

Ford County Historical Society
Presents

HISTORIC CEMETERY TOUR

OCTOBER 2021



Maple Grove Cemetery
Dodge City, Kansas



George & Margaret Hoover



Margarett & George Hoover

It's only fitting that the first person we visit today is George Merritt Hoover. Mr. Hoover, a Canadian, is responsible for having the first business in Dodge City - a saloon. The commandant at Ft. Dodge had decreed there would be no alcohol on the military reservation, so Hoover knew that the western boundary of the military reservation was at the 100th meridian, five miles west of Ft. Dodge. Hoover tied a rag to the wheel of his wagon, measured off the five miles, and dropped the tail gate. He set up shop at eight o'clock in the morning on July 17, 1872, about half way between Dodge City's present First and Second Avenues, just south of the railroad grading stakes. During the first year of Dodge City's existence, even though the Town Company had organized, the still unincorporated city had no elected or appointed officials; the county government was not yet organized, and consequently there were no courts, jails, or official law enforcement nearby. In 1903, Hoover recalled that he remembered of no less than fifteen men killed in Dodge City during the winter of 1872 and spring of 1873.

Once buildings went up on the north side of the tracks along what became known as Front Street, George M. Hoover's saloon and wholesale liquor store was one door east of the Long Branch Saloon. Hoover's was a simple bar run in connection with his wholesale trade which extended south into Indian Territory and the Texas Panhandle. He allowed no dancing, no gambling except occasional games of

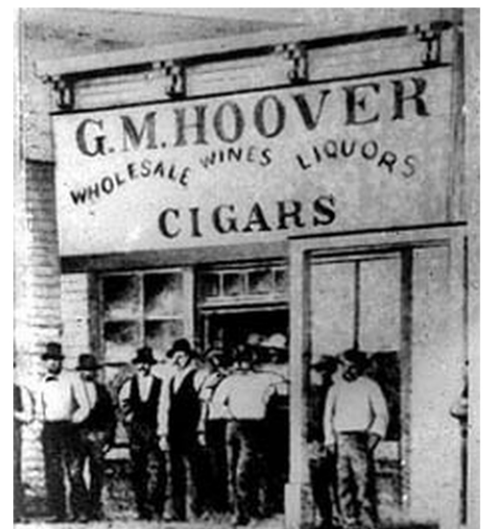
cribbage, and kept a strict business-like house. Cigars were a necessity in the Cowtown atmosphere of Dodge City. In 1877 Hoover received upwards of five thousand fresh cigars in one week's shipment.

Hoover was the second mayor of the city, however the first elected mayor, and served three later terms as mayor. He also served as city councilman and county commissioner several times. He later served in the Kansas Legislature and when Fort Dodge was closed in 1882, he introduced the bill in 1883 to use the fort as a State Soldiers Home. In the spring of 1882 as a saloon merchant, George Hoover, began selling drug supplies to bolster the argument that his liquor was for medicinal purposes because a temperance society was organized in the Union Church on Gospel Hill.

The city was 10 years old before it had its first bank and in 1882 he opened the town's first commercial bank, the State Bank of Dodge City. This bank later merged with the Kansas State Bank in 1933 and is now known as Fidelity State Bank & Trust located in downtown Dodge City today.

Hoover said that he made his money in Dodge City and would leave it here. He bequeathed a trust of \$100,000.00 to the city, the interest to be used for the beautification of the city and the cemetery. He left \$1,000.00 to each of the six churches and a sum of \$10,000.00 to build a city meeting place in Wright Park - which we know today as Hoover Pavilion.

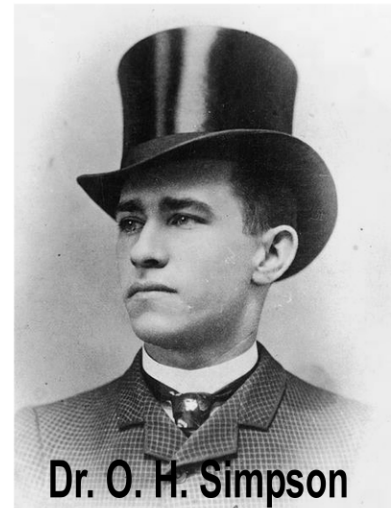
Mr. Hoover married his wife, the former Margaret Carnahan in 1876 and even though they were childless - they raised a foster son named George Curry. Mr. Curry later went on to be one of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders and the first territorial governor of New Mexico. Mrs. Hoover accompanied her parents to Dodge City from Blanchester, OH in 1875 and was known for raising flowers and maintained a greenhouse at their home that was located at Central & Military.



Hoover's Store on Front Street

Dr. O.H. Simpson

Doctor Simpson may properly be called the pioneer dentist of western Kansas. He arrived in Dodge City in 1885, age 23, to visit a friend and render professional services. He liked the wild and woolly west and decided to stay. When he first appeared on the streets of Dodge, he wore a black broadcloth cutaway coat, pinstripe trousers, boiled shirt, flowing bow tie, kid gloves, and a high black silk hat - "insignia of the tenderfoot." He was taunted and jeered by the loafers on the street, however their disapproval did not bother the broad-shouldered dentist. He checked into the Great Western Hotel and the next morning as he was leaving the hotel he was warned not to 'run the gauntlet' of Front Street by wearing that hat. His reply was "I am an American, and I can wear any kind of a hat I like anywhere." There are conflicting stories about what happened to his hat, or his response to it, however in the end he won the respect of those involved by going into a dry-goods store where he purchased a pair of cowboy boots and a big, white hat. This act was equivalent to waving a white flag - and it gained him respect and acceptance. He became known affectionately as the "Dude Dentist of Dodge."



During his practice as a dentist he developed the most modern dental office which was known for efficiency and his tools in his laboratory were all handmade from models prepared by himself. His methods were nearly all original ideas. In 1898 he discovered the possibilities of casting gold inlays and introduced that into the profession of dentistry. By 1903 he was known nationally for his innovative improvements in the field of dentistry. He never profited personally from his discoveries and gave everything to the profession. During more than 52 years of practice in Dodge City he constructed thousands of dental restorations. He would tell the story of the pioneer days when, lacking necessary rolling equipment, he used to have the local Santa Fe yard switch engineer run his locomotive over \$10 gold pieces, rolling the metal out for dental use.

Dr. Simpson retired from active practice in 1923 at which time he began his concrete sculpture of the history of the southwest. He created an elk head which adorned the Elks home. He practiced with molding concrete, and developed perfection in making stone frogs using colored marbles for jeweled eyes. The frogs may be found in every part of the U. S. where he sent them or gave them as souvenirs. He made yoked steer heads representing a yoke of oxen to commemorate the freighters of the early days and the long caravans, which is located on Boot Hill.



During a 1932 Rotary Club convention, for entertainment, he developed the concrete skulls and the toes of boots to be displayed on Boot Hill to represent the Old Boot Hill Cemetery. It was also his idea to add a Hangman's Tree to demonstrate the penalty of horse stealing. Perhaps his most famous sculpture is the Cowboy Statue he fashioned after Joe Sughrue, chief of police in Dodge City. On November 4, 1929 the statue was unveiled at the new city hall with the inscription "Upon the ashes of my camp fire this city is built."

You will notice that the letters "F-L-T" appear on his stone. Dr. Simpson was a member of the Odd Fellows Lodge. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows has three levels: the Lodge, the Encampment, and the Patriarchs Militant. The initials of the Odd Fellows Lodge are "FLT" which stands for Friendship, Love and Truth which are the basic guide for each Odd Fellows life.

John T. Riney



John T. Riney

John T. Riney was born in County Kerry, Ireland in 1842 and came to Dodge City in August 1872 as a member of a crew of workmen who were building the grade for the Santa Fe Railroad. In 1873, a toll bridge was constructed across the Arkansas River and Mr. Riney was hired to collect tolls. At the time, it was the first bridge across the Arkansas River and was considered the gateway to the Southwest. When high waters prohibited fording the stream, the bridge was the only way to cross the turbulent river. It cost one dollar for a wagon and two-horse team, \$2.50 for freight wagons pulled by teams of six or eight, 25 cents for a saddle horse and 10 cents for a pedestrian. Mr. Riney lived on the north bank of the river in a small house and was tollkeeper until 1885. In July of 1885, Ford County voted to issue bridge bonds and purchased the existing bridge for \$6,000 and made it a free bridge. A steel bridge was constructed in 1906 and later replaced by a four-lane concrete bridge in 1935. Through the efforts of the Ford County Historical Society, a plaque honoring Mr. Riney was placed on the northwest bridge railing. That plaque has since been moved near the front shelter house in Wright Park. Mr. Riney passed away in 1921 at his home at 702 Avenue A in Dodge City.



The Bridge Street (Second Avenue) Toll Bridge

Adam Schmidt Family



Next we visit an entire family - the Adam Schmidt family. In 1889, this family purchased a home at the corner of what is now Avenue A & Vine Street (and we affectionately know it as the Home of Stone). We will talk more later about the home itself - but let's learn about the family that lived in that house for over 70 years. Adam, whose parents died in an epidemic in St. Louis, later became apprenticed to his uncle as a blacksmith and plied his trade in Abilene, Ellsworth, and Hays City before establishing his blacksmith shop in Dodge City in 1874. Adam's wife - Elizabeth Berg came to Dodge City in March of 1878 with her sister to join their parents who already lived in Dodge City. Mr. Berg was a baker

& confectioner owning the first bakery in Dodge City. Elizabeth worked in her father's bakery and was a champion of the cowboys, and said they were gentlemen, if left alone. Adam and Elizabeth married in January 1881 and their three children were born in Dodge City - Henrich (known as Heinie) in 1882, Louis in 1884, and Elma in 1885. Their first home was located on Trail Street just east of Fourth Avenue (later the Rock Island Depot was located on this site). Adam & Elizabeth were married for 30 years when Adam passed away in 1911. Elizabeth, along with Heinie & Elma continued to live together in the family home.

The eldest son - Heinie, attended Third Ward school on Boot Hill and after graduation worked for seven years as a clerk in a hardware store. Heinie's father Adam believed it was his patriotic duty to attend all public meetings having to do with the betterment of the state or community and he believed that Heinie, being the oldest son, must go with him. He was outgoing, jovial and a friend of everyone. Heinie served as Register of Deeds in 1908. He was appointed postmaster December 29, 1914, and served in that capacity during the Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt administrations. This was a political appointment, and Heinie, an ardent Democrat, received the appointment only during Democratic administrations. Perhaps the chief distinction in Ford County was Heinie as a worker and leader in developing social centers in the rural areas of the county. He was successful in organizing 26 societies in the 64 school districts of Ford County. The object of these societies was for educational improvement and literary entertainment. He was a charter member and past president of the Rotary Club, a member of the Lutheran Church, St. Bernard Masonic Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, the Old Settlers Club and a life member of both the Kansas State Historical Society and the Kansas Authors Club. Heinie's literary interest, love of poetry, and local history has provided a wealth of historical information and enjoyment. Selections from his weekly column, 'It's Worth Repeating' in the High Plains Journal during the 1940s and 1950s appeared in a publication 'Ashes of My Campfire' underwritten by the Rotary Club in 1952. Severe arthritis crippled him in the last few years of his life and this along with blindness caused him to be bed ridden and wheelchair bound in his bedroom upstairs.

The second son - Louis, also attended Third Ward school on Boot Hill. In 1912, he began working at the electric power company, known as the Midland Water, Light and Power Company. Because he was an electrician, the family home at 112 Vine Street (Home of Stone) was one of the first homes in the city to be wired with electricity. He worked as a lineman, then as line superintendent, later stock salesman and storekeeper. He retired in 1956.

The youngest of the three children - Elma, also attended Third Ward School on Boot Hill and graduated in 1904. She was quiet, quite proper and conservative in both her manner and dress. As a business person, she was just that - business. She was not the type of person that customers joked with, in fact, she could be very curt. She had a strong affection and admiration for her mother. One of Elma's first jobs after graduation was as a clerk in the York store, a ladies wear and variety store, in Dodge City. She worked for several years in the Register of Deeds office. She then went to work in the State Bank of Dodge City, which consolidated with the Kansas State Bank, which became known as the Fidelity State Bank (as we mentioned earlier). Elma worked at the bank until she retired. Elma was a member of the Presbyterian Church and a charter member of the Business and Professional Women's Club. Neither Heinie nor Elma married. Louis, however, had three wives - two of which are buried here.

Home of Stone

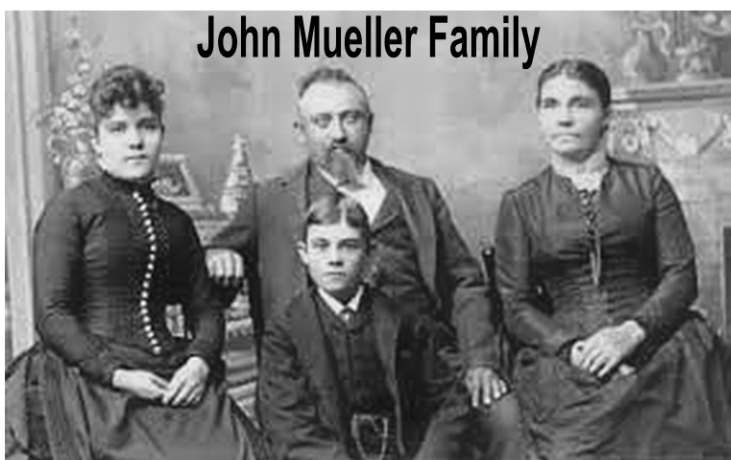
The story of the Adam Schmidt family is not complete without telling the story of the house located at the corner of Avenue A and Vine (112 Vine Street). The house was built by the John Mueller family (1879-1881). They lived in the house until 1889 when the house was sold with all its furnishings to the Adam Schmidt family, for \$5,000.00.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s Elma made some changes to the house by adding an upstairs bathroom, a fireplace in the parlor, an addition to the north side of the house for a modern kitchen and bathroom, and had the house wired for electricity. She turned the original master bedroom into a dining room. Members of the Schmidt family lived in the house for over 70 years from 1890 to 1963, when Heinie and Elma Schmidt had to move to a one level home on Antonita Street because of health reasons. Elma, as Heinie's caregiver, could no longer climb the stairs to care for him.



When Elma and Heinie began to plan to move, they discussed their family home becoming a pioneer museum. Elma insisted that at least one room be dedicated to the pioneer mothers. In 1965, Elma sold the home to Ford County and the Ford County Historical Society became the custodian of the house. From the very beginning, the Historical Society insisted the building be called the Home of Stone and not the House of Stone. Home is a much warmer word and somehow it seems to tie it to the families who lived there.

The Home of Stone is the oldest house in Dodge City located in its original location. On June 1, 1968 the house was opened to the public as the Home of Stone Museum. The 'old' dining room was turned into the Pioneer Mother's Room and exhibit.



In 2019 the Ford County Historical Society began restoration work on the Home of Stone both outside and inside. The Pioneer Mother's Exhibit was packed up and moved to the new location for the Ford County Legacy Center, 310 Gunsmoke. The 'old' dining room was refurbished and brought back to the original as Elma had it in the 1940s. The Home of Stone is a 'living home' and a well preserved example of the early pioneer days.

Robert M. Wright

Next we visit Robert Wright - known as "Mr. Dodge City". He came west when he was 16 years old and by 1870 he had been a freighter, stage line operator, Indian fighter, and wood contractor, but it was as a shipper of buffalo hides and outfitter of hunters, cowhands, and cattlemen that Wright became wealthy. In 1866, Wright settled at Fort Dodge and in addition to his duties as overseer he became the operator of the Sutler's Store. In 1867 he and A. J. Anthony, a partner with Wright in ranching west of Fort Dodge, were appointed as post traders at the fort, and in 1872 co-owner of the Sutler's Store, with A.J. Anthony.

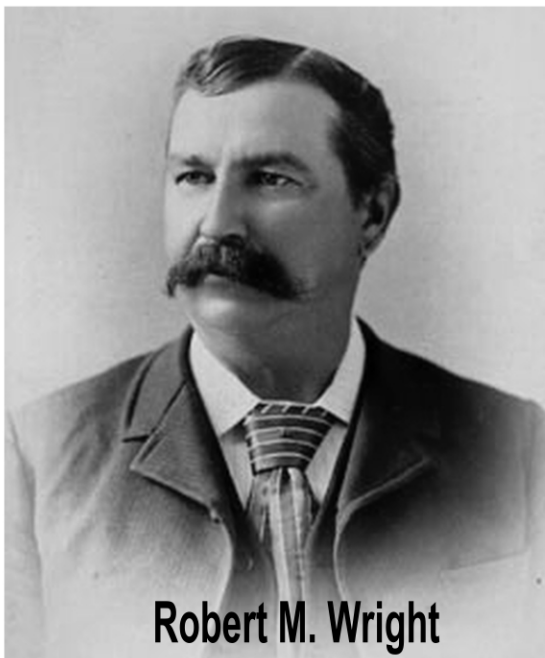
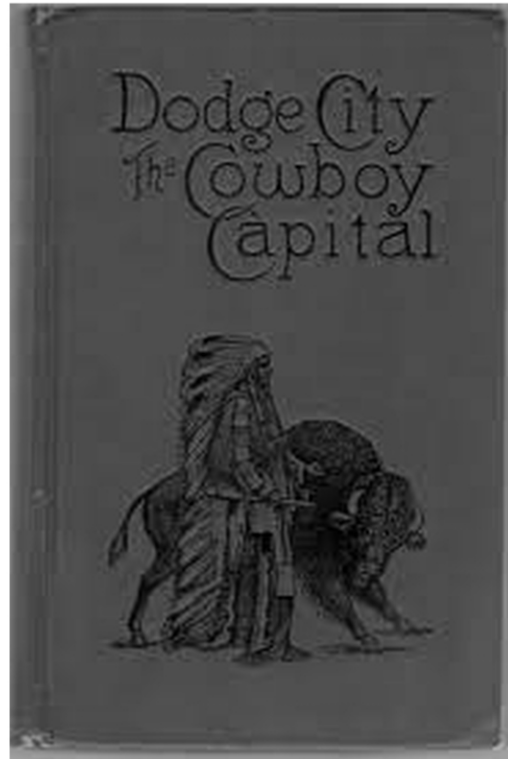
When the movement was made to establish Dodge City, Wright was elected president of the Town Company, a position he held for many years. The Town Company completed its formal organization on August 15, 1872. Wright was one of the original civilian signers of the founding document for the establishment of the private corporation to be known as the Dodge City Town Company.

In July 1872 (shortly after George Hoover opened his makeshift saloon) Robert Wright and Charles Rath combined their resources to build a two-story building at the corner of Front and Bridge Streets (now 2nd and Wyatt Earp, just east of where the Longhorn Statue is now located). The "General Outfitters" front at Boot Hill Museum is a representation of that structure.

Over the years Robert had several different partners. The firm was known as Charles Rath & Co., which Wright owned along with Charles Rath and A.J. Anthony. Later the firm of Rath, Wright, and Anthony did the biggest business in buffalo hides, bones, and meat and was largely the firm that made Dodge City the "buffalo city". Later, Anthony and Rath sold out leaving Wright as the sole owner. In 1876 Wright rebuilt his store in brick.

In 1877 Wright took Henry M. Beverly into full partnership and changed the name of his firm to Wright, Beverly & Co. The store grossed millions of dollars during the buffalo hunting days and the cow town years. He had branches established in the panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas. Most nationalities could be accommodated in the store. Wright understood most Indian languages, store clerk - Mr. Isaacson spoke French, while Sam Samuels spoke Spanish,

German, Russian, and Hebrew. Wright said it was a common practice to send shipments of \$50,000.00 to banks in Leavenworth for deposit because Dodge City had no bank. Wright had many other financial interests in the territory. In fact, he was dubbed "Merchant Prince of the Prairie" and became known over the state as "Mr. Dodge City".



Robert M. Wright



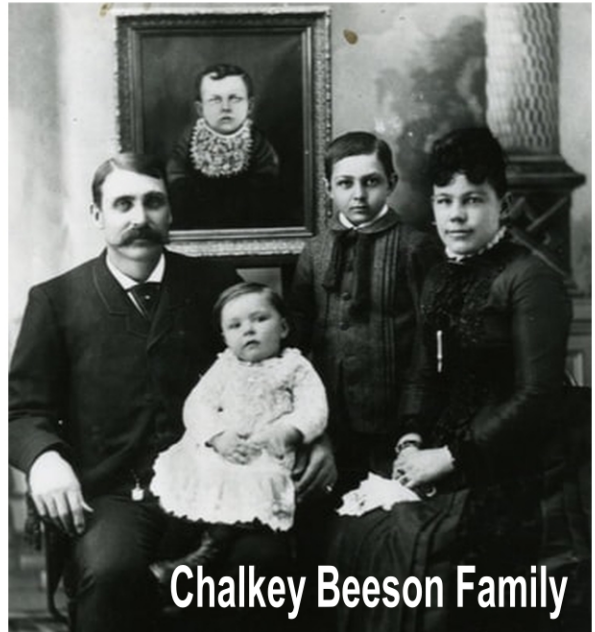


Chalkley & Ida Beeson



In 1872 Chalkley Beeson came west - hiring on as a stagecoach driver between Denver and Colorado Springs. By accident he learned of the 1872 visit to Kansas of the Grand Duke Alexis, son of the Russian Czar who was to be entertained in Dodge City. He managed to get himself invited and for years he told stories of the buffalo hunt northwest of Dodge City. In 1876, Chalk (as people called him) returned to Dodge City, seeing it as a promising and exciting town. He met George Hoover who said "We could use a man like you here in this town". Upon deciding to stay in Dodge City, Chalk, responded to George "Guess I've stayed until I can't get away." Chalk announced "I'm going to start a saloon. I'll call it 'Long 'Branch'." Hoover responded, "Fine! There's trade enough for both of us."

He came to Dodge City to collect a debt, stayed on, and purchased the Long Branch saloon property in 1878 from Robert M. Wright. He invested money in a cattle herd and the first range he herded over was on the Sawlog Creek. He acquired much valuable farm land and when the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway were coming through, he gave them a generous slice of his land for their right of way.



Chalkey Beeson Family

In July 1876 he traveled back home to Ohio to marry his waiting sweetheart, Ida M. Gause. When they were married he brought Ida home to a house on the southwest corner of Second Avenue & Spruce Street where the First National Bank building now stands. In 1887 he acquired land owned by D. F. Owens which included a palatial three-story frame house. Owens and Beeson traded their homes, complete with all the furnishings. The big farm house, a landmark in the country, was located on the southeast corner of what is now 14th Avenue and West Beeson Road, or 501 W Beeson.

He settled in Dodge City in 1876 just four years after it was chartered, to set up the Long Branch Saloon. He served as sheriff, legislator, baseball coach, founder of and musician in the famed Dodge City Cowboy Band, a skilled musician, with special talent as a violinist. In addition, he played the baritone and French horn, trombone or tin whistle according to accounts. In 1889 he and the band were invited to play for the inauguration ceremonies of President Benjamin Harrison.

Chalkley McArtor Beeson was an indefatigable worker at whatever he undertook and never went after anything that he did not succeed. It was greatly through his efforts that the Masonic Hall was built. If anyone in Dodge City was a living legend, Chalk Beeson would be that one for he was a great mixer and uttered many quaint expressions that set people roaring with mirth. "Everyone to his own liking the old man said as he kissed the cow," he was wont to say at the end of hearing an improbable tale. Chalk wasted no time getting acquainted with everyone. When the matter of weather came up, as it always did sooner or later, Chalk would stand sidewise and squint at the sky, and say "It's all clabbered up!" He was once referred to as "The Man of the Hour".

For eight years he prospered as a barkeep, however, in 1883 he sold his interest in the Long Branch to Luke Short, a notorious wild west character. The Beesons owned the Long Branch site until 1918. Prior to opening the Long Branch in 1878 he had a partnership as owner and operator of the Saratoga saloon. Times were changing and he had lived through the age of the cowboy, the buffalo hunt and enjoyed the wild life. He was quoted as saying "Now, the cowboy has had to change his six shooter and horse for a hammer and plow as settlers are turning the country into farmland." He along with several partners purchased land southwest of Dodge City forming the C.O.D. Ranch.

He ran for Ford County Sheriff in 1891, serving two terms, through 1895. During this time, he led a posse into Oklahoma Territory to capture the Doolin Gang that had robbed the Spearville Ford County Bank on November 1, 1892. He represented Ford County in the Kansas State Legislature for six years after being appointed, then reelected for two more terms, from 1902-1906. He led delegations to the GOP convention, gaining fame for heading a "peace" drive to unite warring factions at the May 1912 convention in Chicago, which nominated Teddy Roosevelt.

On August 9, 1912, Chalk Beeson died as a result of an accident on August 6, at the age of 64. A lover and trainer of horses, he nonetheless, was severely injured when his mount, startled when he stopped to watch some road construction near his ranch, reared and bucked, throwing him against the saddle horn. Newspaper accounts reported the funeral service at his home on August 11, 1912, was well attended and his contributions to the community were well documented by benevolent and fraternal societies. Ida became a leader in the community. She was instrumental in organizing one of the first Sunday Schools, which became the foundation of the Presbyterian Church. In April 1878 she and Chalkley were members of the choir to sing at the funeral of Marshal Ed Masterson. The song was a woeful dirge: "Lay him low, lay him low, In the clover or the snow - What cares he, he cannot know."

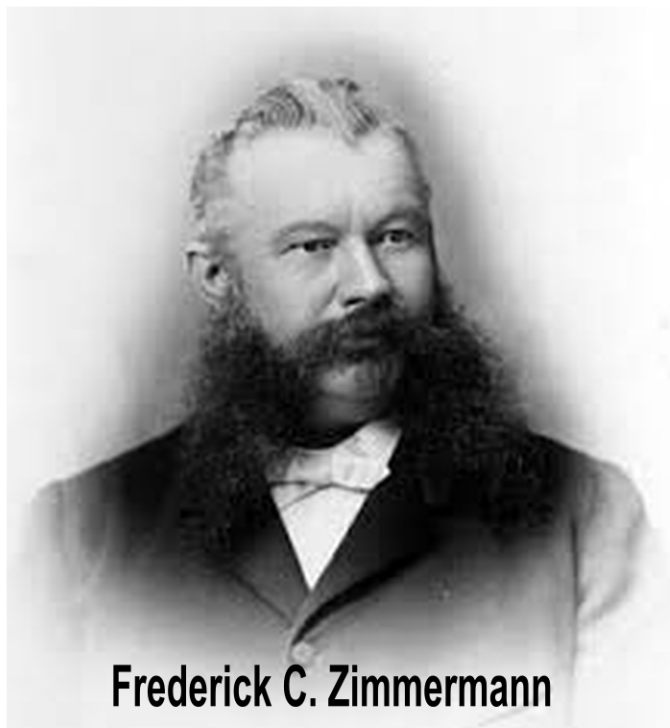
Frederick C. Zimmermann

Frederick C. Zimmerman was born in Prussia in 1833 and was apprenticed to a gunsmith at the age of 14. After serving his compulsory three-year military service, he practiced the gunsmith trade in Paris and London. He emigrated to the United States in 1863, and in 1865 met and married his wife, Matilda Messinger of New Britain, Connecticut. In September 1872 he arrived in Dodge City and discovered only a sod house and two canvas buildings. Being an experienced gunsmith, he was a valuable addition to the new town. He opened his gunsmith business in a tent. His wife and two babies arrived shortly after - son Arthur (age 2) and Clarissa (age 2 months) were the first children to reside in Dodge City.

He was an ardent foe of the gambling and saloon elements in Dodge City's cattle town days. According to Kansas and Kansans (1919), it was while rerunning for treasurer that "he was set upon by a band of 'bad men' believed to have been inspired by Bat Masterson for the sole purpose of harming Mr. Zimmermann. They laid for him at a lonely spot, and as the county treasurer and his wife approached in a buggy fired a shot in their direction. Mr. Zimmermann at once handed the lines to his wife, jumped from the vehicle with his old bright barreled shotgun and started after his assailants. The glistening of the gun barrel in the bright moonlight revealed the determined character the outlaws had to deal with and they quickly disappeared. He was frequently ordered to leave town by members of this outfit (Zimmermann was against gambling and the saloon gang of Dodge City), and on one occasion they sent him a valentine indicating in cartoon how he would be disposed of if he did not go. Mr. Zimmermann labeled the valentine 'Bat Masterson' and stuck it up in his window and forgot the threat. He was absolutely without fear, and no threats coming from any man would deter him from his straight and narrow path of duty."

His store on Front Street was the source of firearms and ammunition for hunters and cowboys in the early history of Dodge City. Over the years Zimmermann added hardware, general merchandise and lumber to his business. The F. C. Zimmermann hardware store was one of the most profitable businesses until well into the 20th century.

The Zimmermann home was on a large acreage on the west edge of the city (what is now 14th & Wyatt Earp Blvd). As a "gentleman farmer" he experimented with fruit trees, vines and windmill irrigation. He was the first to produce alfalfa successfully in Ford County. In 1885, his vines produced over a ton of grapes. The beautifully landscaped estate was called "Fountain Grove". The original house was moved from the site and is now located on Garnett Road north of Dodge City.



He was a leader among the German population and served as president of the German Immigration Society. June 5, 1873, he was elected county commissioner at the first held election. He served several times as county commissioner and served two terms as county treasurer.

In November of 1885 at seven o'clock in the evening a fire started in a room over the Junction saloon destroying the heart of Dodge City's business district including the F. C. Zimmermann hardware store. His losses were estimated at \$8,000.00 with no insurance - a sizeable sum in 1885. A news article in the Times reported that he "takes his loss with his usual grace." Brick buildings replaced the wood structures. He rebuilt the hardware store and in 1890 could supply nearly every need from buggies to bullwhips.

Zimmerman died on January 20, 1888 and was originally buried at Prairie Grove Cemetery. When that cemetery closed, his body was moved to his farm where two of the children were buried and ten years later, they were moved to Maple Grove Cemetery.



Hamilton "Ham" Bell



Hamilton B. Bell

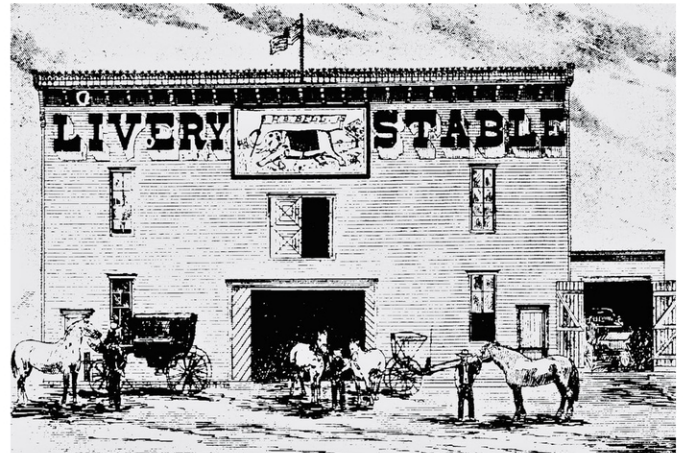
Hamilton B. Bell left home at the age of 14 to make his own way in the West. He worked in Lawrence, Abilene, and Ellsworth. He arrived in Dodge City in 1874 from Great Bend, KS and entered into the livery business. He built a large stable in 1885, known as the Elephant Livery Stable. He remained an active merchant for seventy years. His main business was as owner of the largest livery stable and as an undertaker. The livery stable was a rendezvous where freighters could leave their expensive equipment and turn their mules and horses into the big corral. As many as fifty men made their beds in the hayloft at night during the cattle season. The Elephant stable, the largest building in southwest Kansas, served as an undertaking establishment where Ham Bell kept the first hearse in Dodge City.

Ham Bell served as a deputy United States marshal at various periods from 1880 to 1885 and as sheriff of Ford County from 1888 to 1892. He spent 36 years as a peace officer, 12 as US Deputy Marshal, six terms as sheriff - the first time in 1887, and the last time in 1911, and 12 or more times as a deputy or assistant and one year as chief of police. It has been said that when he was elected mayor in 1912, it was the women's vote that overwhelmingly chose the handsome, courtly Ham Bell. During his administration as mayor, the work of paving the brick streets began. In 1877 the first Fourth of July celebration was held in Dodge City featuring pony races, which Ham Bell's pony, Lon, won the first race.

In 1878 he opened the Varieties dance hall where the Can-Can was introduced to the town but the dance hall operated for only one year. Ham Bell's Varieties had not been so successful and by August 1878 was closing down. The manager of the Varieties had run up enormous debts and 'silently stole away' the last of July on the east bound train. On August 14, 1878 Dora Hand, performing under the stage name of Fannie Keenan played a benefit at Ham Bell's Varieties. Ham Bell asked her "Well, what is your real name?" to which she replied "Well, Mr. Bell, take your pick, one's just as good as the other."

Dodge City was soon to see the end of its lusty frontier atmosphere. In 1884 the idea of a Spanish bull fight contest of matadors and ferocious Texas bulls was conceived for the Glorious Fourth celebration. They were determined to "get to the joint" one more time before the preachers and prohibitionists closed them down. Ham Bell, president of the newly organized Dodge City Driving Park and Fair Grounds, along with several other members raised \$10,000 in less than 3 months to build an arena, a half-mile race track, and grandstand with seating for 3,500 spectators on a 40-acre tract southwest of town. The spectacular event did not disappoint.

Ham Bell was a multi-faceted entrepreneur. He had a land and auto company on Chestnut Street around 1916. He also owned and operated a 2,000-acre farm south of Dodge City. He owned the first horse-drawn hearse and the first motor-driven hearse in Dodge City. In 1926 Ham Bell owned a new Chalmers roadster. In the 1910s and 1920s he was an automobile dealer in Chalmers and Reo cars. In 1927, he closed the auto dealership and opened a pet shop that he loved. This business was not profitable; however, he operated the shop until the 1940s. In 1939 Ham Bell was a member of the committee traveling to Hollywood to invite Jack Warner to hold the premiere of his movie in Dodge City. In 1942 at the age of ninety-one Ham Bell, viewing the fourth war in his lifetime, christened a Marauder B-26 at the Dodge City Army Air Field.



He is buried along with his wife, the former Josephine Dugan (hence the dual names on the tombstone). They were married in 1874 and she died in 1900. They had one son, also named Hamilton Bell who died in 1915.

Violet Z. Watson

Violet Watson was born in Lawrence Kansas and came to Dodge City with her family in 1903 when she was eleven. Her Parents were Willis Watson and Dora Jean Dessery - they are buried here as well. Dora Jean and her two sisters were seamstresses and grew up in the same village as Maurice Chevalier to whom she was distantly related. There were three Watson children - Violet was the oldest, followed by a brother - Arthur, and a younger sister - Mildred. Violet attended Third Ward School for two years where she studied typing and shorthand. In 1905 to 1910 she started to work for Coolidge-Smith Abstract Company. In 1910 she started working for the H. B. Bell Land and Auto Company (Ham Bell, owner) and worked there until 1927. When Bell closed the business and opened the pet shop Violet continued to work for him.



Violet Watson

Violet is remembered best when she worked at the pet shop. She loved her work with the parrots, parakeets, monkeys, squirrels, and dogs, especially the puppies. At one time Violet had seven dogs of her own. As each one died, she buried it in her back yard and planted flowers on the grave. After the pet shop closed and Ham Bell retired, Violet worked at Boot Hill for nine years before she retired.

She remained active in her home and became quite a household mechanic. She did her own electrical work and built cupboards and shelves. Like her mother she was a fine seamstress. She was always willing to make doll clothes and doll bodies for friends and other collectors. She had a collection of over 150 very fine dolls. She was a collector of antiques and was an authority on antique glassware and china.

She and her neighbor Mary Robinson loved to fish. In season they could always find the wild sandhill plum bushes. Violet and Mary were active members of the Old Timers Club. She was engaged to be married, but her fiancé died before the wedding. She lived with and cared for her parents until their deaths; Dora died in 1955 at 91 and Willis died in 1957 at age 95.

She was a caregiver for Ham Bell until his death. Violet, however, had no one to care for her in her old age and lived for five and one-half years in the Good Samaritan Home.

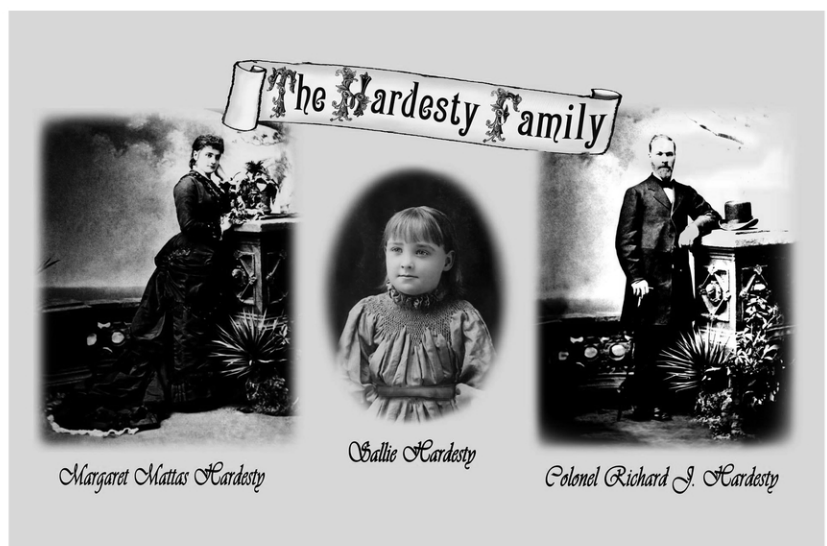
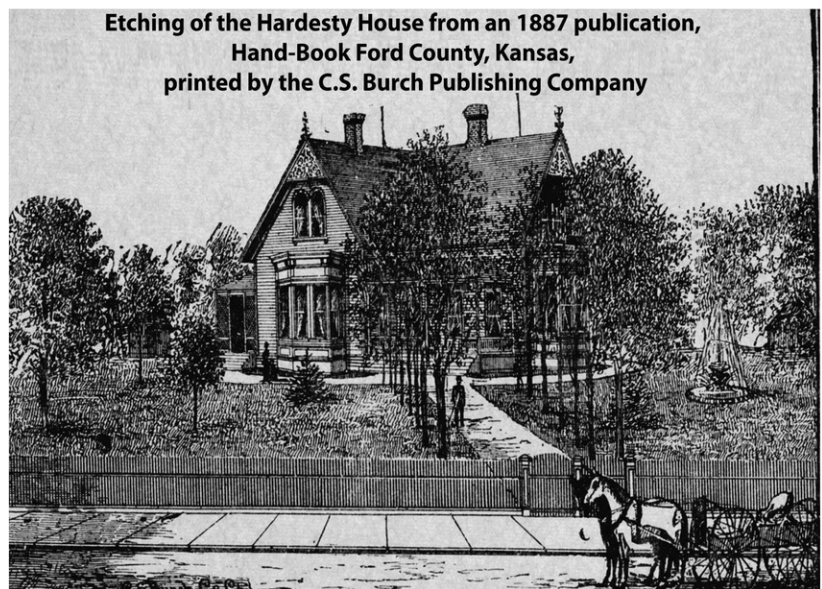
Richard & Margaret Hardesty

Colonel R. J. 'Jack' Hardesty, was one of the richest ranchers in the west. The Kentucky born Hardesty had made his first fortune going west to mine in the 1860s, and he invested that money, including \$10,000.00 worth of gold he claimed he carried in his belt, in Texas cattle. (a value today of \$252,000.00). He had a reputation for being a gentleman rancher - his cowboys knew better than to swear in front of him - and a generous host - his sponsored parties were grand. His Christmas ball in Dodge City was considered the social event of the year. At the age of 46 he was one of the most eligible bachelors west of the Mississippi - until he met Maggie Mattias.

Fred Harvey, the famous restaurateur on the Santa Fe Railway, along with his wife, Sally, sponsored a Fourth of July picnic in 1879. Sally's younger sister Margaret attended the event. At the age of 23, 'Maggie' was more than ready to find a husband. Among the guests at the picnic was 'Jack' Hardesty. After the picnic, everyone attended the gala at the Lakin depot hotel. Fred and Sally were asked to lead the Grand March. At one-point Sally saw her petite sister dancing with muscular Jack Hardesty - who looked every bit the western gentleman in his full beard, Stetson hat, and highly buffed cowboy boots - and she knew that Maggie had finally met a man who would change her life the way Fred Harvey had changed hers. Only a few months later, the couple was married at the Harvey's home in Leavenworth. They moved into a fine new house in Dodge City, just a block away from Boot Hill.

That home was originally built by A.B. Webster as a pattern home. Lumber yards had pattern books and home builders could choose the house they liked. Plans would be sent from the architect, building materials were shipped by rail, and local artisans assembled the house. This house still exists today at Boot Hill Museum. It is one of the oldest homes in Dodge City (even older than the Home of Stone) but it has been moved twice.

Jack & Maggie's daughter, Sallie, was born in 1884 and was named for her aunt, Sally Harvey. Sallie never married and upon her death in 1955, left a large trust fund to St. Cornelius Episcopal Church here in Dodge City.



Dr. Thomas McCarty

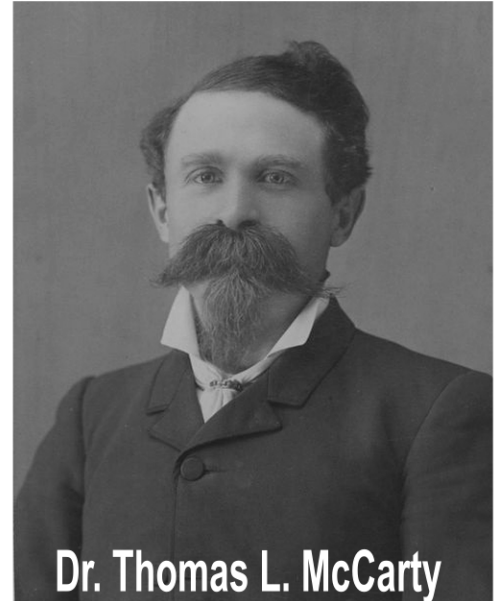
At the age of 17 Thomas decided to study medicine. He began his studies in the office of a doctor in his hometown of Tuscola, Illinois. He entered Rush Medical College at Chicago and then entered Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, graduating in 1870 with a medical diploma. He began his medical practice in St Louis, however the appeal of the west was too strong to resist. He and his wife Sarah (called Sallie) left to open an office in Denver, Colorado. They stopped in Dodge City to visit his brother-in-law. The stopover lasted 58 years, beginning in November 1872.

It is reported that Dr T. L. McCarty assisted with the removal of several inches of splintered bone from the arm and shoulder of James Kenedy, the killer of Dora Hand. Most of the doctor's business in those first years came from wounded buffalo hunters, soldiers from Fort Dodge, or from gunfights. A large part of Dr. McCarty's practice was surgery.

In the spring of 1883 there was a terrible epidemic of smallpox. Fort Dodge had been abandoned in the fall of 1882 leaving the hospital empty. Dr McCarty knew the need for isolation and made a pest house of the old hospital quarters. Dr. T. L. (as he was affectionately called) documented the scourge of the disease by taking photographs of the patients at Fort Dodge.

He practiced medicine in Dodge City from 1872 to the 1930s. In 58 years, he was the only man in town from the early years to hold on to the habits of eastern civilization day in and day out. There was always the daily shave, white collar and tie. He could not adopt the western style of dress, but he liked the western spirit. Dr. T. L. was a public-spirited man who took his civic duties seriously. He was a member of the first school board, county coroner, county commissioner, and a signer of the petition creating the first church, for which he donated a site. He was superintendent of schools for several years. McCarty's building, originally a theater, was built in 1885, and then operated as the McCarty Skating Rink and Opera House on Second Avenue in the 600 block (the same block where 2nd Ave Art Gallery is now located).

In the city elections of April 1880 Dr. T. L. McCarty, an educated and respected member of the community, was nominated to run for mayor against James H. 'Dog' Kelley. In a surprise turn of events, Dr. T. L. McCarty lost due to his friends thinking it unnecessary to organize or prepare to meet opposition. The general public had settled down to the conviction that McCarty would have a walk-over. There was considerable concern about the election and 'how this could have happened'.



In 1883 more forms of advancement and civilization came to Dodge City. A new telephone was connected between Dr. T. L. McCarty's home and his City Drug Store on Front Street. Around 1890, with the advent of the bicycle he organized the first Cycle Club in Western Kansas. He was a stock holder in the toll bridge and he bought the first automobile in Dodge City. He and his son Dr. Claude McCarty established the first hospital in Dodge City in 1905, by converting the Markham Hotel, originally built in 1885, into a hospital. In 1925 after the completion of St. Anthony Hospital, the old McCarty hospital was razed, and the sandstone block of which it was constructed, are now in the city band shell in Wright Park. The "Hospital" stone is in the stone wall in front of the Robert Wright memorial in Wright Park near the Band Shell.



Dr. Claude McCarty



Claude E. McCarty, son of T.L. and Sarah, was the first 'white' child born in Dodge City. He was not the first 'baby' in Dodge City, that honor goes to Clarrisa "Clara" Zimmerman, daughter of F. C. Zimmermann (who arrived in 1872 at the age of 2 months).

Dr. Claude McCarty was educated at Dodge City High School, St John's Military Academy of Salina, and received his degree in medicine from Rush Medical School, Chicago, Illinois in 1897 at the age of 24. He immediately returned to Dodge City to join his father in practice of medicine. Dr. Claude practiced medicine in Dodge City for 53 years and devoted his entire energies and attention to his patients, driving himself far beyond the point of ordinary human endurance. This devotion to duty was especially marked in the influenza epidemic of 1918 and in the drought years of the 1930s.

In 1900, he and his father founded the McCarty hospital - the first such institution west of Hutchinson. The hospital was located at the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Spruce Street (where Landmark Bank is today). Dr. Claude McCarty was responsible for securing establishment of St Anthony Hospital. He served on the hospital staff and on that of Murray Memorial Hospital, later Trinity Hospital. Dr. Claude was one of the pioneers in x-ray and radiology. He worked on perfecting one of the earliest x-ray machines and was the first to put an electric motor on the x-ray. He perfected the first fixation splint on the lower maxilla.

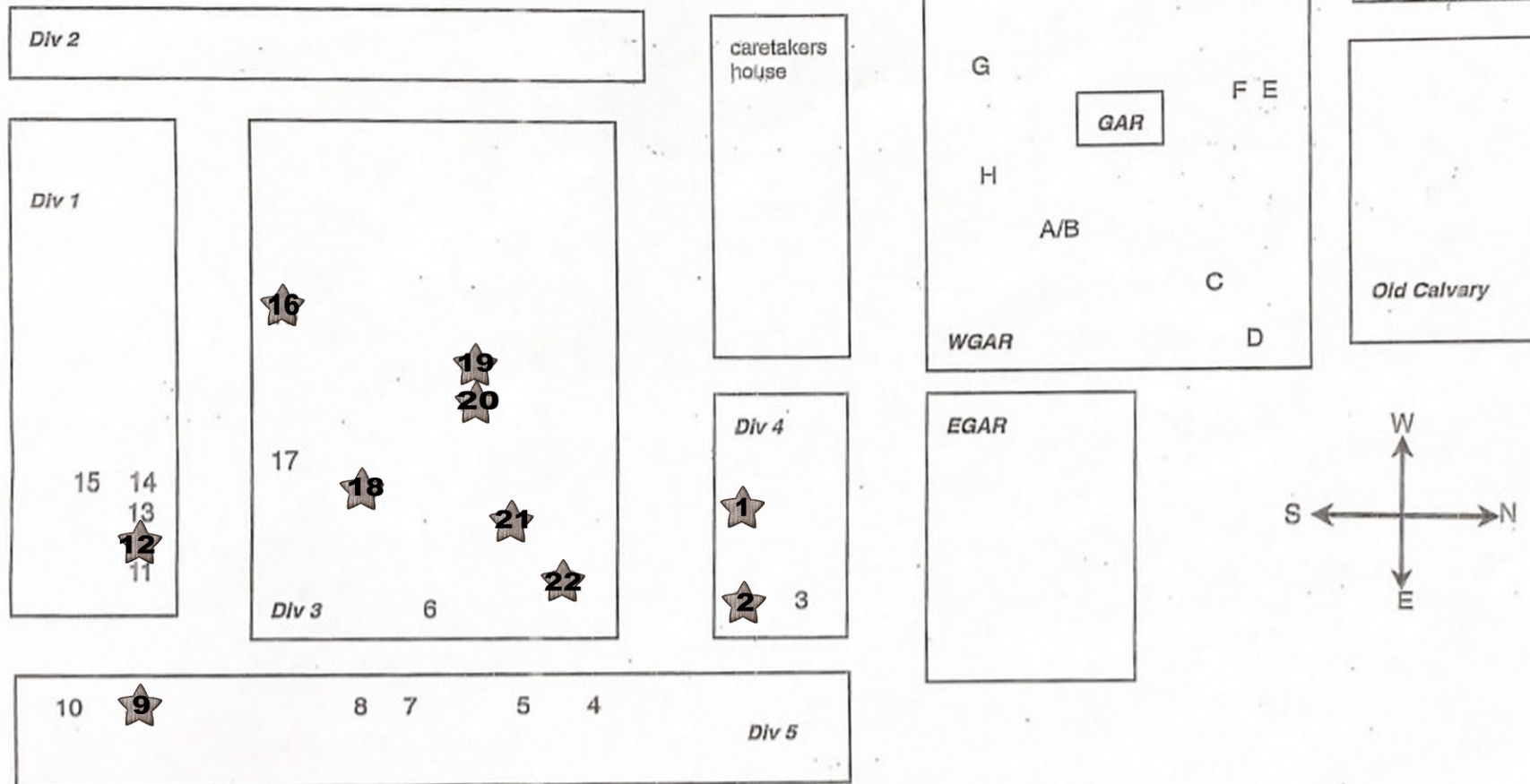
Dr. Claude served as surgeon for both the Santa Fe and Rock Island railroads. He was head of the Dodge City Board of Health, Fellow of American College of Surgeons, Member of the American Medical Association, Southwest Clinical Society, American Association of Railway Surgeons, and Honorary Member of the Kansas Historical Society. Dr. Claude's office was at 714 Second Avenue and the family lived in the Kellogg family home at 608 W. Cedar Street (northeast corner of Sixth & Cedar).



Matt Down Road

MAPLE GROVE CEMETERY

I-Ben Hodges



- | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. <u>George/Margaret Hoover</u> | 11. <u>Andrew "Andy" Johnson</u> | 21. <u>Adam Schmidt & family</u> | A&B <u>Alonzo Webster/OA Bond</u> |
| 2. <u>Dr. & Katheryn Simpson</u> | 12. <u>F.C. & Matilda Zimmerman</u> | 22. <u>John T Riney & family</u> | C. <u>George Reighard</u> |
| 3. <u>"Buss" Hulpleu</u> | 13. <u>John Churchill</u> | | D. <u>Harry Gryden</u> |
| 4. <u>Emily Summersby</u> | 14. <u>Fred Singer</u> | | E. <u>Richard & Sarah Evans</u> |
| 5. <u>Stubbs family</u> | 15. <u>A.J. & Calvina Anthony</u> | | F. <u>H.L. & Emma Sittler</u> |
| 6. <u>Dr. Samuel & Bertha Galland</u> | 16. <u>Hamilton & Josephine Bell / Violet Watson</u> | | G. <u>Carrie Rath Bainbridge</u> |
| 7. <u>Print & Louisa Olive</u> | 17. <u>Frank Warren</u> | | H. <u>James & Fannie Arment</u> |
| 8. <u>Michael & Florence Sutton</u> | 18. <u>Robert Wright & family</u> | | I. <u>Ben Hodges</u> |
| 9. <u>Chalkley & Ida Beeson</u> | 19. <u>Richard & Maggie Hardesty</u> | | |
| 10. <u>Philander & Lemira Reynolds</u> | 20. <u>Dr. T.L. & Sally McCarty / Dr. Claude McCarty</u> | | |

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