BELLEVILLE ILLINOIS ILLUSTRATED

SOME PHASES OF LIFE IN THE CITY AND MANY OF ITS PRINCIPAL POINTS OF INTEREST

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BELLEVILLE, ILLINOIS--A SKETCH.

Belleville, Illinois, a few of whose salient features we present herewith, is one of the most prosperous cities of our country, and with this present prosperity, it enjoys bright prospects for the future excelled by but few, if any, of the cities of to-day.

In the immediate vicinity of St. Louis, it lies in the very heart of the great industrial center of our nation, from which the mighty arteries of trade and industrial life pulse out to every corner of the land.

Surrounding Belleville, roll the richest of the alluvial prairies of St. Clair County, whose fertility is beyond description. These furnish to the husbandman bounteous return for his labors. Underneath these extend the almost inexhaustible fields of coal.

Founded in 1813, Belleville was incorporated as a city in the early 50's. Selected as the County Seat of St. Clair County, because of its central locality as well as its natural advantages, the history of its progress has amply justified the wisdom of its selection.

In its earlier years Belleville was an agricultural community, occupying the most prominent position among the cities of the Prairie State. In 1852 the first coal mine was sunk, opening a new era in its life. From this time, Belleville, while drawing none the less from its agricultural resources, entered upon its active career as an industrial community. The new industry not only furnished employment for a large multitude, but also a substantial basis for successful manufacturing.

Never a "boom" city, its growth from that day has been steady, until to-day Belleville is a city of twenty-five thousand people, the center of a rich and prosperous territory of twice as many more. As an industrial center it stands at the fore-front of the manufacturing centers of the state, and to-day it is forging forward with an impetus that astonishes even its warmest champions.

And yet there is no real foundation for such astonishment, for a moment's consideration of Belleville's natural advantages will convince the most skeptical that Belleville stands to-day but at the threshold of its real activities.

To its agricultural resources, which for almost a century have ministered to its prosperity, we have already alluded. Surpassing these, however, are the advantages for manufacturing, to a few of which we will briefly refer.

First and foremost are its coal fields, furnishing the cheapest fuel to be found anywhere. Lake and deep wells supply water in abundance and of the best quality. Transportation facilities are ample. Three great trunk lines, the Southern, L. & N. and Illinois Central, connect Belleville with the outer world. These are united by a Belt Line built by Belleville, by means of which, without additional charge, any industry on either line has the benefit of all. But a few miles away at the river front all the great trunk lines converge. Belleville enjoys the rate of this center, to all points of the country. Add to this a large, intelligent labor supply, and you have the description of what might be deemed an ideal industrial center, and of what Belleville actually possesses.

This will explain the great diversity of industrial life prosperously flourishing in Belleville, glimpses of which may be gleaned from these pages. Here abound foundries, breweries, distilleries, agricultural implement manufactories, boiler works, brick manufactories, glass works, shoe factories, flour mills, nail mills and other industries too numerous to mention. These, together with the mining industries, give steady employment to an army of more than 7,000 men, the weekly pay-roll averaging $125,000 whilst the annual output runs upwards of $5,000,000. The products find a ready market all over the land as well as in foreign fields, and the trade mark of "Belleville, Ill." on any manufactured product has become the synonym of honest quality.

What is true of the industrial field applies equally favorably to the commercial activity. The business men while progressive, have built up
their success upon true foundations of conservative honesty. Fearlessly have they met the opposition of the nearby metropolitan center, and how successfully the history of their progress tells. And it can safely be affirmed that in no city of its size were there less commercial failures during the last twenty-five years than in Belleville. For Belleville has in addition to its own population, tributary to it, a large prosperous farming community with numerous towns and villages, all connected, or soon to be, with Belleville by trolley lines. Amongst these prosperous communities are Lebanon, O'Fallon, Caseyville, Mascoutah, Millstadt, Smithton, Freeburg, Marissa and others.

Nor is this prosperous condition confined to manufacturers and merchants. It is most generally diffused amongst all the people, and is reflected in the saving accounts and the homes of the people. For Belleville is pre-eminently a city of homes. Merchant prince and clerk, manufacturer and employee, none are satisfied without homes owned by themselves. And Belleville proudly boasts that more homes are owned and less rented than in any other city of its size.

The financial prosperity of the people is even more fully reflected in the banks, of which the city has three. The Belleville Savings and First National have existed for years, meeting without a tremor financial cyclones that have swept others out of existence. The third, The Belleville Bank and Trust Company is of more recent date, but built upon the same solid foundations. These banks have a capital of $550,000 with surplus and undivided profits of over $300,000 more. The deposits reach nearly $4,000,000 of which almost $2,500,000 are time deposits, representing the savings of the prosperous and thrifty people of Belleville.

While thus advancing along material lines, Belleville has not neglected the equally important "cultural" side of life.

Long before the free school system was called into life, the pioneers had founded schools of note. Its public schools have always borne the reputation for depth, breadth and solidity. Its educational leaders were leaders indeed as the names of Bunsen, Slade and Raab will show. The thoroughness of the work is best attested by the high rank gained and held by Belleville students in the higher institutions of learning to which they advanced.

The school houses are many and commodious, and no child has ever been turned away for lack of room. In addition to the public schools, the various parochial schools care for hundreds of the children of their flocks.

Long before Carnegie's day, Belleville felt the need of a library and one was established under the auspices of the "Saengerbund." This latter organization has long since passed away, but its legacy formed the nucleus of the splendid Public Library of Belleville with its more than 23,000 volumes housed in its own building.

The influence of Germanic blood in Belleville is seen in its musical activities. Organizations both instrumental and vocal, have fostered and nourished this spirit. Amongst these are the Philharmonic, an orchestral organization of high rank, the Liederkranz and Krunthalers, German, and the Choral Symphony, an American vocal society. All these are liberally supported by the citizens and serve to keep alive the musical spirit of the fathers. The opera house managed by Charles Linke, Jr., gives a good class of dramatic entertainment now, and present agitation will probably soon result in a more pretentious house.

The fraternal spirit is also very prominent, the following organizations being represented by flourishing local societies, Masonic, Elks, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, A. O. U. W., Knights of Honor, Harugari, Treubund, G. A. R. and numerous other benevolent orders connected with religious organizations.

The religious side has not been neglected. With the early pioneers came the church, and the denominations are all represented by flourishing congregations worshipping in structures worthy the cause. Protestantism is represented by numerous branches, both English and German, and the Catholic church in addition to three large churches has hospitals, orphanages and a large building for educational, social and recreational purposes.

With such influences at work it is not to be wondered at that Belleville has always been the nursery of great men, leaders in forum, legislative
halls and in the fields of conflict. To mention all of these would transcend the limits of this booklet. A few of the many might be recalled, all of whom have wielded a potent influence in the affairs of state and nation. Amongst these of earliest days are Snyder, Hay, Reynolds, with Bissell, Shields, Trumbull, Koerner, Baker and Hay of a later generation, General Merritt, of the navy Niles, Kempf and Coghlan might also be mentioned, representatives of the great host who have achieved renown in their country's service.

The press of Belleville has always been of a high character. To-day five dailies, two German and three English are supported, and to their enterprise and enthusiasm much of Belleville's prosperity is due.

For years Belleville enjoyed the distinction of being the best macadamized city in the state. Whilst other cities still wallowed in the miry clay, Belleville with miles of macadamized streets and brick side walks was the envy of all. At the present time these streets are rapidly being supplanted by brick paved, and soon Belleville will again lead as she did in days gone by.

The civic spirit and pride is of the highest order. The business world is progressive, ever alert for the welfare of the city. Never polluted by politics, the municipal affairs are guarded by an organization of citizens known as the Good Government League, under whose inspiration the best citizens have sacrificed themselves for municipal service, and the municipal government in consequence is organized on lines of business principles of official rectitude and enterprise that comes near fulfilling the ideal of the municipal sociologist. In other lines the same spirit is active. The commercial world has its Merchants' Association, whilst the industrial is represented by a progressive Manufacturers' Association, and these, with other enterprising citizens, have formed a Commercial Club. All these organizations under the leadership of the Commercial Club, are ever alert to the interests of the city and its advancement, and the many new manufactories secured as well as many local enterprises fostered, encouraged and forwarded bear witness to the enterprise and ability of the latter organization.

Situated upon rolling hills, Belleville enjoys the best natural advantages for sewerage. Its health record is enviable. It is well lighted by gas and electricity. The absence of crime, as well as of great conflagration, attest the efficiency of the police and fire departments; for both crime and fires are almost unknown. With food supply abundant, living is cheap. Connected with St. Louis by railroads, as well as by a trolley system which is at service every fifteen minutes, and which transports its passengers to all parts of the city without additional charge, Belleville enjoys all the advantages of city life without its disadvantages. For these reasons with others already given, Belleville is an ideal spot for true family life.

Such is Belleville, offering to industry a site for most profitable investment, to the commercial world a field for successful activity, to the wage-earner the opportunity for steady, remunerative employment, to the family an ideal home, to all "A fair show for every man."

SOME PUBLIC OFFICIALS OF BELLEVILLE.

Mayor F. J. Kern in the center; on the right, Assessor Henry Dietrich, Jr., H. R. Heinberger, City Attorney, G. H. Peinecke, City Clerk, and Chief of Police William Nebgen, and at the left, Corporation Counsel A. H. Panet, City Treasurer H. R. Hartman, John Gebhart, Superintendent of Streets, and City Engineer L. L. Harper.
This is one of the finest Court Houses in the State. The front was built about the year 1860, and the addition about ten years ago. It is headquarters for all the county officers. The Circuit Court, the County Court and the Probate Court have each fine rooms and many famous lawyers have appeared in these court rooms. Much of the East St. Louis legal business has to come here to be finally adjudicated. * * * The County Jail is near, on First, between South Illinois and Spring streets. It is a fine modern institution capable of accommodating about 250 prisoners.
THE PUBLIC SQUARE, LOOKING WEST.

The trolleys of the East St. Louis Railway Company make their Belleville terminus here, and many lawyers occupy offices in the buildings back of the hotel. The National Hotel replaces one of the original taverns of the city, The Tannehill.

THE PUBLIC SQUARE, LOOKING SOUTH.

South Illinois Street comes in here. The Public Library, City Hall, Central or High School, Illinois Central Depot, the offices of many leading lawyers and several prominent business houses are located on this important thoroughfare. The County Fair Grounds and the City Water Works are near the end of the street. The proposed City Park will also undoubtedly be established in this section at no distant day.
The Public Square is a distinctively American institution, and was inaugurated for the accommodation of the citizens and suburbanites for trade and traffic, public meetings and celebrations. The West and Penn buildings were built by two of the pioneers of St. Clair County, Benjamin J. West, still living, and Joseph Penn, who died a few years since.
THE PUBLIC SQUARE, LOOKING NORTH.

North Illinois Street, with its southern connection, is the main thoroughfare running north and south in the central section of the City. The First National Bank Building, one of the finest business blocks in Belleville, occupies the site upon which originally stood the Hinckley Bank, the pioneer bank of the County.
The Old Mansion House, on the corner of North High and East Main streets, still standing and now used as a liquor saloon, was made famous by reason of its having sheltered for a night in 1842 Charles Dickens, the great English author. It was noticed in his "American Notes." Directly opposite, in the 50’s, stood the American House, a celebrated tavern in those days. Next to the Mansion House, on the other corner to the west, is the Thomas House, built about 1857 by Colonel John Thomas, one of the County pioneers.
BELLEVILLE BANK AND TRUST COMPANY.

Banking Rooms located at the Northeast section of the Public Square. Has a Capital Stock of $350,000, and began business in 1903. Does a general banking business. It has a fine Safe Deposit Department with boxes to rent, and Vaults protected by the latest burglar alarm system.

President, Adam Karr. Cashier, Nic Waller.
FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF BELLEVILLE.

Established 1874.
BELLEVILLE SAVINGS BANK.
Organized 1860.

The importance of the Public Library as one of the educational institutions of Belleville may be realized when we consider that about 25,000 books are taken annually from these shelves to the homes of the readers, while over 13,000 persons, during the last year, sought profit and pleasure by using the Reading Room. Many young men spend much of their leisure time here in study.
Belleville supports five dailies and a number of weeklies. They occupy buildings of their own, with modern machinery and facilities, and represent various phases of life and politics in the community. The News-Democrat is Democratic in faith, The Advocate Republican, The Post-Zeitung is also Republican, The Record is an Independent, and The Tageblatt and Arbeiter-Zeitung represents the Independent-Social-Democratic elements.
The public school system of Belleville ranks with the highest in the State. The school buildings are among the best and the Board of Education is liberal in policy in making appropriations, the expenditure during the past year being about $60,000. In the Central School there are ten recitation rooms beside the Assembly Hall and laboratories.
Belleville has seven school buildings and sixty-five teachers. The Board of Education holds its meetings in its own building next to the High School. The school buildings are located in desirable spots, convenient for each district. The number of pupils enrolled in the seven schools at the last enumeration was 2,640.
SCHOOL-ROOM LIFE IN BELLEVILLE.

The public school system is similar to that in vogue in most first-class cities, with the addition of one hour daily being devoted in all grades above the first—where one-half hour is given—to the study of the German language.
DEPARTMENT STORE OF FUESS-FISCHER CO.
Dry Goods and Carpets
EAST MAIN STREET, BELLEVILLE.

THE JORDAN SHOE COMPANY.
Manufacturers of Boys' and Men's McKay Shoes.
EAST MAIN STREET, BELLEVILLE.
The centre of Catholic interest is the Cathedral, with the adjoining residence of the Rev. John Jansen, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Belleville. Many noted gatherings tending to the welfare of the members of the Catholic faith have taken place here.
THE ROMEISER COMPANY.

EAST MAIN STREET, BELLEVILLE.
SOME NOTED CATHOLIC CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, CONVENTS, AND CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS OF BELLEVILLE.

Going down South Race Street the visitor will be greeted by a group of fine buildings devoted to education and charity, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, St. Vincent's Hospital, Cathedral Hall and Notre Dame Convent. St. Mary's handsome edifice is situated on West Main Street, while St. Luke's beautiful church, with its graceful spire, adorns North Church Street.
VIEW OF THE EXCELSIOR FOUNDRY COMPANY'S WORKS.

Established as the Rogers Foundry in 1880, and incorporated as the Excelsior Foundry in 1888 with Mr. E. P. Rogers as President and Mr. Geo. B. M. Rogers Secretary. Their specialties: grey iron castings, corn mills, feed mills and boiler fronts.

PARTIAL VIEW OF THE WORKS OF THE BELLEVILLE GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY.

Established in 1856. Electrical Department established in 1880. The picture shows the Power House on the left, with the Retort House on the right.
The Catholic parochial schools of Belleville are the pride of the members of that faith. St. Luke's and St. Mary's are shown in the picture above, together with Glen Addie's beautiful Orphan Home and its surroundings. Including Cathedral Hall, shown on another page, these schools keep abreast with the ever-progressive spirit of education.
THE KARR SUPPLY CO.'S BUILDING.

WEST MAIN STREET.

Engineers and Contractors, Manufacturers of Hot Water and Steam Heating Apparatus. Plumbers and Dealers in Gas Fixtures and Electric Chandeliers.

SAENGER'S DEPARTMENT STORE.

EAST MAIN STREET.

Established by Joseph Saenger in 1879. One of the well-known and reliable stores which makes Belleville popular as a trading centre for 30,000 people.
The city has something like fifteen churches, representing the various forms of religious faith. These illustrations represent a number of the edifices of the leading Protestant societies.
THE PRESCRIPTION PHARMACY OF WALTER J. KOHL.

No 100 EAST MAIN STREET

Specialties, Hospital and Physicians’ Supplies and Truss Fittings.

VIEW OF KNAPP BROS’ JEWELRY AND MUSIC HOUSE.

304-306-308 EAST MAIN STREET.

Established in 1851.
Belleville is distinctly a manufacturing city, its industries are both varied and extensive. There are a number of stove foundries, two manufactories engaged largely in making glass ware and several concerns producing bricks in all the shades and varieties required by modern builders.
THE WORKS OF THE ST. CLAIR VINEGAR COMPANY.

BELLEVILLE ILLINOIS.

Adam Ginz, President, W. E. Ginz, Secretary. Yearly output 1,500,000 gallons. This is the best equipped and one of the largest vinegar factories in the world.
There are something like thirty coal mines in and about the City of Belleville, making this a most important centre for this product. It has also one of the largest manufactorys of thresher machinery in the world.
A DEPARTMENT OF THE LENGFELDER STOVE AND HARDWARE COMPANY.

413 AND 415 EAST MAIN STREET.

Stove and Tinware Department, next door, 501 East Main Street, Belleville.

INTERIOR VIEW OF KREBBS BROTHERS’ STORE.

WEST MAIN STREET.

This fine store was established in April, 1906. Carries a fine stock of Chinaware, Glassware, Household and Bath Goods, and is the largest house in this line in Southern Illinois and the only one in Belleville.
SOME ELEGANT BELLEVILLE RESIDENCES.

To see the fine residences of the city to advantage one needs quite a little time. Abend, Portland, South Church, North and South Jackson, Second, South High and South Charles Streets, Mascoutah Road, and Pennsylvania Avenue will well repay a visit.
THE BELLEVILLE BRANCH OF THE ANHEUSER-BUSCH BREWING ASSOCIATION.

LOCATED ON CORNER OF PORTLAND AND A STREETS
WILLIAM WINKELMANN.
ABEND STREET

NIC MULLER.
SOUTH JACKSON STREET.

SOME ELEGANT BELLEVILLE RESIDENCES.
L. WOLFORT & COMPANY'S HEADQUARTERS.
NORTH JACKSON STREET.
These Extensive Dealers in Horses and Mules for all purposes were established in Belleville in 1869.

PARTIAL VIEW OF THE WORKS OF THE STANDARD BRICK COMPANY.
ON THE SMITHTON ROAD AND THE LINE OF THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD
This Company is one of the largest manufacturers of all grades of Building Brick in Illinois, and has a capacity for producing 12,000,000. President, Charles H. Starchel; Secretary and Treasurer, William Schmidt; General Manager, L. H. Alsip.
AN ELEGANT BELLEVILLE RESIDENCE.
THE HOME OF ADAM KARR,
SECOND STREET.

In many cities the fine residences are confined to certain favorite localities. While Belleville has distinguishing groups, its elegant homes are located in all sections adaptable as a matter of taste.
BELLEVILLE CITY HOSPITAL.

Located on the Smithton Road, three-fourths of a mile south of the city limits. The site embraces fifteen acres of splendid ground and the main building will comfortably take care of sixty patients, besides supplying quarters for the hospital staff. Has private gas and steam heating plant and the city deep-well hydrant water.

THE JACKSON STREET ENGINE HOUSE.

The Fire Department of Belleville is modern in every respect. The Jackson Street Engine House has a permanent force of trained fire fighters and is equipped with an engine, hose reel and ladder truck. The Gold Street Station is similarly equipped. Drills take place daily at the noon hour and at seven o'clock in the evening. The men are employed permanently and give their entire time to the city.
SOME ELEGANT BELLEVILLE RESIDENCES.

Among the numerous fine residences of the city a few only have been selected to represent the many and among the notable ones those of P. M. Romeiser on Abend, Philip Knapp on Charles Street, W. S. Keller on Pennsylvania Avenue, and John Groom on William Street are conspicuous.
HALL OF THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

NORTH JACKSON STREET.

The only orchestra in the United States not composed of professionals. It has a membership of forty persons and was organized in 1907. G. A. Neubert, Director.

LIEDERKRAZN HALL.

NORTH ILLINOIS, CORNER OF B STREET.

The Leiderkranz is the leading musical organization of the city and was established in 1878. It has a male chorus of fifty voices, a ladies' chorus of sixty-five, and a children's chorus of one hundred and fifty. Charles A. Grossart is President, Fred. J. Schrader, Vice-President; George H. Stohlberg, Secretary; A. Edman, Treasurer; and Louis Hammertstein, Director of the Society.
AN ELEGANT BELLEVILLE RESIDENCE.

HOME OF B. HECKENKAMP.

This beautiful modern residence is located on the corner of Court and E Streets, in one of the finest sections of the city. Its grounds are finely kept and its flower beds a matter of pride.
One of the most delightful outing spots in this section of the country is that of Priester's Park, near Belleville. It is conveniently located on the line of the East St. Louis and Suburban Railway Company.
The residence of Dr. C. H. Starkel on the corner of Second and Charles Streets, that of Fred Engelke on East First Street; Victor Gauss, North High; Chris. Dietz on South High, and George R. Long on East Fifth Street are all picturesque, noticeable places.
VIEWS ALONG THE BELLEVILLE DIVISION OF THE EAST ST. LOUIS AND SUBURBAN RAILWAY COMPANY.

The trolleys of this finely equipped modern line furnish a delightful means of travel between Belleville, East St. Louis, St. Louis and all the intermediate points. The cars are of the best modern style and the service efficient. An outing over any of its sections is always interesting and well repays the trip.
The residences of Louis Opp on East B Street, Henry Ehret on Douglas Avenue, and Charles Spoemenn on North High Street, are among the most beautiful and delightful homes of this city.
Belleville has excellent railroad facilities, being served by no less than three big lines of railroad—the Illinois Central, with depots on Seventh and Illinois Street; the Southern with depots on A Richland Street; and the Louisville & Nashville, with their passenger depot on Seventh near Sycamore Street.
SOME ELEGANT BELLEVILLE RESIDENCES.

One of the most delightful places in or about Belleville is the home and grounds of Henry A. Kircher on North Church Street. The home of Richard Wangelin, on South Charles Street is also a charming, picturesque spot, and the chaste and elegant residence of Theodore Karr, on South Illinois Street, and Adam Karr on West Second Street, give further illustration of the taste and aspirations of the progressive spirits of the city.
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