill a 1000 foot hole. The price was \$1.00 per foot for the first 100 feet, and 25 to 50 cents per foot added as the depth of the well increased. At 800 feet a small pocket of natural gas was hit but it soon burned itself out. At 900 feet they hit oily slate so the prospect for coal vanished. At 1000 feet, still confident of finding some natural resources but still empty handed, Swan agreed to drill another 200 feet for \$2.00 per foot which would be paid only if oil, gas or coal was struck. After going 65 additional feet "the string of tools got away. Swan and his men cussed valiantly and fished for them persistently for days and days, but it was no use. . . (F)inally a cave-in buried the drill hopelessly for all time, and 1,700 pounds of steel stands in that almost forgotten hole today." (Quotes are taken from Walter Sickel's 1915 account of the first drilling in Montgomery County.) Dr. Masterman, after that episode, concentrated more on medicine and became a leading physician in Independence (see p. 39). W. P. Brown moved to Coffeyville and drilled a few more dry holes before he was successful. By 1905 he sold his immense gas holdings for a quarter of a million dollars. A year later he completed his home--the Brown Mansion.

The deep hole remaining from this unsuccessful exploration for oil, gas or coal did have water in it. And it was thought that the well " . . . had curative properties so Dr. McCully and others built a clinic on this corner. . ." (Centennial, p. 29) Later it was reported that: "The well developed salt water that had some mineral properties, and the building was turned into a bath house and was known as the Independence Mineral Bath House. It was operated as such for some time, and did a fairly good business, but later the plan was abandoned, after two or three parties had tried it. . . (T)he pipes all rusted out and it was found not profitable to replace them. . . A number of local businessmen tell of the times they used to have about the old Mineral Bath House and later when it was transformed into a rooming house. Several of the old-timers here had an interest in the bath-house project at various times . . . but the names of all could not be ascertained from the records after careful and diligent search." (Reporter, December 6, 1929) The share of stock shown indicates three prominent citizens of Independence: W. T. Yoe was an early day publisher of the Tribune (see p. 30); F. C. Moses was a popular mayor of our city (see p. 33); and William Dunkin was a businessman and mayor (see p. 56).

The structure was leased in 1904 to the Walton Lumber Company which carried "a full stock of lumber, lath, shingles, sash, doors, blinds, etc. . . and in addition, a full line of oil rig timber, oil tanks, etc. . ." (Proclamation) The building was operating as the Cottage Hotel when it was demolished in 1929 to construct a service station and is now Taco Tico.





MABLE'S PLACE



Mable's Place was an eating place at Twenty-sixth and Laurel which was "... renowned for its friendly atmosphere and good food." The cafe thrived under the management of Maybell Thomas, still a resident of this city, from its beginning in 1928 until she sold it in the mid 40's. Miss Thomas recalls starting her help during the depression at \$1.00 a day plus meals, and she still has the records to prove it. She would never hire help who had previous experience because she wanted to teach them to cook her way. She takes pride in never having had to advertise her small cafe with a seating capacity of twenty-four people because everyone knew where she was and the kind of food they would get there. Miss Thomas reasons that much of her success was due to offering every complaining customer a different plate of food until he or she was satisfied. There was considerable disagreement among her former customers as to her most outstanding recipe—some insisted it was the cabbage salad, others argued it was the chili, and still others recalled the forty to fifty pies she baked per day. Two Kansas Governors—Harry Woodring and Alf Landon—were among the list of famous people to eat at her cafe.

The property housing Mable's Place was significant per se and was vividly described by Wilma Schweitzer: "Old timers in Independence profess a nostalgic feeling for this section of town. It is one of the historical spots that has served many purposes. Early in the 1870's, Andrew Randall received a patent for the property from the United States government. For the sum of \$500, he sold 40 acres of his tract to William Davis. In 1876, Davis and his wife signed an agreement with the Montgomery County Agricultural Society whereby the society leased for three years the property for an annual fair. The society was to have exclusive control of all buildings and structures including a suitable tract for driving and racing. In addition they were to have free use of water from a well near the Davis home. . . . Davis was to receive ten percent of the gross amount of all monies collected by the society from any source with the exception of money donated. . . . Title to the forty acres was acquired by the Montgomery County Park Association in July, 1881. The purchase price had been \$1,600."

In 1898, the forty acres were platted, some within the city limits, and the "fairgrounds" were dissolved. (All quotes are taken from Mrs. Schweitzer's article in *Reporter*, October 25, 1959.) Mable's Place changed hands several times before it was dismantled in 1959 in order to expand the Bloom's Trailer Courts. The picture taken at that time shows the building in a sad state and Miss Thomas quickly added that neither the beer sign nor the weeds were there when it was "Mable's Place."





BRICK PLANT



Coffeyville Vitrified Brick & Tile Co. Workmen - Independence, Kans.

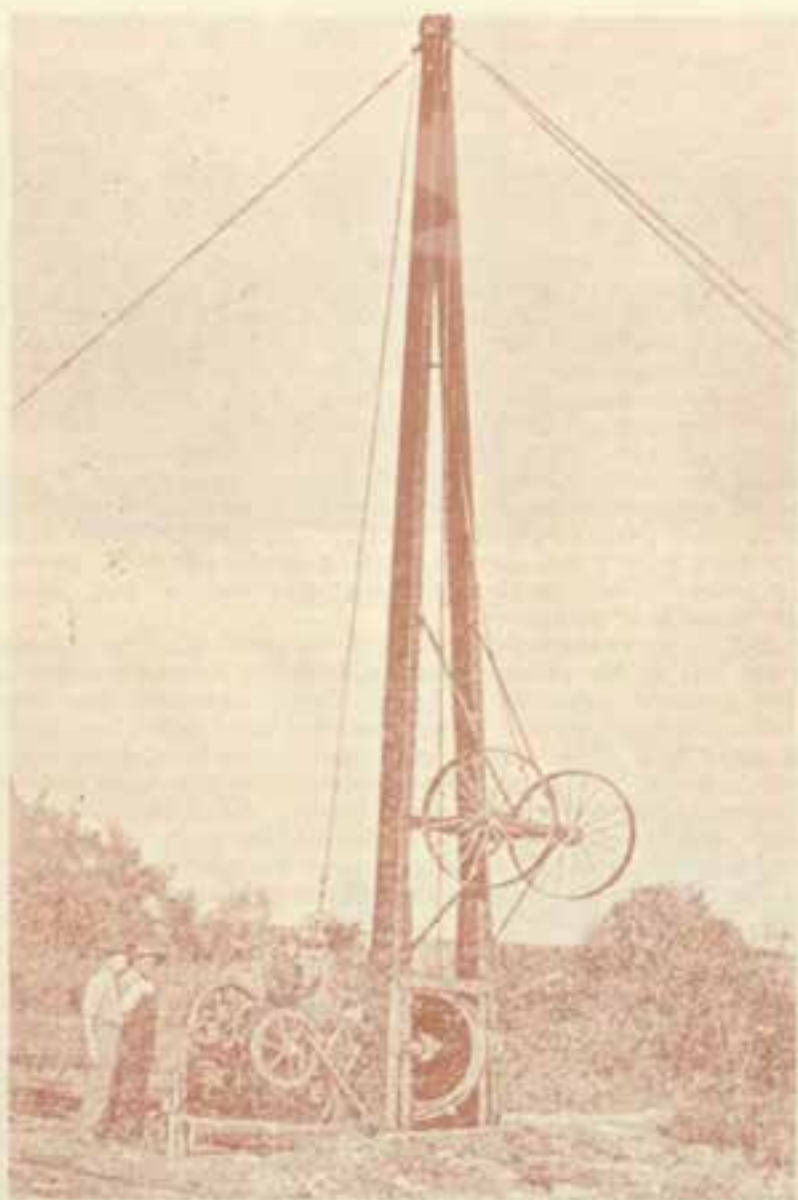
PHOTO BY  
RAYMOND M. MARTIN



In 1898 the Independence Vitrified Brick plant was organized as part of the Coffeyville plant and soon paralleled it in production. By 1903, with plants at Cherryvale and Chanute also, the Vitrified Plants were manufacturing 335,000 bricks per day—Cherryvale supplying 110,000 and the other three plants 75,000 each. The demand for "dry pressed face brick and ornamental brick of a dozen different patterns" came from all over the country, not to mention the tremendous demand to "develop" Independence by replacing our wooden downtown buildings with larger brick ones and paving our streets with brick. The *Tribune* suggested the reasons for the popularity of our brick were: 1) "the shales found in this particular locality are acknowledged to be superior to those found in other parts of Kansas" and 2) "the pressed brick burned with coal were crushed with a pressure of 50,000 pounds, while the pressed brick made by the Independence plant and burned with natural gas, withstood the test of 100,000 pounds of pressure."

So by 1903, it was contended that the brick plant was "the leading single industry of our city at the present time, having the largest pay-roll and consequently the greatest influence in trade. Other concerns now lying dark, silent and idle, promised greater things, but the brick plant has gone on and on, turning more and more money into the channels of trade, and never shutting down, except for repairs." The processing of the brick was described as follows: "Great crushers and grinders receive the shale almost as fast as a car can dump it and pulverize it into a dust as fine as flour. This is elevated to containers where it is mixed with water and kneaded by machinery to the proper consistency and then forced under pressure through an orifice the opening of which is of the rectangular shape of the broadside of a brick. Thus emerging in a continuous length of 'dough' it is conveyed by an endless canvas belt to the automatic cutter, which glides through the mass with its knives of taut wire, clipping off the mud brick in blocks of ten. The drying and burning process then follows. (This) description tells only how 'pavers' and common brick are fashioned. The dry pressed bricks are formed in moulds under an enormous pressure that holds them intact until ready for burning. When finished they are very smooth in color and mostly of a rich dark red."

The plant which manufactured most of the ornamental brick for the four plants was located at Nineteenth and Sycamore, about where the National Alfalfa Mill is now. In 1926 it merged with thirty-two other plants in Kansas and surrounding states into the United Clay Products Company. (All quotes are taken from 1903 *Tribune*.)



Mr. R. Morrison, who had a turntable constructed in his garage at 209 South Fourth so his Hupmobile could be driven forward out of the garage to negotiate the crooked driveway, was better known as the manufacturer of the "Eclipse Well Pulling Machine." His plant was located at Fourteenth and Railroad Streets. There was great demand for such machines to pull the heavy drilling equipment out of the wells as noted in the first drilling effort in Independence (see p. 67). In 1914 it was noted that his machines were "... selling fast. Orders for fifteen were had last week." (*Centennial*, p. 53) "This illustration shows the machine in actual operation. The simplicity of this well pulling machine and the ease with which it is operated makes it a favorite with operators." (*Booster Train*)

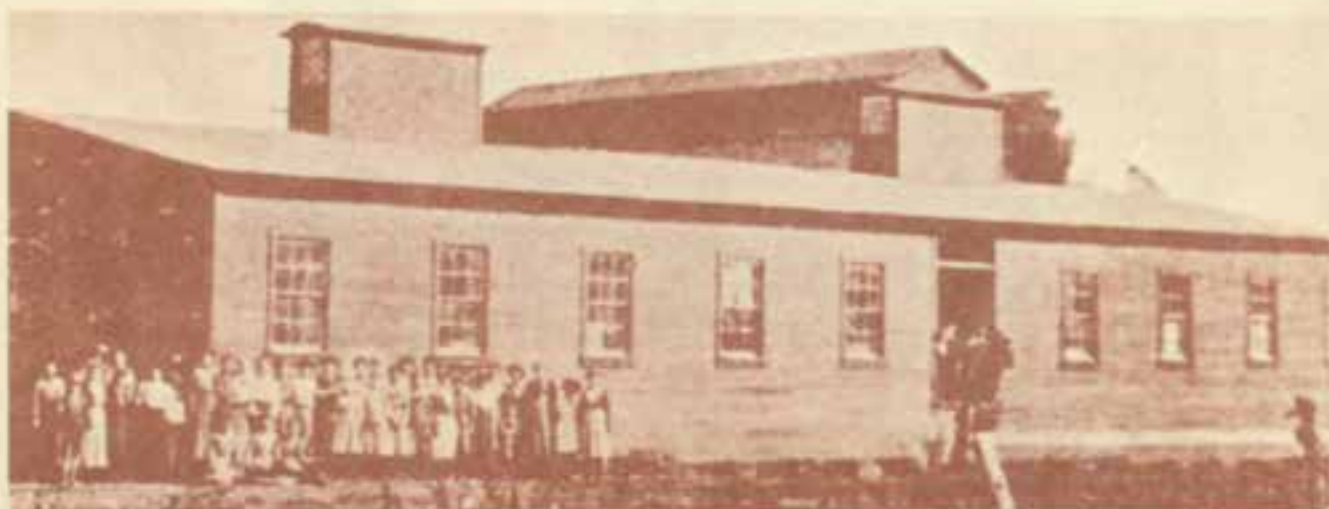


The "Broom Factory" was located at Twelfth and Sycamore and was owned by Josh A. Stone with Fred Rees the manager. Newt Rees, also pictured, and about twenty others were employed there. The factory started before the turn of the century as it had an 1898 "order from the Santa Fe Railroad for 1800 dozen brooms." And this "had been an annual deal for several years." In 1901 the factory burned down but "new machinery was immediately ordered." In 1915, Mrs. Stone sold the factory and the new owners put "in some new machinery to be able to do more business." (All quotes are taken from Centennial.)





VERDIGRIS RIVER AT MAIN STREET BRIDGE



818 NORTH TENTH

In 1901 Mr. J. F. Ellsworth took advantage of "cheap fuel" and "cheap wheat straw" to erect the Independence Paper Company and its valuable adjunct, the Ellsworth Egg Case Filler Company. The Paper Company's "... buildings are large, substantial brick structures, equipped with the most modern machinery for the manufacture of wheat straw into wrapping paper and pulp strawboard." (*Proclamation*) The Company was located "just across the river east of the city" and had its own water works and sewage system. The Santa Fe Railroad built a switch to the plant "over which daily car loads of the raw and finished products are hauled." The Paper Company employed about eighty people.

The other related business—the Egg Case Filler factory—occupied a building 75 by 150 feet which was located at 818 North Tenth, about at the location of Hasselman's Flower Shop. The factory employed about one hundred people. The *Proclamation* stated that before the manufacturing of these paper egg filler cases "... the shipment of eggs to market was a difficult and some times disastrous business. By this invention the poultry farmer is put in a close touch with the distant consumer as if he was personally on the ground." It was difficult for the factory to keep up with the demand for orders as the cases were shipped all over the South and Middle West.

Mr. Ellsworth devoted his lifetime to the paper business and deserved "... great credit for the success ... made here. It is such institutions as these that go to build up cities, and Independence is proud of these two factories." (*Proclamation*) Neither business lasted very long—the raw materials were cheap enough but wheat straw did not prove to be a good base for paper and water (too much of it) forced vacating the original site.



The Kansas Cracker Company "... was organized in April, 1898, by Messrs. Allen Brown, W. L. Wheeler and others, and embarked upon the ever-tempestuous seas of manufacturing and commercialism unballasted by bonus or public assistance of any kind." (1903 Tribune) The Company was reorganized, and consolidated the Jones Confection Company in 1907. At that time, Harry Jiencke (see p. 10) was elected president of this \$50,000 business. It was located at Tenth and Railroad (now vacant) and operated "... until 1914 when National Biscuit went into each town and sold crackers and cookies at less than cost, resulting in the closing of the local plant. (Reporter, June, 1969)

"Its capacity is 1,000 boxes of crackers per day, to manufacture which requires the consumption of 100 barrels of flour. . . (It) also manufactures a large amount of candy, while its ice cream capacity, with the most modern machinery, amount to 800 gallons per day. This factory is now run in full compliance with the pure food laws of the state and nation, and the utmost cleanliness is observed in all departments, the windows being screened against flies and insects as completely as those of the best residences. The company has recently inaugurated the policy of placing tickets in every box of goods put up for the retail trade, which enables each purchaser of these goods to get an additional free package of goods for each ten tickets preserved. . . When you need crackers or sweet goods of any kind, ask for the Kansas Cracker and Confection Company's products, and you may be assured that what you get will be pure and wholesome, as well as fresh and appetizing." (Times, pp. 96-97)

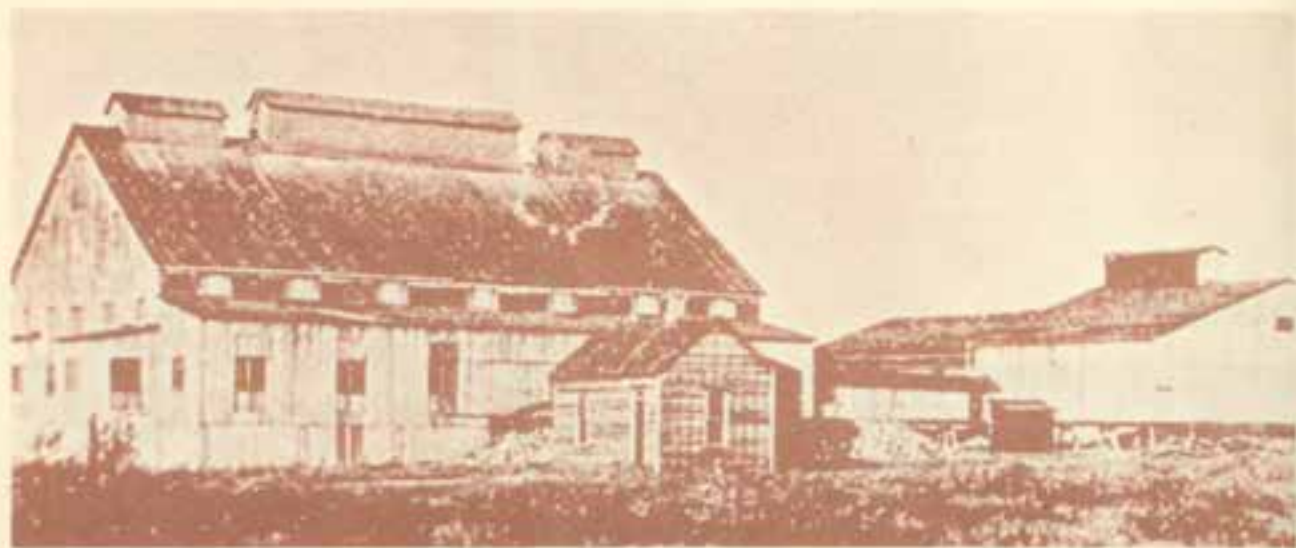




Mr. S. Jay came to Independence in 1903 and started the first glass company which was located north of the railroad tracks on Tenth Street. Midland Window Glass, which only manufactured window glass, soon became "... one of the big industrial institutions which go toward making Independence a commercial and manufacturing center." Several "... fine large buildings of modern construction, built especially for glass factory purposes" were constructed on the ten acres of land.

To the north of this plant, A. E. Todd built "Glass Town" which was fifteen houses for the workers at Midland. "The fifteen dwellings and office building were completed in twelve weeks, and at no time did Mr. Todd have more than seventeen men at work on the contract. Ten of the houses are two-story, five of them containing five rooms and bath, five containing seven rooms and bath, and five four-room cottages. 'Rome was not built in a day,' but the first of this collection of houses, the office of four rooms was completed and ready for the plasterer in seventeen hours. As an illustration of the perfect system under which the work was conducted, three of the seven-room houses were completed each so nearly in the same length of time, that the cost for labor only varied \$1.20." (1903 Tribune)

The plant employed over one hundred people "... half of whom are skilled mechanics in that art, (and) are employed here at good wages." "The fact that it (the company) uses natural gas, the finest fuel in the world, accounts for the uniformity and quality of the glass ... of the finest grade, flawless and of any size. ..." (All quotes except where noted are taken from Proclamation.)



The Western Window Glass Company was built in 1905 and was soon thereafter destroyed by fire "... with only a small insurance on the buildings and no insurance on about 3,000 boxes of glass which had just been turned out." This "unforeseen accident of nature" made "failure seem inevitable" and the twelve stockholders "were sorely perplexed at the destruction of the plant." Then, "two or three of the businessmen of the city came to their rescue at the critical time and enabled them to commence rebuilding at once, and it is a remarkable fact that the plant was completed within thirty days. . . The plant is now running its twelve pots at full capacity and the glass is being shipped to all parts of the South and West. The quality of the glass made makes a ready sale for it and a prosperous business for the year is assured. This plant runs ten months in the year, where most factories run on an average of from six to eight months. The class of men employed by the Western Window Glass Company are sober and industrious and the most of them are citizens of Independence and quite a number own their own homes." (All quotes are taken from *Oil and Gas*, p. 56.)



The third, and final, glass company to locate in Independence was the Osage Window Glass Company in late 1905. That plant, "located just south and east of the city" on South Second Street, was "... reputed to be the finest for the manufacture of window glass in the West. . . . An idea of the magnitude of the plant is gained by the size of the buildings. The batch room, where the material is mixed, is 60 by 60 feet and the blow room, where the furnaces and pots are located and the glass is blown, is 128 by 180 feet. The flattening room, where the huge rolls of glass are heated and flattened, is 130 feet by 176 feet, and the warehouse is 70 by 130 feet. The plant has hot and cold water, and in addition to having the city water connections they have a well 300 feet deep which furnishes 2,000 gallons of water per minute, sufficient for all the uses of the plant. Hot and cold shower baths are provided for the men and every facility for the comfort of the 115 employees is looked after to the smallest detail. The factory has a capacity of twenty-four pots, and this can be increased with little additional expense to thirty-six pots." (*Oil and Gas*, p. 56)





In 1898 the North Side Planing Mill or Addington's Mill was established by D. M. Addington. Because of its success the "... commodious two-story brick structure" shown above was built in 1902. The plant was "... equipped with the most modern and scientific wood-making machinery for the making and turning of scrolls, wood decorations, pillars, stairways, fixtures and mill work of all kinds." (*Oil and Gas*, p. 55) During this time there was quite a building boom in Independence and the *Tribune* noted that "this present rush of building operations in this city is giving the mill all and more than it can handle." It further noted that "the specialties of this mill are 'what you want.' All you have to do is 'tell the man' and it will be turned out for you at the earliest possible moment and at satisfactory prices. On the other hand, if you don't know what you want, you will be promptly furnished with hundreds of designs and suggestions from which to make selections."

Mr. Addington's sons (William W. and Francis M.) were also in the business with him. All were "... energetic and substantial businessmen of the city and highly respected citizens." (*Oil and Gas*, p. 55) The *MG History* further noted that "with his characteristic energy, Mr. Addington ... has been the leading contracting carpenter in the city. His handiwork is seen on all sides, in the many artistic store fronts, and in many of the better class residences and public buildings, whose stately proportions reflect credit, alike, on builder and city." (p. 613)

The plant was located north of and behind Midland Glass (see p. 77) on north Ninth Street.

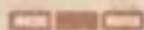


"In a prohibition state like Kansas there is naturally a large demand for soft drinks. To supply the local demand, as well as take care of the trade in the territory tributary to Independence, the Independence Bottling Works was established in 1876. The plant is located at the corner of Laurel Street and Waldschmidt (now Wald) Avenue and is under the management of Mr. H. H. Truman. From the first the products of the factory have enjoyed an enviable reputation and the business has grown to such an extent that removal to larger quarters will soon be a necessity. The factory is equipped with every appliance for carrying on the business with the minimum amount of labor and expense. All kinds of soda, mineral and selzer waters are bottled, as well as a number of popular summer drinks, a specialty being made of Dr. Pepper and Iron Brew. The reputation of the pure and wholesome beverages bottled by this concern is wide and the company does a large business. . ." (Times, p. 61)

## INDEPENDENCE POULTRY CLUB

### OFFICERS

E. E. BRANN, PRESIDENT  
 JOHN ELLIOTT, VICE PRES.  
 H. H. WHITE, VICE PRES.  
 MRS. JNO. ORENER, VICE PRES.  
 MRS. MARY MCCALL, VICE PRES.  
 O. W. REDDINS, VICE PRES.  
 F. J. PARKER, SUP'T.  
 E. W. COOK, JUDGE



1914



### DIRECTORS

W. E. MILLER  
 O. V. DOLLISON  
 J. C. SMITH  
 F. J. PARKER

H. L. WHITE, SECT. & TREAS.  
 W. H. HUNTER, ASST. SECT.

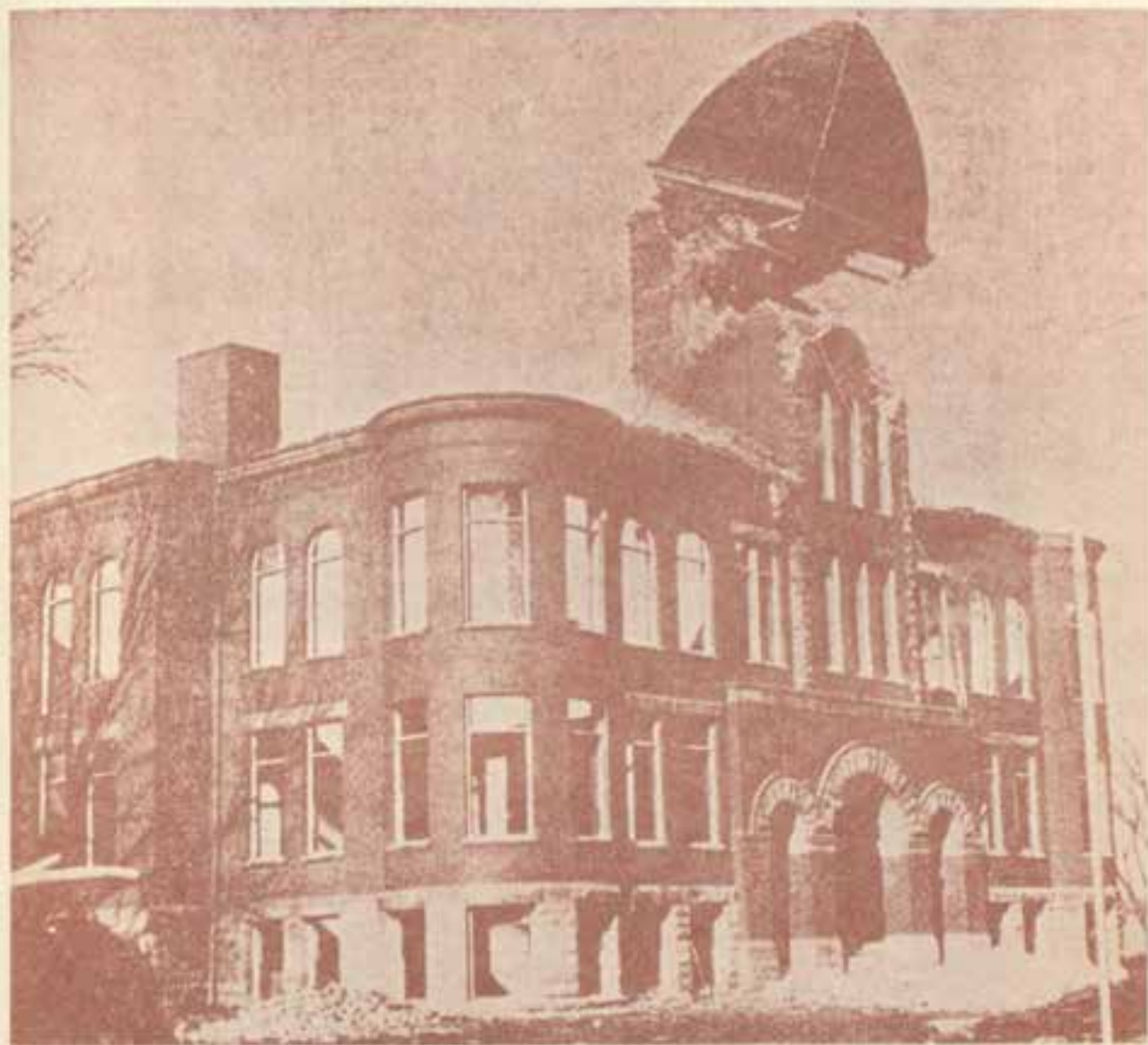
**SIXTH ANNUAL SHOW DEC. 1-5, 1914**  
**INDEPENDENCE, KANSAS**

The poultry business was at one time "big" business in Independence—3,300 chicks were hatched every day in four hatcheries during the peak years around 1930. However, "as the farmers do not produce enough chickens and eggs to supply the local market," an "Independence Poultry Club" was formally organized which sponsored an annual show "to stimulate interest in poultry." (*Tribune*, January 8, 1940, *Thirty Years Ago* column) Businessmen not associated with the poultry business helped promote this annual show as illustrated by the back of the business card from Gilmore Insurance Agency (shown above) advertising the 1914 show.

One of the most unusual hatcheries was the "Kansas Pheasantry" which was owned and operated by W. N. Haslett. His ad in the *Booster Train* brochure boasted of the "Pleasure and Profit in Raising Pheasants. The Game Bird of the future and the farmers friend, destroys more injurious insects than any other bird. Easily raised, pays better than chickens. A pair of pheasants is worth \$20 to \$100 yearly to a breeder. There is money in the Eggs, Feathers, Meat and Birds. EGGS SENT PREPAID ANYWHERE."



## Churches and Schools



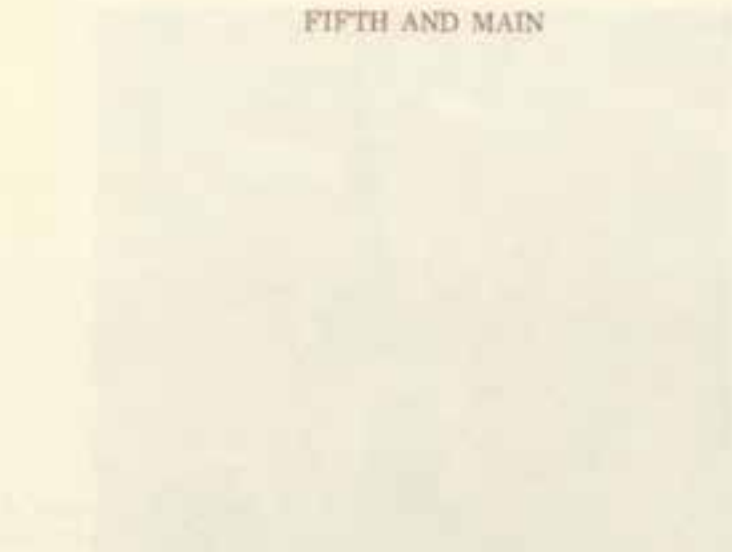
Preservation of our nation's past gives dimension to the present, direction to the future . . . the dreams of the future are built on the history of the past.

—Senator Patrick J. Leahy




PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH





The Presbyterian Church has had an interesting and progressive history in Independence. In 1872, they built the first brick church "in the Osage land" which still stands between Main and Myrtle on Fifth Street. The Church of Christ presently occupies the building which had its brick facing removed many years ago. The second Presbyterian Church (above) was constructed in 1904 at Fifth and Main or directly behind the first church. This \$20,000 building was at that time "... the largest brick church in this section of the country." About this time "... the discovery of oil in this area led to the oil boom and easy money came and went. . . Independence was credited with more millionaires per capita than any other place in the entire country. . . The rapid growth in the town's population due to the oil boom had been reflected in the growth of the church. . ." So in 1912 the building was extensively remodeled and expanded; "by raising the building on jacks the basement was greatly enlarged." The remodeling cost over \$20,000 and brought the valuation of the church to \$65,000. This church (below) was razed after the present church was constructed at Fifth and Maple in 1929 on the A. C. Stich lot (see p. 24).







METHODIST CHURCH



In 1869 when the Rev. C. R. Rice, presiding elder and organizer for the Methodist Church, rode his horse into Independence he found it to be "a city of stakes and a name." He preached "... in the unfinished log hotel which was afterward known as the Judson House (see p. 60) ... (and in Sam Van-Gundy's house which) consisted of two haystacks with poles laid across covered with hay. . . ." After two or three efforts were made, the church built their first parsonage in 1872. In 1876 they built their first brick church (above) which took seven years to complete. The church was remodeled in 1903 (below), and it served as their place of worship until "Sunday, September 28, 1913, when the farewell service was held . . . and by Thursday evening the tower, the last of the old building, fell." The present church, which included three additional Cullison lots, was built immediately thereafter. Both churches were located at Penn and Myrtle. (All quotes are taken from the *Dedication Booklet of the First Methodist Episcopal Church*, October 25, 1914.)

69



LUTHERAN CHURCH

70





## TENTH AND MAGNOLIA

In 1872, nine Lutheran immigrants (including Henry Baden—see p. 26 and John Baden—see p. 16) from Germany settled in Independence and established the "German Lutheran" Church. Two years later they bought land on the southwest corner of Tenth and Magnolia to construct a small frame church (above). The structure was 24 by 36 with the front 24 by 24 serving as the sanctuary and the rear 12 by 24 serving as the pastor's living quarters. When the pastor was married in 1886 and requested larger quarters, a parsonage was built to the west of the church and the church itself was enlarged to full size.

In 1894 lots were bought across the street (where the church is presently located) and a new church (below) was constructed in 1895. The old church was then used as the Lutheran School. There were "no modern conveniences in the new structure. . . . Two large stoves in the sanctuary provided heat, coal oil lamps were used for lighting, and a small reed organ provided music." To celebrate the tenth anniversary in 1905 a new pipe organ was purchased. It is ". . . interesting to note that this organ, actually a fine instrument, was not equipped with electricity . . . (so) various members of the congregation were called upon to pump the air by hand into the bellows. . . ."

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Lutheran Church was the fact that German was spoken in all the early church services as most of the congregation spoke German in their own homes. ". . . (T)he years of World War I were troublesome years for many Lutheran churches due to America's being at war with Germany. During this period it was resolved by the church members to discontinue the German services and the teaching of German in the Christian Day School."

The church was torn down in the summer of 1925 and the present church constructed shortly thereafter. (All quotes and information are taken from the *Lutheran Centennial Booklet* in 1972.)

71



72

CHRISTIAN CHURCH



ELEVENTH AND MAIN  
TENTH AND LAUREL

The Christian Church members decided in 1883 to build its own structure after having met in an early school house and the court house for the first thirteen years of its existence. The first church was built on the corner of Main and Eleventh by Harry B. Smith, "Elder A. Maynard . . . (and) . . . Bro. John Watts . . . literally built the first structure . . . with their own hands. . . It was dedicated by Elder C. W. Pool, who was the State Secretary of Kansas." A small congregation resulted in some financial barriers but ". . . they made up in spiritual power what they lacked in money power." By 1905 the church had an increased congregation and an enlarged building (above) being "taxed to the limit" so it was decided to construct a new building at Tenth and Laurel. In 1908 the new edifice (below) was completed and noted as ". . . the best arranged building in this part of the State. We have more for the money than most churches get when they build." The building cost \$30,000 and was patterned after the "Akron Plan" which ". . . was a new and big move in church architecture for Southeastern Kansas." This church was razed for the construction of the present church in 1963 at the same location. (All quotes are taken from a booklet published in 1931 entitled *Sixty-First Anniversary of Independence and the First Christian Church.*)



73



FOURTH WARD SCHOOL

74



SECOND WARD SCHOOL

75



FIRST WARD SCHOOL

POPLAR, BIRCH, FOURTH AND FIFTH  
THIRTEENTH AND MYRTLE  
FIFTH AND LAUREL

These "three large and well arranged buildings afford shelter for the 1,200 school children of the city and adjacent territory. . . People from abroad who may wish a good education for their children will find our city schools in advance of any other locality in southern Kansas. . . A teacher's meeting is maintained monthly, at which the newest methods are discussed and papers read on the subject of education and general literature. Professional representatives are invited in for addresses, and a deep interest is sustained at all times." (Carthage)

In 1872—when 71 schools were built in Montgomery County at a total cost of \$70,043—the Fourth Ward school house was built in the center of the block bordered by Poplar, Birch, Fourth, and Fifth Streets. This \$12,000 (some references boast it cost \$23,000) brick school building, the first brick one in Montgomery County, was built under the protest of some citizens because it was "too far from town." It was razed in 1902 under the new re-organization plan (see pp. 94-95).

Early in 1878 the four-room Second Ward School was constructed on the site where Lincoln School now stands. This brick building cost \$8,000 and the block to set it on was an additional \$515. Again, one of the city papers complained that this location was "too far out for little folks." (MG History, p. 98) This building survived until the first Lincoln School was constructed in 1902 (see pp. 94-95).

A bare majority of twelve voters approved \$10,000 in bonds in January, 1883, for the erection of a new school building in the First Ward on the site where Washington School now stands. This two-story seven-room brick building was completed by John P. Filkins within the year but was torn down twenty years later to construct the first Washington School (see pp. 95-95).

76



77

LINCOLN SCHOOL



WASHINGTON SCHOOL



THIRTEENTH AND MYRTLE  
FIFTH AND LAUREL

In 1900, the voters authorized an appropriation of \$40,000 in bonds for the construction of two new modern school buildings "... to take the place of the three existing buildings (see pp. 92-93), all of which were to be demolished. To destroy school houses as good as we then had seemed to many people like reckless extravagance and prodigality; but the practical condemnation of the Fourth Ward building, erected in the pioneer days, made some action necessary and the voters stood by the Board of Education and adopted the very radical proposition they submitted ... every ward in the city (4) giving a majority in their favor and the total being 167." (MG History, p. 108)

The bond election called for "... the construction of two modern up-to-date school buildings, each to have twelve school rooms, full-sized basement, closets, lavatories and all to be heated with steam and ventilated by the best methods. ... The new buildings, each 68 x 111 feet, will be known as 'Washington' and 'Lincoln' schools, built of pressed brick with stone basements and slate roof, finished with architectural beauty and ventilated by the fan system. Contracts have been let for their completion at \$43,760. The two buildings were awarded to Kingston and Co. of Joplin, Mo., at \$37,799. The fan system for steam heat and ventilation, to Lewis and Kitchen, of Kansas City for \$4,960, and the slate blackboards, on quality, to W. L. Bell and Co., at 32 cents per square foot—about \$1,300." (1901 Tribune) The brick work was done by Frank D. Brewster—the well known builder of the Carl-Leon Hotel (see p. 64), the Annex (see p. 65) and the large residences still standing at 317 North Tenth and 201 South Second. He constructed his own home at 419 West Locust (now the Achievement Home for Boys).

These two schools—along with Longfellow, Willard and McKinley (see pp. 96-97)—survived until 1939 when another major reorganization was planned. At that time it was argued that with the trend of declining enrollments fewer schools could serve the educational needs of the community. These five schools were razed in December, 1939, by Sherwood Construction.

78



LONGFELLOW SCHOOL

79



WILLARD SCHOOL

80



McKINLEY SCHOOL

SECOND AND BIRCH  
200 SOUTH SEVENTEENTH  
THIRTEENTH AND SYCAMORE

For the third time in less than ten years (1899—see p. 98; 1900—see pp. 94-95; and 1906), the voters of Independence gave their approval for bonds to construct new schools. The population increase during this time was reason enough to demand two more elementary schools—Longfellow and Willard. The \$55,000 schools were constructed by A. E. Todd—who built among many other significant structures in Independence, the Thibus home (see p. 20), the Guernsey home (see pp. 12-13), and the Jiencke home (see p. 10). The brick work was done by Harry B. Smith—the notable bricklayer for the Christian Church (see pp. 90-91), the Kansas Natural Gas Company (see p. 46), and Harry Sinclair's home at 215 South Fifth. The interior contracting was done by H. G. Ellis because "his plans were the most up-to-date in that they provide better light and where it is wanted and for heat and ventilation that ventilates and prevents overcrowding of hallways. His architecture and his work is all of the modern class." (Tribune, February 7, 1906)

There was some controversy over the location of these new schools. Longfellow was constructed on the Bodwell "farm" at Second and Birch. The Bodwell home was a plain looking "farmhouse"—now it is the stately-looking, "Kentucky-columned" home at 601 South Park. In effect, Longfellow replaced the Fourth Ward School razed in 1900 (see pp. 92-93). The Tribune remarked: "How fortunate it would have been if the Board (of Education) had retained the old Fourth Ward school lots which they sold, ten lots and the building for \$1,750, and now have to pay \$2,500 for a smaller plat five blocks farther out." (February 7, 1906)

Francis Willard was the other eight-room school built in 1906. It was located in the 200 block on South Seventeenth, with the playground on South Eighteenth. That land was purchased from the Powers and also provoked some controversy because of location. The Tribune offered: "Some of the Third Ward knockers don't like this (location), but they will have to take their medicine." (February 28, 1906)

The controversy over the building of the two schools and especially their location culminated in an attempt to litigate the issue. The Tribune editorialized: "The putting of two (schools) on the almost extreme south part—out to boom additions as some charge and leaving the extreme north without a school does not look as exact justice. The \$55,000 is sufficient to build three fairly good buildings, and it might be wise to do so, instead of inviting litigation, irritation and injury to the pupils." (June 13, 1906) As a consequence, five lots were purchased for \$2,200 from W. H. Wheeler at Thirteenth and Sycamore. On that "north" location, McKinley was constructed similar in style but larger than Willard or Longfellow.

All three schools were razed in the reorganization plan in 1939 (see p. 95). Willard "merged" with Lincoln and Longfellow "merged" with Washington. Large medallions signifying these combinations were installed in the construction of the new schools. Most of the McKinley students were transferred to Riley.





"Montgomery is one of the few counties in the state with a County High School, where every pupil in the county has tuition absolutely free of cost. It was built (in 1899) and furnished at a total cost of \$33,000, and is the finest in the State, and all paid." (1901 *Tribune*) The three-story school was contracted by Mr. Eret of Coffeyville. The dimensions of the substantial structure were 115 by 85 feet. The 1903 *Tribune* described some of its qualities by writing: "It is equipped with all necessary modern improvements and appliances, including a thorough system of ventilation, steam heat by direct and indirect radiation, abundance of light, water on each floor, natural gas for fuel and lights, sewerage and telephone connection. . . The assembly room is furnished with opera chairs and has a seating capacity of five hundred. The eight recitation rooms are seated with the best grade of oak single desks and are sufficient size to accomodate forty students each. The laboratory is one of the best in Southern Kansas. It has been equipped for the work in physics and chemistry at a cost of over twelve hundred dollars. . . A suitable room has been set apart for the library, which is rapidly becoming a prominent factor in the educational influence of the school. The library now contains about sixteen hundred volumes, more than a thousand of which have been carefully selected by the faculty because of their literary merit and their direct bearing upon the work of the school. . . A strong corps of instructors is essential to the growth and prosperity of any school. The members of the faculty of the Montgomery County High School have been selected because of their educational qualifications, their practical experience in common and high schools, and their special preparation and fitness for the work in which they are now engaged."

The building was later named Nees Hall after Samuel M. Nees, the first principal of the school. It was razed (see p. 83) in 1955 by Sherwood Construction. The original bell from the old tower is housed in a Bell Tower on the corner of Tenth and Locust. The tower was constructed in 1956 from the pressed brick and native sandstone of the old building. The location is now vacant and is used by the Junior High School for a physical education field.

## Miscellaneous



Preservation is a citizens' movement; its strength lies in the energy and determination of private citizens, private organizations and private businesses . . . Millions are maintaining or rehabilitating their properties and yet do not think of themselves as preservationists.

—James Biddle



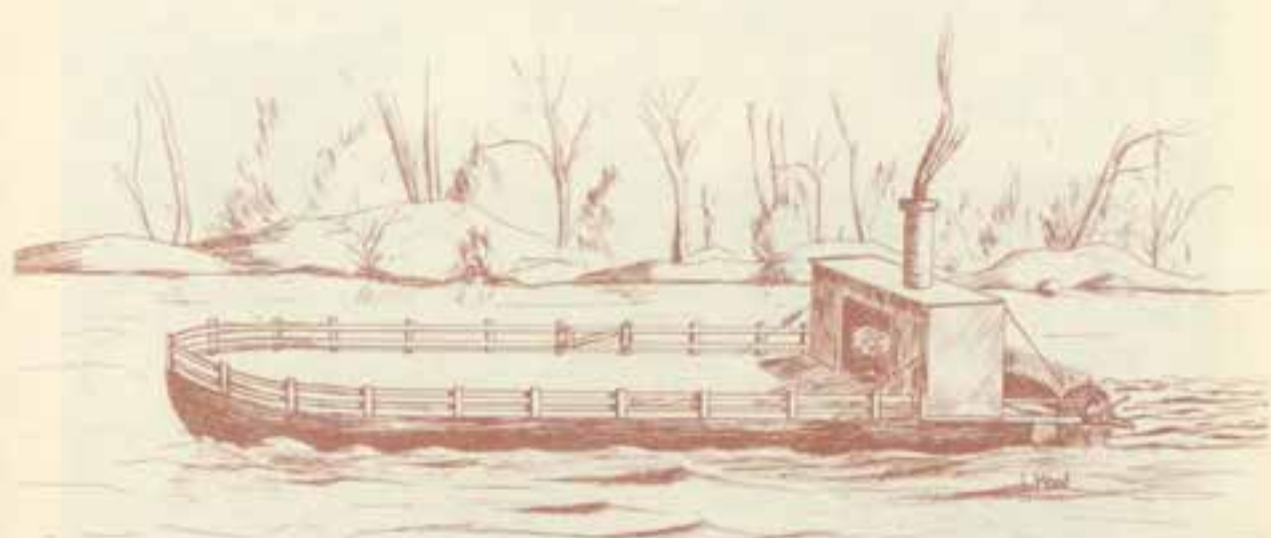


In February, 1893, J. D. Nickerson drilled the first successful gas well on the J. H. Brewster place (about three miles east of Independence.) The Independence Gas Company was formed as a result with C. L. (Cam) Bloom as president, J. D. Nickerson as vice president, and A. P. McBride as secretary-treasurer (pictured are Bloom, McBride and C. L. Kimble). "By September the natural gas fever was at the peak and pipe was shipped for mains on Main, Maple, Magnolia, Walnut, Poplar, Myrtle, Laurel, Chestnut, and Locust, from Third (Park), west to Eleventh Street. The prices for use of natural gas was to be: Per month — 1st stove, \$2.50; 2nd stove, \$2.00; 3rd stove, \$1.50; cook stove, \$2.00; lights, 35c; street lights, \$1.20, with the plumbing extra." (*Centennial*, p. 29)

After drilling other wells, eventually some "black, sticky stuff" was discovered to the initial disappointment of these gas men. It did not take them long, however, to realize the importance of oil and by 1903 the "gas companies" were "oil and gas companies." Prairie Oil and Gas Company (see p. 65) had thirty-two oil wells by November, 1903, which were pumping 10,000 barrels a month. The *Centennial* noted "we are getting used to oil gushers now." (p. 40)

By 1905, to contrast the oil and gas business, this description was offered "It is generally the 'wild-catter' seeking crude petroleum who uncovers natural gas . . . in sparsely settled districts where there is but small use for gas, (so) it is discarded as useless and (the) territory that has a 'gassy' reputation is shunned. . . . (T)he gas is 'caused off' as a nuisance, a hindrance. . . . Oil and gas men bear about the same relation to each other that cow men and sheep men do along the frontier. . . . the oil man ranking with the cow man. . . . Some oil men, tiring of the 'ride and tie' game, settle down and drift into the gas business, and occasionally a gas man has a 'wild-cat' kind of hankering and goes out after the real stuff. . . ." (*Oil and Gas*, pp. 38-39)





In 1893 the first successful gas well was drilled three miles east of Independence on the "Brewster Place," (see p. 100) and "Petroleum Park" was soon thereafter erected to commemorate it. This "... 50 acre park was a favorite spot for picnickers. ... A large exhibition hall stood on the grounds and fairs were held there. Adjacent to the park was a race track. ... Chugging up and down Drum Creek, south of the park, was the paddle wheel steam boat, the 'Nellie Hockett' which used to haul passengers into Independence." (Reporter, November 4, 1932) The steamer "perhaps fifteen feet wide and maybe thirty feet long, boarded passengers at Myrtle and First Streets here in Independence, delivered them to the "park" and then turned around at McTaggart's Dam (one mile further east). The roundtrip ticket price included dancing to violin music on the boat.

The "little steamer with a capacity of 150 passengers" was built in the spring of 1896 by Mr. J. N. Knock, a "popular woodworkman," and his two sons, Claud and Clyde. "These three gentlemen built 'Nellie Hockett' from the ground up, which is a true representation of their mechanical ability." They "... launched her on the waters of the Verdigris River, to give the citizens of Independence and surrounding country a new and pleasant system of transportation to and from the parks, fair grounds, and various other points along the banks of this picturesque stream. ... (When running an excursion to any point, (they make) it perfectly safe for those on board, as they are thoroughly familiar with the stream and look after the safety of their passengers."

The Carthage praised Mr. Knock by asserting: "Energy and public spirit are characteristic of western men, but in some we find the faculty much more developed than in others, and that is much better for the man and the community in which he resides. Mr. J. N. Knock ... is an exemplification of these traits, and to these essential qualities may be ascribed, more than to anything else, the present successful state of his affairs." (All quotes except where noted are taken from the Carthage.)

It is believed that the little steamship similar to the one pictured functioned about fifteen years before "the hull of the old boat was half sunk in the bank and the boys dived off it" while swimming down by the cement plant. (Centennial, p. 32) Eventually a flood washed it away.



Independence's first swimming pool — the Natatorium — was built in 1912 just south of the railroad tracks on Penn Avenue about where Crystal Ice is now located. Pictured in a similar pool of that era are "bathing beauties. . . daringly garbed for a big splash." The Nat, as it was more commonly known, was built by the Ladies Physical Betterment Society and assisted by the Commercial Club. In 1914 the ladies took over the operation of the Nat while the city participated " . . . by paying the city water department \$150 for the free water used in the pool." (Reporter, July 31, 1966) The city records on the Natatorium expense show:

YEAR	EXPENSE	INCOME
1914	\$150.00	
1915	150.00	
1916	157.58	
1917	505.04	\$794.76
1918	1,113.87	1,331.84
1919	1,262.88	1,314.22
1920	1,459.03	2,110.80
1921	3,882.84	2,219.75
1922	2,095.83	1,908.65
1923	2,176.06	2,033.80
1924	1,242.82	1,026.95
1925	665.58	400.00
1926	942.05	400.00
Net Loss		\$1,765.83

The Report of the Park Board to the City Commissioners concluded: "The Natatorium has only cost the taxpayers \$1,765.83 for the fourteen years it operated. During that time many a boys life was saved as the treacherous waters of the Verdigris River were taking one or two lives a year before the Natatorium was started." The old Nat, "antiquated and lacking patronage," was traded to A. G. Sherwood Construction for grading for the new Riverside Beach in the park, and the city put in a water and sewer line to the pool.





At one time Independence had a fine reputation for its tennis facilities, and there were at least seventeen courts in the city. There were fourteen city courts in the park where the six are now plus six directly behind them where the 4-H buildings are and two to the east of these about where the train now runs. What is now the Montgomery County Historical Museum was built in 1940 for a clubhouse and shower facility for these courts. The Country Club had two courts (see pp. 106-107). This picture illustrates the Independence Tennis Club in 1913 taken on a private court between the Baden home (see p. 16) and the Guernsey home (see pp. 12-13) which is in the background. This tennis club donated the first club house to the park in 1915 which was valued at \$700. It was noted in 1921 that the city collected \$1,600 insurance on the Club House. At this time all the courts were clay which required constant upkeep. For example, the 1926 Report of the Park Board to the City Commissioners listed \$2,154.22 as maintenance for the tennis courts. To put this in perspective, the expense for the swimming pool, the Natatorium (see p. 102), was \$942.05; salaries for park maintenance totaled \$1,460.00; zoo expense was \$130.39; "injury to horses" cost \$149.00; etc. The Kansas Open Tennis Tournaments were held in Independence during the 20's and 30's. Even the Big Eight Tournament was once held here. The facilities declined after World War II until the clay courts were mostly "dirt" courts when they were resurfaced with asphalt in the late 60's.

The pictured Independence Tennis Club includes the following people standing from the left: Mr. Baker, Letta Sickels, Mr. Small, Mrs. Small, Mrs. Pugh, Mrs. Frichot, Mr. Frichot, Fern Wiltze, and Mr. Hare; sitting on the bench from the left: "Jim" Hebrank, Mayme Baden, Mrs. Chandler, Mrs. Baker, Helen Dittner, Bob Sickels, Francis Small, Vertebel Thompson, Will Baden, and Zella Wiltze; sitting on ground from the left: Jim Sickels, Walter McVey and Mr. Chandler. (These names were incompletely listed as such on the back of the picture.)

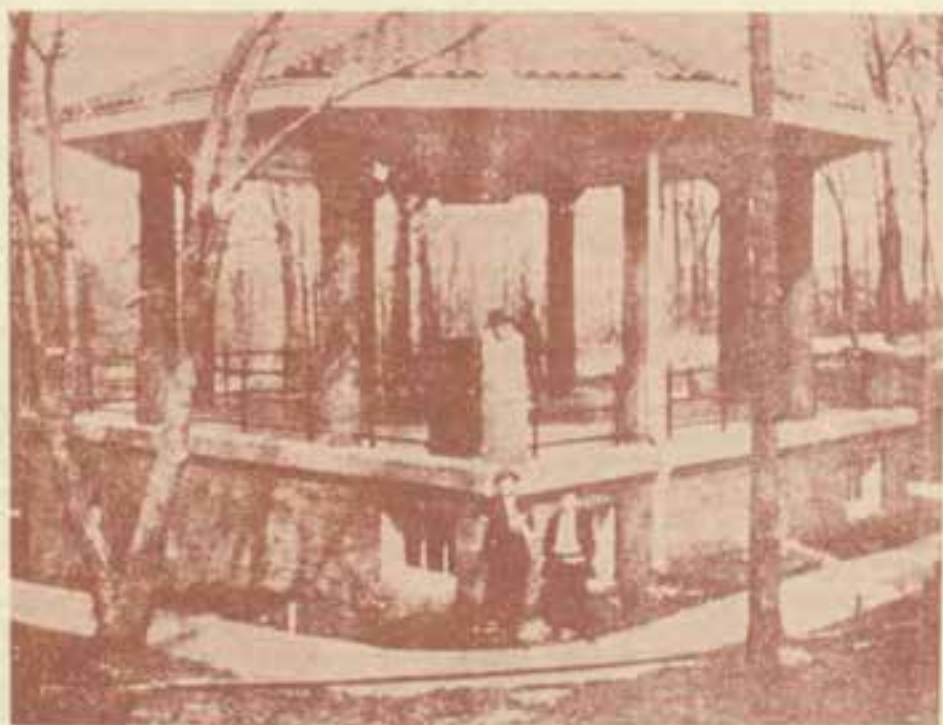


86



BAND AUDITORIUM

87



BAND SHELL

606 NORTH EIGHTH  
RIVERSIDE PARK

The "Cherryvale Kid Band" played at an Old Soldiers' Reunion at Rock Creek in 1891 and inspired the organizing of the "Young America Band" in Independence on January 1, 1892. "One of the band's first jobs was playing at the celebration of the drilling of the first oil well on the Brewster farm east of town (see p. 100). Mr. Brewster paid each member of the promising band with a dish of the ice cream he was selling at the festival. Each player assessed himself twenty-five cents a week for 'band expenses.' Every morning before school, at noon, and after school the boys met in the band room (the rear room of the building on the southwest corner of Sixth and Main Streets owned by E. P. Allen) for diligent practice, until they had finally mastered three tunes! Then came the first appearance, a trip to Coffeyville with the Odd Fellows in April, where they played their entire repertoire, 'Minstrel Quickstep' by Southwell (No. 26 in the red book), 'Marching Through Georgia,' and one little waltz. The striking uniforms worn by the band on that proud day consisted of derby hats! . . . In the summer of 1892 real uniforms were obtained. . . (Later) Harry F. Sinclair, a former member . . . financed the outfitting of the entire band."

When President William Howard Taft was the guest of honor at the Hutchinson State Fair, the band participated in a concert. "As the band marched in, director (Walter) McCray called out 'Play "Hail to the Chief" for the President'. Half the band misunderstood, and played 'Hail, Columbia.' The result was most unusual music, to which the President made his entrance!"

"When the youngsters of the Young America Band grew up and wanted a more dignified name, Independence Concert Band was selected. Later this name was changed to McCray's Band in honor of the band's director, and after he left, was changed to the present Mid Continent Band. . . The biggest trips the band ever took were those with the Booster Trains to New York and to Florida in the years 1916 and 1917. In 1918 the band marched down to play for every departing train-load of boys going off to the war, and welcomed every incoming train bringing them back." During World War II many of the younger members "were answering the call to the colors. . . (but). . . the band did its part for the war — playing for the veterans . . . (and) performing for the injured men at the Base Hospital. Weekly concerts continued throughout the war, and attendance was uniformly excellent."

The "Band Auditorium" was designed and built in 1904 by F. N. Bender, a notable architect and builder in Independence. Among structures still standing in Independence built by Bender includes: Bud Baden's home at 315 North Ninth; Duane Bechtle's home at 201 South Tenth; and Bill Etzold's home at 920 West Sycamore. The Band Auditorium was located between Eighth and Washington, north of where the King Apartments are now. It was razed in the 1950's after the new Band Shell replaced the old one (below) in Riverside Park. As this 1956 *Reporter* concluded, with what could be the same conclusion as today: ". . . for many, many years to come, as the sun gently settles in the West, and as the shadowns slowly turn to night in the amphi-theatre, the Mid-Continent Band will be doing its part in speaking the universal language of great music for the enjoyment and benefit of us all." (All quotes are taken from an article by Orville Roberts in the "Historical Edition" of the *Reporter*, September 23, 1956.)





## COLLEGE AVENUE AND BROOKSIDE DRIVE

C. M. Ralston recorded more "Firsts in Independence" (on a list first published in 1882) than any other early settler. He was, among other things, the first lawyer, the first county attorney to perform the duties of the office (but not the first one elected), the first editor, the first hardware man, and the first lumber dealer.\* He also had been a farmer, a real estate agent, and an abstractor who "... at times pursued more than one of these useful vocations at the same time." (MG History, p. 183)

About 1880 Mr. Ralston had a large house constructed of stone dug from a quarry on what was then his 160 acre farm three miles southwest of Independence. Stone from this same quarry was also used to construct a large barn east of that residence and to construct St. Andrew's Catholic Church. "Blocks of stone fifteen to eighteen inches thick were used for the residence located on a rolling hill overlooking the countryside. The house was planned with three bedrooms upstairs, a parlor, living room and dining room downstairs." (Reporter, June 4, 1961) A few years later when oil and gas was being dug for, Ralston "reported that in a well in his cellar 65 feet deep the gas kept bubbling up in such volume that it could be heard all through the house at night." (MG History, pp. 48-49) A. G. Sherwood bought the home for his family in 1901 and sold it and 70 acres of the land to the Independence Country Club in 1909. Shortly thereafter, the old stone house became the nucleus for the spacious Club House, the stone barn standing near the edge of today's lake was razed, and the pastures became a nine-hole golf course. Leon Sherwood Sr., a son of A. G. Sherwood, recalls that the first summer after they sold his boyhood home, he helped carry water to the men making the greens for the golf course.

The "19th Hole" shows some of the most prominent citizens in Independence as they relaxed on the golf course. These men shown here standing from left to right are: Wes Clark, Fritz Wilhelm, Charles McAdams, Pat Patterson, Bill Love, Ike Montgomery and Earl Sinclair; seated on the bench, Jim Robinson, Bill Gates and Harry Sinclair; front row, Harry Spoonhauer, Pat Curran, Pup Doggett, Jack Brown, Chuck Dougherty, Bernard Slattery, Jim McClelland, Chancey Foster and Fay Finney.

By 1914, the *Booster Train* was boasting, "One of the popular pleasure resorts is the Independence Country Club, which erected a beautiful Club House . . . (which) has wide, double deck verandas, screened and enclosed with glass for winter and summer banquets, and dancing. Also reception room, parlor, billiard room and kitchen. . . It is kept in fine condition and is enjoyed greatly by its large membership and their families." The Club House and grounds were valued at \$75,000 at that time. An annual O'Neil-Litchfield Childrens Picnic was initiated which covered "... this lawn with children, ice cream and everything good in plenty. All free." (Library Vertical Files)

One might have to use a little imagination to agree with the *Booster Train* pamphlet bragging that the "grounds were laid out for (a) fine Golf Course, Tennis Courts, with a lake for boating." Most golfers agreed that the old country club was a fine golf course — especially for one that was constructed in 1909, but the two tennis courts were ruined by frequent use as parking lots, and boating on the lake would be, at best, very limited.

The reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright architecture, stylish Club House, was razed in 1961 and a metal building erected to serve as the Club House. It is now the Administration Building for Independence Community Junior College.

\*The list also indicated that he had the first plastered house in Independence but there is ample evidence to contradict that notion. Several sources indicate that the home built by N. B. Bristol and Benjamine Armstrong at Sixth and Myrtle was the first plastered house. My most senior advisor and granddaughter of Bristol, 101 year old Fanny McAdams, confirms this. The home was her birthplace and is now located at 409 South Second.





## INTERURBAN LINES

As early as 1903 there was talk of "building of two interurban electric lines, (with) franchises having been granted to A. A. Anderson for a line from Independence to Cherryvale and Coffeyville and to William Nees for a line from Independence to Neodesha, Coffeyville and Caney. These lines have been surveyed and have a mileage of about sixty miles." (1903 *Tribune*) In July, 1907, the first interurban lines began running. It was "the Union Traction Company's trolley line, twenty-two miles in length, between Independence and Coffeyville. It is to be extended immediately from Independence twelve miles east to Cherryvale. Another line known as the Southwestern Traction Company is building to the northwest, and it is expected to have the two cement plants connected by a line through the city before the close of the year. Independence will thus soon become the center of a network of trolley lines, and in the construction of these lines through the city we shall get the nucleus of a city system which will be rapidly extended in every direction." (*Times*, p. 9)

This proposed line to LeHunt (to connect the two cement plants) was never completed, but by 1914 the interurban extended from Nowata, Oklahoma, thru Coffeyville to Independence, Cherryvale and Parsons. It was "modernly equipped and a big paying proposition." (*Booster Train*)

There was also electric car service within the city that was very popular and well used. An ad on a 1934 car boasted of "a payroll of \$113,279 for 130 employees and 533,075 passengers carried during that year." (*Reporter*, May 18, 1975) The electric cars were "retired" about 1950 when they gave way to conventional buses. As the bottom picture notes: "After 43 years of faithful service, let the young buses take over."





The Independence Commercial Club chartered a train in 1916 (the "Booster Train") which "... covered 3,500 miles through Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky and Washington, D. C.," with the purpose of "selling" southeast Kansas along the way. (Centennial, pp. 53-54) Many of the "city dads" and "big shots" were on the train, along with samples, souvenirs and exhibits (for example, one of Uhrich's patented revolving doors was installed in one of the exhibit cars). Pamphlets were published to distribute to anyone interested. Its front page boasted: "Sunny Southern Kansas invites inspection by home seekers, those looking for investments, for establishing industrial plants, or any legitimate business. This little booklet is only a bird-eye's view of one of the prettiest towns with elegant churches, unexcelled schools, substantial business houses, good homes, paved streets, electric and gas lights, gas for fuel and pure water, railways interurbans and city car lines, first-class hospitals, county buildings and opportunities for YOU. There were great opportunities when the pioneers elbowed the Osage Indians off the reservation; greater opportunities when natural gas and oil were developed, but greater ones NOW."

