

Senath had a newspaper in 1902 - 1903 when the Senath Star was published by J. C. Chunn from Ravenden Springs, Arkansas. J. H. Bradley and W. G. Bray published the Senath Sentinel in 1906, and John R. Mann published the Senath Leader from 1912 - 1919. O. A. Kern, after World War II in 1920, published the Senath Leader and ran the Dixie Theater. He was a Republican, as was W. Thrower with the Tribune. The Senath Leader was later published by J. P. Martin, and finally, in 1946 Dennis Bacon and Gus Short began publishing the Dunklin County Press. This newspaper remains in print today under the ownership of Jamie and Wayne Bruce.

By 1897, with the congregation of so many people in a small area, the need for some kind of government became apparent and paramount. The village elected a board of directors - a town board to conduct the town's business. Elected were J. M. Douglass - chairman, A. A. Caneer - clerk, J. I. Caneer - treasurer, R. C. Bruce, W. B. Landreth and J. W. Parker. They adopted the first article of the by-laws of the city of Kennett, and spent about ten years revising and re-writing the remaining ordinances to fit Senath's needs. In January of 1903, there were 529 Senath residents.

Besides ordinances and by-laws, other orders

of business facing the early city fathers were the construction of a calaboose and constructing wooden sidewalks. The appointment of a marshal at \$20 per month, was a serious decision. The salary increased to \$25 in 1899, and up to \$40 in 1903. The sidewalks remained a problem until 1910. when the concrete walks were laid. Uneven foundations, water drainage, inability to pay for individual construction were a constant source of discussion for twenty years. Their proudest achievement was the building of the sidewalk westward about three-fourths of a mile to the old Mission School. (One dark night a prankster stuffed a long black stocking and dragged it across the new sidewalk, A lady, probably believing it to be a snake, became frightened and broke her leg trying to escape.)

Seventy-three voters elected R. C. Bruce the city board chairman in 1903, and in February of 1903, R. C. Bruce was elected mayor of the new city of Senath, fourth class. George Ray was elected city clerk, J. A. Bradley the city attorney and J. S. Bullington, the marshal. Also in 1903, the city began transactions with a telephone company, and the town had this service beginning in 1907.

There were doctors in Senath's early days - Dr. Chaney, W. W. White, and Dr. Burks preceded Dr. Hughes, Dr. Speidel and young Dr. Speidel.

(No effort was made to include all the businesses in Senath, nor was there any intent to feature any person, other than Asenath Douglass.)

This writer wishes to acknowledge the use of source material:

History of Dunklin County by Mary Smyth-Davis

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History of Southeast Missouri by R. S. Douglass

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