

Photo of the Month

112 South First Street History



First Street looking south from Walnut. The building at 112 S.First is the fourth building from the right, when Meeks Hardware was located there. (Neg. #N010288)



First Street during a Saturday merchants' drawing in the 1940s. The 112 S. First building is the second building from the right, when Davidson's Grocery was located there. Courtesy of Sam Wood. (Neg. #016352)

On March 9, 2005, a portion of the north wall of the building at 112 South First Street in Rogers collapsed, sending brick and mortar rubble into Centennial Park. City officials cordoned off the Park and are currently seeking condemnation of the historic building, although repair and renovation are still an option. The two-story building sits on the south side of the Park and to the north of the historic 1905 Bank of Rogers building.

The exact construction date of this building is unknown. Its first known inhabitant was Meeks Grocery in 1894. In October 1906 owner F.Z. Meeks "...has the addition to his grocery store completed and the store now extends from First Street through to the alley and the delivery wagon can be loaded at either door. It

gives him more floor room than any other grocery store in town and enables him to arrange his stock to the best advantage." Around 1911 J.H. Fisher had a barbershop "in a portion of the building."

In 1912 Meeks went out of business and the building became home to the Elder Grocery, a retail and wholesale grocery owned by J.S. Elder. The building at that time was described as being 25x140 feet and two floors. At some point, perhaps the late teens, Elder installed "new interior fixtures and sanitary appliances [probably toilets]" as well as new elevator, shelving, and a counter. Elder Grocery was there until 1932.

In 1933 J.S. King opened Exchange Furniture there, a used furniture shop. Sometime in the mid to late 1930s the building went back to a grocery store, owned by Willie Davidson, called Davidson's Grocery. The basement featured the "Basement Cafe." By 1947 the building had exchanged hands again, becoming Anglen Grocery for a single year.

People's Cash Grocery and Market had the building between 1948 and 1950. Another two-year grocery company was there between 1951 and 1952, White's Food Market, owned by Arthur L. White. The basement became home to Springer's Sewing Machine and Repair Shop, owned by Clyde Springer. The last in a string of grocery stores was Ernest Roper's Food Market "Save with Cash and Carry," 1952-55.

One of the longest tenants in the building, from 1955 through 1966 or 67 was OTASCO (Oklahoma Tire & Supply Co.), under the management of Walter J. Jacobs. The company sold appliances, batteries, auto supplies, tires and tubes, televisions, and seat covers. The Up-Town Recreation & Snack Bar owned by Paul Atkins was in the basement until 1959. The building was then vacant until 1972 when Billy Brown opened Family Recreation (a "recreation parlor").

Another long-time resident in the building, 1972-2000, was the Bible Bookstore. After it vacated the building, Comics 'N Stuff was there until 2003. Until the recent wall collapse building owner Tammie McDaniel had planned on renovating the building. The future of this historic building is uncertain at this point.