

P. V. Miller

WRITES FIRE AND LIFE INSURANCE

Chief of Sparks State Bank Behind Counter When Only Nineteen Years of Age—Native of Doniphan County—Conservatism His Motto in All Business Dealings.

When a boy achieves success at the age of nineteen by reason of his undoubted integrity and conservative nature, he is open to congratulations. A young man certainly must have confidence in a youth to place him behind the counter of a bank at that early age. It is what came to P. V. Miller, chief of the Sparks State Bank, when the institution was organized Aug. 16, 1909. At the same time the proud distinction was his of being the youngest banker in the state of Kansas. This successful young business man was born on a farm, as most successful bankers are. Here he received the early training which he has adapted to the ways of the city, never, however, forgetting the value of that life of the fields, the meadows, the woods which

confidence that comes to few. His continued service as cashier speaks volumes for Mr. Miller.

While his duties as cashier are arduous, yet he finds time to give attention to other business pursuits. He has built up a lucrative clientele in the fire and life insurance business, and the companies he represents have a large number of policies outstanding as a result of his solicitations among his many friends. His banking connection has made it possible for him to gain a hearing which in many cases would be difficult for another less experienced to obtain. The people of Sparks and its vicinity know of his conservative methods and know that when he has a proposition to submit there is merit in it. One of the chief duties as cashier is



The Sparks State Bank, Situated in Iowa Township.

was his privilege to enjoy. His father, George Miller, taught him the lessons of frugality and conservatism during the early years on the farm, and he has stood him in good stead during his banking career.

This successful young business man was born March 21, 1890, on a farm about five miles northwest of Sparks and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. George Miller. He was educated in the schools of Iowa, and prepared for the banking profession by attending the Whitmore Business College in St. Joseph, Mo., where he received a diploma. He was considered one of the best boys who grew up in Iowa township, and for this reason was chosen when the directors of the bank were looking for some one to fill the responsible position of cashier. They did not find it necessary to go to some city. Instead they chose a young man from the Iowa township country, and when the first customer stepped up to the counter he found P. V. Miller at the post. Here he has been ever since, and the bank has grown and developed into one of the strongest financial institutions in the state for its size.

of making farm loans. His connection with farm life has made it possible for him to place a conservative estimate upon the value of farm property offered as security for these loans, and in this way he has always protected the stockholders of the bank, as well as serving the customers. When any of the farmers in and around Sparks wish to make a loan they know they will be accorded fair treatment and due consideration by the young banker who is always alive to their best interests. He makes a study of the needs of the community which he serves and is thus able to offer expert service, both to the bank and to those dealing with it.

Mr. Miller has one sister and a brother. His sister is Miss Dillie G. Miller, and his brother, Robert, is station agent for the B. & M. railway at Sparks.

Popular Conductor

John L. Hopkins, the popular conductor, who runs between Atchison and Rulo on the B. & M., enjoys the distinction of being one of the most outgoing conductors who ever punched a railroad ticket. He is one of those thrifty fellows and by his economic methods has purchased a fruit farm in the North Yakima Valley, which is situated in the state of Washington, in one of the most extensively advertised fruit belts in the United States.

The Sparks State Bank

SPARKS, KANSAS

E. A. KENT, President

P. V. MILLER, Cashier

ORGANIZED IN 1909

Capital \$10,000.00

Surplus \$ 2,500.00

Does a General Banking Business
Pays Interest on Time Deposits

ITS MOTTO IS

“CONSERVATISM”

WE SOLICIT YOUR PATRONAGE

DIRECTORS

E. A. Kent
W. P. Kent

A. L. Wynkoop
F. M. Troxell

T. J. Sparks

STOCKHOLDERS

E. A. Kent
W. P. Kent
F. M. Troxell
A. L. Wynkoop
T. J. Sparks
P. V. Miller
D. G. Miller

L. Degginger
W. M. Gillen
A. F. Albers
S. L. Ryan
Elizabeth C. Kent
Susan A. Severin
John E. Lewis

MAKES FARM LOANS

THOMAS E. WAGSTAFF FUTURE STATESMAN

Kansas Man Made Many Friends in Doniphan County—Expects to Be Governor Some Day.

Thomas E. Wagstaff, the young man who made a phenomenal although unsuccessful race against ex-Governor W. R. Stubbs for a gubernatorial nomination in Kansas in 1910, made many friends in Doniphan County when campaigning here that year. Mr. Wagstaff is one of the “coming” men of Kansas.

Thomas E. Wagstaff was born July 23, 1875, at Galesburg, Illinois. He came to Lawrence in 1878, and was educated in the Lawrence schools,

and was both popular and efficient. No one called him Clerk Wagstaff or Mr. Wagstaff, but he was affectionately addressed as “Tom.”

The people of Coffeyville elected the young man as city attorney the following year, in 1900. He made an enviable reputation in this office and was appointed judge of the court of Coffeyville by Governor Bailey. In 1904 he was appointed deputy county attorney, and in 1905 he was elected county attorney of Montgomery County.

In 1910, through the insistence of his friends, he became candidate for the nomination of governor against ex-Governor W. R. Stubbs, who was seeking nomination for a second term. Considering that he was a young man and comparatively unknown, and was running against a man who had served one term as state executive, Mr. Wagstaff made a brilliant campaign, and surprised many on both sides. Although he was defeated the campaign was good advertising for him. He won great popularity while making speeches in Doniphan County, and hopes for the support of the county when he becomes candidate for governor again, which is among his future hopes.

The Wagstaffs were married at Coffeyville in 1903. Mrs. Wagstaff was Miss Jane Norma Wilson of Coffeyville. Two of their children are living, Morna Zel Wagstaff, nine years of age, who was born in 1906, and Robert Wilson Wagstaff, five years of age, born in 1910. A son, Thomas Wagstaff, Jr., died in infancy.



Thomas E. Wagstaff.

graduating from the high school and from the University of Kansas in 1897.

In the fall of 1897 Mr. Wagstaff went to New York, where he took a post-graduate course in law at the University of New York. Returning to Kansas in 1899 he practised law in Coffeyville. That year he also served as clerk of the House of Representatives,

Iola

Iola, an early town, located about two miles south of Sparks, on Section 29, Town 2, Range 20, and the main part of the town was near where the Iola school house stands. John Taylor and Sam Herring reside on the old townsite.

The Town of Sparks

**Name Changed About Eight Years Ago From Its Original of Highland Station in Honor of John Sparks, One of the Most Highly Respected Residents of that Part of Doniphan County—
Thriving Community With Energetic Citizens and Substantial Farmers in Adjacent Country—
Does a Lively Business and Is Destined to Prosper.**

But this hunger did not go unallayed. Here the women, not alone of the congregation of the Christian denomination, but their sisters from every denomination in town and country snowed to the best advantage. Not one nor two, but sometimes as many as three baskets were laden with all the delicacies of the farm, the vineyard, the poultry yard, the orchard and the garden. There was no "groaning of the festal board," as they were too heavily laden to groan.

Dinner was served in the school house and in the big tent owned and provided by Bert Zimmerman. Its spacious canopy stretched across the greensward and vied with the permanent building to accommodate the visitors. Merriment of the children was one of the features that spread good cheer to everyone present. While no prizes were offered for the daintiest and best filled basket, one would naturally have thought that a contest was being staged by the managers of the various culinary departments in the different homes. Domestic science teachers would have been overjoyed to have peeped in upon the merry throng.

John Alfrey took an estimate and declared that five hundred and twenty-six chickens were placed upon the tables. Everyone was fed and there was plenty for a bountiful supper at the close of the exercises. No one went home hungry, unless he were too bashful to eat. The newspapers had published several times that the dinner was to be free, and everyone took advantage of this announcement. The credit for this big overflow dinner and supper was due to the women, who worked together in most commendable harmony and unity.

The entire day of the cornerstone exercises was made a community day, spreading the full gospel of good fellowship throughout the community. The gathering was one of the best opportunities to knit more closely the bonds which have made Sparks the desirable neighborhood that takes front rank in the rural life of Doniphan County. Men left their farm work of the early spring and came together for a richer communion and outpouring of their daily existence. Women forgot the cares of the day and commingled their joys at the hopes of having a permanent house of worship. Young people joined hands in the successful effort to show to the pastor and their parents the earnestness which actuated them in helping to carry the plans to completion. Children played and enlivened the occasion with their cheers and laughter. It was a gala day.

To exemplify the fact that no feeling existed between the different churches at the dedicatory services, in the evening the pastor was pleading for a completion of the necessary pledges. He had succeeded in getting all except a final \$50 pledge. In the quiet of the moment, Josh Dutton, a member of the Evangelical faith, arose and said: "Put me down for that \$50."

The program for the cornerstone and the dedicatory exercises were as follows:

Rev. J. Tilden Sapp, pastor of Christian Church, Troy; Rev. Floyd Bash, pastor Christian Church, Highland; Rev. A. J. Brokaw, pastor Christian Church, Hiawatha; Rev. Harry Smith, pastor Christian Church, Horton; Wesley Jenkins, Miss Taylor, Rev. T. V. Hubble of Everest, Ruth Agee, Pearl Baldwin, Eva Pirtle, Judge Edwin Brown, probate judge of Doniphan County; Miss Anna Mallows, editor White Cloud Globe; Joe Griffin, ex-sheriff; Rev. A. J. Pirtle, pastor of the Severance Christian Church; Chancellor William Oschger of Cotner University, Lincoln, Nebraska; Rev. Hugh Orr, pastor of the M. E. Church, Highland; Prof. Charles Marble of Troy, L. W. Bonham and Tom Springer.

On Nov. 7, 1871, Samuel P. Blair, aged fifty-six years, died of pneumonia at Blair's Grove, near Troy. The deceased was a native of the state of Tennessee, but had lived in Kansas for many years. He was a man of positive character, of strong sense, warm heart and true friendship, a good husband, a generous, kind father and a useful citizen.

On Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1871, a son was born to Mrs. Mary and A. W. Beale, of Troy.

The town of Sparks is one of the most enterprising and substantial communities for its size in Doniphan County. It would not be natural that it should not, because it has been so named in honor of one of the most respected and popular citizens in that part of Kansas.

Sparks had for many years been known as Highland Station, in fact, since the first house was erected there. Eight years ago, however, Cyrus Leland, Jr., who was then one of

ity of any community. In addition to these there are numerous large farmers within a convenient radius of Sparks which will be another commanding influence why the town should never sink into oblivion.

When the original town of Sparks was started it was named Highland Station because of the fact that it was the railway point of the parent town of Highland, four and one-half miles away. The town was located in the winter of 1869-1870 by a company



Delia Everts
Gladys Lovejoy
Celista Alfrey
Theo. Guy
Bowen Alfrey
Ethel Guy

Zada Caudle
Willie Granke
Harvey Lamborn
Annie Laura Herring
Willie Lamborn
Myrtle Helen Searles

Bessie Jane Swogger
Johnnie Collins
Jewel Baskins
Harold Burton
Doris Burton
Mayetta Burton

the leading Republicans in the county and state, had the name changed to that of Sparks in honor of an old friend and greatly esteemed pioneer of the county.

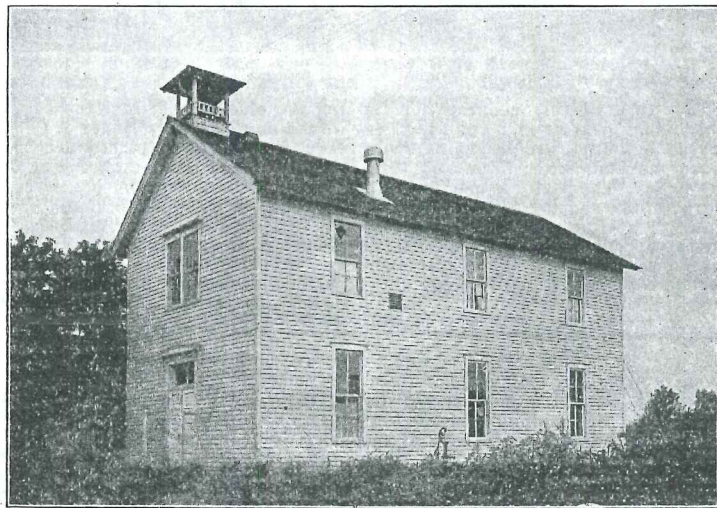
John Sparks, in whose honor the present name was given to Sparks, was long a leading resident of Doniphan County. He came to Doniphan County in the pioneer days and raised a large family. He was known always as a hard worker and attended strictly to his own business. He treated all neighbors alike and that principle was even carried out in his own family relations.

When Mr. Sparks died a few years ago, his will was found to provide

partly formed of Highland men, and partly of representatives of the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad.

The incorporators of old Highland Station were J. P. Johnson, B. F. Herring, J. A. Kennedy and G. W. Glick. The townsite comprised forty acres which had been owned by J. A. Kennedy, and was situated in the southwest corner of Section 21, Township 2, and Range 20.

Immediately after the town was laid out, Kennedy & Herring opened a general store. The same year another store was opened by L. Degginger. After that the town began to assume important proportions. J. Browning started a good hotel and a blacksmith



The Sparks School House, District No. 46.

equally for each of his children in disposing of his property. He was eighty-five years old.

The fact that Mr. Sparks left such a large family will be a great factor in the prosperity of the town of Sparks in the future. There are now forty or more grandchildren substantially fixed in the locality who are sufficiently strong financially to insure the stabil-

shop was installed. A depot was built and a postoffice established, with J. A. Kennedy as postmaster. The first church was a union structure, which was intended to be a place of worship at alternate times for the different sects of all denominations.

From the very beginning the present town of Sparks was endowed with many natural advantages. The soil in

the neighborhood was rich and there was an abundance of timber for all purposes. There were unmistakable indications of fine rock quarries and enough clear, sparkling water to supply a community ten times more populous. The neighborhood was thickly settled when Sparks was started, but it is much more so now. It is estimated that at present there is a population of more than two thousand people within a radius of three miles of Sparks.

In the early days of Sparks there was a lively business done in the cordwood industry. The timber was plentiful and the owners availed themselves of the opportunity of disposing of the wood at a good price. Besides supplying the entire locality with firewood and other lumber, the woods were sufficiently studded with timber that it appeared to grow faster than it could be cut down. So it is little wonder that over one thousand cords had been shipped each year, and it brought top price on the market.

It would be too trite an expression to say that the town of Sparks is a comer. It is here, and here to stay. Of that fact there can be no gainsaying. The town is good from every standpoint, and it is getting better with the dawn of every day. The citizens are enterprising and progressive and the residents of the surrounding country are financially situated to help the good work along in the matter of trade and commerce.

There is nothing that any good, hustling town should require that Sparks hasn't got. There are two churches, schools, a strong bank, and business houses of various kinds. The town has a good restaurant, two general stores, an elevator, a blacksmith shop, a drug store and, last, but not least, a depot on a big railroad trunk line.

One of the best of all assets for Sparks is not included in the above list, for the good and sufficient reason that it attracts more people to the town in a brief period than most all others combined. That is the annual fair and picnic. This event has occurred regularly for the past sixteen years and it embraces the best of all fall festivities in Doniphan County.

The fair and picnic at Sparks lasts four days and is usually held the latter part of the month of August each year. It is not only the most attractive feature of the harvest season in Iowa Township, but it provides the best fall festivities for every section of Doniphan County. The people all around become enthused to a high state over the event and it is beyond peradventure the greatest occasion for a brief season of annual enjoyment and sociability that is known in any community the size of Sparks.

Frank M. Lovejoy, secretary of the fair and picnic, is one of the most enthusiastic boosters and hardest workers for its promotion to a successful termination every year. Last year he was ably assisted by John Stricker. Those two men have given their best efforts to making the event one to be remembered for a whole year and with a little more concentrated unity on the part of the people of the county, the fair and picnic can easily be made the greatest thing in Kansas.

The Sparks State Bank is one of the soundest financial institutions in that section. It has a capital of \$20,000, fully paid up. Its directors are responsible and prosperous citizens and the cashier, Pleas Miller, is one of the popular young men of the town who was raised in the neighborhood. He is the son of George Miller, one of the leading merchants of Sparks.

The business men of Sparks at the present time include Frank Troxler, general store and implements; George Miller, general store; J. O. Swauger, hotel; John Lyons, elevator; Erwin Newton, restaurant; Dave Guy, blacksmith. The drug store so long owned by Dr. A. Herring is now conducted by his son, Dr. Hubert Herring.

Saturday night, Aug. 13, 1871, the large brick steam flouring mill at Doniphan, run by Mr. Lowe, but owned by Mr. Abbott of Atchison, was burned to the ground. An insurance policy of several thousand dollars on the building had expired a short time before and was not renewed, so the building was a total loss. The stock, owned by Mr. Lowe, was fully insured.