

Back In Time (Part 1):

A Visit To The Ava Square In 1935

by Kenneth W. Brown

Born ten years later, I only know of the Ava Square of 1935 through photos, articles in the Douglas County Herald, and eyewitness accounts from Avaites who lived at that time. Still, I'm fascinated by the development of the Ava square over the past 120 plus years. According to J.E. Curry's book on Douglas County history, M.C. Reynolds and W.C. Kelton built the first store building on the west end of the north side of the square. In 1870, county commissioner James Hailey dubbed the town "Ava," and developed a plan for a 50-acre town site.

In 1957, as a seventh grader in Mrs. Martha Jo Dougherty's class, I knew nothing about the history of Ava. That year (1957) was a special year, because the entire Spring months were devoted to preparations for Douglas County's centennial (1857-1957) to be celebrated that summer. I still have my class project, which was to describe the community and its businesses at that time. Not really understanding the movement of time as I do now, it did not dawn on me that most of the businesses on the square had not been there 22 years earlier, and the fact that the businesses on the square were in constant change, with only a few exceptions just a few years of existence.

Having collected considerable information about Ava's commercial district in the 1930's over the past couple of years, I've written this article to document the locations of businesses around the square at a given point in time. December 1935 was chosen as a kind of census date, since many of the smaller businesses changed hands as often as two or three times in the same year. It is my hope, time permitting, to provide the same summary for each ten-year period from 1895 until 1955, a considerable undertaking which I would gladly share with other Douglas county historians.

Included with this article is a copy of the Sanborn

Insurance Map, which was prepared in 1935 to help insurance agents determine fire and casualty premiums on buildings and the businesses in them. This map, and additional maps available from 1914 and 1925, provide the best description of the commercial structures which existed in those time periods.

Additional exhibits provide photos of the present along with lists of the businesses located in each building in December 1935. Notice that each business site has been assigned a two-digit code indicating the side of the square and a sequential number. For example, the first building on the West end of the North side of the square is labeled "N1." The next store to the east is labeled "N2." Building N1, happens to be located on the site of the Reynolds & Kelton first store in Ava.

Next, lists are provided of businesses located on the corners of the square, businesses located off the square in each direction, and a list of known businesses in December 1935 for which a precise location has not yet been determined. Finally, an alphabetical listing of all known Ava businesses as of December 1935.

I would appreciate any additional information or observations that might help fill in the history of Ava's commercial district both in 1935 and at other times. Also, I am a collector of Ava business and street scenes, and I want to encourage readers to help provide copies of such rare photos to the Douglas County Museum, so that they can be shared with others. I can be contacted as follows: Kenneth W. Brown, 1328 East Compton St., Springfield, MO 65804; Telephone: 417-882-4547; E-mail: BROWN_SOLSTICE@MSM.COM.

The author wishes to thank Paul Barker and Wilson McClendon, both of Springfield, for their helping with some of the business locations identified in this article.

(Continued on next page)

Hodges-Deeds

In the 1830's John Hodges and his four children, Meshac, Andrew Jackson, Drury and Edmund, settled in Taney (later Douglas) County. I'm interested in obtaining information on these individuals and their descendants. Columbus Alonzo Hodges (grandson of Edmund) married Laura Ann Deeds, daughter of James Thaddeus Deeds. Recently a generous lady gave me a fairly large box containing pictures of unidentified Deeds individuals. I'm searching for anyone who can provide information on this Deeds family or help in the identification of these pictures. I'm fairly certain some of the pictures are of the Lethco family, which descended from the Deeds line.

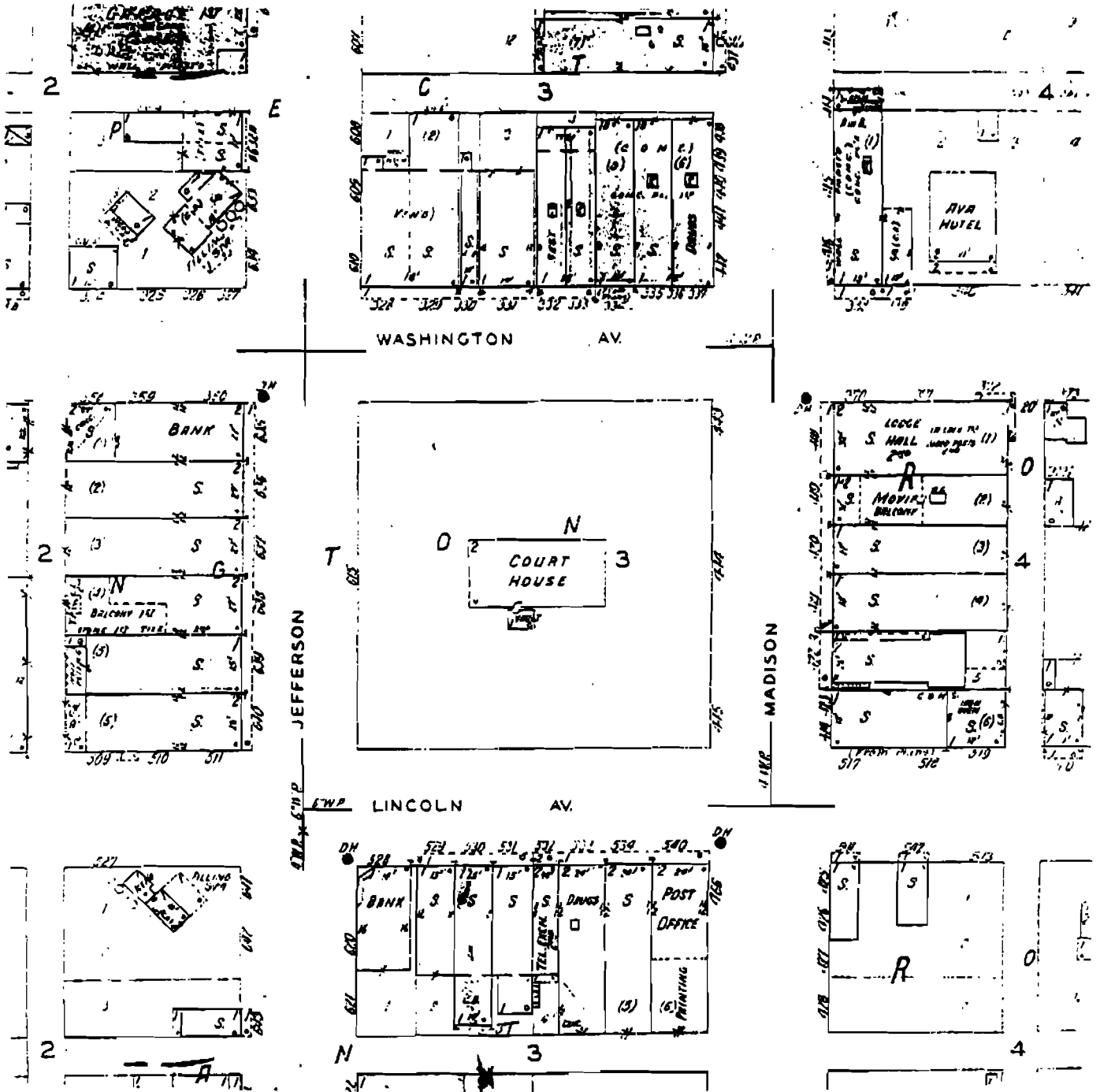
Lena Fae (Hodges) Sexton

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AVA - Business District (1935)

↑ North



Map Source: Sanborn Insurance Maps © 1935

NORTH SIDE OF AVA SQUARE IN 1996

N1

N2

N3

N4

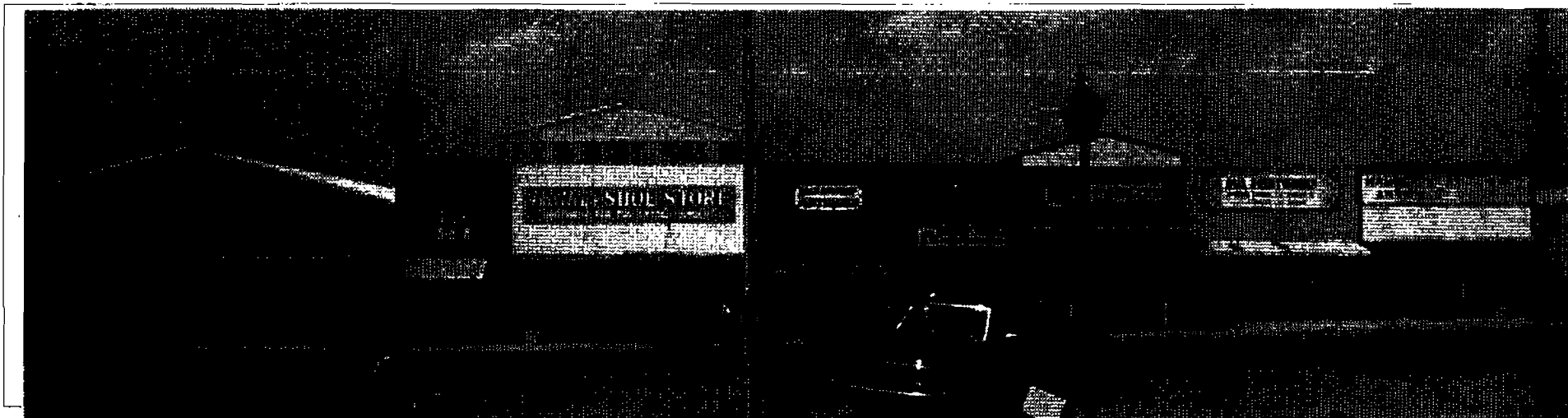
N5

N6

N7

N8

N9

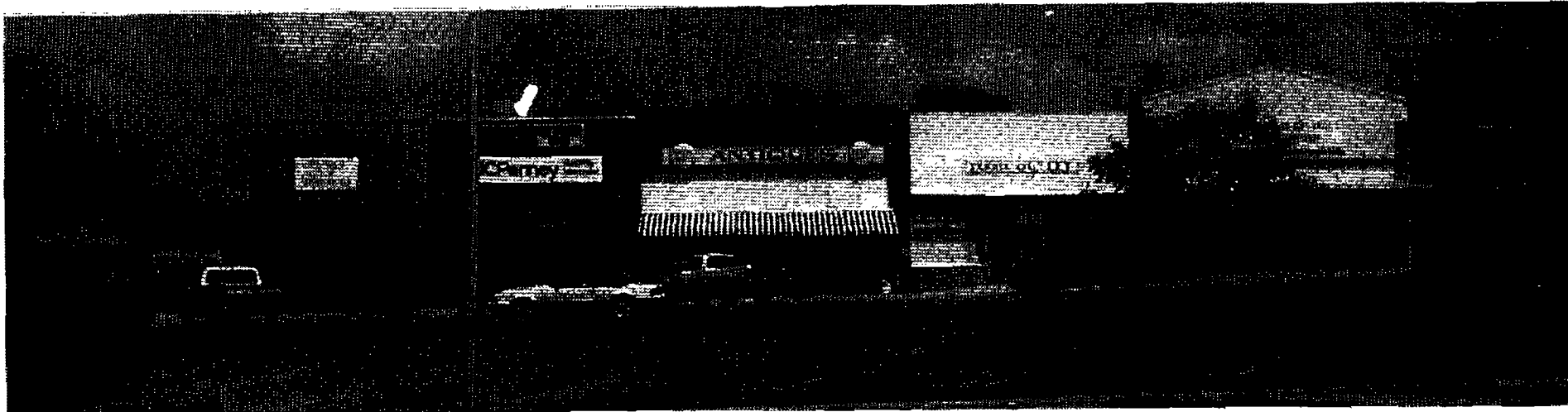


NORTH SIDE BUSINESSES IN DECEMBER 1935

- N1 HARTLEY'S GROCERY--Owned and operated by Albert L. Hartley.
- N2 LOCAL RELIEF OFFICE-- This state agency was given free rent in building N2 from December 1935 until February 1936 when it was replaced by the Stanley Brooks Store. Previously, the structure held the Timberlake Store until it closed in July 1934. Building owner: G. B. Wilson.
- N3 DOUGLAS COUNTY ABSTRACT CO.--Moved to this building in March 1932 from just off the northeast corner of the square.
- N4 STORY & SONS HARDWARE-- The building housed the Bank of Ava until it closed in November 1930. The building was sold by bank liquidators to R. L. Story & A. A. Adams in July 1931. The hardware store was opened 1932.
- N5 BEANO'S CAFE--Beano's moved to this location in January 1933. The building was constructed shortly after the north side fire of March 1932. Building owner: H. M. Curnutt.
- N6 HOUSE SHOE STORE--Ovle House moved his shoe store in this building in January 1933. The building was constructed shortly after the north side fire of March 1932. Building owner: Mrs. Elsie (C. W.) Meeker.
- N7 {Unknown occupant)--The building was constructed by G. B. Wilson in February 1935.
- N8 BROWN'S FEDERATED STORE--In February 1935, Louis Brown moved his store from the Meeker building on the northeast corner of the square. The building was owned by G. B. Wilson and was constructed after the north side fire of March 1932.
- N9 NORMAN-GENTRY DRUG STORE-- Norman-Gentry moved from building E4 on the east side in November 1932. This building was constructed after the north side fire of March 1932.

EAST SIDE OF AVA SQUARE IN 1996

E1 E2 E3 E4 E5 E6



East Side of Square--December 1935

- E1 DEAN & GAULDING—Purchased in November 1928 by H. C. Dean and Landon Gaulding. Formerly Reynolds Mercantile Company.
- E2 WILSON THEATRE—Built in 1925 and operated by Henry S. Wilson and L. H. Pettit.
- E3 V & O FURNITURE CO.
- E4 C. E. DAVIS GROCERY & MARKET—C. E. Davis moved his store from the south side of the square in 1932 after this building was vacated by the Norman-Gentry Drug Store.
- E5 NICHOL'S 5&10 CENT STORE—Owned by Mrs. Ingie Nichol. Opened in November 1935 in a new building on the site of the old G.A.R. Hall. Building owned by Anthony Bunyard of Smallett.
- E6 ST. LOUIS AUTO SUPPLY CO.--Opened by the September 1935 by Steve Wallen in the new C. W. Taber building. Later, Wallen changed the store into a Western Auto store.

SOUTH SIDE OF AVA SQUARE IN 1996

S1

S2

S3

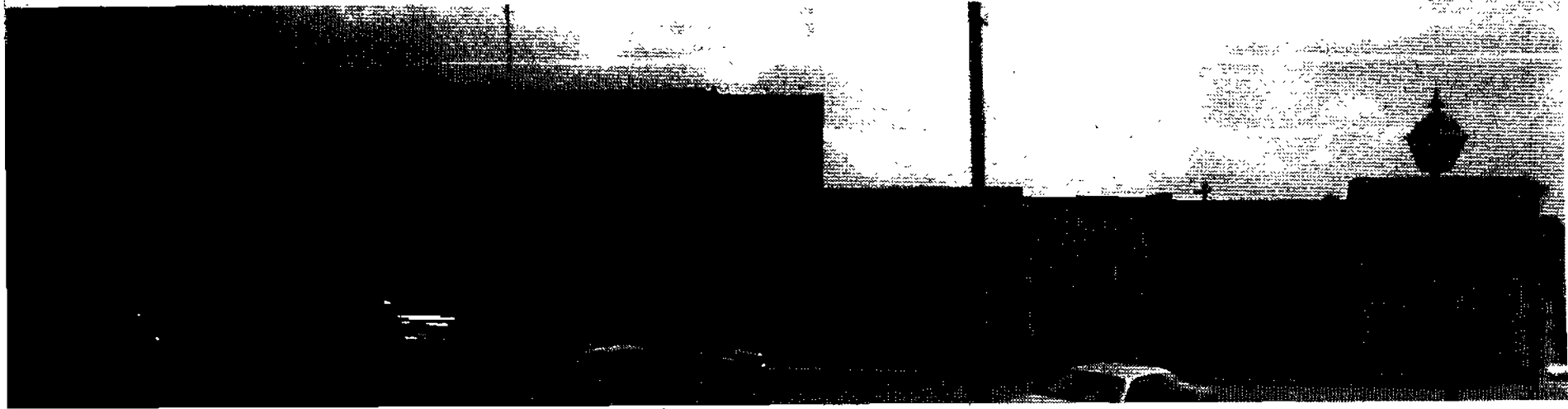
S4

S5

S6

S7

S8



SOUTH SIDE BUSINESSES IN DECEMBER 1935

- S1 U. S. POST OFFICE (front), DOUGLAS COUNTY HERALD (rear)--The Post office was moved to this location in August 1922 from the Wilson building north of the square.
- S2 THRASHER'S GROCERY--Purchased by C. W. Thrasher in March 1935 from Mr. Warrick.
- S3 FERGUSON DRUG STORE--Was the "Ava Drug Co." until December 1928 by Dr. J. D. Ferguson from Dr. J. B. Cunningham.
- S4 {Unknown occupant on 1ST floor}, TELEPHONE EXCHANGE (2ND floor)--
- S5 HARLEY'S STORE--Harley's moved to this location in December 1928 after having a store west of the square for several years earlier.
- S6 HUNT'S GROCERY & MARKET--Operated by R. E. Hunt. Handled dry goods, groceries, flour & feed. Jernigan's moved to this location in 1938.
- S7 {Unknown occupant}
- S8 {Vacant}, PEOPLES BANK was located here, and the building was still part of the bank liquidation in December 1935.

WEST SIDE OF AVA SQUARE IN 1996

W1

W2

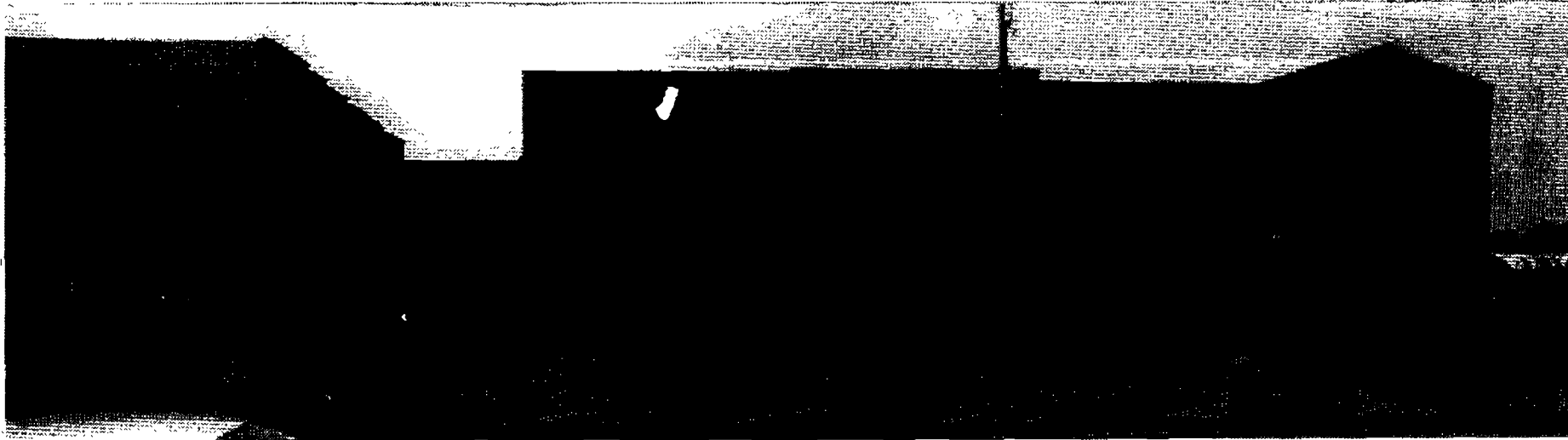
W3

W4

W5

W6

W7



WEST SIDE BUSINESSES IN DECEMBER 1935

- W1 FLETCHER'S STAND—Concession stand selling candy, hot dogs, and other items.
- W2 HOLESTINE'S DEPARTMENT STORE—Owned by J. F. Holestine and managed by Everett Hesterlee.
- W3 AVA HARDWARE CO.—Operated by the C. E. and Emmett Yeoman, the hardware store moved to this location in 1921 after being established in 1919 on the east side of the square.
- W4 CLINKINGBEARD FURNITURE & UNDERTAKING CO.—Operated by Clarence Clinkingbeard after the death of his father, W. R., in 1934. Building constructed about 1912.
- W5 CROSLIN & SON GROCERY & MARKET (1st floor), PUBLIC LIBRARY (2nd floor)—The library opened here in April 1935. Croslin's store became the Ellis Stores in 1938. Building constructed by J. A. G. Reynolds and Mrs. J. M. Adams in 1916.
- W6 MILLER'S—Building constructed by A. P. Miller in 1915.
- W7 CITIZENS BANK—Moved to this location at Christmas 1905 after being established in July 1905.

BUSINESSES LOCATED ON THE SQUARE'S CORNERS--DECEMBER 1935

NW corner	AVA SERVICE STATION--(Shell Gas & Oil). Established in June 1925 on the site of the old Singleton Hotel.
NW corner	SPURLOCK'S DUCK INN-- Owned by Roscoe Spurlock. "Demand the best, drink Budweiser."
NE corner	WILBANK'S GROCERY, FLOUR & FEED STORE--Opened in April 1935 by J. L. Wilbanks. Building owned by Meeker.
SE corner	J. C. "HAPPY" GARRISON'S FILLING STATION--(Sold Sinclair products). Purchased by J. C. Garrison from T. L. Evans in October 1932..
SW corner	FILLING STATION (Unknown occupant)

BUSINESSES LOCATED OFF THE SQUARE--DECEMBER 1935

North	AVA MILLING CO.--Reopened in October 1935 by owner, R. J. Gray, after purchasing it from R. R. Thompson and the W. E. Mankin estate.
North	BROWN'S TAVERN--Owned by Lena McClendon and Vern Wilson. Located just north Norman-Gentry Drug Store on. Served plate lunches, toasted sandwiches, and beer.
North	BURDETT-CHEVROLET MOTOR CO.--Owned by Rondo Burdett. He formed it from the Ava Motor Co. which he purchased in December 1928. Located just north of the square on Jefferson.
North	HASKINS BARBER SHOP--Located just north of the square on Jefferson.
North	HITCHCOCK MOTOR CO.--(Sold Sinclair Gasoline in November 1932). Located just south of the present high school on Jefferson.
North	OZARK HOTEL--Located on Jefferson at its present site.
North	PANTATORIUM--Purchased in June 1935 from the Story family by Glenn Hooper and managed by Carl McDaniel. Became H & S Cleaners in March 1936. Located just north of the square on Jefferson.
North	REED-HARLIN GROCERY COMPANY. Located on north Jefferson across from the present public school complex.
North	THELMA'S BEAUTY SHOPPE--Located on Jefferson south of the present Ozark Hotel.
North	W. & H. MOTOR COMPANY--(Wardie and Arthur) Selling Dodge & Plymouth. Building owned by L. H. Pettit.
North	WHEELER AUTO SALVAGE--Owned by T. J. Moorhouse.
East	COBBLESTONE SERVICE STATION--Opened in 1929. (Marathon Gas & Oil). Present building of the Ava Chamber of Commerce on Washington Ave. east of the square.
East	WHITEWAY SERVICE STATION--Purchased in September 1935 by Troy & Thurlo Mefford from Steve Wallen.
East	SHIPMAN MOTOR CO.--(Standard Service Station, Ford Agency). Purchased by H. T. Shipman from Harry Martin in April 1933. Present location of the Douglas County Herald.
South	AVA FARMERS EXCHANGE--Located one block south of square in 1924. The Exchange itself was established in 1921.
South	L. F. LINDE PRODUCE. Located just south of the square on Jefferson.
South	A. L. KROPP PRODUCE. Located just south of the square on Jefferson.
South	ADAMS SERVICE STATION
South	INDEPENDENT OIL CO.
South	SALLEE SERVICE STATION--Owned & operated by R. L. Sallee and son-in-law, C. W. Robirds.
South	GLENNY KYLE'S SERVICE STATION
South	PECK'S SERVICE STATION--Opened in July 1935 by Ralph Peck in a new building owned by L. H. Pettit.
South	QUALITY BAKERY & CONFECTIONARY (Lee Lackmund, Proprietor). Believed to have been located just south of the present Douglas County Courthouse on the same block.
West	AVA LUMBER CO.-- Managed by Fred Livingston.
West	CHAS. VICTOR & SONS--Plumbing business established in May 1924.
West	SPURLOCK PRODUCE--Owned by Charles Spurlock. Located across the street north of the present City Hall.
West	M. F. SILVEY CREAM STATION--Located across the street north of the present City Hall.
West	A. D. ROPER'S STORE--Selling underwear, blankets, coats, hats, & shoes. Located across the street north of the present City. Hall.

OTHER BUSINESSES OPERATING IN DECEMBER 1935
(1935 LOCATION UNKNOWN)

WADE (AVA) PRODUCE CO.--Owned by D. P. Wade and J. E. Sallee.
 AVA BARGAIN STORE (Jernigan's)--O. M. and Eva Jernigan did not move their shoe store to the square until March 1938.
 BROOKE & WALLACE SERVICE STATION--(Sinclair) Operated by Mr. Brooke and Lev Crumley.
 CAMERON BARBER SHOP
 JUDD'S GROCERY
 DEAN & DEAN SERVICE STATION
 O'DANIEL CAFE
 PEOPLE'S BARGAIN STORE--Owned by D. A. Jennings.
 PIEDMONT CLUB
 SINCLAIR OIL & GAS SERVICE--Operated by Harold Hutchinson.
 VANITY BEAUTY SHOPPE--Owned by Mrs. W. A. Clinkingbeard and daughter, Mrs. Don Burke.

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF BUSINESSES IN DECEMBER 1935

Adams Service Station	Fletcher's Stand	Piedmont Club
Ava Bargain Store	Garrison's (J. E. "Happy") Filling Station	Quality Bakery & Confectionary
Ava Farmers Exchange	Harley's Store	Reed-Harlin Grocery Co.
Ava Hardware Co.	Hartley's Grocery	Roper's (A. D.) Store
Ava Lumber Co.	Haskins Barber Shop	Saint Louis Auto Supply Co.
Ava Milling Co.	Hitchcock Motor Co.	Sallee Service Station
Ava Service Station	Holestine's Department Store	Shipman Motor Co.
Beano's Cafe	House Shoe Store	Silvey (M. F.) Cream Station
Brooke & Wallace Service Station	Hunt's Grocery & Market	Sinclair Oil & Gas Service
Brown's Federated Store	Independent Oil Co.	Spurlock's Duck Inn
Brown's Tavern	Judd's Grocery	Spurlock Produce
Burdett-Chevrolet Motor Co.	Kropp (A. L.) Produce	Story & Sons Hardware
Cameron Barber Shop	Kyle's (Glenny) Service Station	Thelma's Beauty Shoppe
Citizens Bank	Linde (L. F.) Produce	Thrasher's Grocery
Clinkingbeard Furniture & Undertaking Co.	Local Relief Office	V & O Furniture Co.
Cobblestone Service Station	Miller's	Vanity Beauty Shoppe
Croslin & Son Grocery & Market	Nichol's 5&10 Cent Store	Victor (Chas.) & Sons
Davis (C. E.) Grocery & Market	Norman-Gentry Drug Store	W. & H. Motor Co.
Dean & Dean Service Station	O'Daniel's Cafe	Wade (Ava) Produce Co.
Dean & Gaulding	Ozark Hotel	Wheeler Auto Salvage
Douglas County Abstract Co.	Pantatorium	Whiteway Service Station
Douglas County Herald	Peck's Service Station	Wilbank's Grocery, Flour & Feed Store
Ferguson Drug Store	Peoples Bank (Closed)	Wilson Theatre
	People's Bargain Store	U. S. Post Office