

# Civic Progress

- 1857 First hotel erected. It was the Thomas Hotel which was replaced by the Waverly, now Hotel Shelbina.
- 1858 Postoffice with W. A. Reid as postmaster, established. It was located in his store where Miles & Bates now is. Building faced north. It was also used as a meeting place for church services.
- 1866 The Shelbina Gazette, first newspaper in the town, got out its No. 1 edition on January 10. Its editor was J. D. Moudy. In April E. D. Hoselton, the foreman, bought out Mr. Moudy. Its politics were Democratic but later it was owned by Col. Shafer and A. M. York who turned the paper into a Republican publication and changed the name to Shelby County Herald.
- 1867 Shelbina was incorporated as a town on the petition of W. W. Weatherby and others. The first board of trustees included Weatherby, Daniel Taylor, John W. Shafer, Simeon Downing and J. W. Miller.
- 1869 The Shelbina Democrat was born, edited by E. D. Hoselton, former publisher of the Gazette.
- 1870 Shelbina Woolen Mills proved valuable auxiliary in utilizing the products of the country and converting into cash. The building was frame, 36x60 feet, 3 stories high. Attached to the main building was a room 18x36 feet protecting a 25 h.p. engine having all the late improvements and constructed in the best style of mechanism.
- 1870 Arrangements were made to establish a National Bank with the capital not less than \$100,000. Stock would amount to \$90,000. Col. Benjamin was one of the directors.
- 1870 Hurum Miller inaugurated a bank and hotel, two institutions of first importance.
- 1870 \$12,000 was raised by enterprising citizens to erect a good hotel as many felt one was needed. The Shelbina Hotel Association was organized.
- 1871 The first temperance movement was formed and it was called "Division No. 27."
- 1871 The Social and Dramatic Club entertained at Concert Hall and the proceeds were given to the Cornet Band.
- 1871 An Emporium Fashion Show was held.
- 1871 A board of trustees was elected to endeavor to enlarge Shelbina borders, foster its business, increase its beauty, stimulate its growth and prosperity.
- 1871 Between the years of 1870 and 1900 Shelbina grew rapidly in its business establishments. The Hannibal Clipper newspaper called it a "Queen City of the Prairies." The population was 1,800 by 1900 and boasted a broom factory, 3 druggists, 8 dry goods stores, 8 grocery stores (also called provision stores), 4 churches, a Masonic and an Odd Fellows Hall, an elegant school building, large flour mill, 3 hotels, Harris Tobacco Co., a wagon and carriage factory, and a cigar factory. The first automobiles came to Shelbina and were owned by Clifford Reid and Howell Jewett. About 1888 the first Opera House was opened by Jess White and Charles Miller. Companies which performed on circuits came regularly to Shelbina. This opera house was used for school activities and community events. The seats were wooden and would seat over 400 people. During Fair week the Opera House was open daily.
- 1877 The Collegiate Institute was built and used until the establishment of a high school.
- 1878 Shelbina became a city of the fourth class with W. T. Dean being elected mayor.

- 1896 Farmers met and adopted a constitution and thus formed the Farmers Fire Insurance Co. When they secured insurance to the amount of \$100,000 they received a state charter.

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## Public Library

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A Carnegie gift of \$10,000 for a public library in Shelbina was obtained in 1917 after an election authorized a 1¼ mill tax for its support. In addition to the above money, the city spent \$500 to light and shelve the building. The Library was opened September 16, 1918 and on that day 19 books were borrowed. During the first year 5,139 books were loaned. In contrast with that beginning, the Library last year (1956) loaned 58,808 books and magazines.

The Library now has a collection of 10,000 books, regularly subscribes to 66 magazines and newspapers, has a daily average attendance of 179. The Library has 2,658 registered borrowers, 1,751 resident and 888 nonresident; 1,866 adult and 793 children.

Most outstanding patron of the Library was the late Fredrick D. Haskin, from whom some 2,500 books have been received.

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## Firsts In The New Town

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- First Permanent Resident—Henson Thomas (1857)
- First Store—Kemper Bros., north of railroad (1857)
- First House—George T. Hill. Location not known, but the first boy child, William Morgan, was born in a house where Clark Theatre now stands.
- First Child Born in Shelbina—Daughter of M. P. Thomas. It is not established whether M. P. is Morgan, the brother of Henson, or Martin, a son.
- First Resident Physician—Dr. H. C. Lee (1857)
- First Resident Lawyer—Gilbert H. Edmonds
- First Religious Service—The fall of 1857. Services held in bar room of Thomas Hotel by Rev. Thomas DeMoss, a Methodist minister.
- First School Building—(1859) on present site.
- First Postmaster—W. A. Reid (1858)
- First Brick Building—Kemper Bros. South of Depot
- First Catholic Priest—Father D. S. Phelan (1864)
- First Drayman—Uncle Billy Wood (1860)
- First Factory (tobacco)—Sparks, Hill & Co. (1861)
- First Newspaper—Shelbina Gazette (Jan. 10, 1866)
- First President of Collegiate Institute—Dr. Leo Baer (1877)
- First Board of Trustees of New Town—W. W. Weatherby, Daniel Taylor, John W. Miller, Simeon Downing and John W. Shafer (1867)
- First Church Building—Methodist and Baptist combined (1867)
- First National Bank President—John F. Benjamin and F. P. Jackson, cashier (1872)
- First Brick Home—Two were started at approximately the same time: Alexander Graham (still standing just across from ice plant) and John F. Benjamin, most famous house in Shelbina.
- First Mayor of Shelbina—J. Wm. Towson (1878)
- First Marshal—J. J. Foster (1878)
- First Aldermen: First Ward—J. W. Ford and W. H. Warren; Second Ward—G. A. Jenks and Charles Miller.
- First City Clerk—G. A. Jenks
- First Electric Light Plant—1891 (cost \$5,000)
- First Superintendent of Light Plant—Art Connelly