
STORIES ABOUT SAM SCOTT

AN OPTIMIST WHOM EVERYONE LIKED
AND WHO LIKED EVERYONE.

One of the Leaders in the Real Estate
Boom in the '20s—His Army Savi-
nge Paid a Mortgage—The
Funeral Sunday.

The funeral services of Colonel Sam F. Scott, who died from apoplexy early this morning, will be held at the residence, 2645 Wabash avenue, Sunday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. The Rev. Stephen A. Northrop, pastor of the First Baptist church, will conduct the services. The active pallbearers will be: P. S. Brown, jr., George W. Evans, M. M. Sweetman, Harvey Fleming, E. W. Longwell and E. J. Becker. The honorary pallbearers have not been chosen. The body will be placed in the receiving vault at Mount Washington cemetery.

Samuel F. Scott was born on a farm near Port Hope, Canada, in 1849. Ten years later the Scott family moved to Illinois. Until he was 15 years of age S. F. Scott assisted in the cultivation of the farm. When 16 he enlisted with the One Hundred and Fifty-third Illinois volunteers and served until the close of the war. During his army career young Scott saved \$1,100 from his salary and with this lifted a mortgage from his father's farm.

In the year 1868, accompanied by two other young men, he started across country with a wagon and team to visit Kansas. On December 4 the party arrived in Kansas City. Mr. Scott leased a farm in Anderson county, Kansas, and raised one crop there. Then he came to Kansas City and worked in a wholesale house. He saved about \$500 and traded in horses and cattle. In 1873 he married Mary J. Lombard of Barrington, Ill. He opened a real estate agency here the same year and was successful until the boom's collapse.

"Don't knock; try boosting," was Sam F. Scott's advice to the active younger Republicans with whom he came in contact in recent years. It was representative of Sam Scott's whole life and in his real estate business, when he was an extensive operator, it was always with the confidence that the future was big with opportunities.

Scott was an optimist. He came to Kansas City in 1874 and established a real estate office at 317 Delaware street. He saw a great future in Kansas City and had not been in business long before he began to buy corners of farms that adjoined the city and platted additions. He would buy a pasture, have it platted and "boost" as he would say until he had it sold out and developed. When the boom began S. F. Scott & Co., was in the front and was regarded as one of the largest real estate concerns in Kansas City. Sam B. Hough was the junior partner in the firm at that time.

Among the additions platted by Scott in those days was Bernard place, a tract of twenty acres at Twelfth street and Benton boulevard. It was named for Bernard Corrigan, who was Scott's particular friend; Blue Avenue park, ten acres at Fifteenth street and Norton avenue, was another of Scott's additions. He platted Saichman place, corner of Fifteenth street and Cleveland avenue. Saichman was one of the owners of the tract and he and Scott shook dice to determine whose name it should bear. Saichman won. Sidney place at Twelfth street and Cleveland avenue, was another of his additions named for one of his friends, Sidney Smith. He bought a forty-acre field in Argentine and sold it out in lots as Rockaway addition. He laid out as Highland park what is now known as Penn Valley park. It was first built up with houses and later cleared and turned into a park by the city.

not have caught Scott if he had confined his operations to Kansas City. But when he platted additions in Leavenworth, Atchison and Fort Scott, Kas., Birmingham, Ala., and Fort Payne, Ala., and Dennison, Tex., he got into deep water and these with the Elms hotel at Excelsior Springs were too heavy for him when the reaction came. He lost \$20,000 in the Elms hotel deal and the Alabama additions were as money thrown away.

"Many years ago," said Judge Guinotte of the probate court, "Sam Scott was a horse trader. He went into the real estate business about 1878, I think. He and another man had an office at Fifth and Delaware streets. It was the meeting place for men whose names afterward became known to all Kansas City people. There was J. M. Ford, then a councilman and a member of the old drug firm of Ford & Arnold. Dan Frink, later mayor of the city; Bernard Corrigan, now president of the Metropolitan Street Railway company; J. H. Owens, an old time contractor, and others. It was a jolly crowd, a story telling crowd. The best stories about Sam Scott won't be told to-day; they'll come later when his friends are accustomed to the fact of his death."

It was told of Mr. Scott at the county courthouse this morning that some years ago when he was making a fight for the postmastership the late Judge Henry wrote a letter to the Postmaster General indorsing Mr. Scott and saying that he was "a gentleman, a competent man for the position and fully reliable." Coming from an old line Democrat such a strong appreciation of a Republican was notable. Mr. Scott valued it, it was said, above any other.

"Sam Scott was an ideal host, a good fellow and a good friend. Nearly always a delegate or active leader in Republican politics he got no reward himself beyond his one term as postmaster except the satisfaction of helping get things for his friends."

This was the general line of comment to-day by city hall men who had known Colonel Scott.

"Colonel Scott was largely instrumental in getting an extension of the Wabash railroad to Excelsior Springs," said Gus Pearson, city comptroller. "In 1891 he was proprietor of the Films hotel at Excelsior Springs and there formed a large acquaintance throughout the state. He was an ideal host. His genial personality attracted a large circle of friends. Whenever Sam Scott was seen on the street or in the hotel lobbies he was invariably the central figure in a group. You never saw him off in a corner by himself."

"I was probably the last person outside

of the members of his family who talked with Colonel Scott last night," said O. P. Bloss, private secretary to the mayor. "I was returning from the theater and he was on the car when I boarded it. There seemed to be nothing unusual the matter with him except that he complained of feeling tired. We separated at Twenty-fifth and Prospect.

"There was one trait of his character that impressed me particularly. It always gave him more satisfaction to do something for someone else than to get anything for himself."

Mr. Scott was president of the company that built the railroad from Excelsior Springs junction to Excelsior Springs, a distance of about six miles. The company was as independent as if it had been a thousand mile system. Mr. Scott sent out the usual courtesy passes to the presidents of other railroad lines. He got no response from the head of the New York Central system and wrote him a letter. The answer came with a slighting remark about "a road never heard of," and wanted to know where it was operated. "My railroad may not be as long as the New York Central, but it is just as wide," Scott replied. He got the pass.

"I shall never forget the time we went to Wichita, about 1887, to build a belt line around the city," said Sidney Smith, this morning, who was associated for years with Mr. Scott. "D. W. Longwell, Sam Scott and I made up the party. We had a little money. I was introduced as a capitalist and Mr. Longwell as a civil engineer. Four men of Wichita, the 'Big Four,' were to steer the franchise through the council. I think Bernard Corrigan was in on that deal for about \$5,000. The four Wichita men represented about 1/2 million dollars or more. Compared to that sum my modest capital—and all that we had—was as nothing. The amusing thing happened when we went over the proposed route of the belt line. It was up to me, finally, to say something to carry out the impression made by my silk hat and big diamond, so I looked about grandly and said: 'This is too small. We ought to take in more territory.'

"That's all right for you men of big capital," said one of the Wichita four, "but we have to go slower down here." I had all I could do to keep from laughing.

"Well," Mr. Smith continued, "the deal fell through for some reason, the franchise didn't carry or some such thing. We had maintained headquarters at the best hotel and Sam had been a generous host. The result was that when we started for Kansas City one night the colonel and Mr. Longwell were 'broke' and I had the only money in the crowd. Presently the conductor came along and

Presently the conductor came along and asked for our tickets. We had none. Sam went through his pockets and his face grew grave. 'Why, I've lost my passes,' he exclaimed. 'Too bad,' said the conductor, 'but you'll have to pay.'

'I paid for the three and Sam promptly fell asleep. He was a successful snorer, and soon the noise began to disturb other people. The conductor came along, shook Sam and said: 'Say, mister, I'm not taking a calliope through the country; if you can't sleep without that noise you stay awake.'

'Sam told him he was sorry and in two minutes he was at it as loudly as ever. People did growl about it, but he couldn't stop.

'I knew Sam Scott on a farm near De-
loit, Wis.," Mr. Smith concluded. "I was
clerk in a small store and he used to come
in with his mother and his two brothers
to buy provisions. When the war broke
out he enlisted. I don't think he was
much more than a boy then. I lost sight
of him for ten years or more until I came

here in 1873 and found him booming things. If Sam went to a town one night the next day there was a boom there."

In the days when Scott was handling big deals rapidly he and some friends bought eighty acres near Tower Grove park in St. Louis and paid \$700,000 for it. They carried it at a loss for three years, then Scott planned a great auction sale of lots. He sent Sam B. Hough to Chicago to run a special train from that city and pick up passengers in the Illinois towns. Another train was run from Kansas and half a dozen from points in Missouri. The auction lasted three days and at night of the third day the lots had been sold for a total of \$1,111,000, which left a good profit for Scott and his friends.

When the slump came Scott still had great hopes that he could recover his losses. He had been worth an uncertain amount, but he saw most of it wiped out. He went to New York, hoping to be able to protect himself, and stayed at the Hoffman house where he met capitalists and entertained them.

One of the leading New York papers, wanting to illustrate how rich men are becoming, printed one morning the pictures of ten millionaires who could pay

g the national debt. Scott's picture was
t there with those of Jay Gould and John
D. Rockefeller. Scott often laughed over
the incident. At that time, he would say,
3 what was worrying him was how to raise
9 the money to pay his own bills. He was
2 not concerned about the national debt.

This question of his obligations worried
2 Scott more than one who did not know
him intimately ever supposed. His friends
7 urged him to take advantage of the bank-
ruptcy act. He said "no. If I live long
enough I will pay every obligation I
have." He was appointed postmaster by
President McKinley and those who knew
him best say that part of every month's
salary went to pay obligations growing
out of the big deals he had made in boom
times. As fast as he made money he paid
it on obligations long ago outlawed.

A few years ago he with Mayor Neff
and Frank Hagerman bought 140,000 acres
of land in Louisiana, which was sold to
rice planters at a good profit. More re-
cently he organized a lumber company
with a railroad in Arkansas. He was in-
terested with William Strong in the pro-
posed electric railway to Olathe and To-
peka. Had he been given time he would
almost certainly have become a rich man
again in a few years.

Kansas City Star
Kansas City, MO
Friday, November 10, 1905

Page 20, Columns 1-4