

Read what the Great Southern Daily, The New Orleans Picayune, had to say about Opelousas in its issue of March 3, 1907.

OPELOUSAS IS FAST BECOMING A GREAT CITY.

OPELOUSAS TRANSFORMED FROM A TOWN TO A THRIVING METROPOLIS.

The Capital of St. Landry Parish Has Been Made an Important Railroad Center.

The Building of New Railway Lines Has Awakened the People and Attracted Hundreds of People From Other Sections of the Country—Facts About the Growth of Opelousas.

Opelousas, La., March 2.—Rich and elegant in those days of long ago, Opelousas, whose early history is replete with dramatic traditions, is to-day fast becoming a progressive city, and its future is well assured, from the fact that its people have all those necessary attractions that invite immigrants.

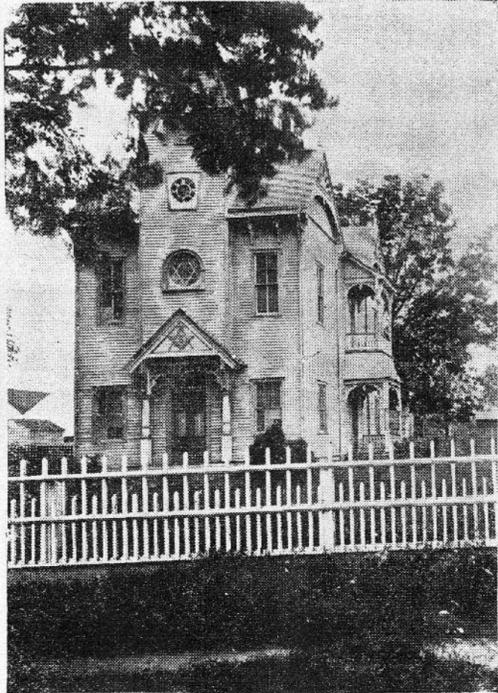
One year ago Opelousas was considered a town. To-day it is a city. The citizens have proven to the Governor that they would build and maintain Opelousas as a growing city, the matter of announcing and proclaiming it such according to an act of the Legislature having taken place only one year ago, and since that time the citizens, realizing the importance of making it what it should be, namely, a first-class city, immediately got together and, by their united efforts, have accomplished much in the way of improvements.

The schools are keeping pace with the growing population. The Immaculate Conception Catholic School has recently moved into new quarters, an attractive two-story building having been erected to accommodate the increased attendance. The public schools have been somewhat congested, and a movement is now under consideration to erect a primary school in the southern portion of the town. The movement has met with universal approval. There is also a movement on the part of the progressive citizens of Opelousas to build and maintain a State normal school, similar to the one in Natchitoches. The city proposes to give a plot of ground, seven and one-half acres,

Opelousas may be shown by the fact that ten new residences are now under process of construction. During the past year more than fifty smaller houses and cabins have been built. There are forty-five new residences in the town which would do justice to a town of 20,000. Many barren prairies and open fields have been converted into desirable residence lots.

With 103 blocks of paved sidewalks, comprising 30,000 feet, at a cost of \$51,000, Opelousas may well boast of as many paved sidewalks as any other town of the same population in the South. Bids are being considered for the paving of ten additional blocks of sidewalks, and also for the paving of sixteen street blocks.

Opelousas owns its own electric light and water plant, and the cost to the consumer is much less than may be found in many other towns, the cost being only about four-tenths of a cent per hour, with lamp renewals free. The plant at present is furnishing light to the extent of 4,900 incandescent and 74 arc lights, and during the summer this same plant supplies over 100 fans. The cost of the plant was \$50,000, and it is self-sustaining, even though the charges for light are exceedingly small. The street lights and water service for municipal wants are supplied free of charge by the Company. Owing to the rapid growth of the city, a contract has been let for the laying of 4,000 feet of water main, and eight more fire hydrants are to be put in. The material for this work has been received and work will begin immediately. The

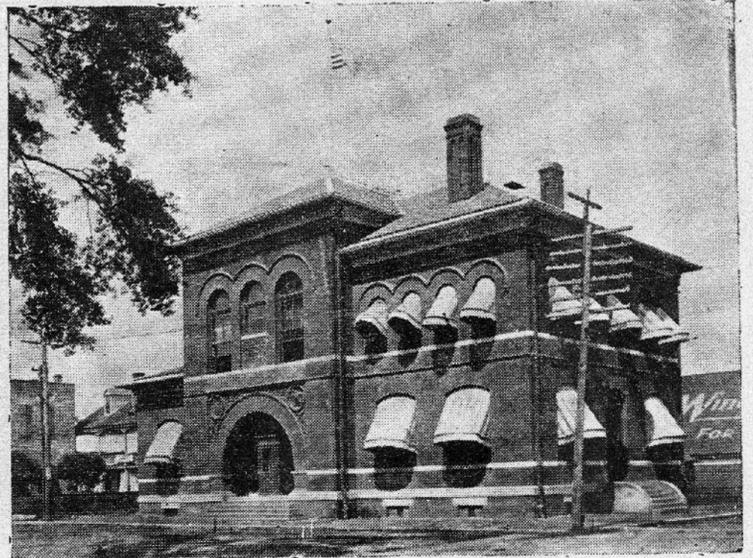


Masonic Temple, Opelousas, La.

tell, and his brother, Dr. R. M. Little, are arranging to equip offices over the new Opelousas National Bank for the performing of surgical operations. It is their purpose

New Orleans and Pacific tracks are now completed as far east as Port Barres. The Opelousas, Gulf and Northeastern tracks were laid as far as Opelousas during the month of February.

On March 1 it was expected to have a big celebration in honor of the opening of the new road between Opelousas and Metairie, a distance of twenty-three miles, but on account of the continued rains the



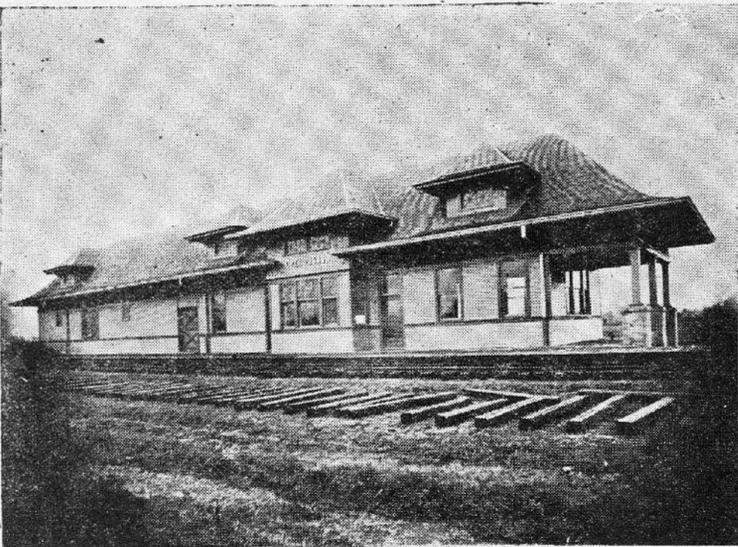
The Federal Building, Opelousas, La.

February issue of the Local Publisher, published by the American Newspaper Union, of Birmingham, Alabama, the following compliment was paid the Clarion: "The St. Landry (La.) Clarion is without doubt one of the best edited and printed weeklies in the whole South."

Opelousas is claiming the best baseball club in the Gulf Coast

best soil. All things considered, if you were to accept a tract of land in the United States best adapted to a wide range of farm crops and fruits and to their profitable production, it is doubtful if anything superior to this could be found. Opelousas, the parish seat of this vast area of fertile soil, ranks today as one of the largest cotton cen-

ter is understood will construct a belt road, or will offer the right of way to the Progressive League. The details as yet have not been fully decided upon, but it is believed that the plan will be to have a belt road owned and operated by local people. V. H. Sabille is arranging to erect a saw mill within the next three months in the city limits. The mill



The Depot of the Opelousas, Gulf and Northeastern Railroad at Opelousas, La. The building cost \$5,300.

In what is known as the Colorado Southern Addition, and a bonus of \$125,000 for such an institute, believing that Louisiana is badly in need of another State normal, and the citizens further believe that they have the town and proper surroundings for such a school.

A square of ground has been donated to the City Council by a lovable and charitable woman, Mrs. E. B. Comeau, and still more in the spirit of giving, the architects, builders and lumbermen have offered their material and services to erect the Primary School without profit to themselves.

Some of the many signs of activity now going on in and around

demand for additional lights has been so great that it is deemed necessary to enlarge the present plant, the cost to be in the neighborhood of \$20,000. The water supply is being increased by the boring of another artesian well, which, it is expected, will be completed shortly. The revenue to the city from the light and water plant averages about \$1,200 per month.

The assessed value of the city of Opelousas is \$1,110,500. The municipal tax, including special taxes, is only 12 mills. Opelousas has been divided into four wards, with a registered vote of 425. The police force of the city is ample and efficient. The present Mayor, Dr. E. A. Little,

to have offices with all the necessary instruments and appliances obtainable, which long-felt want would indicate that in future medical relief will be obtainable in case of serious accidents.

Opelousas supports three financial institutions, namely, the St. Landry State National Bank, the Opelousas National and the Peoples State Bank, whose total deposits exceed \$1,000,000.

The marked activity in railroad construction in southwest Louisiana has been a matter of great importance to Opelousas and the surrounding country. During the past year two railroads have been built into the city. The Colorado Southern



F. H. LEWIS, Founder Opelousas, Gulf and Northeastern Railroad.

of the pioneers of the town, through whose efforts the road was rushed to completion.

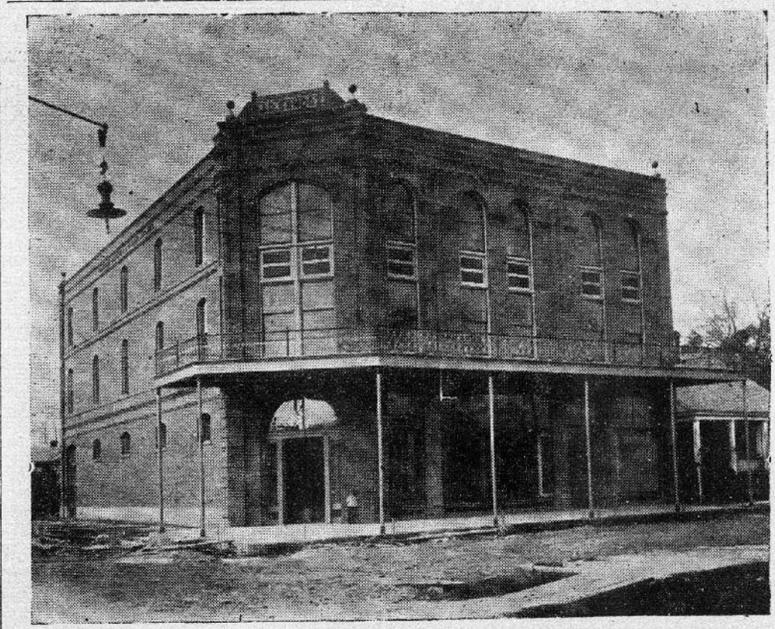
The incoming of this road and the general activity in railroad building has been postponed until some future date. Regular trains will be run on the Opelousas and Gulf within the next two months. The founder of the road is the Hon. Thomas H. Lewis, of Opelousas, one of the prominent citizens of this vicinity who has been an incentive to the citizens to establish factories. Last week a bonus of \$2,000 was offered and accepted by P. A. Rutledge and associates for the establishment of a lumber mill of 40,000 feet daily capacity, to cost \$40,000 minimum, for the manufacture of hard wood. The Company has purchased a supply of timber in the vicinity of Opelousas that will enable them to run their mill for a period of eight years, and it is expected that work will commence on the new plant in about ten days. The Company will employ in the neighborhood of 100 men, and will spend \$100,000 per year in labor and supplies. It is stated that the plant can be in readiness within four months. Mr. Rutledge is at present communicating with parties from the North, who are desiring to find a suitable location for the following industries, namely, a furniture factory, a slack coopeage factory and a box factory.

The City Market of Opelousas is classed as one of the best in the State. It is well screened and equipped with the latest modern refrigerators, marble slab counters, nickel-plated scales and, upon the whole, presents a sanitary appearance. The beef supply of the town is of the best quality.

A new enterprise that has recently been established is a plant for the manufacture of concrete blocks, which enterprise has been very successful. Quite a number of the residences have been erected from blocks made at this factory, and several store fronts have been made attractive by these concrete blocks. Thus goes merrily on the work of patronizing home industry.

The new Lacombe Hotel is now an assured fact. The contract for the erection of a modern three-story, forty-room building has been let, and it is expected that work will begin in the next thirty days. This much-needed hotel will cost \$50,000. A glance at the number of guests registered at the Lacombe Hotel during January, 1906, and the number registered in January, 1907, indicate an increase of 216 guests. The old Lacombe Hotel is one of the landmarks of the town. Remarkable as it may seem, it has been a hotel for 119 years.

The Opelousas Courier has the distinction of being one of the oldest weekly newspapers in the State. It was founded in 1852. The St. Landry Clarion, of more recent origin, is fast forging to the front as a weekly newspaper of merit. In the



J. B. SANDOZ, BUILDING. First Three-Story Building in Opelousas, La.

League. Manager Edmunds has signed his players and will open the season on April 24, at which time the season will begin in earnest.

The Elks have recently purchased from F. M. Welch, at a cost of \$5,000, the building at the corner of Main and Bellevue Streets, known as the City Hotel. The local Elks have a membership at present of eighty.

Regarding the soil of St. Landry Parish, Prof. Knapp, Special Agent of the United States Agricultural Department, has this to say: "The soil in general may be classed as rich clay loam; some possess more clay, and some verge towards sandy loam, but they are all considered the

best in the State. Like all of that country in southwestern Louisiana known as the "Land of Evangeline," beautiful Opelousas in climate is unsurpassed anywhere for either health or comfort.

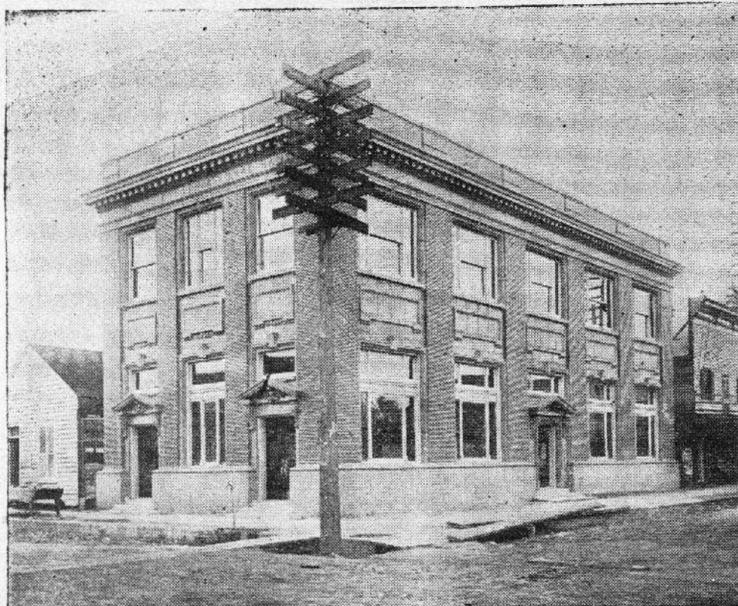
The activity of the real estate market in Opelousas during the past year has been remarkable. Deals to the amount of \$500,000 have taken place in that length of time. Within the past week Messrs. L. E. Little, J. G. Lawler and V. H. Sabille purchased 110 acres of desirable land in and adjoining the city and have secured a right of way connecting all three railroads entering Opelousas, and it

will have a daily capacity of 30,000 feet.

The most striking evidence of the rapid growth of Opelousas may be shown by the large increase in population during the past six years. With a population of 2,900 in 1900 the city now claims a population of 5,000.

A site for the depot of the Colorado Southern has recently been decided upon by the officials of the road. The building will be erected at the corner of Union and Chaney Streets and it is believed that the depot will cost in the neighborhood of \$10,000.

W. F. BLACK.



New Opelousas National Bank Building, Opelousas, La.



Academy of The Immaculate Conception, Opelousas, La.