

**Walks through History
Prescott CHD
March 12, 2011
By: Rachel Silva**



Intro

Hi, my name is Rachel Silva, and I work for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. Welcome to the March Walks through History tour of the Prescott Commercial Historic District! Before we get started, I want to introduce and thank Gail Young and Louise Phillips from the Nevada County Depot & Museum for co-sponsoring the tour.

The district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2008 for its association with the development of commerce in Prescott and for its collection of late 19th and early 20th century architectural styles.

The district is roughly bounded by W. 3rd St., Walnut, E. 3rd, and Pine. It contains a total of 86 properties, of which 47 (54.6%) contribute to the historic significance of the district. There is also 1 individually listed property within the district boundary, the Prescott City Jail (NR-listed 2005).

Prescott has 13 National Register-listed properties, 2 of which are also National Historic Landmarks—the Prairie DeAnn and Elkins' Ferry Battlefields, which were part of the Camden Expedition during Civil War (1864).

Some of these individually listed properties are near the commercial historic district, and we will discuss those as well.

Brief History of Prescott

Nevada County was created by the Arkansas Legislature in 1871 from parts of Hempstead, Ouachita, and Columbia counties. It was named after the State of Nevada (became a state in 1864), which got its name from a Spanish word meaning “snow-capped” or “snowclad.” Since this part of Arkansas is not often snowclad, the name was given because early settlers believed that, like the State of Nevada, Nevada County was rich in minerals. **There has always been a distinct difference in the pronunciation of the word “Nevada.” For Nevada County, it is Ne-void-a.

The town of Prescott was platted in 1873, shortly after the Cairo & Fulton Railroad completed a line through northern Nevada County. The original town site consisted of 48 blocks, 24 on each side of the railroad. The railroad line runs northeast through Prescott, and streets were platted in a grid pattern from the railroad line (so streets don’t run exactly due north or south). The streets running east-west use the railroad as a dividing line between their eastern and western halves, and streets running north-south use Main Street as a dividing line between their northern and southern halves.

The Cairo & Fulton Railroad, originally chartered in 1853, began construction of a railroad line from Missouri to Texarkana, Arkansas, in 1871. In 1874 the line was acquired by the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad. In 1917 this line was merged with Missouri Pacific, which finally became Union Pacific in 1982. So throughout most of Prescott’s history, the railroad has been the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern or the Missouri Pacific.

The town of Prescott was incorporated on October 6, 1874. It was named in honor of William Hickling Prescott of Salem, Massachusetts, a friend of Thomas Allen and H. G. Marquand, C & F Railroad officials. Historically, there has been a debate about how Prescott got its name—whether it was from this friend of the railroad officials or from a county surveyor, W. H. Prescott. Apparently, the version I told you first was verified by the families of the railroad officials.

Prescott grew quickly because the railroad provided a reliable way to transport agricultural products, cotton, and timber to larger markets. The first post office opened in November 1873, and the first newspaper, *The Banner*, was established in

1875. Prescott became the Nevada County seat in 1877, which contributed to the town's commercial importance. People journeyed to Prescott to conduct county business and do their shopping. By the late 1890s, Prescott had its own telephone system and water and light plant.

Although Nevada County was well-suited for growing cotton and fruit, especially peaches, the timber industry probably had the largest impact on the region's economy from 1890 through the 1920s. The Ozan Lumber Company plant was built in 1890 by James M. Bemis, and Dr. R. L. Powers started building the Prescott & Northwestern Railroad the same year. The Prescott & Northwestern RR was built into the forest in order to transport logs to the saw mills (later used to transport peaches). The P & NW RR started in Prescott and went through northern Hempstead County and into Pike County.

Prescott's most well-known resident (besides Old Mike—we'll get to that later) was Thomas Chipman McRae, who was a lawyer, banker (he purchased the Bank of Prescott in 1905), and politician. Beginning in the 1870s, McRae held local positions in Prescott, such as city attorney and city council member. In 1876 he was elected to the Arkansas House of Representatives, and he was elected to the U.S. Congress in 1884, serving for 18 years. He became Arkansas's 26th governor, serving two terms from 1921-1925. McRae was a progressive and supported better funding systems for highway construction as well as education. McRae died in 1929 in Prescott at the age of 78. He was buried in DeAnn Cemetery in Prescott.

Missouri-Pacific Depot (IL on NR 11/17/1978)

The Missouri-Pacific Railroad Depot was completed in 1912 and replaced an earlier depot built in 1873 by the Cairo & Fulton RR. The 1873 depot was constructed on the west side of the tracks in the middle of Main Street. It was demolished in 1911 and the current depot was built at that time. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there were numerous cotton platforms located along the railroad tracks for loading goods into railcars. When this passenger depot was built in 1911-1912, a separate freight depot was also constructed. It was located on the west side of the tracks between W. Elm and W. Vine streets from 1913 to at least 1945.

This depot was designed by Missouri Pacific architect E. M. Tucker in the Mediterranean style, which was typical for depots of this era. It features a terra cotta tile roof, large knee braces under the eaves, exposed rafter tails, brick walls with cast-concrete details, transom windows over the doors, and an open

breezeway. Note bricks made by the Coffeyville Vitrified Brick and Tile Company of Coffeyville, Kansas. The depot has 13-inch brick walls and a 17-inch concrete foundation—you'll understand why this is necessary if you happen to witness a train pass by the depot. It was built at a cost of \$8,573, but it took a total of \$19,087 once the depot was furnished.

The P & NW RR continued passenger service from this depot until 1945, and the Missouri Pacific RR stopped passenger service in 1967. In 1969 the depot was threatened with demolition, but the Missouri Pacific RR sold the building to the City of Prescott for \$1 in 1970. Since that time, the depot has been used for a variety of things, but it became the museum in 1976 with John Teeter as volunteer curator. The depot has received grants from the AHPP and the AR Highway Dept. for repairs on the building. The museum closed in 2001 for renovations and reopened in 2003.

It is open Mon.-Fri. from 10 am to 4 pm (closed from noon to 1 pm for lunch). Admission is free. If you call ahead, they will make arrangements for you to visit on the weekend.

Allen Tire Co. & Gas Station (IL on NR 5/25/2001) NW corner of W. 1st & W. Vine

The Allen Tire Company & Gas Station was built about 1925 by Henry Harrison Allen, who owned a house just to the northwest of the gas station. After Mr. Allen retired from Ozan Lumber Company about 1924, he built this gas station on his property to take advantage of the increasing number of motorists traveling along Hwy. 67 (W. 1st Street). The station sold Magnolia gasoline. According to Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, the building was still used as a filling station in 1945. Since that time, it has had several occupants, including a restaurant, insurance company, and hair salon. The Allen House was demolished sometime after 1996. The filling station remains as the only example of a Craftsman-style filling station in downtown Prescott.

Drive down to parking area at W. 1st St. & W. Elm St.

Scott Building at 200 W. 1st St. South (C)

The Scott Building was constructed about 1910. It originally had a projecting metal cornice above the vents on its upper façade and a peaked parapet that came to a point in the middle and had the word "Scott" in the center. That portion of the

parapet has been flattened and recovered. In the 1910s, this building housed the Scott-Mayer Wholesale Grocery Company. Dr. Buchanan's office was upstairs. Later the building housed Ward's Grocery Store and doctors' offices upstairs. In more recent memory, this was the location of Sears.

South side of street (on your left side)

111 W. Elm (C)

Two one-story buildings covered with stucco veneer to make them appear as one. The easternmost building next to the Scott Building is older—may date to early 1910s. A circa 1915 photo shows a wood-frame real estate office on the site of the westernmost half of this building, so the current structure probably dates to around 1920. In 1913, this was storage for the wholesale grocery business. 1924—auto repair. In recent memory, there was a pool hall here.

113-115 W. Elm (C)

Built ca. 1930 as auto sales and repair shop. It housed the local Chevrolet dealership. Has nice brick detail in its upper façade with three rectangles made up of soldier courses and stretcher courses and cast-concrete blocks at each corner.

SW corner of W. 2nd & W. Elm (lot between W. 2nd & W. 3rd)

After the town of Prescott was surveyed, most of the downtown blocks were part of what was called the "Railroad Survey." Cairo & Fulton RR official Thomas Allen donated a block of land for the construction of a public school. A 2-story, wood-frame school was built on this block in 1881 and called the Tom Allen School. The school was destroyed by fire in 1900, and a two-story, brick building was built to replace it. It was on the same site as the first school and had a central tower with Romanesque Revival-style details. By 1908, this Romanesque building was called the Tom Allen Public High School, and another 2-story building had been built on the western side of this block closer to W. 3rd St. It was labeled "public school." Both structures were still present in 1924, but by 1945, there was a large wood-frame gymnasium on the SE corner of W. Elm & W. 3rd. It was built in 1935-36 by the WPA and used as an auditorium, gym, and county library. It was demolished in the 1950s due to termite damage. There was also a 1-story public school on this block until the 1950s. It had a full basement.

Prescott Water Tower (C) – completed in 1940. Replaced old “stand pipe” from late 1800s.

W. L. Britt Building (C) --NW corner of W. Elm & W. 2nd St.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, a variety of wood-frame buildings were located on this site and housed blacksmiths and wagon repair businesses. Then by 1924, there was a 2-story building here that housed the Hotel Scott on the second floor. However, the current structure was built about 1935 by W. L. Britt.

North side of W. Elm St. going back toward W. 1st St.

NE corner of W. Elm & W. 2nd (old library) NC

Built ca. 1920 as small filling station and expanded with large showroom by 1945. Designed in Mediterranean style with a red tile roof. All of the window and door openings were closed as well as the drive-thru, which makes it NC. In the 1930s, this was the McMahan Sinclair “77” Service Station. After the building was expanded, it was Howell’s Oldsmobile Dealership & Gas Station. In more recent years, it housed the Nevada County Library.

Prescott City Hall and Fire Station at 118 W. Elm (C)

The Prescott City Hall and Fire Station was designed by George Wittenberg and Lawson Delony (two of the designing architects on LR Central High School) and built between December 21, 1938, and July 3, 1939, with assistance from the Public Works Administration (PWA—a New Deal agency; different from the WPA or Works Progress Administration). Like many buildings funded by the PWA, the city hall building was designed in the Art Deco style with patterned brickwork, chevron shapes in the parapet, square cast-concrete medallions, and semi-circular awnings above the front doors. The Prescott City Hall was conveniently situated in front of the Prescott City Jail.

Prescott City Jail – in alley (IL on NR 9/28/2005)

The Prescott City Jail was built in 1912 by the Southwestern Structural Steel Company of San Antonio, TX. The jail was built out of reinforced concrete and still retains its original steel interlocking bar grating. Probably the most significant event in the jail’s history occurred on September 21, 1958, when Patrolman Edward Virden was killed at the jail. Somehow a suspect that Virden had arrested

for drunkenness was able to obtain a gun and kill Virden inside the jail. As a result of the crime, Virden was the only Prescott patrolman killed in the line of duty, and the suspect was sentenced to life in prison for the murder. The current plaque in the jail memorializes Virden.

Although it is not known for sure, it is believed that the jail was last used in the 1960s. After that time, the building was used for storage until 2002, when an effort was spearheaded by the Prescott-Nevada County Chamber of Commerce to clean up the jail. The Chamber of Commerce spent \$3,000 to clean the jail, restore it to its original condition, and install a plaque for visitors.

110-112 W. Elm (C)

This building was constructed about 1905 as a warehouse for the commercial building facing W. 1st Street. It is a very simple commercial-style building with a tile-capped parapet.

128 W. 1st St. South (C)

This building at 128 W. 1st Street and the building next door at 124 W. 1st St. were probably built around 1900 and originally shared an elaborate upper façade above their respective storefronts. A 1930s photo shows the buildings with a slightly taller parapet decorated by dentils at the top and a row of recessed arches in the brickwork. Both buildings had transom windows above their storefronts as well. 128 W. 1st housed dry goods and general store businesses in the early years, and then by the 1930s it was home to the Union Bus Depot. By the 1940s, the facades had been reworked to their current appearance, and this building housed the Lee Montgomery Department Store. In the 1950s, it was the Prescott Bus Center.

124 W. 1st St. South (NC)

Built about 1900. Early occupants included a drug store, dry goods store, and 5 & 10 cent store. By the early 1920s, this was home to Star Pressing Shop, owned by Fletcher Parker and Jesse Crow. The shop specialized in cleaning, pressing, and dyeing clothes, and they had a pick up and delivery service. By the 1940s, the shop became Crow Cleaners, owned by Jesse Crow.

122 W. 1st St. South (NC)

Built about 1900. The original brick façade had two decorative vents and a projecting metal cornice. However, the cornice had been removed by the 1940s. In 1900, this was a general store. Then from about 1905 to at least the mid-1920s, this was Lewis Millinery Store. A ca. 1920 publication called *Illustrated Souvenir of Prescott, Arkansas* claimed that this was the oldest millinery house in SW Arkansas. It was first owned by Mrs. A. E. Shankle, and after her death, her daughter, Mrs. D. Lewis, took over the business. By the 1940s, this was Bob's Café, and it was later Martin Shoes.

120 W. 1st St. South (C)

A wooden building on this site burned around 1900, and the present brick façade was constructed between 1900 and 1908. Then another fire occurred here about 1920, but the front wall was left standing. So the front brick wall dates to the turn of the 20th century, but the back portion of the building was constructed ca. 1925. Notice the name "Blakely" in the parapet as well as the recessed arches in the brickwork. By the 1940s, this building had a sign advertising Nunn Bush shoes. A ghost sign painted on the back of this building reads, "Fleisig's – A Safe Place to Trade." You can see it easily if you're back in the alley by the Prescott City Jail.

118 W. 1st St. South (C)

"Drug Store" building was built about 1900 and features a decorative pressed tin cornice and vents. This was Buchanan Drug Store from at least 1900 until ca. 1935. Citizens Bank was located next door at 116 W. 1st St. Citizens Bank may have closed during the Depression. Regardless, Buchanan Drug Store had moved to 116 W. 1st St. by the 1940s. In the 1950s, the "Drug Store" building housed Dalrymple & Henry Department Store.

116 W. 1st St. South (C)

This building has nice Colonial Revival-style details with its projecting metal cornice with dentils, paired scroll brackets, and pilasters. The front entrance was originally crowned by a triangular pediment. The building was constructed in 1895 to house the Citizens Bank. As mentioned earlier, Buchanan Drug Store moved into this building sometime before the 1940s.

114 W. 1st St. South (C)

Built about 1900 as one building with 4 storefronts. The Gem Theatre was located here. It operated from about 1900 until 1950. R. B. Hardy ran it from its opening until 1939, when it was sold to Brown Theatres. The theatre's appearance changed over the years from a simple painted sign reading "Gem Theatre" on the brick façade to a flat, Art Moderne-style awning with the word "Gem" in neon lettering by the late 1930s.

112 W. 1st St. South (C)

Notice the decorative vents and pane arrangements in the transom windows on the next three storefronts. In the early 20th century (before streets were paved in 1927 & before Buchanan Drug moved into 116 W. 1st St.) this was Stivers Barber Shop. Then by the late 1930s, it was Fore's Barber Shop, and the barbers were Ralph and Garland "Shorty" Fore.

110 W. 1st St. South (C)

Built about 1900. Housed a lunch counter and then a grocery store in the early 1900s. In mid-twentieth century, this was D & D Grill.

108 W. 1st St. South (C)

Built about 1900. Was a general store and then a dry goods store in the early 20th century. This was also the location of Roy's Café.

106 W. 1st St. South (C)

Built about 1900 and housed the Hinton Drug Company. By the mid-to-late 1910s, this was Guthrie Drug Store (before it moved over to E. Elm St.).

Sterling Square Park at SW corner of W. 1st St. & W. Main (NC)

This is the former site of two very significant buildings in the history of Prescott. Unfortunately, they are no longer here. The Greeson Opera House was constructed on this corner about 1898. It was a 2-story brick building with nice Classical detailing in its arched window openings, dentiled cornice, and decorative medallions. The Greeson Opera House advertised that it was the "best equipped house between Little Rock and Texarkana [with] electric lights [and] water works." It had a seating capacity of 1,000 people.

However, the opera house was replaced about 1910 by a one-story, brick building with nice Craftsman-style detailing in its projecting cornice with paired brackets. This building housed general mercantile stores like the Krescent Store (Krescent Store later moved to E. Elm), the Fair Store (not sure on location of Fair Store), and the Sterling Store. Most residents remember this as the Sterling Store. It was housed in the building by 1952 and maybe earlier. Sadly, the Sterling Store Building burned in 1992. Sterling Square Park was established on this lot in August 2002 and features a mural depicting the history of Prescott.

100 block of W. Main St.

100 W. Main St. (C)

This building was constructed in 1912 to house the Nevada County Bank. The Nevada County Bank was established in 1885 on this site. The bank's 1912 building featured elements of the Classical Revival style with its projecting metal cornice, Ionic columns, and triangular pediment above the front entrance. Charles Addison Smith came to Prescott in 1916 and reorganized the Nevada County Bank, which became the First State Bank of Prescott. He remained bank president until 1934. The bank building now houses the Gene Hale Law Office. In the 1920s, Dr. M. H. Kennedy, dentist, had his office on the second floor of the bank building.

102-104 W. Main St. (C)

Built about 1912, the Arnold Greeson Building has nice brick detailing and diamond-shaped cast-concrete blocks in its upper façade. This building housed a 5, 10 & 25 cent store and a grocery/confectionary in 1913. By 1945, there was a printing business in the righthand storefront. Later, it was Stewart's Electric.

There are no other contributing resources in this block of Main Street. However, as you can see from historic photos, this block was full of commercial buildings in its heyday, including a Ford dealership and the 2-story Nevada County Hardware store.

100 block of W. 1st St. North (behind the bank)

115 W. 1st St. North (C)

Built about 1950 and housed Standard Cleaners. This building was constructed on the former site of a ca. 1905 wood-frame building that housed an insurance office as well as Martin Greeson's abstract office.

117 W. 1st St. North (NC)

Built ca. 1920 and housed a bicycle repair shop and later an electrical repair shop. After that it was an office for the Ozan Lumber Company.

123 W. 1st St. North (C)

There has been a hotel on this site since at least 1892 because of the lot's location near the railroad and Hwy. 67. 1892—Winters Hotel; 1896 & 1900—Wilson Hotel; 1908—Hotel Miller; 1913—Miller Hotel; 1924—Bratton Hotel; 1945—Hotel Broadway. The current brick building was probably built in the mid-to-late 1920s. A café was also built on the north side of the hotel. A filling station (282 Service Station) was located in the empty lot to the north of the hotel & café. Local legend holds that Bonnie and Clyde stopped to eat lunch at the café while the service station next door was putting new tires on their car.

There was another large hotel building on the east side of the railroad tracks for many years. The building was constructed about 1905 as the Park Hotel. The 1908 and 1913 Sanborn maps label it as the Park Hotel, but other documentation calls it the Park Sanatorium, which was opened in 1918 as a full-service hospital with resident physicians. By 1924, the Sanborn map calls it the Saxon Hotel, and by 1945 it was Hotel Loda. Also the Lee Hotel and the Lawson Hotel. The building is no longer extant—near the current site of Pizza Hut.

Option to walk back to your vehicles and drive over tracks to E. 1st St. or walk across the tracks on Main.

105 E. 1st St. South (C)

Built about 1905 and housed the post office until the current post office was completed on East Elm Street in 1927. It features brick corbelling and a decorative metal cornice with dentils. The building also has cast iron columns on its storefront made by the Thomas-Fordyce Manufacturing Company of Little Rock. This company also produced cotton gin machinery. John Rison Fordyce, son of Cotton

Belt Railroad surveyor Samuel Wesley Fordyce, was the president of Thomas-Fordyce Manufacturing Co.

107-111 E. 1st St. South (C)

This building and the one next door at 111 E. 1st St. South were built ca. 1905 by Christopher Columbus Hamby, a lawyer and state senator representing Nevada and Hempstead counties in the 1890s. He was also the president of Citizens Bank in Prescott. C. C. Hamby was the father of Randolph P. Hamby, longtime mayor of Prescott (served from 1912-1938).

Alexander Avery III bought these 2 buildings from Hamby about 1913 and put Avery's Café in 107 E. 1st Street. However, Mr. Avery left Prescott to serve in World War I, and while he was overseas, he lost the block of buildings. When he returned to Prescott at the end of the war, he worked for the Ozan Lumber Company. In the early 1920s he bought the buildings back and reopened Avery's Café. The café was open 7 days a week, and Mr. Avery was there to open it up at 4 am and didn't shut down until 9 or 10 pm. In the 1920s, hamburgers sold for a nickel, homemade chili was a dime, and Irish stew was 25 cents. They started selling plate lunches in the 1930s with meat and 3 veggies for 25 cents. The Averys ran the café until 1956.

The building at 111 E. 1st St. South was divided up into 3 storefronts from the late 1920s to at least the mid-1940s. There was a dry cleaners owned by Henry Prince next to the café, a Western Union office in the middle, and a Singer Sewing Machine shop on the end. After interior walls were removed to make this building one large space, it housed East Side Cleaners for over 30 years. It is still home to a dry cleaning business.

211 E. 1st St. South (C--on other side of E. Elm)

The slightly taller brick building with the fabric awning was built about 1925 and served as the office for the Logan Grocer Company Wholesale Grocers. The other building next to it was the wholesale grocery warehouse (it was originally built as a cotton warehouse about 1905). Samuel Orr Logan organized the Logan Grocer Co. in 1919, and during its heyday, salesmen and delivery trucks made calls on over 600 retailers in the area. There were branch warehouses in Gurdon and Arkadelphia with the main warehouse and office in Prescott. The company closed in December 1996.

Going SE on E. Elm Street. Look at buildings on S side of street (right side).

100 E. Elm St. (C)

The block of E. Elm from E. 1st St. to the alley was known as the Waller Block because W. B. Waller owned the land and constructed commercial buildings along this block in the late 1880s. In 1904 a fire destroyed most of this block of E. Elm Street. The fire started after a spark from a passing train ignited a nearby hay warehouse. Waller constructed two one-story, brick buildings about 1905 on this site and they housed the W. B. Waller Dry Goods & Grocery Store up through the 1910s. The current building was probably built in the late 1920s after Prescott Hardware Company's 2-story furniture annex was built in 1927.

In the 1930s & 40s, this was Joe Boswell's Department Store, followed by Ledbetter Department Store. In 2000 it became the *Nevada County Picayune*.

102 & 106 E. Elm St. (C)

The Prescott Hardware Company incorporated on December 30, 1890. Two of W. B. Waller's brick warehouses on this end of the block were used as a temporary location for the business. By the fall of 1891, the company had completed a new 2-room building on E. Elm adjoining the Waller buildings. A second story was built over the room next to the alley and space reserved for the offices of W. V. Tompkins and M. W. Greeson, lawyers, and Dr. J. M. Powell, dentist. The local Masonic Lodge also met in this space. The post office was also temporarily located here. However, this building was destroyed by fire in April 1899. The building was rebuilt after the fire.

In 1899 one of the original company organizers, John Marshall Pittman, acquired all of the stock in the business and sold 10 shares to each of his sons. This put him and his sons, Dan and Charlie, in charge of the business.

In October 1904, another fire struck Prescott Hardware—this was the same fire that destroyed most of the buildings on E. Elm—started when a spark from a passing train ignited a nearby hay warehouse. After the 1904 fire, additional property was purchased from W. B. Waller and the building at 106 E. Elm was constructed. The plans originally called for it to be one story, but Judge Pittman changed his mind during construction and made it a two-story building. It has nice Classical detailing in its recessed arches and panel decorated by garlands. The building is enormous, stretching all the way back to Vine St. It has nice ghost signs

on the alley side. The back portion housed all kinds of things—buggies, harnesses, wagons, vehicles, agricultural implements, etc.

Judge Pittman died in 1919, and the business was continued by his sons. In 1927 Dan and Charlie Pittman purchased more land from W. B. Waller and constructed the 2-story furniture annex for Prescott Hardware Company at 102 E. Elm St.

Prescott Hardware Company continued to operate into the 1990s—in its heyday, it was the shopping mall of Prescott. You could get anything you needed in this store. In the 1920s and 30s they even sponsored periodic drawings for cash prizes, and people would literally fill the streets to hear them announce the winners.

Old Mike

As was typical around the turn of the 20th century, Prescott Hardware had a full line of undertaker's goods. In 1905 the funeral business was separated from Prescott Hardware and called Cornish Mortuary after J. D. Cornish, who became the manager in 1910 (served until his death in 1964).

In August 1911 a white man about 40 years old was found dead in the city park. The remains were brought to Prescott Hardware and the coroner was notified and a jury selected. The people examined the body to determine the deceased's identity. There was no identification on his person, but people reported seeing him in Little Rock, Gurdon, and Arkadelphia in the recent past. He was also seen in the Prescott city park the night before attending church. He was a cripple and used two crutches and apparently made his living by selling lead pencils, as there were several in his pocket. However, the man was not destitute for he had 2 gold teeth. The jury decided that he had died of heart failure. The body was embalmed by undertaker J. D. Cornish and was to be held at the store for a few days in hopes that someone would identify and claim the body.

However, no one ever identified the corpse of "Old Mike" as he became known. His body was on display until the 1970s. Finally, in 1975 "Old Mike" was buried in DeAnn Cemetery because of state laws prohibiting the display of human remains for public view. The funeral home purchased a burial plot for him, and his tombstone reads, "Old Mike. Died August 21, 1911."

116 E. Elm (C)

Built ca. 1908. Housed Guthrie's Rexall Drug Store by the early 1920s. This drug store, operated by Adam Guthrie, had a soda fountain that was considered to be "one of the handsomest in the South."

118 E. Elm (NC)

Pocket park on East Elm St. This was the site of the Western Auto Store.

120 E. Elm (C)

Built ca. 1908. Housed Bemis Department Store. Has nice brick detailing and cast-concrete accents in its upper façade. Including herringbone brickwork.

122 E. Elm (C)

Built ca. 1908 (may have been built by Thomas McRae after he bought the Bank of Prescott next door—his name is stamped in the kickplate near the front entrance of this building). Ozan Mercantile was located here in the 1910s, and in the mid-1930s it was Boswell's Bargain Store (which was also located at the NW corner of E. 2nd & Vine at some point). Fore's Department Store was also located here.

204 E. 2nd St. South (NC--Bank of Prescott)

Built in 1903-04 as the Bank of Prescott. I told you earlier that Thomas McRae was the bank's first president. This building had rusticated brickwork, a projecting cornice, transom windows, decorative vents, and a clock on the corner of E. Elm & E. 2nd St. It was covered with synthetic siding sometime in the 1990s??

216-218 E. 2nd St. (C)

Built in 1924 according to the date on the parapet. It housed Eagle Grocery. The other buildings on this block have been razed.

Courthouse Square

In 1884 a 2-story county courthouse was built in Prescott on this site. This structure was razed in 1911 and the second courthouse was built to replace it. It was completed in 1912 and was designed in the Classical Revival style. It was demolished in 1964 and the current courthouse was built at that time.

207 E. Elm (C)

The Prescott Post Office was built in 1926-27 and exhibits characteristics of the Colonial Revival style in its symmetrical façade, parapet with balustrade, and decorative panels with garlands and fanlights.

In the early 20th century (1908 Sanborn), there was an Air Dome Theatre on this block. These were like drive-in movies, except it was a fenced area with no roof and you walked in to the movie and sat on benches to watch it.

Look down E. 2nd St. and see the Masonic Temple at the NW corner of E. 2nd & Main—it was built in 1927.

Chamber of Commerce Building at 116 E. 2nd St. (NC)

Built about 1905. Served as the law office of Thomas C. McRae. NC because of large awning.

122 E. 2nd St. South (C)

This was the location of Hesterly Drug Store. The building had a decorative parapet and a projecting metal cornice with dentils. Hesterly Drug was started in 1903 by Dr. Simeon J. Hesterly. His sons, Dr. Berry Hesterly and Dr. Jake Hesterly also had offices in the drug store. Dr. Berry Hesterly was the pharmacist. Hesterly Drug carried one of the largest stocks of drugs in southwest Arkansas and had a popular soda fountain.

The Hesterly Drug building burned in the early 1940s, and the business moved to another location on E. Elm St.

The current building was constructed about 1950 and houses the law firm of McKenzie, McRae, Vasser & Barber.

123 E. Elm (C)

Built ca. 1905. Housed the *Nevada News* printing shop until the 1980s.

121 E. Elm (NC)

Site of former ca. 1905 2-story building. It housed Cornish Mortuary. Now a pocket park.

115-119 E. Elm (C)

Built ca. 1910 by Col. C. C. Hamby, who also constructed the 2 commercial buildings on E. 1st St. (later owned by Mr. Avery). Hamby's law office was located in a small frame building near this lot in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and in 1910 he constructed a more substantial building to house his office as well as other businesses. The building is missing some of its decorative metal building components—it probably had another scroll bracket and maybe a projecting cornice across the top. Hamby's law office was in the middle storefront, and there was a barber in the eastern storefront even in the early 20th century. The western storefront housed Teeter Bros. Mens' and Boys' Wear, owned by John and Bill Teeter.

113 E. Elm (NC)

Built ca. 1905. This was the second location of Hesterly Drug Store (moved here after their store on the corner of E. Elm & E. 2nd St. burned in the early 1940s). It was later Fort's Drug Store.

111 E. Elm (C)

Built about 1905. Housed a general store. Later a jewelry store.

103 E. Elm (NC)

Built about 1905. NC because it is a ruin—notice you can see right through the decorative vents. This was a drug store in the early 1900s—in more recent memory, it was Hart's Drug Store. Then it was Rephan's Department Store, which operated in Prescott from the early 1900s until 1980 (it was at this address for sure in the 1960s).

101B E. Elm (C)

As you can see through the crumbling stucco, these three storefronts were probably built as one building. Constructed about 1905. This was the Nevada Theatre, which opened in the 1930s. It had a large marquee that said "Nevada." In the 1930s, the

banner on the theatre advertised “cooled refrigeration” or air conditioning. A fire damaged the building in the 1960s and it closed.

101A E. Elm (C)

Built about 1905 and housed a variety of general stores, including the Ben Franklin Store.