

HISTORY OF

CAMDENTON!

Courtesy of
Brenda Colter
City of Camdenton

The town of Camdenton came into being on May 29, 1931. The first legal records of the 160 acres in Section 25, Range 17, Township 38, County of Camden, State of Missouri was a Land Patent to Homestead from the United State Government issued to Francis Noel on June 20, 1866. Within the 160 acres of woodland were two small fields, cleared for planting and a road which passed through the main section, then turning right to lead travelers to Ha Ha Tonka.

Another branch led straight through what is now the square to continue southeast along present Highway 5 toward Lebanon.

On January 30, 1930, Clint Webb contracted to purchase 160 acres of land, then known as the Chapman farm, from R.S. Dhonity of Mytic, Iowa for \$2,750. Work was started almost immediately in clearing land and building. Highway crews came to build roads and well drillers and ditch diggers

dug the earth. Tents were pitched and a thriving, busy atmosphere were in these woods, ironically as the rest of the nation suffered from the Great Depression.

The first permanent building in the new town was W.H. Powell Lumber Company. The business opened the day after the November 4th, 1930 election to move the County Seat to a new location. The first family to move to Camdenton was Clint and Ina Webb with their

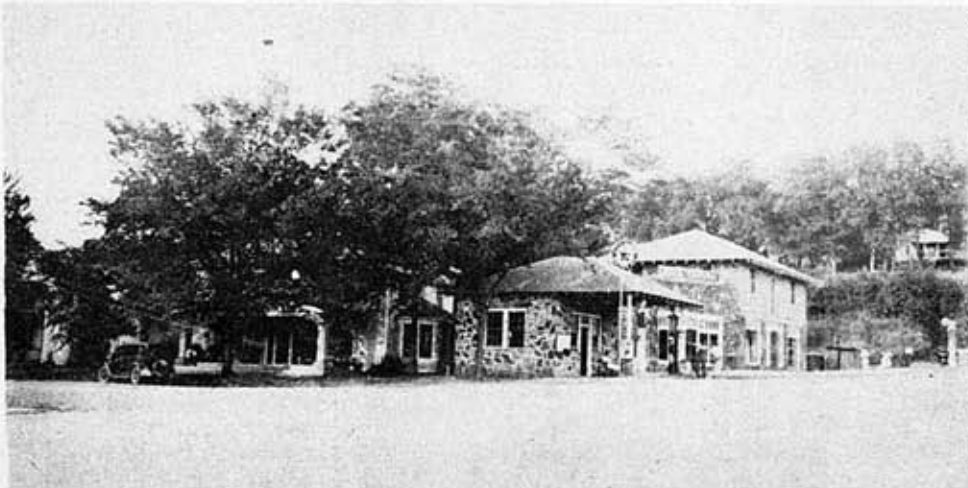
daughter Betty Jean. By 1931, the post office was built followed by, hotels, cafes, a barber shop and grocery stores. Since no courthouse or jail was built, prisoners were sent to Versailles or Lebanon. There was a rural telephone in the town but water was carried from the city well in buckets.

No electric power was to the town so candles, kerosene, gasoline or private power plants were in use. A temporary courthouse was built to

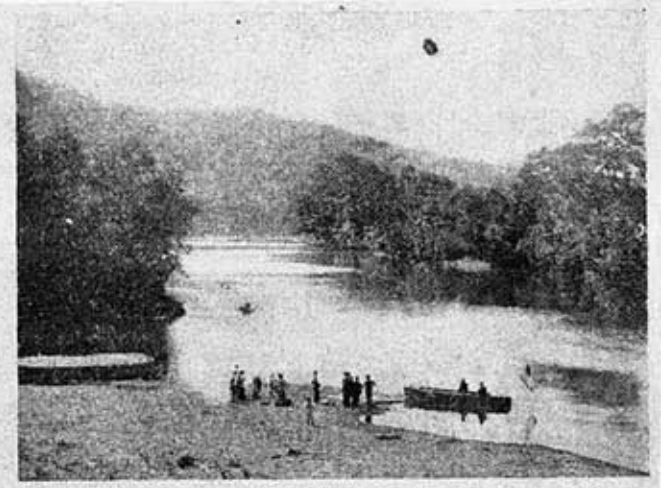
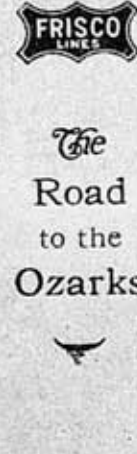
house court records until the new courthouse was completed in the spring of 1932. The lights came on in the town in late winter and the first electric bill for the Town of Camdenton was paid April 5, 1932 for the sum of \$16.90. As the town put down roots, townspeople turned to civic, cultural and social activities. A movie theatre was built, the American Legion Post No. 193 was organized along with the Womens Auxiliary. The Masonic Hall was built on

the square. The first graduating exercises of Camdenton High School were held in the yet unfinished red brick schoolhouse in May 1932 with seven graduates.

The Class of 1941 was the last to graduate from "Old Red" because a new high school was under construction. Camdenton has grown over the years from 73 original petitioners to the latest census count of 2,306 in 1980. The original 160 acres now is in excess of 1,720 acres. Camdenton is referred to as "The Hub City of the Ozarks."



Corner where Jims AG now stands once held a service station and the house of George M. Reed. (Photo courtesy of Doris Reed)



WHERE THE LITTLE PINEY EMPTIES INTO THE GASCONADE AT ARLINGTON, MO. REACHED BY THE FRISCO LINES.

- View of the Little Piney at Arlington. (Photo courtesy of Violet E. Gaddy)

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