

ARKANSAS CITY

Downtown Historic District Walking Tour



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150 YEARS ON THE PRAIRIE

The City of Arkansas City was founded in 1870 and incorporated as a city in Cowley County the following year.

The population of the City was 214 in 1870, when Osage tribal land was opened for settlement that July. By 1880, it had swollen to 1,799, according to Cutler's History of Kansas.

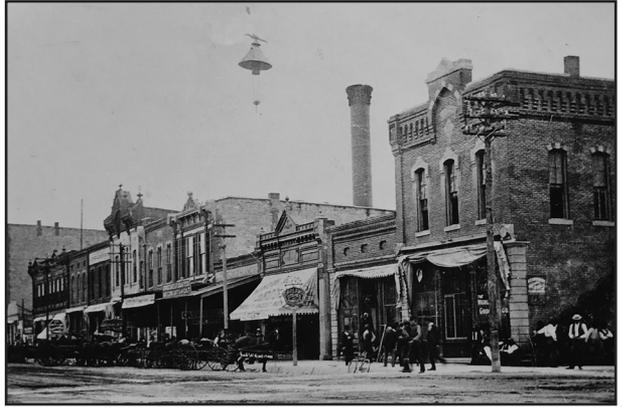
The first building in the settlement was a log house. A general store from Emporia and a newspaper, first published in August 1870, quickly followed.

C.M. Scott, publisher of The Arkansas City Traveler, noted there were 12 houses and 38 business buildings in the new town site.

With the news of the pending arrival of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe rail line, the town constructed a water sawmill and flour mill.

By 1881, the town had its own waterworks, with spring water pumped to a reservoir in the southern portion of the city.

Arkansas City improved its downtown commercial district rapidly in the 1880s, building several handsome brick-and-stone buildings on South Summit Street between Adams and Fifth avenues. Business growth also occurred along Central Avenue.



Between 1910 and 1930, the town continued to boom with the discovery of oil in Cowley County, and the first refinery was constructed in 1917. A second refinery was built in 1923. The economy of the town took off as the flour mills and the meat package industry grew.

The oil boom, which reached its peak in 1925, tapered off in the late 1920s and 1930s, but the population remained relatively stable (around 12,000 to 14,000) through World War II, supported by trade and other industries.

Just prior to World War II, the cities of Arkansas City and Winfield arranged for the joint purchase of land for construction of an airport, now known as Strother Field.

During the war, the U.S. Army Air Corps leased the land and developed the field as a training base.

The military returned Strother Field to the cities a short time later.

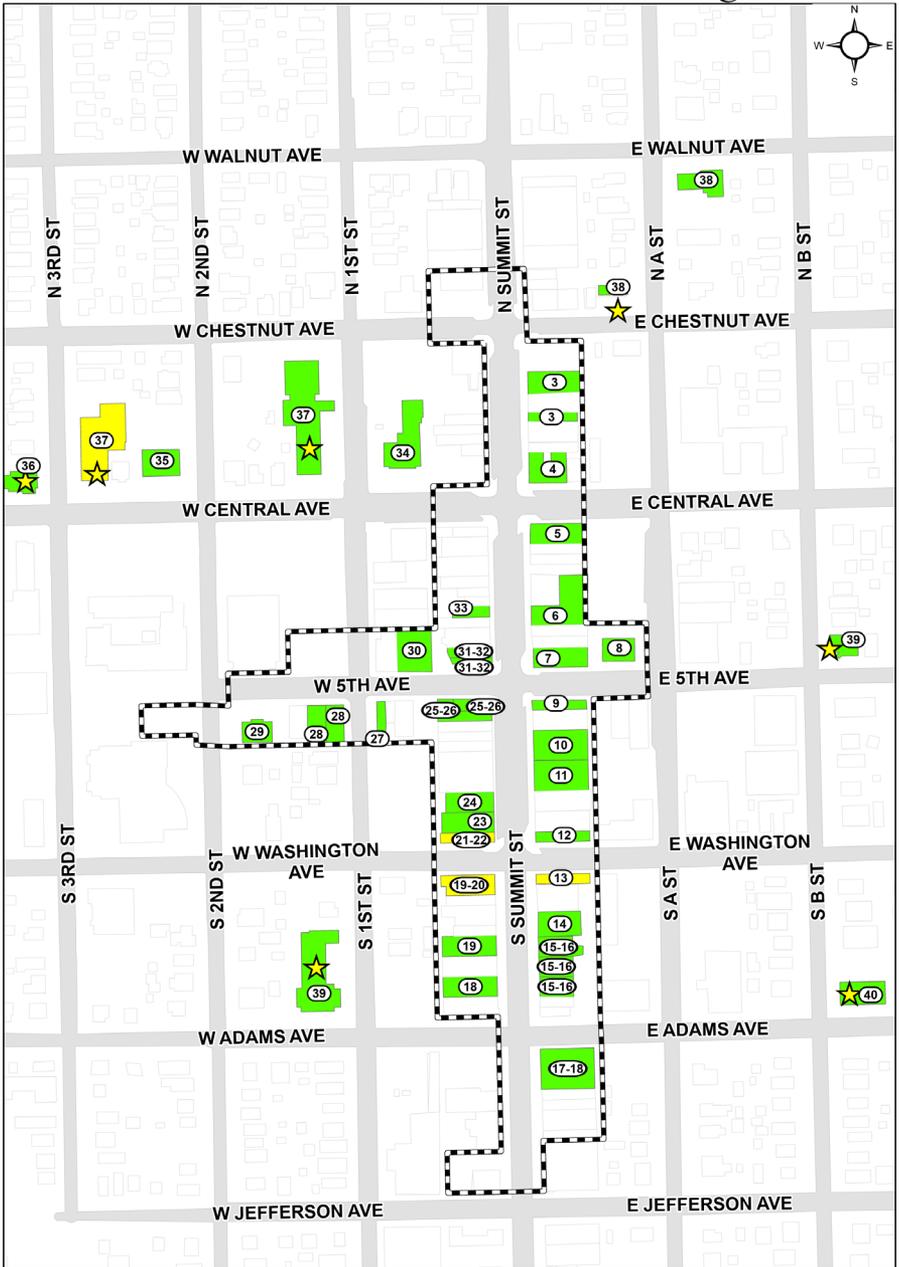
Between 1960 and 1990, Arkansas City experienced a gradual loss of population, from a high of 14,262 in 1960 to 13,201 in 1980.

The downtown remained the primary location for finance and specialty retail shops for years, keying a regional retail hub, but a primary concern of community leaders at the time was the renovation of older downtown buildings, which continues to be a local challenge to this day.

The 1990s and early 2000s presented serious economic losses to the community when Morrell Meats and the Total Petroleum refinery closed.

New businesses have moved in, and others have expanded, including Creekstone Farms Premium Beef, which now employs more than 1,000 people.

Downtown Historic District Walking Tour



Walking Tour Sites ★ Churches

Note: Number on map represents page it can be found on in brochure

- Contributing
- Non-Contributing
- Not Included

--- Historic District



Want to learn more about a particular building's history? Simply scan the QR code on its page with your phone or device to go to a webpage on the City website with more information about that building!

RED HEAD MOTOR CO.

118-120 North Summit Street



The entire site first operated as a garage. In 1920, the front half of the building was devoted to auto sales and the back half to auto repair.

In 1930, it was listed as the Red Head Motor Co. By 1938, three auto-related companies shared the space.

A chicken hatchery operated at the building from 1947 to 1952. First known as Potter Hatchery, Dale Arbuckle purchased the business in 1949 and ran it as Arbuckle Hatchery.

This commercial vernacular-style building features a stepped parapet at the roof level.

The old Antiques Plus Mall at 118 N. Summit St. was built in 1912.

During the first half of the 20th century, the one-story red brick building adjoined a two-story brick structure to the north, 120 N. Summit St. The northern building was

operated since 1962 as the Osage Cleaners, when the dry cleaners moved there from another downtown location. It was demolished in 2000, and the north wall of the mall building adjoining the south wall of the old dry cleaners building was torn down in 2002.

SUMMIT BARBER SHOP

112 North Summit Street



Keefe Printing and Office Supply, located at 112 N. Summit St., was constructed in 1899.

The one-story brick building was operated as a barber shop in 1905 and 1912. During the second decade of the 20th century, a barber named F.H. Harper ran the shop at that address.

In 1920, it was occupied by a stone cutter, and in 1925, the Reed Radio Co. operated there. The building again was used as



a barber shop and lunch counter by 1938. Later, in the 1950s and 1960s, it operated as the Summit Beauty Shoppe, owned

by Vivena Simon. This commercial style building features a tan brick façade with contrasting brick corbeling at the parapet.

THE OSAGE HOTEL

100 North Summit Street



The Osage Hotel was built in 1920 at the northeast corner of Summit Street and Central Avenue by the Swenson Construction Co., of Kansas City, Missouri.

The price to build the five-story brick and stone structure was \$250,000.

Materials, including the Silverdale stone that was used to finish the first level of the hotel, were brought by railroad.

The Osage replaced the town's first hotel, a small rooming house called the Central Avenue Hotel.

In addition to hotel rooms, ground-floor

storefronts housed small shops, including the Peacock Shop (1938), the Osage Barber Shop (1930s-1950s), and a liquor and coffee shop.

"This corner has been continuously a spot for the weary traveler to seek food and sleep for nearly 70 years," noted Arkansas City photographer George Cornish in a presentation he gave about 1940. In 1991, the hotel was converted to apartments and the name was changed to the Osage Senior Apartments.

This building, which has both Neoclassical and late 19th/20th Century Classical

Revival architectural elements, features a deep cornice and stylized brick balustrade along the parapet at roof level, horizontal stone banding, keystones at the major windows, and the original stone storefront.

Did You Know?

The first Arkalalah Cotillion was held in the then-Osage Hotel's ballroom. Queen Alalah I and her court were escorted to the hotel after the coronation ceremony was held at the Fifth Avenue Opera House.

BRYANT HARDWARE

100-102 South Summit Street



The former Bryant Hardware store's origins date back at least to 1870, the year the town was founded. Pioneer businessman C.R. Sipes owned the property and built a hardware store at the southeast corner of Summit Street and Central Avenue. The Gilbert-Sturtz store also was located there and later the Al G. Wright hardware store.

In a photo book, "Arkansas City Illustrated," that includes many early-day photos of Ark City taken by noted Western photographer George Cornish, there appears a photo of the Sipes store. The caption notes that Sipes began his business in a very small way in 1870. He hauled his first goods by wagon from

Emporia and his store was one of the first in Ark City.

It grew to become one of the best hardware stores in Cowley County. Sipes died in 1898, but a series of successors continued to operate a hardware business at 102 S. Summit St. until 1931. Other businesses operated out of part of the building. In 1925, Feagin's Drug Store and W.C. Stoner's barber shop operated at 100 S. Summit St. By 1952, Ruth's Ready Wear was in this space.

Scott Terrel CPA, LLC, currently operates out of 100 S. Summit St., taking over for Riggs Tax Service, which previously occupied the location.

Lew Bryant, who moved to Arkansas City with his family in 1926, began in the hardware

business as a partner in the firm Gambrill-Bryant Hardware. The company originally operated at 106 S. Summit St. Eight years later, Bryant moved his own company a few doors north to the former Sipes hardware store site at 102 S. Summit St. He purchased the two-story brick building, which has a 25-foot front and is 132 feet long, from Guy Ormiston in 1934.

Lew's son, Vic Bryant, took over the store after his father's death. He was succeeded in the business by his son, Alan; Alan's brother, John; and John's son, Zach. The Bryant family continued to operate Bryant Hardware until 2009, when the store went out of business.

102 S. Summit St. was subsequently home to D&R Scrapbook and currently Make It Yours, while 104 S. Summit St. has been the home of Double Eagle Firearms & Pawn since Bryant Hardware closed.

This late 19th/20th Century Classical Revival building with Neoclassical stylistic elements is a four-bay by seven-bay structure that features cast stone trim with columns and corbeling.

THE BURFORD THEATRE

110-112-116-118 South Summit Street



In November 1919, J.B. Burford and his associates purchased Highland Hall, the town's first opera house that was built in 1883, as an initial step toward their plan to build a moving picture palace.

They also purchased the Isabella Block building next door, to the south of Highland Hall.

The Saddle Rock Café had operated in the Isabella Block at 118 S. Summit St. since at least the early 1900s.

The buildings were razed in 1924 for construction of the new Burford Theatre.

It opened in September of that year and the opening represented an investment of \$300,000.

The two-story Burford Theatre, connected to the adjacent Burford Commercial Building, has a total frontage of 125 feet.



The theater was built as a venue for vaudeville shows, local artistic productions and movie events.

Ginger Rogers performed on the Burford stage as part of a vaudeville act in the mid- to late 1930s.

The Arkalalah coronation was held at the theater in the 1930s, the early years of the town's annual fall festival.

Actress Janis Carter, who

starred in the movie "Santa Fe," visited the theater in 1951 for the staging of the movie's premiere.

The theater underwent several changes to its interior through the years.

It closed in 2004, and then-owner B&B Theatres donated the building to the Arkansas City Area Arts Council.

The council then led a 12-year, \$7.5 million effort to restore the theater to its original 1920s look.

Community volunteers, professional construction workers and a New York-based restoration firm worked long hours to restore the theater, which reopened in 2016.

The prairie-style structure with Neoclassical decorative elements is a three-bay buff building with wreath and garland.



HOME NATIONAL BANK

126 South Summit Street



On June 14, 1917, Home National Bank dedicated its new \$100,000 building on the northeast corner of Summit Street and Fifth Avenue.

That afternoon and evening, the bank's president, Albert Denton, and his staff received hundreds of visitors and guided them through the two-story bank.

Spotlights illuminated the building and the Arkansas City High School orchestra provided music.

Congratulatory telegrams came from banks and individuals from throughout the U.S. and Canada.

One of those messages

was from F.M. Strong, of Beloit, Wisconsin, a former Arkansas City resident and the first president of the bank. Strong, Howard Ross and A.A. Newman founded the bank as The Strong & Ross Banking Co. in 1888.

By 1891, it was housed in a former brick building at the Summit Street and Fifth Avenue site.

The name of the business changed to Home National Bank when a national charter was obtained in December 1890.

Construction of the new, Neoclassical Revival-style building started in June 1916.

The Ashlar stone structure with a tall granite

base has Greek Doric columns along the principal façades, a vault façade, and a parapet wall with 20th Century Baroque balusters, triglyphs and block medallions.

The bank continued to operate successfully for many decades.

In addition to the bank on the main floor, the building also housed professional offices on the second floor, including those of lawyers, doctors, dentists, accountants, and insurance and oil company representatives, into the early 1960s.

Home National Bank closed in July 2010, when it was acquired by RCB Bank.



OLD U.S. POST OFFICE

120 East Fifth Avenue



While best known as the current location of the Arkansas City Public Library, the corner of Fifth Avenue and A Street has a long, storied place in the annals of the town's history.

In May 1914, Arkansas City Postmaster C.N. Hunt was ordered by federal officials to vacate the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and A Street for the construction of a new post office. Celebrated Western photographer George B. Cornish arranged to move his photographic studio from the site to a new location a few blocks away.

The 1 1/2-story brick building was completed in 1915. Hundreds of residents attended the dedication ceremony of the new, \$75,000 federal building on November 23, 1915.

It was built in the Italian Renaissance style, featuring an Ashlar stone foundation and symmetrical façade with arcade and Corinthian stone columns that frame a recessed center bay.

The post office operated at this location for 52 years.

It moved to the northeast corner of Washington Avenue and A Street in December 1967. The Arkansas City Public Library moved into the former post office building in November 1980.

Ark City's first post office was established in 1870, the year the town was founded.

It was in a log cabin store operated by the Norton brothers, at the northeast corner of B Street and Central Avenue.

The cabin was moved later to Paris Park, as a

memento of the town's pioneer days, before it was washed away in the flood of 1923. The post office moved several more times, always to the homes or businesses of the postmasters.

When Cyrus M. Scott was appointed postmaster in April 1875, the post office was moved to the Traveler building of that day — Scott was the first editor of the newspaper — about where the Burford Theatre now stands. Scott lived above the post office. When the stagecoach with the mail appeared, he would blow a horn because its arrival was more or less indefinite.

Later, in 1907, the post office was moved to a more permanent site, the I.O.O.F. building at 201 W. Fifth Ave., where it remained until 1915.

THE HOWARD BUILDING

200 South Summit Street



Richard C. Howard, longtime editor and publisher of *The Arkansas City Daily Traveler*, built this structure in 1931 at a cost of \$35,000. Howard also served as a city mayor, postmaster, and state representative and senator.

The Howard Building replaced two previous imposing buildings, each of which was destroyed in a fire. The first of these, built in 1889, was a four-story structure of red stone called the Colorado Block.

It was a business building that included a barber shop, transfer office and newspaper plant. It burned down on January 10, 1905.

Reconstructed in 1906, the new building became known as the Johnson Block (1906) and the Donohue Block (1928).

The building burned again in February 1931.

The three-story Howard Building was designed by

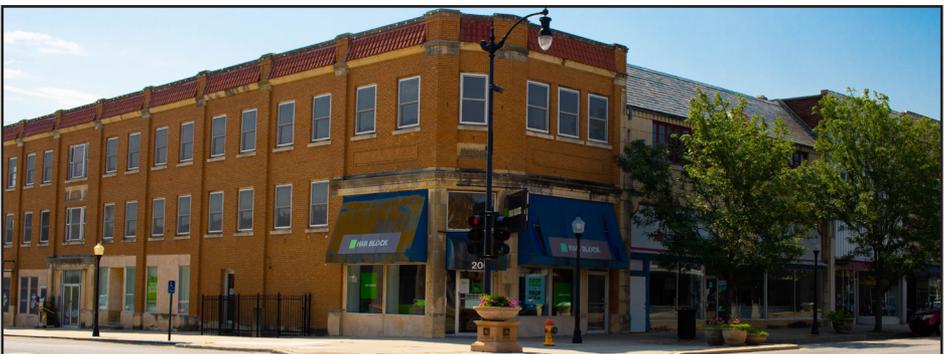
a Wichita architect with elements of the Commercial Vernacular and Spanish Eclectic styles, finished in buff brick and trimmed in Silverdale-cut stone.

The cornice has several feet of red clay tile parapet, in addition to corbeled trim and projecting brick pilasters at regular intervals along the principal façades.

R.C. Howard came to Ark City in 1884 as a newspaper printer. In 1886, he and a partner established the city's first daily newspaper; it was to be named the *Daily Traveler* a few years later. Howard sold the *Traveler* to Oscar Stauffer in 1924. Howard's sons, Forrest and Harry, learned the newspaper business from their father, starting at age 10 as delivery carriers. Years later, R.C. Howard and his son, Harry, became partners in ownership of the *Traveler*; Forrest was managing editor and editorial writer.

The Howard brothers acquired the *Weekly Tribune* in 1929. The brothers moved the *Tribune* to a Howard building on West Fifth Avenue and once again went into business with their father, who became the *Tribune* publisher. In 1945, the year after R.C. Howard died, the Howard brothers sold the *Tribune* to the *Traveler* Publishing Co.

They then established Howard Brothers Investments, located in the Howard Building at 200 S. Summit St. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Howard Building was occupied by Dye's Drug Store, on the ground level on Summit, and the Rex Barber Shop on the ground level on East Fifth Avenue. It is now occupied by H&R Block, on the Summit Street ground level, and the U.S. Marine Corps Career Center, on the East Fifth Avenue ground level.



ZADIE BLOCK BUILDING

206-208 South Summit Street



Two major downtown fires in 1931, occurring within three months of each other, destroyed several buildings on the east side of the 200 block of South Summit Street.

Although structures on both sides of the Zadie Building, 206-210 S. Summit St., were devastated, it still was standing after the second fire in May 1931.

At the time of the second fire, the Eiffler jewelry store and Bartell's barber shop occupied the Zadie Building. In July 1931, workmen tearing out the front of the Zadie Building found a stone hidden behind the front of the building with the engraved initials "G.W.C."

The letters stood for

George W. Cunningham, an early citizen and former mayor of Arkansas City.

Old-timers estimated the Cunningham building was erected about 1881.

In 1931, it was renovated to conform with the front of the new Heard-Bunnel-Denton building, located just to the north, and the entire structure with a 75-foot front was to be known as "Zadie Block."

The commercial-style building with Neoclassical trim elements was remodeled with a brick façade trimmed with Silverdale-cut stone. It also features quoining and keystones. By October 1936, a Townsend's department store occupied the building at 210 S. Summit St.

By September 1956, Sears

Roebuck & Co. had moved into the north part of the building, at 206 S. Summit St., and Gambles department store was at 208 S. Summit St. By the early 1970s, Litwin's department store had moved into the building from another downtown location, 307 S. Summit St.

An antique store that had operated under various names — including Land Rush Antique Mall, Summit Antique Mall, and Cowley Antique Mall and Used Book Café — at 208 S. Summit St. finally closed in January 2020. A gift shop, Flawed Perfection — formerly known as Bee'Tween Friends — also has operated in the north storefront at 206 S. Summit St. since about 2015.

ORMISTON BUILDING

212-214 South Summit Street



The Graves Self-Service Drug store held its formal opening at 212 S. Summit St. in April 1948.

It opened in a rebuilt, redecorated and refurnished building previously known as the Arcade Building.

(It was the 11th drug store opened by Graves.)

The business also had stores in El Dorado, Winfield and several other towns in Kansas.

Prominent Arkansas City businessman Guy Arthur Ormiston planned to build the Arcade Building after a devastating fire in May 1931 destroyed the Commercial Block building, a three-story structure with bay windows that was constructed in 1884 and as recently as 1925 had housed the Leland Hotel upstairs.

Ormiston's father, George, purchased the south portion of the Commercial Building in 1914 and later bought another 75-foot portion.

It was occupied by several businesses, including a clothing store, Kirkpatrick's Furniture and a shoe store, and later renamed the Ormiston Building.

After the devastating 1931 fire — the second major fire on the east side of the 200 block of South Summit Street that year — Guy Ormiston decided to rebuild. The new Ormiston Arcade Building opened in early 1932.

Before Graves refurbished the building, it was occupied by O.W. Fox, a druggist who relocated from 222 S. Summit St.; Clarence

Bartell, a barber; C.H. Sanderson, who operated a ladies' shoe and hosiery store; and Grant Sears, men's furnishings.

The American Legion owned the portion of the building at 214 S. Summit St., possibly as far back as 1952, as recently as 1983, which could account for the closed-up second-level windows.

The architectural style of the Graves building is late 19th/20th Century Classical/Italian Renaissance Revival.

It is a two-story buff-brick structure with nine bays featuring palladian and arched upper windows, a stepped parapet at the roof, stone detailing, a cornice band and small circle panels between the upper windows.



K.P. CASTLE BLOCK

226 South Summit Street



The three-story stone building at 226 S. Summit St., now occupied by Schmidt Jewelers, was constructed in 1889.

It was known as the K.P. Castle Block. K.P. stood for the Knights of Pythias, a secretive men's fraternal order that met on the third floor of the building.

The K.P. Block replaced a previous structure known as the Pottle Building, named for the W.H. Pottle Dry Goods Company that operated there.

By 1928, the K.P. Block also was called the Whittle Building, for the family that owned it.

In addition to the K.P. hall on the third floor, there was a clothing store operating on the ground level and a bowling alley in the basement, according to the 1890 Sanborn Fire Insurance map of downtown Arkansas City.

By the end of the first decade of the 1900s, The Globe, a ready-to-wear women's clothing store, occupied the ground floor.

Incorporated as part of the store was Lessem Mercantile, and in 1909, The Globe provided added room for the Lessem store's expanded stock of women's hats.



By 1910 or 1911, L.D. Mitchell, a dentist, had an office in the building.

The K.P. and dentist are not listed as occupying the building on the 1920 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, which shows a clothing and millinery store and furnished rooms on the third floor.

In October 1926, the Brown & Miller Furniture Co. held an open house after remodeling the 226 S. Summit St. building.

The entire building, from the basement to the third floor, was occupied by the furniture company.

In the late 1960s until 1974, Richardson Interiors operated at 226 S. Summit St. before moving to a North Summit Street location.

In 1999, Arkansas City native Luke Schmidt announced the opening of Schmidt Jewelers at the 226 S. Summit St. location.

This vernacular-style structure with Richardsonian Romanesque influences features arched windows and masonry rustication, fitting for one of the oldest surviving buildings in Ark City.

CRESWELL BUILDING

300 South Summit Street



In 1884, a two-story frame structure occupied by a luncheonette was on the lot at 300 S. Summit St.

In 1886, the site contained a two-story brick structure called the Creswell Building, with a basement and a frame awning.

A drug store occupied the first level and a billiards room was in the basement.

In 1898, A.H. Fitch's music store was located at 300 S. Summit St.

A furniture store occupied the first level in 1905 and the building's name was changed to the Trimper Building.

A new address appeared on the north side of the building (101 E. Washington Ave.) and an undertaker was on the second level.

An elevator also was installed by this time.

The People's Store, a department store managed by W.S. Carter, occupied 300 S. Summit St. in 1925.

In 1928, W.T. Head opened the Brownbilt shoe store, selling Buster Brown shoes at that address.

Two years later, Ted Hedges bought the store.

In 1933, Hedges announced he had completed a course in foot culture and he began



offering lightweight arch supports for customers.

In 1947, Froelich Shoes opened a store at 227 S. Summit St. and sold several shoe brands, including Buster Browns.

This store was located at 300 S. Summit St. from about 1966 until 1969, by which time the store had changed names to Taylor's Shoe Store.

Shear Success salon operated at the South Summit storefront from 1989 until at least 2016.

Remedies Salon and Boutique has operated at the location in more recent years, and a separate hair and nail salon has occupied the East Washington

storefront.

The two-story brick building built in the Commercial Vernacular style has been altered significantly through the years.

The segmentally arched window heads have been boarded up and downsized, and the corbeled trim is obscured by a large fixed awning and replacement storefront.

Although this currently is listed as a contributing building, these changes make it likely that it would become noncontributing if the district is ever amended, despite its status as one of the oldest buildings still standing in Arkansas City.

SHERIDAN BLOCK

308-310 South Summit Street



The Sheridan Block building was built in the late 1880s.

In 1890, this three-story stone building was occupied by a harness business at 308 S. Summit St. and an agricultural implements store at 310 S. Summit St.

A central stairway was installed inside the building on the Summit Street side, between the two businesses.

A number of different businesses have occupied the building through the years, but it probably is known best as having housed women's clothing stores — first, Bridges Style Shop, which moved to 310 S. Summit St. in 1937; and second, Harvey's Fashions, which opened in 1960 and continued to operate until July 2002, when Denim to Lace announced it was moving north to the 310 address from a few doors south on the same side of the street.

Denim to Lace continued in business through 2006.

Previous occupants include, in 1920, the Arkansas Valley Gas Co.

It occupied 308, while 310 was divided into two stores — a flower shop and shoeshine business.

By that year, the upper

floors of the building had rooms for rent.

The Ark Valley Gas Co. remained through 1930, but by 1938, the Kemp Sales Co. and an optometrist occupied 308 S. Summit St.

The American Café occupied the 310 location by 1925, but left the building by 1928.

Bridge's Style Shop was in business at 310 S. Summit St. from 1937 until 1960, when Harvey's moved in.

The building, most recently home to the now-closed Special Threads dress/tuxedo shop at 308 and M's Used Furniture

Store at 310, has elements of the Richardsonian Romanesque, Romanesque Revival, Sullivanesque Influence and Italianate styles.

It has a rock-faced stone façade with a band of round-arched window openings on the second floor and segmentally arched windows on the third floor.

Historic views illustrate that a pressed-metal cornice and other features have been removed from upper façade.

In addition to its rustication and arch work, this building features rosettes in cast-iron trim.



EAGLE//SUMMIT BLOCK

312-314-316-318-320-322 South Summit



Known as the Eagle and Summit Block building, this structure is one of the key historic buildings in the Downtown Historic District.



The Eagle Block and Summit Block were twin buildings adjoining each other, both built in 1886 — with the Eagle Block north of the Summit Block.

By 1890, a third building of the same style and structure was added to the south end of the original Summit building.

From the mid-1880s to mid-1920s, many different businesses occupied the two-story stone buildings with a distinctive cast-iron façade on the upper story.

They included a millinery store, tailor, grocery, hardware store, furniture

store, electrical supply company, meat market, barber, shoe repair, dry cleaners, bakery and — in the early 1900s — a saloon.

The Peerless Bakery was in business at 318 S. Summit St. from about 1920 until 1940.

The Crystal Barber Shop at 322 S. Summit St. started in 1923 and — as of 2021 — remained in business under that name after having undergone several ownership changes.

The store that remained in business at the Summit Block the longest under the same owner was Duvall's Pharmacy. It occupied 312 S. Summit St. for 40 years, from 1925 until 1965.

The owner, Ethel Duvall, came to Ark City as a licensed pharmacist in 1914, after graduating from Valparaiso

University in Indiana.

The year she moved to Ark City, Duvall bought out the Bunker and Fretz drug store at 215 S. Summit St., known as the Walpex Building and the location of Woolworth's.

In 1925, Duvall moved her business across the street to the next block south, to 312 S. Summit St.

The business continued operating at the Summit Block location until it announced a "quitting business" sale in 1965.

Since 1935 until her death in 1974, Ethel Duvall also was known as Ethel Duvall Newbern. In 1935, she married Lee Roy Newbern, but her husband preceded her in death; he passed away in 1940.

Another business that occupied the Summit Block

for many years was the Davis Mercantile Company, which sold men's furnishings, clothing and shoes, at 314 S. Summit St. from 1917 to 1936.

By 1948, Western Auto opened a store at that address and continued in business there until the mid-1970s.

In more recent years, McDonald's Used Books occupied the 314 space (with an accompanying vacuum store at 316 S. Summit St.) from 2002 until 2019, when the bookstore moved north

to 110B S. Summit St. to become Blue Geranium Books and Gifts.

(The vacuum business moved one block north and continues in operation today; following the move, the RooJax Company gift store briefly occupied this space.)

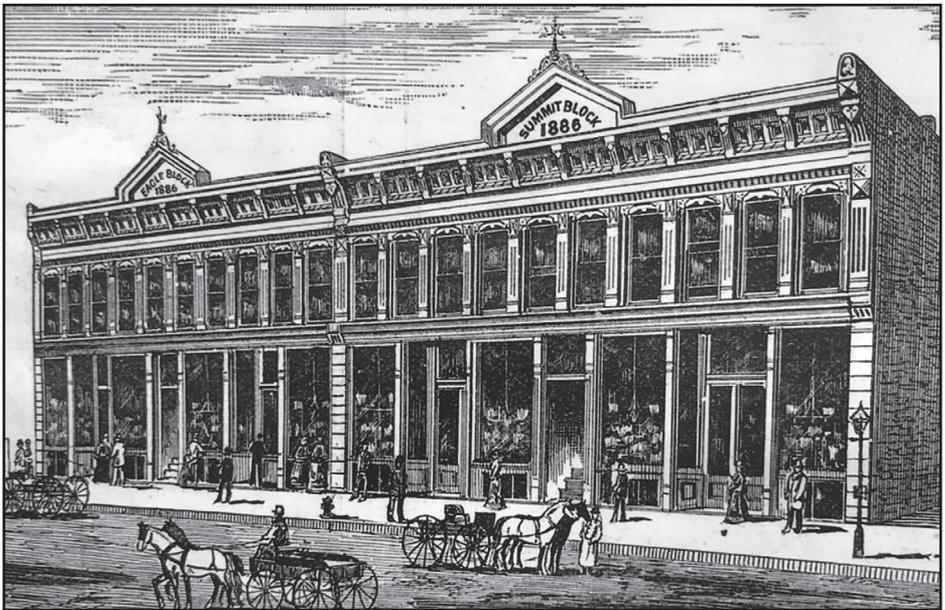
The 314 storefront is now home to a beauty salon, while 312 S. Summit St. has been the location of Meiers Tax Accounting Service for years.

The Coffee Break restaurant at 320 S. Summit St. closed in 2011 after 35

years in business. Breaking Chains Ministries briefly occupied the location at 318 S. Summit St.

A two-part commercial block building with Renaissance Revival, Italianate and Queen Anne features, the Eagle Block and Summit Block building display iron pediments, classical pilasters, cornice treatment, modillions at the cornice and dentil bands.

The upper-story windows are decorated with painted displays of frontier life from the 1800s.



Alternative Route to View Historic Churches

When you reach this point in the tour, there are a couple of different options to proceed, depending on whether you intend to view the historic churches in the area.

The main tour route continues south down the east side of Summit Street.

But you can also turn west on Adams Avenue to go view **First Presbyterian Church** (Page 38), located on First Street. Or you can turn east on Adams Avenue to go see **Sacred Heart Catholic Church** (Page 37), located on B Street.

NEWMAN BUILDING

400-402-406 South Summit Street



Albert A. Newman, an early settler of Arkansas City who played a key role in developing and building up the town, opened a small store in Ark City in 1870, the same year the town was settled.

The Newman's Dry Goods Co. prospered for many years and moved to several different locations along Summit Street as it expanded along with Arkansas City.

It remained in business for more than 117 years, until it closed in 1988 as the oldest business in Kansas that had been owned continuously by the original family.

Construction of the Newman building began in 1916 and the new store opened in 1917.

It is a palatial, five-story building at the southeast corner of Summit Street



and Adams Avenue, defined by its plentiful windows and geometric trim elements. The stucco-covered building occupies a space of 100 by 132 feet and is solidly built of reinforced concrete, with recessed windows that provide plenty of light. Entrances to the building are on Adams Avenue and Summit Street.

The Newman Dry Goods store remained in this

commercial-style Art Deco building until it closed.

Three generations of the Newman family ran the store: A.A. Newman; A.A.'s sons, Earl G. Newman and Albert L. Newman; and Earl G. Newman, Jr.

In April 1989, less than a year after Newman's closed, Dave and Jan Vanderbilt bought the store and renamed it Vanderbilt's. It specialized in boots, work clothing and Western wear

This store was closed in 1995. After renovating the building about five years later, First Intermark Corporation first occupied the store in October 2000.

A grand opening was held in April 2001.

In its early years in the store, a large percentage of First Intermark's direct mail business included following



up on sales for motorcycle dealers.

In 1870, Newman's started out in a one-room, 20- by 40-foot wood frame building at 205 S. Summit St. In 1875, it moved across the street into a building at 206 S. Summit St., adding dry goods and groceries to its stock of men's clothing, furnishings, boots, and shoes.

A year later, the business moved to the two-story Goff and Milton building at 116-118 S. Summit St.; that was the first company-owned building.

The business moved again in 1880 to Ark City's first brick building, located at 126 S. Summit St. where RCB Bank now stands.

That brick building was occupied until 1884, when

the business moved to the Commercial Block at 212-214-216 S. Summit St.

It occupied a main floor and basement there until 1895. Its next move was into the three-story Hill Block, a stone building at 302-306 S. Summit St., where Newman's remained until it moved into its new five-story building at 400-406 S. Summit St.

S.H. KRESS & COMPANY

321-323 South Summit Street



S. H. Kress & Company opened its new "five and dime" department store at 321-323 S. Summit St. in September 1910.

The Arkansas City Daily Traveler said of the grand opening: "Crowds of men, women and children thronged the store ... W.D. MacAllister's orchestra furnished music for the occasion, which was a very enjoyable feature of the opening."

The Kress store remained in business in Ark City until about 1970.

In the early 1970s after it closed, the Dart Dollar Store opened at 321-323 S. Summit St., but it moved out within five years. Dart Dollar held its store closing sale in February 1974.

Roger Sparks, who began in the music business in Arkansas City as a young man in the late 1960s,



moved his store to the 300 block of South Summit Street in 1975.

In 1984, he purchased an adjoining building at 321 S. Summit St. to open The Movie Store, a local video rental business. In May 1999, Home Town Rental-Purchase opened at the 321 location and operates there to this day.

The architecture style of the two-story brick building

is late 19th and early 20th century Classical Revival and Neoclassical.

The upper-story brick façade has corbeled quoins, four bays with paired pilasters, keystones over the windows and a denticulated cornice.

The storefront is configured with a wide central display, window flanked by twin recessed entrances.

OKLAHOMA TIRE & AUTO

313-315 South Summit Street



In June 1933, the Oklahoma Tire & Supply Co. (OTASCO) announced it would open a new store in Arkansas City at 315 S. Summit St. on July 1, 1933.

Thirteen years later, in 1946, the store was remodeled and doubled in size. A photo of the enlarged, two-story Spanish Eclectic-style building was included in an advertisement promoting the business at 313-315 S. Summit St. It features three window bays with stuccoed façade, terra cotta trim and an American Spanish tile roof. The lots on which the OTASCO store stood were used for several different purposes from about 1884 until 1920. By 1884, they were used as lumber yards.

By 1905, neighboring one-story frame buildings had been constructed on



the lots. An iron-clad frame structure at 313 S. Summit St. was occupied by a luncheon business, with a shed behind it to the west, and a wood-frame horse stable was next door to the south, at 315 S. Summit St.

In 1920, a restaurant occupied the 315 location, and a shoe shop and electrical motor business was next door. The two-story buildings on these lots were constructed in the 1920s or early 1930s.

By 1925, AC Floral & Seed Co. was located at 313 S. Summit St., followed by Piggly Wiggly in 1930 and Delux Photo in 1938.

OTASCO expanded north to include this location by 1952.

Local merchant Roger Sparks, who began in the music business in Arkansas City as a young man in the late 1960s, moved his store to 313-315 S. Summit St. in 1975 and it continues there to this day.

CRESCENT / BEARD BUILDING

301-303 South Summit Street



Ernest L. McDowell was one of Arkansas City's pioneer merchants. He was eulogized by the Traveler newspaper on June 25, 1930, the day after his death.

“Forty-six years of continuous service as an Arkansas City businessman

have brought E.L. McDowell, veteran jeweler who died last night, tributes of admiration and regard from other business and professional men who have known him continuously since being in Arkansas City.”

McDowell started in

business in 1884 at 205 S. Summit St. He moved several times before he occupied the two-story brick building at 301 S. Summit St. in 1905, the year it opened.

It was referred to as the Crescent Block, after the original name of McDowell's



business, Crescent Jewelry.

“Crescent” appears on the entry tower that faces the intersection of Summit Street and Washington Avenue.

In 1913, McDowell made the news when a wireless time-receiving station he had installed above the entry tower of the building went into operation. McDowell’s Jewelry continued in business until about 1970.

E.L. McDowell’s son-in-law, William Benedict “Ben” Curtis, took over the business after McDowell’s death and ran it until his own death in 1960. The Curtis family continued to operate it through the 1960s.

The Crescent Block also was known as the Beard Building, and “Beard” is inscribed on the building above the 303 S. Summit site.

Another early-day merchant, George L. Beard, had started a small store in an iron-clad building at the 303 location. As his sporting

goods business grew, Beard enlarged it, and in 1905 it was replaced with the two-story brick building he shared with McDowell. George Beard & Son sporting goods was listed in the 1910-1911 city directory and continued to operate at 303 S. Summit St. until at least 1938.

In May 1946, C.H. Sanderson opened Sanderson’s Smart Shoes store at the 303 address.

Sanderson’s changed names to Hobbie’s Shoes in December 1970 and the shoe store continued to occupy the building until 1974.

A local photographer, P.A. Miller, opened a photography studio on the north side of the building in 1905. He had a skylight installed on the roof. Miller’s Studio, at the southwest corner of Summit and Washington, is listed at 107 W. Washington Ave.

In 1926, Mr. and Mrs. George Brill purchased

the photographic studio and operated it until their retirement in 1968.

The McDowell’s Jewelry building reopened in January 1975 as Brick’s Restaurant, and owner Brick Vining continued to develop that property and the adjacent storefront to the south, plus other downtown properties.

Accents Too, a gift shop that opened in 1995 in the 400 block of South Summit Street, moved to 303 S. Summit St., adjoining Brick’s, by 2000. It closed in 2020, but Brick’s remains open today as one of Ark City’s most popular eateries.

Built with elements of Italian Renaissance influence, as well as the Richardsonian Romanesque and Romanesque Revival styles, this building features arched block, grouped arched windows, elaborate molded and corbeled brick ornamentation, and a pediment.

AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK

223-225 South Summit Street



The bank building at 227 S. Summit St. was built in 1890. It originally was the site of the American National Bank, chartered in March 1889. The site became home to Farmers National Bank in 1891.

In 1907, the bank merged with Citizens State Bank, which moved to 227 S. Summit St. from its previous location at 127 S. Summit St. (now the site of the Union State Bank).

The bank then was known as Citizens & Farmers State Bank.

In December 1908, S.J. Gilbert, president of Security State Bank, purchased the bank building.

In 1915, the bank became Security National Bank, which was later robbed on May 29, 1924. The robbers

stole about \$12,000 and fled in a Cadillac.

In 1890, the year it was built, the three-story, rusticated stone building housed a bank on the first floor, mezzanine and basement levels.

Other occupants in the early years were the I.O.O.F. (Independent Order of Odd Fellows), on the top level, and a photo studio on the second level.

By 1905, only minor changes in occupation occurred: a barber was in the basement, and the photo studio was replaced with printing and composing offices.

By 1912, the Commercial Club was located on the first level of the west portion, but the lodge hall, bank and barber still were there.

Most of these functions, except for the barber shop, still were in place in 1920.

By 1925, the bank building housed Security National Bank, a printing business, the Mid-Continent Petroleum Corporation on the second floor and the American Legion on the third floor.

In April 1937, Security National Bank merged with Home National Bank and moved into Home National's building at the northeast corner of Summit Street and Fifth Avenue.

Froelich Shoes opened a store in the 227 S. Summit St. building in 1947. (The shoe store relocated to 300 S. Summit St. in 1964.)

During the 1970s, a women's fashion-sportswear store occupied

this building. By 2007, Riggs Tax & Financial Services moved into the building; the business later moved out in 2009.

In August 2009, building owner John Sybrant began the task of taking off metal coverings on the building's upper-story windows and installing windows that reflected the historical character of the building.

After the renovation, the building was sold to Dan Jurkovich, whose Edward Jones financial services firm now occupies the first floor of the building.

One of the key historic buildings in the Downtown Historic District, the Security National Bank building features two architectural styles with grace. Arched window

openings at the third-floor roof line area suggest elements of Sullivanesque styling, while its Richardsonian Romanesque and Romanesque Revival influences are seen in the rock-faced finish of the stonework, arcaded block, and use of carved stone featuring gargoyles and plants indigenous to this area.

INTERURBAN TROLLEY SYSTEM

A competition between Arkansas City and Winfield for railroads dates back to the 1800s, but the two rival towns teamed up in the early 1900s to put into operation the Interurban electric rail service. This service connecting Arkansas City and Winfield operated from 1909 to 1926.

It took about five years of planning, raising funds, laying track and building a power plant to make the Interurban a reality. Both Ark City and Winfield came to see its potential for their mutual prosperity.

In March 1904, Mayor Johnson of Winfield received a map of the planned Interurban route in Winfield from L.H.P. Northrup, an investor who helped secure the railroad.

After proceeding through Winfield, the Interurban electric trolley would head south to Ark City, with a



stop at the Hackney station located midway between the two towns, where an electric-power plant was built to supply power to run the Interurban.

The Southwestern Interurban Railway had an excellent beginning, netting a profit for the first full year of its operation.

Besides providing transportation to passengers, the Interurban offered freight service during its 17 years of operation.

But by the 1920s, automobiles and fuel-powered buses were

replacing interurban electric lines as the preferred method of transportation.

In February 1926, Charles Basse, of Wichita, the general manager of the Arkansas City-Winfield Northern Railway Company, and C.A. Morey of Winfield, superintendent of the company, appeared before the City Commission to present an application to discontinue operation of the interurban and to install in its place a bus system.

You can still see concrete patching on Adams Avenue where the line used to run.

KIRKPATRICK'S FURNITURE

223-225 South Summit Street



E. Kirkpatrick, co-owner of a furniture and undertaking business, moved the business to the new McCowan Block building at 225 S. Summit St. in September 1905.

Earlier that year, McCowan, superintendent of the Chilocco Indian School, purchased two lots between Farmers State Bank and Morgan's Music Store, the site of the new block.

After the two-story, 50- by 130-foot stone structure was built, Kirkpatrick led an Arkansas City Traveler reporter on a tour of the building as he was finishing arranging merchandise for the store's opening.

Merchandise was being arranged on both stories of the building. The first floor was devoted to furniture, stoves, china, crockery ware and carpets.

The ground floor had no partitions between the different departments; they



were presented in one large, open room. On the second floor, larger items were displayed in the front room. At the back, or west, end of the second floor were two 16- by 60-foot rooms to be used for undertaking purposes. The basement was to be a stock room.

E. Kirkpatrick was a partner in the firm of Kirkpatrick & Shaffer until 1911, when Shaffer retired.

Kirkpatrick bought out his partner's share of the business and continued to run the store as Kirkpatrick's Furniture until he died in October 1920. He was

eulogized as a popular Ark City merchant and community builder.

The furniture store continued in business at 225 S. Summit St. until the mid- to late 1920s.

McLellan's Department Store moved into the building in 1930.

The firm changed from a department store to a variety store by 1952, and by 1961, the firm's name changed to the McCrory McLellan Co. McLellan's remained in business until the early 1970s, when Brown's Office Supplies, Inc., moved into the building from a previous location.

Brown's had been in business in Ark City since 1966.

It later closed in 2010, and later that year, Willow Fashion, a women's apparel shop, opened in this location and stayed in business for several years.

In about 2018 or 2019, Traver's Furniture, located at 221 S. Summit St., expanded to the store next door, where it offers a gallery of flooring supplies.

This commercial vernacular-style building features a rock-faced finish, alternating narrow and wide coursing, and Chicago-style windows.

THE PARKER BLOCK

219-221 South Summit Street



The Parker Block, located at 219 and 221 S. Summit St., was built by October 1893, when The Arkansas City Daily Traveler reported that the new tailoring firm of Bardwell & Grays had moved into the building.

William Penn Wolfe, the Ark City contractor who built the two-story building, also built the Knights of Pythias building at the northeast corner of Summit and Street Washington Avenue; the Zadie Block, located at 208 S. Summit St.; and others, according to the obituary of his wife, Harriet C. Wolfe, who died in 1925.

The Parker building originally consisted of three storefronts. In August 1904, a fire broke out in the back room of Allen

& Moore's grocery store, located in the middle storefront, and L.S. Morgan, who sold musical instruments in the 221 store next door to the south, sustained the largest loss, estimated at \$1,600 worth of merchandise, mainly pianos and organs in his back room; the loss was covered by insurance.

The 1905 Sanborn fire maps show that the north store (219) was occupied by a meat market. These functions remained through at least 1912. In a major alteration, completed by 1920, the building's front was refaced to create one store from what had been three.

The two-story commercial prairie-style building has a brick façade with cast stone detailing, all with a painted finish.

In December 1918, J.C. Penney held a grand opening in its new, expanded quarters in the Parker building.

Penney's first opened a store in Ark City on April 7, 1917, in a tiny, one-room building in the 100 block of South Summit Street.

Within a year, the company had outgrown its original store and so the move south was made.

The Penney store stayed in business in Ark City for nearly 70 years. It closed in 1986 or 1987. In 1987, the building at 221 S. Summit St. was sold to Allen and Sherry Herman, according to the Cowley County Appraiser's Office.

From then on, it operated as a furniture store, now owned by their son, Traver Herman.

THE MATLACK BUILDING

201-203 South Summit Street / 109 West Fifth Avenue



The oldest building in Arkansas City's Downtown Historic District — as listed in the 2017 resurvey by Brenda Spencer, of Spencer Preservation — is the Matlack Building, located at 201 S. Summit St. It was built in 1880.



It has been a drug store under the names of Albert's, Long's, and Sollitt & Swarts in previous years, and currently operates as Taylor Drug. In its earliest years, it was a dry goods store owned by Stacey Matlack, for whom the building was named. The adjacent brick building at 203 S. Summit St. was constructed by 1884.

The two buildings together are among the

earliest brick structures built in Arkansas City.

At the time they were built, 203 was a one-story structure, while its neighbor to the north was two stories.

A second story was added to 203 S. Summit St. by 1925, when C.R. Anthony Dry Goods occupied the ground floor; the top floor was occupied by a law office and investment company.

Matlack operated the dry goods store at 201 S. Summit St. from about 1879 until 1891. He was regarded as one of the most prominent, reliable and discreet pioneer businessmen in town.

In 1887, the Matlack Building was extended to the west, and a two-story extension was built with a

front entrance facing Fifth Avenue. But hard times struck unexpectedly for Matlack in early 1891, when the American National Bank failed. The bank was put under receivership, and the receiver broke an agreement to help the respected businessman.

That situation broke Matlack, both in spirit and financially. He left town for Oregon and was thought to have settled in Portland.

By the mid-1890s, the Sollitt & Swarts drug store had moved into the Matlack Building from a location in the Colorado Building across the street.

Christopher C. "Kit" Sollitt came to Ark City in 1884 and became a prominent businessman

and member of the city council before he died in 1928. Harry Long, who had started working at the store in 1907 as an errand boy and janitor while still in high school, bought the store in partnership with John Parker in June 1919.

Long acquired Parker's interest in 1928 and became owner of a half-interest in the building; the other half was owned by the Swarts heirs.

Long became a registered pharmacist in 1917.

Like Sollitt before him, he also became a prominent businessman and civic leader. He served on the City Commission and as mayor. He concluded a 38-year career at the drug store in May 1945, when he sold the business to Bob Johnson.

The store continued in business as Long's Drug until March 1962, when Albert Clemente moved his drug store from the Burford building to 201 S. Summit St. and combined his prescription stock with that of Long's.

Albert's Drug continued in operation until Clemente's retirement in 1983, after 32 years as a merchant and civic leader in downtown Ark City.

"If there ever was a downtown businessman who did more for Arkansas City than Albert Clemente, that person is a well-

kept secret," wrote Stu Osterthun, The Arkansas City Traveler's managing editor, in a story featuring Clemente in 1991.

In 1983, Clemente turned the business over to pharmacist Fred Taylor and Albert's became Taylor Drug. Another prominent downtown business owner operated a men's clothing store at 203 S. Summit St., the adjacent building to the south of Taylor Drug. Jack Kelley owned and operated Kelley-Gray Men's Wear for 46 years, starting in 1940.

Through the years, Kelley served on the City Commission (and was mayor from 1951 to 1955), as Arkalalah chairman for seven years, on the Chamber of Commerce board of directors, and as the first president of the Arkansas City Industries Corporation.

Built in the early 20th century Italianate style, the Matlack Building is another key building in the Downtown Historic District.

It features corbeled trim and a stepped parapet top.

As for the Matlack Building Addition at what is now 109 W. Fifth Ave., early pictures show this structure having Queen Anne influence, with a distinctive turret roof area just behind the center arched window.

The sign "Matlack" was moved from an earlier building front at 201 S. Summit St. to its present location facing Fifth Avenue. This addition features arched hooded molds over the second-floor windows and its use of window groupings creates a symmetrical façade accompanying its elaborate cornice and corbeling.



CORNISH PHOTO STUDIO

125 West Fifth Avenue



When Arkansas City-based photographer George Bancroft Cornish built what was to be his final photography studio, he chose a location at 125 W. Fifth Ave.

Cornish was a well-known “Natural as Life” photographer, studying under William Prettyman.

He worked with Prettyman photographing Native American tribes, cowboys and the Cherokee Strip Land Rush, eventually buying out Prettyman’s studio in 1905.

Cornish operated his studio in multiple locations with the help of his sister, Alice, until her death in 1916, and his assistant Edith Berroth.

He and his sister had dreamed of having “the most beautiful photography gallery in the Southwest.”

While Alice didn’t live to see it come to fruition, her brother ensured their lifelong dream was realized in 1924.

Cornish hailed from a family of photographers, including his grandfather and his brothers, Arthur and Harry — both of whom worked for the Eastman Kodak Co.

The family moved to Ark City in 1998 from Illinois



and George Cornish lived here until his death in 1946.

Upon his passing, he bequeathed the studio to Berroth, who operated it until her retirement at the age of 74 in 1969.

She sold the studio and building to Michael M. Marotta, a World War II Army veteran, who upon his honorable discharge in 1945 moved to Ark City and became Berroth’s partner in the business.

Marotta then sold the building to Otis Morrow and Jean Lough in 1979.

Morrow converted it into law offices and operated his practice there for years, eventually selling the building to Tamara Niles in 2005. The offices continued to operate until 2020, when Niles moved away and put the building on the market.

The Cornish Photography Studio was designed by W.L. McAtee, an architect who moved to Arkansas City in 1917.

He was the designer of several prominent buildings in the area, including First Christian Church.

While it was built in the Spanish Eclectic and Colonial Revival style, its red tile roof is unusual because it features straight-barrel Mission tiles as opposed to the traditional Spanish tiles.

The building also features a hand-tiled parapet, wrought-iron railing, plastered stucco exterior walls, an asymmetrical west façade, arched windows and window grills, and the use of stained glass. Batchelder Mayan tiles grace the front-entry walkway.

ODD FELLOWS' BUILDING

201-205 West Fifth Avenue



The Canal City Lodge No. 352 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) had considered building their own lodge building for years.

In 1906, the opportunity to do so came with the plans to establish a new post office designed to meet the requirements of the U.S. Postal Service and to reserve its second floor for the new lodge.

By January 1907, postmaster C.M. Scott received notice that the U.S. Postal Service had signed the lease for the new post office, to be built at 201 W. Fifth Ave. Work on the building progressed rapidly, even though George Hopper's crew also was working on the new Carnegie Library not far to the west on Fifth Avenue.

The cornerstone was set on June 19, 1907, containing a metal box with



papers from the I.O.O.F. Lodge.

On September 30, 1907, the new Canal City Lodge No. 352 I.O.O.F. was dedicated in an elaborate ceremony, with many Odd Fellows leaders from all across the state of Kansas in attendance.

By 1915, a new, larger post office building was built at the northwest corner of East Fifth Avenue and A Street.

Meanwhile, the I.O.O.F. building continued to be used as an Odd Fellows meeting place for the Canal City Lodge and its

female branch, the Rebekah Lodge, until at least the mid-1960s.

In 1946, Aubrey Foster and Ernest Casey opened a furniture store in an adjacent building to the west (205 W. Fifth Ave.) that was named The Ark Furniture.

After Casey's death in 1960, the name changed to Foster's Ark Furniture, and eventually Foster's Furniture. The store grew and was expanded to include the I.O.O.F. building.

The last chapter of the I.O.O.F. building began

in 1995, when Cowley County Community College purchased the building. The first floor eventually was remodeled to become the Ben Cleveland Wellness Center, which continues to operate there today.

Much of the original appearance of this 1907 building has been maintained, including its late 19th and 20th century Classical Revival and Commercial Style.

The old I.O.O.F. entrance can still be seen on the northwest corner.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY

213-215-217 West Fifth Avenue



Library advocate N.D. Sanders first began corresponding with famous industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie regarding funding a public library in 1906.

Carnegie offered Arkansas City a \$16,000 donation for a building, which was later amended to \$18,400, with the stipulation that the City would guarantee a maintenance fund.

The first library Board of Trustees was established in June 1906, after a public vote to support the library was passed that month.

Six lots were purchased at South Second Street and West Fifth Avenue, and Smith and Shenck Architectural Firm, of Fort Worth, Texas, was selected to design the building.

Construction began in 1907 and the building was dedicated on August 5, 1908. When it opened, the library originally contained 3,600 volumes in its collection.

Mrs. A.B. Ranney served as the first head librarian, keeping her position for 24 years. The position of children's librarian was first added in September 1923, when Mrs. P.A. Miller was offered the position.

She previously served on



the library board and had worked as a teacher in the local schools.

Major C.H. Searing bequeathed the library a legacy in his will, which was used to install two drinking fountains in the facility.

A small China fountain was installed in the children's department and a brown Tennessee marble fountain was installed on the main floor in August 1931. A vibrant part of the community, the library organized Victory Book Campaigns during World War II. As the library collection grew, renovations were made to the original structure, including a new entrance in 1960 and a mezzanine in 1965.

In November 1980, the U.S. Postal Service vacated its building at 120 E. Fifth

Ave. and the Arkansas City Public Library, which had simply outgrown Carnegie's generous gift, moved into the newly available location on East Fifth Avenue, where it remains to this day.

The Carnegie building at 215 W. Fifth Ave. has remained empty ever since, although Cowley County Community College has periodically expressed an interest in it due to its proximity to the college campus.

The Carnegie Library was built in the Italian Renaissance style, with Neoclassical elements, and it features dark red brick with stone quoins at the corners, a pavilion/temple-style roof, Ionic columns, egg and dart border above dentil bands, and scrolled modillion brackets at the roof-line.

ARK CITY OFFICE BUILDING

112-114-116 West Fifth Avenue



Known throughout its history as the Arkansas City Office Building, Fifth Avenue Office Building or simply A.C. Office Building, this key building stands out as a very modern-looking structure juxtaposed against other, more classical architecture in the Downtown Historic District.

In November 1928, the H.W. Underhill Construction company was awarded a \$198,600 contract to construct a five-story, Art Deco-style office building at 112-114-116 W. Fifth Ave., near the heart of downtown Arkansas City. It was planned to be open by June 1929, but weather-related issues delayed its completion until November 1929.

Early tenants included A.C. Savings & Investment Co., Ark City Drug Store, A.W. Ralston Investment Co., Santa Fe Building & Loan, The Janet Beeson Beauty Shop, Oscar Renn, J.A. Plumbley, George Templar, Drs. Day and Spalling, Dr. H.C. Gilliland, L.E. Brenz, H.J. Edwards, Ora Elwell, I.W. Bear, V.L. Overstreet, W.H. Rea, C.L. Zugg, H.M. Dummit, and Dr. M.M. and R.R. Miller.

Through the years, many doctors, dentists, insurance agents, loan companies, photo studios,



real estate offices, architects and attorneys called this building home. It also housed the A.C. Coffee House, The Potter's Wheel, The Cowley County Assessment Office, Kansas Gas & Electric, Kansas Power and Light, a business school, and many more.

The original group of investors went bankrupt in 1930 and the building was bought out by a Newton-based group of investors, before being sold for a second time later that same year. The building was purchased by Lou M. Bryant, owner of Bryant Hardware, in 1940. He passed away in 1965 while repairing a boiler in the Ark City Office Building.

In June 1982, new owner J.C. Bates set about renovating the building, including adding murals

depicting Kansas history. But he sold it a year later to Union State Bank, located just to the east. The bank wanted to find a local owner to purchase the building and, in November 1988, Bob Reidlinger made that purchase. He was an insurance agent whose office was located in the building.

Reidlinger auctioned off the A.C. Office Building in June 2005 and the winners, Preston and Rebecca Hill, of Hampton, Virginia, purchased the building for \$101,000. While the Hills initially stated their intentions to move to Ark City and renovate the structure, by 2007, the building was fully vacant.

The owners cited expenses as their reason for closing the building. It has remained shuttered for the last 14 years.

FIRST NATIONAL BANK

125-127 South Summit Street



When the First National Bank building was built in 1883, it covered less space than it does today.

Known as Union State Bank since 1898, the two-story brick building at the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and Summit Street extended about half the distance to the west, down West Fifth Avenue, as it does today as one of the key buildings in the Downtown Historic District.

But the building located at 127 S. Summit St. did not originally extend north to include the 123 and 125 addresses, as it does now.

A previous, wood-frame building on the site housed

the Cowley County Bank, which was started in 1872. Its officers were A.A. Newman, president; W.M. Sleeth, vice president; H.P. Farrar, cashier; and directors T.H. McLaughlin, H.O. Meiss and R.C. Haywood.

In 1876, Sleeth and Farrar purchased all of the bank stock and made it a private bank called First National Bank. They announced in March 1879 that a new building would be erected, and they moved into the new two-story brick building in 1883.

A decade later, the bank experienced lean economic times and, in 1893, went into receivership.

Major Sleeth gave up all of his investments to liquidate the bank's debt and he paid 100 percent to all of the bank's depositors.

The vacant bank building was occupied for the next five years by E.L. McDowell's jewelry store.

By February 1894, the First National Bank was reorganized, but by the early 1900s, the bank's business was taken over by the newly formed Citizens State Bank.

George S. Hartley was president and Thomas Baird was vice president.

It opened as the Union State Bank in January 1909, with Thomas Baird as president and O.E. Mabee



as vice president.

The bank purchased the building from the Baird Investment Co. on October 7, 1909, and Baird resigned his position about two years later. Baird's successors as bank president were Fred C. DeMott, 1910-1940; Grover Dunn, 1940-1958; and the Docking family. Since 1956, control of the bank and the holding company, Docking Bancshares, Inc., has been with the Dockings.

Two Kansas governors, George Docking and his son Robert Docking, have served as chairmen of the board of Union State Bank.

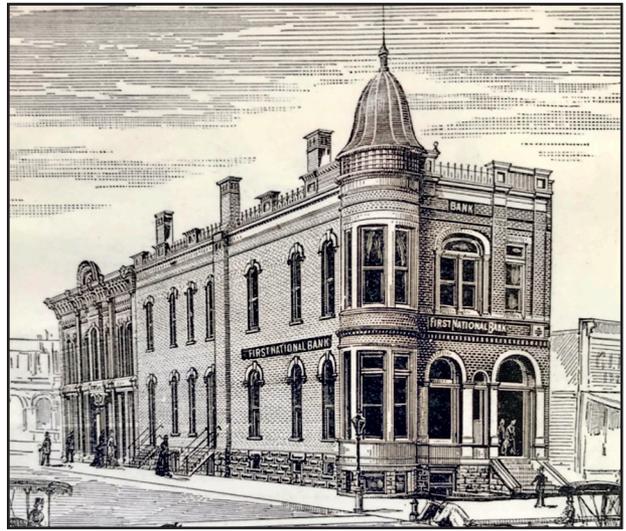
Gov. Robert Docking was president of the bank from 1958 to 1982. Robert's son, Bill, took over the position in 1983 and currently is chairman of the board. After 31 years of serving as Union State Bank's chief executive officer, Bill Docking handed the CEO position over to Eric Kurtz in February 2014.

The bank building has been modified several times through the years, but still retains its basic shape.

Originally, it had 10 steps leading up to the front door.

In 1928, these were removed and the floor was lowered to street level. The bank's upstairs rooms were occupied for many years as law offices for W.L. and W.E. Cunningham, D. Arthur Walker and William Howard.

In October 1961, bank president Robert Docking



bought the Fifth Avenue Book Store building adjoining the bank on West Fifth Avenue. The building continued to be used as a bookstore during the 1960s.

By 1974, when the bank expanded to the west and north, the bookstore was demolished to provide easier access to the drive-through facility behind the bank off West Fifth Avenue.

Meanwhile, to the north at 125 S. Summit St.: In 1899, a two-story stone building replaced a frame dry goods store located on the east portion of this lot, where a saloon was housed. A billiards room and lunch café were located in the basement of the building's west portion.

In December 1908, owner C.B. Kinslow named the billiards and pool parlor the Salty Dog. The saloon remained in operation until at least 1905, but was replaced by a cigar store by 1912.

In August 1915, building owner W.B. Conrad announced the Salty Dog billiard and pool hall would be converted into a movie theater. On December 30, 1915, the Strand Theater opened. It continued in operation until at least 1937.

In the 1950s, a bar called Modern Recreation was located in the building, which was later acquired by Union State Bank and incorporated into the bank building at 127 S. Summit St.

A pool hall and bar have continued in operation at 123 S. Summit St. through the years, under various names and owners.

Built in the Italianate style, both of these buildings feature hooded segmental arches above their windows, egg and dart border columns with plant motifs, arcade block, and a definitive Italianate porch at the main entry.

THE ROYAL CAFÉ

117 South Summit Street



A one-story stone building was built in the late 1890s or early 1900s at 117 S. Summit St.

A restaurant operated in the north half of the building and a saloon occupied the south half.

In 1912, a barbershop replaced the saloon, and by 1920, the entire building was a restaurant. In June 1922, C.R. and H.H. Rawlings, a father and son, came to Ark City and opened the Royal Café at this location.

It was described by The Arkansas City Traveler as a “fine eating house” that was furnished with \$6,000 worth of equipment, including a counter, stools to accommodate 22 persons and 10 tables; all told, the restaurant had a seating capacity of 75. Its wall equipment included a 16-foot range and steam table, and a refrigerator system to cool milk, water and foods requiring ice. Seven ceiling fans were installed to keep the establishment cool.

The restaurant was one of five hotels and restaurants in Ark City that were honored by the Kansas Hotel Commissioner with the Red Seal for providing clean, wholesome food in sanitary and safe surroundings.

Unfortunately, the Royal



Café closed in 1927 after five years of operation and owner H.H. Rawlings moved the business to Hutchinson. But by the early 1950s, Raymond Smith opened Smith Jewelry at 117 S. Summit St. and continued in business until the early 1970s.

In 1972, Jess Kindred and his wife Nancy bought the store. The Kindreds’ first occupation was a construction company called Kindred Construction.

Jess had his start in the jewelry business by repairing watches at home before he and Nancy purchased the downtown store. Kindred Jewelry actually came about when another Ark City jeweler, Loren Grimes, hired Jess to work on clocks at Grimes’ first store on East

Fifth Avenue. Jess took a correspondence course to learn more about watch repair and his interest was piqued. Jess died in 2005 and Nancy closed the shop the following year after 33 years in business downtown.

The building, whose variety in design defines this commercial vernacular structure, is constructed of native rock-faced limestone with ornate carved detailing.

It includes alternating horizontal bands above the storefront, including a row of small arches resembling a blind balustrade on the cornice. Stone piers framing the building include classical components with a plain column shaft and base that transition to local rusticated rock-face stones on the upper third and terminate with an arched cap.

CITY HALL & FIRE STATION

118 West Central Avenue



The City Council of Arkansas City voted April 9, 1917, to commission the building of a new City Hall. Major Charles Hunt championed the project. William T. Schmitt, an Oklahoma City architect, presented the design specifications in February 1918. Everhardt Construction Co., of Salina, completed the current City Hall building in 1919.

The new structure replaced the former City building on the same site.

It was built at a cost of \$51,000 and opened in April 1919.

City Hall included a club room used by various community groups, including the Musical Club and Fortnightly Club.

Plans existed for a memorial hall and auditorium to be built further to the north, which would have mirrored the current building but facing Chestnut Avenue, but they never materialized.

The Arkansas City Police Department initially was located at the north end of the building, but eventually moved into the basement, where it resided for decades, complete with jail cells and a secure area for dispatchers.

In July 1996, the City Commission of Arkansas



City voted to purchase a building at 117 W. Central Ave., directly across the street from City Hall to the south, as a new location for the police department.

It officially opened to the public on July 11, 1997. The basement then was remodeled to house various offices, computer equipment and servers, and an Emergency Operations Center.

The Arkansas City Fire Department also was located at the north end of the building. There are multiple west-facing garage bays along the rear of the structure where the fire engines were housed.

On the northeast corner of City Hall, an enormous tower still stands where ACFD at one time would hang its fire hoses to dry.

The City Commission purchased the former National Guard Armory building at 115 South D St. in July 1980. The Arkansas City Fire-EMS Department relocated there after

completing renovations the following year. The north City Hall bays are now used for police storage.

Throughout its more than 100-year history, City Hall only has seen limited renovations, including two renovations to the city manager's office in the past 20 years. A proposed sales tax vote for further building renovations and other City improvements failed in 2014.

In November 2015, the City Commission approved some additional renovations and repainting for the building. The City's stated goal was to modernize the structure while keeping its historical integrity intact.

City Hall was built in the late 19th and 20th century Classical Revival style.

It is a monumental free-standing building with a classical temple front and stone Doric columns.

The brick building has a natural-faced stone foundation and Ashlar stone detailing.

OLD HIGH SCHOOL

300 West Central Avenue



By the late 1880s, the Arkansas City school board was preparing to build a new high school building for the growing city. In April 1890, a design was accepted from Charles Sedgwick, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and work began July 10 of that year.

Robert Baird, brother of pioneer resident Thomas Baird, was the local contractor in charge. Baird relied on the expertise of Joseph Bossi, a stone cutter from Milan, Italy, for the ambitious design.

This Richardsonian Romanesque building was built with locally quarried limestone of a nearly white appearance. The builders decided to offset the pale color of this stone with red-colored mortar.

Vermilion, an ancient source for red coloring, was mixed into the mortar.

What the builders did not know was that the vermillion would interact with the rain, staining the limestone blocks with the red coloring.

The high school would henceforth be known as “The Red School House.”

Artistic features of lions’ heads and dragons carved in stone, along with two massive chimneys and a clock tower, contribute to



the spectacular appearance of this distinctive building.

(Ironically, clocks never were installed in the tower.)

The first high school class, with 194 students, started on September 7, 1892, although the building was not completely finished until 1893. It remained in use as the high school until 1922, when a new high school was opened. Arkansas City’s sixth-graders used the school until 1941.

After the last students left, the old high school was used by the USO during World War II, as a teen town, and also by the Red Cross.

By 1949, time had taken its toll and the school board was considering selling the old school. But interested persons suggested the building should be made available for the local junior

college. A new chapter in the life of this old building began when Cowley County Community College acquired it in 1971.

In 1974, the building was added to the National Register of Historic Places and declared a state landmark.

After the college secured funding for a renovation of the lower portion of the building, which was completed by the summer of 1982, “The Red School House” returned to its original mission of education. The building was officially dedicated on December 12, 1982, and named after W.H. “Pat” Ireland, a strong community supporter who served on the college’s Board of Trustees for nearly 10 years.

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL

101 North Third Street



Construction of one of Arkansas City's most impressive historic buildings, the Pilgrim Congregational Church, began in 1891 and finished in 1893.

It was completed just a few years after the old high school (now Ireland Hall), which was built in 1890.

Both buildings are wonderful examples of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture, and both are built of cut Silverdale stone blocks with the Roman arches and towers typically found in this style.

The Congregational Church was one of Ark City's oldest churches.

Several of Ark City's founding fathers, who originally came here



from Emporia, were Congregationalists.

Among them were A.A. Newman, Lyman Beecher Kellogg and Henry Brace Norton.

The latter two men were instrumental in securing and staffing the Kansas State Normal School in Emporia, now known as Emporia State University.

The Congregational Church in Ark City had grown to 154 members by 1892.

During the 1870s, its early members joined members of other denominations and met in several different locations in town.

In 1887, the Reverend D.D. DeLong, a popular minister, was secured to unite the people and the church was incorporated.

A building committee was formed in 1889.

Built of sandstone with limestone trim, the church features a bell tower 78 feet high.

In 1949, it became home to the Nazarene Church and, in 2002, the Vinelife Family Church.

It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.



CENTRAL CHRISTIAN

206 West Central Avenue



The Central Christian Church of Arkansas City was born one night in 1877, when 13 men and women met in the Parker schoolhouse 3 miles east of town to discuss the need for a church. From 1877 until 1882, the small congregation met outside of town.

But two years later, they began to hold services in a hall located where the Burford Theatre now stands. Then they began meeting in the First Ward school building (now Roosevelt Elementary School).



By 1886, the congregation had built a 28-by-40-foot frame church located on Central Avenue, just north of the current

church's entrance on First Street.

The current church building was begun in 1921 and completed in 1923.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN

320 West Central Avenue



Arkansas City's Redeemer Lutheran Church was organized in 1930, but the first services of the Lutheran congregation began five years earlier in 1925, when several different men from St. John's College in Winfield started coming to Ark City to conduct services.

Before Redeemer Lutheran's first dedicated church was built in 1941, the Lutheran congregation met in various locations in Ark City, including the Oldroyd Funeral Chapel and clubrooms in City Hall.



The first resident pastor, the Reverend Paul Mehl, was installed in August 1930. Soon after his arrival, the church purchased a piece of property near the site of the current church building. On April 27, 1941, Redeemer Lutheran's new church was

dedicated at 320 W. Central.

Architects Shaver & Sons, of Salina, designed the one-story church in the Gothic Revival style as developed for English chapels.

The church is built of random-coursed stone blocks in varying sizes.

CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST CHURCH

201 North A Street



The citizens forming the nucleus of the First Church of Christ, Scientist in Arkansas City were granted a charter in 1888.

Church services were held continuously since that date at various locations until a church property was purchased in 1898 at 108 N. Second St. In November 1911, the church purchased property at the northwest corner of A Street and Chestnut Avenue, where the current building stands.

The cornerstone of this new church was laid on



November 2, 1915, and the terra cotta brick structure was completed and used for services on July 16, 1916.

The church features

a Greek revival style and resembles the Pantheon in Rome, with its circular sanctuary, shallow pediment and Doric columns.

TRINITY EPISCOPAL

224 North A Street



About two dozen Cowley County residents met on, December 27, 1884, a cold winter night, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wyard E. Gooch to sign a resolution to establish a Protestant Episcopal Society. The society soon made arrangements with the Reverend Mr. McKay, of Emporia, to conduct an Episcopal service at Highland Hall in downtown Ark City (where the Burford Theatre now stands).

The cornerstone of Trinity Episcopal's present stone church building at the



southeast corner of A Street and Walnut Avenue was laid on January 1, 1922.

The church is built of Silverdale stone and adheres to the Gothic architectural style typical of Anglican churches.

Trinity added a new Education Building to the south of the church in 1959, at 220 North A St. It has served as a multipurpose building, and also as a gymnasium and day school.

FIFTH AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN

122-124 South B Street



Great Grace Church of God in Christ, formerly known as Great Grace Family Worship Center, continues a nearly 150-year tradition of worship in the oldest dedicated edifice still being used for worship in Arkansas City.

The historic Fifth Avenue United Presbyterian Church sanctuary bears a cornerstone stamped 1874 and it has never been used for any other purpose.

In recent years, there has only been one change to the interior, the creation of a unisex restroom on the



main level, and one exterior change with the addition of a powered lift to increase access to the main level.

The irreplaceable stained-glass windows include a biblical depiction of the

New Jerusalem. The stained-glass windows on the main level are nearly 100 years old. Pending improvement projects include the restoration of the bell tower on the southwest corner.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

321 South First Street



A Presbyterian church was organized in Arkansas City in 1873, to be designated as the First Presbyterian Church.

The first meeting place for members as the church was being organized was in a store building at 207 S. Summit St.

The first designated church building was erected in 1873 and used by several denominations until they established their own buildings. It was a wood-frame structure with a steeple at 311 S. First St.

Additions were made to



the building in 1882, 1900 and 1909. Construction on the domed sanctuary building at 321 S. First St. began in 1913 and it was dedicated in 1915, with Dr.

William Gardner as pastor.

It is a tan brick structure, built in the Greek Revival style, with four Neoclassical columns employed at the church's east porch entrance.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC

320 South B Street



In the 1870s, Jesuit priest Father Paul Ponziglione visited early Catholic settlers in the Arkansas City area.

Father Ponziglione was a missionary who traveled by horse and buggy from Osage Mission (now St. Paul, Kansas) to minister to Osage villages and camps, as well as Catholic settlers in fledgling towns in southeastern Kansas.

In 1886, Florian “Fred” Trimper and his wife, Christina — devout Catholics born in Germany — came to Ark City and offered their home for church services. In October 1886, Father Bernard McKernan was assigned to Winfield as a pastor and also served Ark City as a mission church.

The first Catholic church building in Ark City was a small frame structure built in 1886 and located in what is now the 900 block of North A Street.

But that location was considered inconvenient because, at that time, it was outside the city limits.

In 1898, another wood-frame church was built at the southeast corner of A Street and Fifth Avenue, just west of the former opera house (now the site of the Arkansas City Recreation Center). In October 1900,



Father Martin Degan was sent to Ark City as the first resident priest and served here for 28 years.

By 1919, the congregation had outgrown its small church and construction work began on the current church building at the northeast corner of B Street and Adams Avenue.

The new Sacred Heart Church, dedicated on November 11, 1920, is of the Richardsonian Romanesque and Romanesque Revival architectural style. It is built of Copper Chief brick, is 120 by 42 feet and has two 85-foot-tall towers.

Sacred Heart School was

built just to the north of the church in 1926.

In November 1944, a longtime Sacred Heart pastor, Father Arthur Holtz, was named administrator of the parish and served as pastor until September 1961.

On September 18, 1960, Mark K. Carroll, bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Wichita, traveled to Arkansas City to dedicate a Sacred Heart parish recreation building behind the church and school in the 300 block of South C Street. The Sisters of St. Joseph taught generations of Ark City-area students at Sacred Heart School.

Buildings We've Lost...

GLADSTONE // ELMO HOTEL

A former shipbuilder from New England, Samuel C. Smith built the Gladstone Hotel in 1886 during a time of expansion in Arkansas City.

It was built under the supervision of two Italian stonecutters, Joseph Bossi and Antonio Buzzi, who built several other large Silverdale stone buildings in the area.

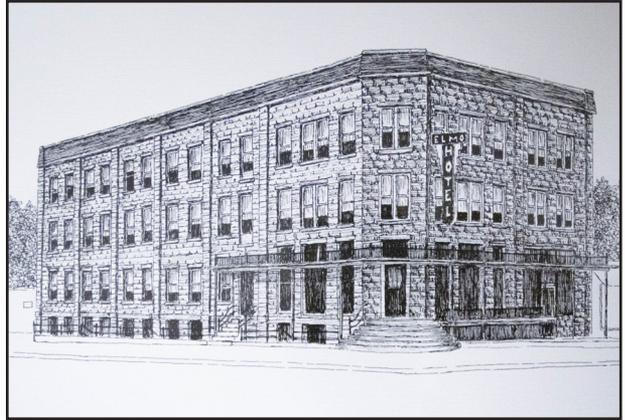
Early pictures of the Gladstone show an imposing L-shaped stone building with balconies running along the second and third floors, and a large, two-pointed cupola on the top corner facing the Chestnut Avenue and Summit Street intersection.

A series of cryptic ads in 1894 issues of *The Arkansas City Traveler* shows the hotel being advertised as the home of the "Arkansas City Academy," which taught such subjects as stenography, railroading, telegraphy music and typewriting.

As the hotel business cooled, the Gladstone was sold to Dr. O. Robertson, of Kansas City.

He converted the hotel into the Robertson Sanitarium, which operated in the 1910s.

In September 1923, remodeling began on the



building so it could once again be a hotel.

L.V.E. Moore bought the renamed Hyland Hotel in 1928 and renamed it the Elmo Hotel. In 1944, Moore sold the hotel to Mr. and Mrs. C.L. Calder, who operated the hotel until Mr. Calder passed away in 1951. The Calder family continued to operate the hotel until Mayme Calder sold the hotel to Mr. and Mrs. A.B. Baker. The Bakers took over operation of the Elmo in January 1960.

After 90 years, the Elmo closed its doors for good in 1976. The building was sold to an Emporia firm with the intention of reopening it as housing for the elderly.

While that dream came to fruition with the Osage Hotel — purchased by the same company — it wasn't to be for the Elmo.

On June 5, 1980, a fire

broke out and structural damage occurred.

For the next five years, there were many debates about proposed renovations versus demolishing the building, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Citizens protested the idea of demolition.

However, on July 29, 1985, Cowley County District Court in Arkansas City ruled the building was a dangerous structure that needed to be demolished.

To add insult to injury, a second fire occurred on October 8, 1985, ravaging what was left of the northern anchor of the Downtown Historic District.

With its fate sealed, the City demolished the building in November 1985, just short of its centennial.

Buildings We've Lost...

FIFTH AVENUE OPERA HOUSE

Construction on the Fifth Avenue Opera House began in the fall of 1887, under the supervision of Stauber & Keefe.

A grand opening was held on October 26, 1888, and included a performance of "As in a Looking Glass," featuring celebrated British actress Lillie Langtry and her professional troupe.

Several well-known, turn-of-the century artists performed at Ark City's Fifth Avenue Opera House, including bandleaders Patrick Gilmore, who appeared on November 27, 1889; and John Phillip Sousa, who appeared there on November 18, 1904.

A famous bandleader and composer, Sousa conducted the U.S. Marine Band and became known as the "March King."

He composed Kansas State University's "Kansas Wildcats March" in 1930, after visiting the school in 1928.

During the final year of World War I, the Fifth Avenue Theatre offered a performance of a "Lady Orchestra" to help support the war effort. An Arkansas City Traveler advertisement for the concert had the headline "Buy a Liberty Bond! ... Swat the Kaiser."

Concert-goers were



admitted "only by paying War Tax and accompanied by a paid 30-cent ticket."

New managers took over the theater in August 1920, leasing the building from Carl Dees. By this time, the theater was not offering nightly programs and needed renovation.

The new managers, L.J. Lenhart and H.R. Barker, came to Arkansas City with substantial experience in show business. They had operated theaters in Iola, Chanute, Girard and Kansas City, Missouri, and planned extensive renovation and remodeling of the theater before its reopening.

The first Arkalalah ceremony in 1928 was held at the Fifth Avenue Opera House — then known as the Masonic Theatre. The ceremony included the crowning of the first Queen Alalah, Dorothy Moore.

Then another

management change occurred in 1929.

In the early hours of April 11, 1941, a fire broke out in the northwest corner of the building, threatening the entire structure.

The Arkansas City Fire Department brought the fire under control, but the building suffered extensive water damage to its second floor, as well as heat and smoke damage on the other floors.

Several months later, in August 1941, a windstorm partially tore the roof from the already damaged facility.

George Stanley, a local attorney, purchased the building in 1942 with the design of converting it into an apartment building.

However, he sold it to Earl Downing for scrap in March 1943. F.G. Van Sickle dismantled the interior and the building was completely razed by 1944.