

FORT SMITH

An Arkansas City of Industry and Business—The Gateway to the Southwest.

Established One Hundred Years Ago by French Traders, Dispensing Stern Justice in the Territorial Days of Strife, the Progress of Time and Civilization Has Made of Fort Smith Today a Thriving, Busy City of Forty Thousand Souls, While Nature Has Provided Unlimited Natural Resources, Until the City is Truly Termed "The Super-Power Center."

By RAY GILL, Secretary, Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce.

MORE than 100 years ago, when French traders were cruising up and down the Mississippi establishing trading posts and carrying on the crude commerce of that day on the American frontier, a party of traders came from the Mississippi up the Arkansas River.

After days of travel, they came to a beautiful lands-point, the confluence of the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers.

Because of the beautiful surroundings and ideal location, these traders named the post which they then began, "Belle Point", and as "Belle Point" the now prosperous City of Fort Smith was founded.

In 1817 the Federal Government located a military outpost at "Belle Point" and changed the name to Fort Smith in honor of General Thomas A. Smith, who was placed in command.

Throughout the hazardous and trying days that followed, Fort Smith

was rebuilt three times, continuing through the Civil War and lasting until 1874.

Throughout its grim history runs the notorious territorial period, when the federal court, with jurisdiction over the Southwest territory, brought to a stern accounting the outlaws and renegades from this east section. And Fort Smith takes a traditional pride that it was the first thoroughly organized point for the rigid enforcement of law and order in the southwest.

But the progress of time and civilization has changed

these things.

The old federal jail, which was a part of the last fort, is now owned by the city and in service of the welfare association. Cells and bars are gone and this building and its spacious grounds are given over to the care of underprivileged children. The old commissary building at the foot of Garrison Avenue, now houses a splendid collection of historical relics and documents of every character. The federal cemetery, located in a beautiful natural park, still remains, and is given perpetual care by the government of the nation, while the old Military Trail, established one hundred years

ago for wagon service to supplement the traffic on the Arkansas River between Fort Smith and Little Rock, is now a state highway of the most modern sort, under the continual maintenance of the State Highway Department.

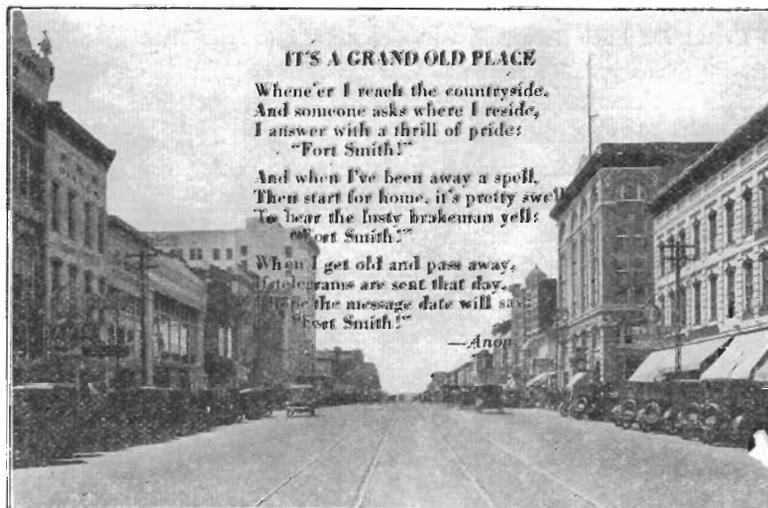
Against this background of romance and battle, the new Fort

Smith, modern city of 40,000 souls, beautiful with parks and boulevards, wealthy with business and commerce, offers the natural gateway to the large territory of the Southwest.

Cheap fuel and fine railway facilities, the greatest industrial assets of Fort Smith, have aided in building a remarkable manufacturing and industrial city.

Coal for a Thousand Years

Located in the midst of the Mid-Continent or



Arkansas-Oklahoma coal fields, a normal annual production of approximately four million tons of coal evolves around Fort Smith as the hub. Within a radius of 100 miles of the city, easily tapped by the network of railway lines, there are four billion tons of unmined coal, according to geological surveys. It would require almost one thousand years of mining operations on the present basis to exhaust the available geologically measured coal supply.

Out of the total of 1,233,242 tons of coal produced in the State of Arkansas in 1924, 642,717 tons were mined in Sebastian County, in which Fort Smith is located, bringing a revenue of \$2,197,000 to this County alone. Sebastian County, together with Franklin, Johnson and Logan Counties, produced more than 94 per cent of all the coal mined in the state in 1924.

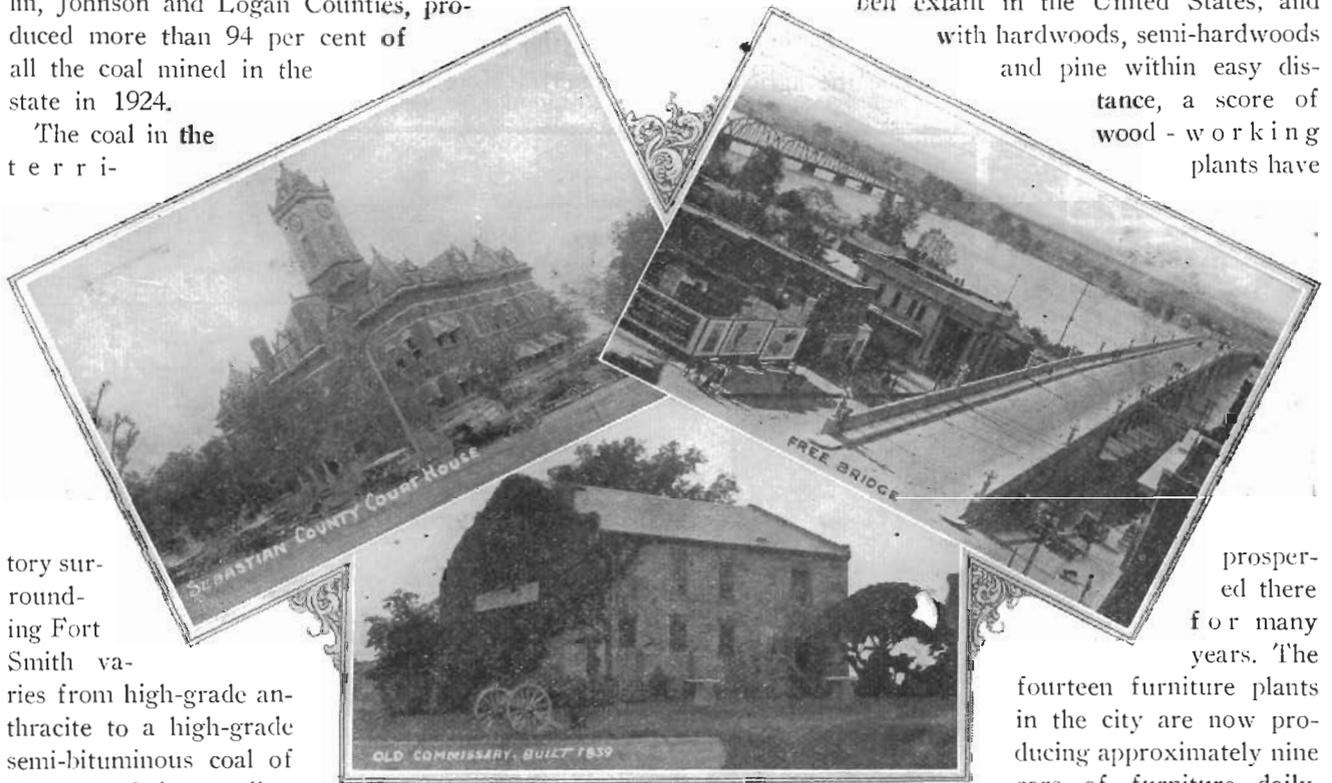
The coal in the territory

represents a total potential horsepower comparable to the great Wilson Dam at Muscle Shoals. An immense power plant at Fort Smith now has available electric power, produced from natural gas at rates which are the lowest in the southwest.

Railroads Serve Well

Five main line railroads and four branches serve this Arkansas city of progressive people, affording ample switching and yards, prompt service and adequate equipment. Fort Smith factories and jobbing houses have first-class service into the entire southwest and distribution of a nation-wide sort is thereby provided for the furniture, glass, smelter and other industries.

Fort Smith is in the midst of the greatest timber belt extant in the United States, and with hardwoods, semi-hardwoods and pine within easy distance, a score of wood-working plants have



tory surrounding Fort Smith varies from high-grade anthracite to a high-grade semi-bituminous coal of almost smokeless quality.

The semi-anthracite is preferable for domestic use because of its cleanliness and the semi-bituminous is more suited for steaming purposes because of its high heat producing qualities.

Unlimited Gas Fields

For the past thirty years natural gas has been developed near Fort Smith until now, the gas fields and proven territory literally surround the city.

The title "Super Power Center" has been applied many times to Fort Smith because of its unlimited supply of natural gas.

Today the available supply connected with the city by a double system of pipe lines, is 600,000,000 cubic feet daily, and the fields are only partially developed. This available flow is fifty times the present need and

prospered there for many years. The

fourteen furniture plants in the city are now producing approximately nine cars of furniture daily,

including a full line of beds, dressers, chairs, couches, davenport and all other branches of the furniture line.

Fort Smith has one hundred twenty-one diversified factories including fourteen furniture factories, wagon, truck, body, handle, rim and bow, wood stock, novelty, broom and other wood-working industries. There are six glass plants making window glass, bottles, lamp chimneys, lantern globes, tumblers and cylinders. Three zinc smelters, a sorghum and stock feed plant, biscuit factory, pants, overalls and tent and camp equipment factories. The scissors factory distributes the highest grade cutlery throughout the world.

Other plants include harness, saddles, pharmaceutical and chemical preparations, floor sweep, candies, coffee, cigars, coffins, well buckets, cotton seed products, cotton compress, castings, trucks, wheelbarrows, springs,

mattresses, brick, tile, engraving, bound books circus and race track and theatre tickets in all languages, bottlers' products, bakery goods, creamery butter, cereals, boilers, drill bits, sash and doors, jewelry, ice cream, boxes and shocks, mirrors, millinery, canned goods, etc.

The factories in Fort Smith employ from 5,000 to 6,000 workers and have an annual production valued at \$25,000,000.

A tribute to the agreeable labor conditions of the town is contained in the knowledge that no labor disturbances have occurred for several years and labor turnover is very slight.

Great Diversification There

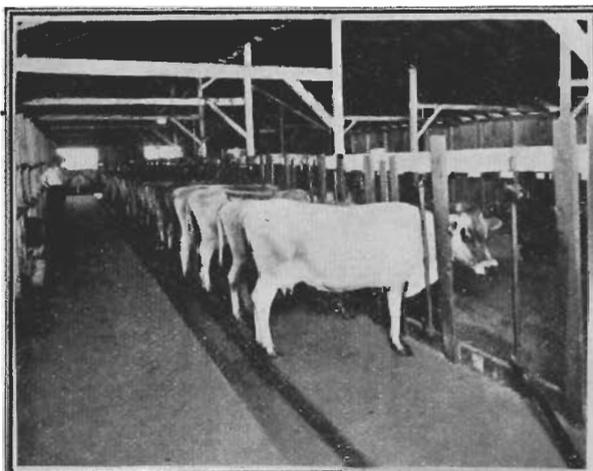
That farming term of magnetic meaning, "Diversification", is the one word to describe the agricultural

agricultural production of these counties is more than \$50,000,000.

Just north of Fort Smith are the world's greatest apple orchards and just south and west the largest Elberta peach orchards.

Mild winters, water supply, long growing seasons, varied soils from river bottoms and prairies, to vineyard hillsides and abundant natural pasturage make profitable dairying, hog, poultry and general stock raising. Extensive local markets and adequate rapid transportation to the markets of the entire country assure returns for every standard agricultural product grown within hauling distance of Fort Smith.

Within a hundred miles of Fort Smith there is grown on a ten year average 350,000 bales of cotton annually. More than eighty per cent of this cotton is



INTERIOR OF DAIRY BARN
NEAR FT. SMITH, ARK.



TOMATO HARVEST R. O. STOUGH'S
TRUCK FARM, FT. SMITH, ARK.



40,000,000 FEET NATURAL GAS WELL
FORT SMITH, ARK.

situation surrounding Fort Smith. Almost every plant, grain, vegetable, fruit, flower and shrub grown in the temperate zone, thrives there. This locality is a famous market for fruits and vegetables, producing the earliest and finest cantaloupes, strawberries, tomatoes, lettuce and radishes. Two crops of Irish potatoes are grown annually on the same land. The Fort Smith Nancy Hall sweet potato is gaining national recognition.

It is peculiarly the spot where "corn and wheat and cotton meet". All small grains and forage crops yield unfailingly. The sorghum in Fort Smith's immediate territory supplies the largest sorghum plant ever erected, which also furnishes the growing dairy industry with important by-products of stock feeds.

Four counties border on the city limits of Fort Smith, Sebastian and Crawford in Arkansas, LeFlore and Sequoyah in Oklahoma. The combined annual

suitable for weaving into high-grade fabrics. This means that the raw material in high-grade cotton near Fort Smith would support 500,000 spindles

making gingham and other products, with cheap power, ample labor, water, transportation and market at hand.

Within the city limits of Fort Smith and on railway switches are millions of tons of shale suitable for building and paving brick and tile. Near Fort Smith are large deposits of clays and kaolin. South of Fort Smith are large deposits of iron ore and manganese, slate and chalk beds for cement plants. To the north are lime, lead, zinc and glass sand.

A Splendid Social City

One must not gather from this story to date, that Fort Smith is a hive of business and industry, with nothing else.

The social life of the community is one rich for all its citizens. In addition to many church, social and

fraternal organizations, there are Rotary, Lions, Civitan, Co-Operative, Exchange and Noon Civic luncheon clubs.

The city boasts two large and first-class theaters, three moving picture houses, a high school auditorium, Carnegie Library and ten club halls frequently used for social events.

The Fort Smith Concert Club, an organization within the city, brings a series of high class musical entertainment each season. Andrews Field has a splendid athletic stadium, accommodating baseball, football and all field day events of the schools.

Then there are swimming pools, bathing beaches, tennis, boating, golf, hunting and fishing—all of them popular in season.

The city is located in the midst of a great natural park and the fine streams and wooded mountains invite picnic and camping parties to a thousand delightful retreats. The summer camps of the Boy Scouts and the Boy Rangers are among the hundred resorts of the Ozarks.

Fort Smith has many inducements to offer those who consider making their home within its limits.

Climatically the location is one of idealism.

The United States Weather Bureau reports show

a mean temperature of 61 degrees for the past forty years, and an average rainfall of 38.33 inches. The winters are mild and open and summer temperatures are moderated by low humidity during the day and relatively cool nights.

Located as it is in the foot-hills of the Ozarks and practically surrounded by the Ozarks, Boston and Kiamichi Mountains, it is on the border line of the Gulf and plains types of weather and thus avoids to a great extent, storms and extremes of both types of weather.

In a sanitation way, the city has just expended nearly a million dollars on improvements to its water plant and it is now adequate to supply a population of 100,000 with pure, soft water from the spring-fed Poteau River. All streets in the city are paved, a record unexcelled in any city of America and the

sewerage system is complete. Public incinerators, no malarial mosquitoes and ideal living conditions aid the vital statistics of the public health office in showing a birth rate of 35 per thousand in the past twelve months and a low death rate of 10.5 per thousand.

In educational work, the city has a magnificent departmental high school accommodating 1,600 pupils and fourteen modern ward schools. The school plant invoices over \$2,000,000. In addition there are three parochial schools, two business colleges, a conservatory of music, boys' boarding academy, schools of dancing and kindergarten, all under public or denominational direction.

Come to Ft. Smith

Churches of every denomination thrive in the city, representing an investment of \$2,500,000 and a long list of fraternal and social orders includes: The American Legion, Masonic Orders, Country Club, Elks, Knights of Columbus, Progress Club, Eagles, the Grotto, Knights of Pythias, Odd Fellows, A. O. U. of W., Maccabees, W. O. W., Redmen and U. C. T.

The city government is of the most modern and approved form, consisting of a commission with three salaried members. The executive departments are divided among the

commissioners, and the plan has proved economical and the residents feel it is in every way a marked improvement over the old alderman form. Adequate fire departments and a health department work under the commission direction.

With the above list of business and industrial activities, ideal climatic and governmental conditions, it is indeed an easy matter to see why Fort Smith, Arkansas, a veritable commercial hub of its state, has grown from a population of 964 in 1850 to upwards of 40,000 in seventy-five years.

It has kept faith and stride with other growing, glowing cities of the great Southwest.

And Fort Smith citizens, boosters all—join in the cordial invitation:

"Come to Fort Smith. There is prosperity ahead for you."



FRISCO OFFICE BUILDING, FORT SMITH

Frisco Railroad Pioneers the Field in Safety Campaign for Little Children

J. W. Morrill and Harry Harrison Carry Message of Carefulness to 150,000 Youths Along Frisco Lines With Remarkable Results

THE word "automobile" hasn't been in the dictionaries for but a few years. Within the memory of every adult there is a picture of the chugging, one-cylinder machine. Fifteen or twenty years ago every town had its troublesome motorist (usually just one or two), and "respectable" people who wished to drive their horses to the family phaeton on a Sunday afternoon phoned the motorist to see what road he would take in his dusty journey. Then they drove old Dobbin in another direction.

The "experts" in the automobile world stood aghast when the first two-cylinder car came into existence.

"It's impossible," they said. "They won't run with two cylinders. One is enough."

But look, today!

Now there are 17,000,000 automobiles in America. More than that number of drivers speed them over country roads and on city streets.

The automobile has brought a feeling of cheer and liberty to America—yet it has done other things than that.

Running through its pleasure-bringing life as a cyclonic cloud through the blue of a summer's sky, comes a trailing wake of devastation and horror.

Twenty-two thousand people were killed in 1924 in automobile accidents.

Twelve thousand of them met their death at railroad crossings, the result of that rapidly-growing sport—"Let's beat that train."

Six hundred and eighty-seven thousand people were injured in automobile accidents, and the estimated economic loss to the nation was in excess of \$600,000,000, according to governmental tabulation.

The nation's lawmakers are becoming aroused to the question and in several states legislation is in progress to enforce motorists' obedience to railway crossing laws.

Eleven states have passed a "Stop, Look and Listen" law, and since the passage each of these states has noticed a decrease in the number of grade crossing accidents. The north end of South Carolina reports a decrease in crossing accidents of fifty per cent.

Yet little of a legislative nature has been done for the rigid and complete education of the school children of the nation with regard to safety measures at railroad crossings and in automobiles.

The Frisco Railroad has stepped into the breach.

With the recent employment of two men to spend their entire time over the eight-state territory through which the Frisco operates, engaged wholly in education of grade and high school students, the Frisco has pioneered the field.

J. W. "Uncle Billy" Morrill, of Pacific, Mo., was the first of the two men to take up this work. Morrill is known from one end of the Frisco to the other. He was a locomotive engineer for forty years, and since 1894 ran over the Eastern Division from Pacific to St. Louis. Deafness in one ear retired Morrill from



J. W. MORRILL, SUPERINTENDENT OF SAFETY