

**A BIRTHDAY BOOK
OF KANSAS CITY,
1821-1921**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9781760573621

A Birthday Book of Kansas City, 1821-1921 by Charles Phelps Cushing

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

CHARLES PHELPS CUSHING

**A BIRTHDAY BOOK
OF KANSAS CITY,
1821-1921**



The "City of Kansas" in 1865, when it had a population of only 475. This was the year that Gilpin drew his prophetic man of "Comtropolis." And this was also the golden era of the steamboat. Westport was yet the West's city of destiny and laughed at the "landing's" airs. — (From an old print made in 1865).

2

A
BIRTHDAY BOOK
of
KANSAS CITY
1821—1921



CHARLES PHELPS CUSHING

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

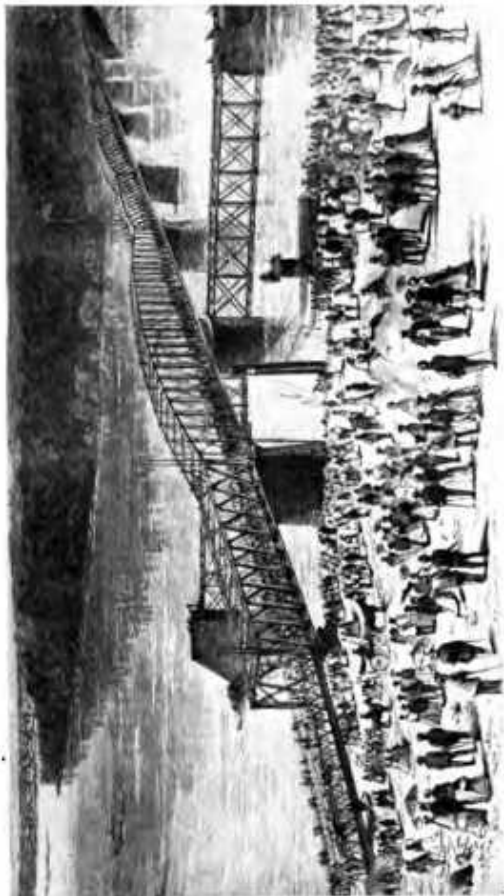


Kansas City, Missouri
BURTON PUBLISHING COMPANY
Publishers

Dedicated to

J. C. NICHOLS

Who, though not a pioneer in the work of making Kansas City "a good place to live in," has set us as brave an example, both of vision and of accomplishment, as any of our forefathers.—By the Author.



Harper's Weekly printed this picture in its issue of August 6, 1889, with the comment that "to Kansas City belongs the honor of building the pioneer bridge over the Missouri." The editor made further comment that may sound more strange in modern ears: "Kansas City, Mo., though not so well known in the East as Leavenworth, Omaha, St. Joseph, and possibly some other Missouri River towns, enjoys remarkable advantages of natural location and commercial facilities."

that she has attained such conspicuous success in so short a time is all the more remarkable because the settlement had to battle, from the very beginning, against a formidable series of obstacles.

In canoes and pirogues in the summer of 1821, a little band of early day French *poilus* paddled up the Big Muddy—a perilous cruise of twenty days into the wilderness—and established a fur trading outpost on the banks of this turbulent river a few miles below the mouth of what was then known only as the “Kaw.” (On the maps the “Kaw” is now set down as the “Kansas River,” but it never has been accepted locally as the proper name of the stream.) The French pioneers built a warehouse and a few log cabins. Then they set to work to establish the settlement’s first reputation as a hustling center for wholesale trade, jobbing and retailing. The *petite ville* had a population of only 31, but it did a volume of business all out of proportion to its puny size.

Thus was a tradition set which has been faithfully cherished even unto the present day. By the census of 1920 the community at the mouth of the Kaw numbers, as you may know, 324,410 on the Missouri side of the state line, and 100,177 on the Kansas side. (Doubtless, by this time, you have guessed that its present name is “Kansas City.”) Many other

Page eight

American cities are ahead of it on the census lists, but the community carries on an amount of business all out of proportion to its size, and in volume of bank clearings ranks fifth in the entire United States, right up next to New York, Chicago, Boston and Philadelphia, like a bantam soldier mixed into a squad of six-footers.

Vision told Francois Chouteau and his comrades that somewhere near the confluence of these two great water highways, one of them 3,000 miles long, a great city might some day arise. These valiant Frenchmen might even have dreamed—who knows?—that the place would become eventually what it is today—the giant of the whole Missouri Valley.

The great treacherous beast of a river, which the Indians called the "Big Muddy," picked the location of Westport Landing and afterward tried time and again to destroy it. Chouteau and his voyageurs chose this site as a strategic situation for an outpost for fur trading—both with the trappers of the Rocky Mountains and with the Indians of the western plains, tributary to the Kaw valley.

Besides vision, this little band of pioneers had as an inheritance of their blood a goodly store of courage—for they were Frenchmen. Does this latter declaration require to be supported? If so, it may be recounted that only last month your