

The Winding Valley and the Craggy Hillside

**A History of the City of Rosedale, Kansas by Margaret Landis.
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Chapter XIII **THE SEVENTH STREET TRAFFICWAY** **General History**

Upon the completion of the Turkey Creek Viaduct over the Katy and Frisco Railroad tracks and the Approaches, The Seventh Street Trafficway was opened to Southwest Boulevard, April 23, 1935.

The Cross-town trafficway is approximately 10 miles in length from the Northern City limits to the Southern city limits; linking three counties: Johnson and Wyandotte Counties in Kansas and Platte County, Missouri. It carries U.S. Highway 29 and connects with U.S. Highway 50 on the South.

The traffic-way spans the Kansas River with the Fairfax Bridge. There are six railroad viaducts and the Shawnee Road Overpass. The railroad viaduct: The Missouri-Pacific, The Kansas City Southern, The Kansas City Terminal, The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe, The Missouri-Kansas-Texas and the St. Louis and San Francisco.

Construction was during the Depression of the 1930's. Among those involved in the cost of the trafficway were: The Federal Government, The Reconstruction Finance Corporation, The States of Missouri and Kansas, Wyandotte County, Kansas, Platte County, Missouri, Kansas City, The State Highway Commissions of Kansas and Missouri and the Railroads over which the viaducts were built. The cost, from end to end, was 5 million dollars.

The trafficway fulfills a long-time need and is the culmination of many years of legislation and planning. Each section was a major undertaking in itself. State Legislation, county and City Ordinances, Financing, contracts, Benefit Districts, Right-of-Ways, Widening of streets, grading, paving, Bridges, Viaducts All were part of the realization of the trafficway.

PREFACE

Rosedale, of course, is my prime interest and the detailed material will focus on the early efforts of Rosedalianians for a way over the bluffs and across the river; The Seventh Street Bridge, Section 4 and 5 of the Trafficway.

Rosedale was isolated geographically. On the South side of Turkey Creek there were seven hills but on the North side there was one continuous high bluff that started in the West end of Rosedale and extended to Todaloupe where Turkey Creek emptied into the Kansas River. Unless you were "On Foot or Horseback," it was necessary to go thru Kansas City, Missouri in order to get "Wyandotte:" - (Kansas City, Kansas).

One of the agreements of the annexation of Rosedale to Kansas City, Kansas was that a trafficway would be provided. The entire Seventh Street Trafficway was determined by two factors situated in Rosedale: (1) - There must be a bridge across the Kansas River. (2) - There must be a viaduct across the tracks of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad and the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad.

EARLY EFFORTS

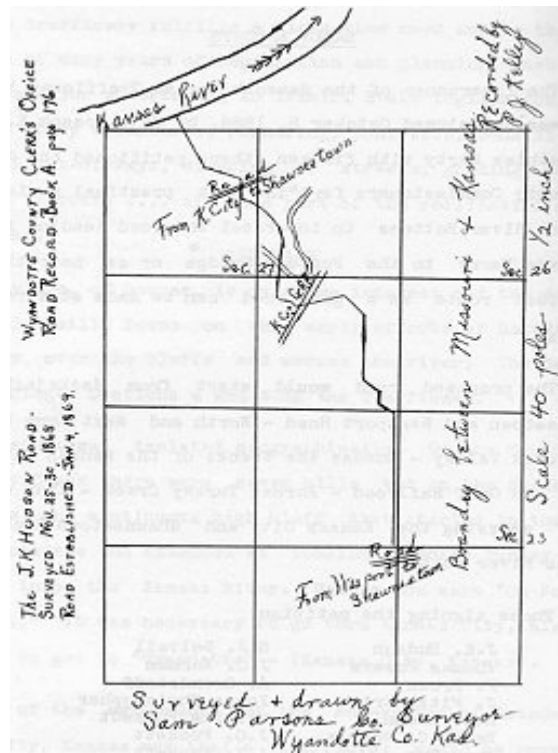
The forerunner of the Seventh Street Trafficway in Rosedale was envisioned October 5, 1868, by Maj. Joseph K. Hudson and Mathias Marty with fifteen others petitioned the Wyandotte County Commissioners for "The most practical route to the Kansas River Bottoms to intersect the road leading from the Delaware Ferry to the Pontoon Bridge * or as near the above described route as a good road can be made at a reasonable expense."

The proposed road would start from Mackajack on the Shawneetown and Westport Road - North and West thru the Turkey Creek Valley - Across the tracks of the Kansas City, Fort Scott and Gulf Railroad - Across Turkey Creek - then over the bluff crossing the Kansas City and Shawneetown Road to the Kansas River Bottoms.

Those signing the petition:

J.K. Hudson	S.J. Belvail
Thomas Powers	J.C. Norman
F. Brown	A. Grandstaff
J. Fitzpatrick	James Christopher
E.O. Brown	William Puckett
Henry C. Morris	J.C. Puckett
Amos Dye	J.J. Puckett
M.C. Singleton	M.M. Marty
John Campbell	

The viewers appointed to approve the road: J.S. Pritchard, J.B. Steel and A. Grandstaff.



Map of Sam Parsons, Wyandotte County Surveyor, who surveyed the road, November 25 - 30, 1868, and reported:

"The line is crooked and hilly but is as well located as the nature of the country will admit and is much needed by the citizens along the line."

The perpetuation of the J.K. Hudson Road was continued by the following streets: Hudson Road, Westport Road, Mill Street S.S. Ely Road and the S.S. Ely Road Extended.

By our present day locations, the junction of the J.K. Hudson Road and the road from Westport to Shawneetown is known as Rainbow Boulevard and U.S. Highway 50. Rainbow Boulevard passes in front of the K.U. Medical Center. The jog from 39th Street is still in Rainbow Boulevard. Seventh Street Trafficway replaced old Mill Street; crosses the railroad tracks and Turkey Creek then proceed on the Extension of the S.S. Ely Road. The intersection of the road from Kansas City to Shawneetown is the location of the Shawnee Road Overpass.

1911, L.H. Rose was president of the Wyandotte County Trafficway Commission whose objective was to build a united and greater Kansas City. In 1912 Mr. Rose was President of the Cross-Town Trafficway.

March 1913, Mayor Samuel Clasen and the Rosedale City Council passed an Ordinance which provided for the opening of Waldeck Street to connect with Roanoke Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri City.

A boulevard system of Kansas City, Missouri would pass thru Rosedale, across the hill North of Rosedale (30th Street, K.C. Mo.) across the Kansas River via the Fifth

Street Bridge. This afforded a direct route from Minnesota Avenue to the South Section of Kansas City, Missouri.

The bridge over the Kansas River was a vital link. After the 1903 flood, when the Fifth Street Bridge and the Twelfth Street Bridge were rebuilt there were a number of attempts to get a bridge at Seventh Street.

Representative Louis R. Gates, 9th District, Wyandotte County, introduced a bill in the 1923 Session of the Kansas Legislature relating to Bridges and Approaches. Rep. Gates lived in Rosedale. He was City Attorney for the City of Rosedale from 1919 to 1922.

The Bill provided that the Board of County Commissioners "May locate, erect and construct one bridge and the necessary approaches thereto across any river which flows through said county, at a point where a public street, highway or trafficway crosses, or if prolonged would cross said river.....: From the South Side QUAY STREET was the only available approach to the Kansas River and this determined the location of the Seventh Street Bridge. Quay Street was located in Potomac Heights. Potomac Heights was platted and recorded Dec. 19, 1889 by George F. Winter and Eliza Winter.

After locating the Bridge, an ordinance was passed Feb. 23, 1923, officially designating Seventh Street Trafficway."The purpose being to create a thoroughfare and trafficway connecting the North and Southeasterly portions of Kansas City, Kansas and making the two sections of the City accessible one to the other.".....

Frank A. Davis was a resident of Rosedale and a member of the Kansas Legislature from Wyandotte County; also Secretary of the Greater Kansas City Regional Plan Association. Representative Davis advocated a system of trafficway.

In the Legislative process, a bill was passed providing that: ".....certain streets and avenues shall be established and designated as main arterial highways..."

With this enabling law, the Kansas City, Kansas City Commissioners passed an Ordinance (Ordinance 26862) (replacing a previous Ordinance) authorizing the establishment of Seventh Street Trafficway:

"The designation and establishment of a main arterial trafficway to be known as the Seventh Street Trafficway..." The main arterial trafficway was established and designated into five (5) Sections of the continuous route:

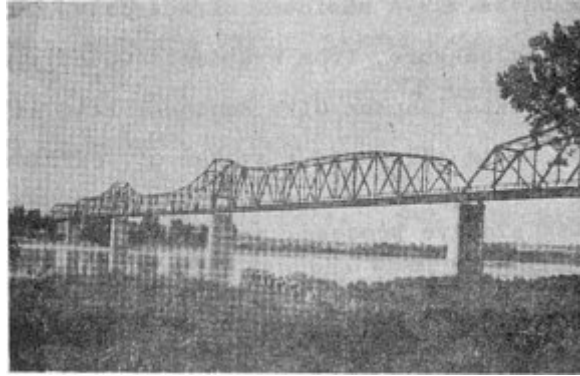
Section 1. North of Quindaro Boulevard Trafficway. (North City Limits to intersection of Seventh Street Trafficway and Quindaro Boulevard Trafficway.)

Section 2. Quindaro Boulevard to Kansas Avenue Section.

Section 3. Kansas Avenue to Kansas River and Fifth Street Section.

Section 4. Metropolitan Avenue to Southwest Boulevard Section. (From the Kansas River on the North.)

Section 5. Southwest Boulevard to Johnson County Section. (The Southern City Limits via Rainbow Boulevard.)



The Fairfax Bridge - also known as the Regional Bridge, spans the Missouri River between Platte County, Missouri and Wyandotte County, Kansas. The Northern-most part of the Seventh Street Trafficway. The design for the bridge was by Sverdrup & Parcel Consulting Engineers. The contract for the bridge was awarded to the Kansas City Bridge Company. Steel was furnished by the Kansas City Structural Steel Company. Ground was broken April 21, 1931. The bridge was completed September 27, 1934. The Cost: \$600,000.00.

The Fairfax Bridge built of steel and concrete is 2486 1/2 feet long; 55 feet above the water. It has 13 spans resting on 14 piers.



Fairfax Bridge Toll House

The bridge, now free, was a toll bridge until paid for. Later, due to such heavy traffic, a "Twin Bridge" was built. (The "Twin Bridge" is now the toll bridge.)

Frank A. Davis .. was Secretary-Manager of the Greater Kansas City Regional Plan Association in 1929. He later served as Superintendent and Manager of the Fairfax Bridge.

The Missouri-Pacific Railroad Viaduct



The Missouri-Pacific Railroad Viaduct is in Section 1 of the Trafficway, North of Quindaro Boulevard. The cost of the viaduct was \$118,000.00.

In the portion from Kansas Avenue to the Kansas River was Shawnee Park. In the path of the trafficway in Shawnee Park was a Spanish-American War Cannon. It was

necessary to divide the park for the road-way -- move the cannon and erect six-foot woven-wire fence on either side of the trafficway thru the park.

On the West side of Seventh Street and in Shawnee Park there is now a 155 M. Howitzer of World War II that replaced the Spanish-American War Cannon.



PLAQUE

155 M. Howitzer of World War II

Replacing Spanish-American War Cannon
Contributed to Scrap Iron Salvage in Steel
Production Crisis of 1942.

Replacement Arranged By Wyandotte County
Salvage

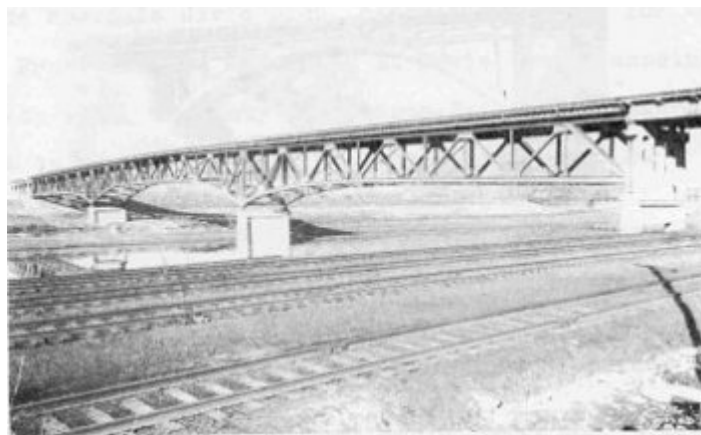
1942 - 1947

The Seventh Street Bridge

Not until the Emergency Act of 1932 was action taken on the bridge. The State Highway Commission required that the City furnish the plans for the bridge and that the railroads build the Approaches to the Bridge over the tracks.

November 24, 1932, the War Department approved the plans for the Seventh Street Bridge. The State Highway Commission was authorized to build the bridge approaches. The contract to build the bridge was awarded to the Kansas City Bridge Company.

The bridge was paid for by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (A Federal Government Agency) advanced to the Kansas State Highway Commission.



The Seventh Street Bridge spans the Kansas River from Cheyenne Street on the North to Stine Avenue on the South. It is 2503 feet long.

The Viaduct Approaches on the North Side of the River were paid for by the Kansas City Southern Railroad and the Kansas City Terminal Railroad and on the South Side of the River by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. Much of the labor on the Approaches was under Federal Relief Programs.

Designed by: Sverdrup & Parcel Consulting Engineers.

Contractor: Kansas City Bridge Company.

Steel by: Kansas City Structural Steel Company.

Cost of Bridge: Approximately a half-million dollars.



The Shawnee Road Bridge (Overpass) is between the Seventh Street Bridge and the Turkey Creek Viaduct. The Bridge is constructed of steel and concrete. The Roadway is 26 feet in width with concrete sidewalks of 5 feet in width on each side. Cost: Approximately \$20,000.00.

Section 4 of the Trafficway included the Shawnee Road Bridge over Seventh Street and the Turkey Creek Viaduct over the tracks of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad and the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad. (Also known as the Katy-Frisco Viaduct and the Seventh Street Viaduct.)

The viaduct across the railroad tracks presented problems that originated in 1905 when the Old City of Rosedale passed an Ordinance granting the railroad the right to operate its tracks and system of railroad across Mill and Clinton Streets in the City of Rosedale. The Ordinance also provided that whenever the volume of travel along Mill Street reasonably so required, the railroad would build and construct a viaduct over its tracks. The subject of a viaduct over the railroad tracks had emerged several times.

The Rosedale Civic Club renewed its drive for the Viaduct. Frank Rushton and Frank A. Davis were appointed to negotiate with the Katy and Frisco Railroads regarding the viaduct in compliance with the Rosedale Ordinance.

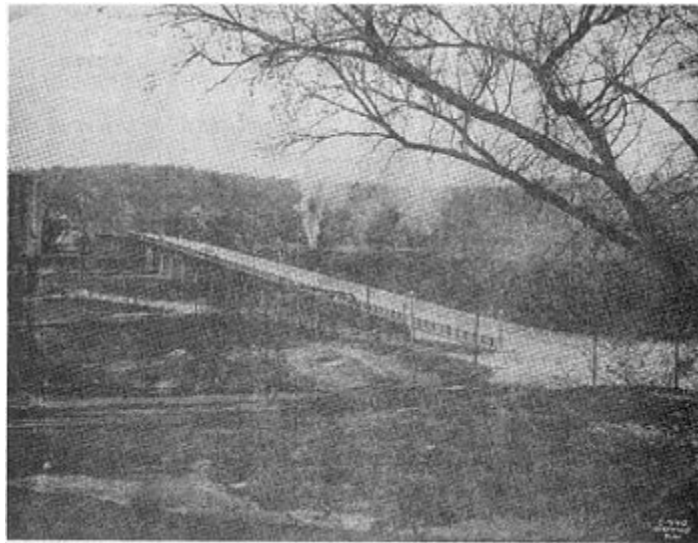
The building of the viaduct was imperative. In order to receive money from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation for the Fairfax Bridge and other improvements, the City must enforce the building of the viaduct. The R.F.C. did not want to finance a thoroughfare that would "dead end" after crossing the Kansas River Bridge. The Trafficway had to be opened to Southwest Boulevard.

By January 1931 the Railroads had taken no action, so the Committee appeared before the City Commissioners. Mayor Don C. McCombs and the Board of

Commissioners ordained "that for the safety and protection of the public that a viaduct with the approaches thereto be constructed."

A four-way agreement was worked out between the Kansas State Highway Commission, Kansas City, Kansas, The Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad and The St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad.

The viaduct was completed in 1934; the Approaches in 1935. It was opened April 23, 1935 and thus the Seventh Street Trafficway was completed to Southwest Boulevard.



When the Seventh Street Viaduct was built it spanned 26 tracks of the two railroads.

The Kansas State Highway Commission built the viaduct.
Designed by Sverdrup & Parcel Consulting Engineers.
The Contract was awarded to the Tobin and Scherer Construction Company.
Cost: \$314,400.00.

Section 5. The contract for the widening and paving of Rainbow Boulevard from Thirty-Ninth Street south to the South City Limits was awarded to the Tobin Construction Company, June 1937. The name of this portion of Seventh Street Trafficway remained Rainbow Boulevard. Named Rainbow Boulevard in 1919 in honor of the Rainbow Division (42nd Division) of World War I.

SEVENTH STREET CUT-OFF

For about 20 years there was a jog from Seventh Street and Southwest Boulevard to Rainbow Boulevard (on Southwest Boulevard.) This created a "bottle-neck" resulting in traffic congestion and accidents.

A new Trafficway "Cut-Off" eliminated the jog by routing Seventh Street diagonally southward to Rainbow Boulevard. The hill south of Southwest Boulevard was leveled for this part of Seventh Street.

An enclosed over-head walk-way was installed at Seminary Street over Seventh Street for pedestrian traffic and school children from Columbian School. The walk-way was later removed in the Urban Renewal Program.

The Seventh Street "Cut-Off" was officially opened July 1, 1955. Public Officials, civic leaders and others attended the dedication ceremony.

SEVENTH STREET -- TURKEY CREEK EXPRESSWAY -- I-35

The Turkey Creek Expressway follows the old Fitzgerald Road on the North bank of Turkey Creek and is part of Inter-State 35 Route with inter-changes at Seventh Street.

Parcels of land for the "right-of-way" were acquired in 1962. The multi-million dollar project was under way by 1963. Connections with Mission Road and Southwest Boulevard was [sic] accomplished by exit ramps.

By February 1970 the Inter-State 35 Route was opened to the Missouri State Line.

Seventh Street Viaduct was enlarged to four lanes each side with exits at the inter-changes. The diagonal Cut-Off to Rainbow Boulevard was divided to two lanes each side with right turn bays.

SEVENTH STREET BRIDGE -- REPAIRS

In the fall of 1970, the Seventh Street Bridge was closed for reconstruction. A four-lane roadway was achieved by widening the bridge two and one-half feet. The bridge repairs cost 1.2 million dollars.

The bridge was reopened July 27, 1971. Kansas Governor Robert Docking formally reopened the bridge in ceremonies attended by public officials, civic leaders and others from Argentine, Armourdale and Rosedale.

During the ten-month construction period, traffic was re-routed over 12th Street Bridge, 32nd, 42nd and 55th Streets.

RAINBOW BOULEVARD IMPROVEMENTS

The Rainbow Boulevard Improvements was An Urban Renewal Project (Site Improvements). The improvements were from 36th Street to Southwest Boulevard. The 1976 project included the widening of the boulevard and islands at intersections.

(*The County Road was established on the South side of the Kaw River in 1864. The Pontoon Bridge was a military measure at the mouth of the Kaw River.)