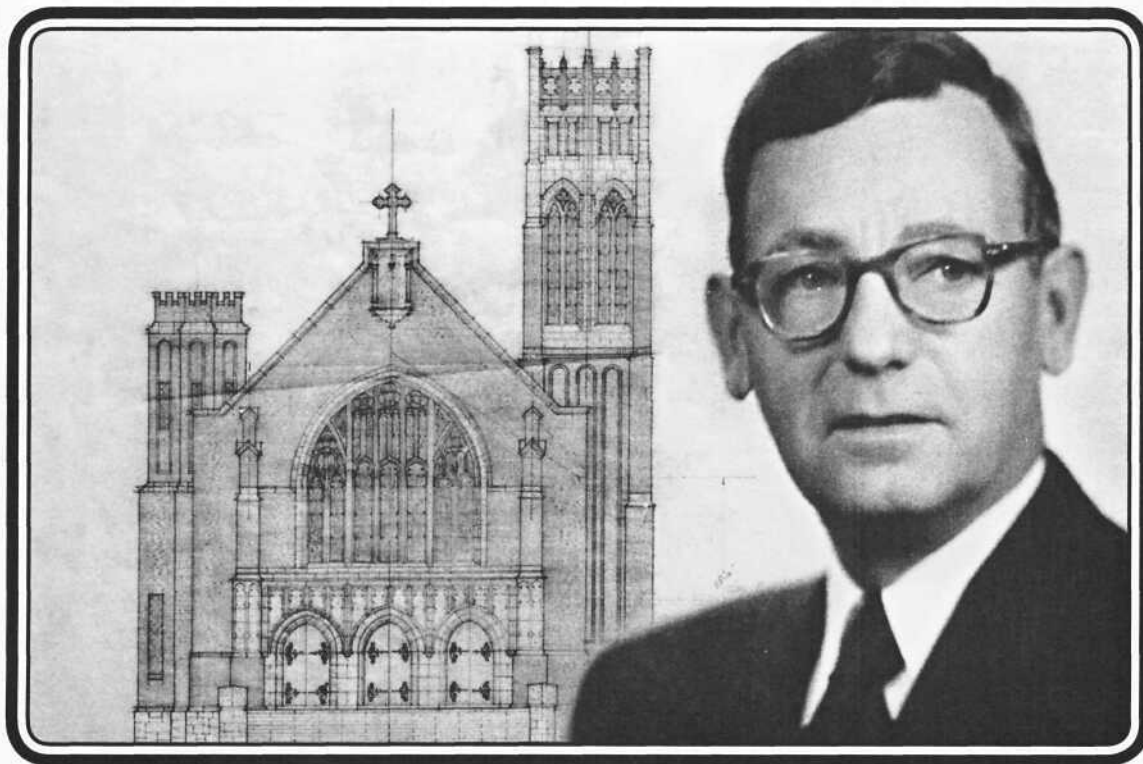


The JOURNAL



Designer of Landmarks

E. Chester Nelson, Architect



Fort Smith's Admirals:

Eberle and Cooke



Hangin' Times in Fort Smith



Man on the Street:

Images from Garrison Avenue's mystery photographer

Vol. 33, No. 1, April 2009



MISSION: The mission of the Fort Smith Historical Society, Inc., founded in 1977, is to publish *The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society* and through *The Journal* and other activities to locate, identify and collect historical data; to publish source materials and historical articles, all pertaining to the City of Fort Smith and the immediate surrounding area. Preservation of Fort Smith history is our primary mission and to this end, we always welcome the loan of Fort Smith historical material and will return it promptly.

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AMELIA WHITAKER MARTIN

Journal Editor & Co-Founder 1977-2004

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The JOURNAL

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COVER: E. Chester Nelson and a sketch of Dodson Avenue Methodist Church, now Goddard United Methodist Church
 Photos courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weillbaecher.

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Mission, Values And Vision Statement

This mission, values, and vision statement provides a framework for the development of a five-year Strategic Plan, setting the direction and providing a focus for developing action plans and prioritizing the work of the Fort Smith Historical Society.

- Our mission statement describes our core purpose — why we exist, what we do, and why we do it.
- Our values are closely held beliefs that guide our individual and group behaviors and direct our institutional decision making.
- Our vision describes our future aspirations for this organization.

MISSION

The mission of this organization is to publish a historical journal pertaining to the city of Fort Smith and surrounding area. The style of the publication is *The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society*. The Society shall collect documents, photographs, and papers. The Society shall collect audio and visual interviews for the purpose of making public history presentations. The FSHS is a nonprofit organization dedicated to community service.

VALUES

- **Documentary Accuracy:** We seek always to maintain the highest journalistic standards in all of our published works.
- **Historical Inclusiveness:** Attempting to present the history of our city and region in a way that is representative of all groups, cultures and lifestyles within our community and, to the extent possible, also represents conflicting perspectives on the impact and significance of those historical events.
- **Collaborative Partnership:** Working closely with other complementary organizations and interest groups to create cooperative, synergistic relationships and to maximize our mutual effectiveness.
- **Accessibility:** Making every effort to make all of our services and programs available to everyone within our community, regardless of status, disability or financial means.

VISION

— *To be recognized as the enduring voice of Fort Smith history* —

Elaborated vision ...

To be recognized as the enduring voice of Fort Smith history and as a strong advocate for the preservation of that history through our publications, our partnerships and our related services.

The Fort Smith Historical Society will be:

- Recognized as the most authoritative source by persons and organizations seeking information on the history of Fort Smith and the surrounding area.
- At the forefront of efforts to build and maintain a lasting appreciation of Fort Smith's rich history.
- Routinely involved in helping to create powerful partnerships with like-minded civic organizations.
- Known for its expertise in organizing and presenting history in a manner which empowers people and transforms lives.
- Involved in actively engaging a variety of communities in the delivery of relevant history programs and services.

News & Opportunities

2009 Frontier Achievement Awards

Thursday, April 16, 6:30 p.m.
River Front Park Events Building

The 28th annual Frontier Achievement Awards will be presented by the Secondary Social Studies Educators of Fort Smith, recognizing various individuals, businesses, or industries that have made an outstanding contribution to the historical development of our city and/or helped to preserve the heritage of Fort Smith. The public is invited.

Fort Smith Historical Society 2009 Annual General Membership Meeting

Thursday, April 16, 7:30 p.m.
River Front Park Events Building

The annual general membership meeting will follow the Frontier Achievement Awards Reception, which begins at 6:30 p.m. Officers and board members will be elected at this time. Please try to attend both functions.

Be A Part Of Fort Smith History

The Fort Smith Museum of History is proud to announce a new docent/volunteer program to begin with an Orientation Day set on Thursday, April 16. For early risers, a morning meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m.; for those who would rather come a little later, an afternoon meeting will begin at 1 p.m. These meetings will be held at the museum, 320 Rogers Ave., Fort Smith, in the large meeting room on the second floor.

Each meeting will detail volunteer opportunities in all areas of the museum, including guiding groups and individuals, helping with research, working in the soda fountain, and office and entertainment opportunities. For more information, call FSMH at 783-7841, or just

come at 10:30 a.m. or 1 p.m. on April 16. Come and be an important part of Fort Smith history!

12th Annual Tales Of The Crypt

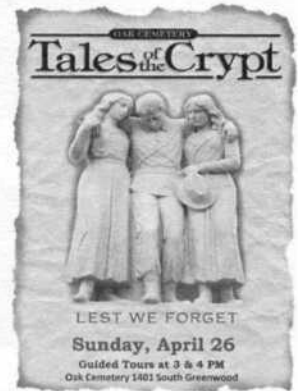
Sunday, April 26, 3 to 5 p.m.

Oak Cemetery

- Historical and educational guided tours.
- Portrayals of historic figures buried at Oak Cemetery.

- Event for all ages!
- Admission is free!

Oak Cemetery
1401 South Greenwood Avenue
Call (479) 784-1006
www.fortsmithparks.com





GRAHAM REINHARD



Photos courtesy of Shirley Perez
CAROLINE DELAY

DAR Essay Winners Announced

The Fort Smith Chapter of the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution annually recognizes area high school seniors chosen by their teachers as outstanding good citizens. These students participated in the DAR essay contest under the supervision of their teachers. This year's essays were entitled "Our

American Heritage and Our Responsibility for Preserving It." The local chapter recognized essay winners on February 5, 2009, from four local high schools: Colton Mason of Alma; Mariah Morris of Greenwood; Graham Reinhard of Southside High School in Fort Smith; and Caroline DeLay of Northside High School in Fort Smith. Reinhard was the first-place winner, and his essay was sent on to the state competition, with winners to be announced in March. State winners will go on to National, where scholarships are awarded to winners.



Photos by Dennis Siler

DR. TOM DE BLACK of Arkansas Tech University, from left, Jeannie Whayne of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, Ken Barnes of the University of Central Arkansas, and Billy Higgins of the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith are shown during a roundtable discussion.

Murder, Scandal, And Politics: The Clayton Family In Post Civil War Arkansas

**Historic Symposium Held
At University Of Arkansas-Fort Smith
By Dennis Siler**

A corrupt election, racially motivated ballot-stealing, and a 120-year-old unsolved murder case were some of the topics discussed at a January 31, 2009, event in the Smith-Pendergraft Campus Center at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith.

The UAFS College of Humanities and Social Sciences joined forces with the W.H.H. Clayton House Museum and the Fort Smith Heritage Foundation to bring Arkansas historians together to discuss a significant period in the history of Arkansas.

The symposium was organized by two graduates of the UAFS Historical Interpretation program: Martha Siler of Van Buren, who graduated in 2007, and Leita

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Spears of Waldron, a 2008 graduate.

The impetus for the event was the anniversary of the murder of John Clayton, brother of former Arkansas Gov. Powell Clayton and the twin of William Henry Harrison Clayton, prosecutor and U.S. district



ANN CLAYTON RYBURN, from left, *Verdie Triplett and Met Jones are shown at the symposium.*

attorney to Judge Isaac Parker. John Clayton's murder took place while he was investigating voter fraud in Conway County in Arkansas after an armed gang forcibly took a box of ballots cast in a predominantly African-American district in Plummerville.

Presenters at the symposium included Dr. Jeannie Whayne from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, Dr. Ken Barnes from the University of Central Arkansas, Dr. Tom De Black from Arkansas Tech University and UAFS' Billy Higgins and Tom Wing.

While the symposium discussed historical events, the symposium was also historical in itself. Descendants of John Clayton and descendants of the Brewer family of Plummerville, whose voting rights Clayton died to protect, were brought together in a reception at the W.H.H. Clayton House in the Belle Grove Historic District of Fort Smith. All descendants participating in the reception later attended the symposium.

Symposium presentations covered Gov. Powell Clayton's reconstruction administration, the events surrounding John Clayton's murder and William Henry Harrison Clayton's tenure as prosecutor in Fort Smith. A roundtable question-and-answer session moderated by Tom De Black and a luncheon with readings of period speeches and letters rounded out the day. Symposium committee chair Martha Siler was pleased that the event tied together Fort Smith history with little-known significant events in the history of the state and region.

"Top scholars in Arkansas history came here from across the state," Siler said, "and, for the first time, met to discuss these fascinating events in a public forum." Co-chair Leita Spears said she had received overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees, some of which included suggestions that the symposium become an annual event.

Memorial and Commemorative Gifts Important to the Historical Society

When making a gift to honor or remember someone important to you, please think of the Fort Smith Historical Society. Gifts may be made in memory of a loved one, or in honor of a birthday, graduation, anniversary or other event.

Memorial gifts are a beautiful and lasting way to honor those who are dear to us. All memorials and commemorative gifts are acknowledged with a letter to both the donor and the family of the person honored.

Here's another idea: If you particularly enjoyed a feature in *The Journal*, show your appreciation for a subject you found interesting by making a contribution in honor of the writer.

A contribution to the Fort Smith Historical Society supports the publication of *The Journal*, which is placed in libraries and schools, and becomes an important part of the historical record of our region. *The Journal* is indexed by the Boreham Library at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith, with the index carried on its website. UAFS is also developing a site with complete, downloadable copies of *The Journal*, accessed on the UAFS website.

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Designer of Landmarks

*E. Chester Nelson was architect of several buildings
now listed on the National Register of Historic Places*

By Brenda Andrews

When E. Chester Nelson first walked down Garrison Avenue in 1919, he had second thoughts about his decision to move to Fort Smith. At the young age of twenty-five, Nelson was an intelligent and handsome young man with round spectacles and an enthusiastic desire to pursue his profession as an architect. Many years later, he would confide to his daughter, Sharon Nelson-Weilbaeher, that his first assessment of Fort Smith made him wonder, "Oh Lord — what have I done?" Elmer Chester Nelson may have initially experienced trepidation about moving to Fort Smith, but that concern quickly evaporated as his career flourished and he became one of Fort Smith's most successful and well-known architects.

Nelson was born on July 26, 1894, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Carl Oskar Nelson and Bessie Peterson-Nelson. Carl Nelson (originally Carl Oskar Nilsson) had emigrated from Domnarvet, Sweden, in 1887 and became a U.S. citizen in 1888. After becoming a U.S. citizen, he anglicized his name to Carl Oscar Nelson. In 1895, when E. Chester Nelson was a toddler, he moved with his family to Birmingham, Alabama, where he remained until he was a young adult.

Nelson attended Alabama Polytechnic Institute — now known as Auburn University — in 1913 through 1915 and obtained his architectural education. After completing his education, he worked in Birmingham as a draftsman at Miller and Martin. He also worked at the well-known

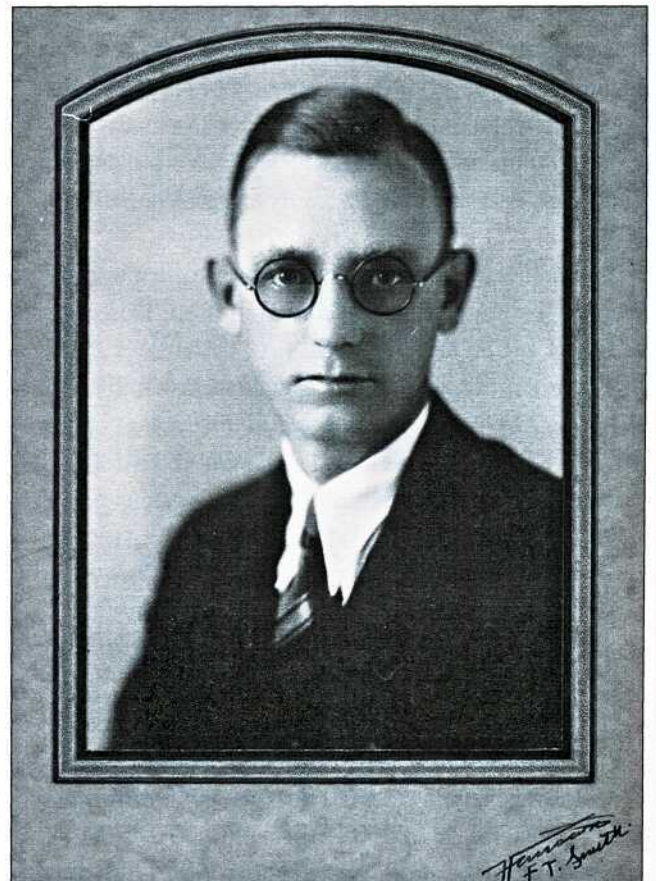
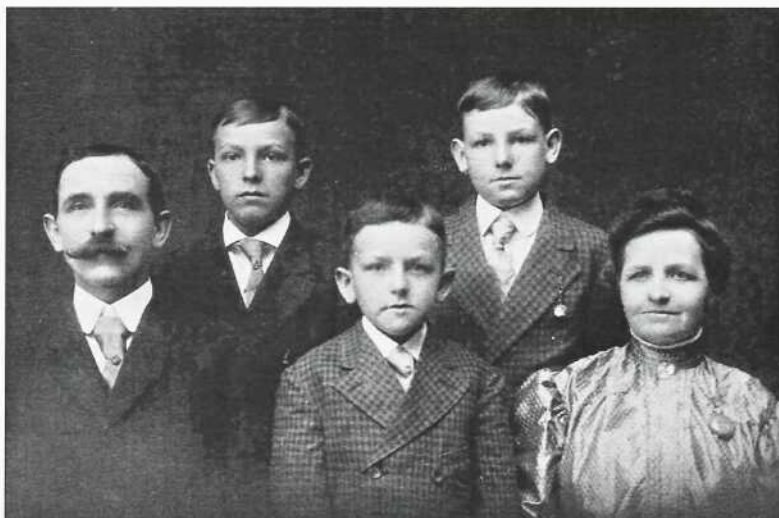


Photo courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaeher

E. CHESTER NELSON is shown in Fort Smith, probably shortly after arriving in 1919.

Montgomery firm of Frederick Ausfeld, who designed many significant buildings in the South.

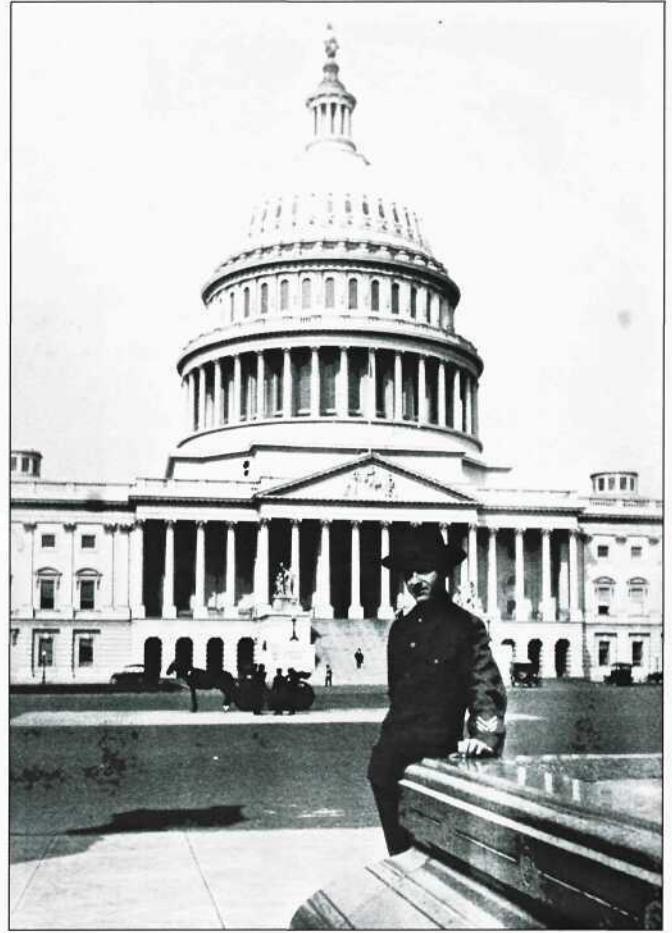
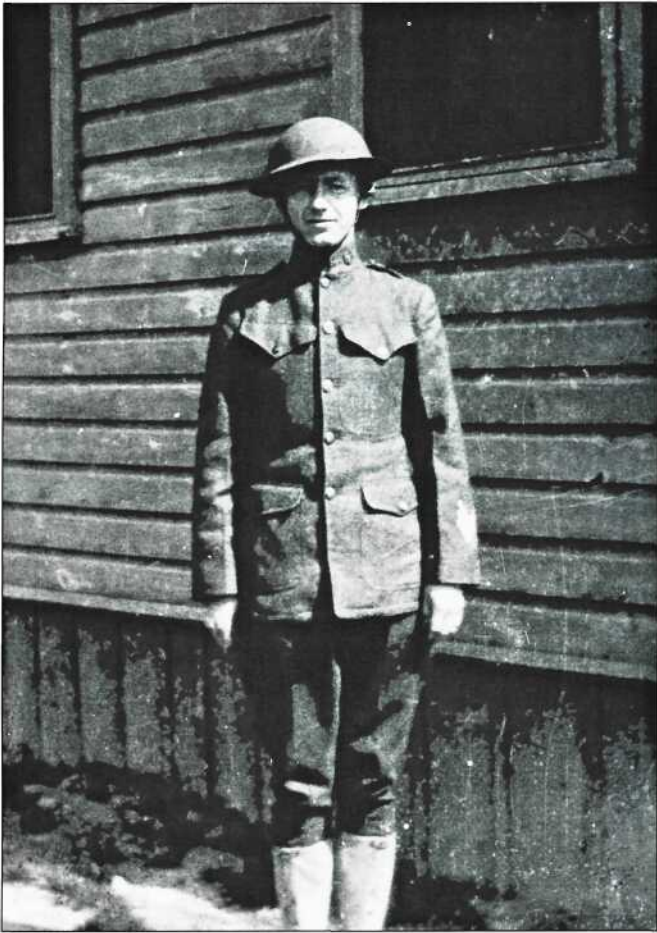
In 1917, while Nelson was busy pursuing his career as an architect, Europe was in turmoil as



Photos courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaecher
(TOP LEFT) E. Chester Nelson's
 parents, Carl and Bessie, are shown in
 Birmingham, Alabama.

(TOP RIGHT) The Nelson family
 — Carl Oscar Nelson, from left, Carl
 Edwin Nelson, Oscar Alvin Nelson,
 Elmer Chester Nelson and Bessie
 Peterson-Nelson — is shown in
 Birmingham, Alabama.

(LEFT) E. Chester Nelson in
 Birmingham, Alabama.



Photos courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaeher

E. CHESTER NELSON served in the U.S. Army during World War I from September 1917 to May 1919. He is shown (left) outside his barracks in Newport News, Virginia, and in Washington, D.C. (right).

World War I reached its peak. Just a few months after the United States declared war against Germany, Nelson was drafted into the military at the age of twenty-three. Advancing to the rank of corporal, Nelson was sent to an Army supply depot in Newport News, Virginia, a port of embarkation during World War I. He was assigned the duty of outfitting troops and transport ships going overseas. Years later, Nelson recalled that one of the highlights of his time at Newport News was working with Joseph T. Swanson, who was the father of silent-screen actress Gloria Swanson.

After World War I, Nelson returned to Montgomery in 1919 and resumed his work as a draftsman at Frederick Ausfeld. A few months later, he received a letter from Joseph J. Haralson, a friend from his college days at Alabama Polytechnic Institute, asking him to consider joining him as co-owner of an architectural firm in Fort Smith. Haralson was working as an architect



E. CHESTER NELSON is shown in a photo taken in Montgomery, Alabama, around 1916 or 1917, when he was about 22 or 23 years old and working as a draftsman for Frederick Ausfeld, architect.

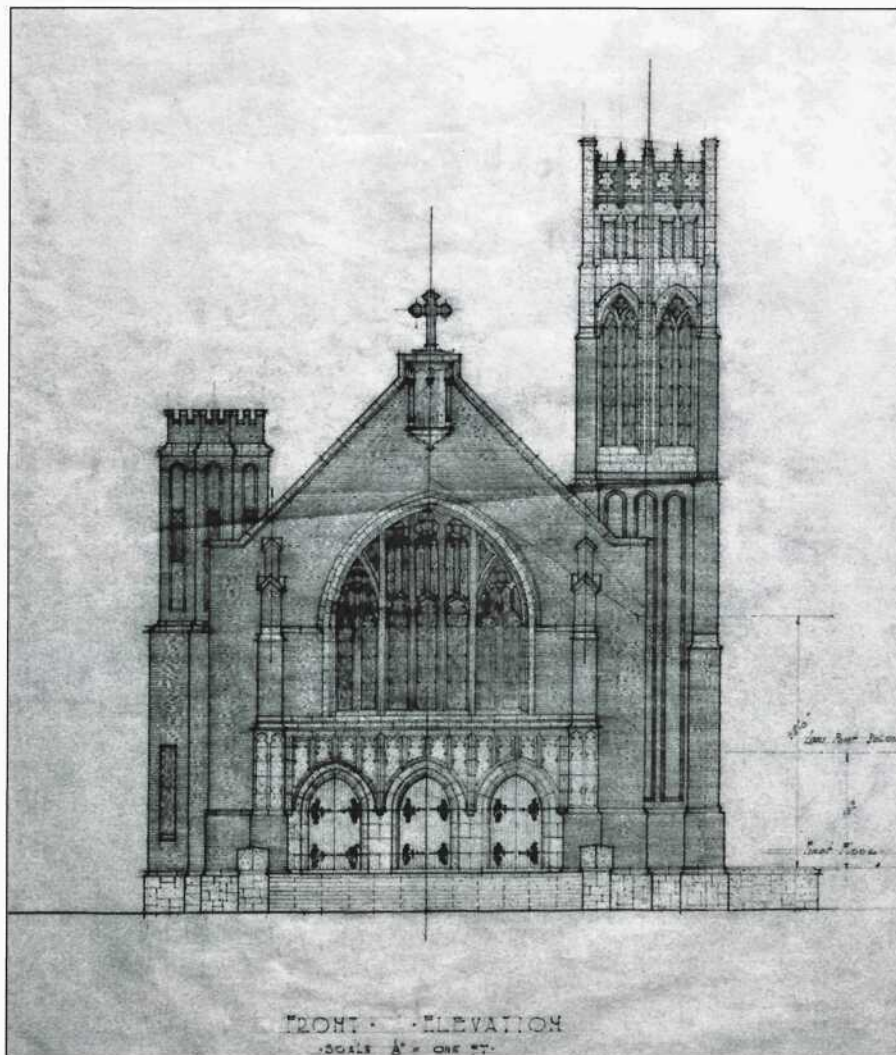


Image courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaecher

DODSON AVENUE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1931. (Now *Goddard United Methodist Church*).

for Alonzo Klingensmith, a well-known architect in Fort Smith who was retiring and wanted to sell his business. The two young architects acquired Klingensmith's firm and established the architectural firm of Haralson and Nelson in November 1919. Their office was located in the Merchants Bank Building at 621-623 Garrison Avenue.

During their partnership, the talented firm designed dozens of plans for government buildings, churches, and schools. Haralson and Nelson earned an excellent reputation for their talent in architectural design and careful project management. A biography of the young architects in a 1922 edition of the Dallas T. Herndon's *Centennial History of Arkansas* states that Haralson and Nelson "have a thorough understanding of all of the scientific phases as well as the practical

features which underlie their work, and as the years go by their developing powers are bringing them more and more into prominence."

In addition to their architectural and management skills, the two men's contrasting personality styles complemented the partnership. Joe, as Haralson preferred to be called, was outgoing and gregarious, while Nelson was quiet and dignified. Adding to Nelson's air of dignity was his well-known sartorial elegance. He was seldom seen without a coat and tie — a trait that he so fastidiously maintained that he was good-naturedly teased that he went to bed wearing both.

Haralson and Nelson designed buildings that met their clients' needs but with enduring architectural designs and materials. One example is the Dodson Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church,



Images courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaeher

(ABOVE) MEN'S GYM AND FIELD HOUSE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS IN FAYETTEVILLE, 1944. E. Chester Nelson, AIA architect.

(BELOW) JOHNSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN CLARKSVILLE, 1938. E. Chester Nelson, architect.

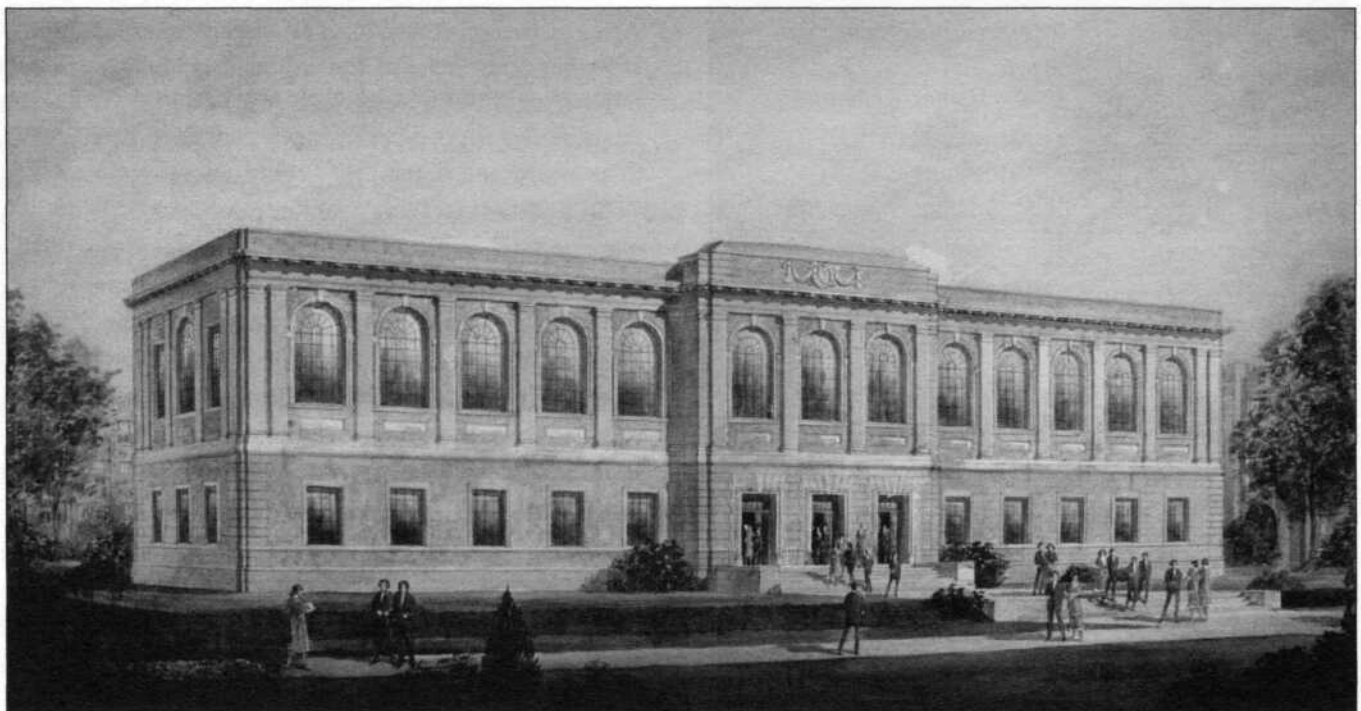




Image courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaecher

ROSELAWN CEMETERY IN FORT SMITH, artist's rendering, 1930. Haralson & Nelson, architects.

now known as Goddard United Methodist Church. Constructed in 1930, the Late Gothic Revival architectural style provides a strong statement of faith and architectural beauty that remains as relevant today as when it was first built. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2006, the nomination written by Fort Smith architect Galen Hunter states that the “design and intricate details created on paper by Haralson and Nelson were faithfully conveyed through the brick, stone, stained glass, and other durable materials they specified for the project.”

Among the many other important buildings and sites designed by the Haralson and Nelson firm during the 1920s and 1930s are: Logan County

Courthouse in Booneville (their predecessor, Klingensmith, designed the Logan County Courthouse in Paris), Masonic Temple in Fort Smith, Rose Lawn Park Cemetery, Ninth Street Baptist Church, Johnson County Courthouse, and Vol Walker Hall and the Old Men’s Gymnasium at the University of Arkansas — both listed in the National Register of Historic Places. In 1931, Nelson received national recognition for his design of Fentress Mortuary in Fort Smith.

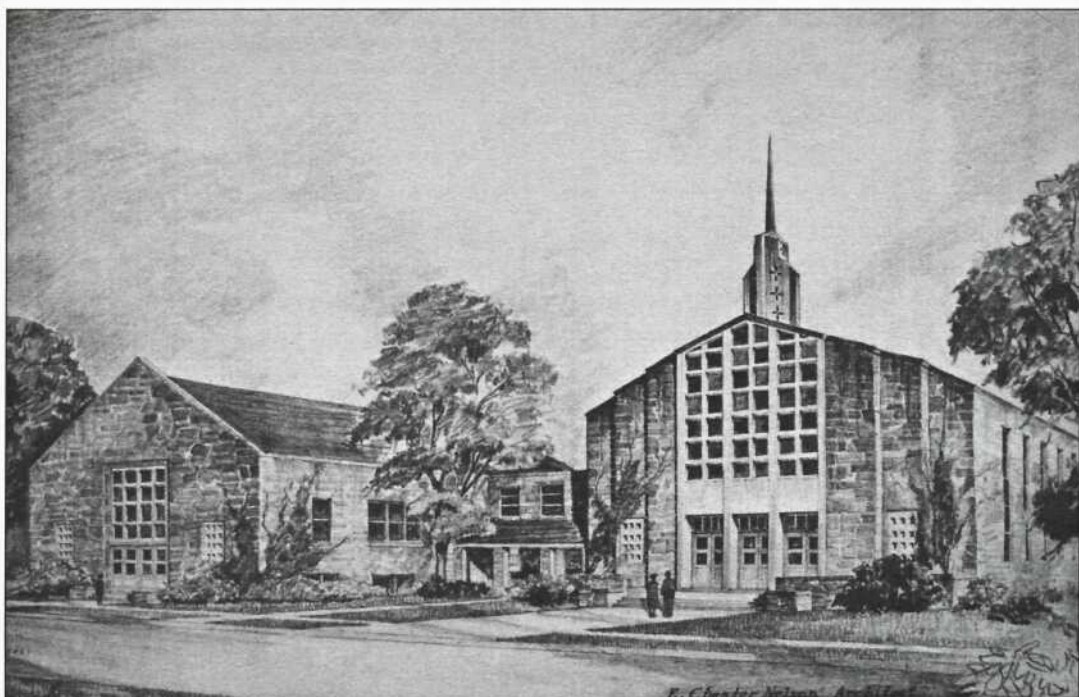
The successful firm continued for sixteen years until 1935 when the partnership was dissolved. Haralson became a partner in the Haralson and Mott firm, and Nelson continued practicing architecture alone under the firm name of E. Chester Nelson.



Images courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaecher

(ABOVE) WOMEN'S 4-H HOUSE, DORM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS IN FAYETTEVILLE. *E. Chester Nelson, AIA architect.*

(BELOW) GRAND AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH IN FORT SMITH, 1946. *E. Chester Nelson, architect.*





Photos courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaecher

(ABOVE) Minnie and E. Chester Nelson stand in front of their first home at 504 Lecta Avenue in Fort Smith.

(RIGHT) Minnie Nelson poses with daughters Sharon, left, and Sylvia.

Nelson's most important partnership was with his wife, Minnie Laser-Nelson, whom he met eight years after coming to Fort Smith. Laser had moved from Clarksville to Fort Smith to take a teaching position at Trusty Elementary School. The two met at Miss Clark's boarding house at North Twelfth and I streets. Laser lived at the boarding house, and Nelson, who lived a few blocks away, dined there regularly. A shy Nelson was immediately attracted to the vivacious and petite, dark-haired beauty. One evening Nelson saw Laser walking home as he drove down a street. Building up his courage, he followed her for a moment before asking her if he could give her a ride. The couple dated for three years before marrying on September 11, 1930. The Nelsons had two children, Sylvia Nelson-Bass and Sharon Nelson-Weilbaecher. Although the young



couple differed in personality, their marriage was a complete success that lasted 40 years. The Nelsons purchased their first home in 1936 at 504 Lecta Avenue. Still in existence, the house is located in the May-Lecta-Sweet neighborhood. During the two years that the Nelsons lived on Lecta Avenue, Mrs. Nelson operated a kindergarten. In 1939, the Nelsons moved to a two-story stucco house at 1501 North 37th Street.

Throughout their marriage, the Nelsons were actively involved in the community and in church activities. Nelson was a 32nd degree Mason and participated in numerous civic organizations, including Rotary Club, Scottish Rite Club, and the Fort Smith Engineers Club. Mrs. Nelson volunteered many hours with the Sparks Woman's Board. The family attended First Presbyterian Church where Nelson was an elder and Mrs. Nelson was honored as the church Woman of the Year in 1988, one year before her death. In his spare time, Nelson enjoyed golfing and fishing with his favorite fishing partner, Lee Davis, who was a local contractor. Above all, Nelson was a family man who was proud of his family and cherished spending time with them. His younger daughter, Sharon Nelson-Weilbaeher, says her



MINNIE AND E. CHESTER NELSON are shown at an American Institute of Architects Conference, probably in the 1950s.



Photos courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaeher

MINNIE NELSON SITS with her kindergarten students on the porch of her home at 504 Lecta Avenue in spring 1935. During the Depression, Minnie operated a kindergarten class at the Nelson home.



Photos courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaeher

E. CHESTER NELSON AND MINNIE NELSON, photos likely taken in the 1950s.

father would have “moved heaven and earth” to help his family. Nelson was also proud of the buildings he designed and enjoyed showing them to others. Nelson-Weilbaeher remembers her parents frequently inviting soldiers from Camp Chaffee to their home for Sunday lunch. “After lunch,” she says, “my father would drive us all to see the progress of whatever building he had recently designed.”

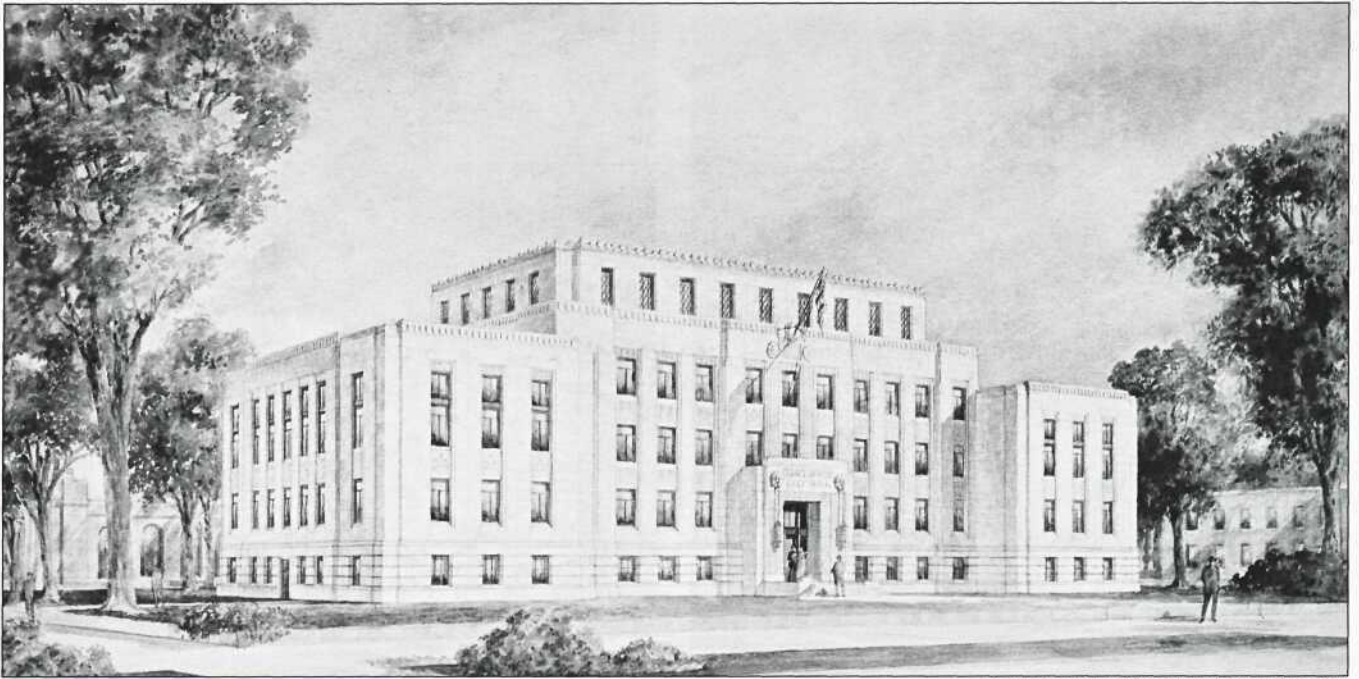
From 1935 to 1957, Nelson amassed an impressive portfolio of buildings he had designed for his numerous clients. His buildings reflected his talent in combining function and form for the many commercial, government, and hospital buildings, schools, and private residences he designed. Nelson set high standards for his designs and workmanship. The architectural renderings that Nelson presented to his clients were also indicative of his attention to detail. Many of

“After lunch (on Sundays), my father would drive us all to see the progress of whatever building he had recently designed.”

Sharon Nelson-Weilbaeher, daughter
of E. Chester and Minnie Nelson

Nelson’s renderings were drawn by Schell Lewis, a 20th century architectural delineator. Lewis was recognized as one of the finest illustrators and was hired by many leading firms.

Nelson designed numerous government buildings during his career, including the Sebastian County Courthouse in 1935 and the Madison County Courthouse in 1939. The buildings reflect the modern and cubical symmetry of the Art Deco



Images courtesy of Sharon Nelson Weilbaecher

(ABOVE) SEBASTIAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN FORT SMITH, 1935. *E. Chester Nelson*, architect.

(BELOW) HOWARD SCHOOL IN FORT SMITH, 1948. *E. Chester Nelson*, architect.



style, which was a popular architectural style from 1925 to 1939. Both courthouses are listed in the National Register of Historic Places for their architectural significance. In the late 1940s, he designed the Creekmore Park bathhouses and swimming pools.

Nelson was well known for his extensive experience in designing hospitals and schools and designed many in the area during the 1950s. A partial list of those buildings and the year they were completed includes Howard Elementary

School, 1950; Sunnymede Elementary, 1951; University of Arkansas Engineering Hall, 1951 addition; Springdale Memorial Hospital, 1952; Turner Memorial Hospital in Ozark, 1952; Sparks Memorial Hospital, 1953; Yell County Hospital in Danville, 1955; and Pike County Memorial Hospital in Murfreesboro.

In 1957, Nelson's nephew, Robert S. Laser, and James G. Cheyne Jr. joined the firm as associates, and Nelson changed the firm's name to E. Chester Nelson and Associates. Jim Cheyne, a graduate of

Alabama Polytechnic Institute, began working for Nelson in 1950, and Bob Laser, a graduate of the University of Arkansas, started in 1955.

In the early 1960s, buildings designed by the firm include the First Federal Savings and Loan on Garrison Avenue, Sparks Manor Nursing Facility, Chaffin Junior High School, and the Sebastian County Courthouse in Greenwood. In the mid-1960s, Nelson designed Fort Smith's first civic center. A modern structure of reinforced concrete, brick, steel, tinted glass, and colored lights, the Fort Smith Municipal Auditorium was touted by the *Southwest American* as a show place of the future. Originally planned as part of the Garrison Plaza Urban Renewal Project, the auditorium was completed in 1966 at a cost of \$1.5 million.

The dedication and grand-opening ceremonies were held on July 15-17, and July 19, 22, and 23. An elaborate variety of entertainment was planned

for the public, including the Dancing Waters from Radio City Music Hall, First Christian Church Hand Bell Choir, H.K. Mayes' world-renowned collection of old-time silent movies with musical background accompaniment provided by Don Jenkins, Russ Carlyle Orchestra, stars from The Grand Ole Opry, and a special young people's dance starring The Uniques.

Nelson's success as an architect and business owner was due not only to his talent and excellent reputation, but also because of his respect toward

his employees. According to Betty J. Jones, who began working for Nelson in 1952 as a secretary, Nelson was from the "old school" and expected his employees to give eight hours for eight hours' pay. Jones remembers Nelson timing the draftsmen when they would leave the office to take a coffee break at the Broadway Grill. "Mr. Nelson," Jones recalls, "would always check his watch when he saw them leave so he would know if they took an extended break, which they sometimes did."

Although Nelson was known as

being strict, Jones says he had a soft side. Every Christmas, the Nelsons would invite all of the employees and their spouses to their home for a party and give each of the employees a special gift. She recalls that on one Christmas when clients were slow to pay, Nelson borrowed money from the bank so he could give the employees their customary Christmas bonuses. Jones says, "No matter what the financial situation of the company, Mr. Nelson always gave the employees a Christmas bonus."

As an architect and downtown business owner, Nelson was interested in improving the appearance of Garrison Avenue. In the early 1960s, Nelson volunteered to head a Rotary Club project to interest citizens to work toward enhancing Garrison Avenue. "Lifting the Face of Main Street" was the theme of the project. Nelson drew sketches of many of the downtown buildings, and a meeting was held showing how

"Mr. Nelson," Jones recalls, "would always check his watch when he saw them leave so he would know if they took an extended break, which they sometimes did."

Betty J. Jones,
who began working
as a secretary for
Chester Nelson in 1952

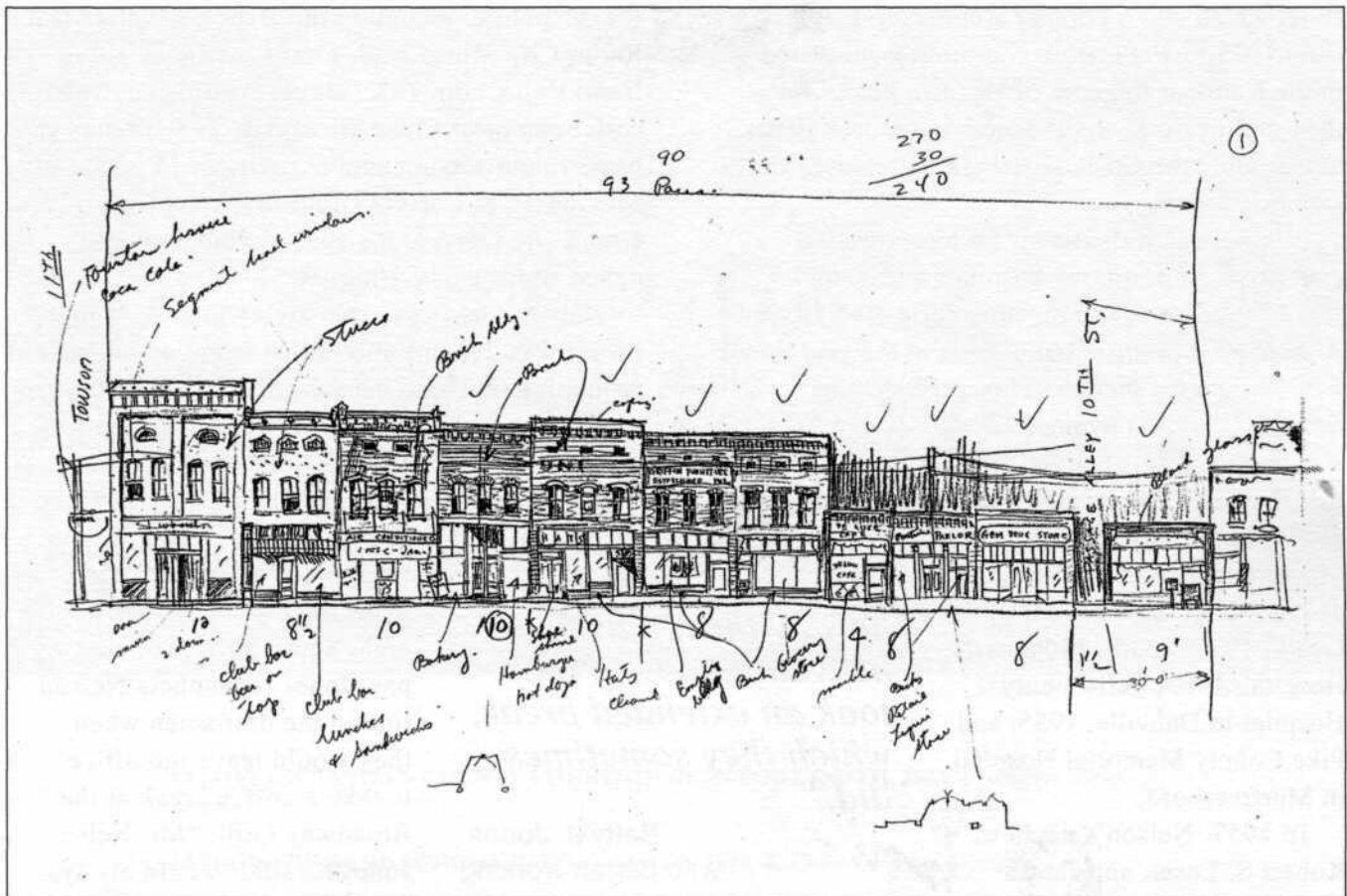


Image courtesy of Brenda Andrews

THIS PENCIL DRAWING BY E. CHESTER NELSON shows some of his ideas for making improvements to Garrison Avenue between Towson Avenue and Tenth Street.

the buildings could look after renovation. The meeting was well attended, and people expressed interest in renovating some of the buildings, but few followed through with their enthusiasm. In a speech Nelson made to the Rotary Club a few years later about the meeting, he said, "Interested citizens were invited, and a good attendance was present and interest expressed, but as usual, nothing was done at the time except the Sears-Roebuck building got a face-lifting — doing something for the betterment of Garrison Avenue still exists."

Nelson died on April 9, 1970, at the age of 75 and was buried at Rose Lawn Cemetery in Fort Smith. At the time of his death, he had practiced architecture for fifty years in Fort Smith. During Nelson's career, he designed hundreds of buildings, many of which are considered landmarks today. The firm that Nelson founded in

1919 has been in existence for more than ninety years and is known today as Guest-Reddick Architects.

Brenda Andrews is a senior planner with the City of Fort Smith Planning Department

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Nelson-Weilbaecher, Sharon. The E. Chester Nelson Collection.

Fading Beauty

Belle Grove Historic District's Architecture



Photo courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

By Graham Sharum

Named after the existing, beautiful orchard that once covered the area, the Belle Grove Historic District, comprising a twenty-two square block area on the north side of downtown Fort Smith, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on July 16, 1973, and was designated by the City of Fort Smith as a Local Ordinance Historic District in 1974. Over the past thirty-four years, the District has seen many changes ranging from the demolition of

*Information on and
images of architectural
styles in Belle Grove
Historic District
on pages 21-31*

dilapidated structures to the construction of new residential and commercial structures. Each change has affected the historical significance of the

District and continues to do so. One of the most distinguishing characteristics of the Belle Grove Historic District is the wide range of architectural

styles present within a small, well-defined area. Within the District there are presently about twenty architectural styles (ranging from the very elaborate Queen Anne style to the more simplified Craftsman/Bungalow style), including one structure that was constructed in 1942 under the Works Progress Administration. According to the Department of Arkansas Heritage's Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, the Belle Grove Historic District is the most diverse district in the state of Arkansas and one of the most diverse historic districts in the United States. When you compare the ratio between the number of contributing structures that currently reside within the District and the number of architectural styles present throughout the District, it is really quite a unique residential neighborhood, particularly given the District's relatively small footprint.

The Belle Grove Historic District's wide variety of architectural styles, however, may also be one of the District's greatest threats because there are only a handful of structures from each particular style. As a result, each time a structure is lost, there is a more dramatic impact on the District than there would be in a district of similar size that contained only a single or a handful of architectural styles. Therefore, the demolition of any of the historic structures should be carefully considered prior to approval.

Part of this consideration should include whether the historic structures could be restored instead of demolished. Such a determination, however, is largely dependent on the availability of funding. For example, earlier this month and after several years of discussion between the owners and the City of Fort Smith, the Fort Smith Historic District Commission voted to approve the demolition of a dilapidated American Four-Square style residence constructed in 1911. After decades of neglect by its prior owners, this structure had been left vacant for at least the last ten years before it was acquired by the current owners. In addition to the deterioration of the structure itself, the lot it was constructed on had been replatted into several smaller, abnormally shaped lots. Making the situation more dangerous was the fact that two structures had been constructed over the years on either side and built to within a yard of the American Four-Square. The owner made

several attempts to find a buyer who would be able to rehabilitate the structure, but each attempt fell short. And so after a review by the city's Neighborhood Services Division, it was determined that the structure would continue to deteriorate and present a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the community at large, as well as a direct threat to all adjacent structures. At this time, the structure is awaiting demolition. This situation could have been prevented by providing access to additional programs with greater incentives for owners to rehabilitate properties in need by means of special grants, tax credits, or both.

Unfortunately, funding in the form of state and federal grants and tax credits is currently available only to owners of "income-producing" commercial properties. Residential property owners have few means of financial assistance to rehabilitate historic properties aside from existing personal wealth, loans, or a second mortgage. Therefore, even in this era of economic "downturn," we still need to make available the funds necessary to provide for the revitalization of our neighborhoods, towns, and cities across this great nation of ours, or risk losing parts of our historic heritage forever.

In addition, we must monitor the status of the District's historic quality on a regular basis to ensure that the District's finite historic resources are preserved. This is because historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places are required to maintain at least 51 percent of their resources as contributors to the District's historic fabric in order to keep their status. While the most recent National Register survey found that the Belle Grove Historic District's contributing ratio was approximately 79 percent, with ninety-nine structures listed as contributing and twenty-seven structures listed as non-contributing to the District's overall historic fabric, additional surveys should be commissioned to monitor the status of the District every five to eight years to ensure that the District's finite historic resources are preserved for the eyes of tomorrow.

Graham Sharum, AIA, LEED AP, is a graduate of the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, with a bachelor of architecture degree. He is employed by Architecture Plus in Fort Smith and serves as chair of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission.

Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles

Architectural style as used in the dictionary: "A definite type of architecture distinguished by special characteristics of structure and ornament."

Fort Smith and the Belle Grove Historic District are very fortunate to have within the District such an architecturally diverse group of building styles from different periods. It is a living museum of our architectural heritage that allows us to better understand our history. There are perhaps very few (if any) other historic districts in this country that have so many different styles of historic buildings. Surrounding the District and throughout other areas of Fort Smith there are many other historic structures. Architectural styles are not a result of just the construction method or ornamentation. Several other components must be considered in determining a style. The plan, building materials, roof shape, shape of the footprint, openings, porches and dormers, etc., have a bearing on a particular style identity.

Since most architectural styles have been introduced in cities, some have been altered for smaller towns. During the development of our nation, such things as mail-order plans were used. Sears Roebuck & Co. had many plans in a catalog from which one could purchase a kit that included

everything from the foundation up, including the sink, stove, roof covering, etc.

In the Belle Grove Historic District there are numerous architectural building styles, including one of the earliest French Colonial from around 1850 and the Federal style in 1869.

The District also contains buildings in the Colonial Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Carpenter Gothic, Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, Stick, Eastlake, Romanesque Revival, Richardson Romanesque and Classical Revival styles. These are part of the Victorian period of circa 1837-1920, named for Queen Victoria of England who reigned from 1837 to 1901.

Later building designs were constructed in American Foursquare, Craftsman, Prairie and Mission styles. Many buildings include parts from several styles in their design, as people were influenced by their neighbors or local adaptations of a particular style. Some are identified simply as Vernacular style.

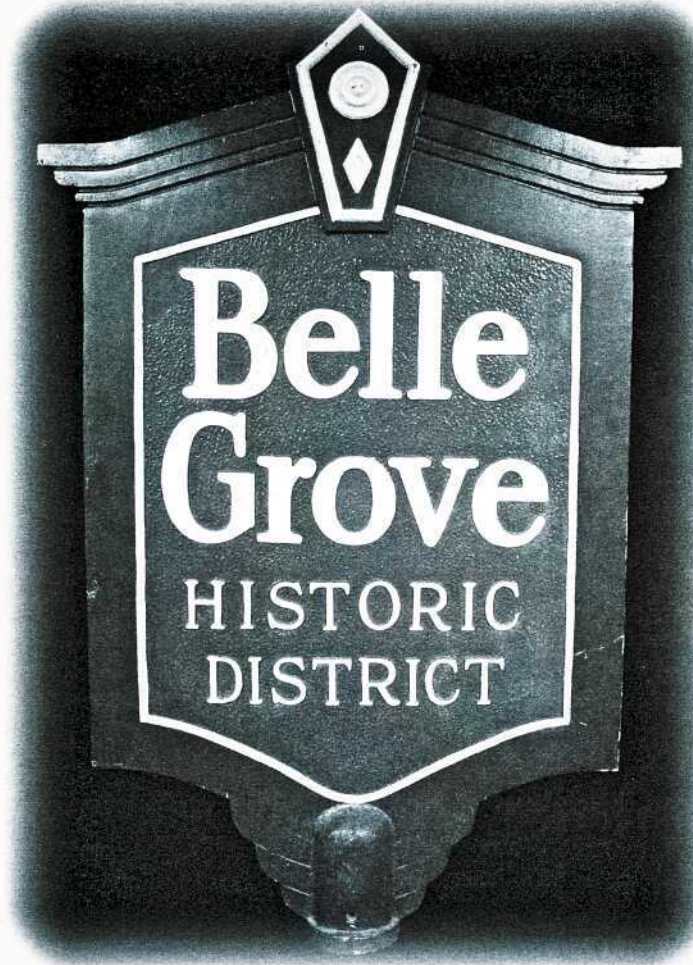


Photo courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

Source

Guidelines for Rehabilitation and New Construction for Belle Grove Historic District. Published by City of Fort Smith, Arkansas, 2003.

Used with permission by the Fort Smith Historic District Commission.

Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles



Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

(ABOVE) **FEDERAL STYLE.** *Louis Tilles House, 400 North Eighth Street, circa 1869.*

(BELOW) **FRENCH COLONIAL STYLE.** *The Casper Reutzel House at the corner of North Fifth and D streets, circa 1850.*



Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles



(LEFT)
GOTHIC/
ECCLESIASTICAL
STYLE. *First
Christian Church, 220
North Seventh Street,
circa 1886.*

Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

(RIGHT)
GOTHIC REVIVAL
STYLE. *St. John's
Episcopal Church,
215 North Sixth
Street, circa 1898.*



Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles



Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

(ABOVE) CARPENTER GOTHIC STYLE. *Bernard Baer, 408 North Eighth Street, circa 1889.*

(BELOW) FOLK VICTORIAN STYLE. *Sengel Cottage, 504 North Eighth Street, circa 1886.*



Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles



Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

(ABOVE) ITALIANATE STYLE. McKibben-Bonneville House, 318 North Seventh Street, circa 1870.

(BELOW) SECOND EMPIRE STYLE. Ben Atkinson House, 309 North Seventh Street, circa 1882.



Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles



(LEFT)
**QUEEN ANNE/
EASTLAKE STYLE.**
*W.J. Johnston, 623
North Sixth Street,
circa 1885.*

Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

(RIGHT)
**CLASSIC
REVIVAL
STYLE.** *Blair
Amis House, 708
North Seventh
Street, circa 1898.*



Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles



Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission



(ABOVE) ROMANESQUE REVIVAL STYLE. *Belle Grove School House, 600 North Sixth Street, circa 1886.*

(LEFT) RICHARDSON ROMANESQUE STYLE. *James K. Barnes House, 515 North Sixth Street, circa 1893.*

===== Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles =====



(LEFT)
STICK STYLE.
*Residence, 507 North
Sixth Street, circa
1900.*

Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

(RIGHT)
**COLONIAL
REVIVAL
STYLE.** *Sarah
Mincer House
(restaurant), 407
North Eighth
Street, circa 1901.*



Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles

**(RIGHT)
PRAIRIE STYLE.**
*Residence, 509 North
Seventh Street, circa
1905.*



Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission



**(LEFT)
MISSION
STYLE.** *Harper
House, 404 North
Seventh Street,
circa 1910.*

Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles



(LEFT)
QUEEN ANNE
STYLE. E.C. Haskett
House, 312 North
Eighth Street, circa
1882.

Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

(RIGHT)
CRAFTSMAN
STYLE.
Residence, 723
North Sixth Street,
circa 1919.



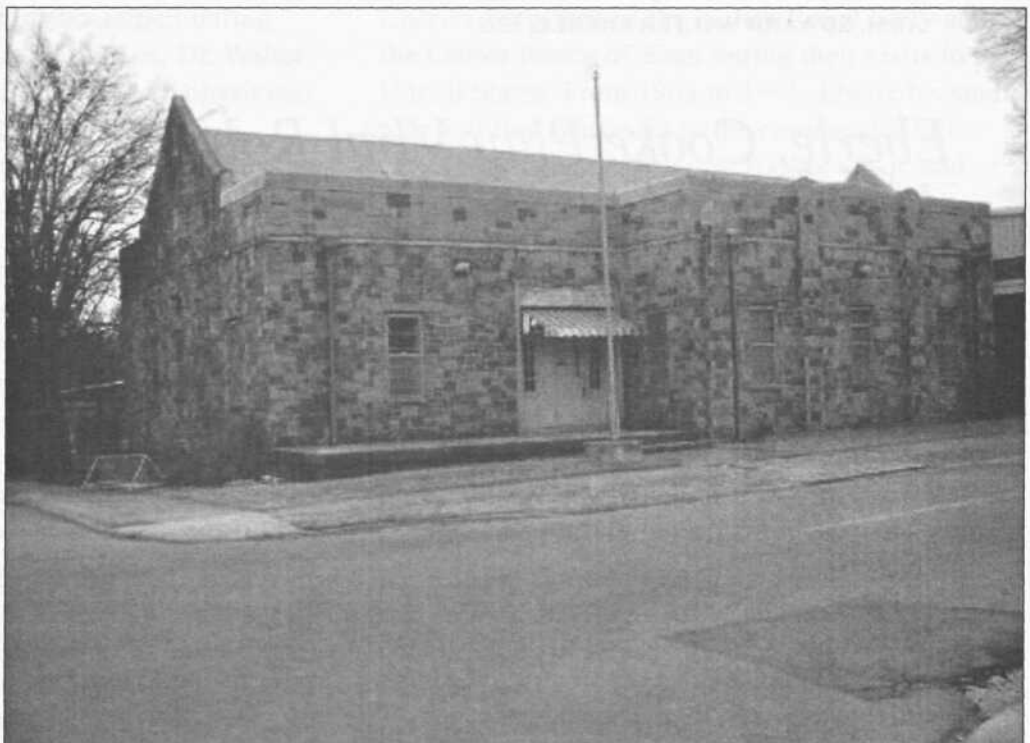
Belle Grove Historic District Architectural Styles



(LEFT)
**AMERICAN
FOURSQUARE
STYLE.** *Matthew
Russell House, 515
North Seventh Street,
circa 1927.*

Photos courtesy of the Fort Smith Historic District Commission

(RIGHT)
**WORKS PROGRESS
ADMINISTRATION.** *Girls
Club.*



Fort Smith's Admirals



ADM. EDWARD WALTER EBERLE, 1921



Photos courtesy of U.S. Navy and National Archives
ADM. CHARLES M. COOKE

Eberle, Cooke Play Vital Roles In U.S. History

By Judge Jim Spears

Ironically I learned of this portion of the history of our town at a funeral — not just any funeral but that of J. Fred Patton, who recently passed away at the age of 101. Patton was known as a chronicler of our past. As I approached the sanctuary of First United Methodist Church, I ran into Thurman Jordan, a delightful person and himself a historian and collector of our past.

While I was sitting with him, he asked me if I had heard about Fort Smith's admirals.

"Our what?" I replied.

He proceeded to tell me an amazing story of

two individuals who spanned the history of our country through the Spanish American War up to the surrender of the Japanese in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945, and beyond. They were both from Fort Smith.

I pride myself with knowing a little about our history, but I had never heard of Admirals Eberle and Cooke. Thurman later provided me with some old newspaper and magazine stories concerning these outstanding individuals. All of the information I have comes from these stories that he provided. I was the student, and he was the teacher,

and it was as if it began, "Once Upon a Time," but this was no fairy tale.

Adm. Edward Walter Eberle

The first of our remarkable men was Adm. Edward Walter Eberle. The story concerning Eberle was written by Nancy Edwards in the *Southwest Times Record* on April 14, 1996. She begins: "It is easy to see where casting agents get their idea of what a Navy Admiral is supposed to look like: trim beard, round glasses perched on his nose, a little bit of swirl to the snow white mustache. They must have based it on Admiral Edward Walter Eberle of Fort Smith."

Eberle was born in Denton, Texas, in 1864 close to the end of the Civil War. His father was a Swiss immigrant named Joseph Eberle and his mother a girl from Georgia named Mary Stemler. They located in Fort Smith when the naval-officer-to-be was 1 year old. His father ran a store made of logs at the corner of Sixth Street and Garrison Avenue. This was later known as the Eberle Block and was the location of Merchants National Bank for many years and more recently The Broadway Grill. The family lived in a house just behind the store. Fort Smith in 1865 had been ravaged by the war and the changing occupiers of the fort. The admiral's brother, Dr. Joseph Eberle, practiced medicine in Fort Smith for 49 years, was a prominent citizen and was the physician for the federal jail during the time of Judge Isaac Parker. His son, Dr. Walter Eberle, was also a prominent Fort Smith physician.

Young Walter, the subject of this tale, was nominated to the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, when he was just 17 years of age. In the 1880s, he served aboard the *USS Shenandoah* helping maintain treaty obligations during an insurrection on the Isthmus of Panama, and from 1887 to 1891 he served on U.S. Fish Commission steamer *Albatross*. He helped develop the Tanner Sounding Device, used in charting fishing waters off Cape Horn in Africa and in the northern Pacific. This sounds as if it was a precursor of sonar.

In 1896, Lt. J.G. Eberle was assigned to the new battleship *USS Oregon*, the third of the new fleet of ocean-going battleships known as the "Great White Fleet." The ship was assigned to Bremerton, Washington Naval Base, and when war

was declared in 1898, it was ordered to proceed to waters off Florida. This required a voyage of 14,700 miles at full steam around South America. This voyage was followed closely by the American public and emphasized the need for the Panama Canal. It took sixty-seven days to make the journey.

The Battle of Santiago Bay commenced July 3, 1898, when, following the Army's victories at San Juan and Kettle Hill, the Spanish naval commander decided he had better flee from Santiago harbor if he had any hope of saving his command. The Spanish had been blockaded in the harbor by the U.S. Navy. As the Spanish made their getaway attempt, the Americans took up the chase. After more than one hour of fighting, the Spanish navy had lost all but one ship. *The Oregon* had remained at full power and had the capacity to overtake and bracket the Spaniard *Cristobel Colon*, the only modern ship of the Spanish fleet, with shells forcing the ship to run aground. The officer of the forward turret who directed fire during the battle was Walter Eberle.

In 1899, Eberle became flag lieutenant and acting chief of staff under Adm. Albert S. Barker, commander in chief of the Asiatic Station, headquartered in Manila. During this time he wrote the drill procedures manual for modern guns and torpedoes. He served as aide to Adm. Lord Charles Beresford of the British Royal Navy and the Crown Prince of Siam during their visits to the United States. From 1903 to 1905, Eberle became aide and flag lieutenant to the commander of the U.S. Fleet, Atlantic, Admiral Barker again, and helped with the installation of wireless telegraph on Navy vessels devising instructions and codes. He prepared the manual on this new technology. In recognition of his accomplishments, Eberle was sent to the War College and subsequently assigned as commandant of the San Francisco Naval Training Station, where he served from 1908 to 1910. For the next couple of years he commanded the *USS Wheeling*, a cruiser, on a trip around the world.

In 1911, the Atlantic Torpedo Fleet (destroyers) was formed and Eberle, now a captain, was its commander. He devised the smoke-screen tactic that became a part of destroyer tactics. He was the first to use airplanes to detect submerged

submarines, and he outlined the mine-laying and mine-sweeping tactics used by the Navy.

In 1914, he was in command of the battleship *USS Washington* and helped establish a blockade of Santo Domingo harbor in the Dominican Republic, thereby helping to suppress a revolution and supervise the election of the country's new president.

In 1915, President Woodrow Wilson chose Eberle as superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy. He was to restore the school's reputation following some scandals. He shortened the training period for midshipmen so as to supply officers for the war effort and was successful in regaining the honor of Annapolis. For this service, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. The next year, 1919, he was promoted to rear admiral.

In 1921, he was designated commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet and in 1923 as chief of Naval Operations, the highest shore office in the Navy. In this office his diplomatic and political skills resulted in his giving requested advice to President Calvin Coolidge on situations in Nicaragua and China.

In 1925, the citizens of Fort Smith presented him with a fine sword that was engraved and cost the princely sum of \$1,000. In 1927, he became the chairman of executive committee of the Navy General Board.

He reached the mandatory retirement age in 1928 and ended his 47-year naval career. He retired to his home in Virginia and passed away the following year. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. In his honor the Navy named two ships. The first was a destroyer *USS Eberle DD-430*, which was commissioned December 4, 1940, and saw service throughout World War II. The second was a troop transport, *USS Admiral E.W. Eberle*, which was commissioned in January 1945 and decommissioned in May 1946. Both ships saw duty under another name later in their useful careers.

'Savvy' Adm. Charles M. Cooke

Fort Smith's second admiral was no less distinguished. Adm. Charles M. Cooke, who was nicknamed "Savvy," was the subject of a story in the Styles section of the *Southwest Times Record* on July 21, 1985. It was a "special" written by Bernice Cole.

Admiral Cooke was born in Fort Smith on December 19, 1886. He was from a prominent family. His maternal grandfather was a noted attorney named John B. Luce, who in 1849 settled at Moore's Rock Plantation near what is now Lavaca. His father, Charles M. Cooke Sr., was a lawyer and served as an assistant district attorney in the federal court presided over by Judge Isaac C. Parker. Cole's story notes that the Cooke children often napped on the judge's feather bed. Charles Sr. also served as the mayor of Fort Smith in 1891-92.

The future admiral completed both grade and high school in just seven years, graduating at the young age of 16. The next November he enrolled at the University of Arkansas as a sophomore. Due to lack of funds, he was forced to leave school in March and return to Fort Smith, where he worked for the Pure Milk Co. That fall he was able to return to school as a junior and enrolled in 24 credit hours. He completed his junior and senior requirements in one year and graduated with a bachelor of science degree in 1 1/2 years. According to Cole, this achievement has never been equaled at the University of Arkansas. It was also the reason for a change in the on-campus requirements for the university. It would no longer be possible to re-create his feat.

Cooke then was appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis. He had a family background in the naval service. His great uncle was Adm. Stephen Bleeker Luce, the founder of the Naval War College. This no doubt was some aid in getting his appointment, but his academic accomplishments should have been more than adequate. He graduated from the academy in 1910 after four years, with honors and ranking second in a class of 132. While accomplishing this remarkable record in academics, he also played on the baseball team, was on the staff of the academy journal, and was president of Midshipmen's Athletic Association. It was at Annapolis that he gained the nickname "Savvy."

Following his academy days, he was not immediately commissioned. This was the practice then. He served on several ships, including the battleships *Maine*, *Connecticut* and *Alabama*. In this period, he met and married Helena Leslie Temple, a member of a prominent Philadelphia

family. They had two children. Helena suffered from depression and took her life, leaving Savvy to raise their two children. Because of his naval career, he sent them to Fort Smith to live with his parents. Their daughter, Temple, died at age 6, and he relocated his family to California.

In 1913, Cooke was attached to the submarine service. It was while in this service that his most harrowing ordeal and the one that revealed the character of this true American hero occurred. While in command of the submarine *E-2* in New York harbor, Cooke saw a canoe capsize, throwing two teenage boys into the frigid waters. One was trapped under the canoe. Cooke jumped into the water and saved the two boys, risking his own life.

On January 16, 1916, experimental lithium batteries furnished by Thomas Edison produced an excess of hydrogen on board the *E-2*, and an explosion resulted. Five sailors died as a result. Cooke was on a nearby ship and immediately rushed to his ship and led a group of men inside the burning vessel to rescue injured crewmen. A formal board of inquiry resulted. When the evidence of the danger of the lithium batteries was clear, Edison caused the investigation to come to an end and withdrew support of the idea of lithium batteries for submarines. Cooke was exonerated from any fault in the matter.

In 1920 Cooke became the commander of the submarine *S-5*. His mother christened the ship as she had another under his command. It was on the *S-5* that Savvy became a legend. This ordeal is the subject of a book, "Under Pressure, the Final Voyage of Submarine S-Five" by A.J. Hill.

On Wednesday, September 1, 1920, the *S-5* set out from New Jersey to Baltimore for a recruiting and public relations event. The new sub was still undergoing sea trials and drills. One of the things apparent in the S-class subs was that the air induction valve was extremely difficult to close. This is where fresh air is taken aboard while the sub is running on the surface. The closure of such valves had to be accomplished by hand. Each person on board had his tasks to perform in the event of a dive.

At 1:50 p.m. Cooke ordered a crash dive drill. The person in charge of the air induction valve failed to close it, and the sub began to flood, which caused it to take on water into the interior of the

sub and prevented it from being able to surface by the time the flooding was brought under control. At 2:40 p.m. Savvy tried to get the sub to the surface by expelling the ballast tanks using compressed air. It was not successful; the extra weight of the water on board caused the sub to rise stern first at a 60-degree angle. The stern of the ship was out of the water about 10 feet, and it was standing on its nose, which was stuck in the mud.

There was no way to contact the outside because the telegraph could not be used under water. There was little food or water because the fresh water was produced by reverse osmosis using the water on board. This didn't work due to the damage to the vessel. All items on board had crashed toward the bow when the sub had turned on end. The batteries had been damaged and were not capable of producing any but the faintest charge used to dimly light the vessel. The crew seemed trapped and entombed. Chlorine gas was present as a result of the acid of the batteries, and seawater coming into contact. This was deadly for those who might come in contact with it.

Savvy determined that the nose of the sub was on the bottom. He knew that he was in about 180 feet of water and that with a 60-degree tilt, the stern of the sub had to be out of the water. They had now been under water for around nine hours. The air was stale and wasn't going to get better. Savvy knew that their only hope was to cut through the hull of the ship in the stern and escape. That was easier said than done. They searched the jumble of the submarine as everything had shifted to the bow when the sub tilted. They found some manual drills and a chest drill. These tools were not designed to be used overhead but that was what had to be done.

The going was very slow cutting through the steel plates that were three-quarters of an inch thick. By 11:30 p.m., the drinking water was gone and the air was foul with carbon dioxide. Energy and the ability of the crew to function were fading fast. They had now been down 9½ hours. Cooke and the few others able to assist him continued the near futile attempt to drill through the hull. By 1 a.m. on September 2, the crew was gasping for air. The small hole that had been made in the hull did not allow in much air but compromised the ship by allowing some of the foul air to escape to be

replaced with seawater coming into the ship, and it was slowly sinking.

By morning there was an 8-inch hole that had been made in the hull using the dulling and inadequate drills and a hack saw. With the light of day, Savvy could see some passing ships in the distance, but they would not think the ship was more than an old buoy or an unmanned wreck. They tried to devise a signal, and this was a shirt on a copper pipe they raised up through the hole. The shipwrecked crew failed to get the attention of one ship, but another passing in the vicinity

finally saw the T-shirt flapping in the breeze at 1:15 p.m. The *Atlanthus* came about to their aid. The *Atlanthus* had no radio operator on board and could not send word for more help, but the crew of that small steamer started cutting through the hull from the other side. Another ship, the *George Goethals*, also came to their aid. By 1:20 a.m. on September

3, the first man was hauled from the *S-5*. Savvy Cooke, the captain of the vessel, was the last to be removed at 3:34 a.m. He had been under the sea in a life-threatening situation for thirty-seven hours without sleep.

Another board of inquiry was held concerning the loss of the *S-5*. Savvy was found to be without fault in the incident, but it provided cause to change the design of submarines and make all of the valve closures mechanical. There was also instituted a grid of electronic gauges to indicate that the machinery had done its job in making the submarine ready to dive. The changes made as a result of the sinking of the *S-5* made possible the rescue of the *Squalus* fifteen years later.

The remarkable career of Savvy Cooke did not

end with the *S-5* incident. It was less than a year from the sinking that his daughter, Temple, died in Fort Smith. As mentioned earlier, he then moved his family, including his parents, to California to be close to his duty station. The preceding November, in 1920, he was assigned as the executive officer of the *USS Rainbow*, the flagship of the 12th Submarine flotilla. He commanded the flotilla a year later when it was stationed in Hawaii. In 1921, Cooke married Mary Louise Cooper, who had been a newspaper reporter in Honolulu. Future Adm. Chester Nimitz served as his best man.

Savvy and Mary had three children.

In 1923 Cooke spent ten months in the Philippines prior to assuming important administrative duties in Washington, D.C. He served as the commanding officer of Mare Island Naval Base and a tour at sea as gunnery officer on the *USS Idaho*, a battleship. He was promoted to captain and served in the office of the

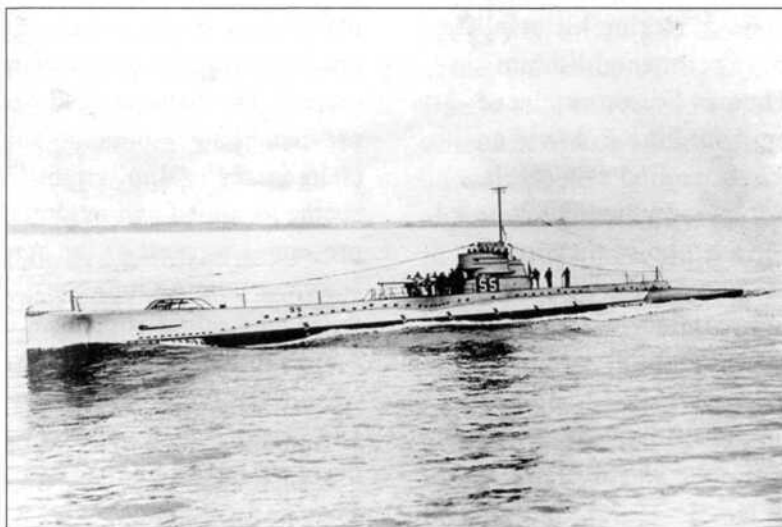


Photo courtesy of U.S. Navy and National Archives
THE SUBMARINE S-5, which was commanded by Adm. Charles M. Cooke is shown underway.

chief of Naval Operations in Washington. Under the sponsorship of Admirals Leahy and Stark, he was responsible for the design and construction of the Two-Ocean Navy. He was then sent to Congress to sell the idea for such a navy.

Following this duty, he was placed in command of the Pacific Fleet flagship, the battleship *USS Pennsylvania*, in February 1941. He brought the ship into dry dock at Pearl Harbor for repairs several months after he took command. After his breakfast one morning, he glanced out a porthole and saw a bomb hit the water. It was December 7, 1941. The United States had just entered World War II. Battle stations rang out, and during the two-hour attack, the United States lost seventeen ships and 188 aircraft and had almost 3,000

casualties. The *Pennsylvania* was the first ship to return fire, and although it was struck by bombs and gunfire and set ablaze by an oil slick, the ship suffered no major damage. It suffered twenty-seven dead and thirty wounded. According to Cole's article, Cooke praised the crew, which was credited with shooting down five Japanese aircraft, by telling them, "You have shown the world that you have the guts to do the job."

Despite his being at the scene of the attack, battle command was not to be his. He was 55 years old in 1942 and a rear admiral. He served the rest of the war as the chief planning officer for Adm. Ernest J. King, commander in chief of the U.S. fleet and chief of Naval Operations. Savvy Cooke's planning capacity helped create a worldwide war strategy. He attended the summit meetings at Cairo, Quebec, Teheran and Casablanca as a confidant of President Franklin Roosevelt, and often dined with Roosevelt and Winston Churchill.

Cooke was on Omaha Beach during the landings on D-Day. He and Gen. Tom Handy were assigned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be on scene so that if things were going badly a decision could be made on a high level to withdraw. Eisenhower was unaware of this. The chiefs were afraid it would upset him at a critical time had he known. They had been sent ostensibly as observers to England in May 1944. Cooke and Handy not only accompanied the ships across the channel on D-Day, but also were actually ashore to observe operations. Cooke's helmet was struck by a piece of shrapnel from an exploding German shell.

After the death of FDR, Cooke remained on the staff of President Harry S. Truman and accompanied him to the conference at Potsdam. He was on the deck of the *USS Missouri* at the time of the signing of the Japanese surrender treaty. By the end of the war, Cooke had been promoted to vice admiral and deputy chief of Naval Operations.

Following the war, now a four-star admiral, Cooke became the commander of the 7th Fleet in the Western Pacific and retired at mandatory retirement age in 1948. He died on Christmas Day 1970 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Savvy Cooke may be the only person who was present during the attack on Pearl Harbor, on Omaha Beach during D-Day, with the president at Potsdam, and on the deck of the *USS Missouri* in

Tokyo Bay for the Japanese surrender.

Cooke and Eberle, two very remarkable men, little known or remembered today, were great heroes whose stories need to be told in more depth. It is not known by this writer if they ever met. Eberle was commander of the Pacific fleet at the time of the S-5 incident. It is reasonable to assume that their families in Fort Smith were acquainted. They are both sons of Fort Smith and should be honored and remembered by later generations of Fort Smithians.

As Thurman Jordan told me, "Our military heritage is even more than the Old Fort, Zachary Taylor, and Bill Darby and the 1st Ranger Battalion." So true, Thurman, so true.

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NOTE: The paragraph about Admiral Cooke in 1910 lists three ships he was on, the first being the *USS Maine*. This was not the famous *USS Maine*; it was the second one, launched in 1910. The first one was designated *USS Maine ACR-1*, and the second one, which Cooke was on, was the *USS Maine BB-10*. ACR means Armored Cruisers, BB means battleship.

Jerome Ney and the OPA



Photo courtesy of the Fort Smith Museum of History

JEROME NEY SR.



Photo courtesy of the Fort Smith Museum of History

THE BOSTON STORE is shown in downtown Fort Smith on its 77th anniversary in 1956.

Fort Smith Native Makes Difference From D.C.

By Suzy Hestand-Laird

Jerome Ney was born in Fort Smith, Arkansas, on August 23, 1906. His father, Rudolph Ney, was a principal stockholder of the Boston Store Dry Goods Company, along with Jerome's uncles, Aaron Fuller and Sigmund and Julius Baer. Jerome's mother, Marie Baer Ney, was a sister to the Baer brothers. Jerome attended public schools in Fort Smith and graduated in 1924 from Culver Military Academy in Culver, Indiana. Upon graduation, Ney started his career as a stock boy at Mandel Brothers Department Store in Chicago, training to take his place in the family business back in Fort Smith.

In 1926 he returned to Fort Smith as a salesman at the Boston Store; by 1936, he was president and general manager. That same year, he married Ione Sternberg, and they had two sons, Randolph and Jerome, Jr., who would both grow up to join the family business.

Before World War II, Jerome Ney devoted his life to his work, his wife, and his two sons. The family lived in a tightly knit neighborhood of friends and relatives and enjoyed an active social life. He was well known to people in Fort Smith as a family man, business leader, and merchant. After World War II began, he was well known in



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



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OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION

No 281985 -129

Photo courtesy of the Ney family collection

IMAGE OF WAR RATIONING BOOK

Washington, D.C., as well.

Ney became a key figure in the economic welfare of the United States during the war and in its recovery afterward. Among papers saved by the Ney family are telegrams from such notables as John Steelman, assistant to President Harry Truman, former President Herbert Hoover, and letters typed on White House stationery and congressional letterhead. These telegrams and letters tell the story of Ney's dedication to his country.

The Office of Price Administration was organized to stabilize prices and rents after the outbreak of World War II. The OPA had the power to place ceilings on all prices except agricultural commodities and to ration scarce supplies of other items. On December 27, 1941, it instituted rationing of rubber tires. By April 1942, rationing

had extended to automobiles, sugar, typewriters, and gasoline.

By the end of the war, the rationing program included coffee, shoes, stoves, meats, processed foods, and bicycles. At the peak, almost 90 percent of retail food prices were frozen. The OPA could also authorize subsidies for production of some of those commodities. In short, it was a very powerful organization.

In June 1942, Ney was invited to join the Office of Price Administration as regional officer in Atlanta, Georgia. By November of that year, he was transferred to the main office in Washington, D.C., to serve as chief of the Program Planning Branch of the OPA, preparing a shoe-rationing program.

He later said that his wife never forgave him for not telling her in advance that shoe rationing

was imminent. Within one week after rationing became effective, she had to surrender her shoe stamps in order to buy shoes for their two little boys!

Ney moved up to director of Miscellaneous Products Rationing Division, where he supervised the preparation of a clothing-rationing program. Fortunately, the rationing of clothing never had to be implemented, although it came very close on several occasions.

From this post, he was appointed as deputy administrator for Rationing. On April 12, 1944, a congratulatory telegram to Ney from a friend reading, "ALLOW ME TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON BECOMING THE HEAD OF SUCH AN IMPORTANT DEPARTMENT IN THE GOVERNMENT" was rejected by Western Union with the words "CENCOR (sic) WONT PASS ANY OF THAT THESE ARE GOVT ORDERS." Instead, his friend sent the message by special delivery to him at the Mayflower Hotel, where Ney was staying. It was attached to a letter that read, "Sorry, but the government would not allow this to be sent."

A telegram dated May 15, 1946, from former President Herbert Hoover, then honorary chairman of the Famine Emergency Committee, begins "YOUR PERSONAL INTEREST AND EFFORTS ARE NEEDED TO HELP US SAVE THE LIVES OF MILLIONS OF STARVATION VICTIMS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD."

During the war, Ney commuted between Fort Smith and Washington. He appeared before Congress as spokesman for the OPA, answering for shortages in manufactured goods due to the war effort. He was the man sent to Capitol Hill when the congressmen wanted to quiz the government about the doings and shortcomings of the price agency, and the irate senators were not happy about shortages of shirts, underwear, and baby clothes. It was the task of the OPA to hold in check the rise of prices in the consumer goods field. In Ney's own words, it was a tough job.

Eventually President Dwight D. Eisenhower terminated the whole price-control program. Ney returned to Fort Smith full time and continued his career as president of the Boston Store. He was elected a director and later a vice-president of the Baer family's large department store chain, Stix,

Establishment of Office of Price Administration

With the nation preparing to enter World War II and prices threatening to skyrocket, the government took action to prevent inflation. On August 18, 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt handed down the executive order establishing the Office of Price Administration (OPA), to control consumer prices in wartime. The OPA imposed rent controls and rationed auto tires. Soon the OPA was printing coupon books for sugar, coffee, meat, fats, oils, and other items. Americans were asked to stick to the system of rationing and to take the Homefront Pledge, a declaration of commitment to avoid buying on the black market, and to buy the OPA way. At the end of the war, the OPA was not shut down immediately. Reasoning that some goods were still scarce, President Harry Truman kept the agency running. However, government-regulated prices and production were unpopular with many people, big business and farmers, who suffered under continued meat rationing. After the election of 1946, the OPA was relieved of its duties, with only rents, sugar, and rice still subject to controls. The agency's record of service during the war was impressive: by V-J, consumer prices had increased by 31 percent, a number noticeably better than the 62 percent bloating of prices during World War I.

— Source: <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history.do?action=article&id=6032>

Baer & Fuller, in St. Louis, Missouri, serving from his Fort Smith location. He purchased the White House Dry Goods Company in Beaumont, Texas, and merged it with Roenthal's, Inc. Under his management, the Boston Store and its affiliates grew into the largest and oldest family-owned business in Arkansas and Oklahoma.

In 1947 Ney was elected chairman of the board of the American Retailers Federation. The Joint Committee on the Economic Report had been established in 1946 for the purpose of developing governmental policy to prevent or alleviate economic depressions. In 1947, the Joint Committee invited Ney to speak again before Congress, representing the 500,000 merchants of the American Retail Federation. A newspaper clipping among his papers is

titled, "A Little Guy Named Jerome Ney Tells 'Em Off." And tell them off he did. Some of his words could be applied today, when he stated, "The American way of life is on trial before the world." He warned that production was needed to retain prosperity and that inflation must be kept under control. He stated that the continuing spiral of living costs was the greatest current threat to the American free enterprise system. Senator Taft of Ohio asked if Ney had any suggestions. He had plenty of them. With his eyes glistening behind his spectacles, he pointed a finger at price-fixing and violation of anti-monopoly laws by some areas of business. One radio announcer on the NBC network said that Jerome Ney "was much more frank than the president" in his report to Congress. It was his turn to talk and the senators' turn to listen.

Along with the letters, telegrams, and photographs saved by the Ney family is memorabilia from the *Queen Elizabeth* as it sailed for Europe in 1947. Shortly after his appearance before Congress, Ney was on his way to speak to the Congress of the International Meeting of Retail Associations in Stockholm, Sweden. He was to present a discussion on the advantages of the free enterprise system practiced in the United States. His address was extensively commented

upon in the Swedish press, and a wonderful album containing newspaper clippings and photographs about his visit is included in his papers.

Today Ney's words to that assembly sound almost prophetic when he said, "We hope by consultation between the president and the Congress and by appropriate legislation on taxation, bank credit, timing of public works and the like, to level off the ups and downs in production and employment.

"We hope by consultation between the president and the Congress and by appropriate legislation on taxation, bank credit, timing of public works and the like, to level off the ups and downs in production and employment. Slowly but surely, we think we are learning about the factors that make for booms and that make for busts, just as we have learned about the cure of diphtheria and scarlet fever."

Jerome Ney Sr. to an assembly of the Congress of the International Meeting of Retail Associates in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1947.

Slowly but surely, we think we are learning about the factors that make for booms and that make for busts, just as we have learned about the cure of diphtheria and scarlet fever." This speech, titled, "Free Men Make the Best Neighbors," became the text of a pamphlet by the same title widely distributed by the American Retail Federation.

During the Korean War, Ney was again asked to come to Washington as director of the newly organized Office of Price Management. He declined the offer, electing to raise his family in Fort Smith. A few years later, he was offered the presidency of the St. Louis-based firm of Stix, Baer & Fuller. Again he declined, choosing to stay in Fort Smith, where in 1886 his father had first partnered with the Fullers and Baers in founding the Boston Store.

Jerome Ney received awards and praise for his service to our country both during and after the war years, but by and large, the citizens of Fort Smith were unaware of his accomplishments. From the Office of Price Administration came these words: "In the course of time, after the fog of confusion and uncertainty that exists today has blown away, the people of your community and of the entire nation will realize more fully the efforts you and your associates have made toward



Photo courtesy of the Ney family collection
JEROME M. NEY, center, is shown with his sons, Jerome M. Ney, Jr., left, and Randolph J. Ney on August 8, 1973, in Lake Charles, Louisiana.

the economic safety of our country. With this recognition will come your true reward.”

In an informal biographical profile written in 1972, Ney described his work for the OPA as one of the most difficult and back-bending efforts of his life.

Ney passed away in 1988. It is long past time for us to know and truly recognize the magnitude of his hard work and dedication to the economic

safety of our country.

Source: Ney Family Collection

Suzy Hestand-Laird, a Fort Smith native and former executive director of the Fort Smith Museum of History, is now retired and living in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Surprise your favorite persons with a membership in the Fort Smith Historical Society.

They will love *The Journal* and you.



Hangin' Times in Fort Smith



By Jerry Akins

Three Senseless Murders — Two Hangings

*Malachi Allen and James Mills
April 19, 1889*

Neither Malachi Allen nor James Mills was a stranger to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas. Mills had appeared in 1882 and 1885 on liquor charges, in 1882 and 1888 for larceny and had an 1883 warrant for failure to appear.

Malachi Allen

Malachi Allen, who also went by the alias of Nole Chil, had been charged in 1884 with assault with intent to kill. From the depositions available in that case, it appears that Allen was a man who intended to have his way even if it required violence. He had loaned \$10 to John Kemp with the promise from Kemp to repay as soon as possible. When Kemp went to repay, he found that Allen had taken his cow and intended to keep it. Allen told Kemp not to take the cow back, but Kemp said the cow had not been part of the deal and that he would take her, which he did. The next morning before Kemp had finished breakfast, Allen rode his horse to the door and came in shooting.

He must have had as little control of his weapon as he did his temper. The first shot was so close that Kemp had powder burns on his hands. Allen fired a total of five shots but never struck Kemp with any of them. Kemp ran into the next room and fired back through the crack in the door with his Winchester, causing Allen to run for the fence. Kemp followed Allen into the yard and attempted to fire two more times, but his father restrained him.

Allen, in his deposition, told a different tale, that he had gone in peace to work out the matter and Kemp had come out shooting. The depositions of other witnesses and the evidence did not bear out Allen's story. The fact that he had a pawn note from Kemp, who could neither read nor write, did not lend to his credibility either. However, for some reason, it appears that Allen was not convicted of the assault charge.

The killings that led to Allen's execution seem to be further proof of his volatility. They occurred after Sunday church services when four men were

arguing over a saddle. Allen was not a part of the group but he heard his name mentioned and approached the men and told them to keep his name out of it. One of the men responded, and Allen went to his wagon and got a rifle. He pointed it at Cy Love and pulled the trigger but the gun didn't fire. Shadrack Peters, who was nearby, told Allen, "Put down your gun and fight fair. Cy has got no gun." Allen then turned on Peters, who also was unarmed, and told Peters that if he wanted to take up the argument then he would kill him too. Peters replied that if he wanted to kill him then do so, whereupon, Allen fired and killed Peters. He then fired on Nero Russell and shot twice at Jack Peters, missing both men. Love ran around the church building, and Allen followed and shot him in the back, killing him. According to witnesses, Allen's rifle was the only gun present.

Deputy John A. McAllister sent the following letter to U.S. Marshal John Carroll next day:

Paul's Valley I.T. July 2nd, 1888

Col. John Carroll, U.S. Marshal

Yesterday, July the first a Negro named Melikies Allen shot and killed Silas Love and Shed Peters, both Negroes near Winewood I.T. The witnesses are Lawrence Love, Lige Blue, Mat Russell & Nero Russell.

The killing was done at the church. There was only one gun there. That was the one Allen had. The two Negroes he killed was unarmed and did not know Melikies Allen was mad or had anything against them. Both men are shot in the back. I hunted him all day yesterday after the killing and last night. Allen has three brothers and a cousin that is with him. They are all armed now and say they will not be taken alive. I am going after them today. Please send warrant at once.

John A. McAllister, Deputy Marshal

The newspapers made a longer and more exciting story out of the pursuit and capture than did McAllister, but they neglected to tell how fast this man worked. Later the same day, still July 2, McAllister sent this letter to Carroll also:

Paul's Valley I.T. July 2, Inst.

Marshal Carroll, I wrote you this morning for a writ for Melikies Allen, a Negro, for double murder. I stated that I was just starting to capture him. We found him about one mile from where he done his shooting, near a branch that runs through the prairie. When he saw us he ran his horse to the branch and got off the horse and behind a tree and began shooting at us. He shot three shots at us before we commenced shooting at him. We fired several shots without any effect. He fired about ten shots and we got him surrounded. He left the tree and took the open prairie tho (sic) in high weeds and grass. One shot struck his left arm and broke it and one struck his left foot in the bottom but didn't amount to much. He then surrendered. We brought him to Paul's Valley about 12 o'clock. His arm was shot so badly the doctors had to amputate it. He is getting along fine. Please send writ at once. He killed Silas Love and Shed Peters, both Negroes, yesterday, July 1st near Winewood I.T. Witnesses, Lawrence Love, Nero Russell and others, all Negroes. You will see in the information I sent this morning.

If Mr. Thomas is there tell him to send me the writ for Bud Bennett, a Negro from Stone Wall. I have him arrested, or if the writ is there send it or if the information is there send writ. Please send me writs for all the cases I have sent."

Yours Truly, John A. McAllister, Dept.

In the first week of January 1889, Allen went to trial in Fort Smith. In his application for witnesses he asked for a number of people whom he claimed could verify "That he was attacked by the deceased and others, some of them with knives — and beat and bruised — and that he shot in his own necessary self defense." At the trial, however, his attorneys, Duval and Cravens, based their defense on insanity. The *Elevator* reported that "Allen has conducted himself in a 'cranky' manner since his incarceration, but at the time of the killing

he had sense enough to make a desperate and shrewd flight when the officers overtook him." On Thursday, January 5, 1889, the jury took about twenty minutes to return a verdict of guilty.

James Mills

No motive is given for James Mills' murder of John Windom, either in existing archive documents or the period newspapers. There is one mention in the *Elevator* that the men might have had an argument on an earlier occasion. Without a motive, or maybe even with a motive, the events make no sense. The whole story involves a group of people with either unfathomable logic or total lack of logic.

Mills was either living or boarding at the home of his victim, John Windom. On Friday night, December 9, 1887, James Mills, Tom Robbins, John Windom and Windom's stepson, Phillip Lincoln, went hunting for coon and skunk. The only living witness, twelve-year-old Phillip, deposed and said that Windom was just walking along in front of Mills and listening for the dogs when Mills shot him. After Mills shot Windom, Robbins, who was walking behind Mills, stepped up and shot Windom twice. Mills shot Windom in the back, the bullet coming out of his breast, then Robbins turned him over and shot him first in the mouth then in the breast. They left Windom lying where he fell and started back to the Windom house. On the way the men told Phillip that if he told anyone what had happened they would kill him too.

The trio went back to the house and told Windom's wife, Eliza, some story explaining her husband's absence. Phillip testified that his mother (Mrs. Windom), Anna Edwards, Sylvia Lincoln, George Coody, George Lincoln and Robin Bruner were at the house when they returned and that Eliza Windom, Mills, Robbins, George Lincoln and Anna Edwards stayed there all night. The next morning Lincoln went to a neighbor's house and told them what had happened. That day Eliza Windom, Mills and others went out and found Windom's body and brought it home.

Peter Lincoln, Phillip's father, said in his deposition that Robbins told him that they were walking along and Mills pulled out his pistol and shot Windom then told him (Robbins) to shoot him

and that he shot him twice. Robbins gave no reason for the shooting.

Eucum Bruner, in his sworn statement, said that he went down to the Windoms' the day after the killing and asked Mills if he killed Windom and he said, "Yes." Bruner asked Mills if he would show him where the body was. They went in a wagon, and Mills drove to the spot where the body lay. Bruner said, "I told Jim that it was a pity they killed him, and Jim said he had to do it to save himself. He did not say why he had to do it to save himself."

Bruner and other neighbors formed a posse and attempted to arrest both Mills and Robbins. In the process, Robbins was shot "in the fleshy part of his leg" but Mills escaped. Robbins was taken to the jail at Fort Smith, where he died from an infection in the leg wound after being indicted but before being tried.

On the back of the True Bill indictment No. 2386, United States v. James Mills, murder is this notation dated November 10, 1888: "We the jury find the defendant, James Mills, guilty of murder as charged in the second count. R.A. Caldwell, Foreman."

On Saturday, February 2, 1889, Judge Isaac Parker, acting on United States v. James Mills, Indictment for Murder No. 2386, sentenced Mills to hang on April 19, 1889. Mills' attorneys immediately filed for a retrial citing the usual charges; that the jury's verdict was not according to law and that the court erred.

On the same day, the same sentence was pronounced on Malachi Allen with Judge Parker giving one of most the scathing addresses to the condemned man. In part, he said, "We scarcely ever have a case in court which exhibits the moral depravity and wickedness in your case. You have wickedly, wantonly and without any just cause taken the lives of two of your fellow men, for which high crimes against the law of your country, you are called on to pay the penalty due an offended and violated law. You not only killed the two men I have named, but you fired on two others. You made every endeavor possible to kill the officers who pursued you to bring you to justice. These acts done wrongfully and wickedly by you show that you have no regard for human life. You must pay the penalty of the offended law

with your own life. But you must do more than this. You must propitiate and satisfy God. A God whose law has been wickedly broken by you."

On that Saturday four more men were sentenced to hang but one would be commuted to life in prison, one given an unconditional pardon and two respited to a later date.

The following Friday, February 8, 1889, the *Fort Smith Weekly Elevator* ran this article:

"On Sunday evening last [2/3/89] the notorious Belle Starr was shot and killed near her home by unknown parties. She was riding along the road alone when her assailant fired on her with a shotgun, the shot striking her in the face. As she reached for her gun the assassin fired a second time putting a load of buckshot in her breast and she fell from her horse dead. The frightened animal ran home and the alarm was soon given, but up to this time, so far as we know, there is no clue to her murderers.

"Her husband, Jim Starr, alias Bill July, was here attending court as a defendant in a larceny case and received the news by telegraph Monday evening. He at once set out for the scene and will likely be heard from in due time."

And on the next Friday, February 15:

On Saturday last Jim Starr, husband of the late Belle Starr, arrived here, having in custody a man named E.A. Watson, whom he charges with having murdered Belle, and turned the prisoner over to Jailer Pettigrew.

Fort Smith Weekly Elevator, Friday, April 26, 1889:

Friday last was a gloomy day, being cloudy and raining, but especially gloomy about the United States court house and jail, where two lives were to be taken according to law and in behalf of justice.

Malachi Allen and James Mills were to suffer the extreme penalty of the law for murders committed in the Indian country. The death trap had been carefully prepared and the ropes well stretched for the occasion. The condemned men slept well during their last night on earth, and arose at the usual hour in the morning. They were furnished with a good breakfast of which they partook with apparent relish. During the forenoon they were furnished with neat black suits, white shirts, collars, cuffs and white ties. They made their toilets with great care, assisted by their fellow prisoners."

Until the execution day, Allen had made no religious preparations, but on that morning he asked for a minister. The Rev. J.L. Massey of the Methodist Church responded, and Allen was baptized saying that he had repented and was ready to die. Between 11 a.m. and noon, dinner was brought to the men, and Allen ate well, but Mills ate nothing and stayed in his cell with the Rev. Lawrence Smythe. By noon, other ministers had arrived at the jail, and they held services for Allen who knelt in the jail corridor surrounded by fellow prisoners Henry Miller, George Brashears, Frank Capel, Joe Martin and Jack Spaniard, all of whom were also convicted of murder.

Services concluded, Jailer Pettigrew entered and read the death warrants to the condemned men who showed no emotion or nervousness. That done, they bid farewell to the other prisoners, the doors swung open, and then the walk to the gallows commenced in drizzling rain. The ceremonies on the scaffold were brief. Allen's one arm was pinioned to his side, and Mills was bound in the usual way. The men spoke only to their spiritual advisers, the black caps and nooses were placed, and in a few seconds the drop fell. It was just fifteen minutes from the time the walk began until the drop fell and both of their necks were broken.

These two brought the number executed since 1873 to sixty-one, nineteen of whom were executed under the administration of Marshal Carroll.

Sources

Fort Smith Weekly Elevator
National Archives



Photo courtesy of Pauline Beckman

ELIN, REBECCA AND JAMES BECKMAN on Garrison Avenue in the 1940s.



Photo courtesy of Joyce McClure

DON AND LAURA JARRELL are shown on Garrison Avenue.

Man on the Street

1930s and 1940s on Garrison Avenue

We thought it would be fun to feature a collection of photographs of Fort Smithians, snapped on Garrison Avenue by an unknown photographer sometime during the late 1930s and the 1940s. As you walked along Garrison Avenue, somewhere near Hunts Department Store, the Boston Store or Tilles, you might become the subject of a "man on the street" photograph. The photographer snapped the photo, handed you a ticket, you paid and received the photo when it was ready. Does anyone remember the name of the photographer?

You may recognize friends and relatives here. You may have a photo to submit for the next "man on the street" column. If so, send it to: Editor, *The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society, Inc.*, P.O. Box 3676, Fort Smith, AR 72913-3676.

Man on the Street



Photo courtesy of Rita Webb



Photo courtesy of H.E. Huber



Photo courtesy of Joyce McClure

(ABOVE) R.C. Steinmetz and Wilma Hardgraves.

(TOP LEFT) Rita Webb and Larry Campbell. (Note: Larry Campbell was misidentified in the September 2008 issue.)

(LOWER LEFT) Herbert E. Huber, 15, and his mother, Hattie May Huber, 40, walk along Garrison Avenue on March 31, 1945.

Man on the Street

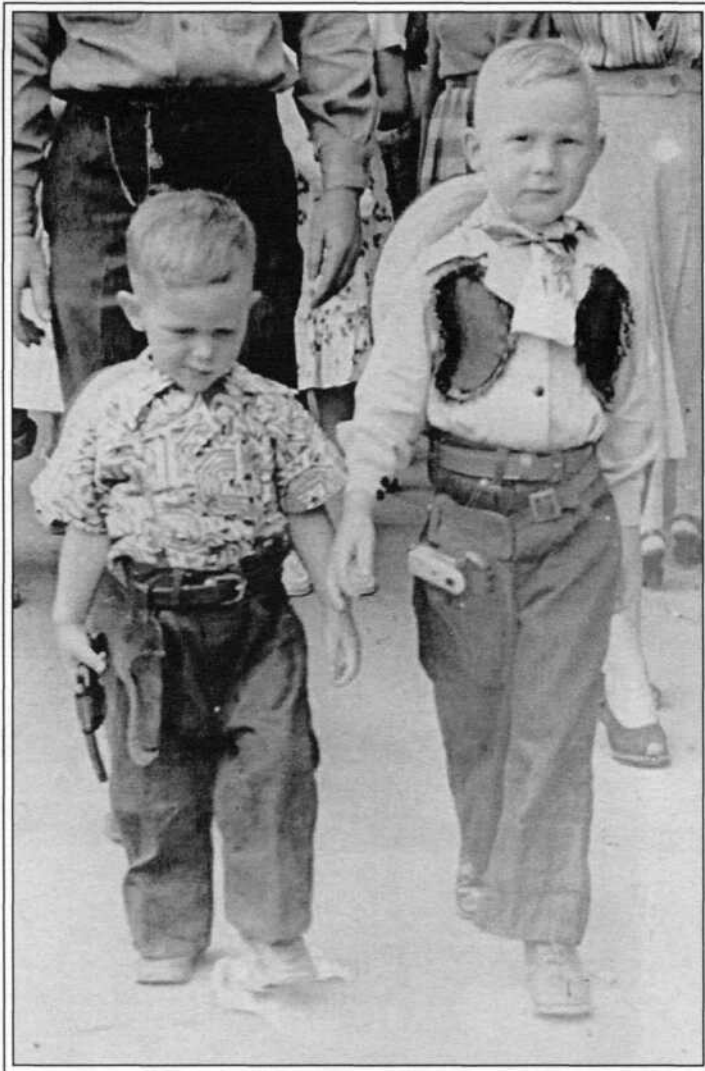


Photo courtesy of Bonnie Montgomery

(ABOVE) Jim Montgomery, left, and George Montgomery Jr. walk ahead of their parents, George and Bonnie Montgomery, on Garrison Avenue in 1947.

(TOP RIGHT) Kathleen Campbell on Garrison Avenue.

(LOWER RIGHT) Martha Ray Martin and Kate Lucille McMinn (Martin) are shown on Garrison Avenue in 1936.



Photo courtesy of Rita Webb



Photo courtesy of Amanda Hiller Goldsborough

Man on the Street



Photo courtesy of Nancy Ciulla

MARY NARISI and Mary Ciulla in the 1940s.

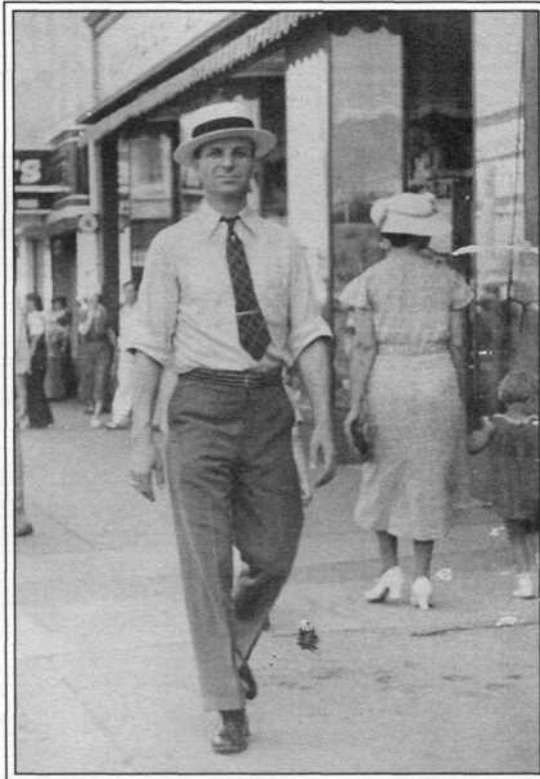


Photo courtesy of Nancy Ciulla

SARINO CIULLA, circa 1930s.



Photo courtesy of Nancy Ciulla

JIM AND MARY CIULLA, circa 1940s.



Photo courtesy of Nancy Ciulla

SARINO CIULLA, 1945.

Man on the Street



Photo courtesy of Nancy Martin Heflin

(ABOVE) Tommy, Nancy, Amelia and Bradley Martin walk along Garrison Avenue, circa 1949.

(TOP RIGHT) Gwen Kissinger Carter and Walter Lee Carter are shown on Garrison Avenue before they married, circa 1940.

(LOWER RIGHT) Wenoma F. (Jacobs) Wiltshire and William Duke Wiltshire are shown on Garrison Avenue in about 1945 or 1946. Wenoma, part Cherokee and Choctaw, was born in Indian Territory in 1893, and William, also part Cherokee, was born in Indian Territory in 1888. The couple lived in Muldrow until their deaths. William died in 1959 and Wenoma in 1987.

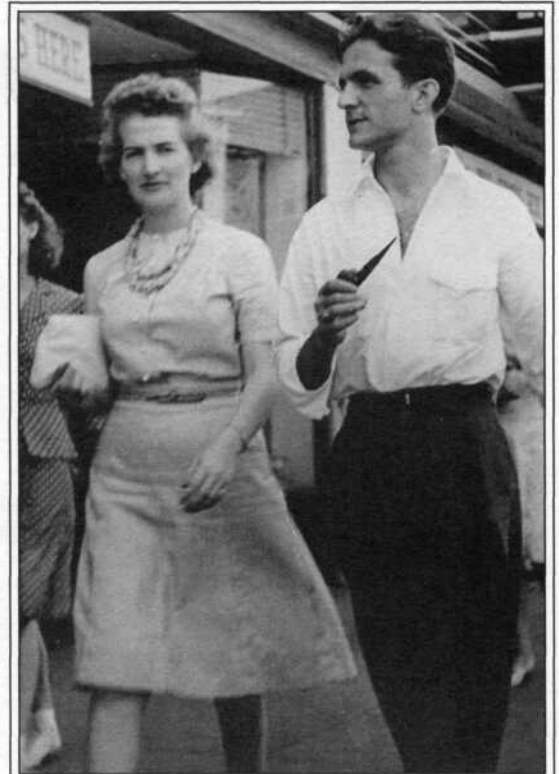


Photo courtesy of Mrs. Walter Carter



Photo courtesy of Ida Pilgrim

1909 Newspapers

THE SOUTHWEST AMERICAN

January-July 1909
by Wincie Hendricks

Abstracted from microfilm
in the Fort Smith Public Library.

Editor's note: Most spelling, punctuation and grammar
appear as printed in *The Southwest American*.

Midland Heights	200
• W.W. Bailey et al to Mrs. Max Hopp: lot 9 and 10, block 2, Fairground addition	450
• Mary E. Henry to City of Fort Smith, lot 6, block 53, Fitzgerald addition.....	1,200
• C.C. Robertson and wife to Cons. P. Wilson	18 acres

January 3, 1909

REAL ESTATE MARKET WAKING UP; \$33,000 IN SALES THE PAST WEEK

The real estate market shows a general waking up and the dealers anticipate a very active business from this time on. Many deals are in hand, and the coming month will chronicle numerous important transactions.

There will be a large number of residences erected this summer. Among them will be a one-story frame cottage on South Twenty-second street by Frank W. Bredlow. It will be a modern home and will cost about \$7,500.

The Lyman Abstract company reports the following warranty deeds having been filed since December 20, amounting to \$33,200, an increase of nearly \$20,000 over the same week a year ago:

- S.W. Hoag and wife to
Frank Steumetz, lot 5, block 576,
Reserve addition..... \$2,300
- John Kagen and wife to
Will O'Shea, lot 13, block 2,
Barry addition \$300
- J.L. Hendricks to
Roscoe H. Johnston, lot 4, block 116,
school addition 750
- C.W.L. Armour and wife
to A.C. Earp, lot 34, block 32

January 23, 1909

BIG ROBBERY AT GREENLEE HOME

The biggest robbery yet reported since the wave of crime enveloped Fort Smith was reported yesterday evening to the police.

The home of A.L. Greenlee on Park avenue was entered while the family was absent and the robbers secured \$200 in cash, a diamond ring, gold watch and other jewelry, and two checks. Mr. Greenlee had payment on the checks stopped at the bank, so their loss will not mean anything. Mr. Greenlee is half owner of the Cruce drug store on Eleventh street.

The robbers were very bold entering the house in broad daylight. They made themselves very much at home and evidently knew that the family would not return soon because they had the nerve to sit down to a meal which they prepared themselves. That there were two persons is evidenced by the table being set for two people.

It is thought that the robbery was committed by a redheaded woman and a small girl as two persons of that description were seen in the neighborhood yesterday begging. The police have the description and are on the lookout for them. Another theory is that it may have been the two young men who have been going about the city on the pretense of selling silver polish and who have acted in a very bold and suspicious manner.

February 5, 1909

**JUDGE HARP MAY REVOKE SALOON
LICENSE OF PLACE WHERE WOMEN
WERE SERVED WITH INTOXICANTS**

That women are permitted in certain saloons in the city and that they are accompanied by male companions who order drinks which are served in the seclusion of rear rooms, has recently been brought out in testimony in Justice Fisher's court.

The revelation has caused County Judge Harp to start a quiet investigation and it is more than probable that the licenses of the luckless saloonists who have violated their agreement will be abrogated.

It is an iron-clad specification in the pledge which County Judge Harp demanded before licenses were issued the first of the year, that women would not be permitted in saloons, and that no drinks would be sold, which knowingly to the bartenders were intended for women.

February 23, 1909

CITY NEWS

The body of Dave Carouth, who committed suicide Monday in a room in the Breen rooming house, was shipped yesterday to Lavaca, Ark., where interment took place.

Members of the Knights of Columbus and their friends enjoyed a euchre party and dance at Knights of Columbus hall last night.

The Salvation Army is caring for two small boys, for whom homes are wanted. The children were deserted in this city some months ago and were sent to Cowlington, Okla., where a physician cared for them until recently, when they were returned.

The local Catholic Societies are planning for a big celebration of St. Patrick's day.

There will be an entertainment given in Catholic hall, and other features commemorative to the great

patron saint of Ireland held.

March 27, 1909

MALEDON WILL CASE SETTLED

The suit to break the will of Katherine Maledon, brought by Lucien Maledon, by his guardian, Fannie M. Pague, was settled out of court yesterday, the other heirs to the estate agreeing to give young Maledon \$1,000 in cash and a number of lots in Fort Smith, and an eighty-acre farm, all of which is said to total about \$7,000. For this consideration Maledon forfeits all right to one-fifth of the estate of his grandfather, John B. Maledon, and of the estate of his grandmother, Katherine Maledon. The property to which he was given the deeds, beside the farm, is 45 feet of Lot 1, block 90, corner Twelfth and F streets; lots 7 and 8, race track row, section 16, on Greenwood avenue.

April 10, 1909

WANT ROGERS AVENUE PAVED

The property owners on Rogers avenue are clamoring for the paving of that thoroughfare. Nearly all of the curb and gutter has been put in, only a few properties still remaining neglected in this respect, outside of the city and federal properties. With the coming of the new administration a renewed effort will be made by prominent property owners to get the paving done on this thoroughfare. They feel that, owing to its prominence and the fact that it comes under the eye of so many visitors to the city who go to the courthouse and the federal building, that it ought to be attended to at once. The paving of this street from Towson avenue to the railroad tracks would make a greater showing, to out-of-town people, than any other in the city.

The same sort of a movement is on foot in the matter of "A" street, and many property owners on that street are clamoring for it to be paved. The curb and gutter has been completed there, except in a few spots, east as far as Sixth street, and it is expected the brick will soon be going down. The

paving of Rogers and "A" would greatly relieve the frequent crowded conditions of Garrison avenue.

May 4, 1909

LARGEST IN THE SOUTH

Will Be The First National Bank Building Passenger Elevator, Contract For Which Was Let Yesterday

The passenger elevators for the First National Bank building were contracted for yesterday, and, like the rest of the appurtenances thereto, they will surpass anything in the southwest in cost, quality and perfection. There is nothing so good south of St. Louis, with the possible exception of one at Dallas. This part of elevators will have a lifting capacity of 2000 pounds and a speed of 350 to 400 feet per minute, and will be propelled by a direct current of 500 volts.

May 20, 1909

VALUED AT \$1200; ASSESSED AT \$125

While viewing the proposed road which is to run parallel with Free Ferry road, opposite Walter Barry's farm, Michael Burke and Fred Johnston learned that Barry claimed that his property was worth \$1,200 an acre, and on that basis he wanted damages assessed on account of the building of the road.

The assessors' books show that his land is assessed at only \$125 per acre, and this case serves to illustrate the need of the state tax equalization board which was created at the recent session of the legislature.

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- NOTES: # - some sort of graphic is used, other than a portrait.
 * - a portrait of the person(s) named is on page indicated.
 (- - -) - for such as title, marital status, degree, etc.
 "- - -" - for nickname or special emphasis.
 (-) - dash between page numbers indicates the name of the person, place, etc. is carried throughout the story.
 (gp) - group picture
 (pc) - postcard

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