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"Early Merchants" (original from Chronicles...)" by Saggitarius

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CHRONICLES OF EARLY HUNTINGTON

Early Merchants

By Sagittarius

As the pages of memory turn backward the number of merchants of the early days of Huntington seem almost a legion in number. Only a few of them or their successors remain in business today. Almost all of them for one reason or another, death, failure, economic conditions, or what not, have vanished from the scene. The record well illustrates the enormous mortality in the retail business throughout the whole country and the extreme hazard of embarking therein.

Probably one of the first stores to be established in Huntington was the general store of E. T. Mitchell & Son (^{grand}father and ^{brother} of Mrs. Peyton Dudley) on the southwest corner of Second Avenue and Eighth Street. It continued there until business drifted over onto Third Avenue, and was then discontinued. In the same block were the drug stores of M. H. Brooks and Smith & Davis (B.T.) Mr. Davis continued in business there until he built the Davis Opera House on the southeast corner of Third Avenue and Eighth Street. He then moved to the corner room of the Opera House building, and continued in business there until his death in 1937. The business is still conducted there by his son. In the same block was the news, cigar and candy store of Herman Jenkins (father of Harry W. Jenkins). This store was later moved to the north side of Third Avenue near Ninth Street. Another store in the same block was that of J. W. Verlander (father of James E. Verlander).

One of the first dry goods and notions stores was that of F. J. Harmon who moved his store from Guyandotte to Huntington in 1871. A young clerk in the store was Robert A. Jack, who married a daughter of Rev. A. Valentine. A short time later Jack became a partner in the business under the firm name of Harmon, Jack & Co. Still later he acquired his partner's interest and conducted the business as R. A. Jack & Co. until

Another early dry goods merchant was Thomas C. Morallee (1873) who moved to Cincinnati a few years later.

Another early dry goods merchant was Jacob Sheets with his "Racket Store", on the north side of Third Avenue near Tenth Street.

One of the early grocery stores was operated by a young man from Alabama, John Hooe Russel. His partner was M. Erskine Miller, his kinsman, of Staunton, Virginia. When the Bank of Huntington was organized in 1873 Mr. Russel became its first Cashier, and later its President.

Another of the early grocery stores was that operated for many years by Laidley & Johnston on the southeast corner of Third Avenue and Tenth Street. They were succeeded by Dusenberry (C.C.) and Wilson (W.B.) Later Mr. Dusenberry withdrew and W. B. Wilson did business in that location for many years.

Other early grocery and sundries stores were operated by Noah Adkins on the southeast corner of Third Avenue and Seventh Street; Amos Crider on the south side of Third Avenue near Tenth Street; George W. and H. M. Adams on the north side of Third Avenue near Tenth Street; John Q. Adams, W. H. Bull and S. R. Hall on the north side of Third Avenue between Eighth and Ninth Streets; E. E. Ward on the northwest corner of Third Avenue and Ninth Street; Tolbert Adkins on the south side of Third Avenue between Ninth and Tenth Streets; J. N. Potts on the southwest corner of Third Avenue and Eighth Street who was succeeded in 1884 by C. A. Boxley, later Boxley & Dudley; S. J. Ingham and Mrs. Kline. Later G. C. Ricketts was a leading grocer on the southwest corner of Third Avenue and Tenth Street, and L. J. Hshworth, J. S. Davis, L. V. Waugh and Hague, Plymake & Co. were prosperous merchants in the East End.

The first clothing store operated in Huntington was that of Sam Gideon (1872) on Third Avenue near Tenth Street. The business was continued in that location by Mr. Gideon and his sons for more than fifty years.

Other early clothing merchants were Paul Eober who moved from Gallipolis in 1887; Jacob Zigler on Third Avenue between Ninth and Tenth

Streets; Northcott (G.A.) and Kelly (Heath) (1884) who were located on Third Avenue between Ninth and Tenth Streets, and which business finally evolved into the present Northcott-Tate-Hagy Company; J. H. Cammack (1878) on Third Avenue near ~~Bank~~ ^{North} Street, later at corner of Third Avenue and Tenth Street; ~~and~~ Mike and Julius Broh (1887) on south side of Third Avenue near Ninth Street; ^{and B. Kahn.} Other early merchants who handled clothing with other lines were O. R. Mungler, Biern and Friedman and Max Schoenfeld.

The early milliners were Mrs. McLellan, Mrs. M. A. Lallance, and Mrs. K. A. Knuff. Later came Mrs. Lena Kahn, and H. Newman who also handled dry goods and notions.

There were two hardware stores established in 1871, viz., B. W. Foster on the southwest corner of Third Avenue and Ninth Street and C. F. Parsons & Son on northeast corner of the same streets. They are both in existence today, the former as the Foster-Thornburg Hardware Co., and the latter as the Emmons-Hawkins Hardware Co.

The first shoe store was probably that of Mr. Burdick (father of Mrs. Frank H. Tyree), who built the Burdick Block on the south side of Third Avenue between Ninth and Tenth Streets. Other early shoe merchants were K. Delebar & Brother, T. S. Scanlon (1883) and H. Levy; and about 189 W. H. Lyons embarked in the shoe business.

Among the early druggists in addition to those already named were J. L. Cridor, William O. Keefe, Warren Overby and T. N. Boggess.

The early jewelers were George Cullen, R. C. Shoup, Andrew Strong, Frank Hoff and Glenn Hilton.

The first china and crockery store was operated by Thomas Medford on Third Avenue near Eighth Street. He later built the three story brick building just east of the Anderson-Newcomb Company, and moved his store there where the business continued until his death. In the new location he operated five and ten cent counters, the first of the kind in Huntington.

A later china and glass-ware merchant was Frank Shepard (brother of Mrs. Henry O. Aleshire) on the south side of Third Avenue between Tenth and Eleventh Streets.

The early photographers were George W. Kirk, George C. Teaford, D. E. Abbott and Sam V. Matthews.

The early coal merchants were Isaac Bowman, V. H. Green (father of E. T. and E. H. Green), Thomas Archer (father of Robert L. Archer), N. C. Petit and Dan A. Mossman.

The early insurance men were Donner & Titus, Captain Mark Poore and E. B. Enslow & Co. The Enslow agency finally evolved into the present Staats-Blair Agency.

Levi Crider was a brother of J. L. and Amos Crider. He clerked for a while in his brother's drug store and then embarked in business on his own account as a dealer in books, Magazines &c. Later book stores, were operated by Lansing Farroll, Joseph R. Hallick and J. P. McVey.

The first furniture store was operated by E. E. Randall, who was finally succeeded by W. H. H. Holswade on the south side of Third Avenue between Ninth and Tenth Streets. Mr. Holswade and his son (J. Fred) continued in business there for many years until the death of the elder Holswade. Later furniture merchants were Johnson (James E.) and Emmons (J. A.), and J. C. Carter & Co.

The early bakers were Adolph Molter, Conrad Molter and W. R. Remmele (father of C. C. Remmele and Mrs H. Linn Huff).

The early butchers were J. H. Noble and Brownrigg & Dwyer; and later F. D. Boyer (father of Mrs. R. L. Hutchinson).

Early stone and brick contractors were Robert McIntosh, George McIntosh, Thomas Sikes (father of George W. and Austin M. Sikes), and P (Pote) Henson. Henry L. Wright was a contractor for wells, cisterns and other excavations.

Peter Baer opened the first five and ten cent store in 1887.

There was no need for plumbers until the water works came in 1886. Charles P. Cole was an early plumber. His father-in-law, Mr. Magee of Proctorville was later associated with him. Another early plumbing firm was R. E. (bob) Hagan & Brother.

The saloons and the number thereof were a continuing problem to the City Council. At times the city saloon license was placed as high as one thousand dollars per year in an effort to restrict the number. Another plan was to license only one for each thousand of population. Some of the saloon keepers were highly respected and valued citizens whose places of business were orderly and well kept. Others kept places that were disorderly and more or less of a nuisance to other citizens?

There were a goodly number of small retail merchants whose names have not been mentioned. In fact small retail stores rose and fell much as do the flowers in the Spring.

Practically all business was done on credit, and settlements were made monthly if possible. The merchants traded with each other, and the custom between them was to make settlements semi-annually or annually. The standing of the citizenship as a credit risk compared favorably with that of today.

No doubt the author has omitted some names that ought to have been mentioned. With the thought that sixty years back is a long time to remember he hopes to be pardoned.