

L. Scott Moore (July 14, 2008 - February 2, 2009)

Scott Moore, an Assistant City Manager for the City of Wichita since June 2005, was named Wichita's interim City Manager on July 8, 2008. Mayor Carl Brewer and the Wichita City Council announced Moore's appointment following a late afternoon City Council meeting.

Brewer said though the City's search continues for a City Manager, Moore brings a wealth of city government knowledge and broad experience as a public administrator.

"Scott's in-house," Brewer said. "He's well-rounded. He has demonstrated that he can build strong relationships with staff. He works diligently with Council members. His skills will serve us well as we search for a City Manager."

Moore will oversee 3,100 employees, a \$500 million operating budget and a \$2 billion Capital Improvement Budget. The city's ongoing budget process concludes on Aug. 12 when the City Council, by state law, must adopt the 2009 budget.

"I'm excited and eager to work with staff to advance the vision of the City Council," Moore, 37, said. "This appointment represents a powerful opportunity to grow professionally and to help this city further prosper." Moore's annual salary is \$108,000. The Council is expected to approve his contract as interim City Manager at its meeting next Tuesday. Moore's appointment comes a day after City officials learned that Pat Salerno rejected the job as Wichita's City Manager. Salerno had accepted the top administrator post in early June and was scheduled to begin work on Monday.

Moore was the top administrator for the City of Ellsworth from June 1997 to June 2005 when he became Wichita's Assistant City Manager of Operations. Cathy Holdeman is the Assistant City Manager of Administration.

Moore is a native of Bastrop, Texas. He attended college at Southwest Texas State (known now as Texas State), where he earned a business administration degree in 1994. He played wide receiver for the Division I Bobcats. In May 1999, Moore earned a master's degree in public administration from Wichita State University while serving as the top administrator for Ellsworth. Moore's achievements in Ellsworth include uncovering a high-profile embezzlement case, negotiating an \$800,000 legal agreement with the Kansas Department of Transportation and securing future financial commitments to assist the city-owned visitor center.

His honors include being named Ellsworth's Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year in 2003. In 1999, Gov. Bill Graves presented him with a certificate of recognition for becoming Kansas' first African-American city administrator. He also coached middle school basketball in Ellsworth. In 2007, the Wichita Business Journal selected him as member of its coveted "40 Under 40" honorees. Moore currently sits on the board of the Boy's & Girl's Club of South Central, Kansas.

Before Ellsworth, Moore worked four years as a budget analyst for the City of Austin, Texas, which is near his hometown. He is married to Tammy, a native Lyons; they have two daughters.

Dr. H. Ed Flentje (January 2, 2008 - July 11, 2008)

Mayor Carl Brewer and the Wichita City Council appointed Dr. H. Edward Flentje interim City Manager on December 18, following the November 28, 2007 resignation of former City Manager George Kolb who served as City Manager since July 26, 2004. Flentje's term as interim was scheduled to run from January 2 to July 11, 2008.

Flentje is the director of the Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs at Wichita State University and a professor of public administration. He has been on the public administration faculty since 1979 and has been the school's director since 1999.

Born and raised in Harper County, Flentje received an undergraduate degree from Emporia State University and a doctoral degree in political science from the University of Kansas. He has extensive experience in public management and public policy development. While on leave from the University (1986-88), he served as chair of the transition team for Governor-Elect Mike Hayden and as Secretary of the Kansas Department of Administration in Governor Hayden's administration. He also served as director of the Kansas Division of State Planning and Research in the administration of Governor Robert F. Bennett (1975-79) and as legislative assistant to former U.S. Senator James B. Pearson of Kansas (1968-69). He earlier held administrative posts with the Illinois Board of Higher Education and Southern Illinois University (1969-75).

George Kolb (May 2004 - January 2, 2008)

In May 2004, George R. Kolb was appointed City Manager of Wichita, Kansas. Kolb oversaw a workforce of 3,200 members and a budget of more than \$500 million for a community whose population exceeds 358,000.

For the past 30 years, Kolb has been involved with the operations of municipal governments in Georgia, Michigan, Virginia, and now Kansas. During this time, he has held management positions in various capacities from directing a major utilities operation in Virginia to serving in city management positions overseeing all operations of municipal governments. Kolb's development and implementation of unique and invaluable skills has facilitated improvements for organizations to focus on excellence in municipal service delivery and customer service in a public sector environment.

Kolb has obtained the International City/County Management (ICMA) Credentialed Manager designation. He was one of the first local government management professionals worldwide to be credentialed through the ICMA Voluntary Credentialing Program.

Prior to joining the City of Wichita, Kolb served various communities in Georgia, Virginia and Michigan. He is a 1996 graduate of the Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program. Kolb received his Masters of Public Administration from the University of Michigan and his undergraduate degree in business administration from Eastern Michigan University.

In addition to serving on the NFBPA Board of Directors, he was a member of the Wichita Art Museum Board of Directors and the Greater Wichita Economic Development Council.

Cathy Holdeman (2004)

Cathy Holdeman, Assistant City Manager, took over as interim City Manager when Chris Cherches retired December 31, 2003.

After a permanent replacement was hired, Cathy returned to her previous job as Assistant City Manager.

Chris Cherches (1985 - 2003)

Born: September 14, 1932 | Died: August 26, 2004

The following is a timeline of accomplishments achieved by former City Manager Chris Cherches during his service to the Wichita community.

- October 7, 1985 - Chris Cherches first day at City Hall.
- 1986 - Long range planning task force developed and WI/SE economic development partnership is established.
- 1988 - Redevelopment program for 21st Street corridor begins and includes several projects for improvements such as street improvements, a bank at 21st & Grove, senior center, Piatt Manor Housing Project and a new Police sub-station and library.
- 1989 - K-96 (previously known as the Northeast Expressway) construction begins
- Spring 1990 - Contamination was discovered in the downtown area that posed risk to public health and environment.
- Fall 1990 - Over 500 people attend a town hall meeting to hear the problem known as the Gilbert & Mosley site. At this event, the City Manager unveils a possible solution through a 5-point program that included the development a unique tax-increment financing district to avoid SuperFund intervention. Today the Gilbert & Mosley Project is considered to be one of the most innovative public-private partnerships ever created to address a complex environmental problem of groundwater contamination. The City of Wichita received the prestigious Ford Foundation's Innovations in State and Local Government Award from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government for its forward-thinking leadership and its will to create revolutionary practices to accomplish community goals.
- 1991 - Kellogg construction begins between K-42 & Kellogg
- 1991 - Old Town development (a public-private partnership) begins and includes street improvements to Mosley and Rock Island from Douglas to First Street. Public funding was set up through a tax increment district (only the second one in the State of Kansas). In addition, an innovative parking district was established that created free public parking. The first phase included the construction of five parking lots.
- 1992 - Kellogg "flyover" completed downtown; begins between Sycamore & Emporia Streets
- 1993 - Received "All America City" Award for the second time
- 1993 - The Neighborhood Initiative was established to address crime and involve neighborhoods in residential issues. Community Policing, an award winning concept, was developed from this forwardthinking planning.
- August 1993 - Phase two of Old Town began and included converting a former warehouse into the Farm & Art Market and Plaza area, additional street and parking improvements. Incremental development to Old Town continued through the 90s that includes an area of about 33 acres extending from Douglas on the south to Second Street on the north and from Washington on the east to the elevated railroad tracks on the west.
- 1993 - Kellogg construction between K-42 & Kellogg completed
- 1993 - K-96 completed (note that a portion of the 1-cent sales tax was used for this highway)
- Spring 1994 - Kellogg construction begins between Kellogg & Dugan (west Kellogg)
- July 1994 - State Office Building opens
- Spring 1996 - Hyatt construction begins
- Fall 1996 - Kellogg & Dugan completed
- September 1996 - Ice Sports Wichita opens, complete with the only Olympic-sized skating rink in the Midwest.
- April 1997 - City of Wichita buys the Eaton Block at a Sheriff's Auction
- Spring 1997 - Kellogg & Oliver construction begins
- September 1997 - Hyatt Regency Wichita opens
- November 17, 1997 - Cessna Training Center opens on 21st Street (President Bill Clinton attends the event)

- 1998 - Hotel at Old Town completed where City and private developers salvaged the historic Keen Kutter building and converted it into a first-class hotel.
- 1999 - Received "All America City " Award for the third time
- September 21, 1999 - Transit Operations Center Opens
- April 1, 2000 - Exploration Place Opens
- 2000 - Kellogg & Oliver construction completed
- December 31, 2000 - Eaton Place Redevelopment Completed
- May 2000 - Establishment of District Advisory Board to promote citizen participation in city government.
- September 29, 2001 - Neighborhood City Halls Opened (all four opened the same time)
- October 2001 - Douglas Streetscape Project Completed
- February 5, 2002 - signed a development agreement for a public-private partnership to expand Old Town to the north by 7 acres. This \$25 million dollar project includes a 500-car parking garage and anchors the Old Town Warren Theatre and City Arts.
- February 28, 2002 - AirTran Airways arrive at Mid-Continent, bringing affordable airfare to Wichita
- March 2002 - Improvements to Lawrence Dumont Stadium completed
- June 2002 - Kellogg & Tyler/Maize Road begins (scheduled completion November 2004)
- September 10, 2002 - signed a development agreement for a public-private partnership to develop 27 acres of Wichita's downtown. This 100 million dollar project, called WaterWalk features water amenities in a mixed-use development. Tenants are expected to begin moving into the development in 2007.
- October 16, 2002 - Water Center Officially opens
- January 2003 - Kellogg & Woodlawn construction begins (scheduled completion in November 2005)
- November 7, 2003 - City Manager Chris Cherches resigns. His last day was Dec. 31, 2003.

Eugene H. Denton (July 7, 1976 - April 16, 1985)

Born: November 13, 1933 | Died: May 14, 2011

Gene Denton began his career as assistant to the city manager in Fort Worth, Texas in 1960.

He then served as the assistant city manager of Dallas prior to becoming the city manager of Wichita, Kansas in 1976.

In 1985, Gene became the county administrator of Johnson County, Kansas and continued in that position until his retirement in late 1998.

Since then, Gene served as a consultant. He worked for the city of Colorado Springs to review their city charter and gave a presentation on city management at a conference in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

Other Interesting Facts

- He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Missouri and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Kansas.
- He was also a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Cologne in Germany, a Life Member of the International City/County Management Association, and a member of Phi Beta Kappa.
- He proudly served in the United States Army as an Artillery Officer in Korea.

Robert G. Finch (April 27, 1976 - July 7, 1976) (April 16, 1985 - October 7, 1985)

Born: June 28, 1928 | Died: January 3, 2002 | Interred: Resthaven Gardens of Memory

Mr. Robert G. Finch was employed as City Clerk (1963-1965) and later became deputy city manager until his retirement.

He was interim city manager two different times when Ralph Wulz retired in 1976 and when Gene Denton resigned in 1985.

Other Interesting Facts

- Served in World War II as a colonel in the US Army.
- Served in the Army National Guard reserve.

Ralph Wulz (September 1, 1968 - April 30, 1976)

Born: December 3, 1918 | Died: August 2, 1988

Mr. Ralph Wulz became the new city manager after Russell E. McClure retired. Mr. Wulz had already been a city employee, having been Director of Finance and Director of Public Works. He retired as City Manager in 1976.

Other Interesting Facts

- Ralph Wulz Riverside Tennis Center is named after him.

Frank Harold Backstrom (March 12, 1956 - March 27, 1962)

Born: April 24, 1902 | Died: June 7, 1990

Mr. Frank H. Backstrom took the reins of city manager March 12, 1956. Prior to becoming city manager of Wichita, he had served as Tacoma, Washington's first city manager since 1953.

As Wichita city manager, he earned a salary of \$20,500. When he resigned to assume the city manager position in Toledo, Ohio, his salary went up to \$25,000.

He would remain city manager of Toledo until his retirement in 1970 and served several years as executive director of the Masonic Auditorium in Toledo.

Other Interesting Facts

- In 1904, The Backstrom family moved to Kansas City, Missouri, where he spent the rest of his childhood.
- Mr. Backstrom graduated from University of Michigan with a literary degree (1924) and law degree (1926). He was admitted to the Missouri Bar and became a member of the law firm of Swearinger, Olsen, and Backstrom in Kansas City.
- Mr. Backstrom entered politics when he resided in Kansas City. He failed in his bid for the Republican candidate seat for the 9th District Missouri General Assembly seat (1932). Later he won the Kansas City 4th District Councilman race (1934) and served on the Kansas City Council until 1951 when he chose not to run again.
- Mr. Backstrom became Assistant City Manager of Kansas City in 1952.

Emory Lee Cox (November 15, 1955 - November 22, 1955)

Born: May 13, 1905 | Died: July 1991

Mr. Emory L. Cox was employed as Director of Parks when he was asked to step in as interim city manager for one week when the current city manager, Eugene N. Smith, was fired and then reappointed.

Before his brief stint as city manager, Mr. Cox had succeeded Alfred MacDonald as Director of Parks in January 1949. He would remain in that position until December 31, 1971, when he retired at the age of 66. He had served 30 years with the Parks department, including 23 as director. His successor was H. Jay Setter, deputy director of aviation.

Mr. Cox later moved to Florida where he would reside until his death in 1991.

Other Interesting Facts

- Emory L. Cox graduated from Emporia High School in 1924. His senior yearbook profile stated:
- Emory hailed from Hartford. He was the mainstay of the football team there for three years. When he arrived here he did wonders for the high school team. Cox possesses wonderful side-burns, at least the girls say so. Football '23.

Eugene N. Smith (November 13, 1952 - November 15, 1955) (November 22, 1955 - March 12, 1956)

Born: February 3, 1895 | Died: December 7, 1976 | Interred: Wichita Park Cemetery

E.N. Smith's death Tuesday at age 81 ended 15 years of quiet retirement for the man who served Wichita for 27 years in a variety of government positions, including city manager. But his tenure as Wichita's 10th and 12th city manager was far from quiet.

The story of his fall from and return to office in November 1955 is of more import to the city than most people knew when it happened. The '50s were stormy times for city government here. City managers went through office as through revolving doors. But in the midst of one of those storms, Smith stood up for principle - the city manager's authority over his staff. He lost his job because of that stand. But he also set a precedent for managers to come.

He went to work for the city as building inspector in 1934 and became director of services in 1945. He was appointed city manager in 1952 as a result of one of those recurrent storms. Manager Monty Jones was suddenly fired by the city commission. While Commissioners L.A. Donnell (father of present Mayor James Donnell) and William Salome repeatedly asked for reasons for the firing, the majority of the commissioners - Walt Keeler, Floyd Amsden and Mayor Russell Jump refused to give them, and outvoted the two.

Such was the tenor of the commission; City manager was not a job that guaranteed long tenure. Smith's trial by fire - or firing - came three years later as the result of his controversial efforts to reorganize the police department.

At the Nov. 8, 1955, commission meeting, Police Chief R.L. Price bypassed the manager and took his case to the commissioners. Price publicly blasted Commissioner A.E. Howse, saying Howse had brainwashed Smith on the need for reorganizing the department. He also said that he no longer took departmental problems to Smith, but to Commissioner James Gardner. Strong personalities and complex issues were involved. But regardless of the pros and cons of the issue, Smith faced one hard fact - Price had bypassed his boss, making Smith a city manager who no longer had authority over his employee.

After that stormy meeting, Price left town for a Kansas Peace Officers meeting in Topeka. Smith phoned him and arranged for a meeting in his office upon Price's return. "Why don't you fire me over the phone or by telegram?" Price said. "I don't do business that way," Smith replied.

Following the next commission meeting, Smith told the commissioners he planned to fire Price. A majority of the commission objected to that move, but Smith said he had to fire Price for bypassing him. He told them retention of the chief after the attack on Howse and himself would be intolerable. He also said the action was his legal right.

Suddenly, a special commission meeting was called for 9 that night. Split again, the commission fired Smith before he could fire Price. Mayor Claude DeVorss, Gardner and E.E. Baird voted to fire Smith. Howse was opposed. H.D. Lester abstained from voting. The next day, Smith arrived at his office at 9 a.m. and began packing. To reporters, he said, "After all the talk of the commission about separating the policy-making powers and the administration, I thought I was clearly in my proper authority. "But now it seems like they want to be the administration too. "If I had it to do all over again, I'd do it the same way."

Contacted in Topeka, Price said, "I feel sorry for E.N. Smith, but then I feel sorry for anyone who wouldn't take advice or see the light." Then, one week later, the commission rehired Smith in what DeVorss called an effort to gain harmony and stability.

Interim City Manager Emory Cox resigned from the shortest tenure in that office, and Smith's first assignment from the commission was to find his own replacement. He also had to promise he would not fire Chief Price. And so it was over as suddenly as it had begun. But a principle had been stated, acted upon and fought out in public. Smith's replacement - in 1956 - was Frank Backstrom.

Smith became director of public works until his retirement in 1961. Since then a succession of strong city managers have administered the city's affairs. More than once, a manager has fired employees the commission did not want fired. And managers have steadfastly refused to fire employees the commission wanted out. Those battles have not been fought in public as was Smith's. They've been in executive session, where more than once a manager has put his job on the line. The commission has the right to fire the manager. But only the manager has the right to fire his employees.

As present City Manager Gene Denton put it, "The governing body sets policy; but the manager is in charge of personnel. It's one of the most basic principles of the commission-manager form of government. It's what makes it work. "Sometimes," Denton added, "a manager has to force his own firing to protect that vital principle." E.N. Smith did just that. His 27 years of public service are his monument. But it is crowned by that day in 1955 when he stood his ground and lost his job for a principle.

Survivors include his widow, Ruth A., at home, 660 S. Roosevelt; a daughter, Mrs. Shirley Duncan, Tucson, and a half-brother, Lynwood P. Thompson, Stratford, Conn. Lahey's Crest Hill Mortuary has charge of arrangements.

Article courtesy of Staff Writer Jon Roe, Wichita Eagle-Beacon, December 9, 1976

Monty P. Jones (March 1, 1948 - November 13, 1952)

Monty P. Jones became city manager March 1, 1948 after Russell E. McClure resigned to accept the city manager position in Dayton, Ohio.

Prior to becoming city manager, Mr. Jones had been employed as finance director for the City of Wichita since February 1, 1943.

On November 13, 1952, Mr. Jones was fired by the city commission by a 3 to 2 vote.

Russell E. McClure (July 28, 1941 - March 1, 1948) (May 1, 1962 - September 1, 1968)

Born: August 4, 1906 | Died: May 10, 1974

Russell E. McClure was hired as city manager on July 28, 1941, after his predecessor Donald Gordon resigned after serving only two months as city manager.

Mr. McClure was a native-born Wichitan who had been born on the 12th block of old South Lawrence Road (now Broadway) to Mr. and Mrs. E.C. McClure. In January 1929, he married Joyce Thomas of Council Grove, Kansas. Their union produced two children, Tom and Joyce.

Russell McClure, who retired from city government on February 4, 1972, first served as Wichita city manager from 1941-48, after a 10-year stint as first executive secretary of the Wichita Independent Businessmen's Association.

He was city manager in Dayton, Ohio for four years and of Corpus Christi, Texas, for five years, following his first term in Wichita. While in Corpus Christi, he served as president (1955-56) of the International City Management Association.

McClure served from July 1958 to July 1960 as general manager of the Khuzestan Development Service in Iran before returning to Wichita to become first executive vice president of Greater Downtown Wichita Inc. He worked through that organization for the revitalization of the downtown business district. He saw some of those plans completed during his second term as city manager, from 1962-68, including construction of Century II and the new Wichita Public Library.

In September 1968, McClure stepped down from his post to become deputy city manager for urban affairs.

In that capacity, he oversaw development of Wichita's Model Cities Program, a \$4 million federal program to improve health, housing, education, employment and social services in designated model neighborhoods in the center city.

McClure coordinated activities of the Local Housing Authority which provided housing for low-income families, and the Human Resource Development office, which dealt with community programs involving housing, employment, welfare and related areas.

He was also instrumental in organizing a regional Council of Governments and in helping set up a series of urban policy seminars for business and government leaders.

While city manager, he instituted for Wichita city employees a personnel merit system, a retirement program, employees' council and grievance procedures.

In 1969, he received the Clarence E. Ridley In-Service Training Award from the International City Management Association in recognition for his activities in the field of personnel training. He died in 1974 after a long illness and was cremated.

Other Interesting Facts

- He was part of Wichita High School's last graduating class (1923).
- He had served the city of Wichita for 16 years.

Donald Gordon (May 14, 1941 - July 28, 1941)

Born: February 18, 1892 | Died: March 26, 1962 | Interred: Wichita Park Cemetery and Mausoleum

Moved from Oklahoma City to Wichita to become City Manager. Resigned due to controversy.

David Alfred MacDonald (April 10, 1939 - May 14, 1941)

Born: October 17, 1891 | Died: February 10, 1949 | Interred: Old Mission Mausoleum

Alfred MacDonald left his position as Director of Parks on April 10, 1939 to take over the city manager position after Bert C. Wells retired.

Mr. MacDonald had been hired by former City Manager L.W. Clapp around 1921 as Director of Parks for the Wichita Board of Park Commissioners. When he resigned his city manager position, he returned to his former position as Director of Parks and remained until his retirement on January 1, 1949. His successor for the Director of Parks would be Emory L. Cox, who later became interim city manager for one week in November 1955.

Other Interesting Facts

- Mr. MacDonald declined a proposal made by City Commissioner W.C. Salome, Jr. that the Wichita municipal airport be renamed after him (January 20, 1949)
- He died about a month later after his retirement as Director of Parks.
- The old Wichita Country Club golf course at 840 N. Yale was renamed Alfred MacDonald Golf Course after it was acquired by the Board of Park Commissioners in 1949.

Bert C. Wells (August 1, 1927 - April 10, 1939)

Born: July 19, 1880 | Died: September 2, 1948 | Interred: Maple Grove Cemetery

Mr. B.C. Wells, took office immediately upon Mr. Elliott's resignation, on August 1, 1927. He was 47 years old. He was educated at Friends University in Wichita and at Haverford College, receiving the A.B. degree from both institutions. He had been a resident of Wichita since the old mayor-council and commission days when he served the city as city engineer from 1907 until 1917, with the exception of a period of ten years when he served as city manager of El Dorado, Kansas from 1917-1927. He was a member of the Friends (Quaker) Church; the International City Managers Association which he served as first vice-president and chairman or member of several important committees; the American Society of Civil Engineers; the Kansas Engineers Society; Public Health Nursing Association; the Board of Friends University of which he was vice-president; and until he assumed the city managership of Wichita, Kiwanis.

Mr. Wells was employed at a salary of \$8,000, a salary which was reduced by state statute in 1933 to \$6,000.

Mr. Wells seemed to have every quality necessary for a successful city administrator if his long tenure and public popularity were indicative of anything. The Atchison Globe in nominating him for governor in 1938 said that he is a "practical, sensible, wholesome administrator of public affairs. He has poise and congeniality and looks forward; yet his feet never leave the ground. He has only one deficiency. He doesn't know how to make a speech. But if Kansas wants a governor who knows how to economize without being stingy, who knows how to handle men and who knows what a dollar is worth, B.C. Wells is the man to consider."

This description hardly did Mr. Wells justice. He was a truly fine gentleman. He was quiet, well-trained and above all, extremely honest and conscientious. Straight-forward and fair in all his dealings, Mr. Wells had built up a loyalty among his department heads and employees that was remarkable. They were unanimous in their praise of his contribution to the advancement of Wichita. From taxi driver to university president nothing but commendation was heard regarding this man. The worse enemies of manager government admitted that he was honest and that he made a good city manager. One of the eldest residents in the community, a former official in commission days and still a supporter of commission government went as far as to say that the success of city manager government in Wichita could be laid directly to Mr. Wells. "It's Wells and Wells alone." One of his department heads remarked that Mr. Wells had "proved to be a marvelous balance wheel." Another said, "Mr. Wells has made a wrong decision perhaps, but I never knew him to." Another, "He doesn't permit rifts and dissatisfaction to continue if they occur." A commissioner said, "We have a fine departmental organization (look at fire and police) and it can be laid to Wells' feet and Wells' alone. He did it. He should get twice the salary he does." A university president reported that Wichita had one of the best governments in the United States because of men like Wells and Wilson. There can be little doubt of the high regard and esteem that Wichitans held for their city manager.

In spite of the high praise from all quarters regarding himself and his administration, Mr. Wells remained entirely in the background in his modest, retiring way. He had been an inconspicuous administrator. In an effort to show its appreciation, the commission in 1935 voluntarily gave Mr. Wells a ninety-day vacation on full pay of which he took only thirty days. He was honored in 1933 by an invitation from the Oberlander Trust to be one of two city managers in the United States to visit Germany and study municipal government there at the expense of the trust. He did not accept although Mr. Wilson, chief of police, made the trip.

In 1936, Mr. Wells announced that he would not be a candidate for reappointment. "I feel that my work here is completed. I took office when the fire department was badly disorganized and torn with internal strife. The apparatus was old and inadequate. During my term three new fire stations have been built and the men in the department are second to none and all are working in harmony. The police department was poorly housed all over the city hall and was far from ideal in personnel, morale, and equipment. Now the comment is quite common, here and abroad, that Wichita has one of the best police departments in the United States. In engineering, we have built two canal bridges, three bridges across the Arkansas River and four across the Little Arkansas River. Also a sewage disposal plant has been built. The channel of the Arkansas River has been straightened and widened. A fine baseball stadium has been built and a modern milk ordinance put into effect."

This modest recital of accomplishments didn't begin to touch on the progress made under Mr. Wells' guidance. Nevertheless, his resignation immediately became Wichita's concern. Some 300 petitions from civic clubs and groups urged him to reconsider. Newspapers noted how city affairs had been put on a strictly business basis in strong articles supporting Mr. Wells. San Diego, California offered him the managership at \$15,000, which he promptly turned down and finally withdrew his resignation. The commission was all for him and voted him the ninety-day vacation mentioned above. Mr. Wells' own statement was that "I'd rather leave in a blaze of glory than to peter out since I felt I had contributed about all I could." Apparently the citizens of Wichita did not agree with his conclusions.

Mr. Wells' contempt for politics was evident on all occasions where this question arose. The lack of it can be best shown by the conduct of the police and fire departments in recruiting. These departments were now free from politics as were all city departments. This was a far cry from the situation as it existed in commission days.

His relations with the press had always been cordial but reserved and needless to say, strained, during the months of the Beacon attacks on the city administration. However, those relations had returned to normal and Mr. Wells' door was always open to the press or anyone else who had business with him.

He had a strictly professional viewpoint. A table outside his office held recent copies of municipal periodicals. His leadership in professional organizations has been previously noted. He urged his department heads to attend professional meetings.

Mr. Wells had no public relations department. His interest had been to dramatize the progress of the city not through elaborate newspaper articles, speeches or city functions, but rather through a quiet but aggressive plan of giving maximum service to the citizens of Wichita at a minimum of expense. What his department heads did to acquaint the citizens of the service their department rendered, he considered the problem of the department head. As a result the police department had been especially active in this regard. They had prepared many exhibits relating to traffic, marihuana, and crime detection, which had been viewed by thousands of city visitors.

Mr. Wells rarely made a speech and to our knowledge had never been heard to speak upon controversial city policies publicly. He usually issued an annual report having missed three years in the last ten. Mr. Clarence E. Ridley's comment on a Wichita was pertinent. "Wichita is noted for its good municipal reports, but this issue easily eclipses all former ones. It has pretty nearly everything a good report should have. The paper, type, and entire make-up are perfect, and with a few more charts the illustrative material also would have reached the coveted goal. Two features deserve special praise and usually neglected in most cities.

1. Emphasis on significant statements.
2. Table of comparative rates for offenses known to police."

Those were Mr. Ridley's comments in regard to the report for the year 1931.

Mr. Wells made no special effort to maintain good public relations other than through the simple medium of courtesy and friendliness and demanding that municipal employee's employ these tactics at all times. The most casual complaint by the collaborator to the manager's secretary about the discourtesy of two health department employees was brought to the attention of the city manager and led immediately to a personal reprimand. "We can't have that in the city hall," he said of the matter later.

He withdrew from Kiwanis in order not to be liable for any possible criticism of partiality or narrow interests.

His public relations policy had been one of "efficient motion" rather than one of "publicity."

Justifiable criticism or any at all for that matter had been kept to a minimum. The managing editor of the Beacon said, "Wells is honest but has too little fire and is too conservative...a tight old Scotchman." In the same breath he pointed out that Chief Wilson was a nephew of city manager Wells, a story begun by the Beacon in 1932 during its attacks and having absolutely no basis. Mr. Wells never heard of Wilson until he was recommended by August Vollmer. Commissioner Israel, while he said that Wells is a fine, honest and efficient man and right nine out of ten times, felt that he was wrong that other time. "For years here, people have had so much confidence in Wells that the commission never took trouble to discuss matters. I don't think that's what the commission is for." Perhaps those men were right, but in the light of the other evidence, it was entirely logical to believe that their viewpoints had been colored by other factors. At all events the criticism was very minor and that of a small minority.

One is of the opinion that, while Mr. Wells was an extremely practical man, he had a broader view of community needs than had some members of his commission. For instance a point of dissension of late had been the operation of a market through the cooperation of truckers and nearby tradespeople. Mr. Wells was strongly of the opinion that such a plan would be of distinct benefit to the community and its citizens while Commissioner Crawford, a grocer, supported by Israel and Corn felt that this was unfair to the grocery men of the city. Many people were of the opinion that Commissioner Crawford should withdraw from a discussion and vote on this question since he was economically interested in the outcome.

Undoubtedly, the manager was an excellent judge of men. Death seemed to be the greatest cause for separation from the service at the present time, particularly in the administrative positions. The department head who had not held office for at least ten years was the exception.

Mr. Wells' excellent administration had been accomplished in spite of several major handicaps two of which stood out and a third that was proving to be a growing menace to good government.

The first was the major economic depression which his administration weathered in excellent shape. Employees cooperated by accepting salary cuts and Mr. Wells said he had not heard a single dissenting vote in this regard. Expenditures were cut to a minimum without hampering or impairing services through cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce tax committee. This committee sought to cut taxes of the city, county and Board of Education. Good planning and farsightedness prevented Wichita from undergoing the hardships through which many other American cities passed in these difficult times.

The second major battle of the administration was one with the publishers of the Beacon in 1932 and 1933. This has been related in Chapter III, page 34 (City Manager Government in Wichita, Kansas), but needless to say that the Wells' administration was completely exonerated of any of the charges hurled at it in the bitter denunciation of the Beacon. Public support was even forthcoming as the citizens of Wichita arose in their approval of their city government.

The third obstacle to good government in Wichita had arisen within the past year, namely the attitude on the part of Commissioners Crawford and Israel towards the commission's relationship with the administration. Mr. Wells had become very disgusted over the existing situation which is discussed at length in Chapter V, page 74 (City Manager Government in Wichita, Kansas). He felt that the present commission was the poorest in years and his resignation could be expected at any time according to his statement.

(Bert C. Wells was the current manager at the time the City Manager Government in Wichita, Kansas was written - he retired right before the book was published.)

Other Interesting Facts

- He was of Quaker heritage and came to Sedgwick County as a youth with his parents in the late 1890s.
- After graduating from Friends University, he received a scholarship to attend Haverford College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he graduated in 1904.
- Married the former Sara Shoemaker at Indianapolis, August 7, 1904.
- He taught at Oakwood School in New York and Corinth Academy in Virginia before returning to Wichita where he taught school at Wichita for two years.
- He quit teaching and worked as City Engineer for Wichita (1909-1918).
- He later served as city manager of El Dorado until 1921 and City Manager of Atchison (1921-1927) before returning to Wichita to become City Manager.
- In 1939, he retired as Wichita city manager and bought a farm eight miles east of Wichita.
- On January 23, 1956, the Wichita Board of Education approved drawings and specifications presented by Robert S. Mayberry, architect, for a new elementary school to be constructed at 3601 S. Pattie. The new building was needed as new houses were rapidly being built in the area south of Wilson School. Construction began on February 16, 1956, and the building was completed on September 18, 1956. The Board of Education chose to name the new building Bert C. Wells Elementary School.

Earl Conarroe Elliott (June 1, 1921 - August 1, 1927)

Born: June 6, 1878 | Died: June 6, 1949

Mr. Clapp's successor, Mr. E.C. Elliott, was appointed chiefly to take care of the water works which was expected to be taken over by the city, but this did not materialize. He was employed at a salary of \$6,000. He held office from June 1921 to August 1927. He was a native of Indiana and a graduate of DePauw University. More criticism has been levied against Mr. Elliott than any other city manager. His strongest supporters were forced to admit that he was not tactful or diplomatic. One of his department heads described him as "brilliant, cold-blooded, and untactful." Mr. Powell, one of the commissioners, noted that he was a "good, capable fellow who got good results but who was not well liked because of his lack of tact. Commissioner Dehner didn't like him because he (Elliott) was honest." Another department head reported that Elliott was a good city manager but that he had the ability to antagonize people. "He made no effort to be tactful to service club committees, Chamber of Commerce committees, etcetera." One of the police matrons reported that Elliott "tried to run the police department too much which didn't work too well."

While Mr. Elliott accomplished a great deal as city manager, he was handicapped by his terseness and almost hostile manner. The director of finance reported that when Mr. Elliott appointed him he said, "The job is open. You have ten days to decide, but don't bother me." He was a fighter and did not hesitate to tell the commission what he thought and would fight for his stand.

His resignation after six eventful years was the climax of a number of crises. His administration had hardly begun when one of the newly elected commissioners who was a direct representative of organized labor was forced to resign because he was an employee of the Missouri Pacific Railway Company, a company which held a city franchise with the result that none of its employees could serve as a city commissioner without violating a state statute. Mr. Elliott in an official statement denied having anything to do with the dispute and said that the matter rested entirely in the hands of the commissioners. Nevertheless, there was considerable feeling over the controversy and the city manager lost as a result.

Furthermore, the police and fire departments were undergoing considerable criticism which was somewhat justifiable. The fire chief was not considered a good disciplinarian and a serious factional fight developed within the department with the assistant chief involved as one of the leaders. An investigation resulted, the assistant was dismissed and the chief picked out his new successor. The interference in the police department by Commissioner Dehner has been related before in this report and needless to say the affair was not a savory one. Shortly after city manager Wells came into office, Dehner was forced to resign.

Mr. Elliott reported that the biggest fight of his term was over a Ku Klux Klan convention which he denied the use of Wichita streets for a parade.

However, the most immediate cause of his resignation was the failure of the commission to ratify or approve his estimate of the cost of completing a drainage canal project. This made it impossible for the contractors to draw their pay and therefore let the whole project come to a standstill.

It had been known for some time that he could not possibly work in harmony with Commissioners Dehner, Nighswonger and Lawrence who had evidenced a distinct hostility toward his policies. In his letter of resignation of May 10, 1927, to Mayor Coombs he said, "Knowing that the opinion exists in the city commission that a change of managers would be desirable and feeling that while this situation exists municipal activities are hampered to the detriment of the city, I herewith hand my resignation which I ask you to consider effective on August 1, 1927."

Despite the fact that Mr. Elliott had proved to be the only city manager who had resigned under pressure, many of his critics were forced to admit that he was an excellent city manager. He was a man of strong personal convictions, aggressive and forceful but lacked the seemingly necessary quality of getting along with the public.

He was a strong supporter of city manager government and believed that its success depended largely on the legislative body. He pointed out in an interview in August 1938, that under city manager

government, work was done more rapidly and better; that there was one responsible person whose services could be acquired at less expense than five city commissioners. He did not believe in civil service for municipalities as it "makes it too hard to get rid of people." He felt that his hardest job was the enforcement of the prohibition law but that the city had made great advancement under city manager government.

National recognition came to Mr. Elliott in 1923, when he was elected president of the International City Managers Association. He later became a high official in the California Water Service Company.

Some accomplishments of his term as city manager included:

1. The passage of a milk inspection ordinance in 1921 which provided for a rigid inspection of dairies, established certain standards of milk and offered a very great safeguard to the public.
2. Reduction in the tax levy from 9.70 in 1921 to 8.5 in 1926 in the face of rapidly expanding services which the city undertook. This levy was the lowest of any first class city in the state. This reduction of taxes was considered one of Mr. Elliott's greatest contributions while city manager.
3. Removal in 1922 of garbage collection from twenty-four independent contractors and placing it in the hands of one contractor.
4. The initiation of an extensive flood prevention program in 1924.
5. The erection of thirteen bridges over the Arkansas and Little Arkansas Rivers.
6. The establishment of a municipal university of Wichita in 1926.

Other accomplishments of this administration are too numerous to mention here.

Above text from City Manager Government in Wichita, Kansas.

Other Interesting Facts

- Prior to becoming City Manager, he was Vice-President of the Wichita Water Company.

Lewis William Clapp (October 3, 1919 - June 1, 1921)

Born: Sept 23, 1858 | Died: Dec 15, 1934 | Interred: Highland Cemetery

L.W. Clapp was another temporary appointed at \$5,000 per annum, who held office for two years from 1919 until 1921. His resignation from the mayoralty and the commission in order to assume the city managership was a violation of the principles of city manager government as set down by the National Municipal League in their model charter. Apparently the intended lack of permanency to this appointment excused it in the minds of the commissioners. Another reason was undoubtedly the growing interest in park development in Wichita; a movement of which Mr. Clapp was the leader. Mr. Clapp resigned from the city managership as soon as his administration had pushed a bill through the legislature permitting the establishment of a park commission. He became president of this board, a position he held until his death in 1934.

Mr. Clapp was a lawyer and a banker and was president of the First Trust Company. Educated at the University of Iowa, he had lived in Wichita since 1886. His civic and professional affiliations were numerous and included the Garden Club, Flying Club, Rotary, Bar Association, the Art Association and the Community Chest.

In October 1934, five hundred citizens gathered at a dinner in his honor at which they paid tribute to his industry and skill in beautifying and building Wichita. The Director of Parks suggested naming the municipal airport for him in 1935 although this has never been done. He was regarded as a fine man by all who knew him. A former commissioner under commission government said that he thought Clapp a "strictly honest, square man." One of his closest associates, the director of parks, Alfred MacDonald

regarded Mr. Clapp as a splendid city manager; "a man actuated by motives of doing the best he could for Wichita. He took the appointment because Mr. Ash left suddenly and the whole city manager plan was in jeopardy."

Upon his retirement he left a ninety-eight page report for his successor. Perhaps the greatest achievement of his administration was the acquiring and development, in the face of considerable opposition, of two of Wichita's finest parks, Oak and Sim.

Other accomplishments include:

1. Salaries continued to advance until in 1920, wages and salaries in the police department had exactly doubled over those paid in 1917 and in the fire and public service departments, they had very nearly done so.
2. Ordinance revision occurred during 1921 under the direction of a out-of-city lawyer. The ordinances had been last revised in 1912, and the revision at that time had not been satisfactory.
3. The old system of bookkeeping was abandoned and a system approved as especially adapted for municipal work and records was adopted. The new plan proved very satisfactory.
4. The city commission made a singular effort in the Kansas legislature and secured the establishment of a park commission which took over the control of the park department and has been instrumental in the development of an excellent park system.
5. A city planning commission was likewise appointed through legislative permission. Their efforts and successes are noted elsewhere in this report.

In addition to these accomplishments of major importance, Mr. Clapp in his detailed account of the condition of the city at his retirement did not hesitate to point out the many needs and serious and important questions which confronted the city and the next administrator. One of those in particular was the need for greater enforcement of ordinances relating to garbage, waste, cleanliness, and order.

Upon his retirement, Mr. Clapp stated that he had found this work "the most interesting and absorbing of my business life."

Above text from City Manager Government in Wichita, Kansas.

Other Interesting Facts

- His home, built in 1887, was the first house constructed in the area known as Clapp Compound. Wichitans refer to his house as Wellington Place. The house is on the Wichita Register of Historic Places (WRHP), Register of Historic Kansas Places (RHKP), National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and located in the Park Place/Fairview NR Historic District.
- He was Mayor of Wichita (1917-1919)
- Meadowlark Golf Course was renamed L.W. Clapp Golf Course (1956)

Louis Russell Ash (June 19, 1917 - October 3, 1919)

Born: 1873 | Died: April 7, 1930

Mr. Battin's successor was Louis R. Ash, a civil engineer from Kansas City, selected at a salary of \$5,000 after the commissioners had searched far and wide for a suitable city manager. Mr. Ash was 43 years old when appointed and was considered one of the most capable civil engineers in the Middle West. He was eventempered, diplomatic and an executive of great ability. One of the first commissioners described him as having a high character and as being extremely enthusiastic over the city manager plan. The responsibility for the successful beginning of city manager government lay in the hands of the first permanent city manager. Fortunately, he had an excellent commission supporting him.

City Engineer Brockway, appointed by Ash, reported that Ash was the only city manager he ever had to go around when once he appealed to Mayor L.W. Clapp about a departmental matter over which there was a disagreement. It happens that both men were engineers. Mayor Clapp simply told Brockway to "stick in there" since he could not interfere with administrative matters.

Once the city manager took a sewer job into his own hands and saved the city approximately \$50,000. His estimate was \$50,000 under the bids. Under the mayor-council government the construction combine had been used to running affairs very much as it pleased. It now attempted some more highhanded tactics. Ash with the commission's permission tackled the job and saved \$2,578 on his own estimate and nearly \$50,000 for the city. Ash's estimate was based on his knowledge of what the work should cost, not on what the local combine was willing to do it for.

Further accomplishments of the Ash administration were equally notable and included:

1. A definite step forward in purchasing. Under the old regime, the purchasing of supplies was left to the various departments, and this was found to result in confusion and very often purchases were made without proper authority. Often the employee doing the work would order the article needed, and the first information regarding it would be the invoice or bill. Also, it was difficult to keep a proper check on prices and to prevent the duplication of bills. With the new plan, no purchase could be made except upon proper requisition, countersigned by the manager. In this way, no purchase was permitted except by proper requisition and a check was kept which prevented duplication of bills by giving the auditor a copy of the requisition for notation on his records. This was certainly a step forward although a single purchasing agent was not placed in charge until Bert C. Wells became city manager.
2. A system of inspection in the fire department was inaugurated during the year 1918 by which the business district was kept clear of collections of trash and refuse that would create a fire hazard. At first these inspections were considered by some to be an intrusion; later on the benefit to be derived from them so appealed to the merchants of the city that excellent cooperation was given.
3. Generous salary increases were given and in 1919 some employees were receiving 60 percent more than in 1917. Members of the fire, police, and public service departments were especially fortunate. Patrolmen were advanced from \$75.00 per month in 1917 to \$105.00. Detectives, from \$75.00 to \$120.00 and Captains from \$85.00 to \$125.00. These are illustrative of the trend in salaries.
4. The police department was reorganized under the supervision of a chief brought in from Kansas City. During 1918, a Bureau of Records and Identification was established. Formerly the department had maintained no such systematized records and it was impossible to properly cooperate with other police departments throughout the country. Often criminals escaped because of a lack of proper means of identification.
5. The city established a municipal concert series utilizing the new \$200,000 Forum. The greatest names in music are familiar to Wichitans through this added service of the municipality.
6. Late in 1917, a bacteriological laboratory was established as an adjunct to the health department. In 1919, a public clinic was established in regard to venereal disease.

Mr. Ash resigned in 1919 after two years as city manager to return to the firm of Kansas City engineers from which he had been loaned for one year. He was succeeded by Mr. L.W. Clapp of Wichita.

Above text from City Manager Government in Wichita, Kansas.

Other Interesting Facts

- He was employed as a mathematics professor at Coe College in Iowa before moving to Kansas City in 1901.
- In Kansas City, he was largely responsible for "the double deck viaduct at Main Street" to aid traffic flow and work on several other bridges in Missouri and the world.

- He worked as Supervisor of the 12th Street Viaduct and 23rd Street Viaduct and as a proponent of zoning in city planning in Kansas City.
- In Kansas City, he was a partner in the engineering firm of Harrington, Howard & Ash.

Edmondson Taylor Battin (April 12, 1917 - June 19, 1917)

Born: April 1, 1852 | Died: September 7, 1931 | Interred: Maple Grove Cemetery

The first city manager, E.T. Battin, had a brief term of only two months. His appointment was made solely for the purpose of giving the commissioners time to look out of the city for a permanent city manager. The selection of Mr. Battin as the first city manager was a wise one. He had previous governmental experience having served as Commissioner of Finance for two terms under commission government in 1911 and 1913. He had been largely responsible for paying off the bond issues while he had held this office. As a result, city manager government took over the reigns of government with a satisfactory financial condition insofar as actual financial standing was concerned. Furthermore, Mr. Battin's appointment was entirely appropriate because it indicated to the citizens of Wichita that the new government was sincere in its attempt to free the city government, the new one effected only a gradual change in regard to all phases of city government but perhaps most notably in personnel. The wisdom of this course has given no occasion for criticism.

Mr. Battin, a cowboy, cattle raiser, banker, hardware merchant, manufacturer and real estate dealer was entirely in sympathy with the policies of the new commission and cooperated completely through his short term. Upon his resignation, the commission unhesitatingly recognized his integrity, intimate knowledge of city affairs, and his valuable contribution to the city during a strenuous and critical period in its history.

His contribution was great. With the advent of city manager government and the assumption of office by five new commissioners who had but little knowledge of departmental conditions, Mr. Battin took charge of a city of 65,000 whose entire governmental machinery had come to a stop. His handling of the entire situation and his relations with the commission were commendable.

Above text from City Manager Government in Wichita, Kansas.

Other Interesting Facts

- Was elected to Board of Directors for Arkansas Valley Interurban Railroad Company and served as treasurer (1909)
- Had a two-story building erected at 922 E. Douglas (1912).