

THE WEST END

GROCERY

The West End

Grocery

by

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Introduction

Sometimes researching information on our town involved some just old fashioned detective work. This is one of those cases.

Years ago, while collecting the names of businesses that have been part of our town history, I ran across the The West End Grocery. It was a typical "Mom & Pop" grocery of a by-gone era. My hometown in Montana had many of them, but not a single one is there today. Neighborhood groceries were great for purchasing such basics as bread, milk, canned goods, lunch meat, etc. In addition, they had a feature that the chain stores did not; they allowed you to charge what you bought, then pay at the end of the week when the family pay check arrived.

This store was listed in this ad with no address, of course, which was common in the early years. Even our phone book had no addresses until 1947. This ad appeared in the 1924 Prophetstown phone book.

THE WEST END GROCERY

A Full Line of Staple and Fancy Groceries and Notions

Open Evenings and Sunday

Telephone 12-R2

Also, in that phone book is this phone number. Notice that Leonard Sollars has a number with one ring difference. So we had the above ad with its telephone number and Leonard's number below.

14-R19	Soliday, Lyle	City
12-R1	Sollars, Leonard	Grocery Store
21-R7	Sollars, Wesley	City

Unfortunately, there was nothing to tie these two together. But while looking through a January 22, 1931, copy of the *Echo*, I found this notice. In the 1931 Prophetstown telephone book, Leonard is no longer listed, but Emma, his mother is. We found Leonard listed as her son in her obituary.

Grocery Stock for Sale

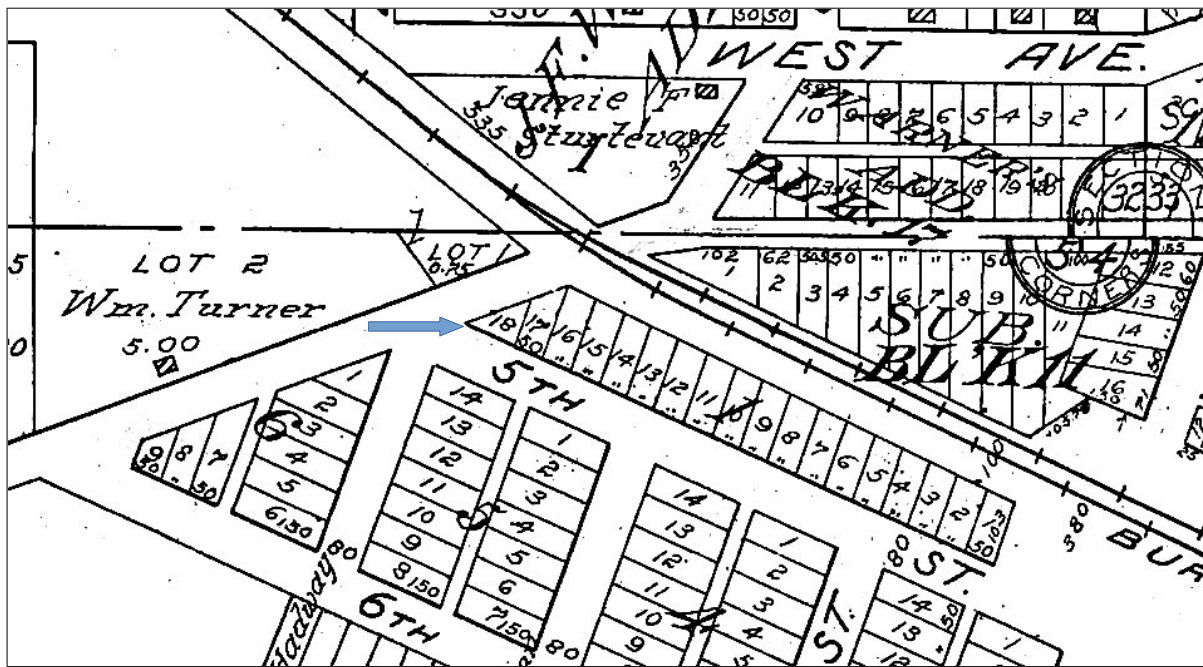
On account of poor health I wish to sell my stock of groceries together with the store fixtures.

Included among the latter is a good set of Standard scales.

Please inquire of

Mrs. Emma Sollars
502 West 5th St. Prophetstown

My next problem was to figure out where 502 W. 5th Street was located. This 1912 map shows the lots on W. 5th Street. The arrow points to where 502 W 5th Street would have been. The even numbers are on the north side of the street. You need to remember that when the factory was built on W. 5th the house number were affected on the north side of the street. At one time, as you can see here, there were 18 lots on the north side of the street.



I know it seems like that lot, being the first one, should be 500 W. 5th. We do not know who setup the system of house and business number that Prophetstown uses, but there are some odd listings. The first lot here should have been 500, but it was 502. The PAHS building on Washington Street is the first building on the north side of the 300 block, west side of the street. Technically, it should have been 300 Washington, but it is 302. Moving out to the Brookhaven subdivision we see some thing similar. Tree Lane is a U shaped street located south of what is now Star Road (Earlier called the Dixon-Rock Island State Road, then Jackson Street, then IL 172). On the west side of the U the house numbers are as follows, moving from north to south – 304, 306, 308, 312, 310, 314.



This is where the West Side Grocery would have been located. You can still see the sidewalk and where the driveway was. Most likely it was in the front part of their home. Many of the “mom & pop” stores we located in their homes. We found the same thing true when we visited Costa Rica in 1997.

JOHN SOLLARS DIES TODAY IN PROPHETSTOWN

PROPHETSTOWN — (Special) — John Wesley Sollars, aged 77 years, died in his home at 8 o'clock this morning from a complication of diseases. He had been ailing for the past two years, but was not taken to his bed until last Monday.

Funeral services will be held at 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon in the Methodist church, Rev. L. V. Sittler officiating. Interment is to be in Riverside cemetery.

The deceased followed the occupation of a farmer until 1905, when he moved to this city. Since that time he has been engaged in the business of installing pumps and windmills. He was born March 14, 1853, in Vinton county, Ohio, the son of James and Lee Anna Sollars.

When 12 years of age the deceased came to Illinois and settled on a farm in Stark county with his parents. Later he moved to this vicinity and farmed. Mr. Sollars was united in marriage March 7, 1885, to Lucinda Roberts of Lorraine township, who died April 16, 1885. He was remarried October 4, 1885, to Emma Black of Wyoming state, who survives him.

Besides the widow there are three sons surviving their father, Claude of Rock Falls and Leonard and Lee of East Moline, and one daughter, Mrs. Samuel Beebe of Prophetstown. A son, Ralph, died October 28, 1888, and a daughter, Mrs. Viola Booth, passed away January 7, 1899. He also leaves one sister, Mrs. Rebecca Black of this city, and a brother, William, of Hot Springs, Ark.

The Sterling Gazette, June 28, 1929.

EMMA SOLLARS DEAD; AGED 70

Funeral Services for Prophets-
town Resident to Be
Wednesday.

Prophetstown, May 10.—Mrs. Emma Sollars, 70, died this morning in her home on West Fifth street. She had been critically ill a week. Funeral services will be held Wednesday afternoon at 2:30 in the Prophetstown Methodist church, the Rev. A. E. Simester officiating. Burial will be in Riverside cemetery.

Sarah Emma Black Sollars was born Aug. 6, 1866, in the Eight Mile community, daughter of James Clark and Sarah Jane Black. She was married to John Wesley Sollars Oct. 4, 1885. She lived on farms in Eight Mile and Leon communities several years, and she and her husband came to Prophetstown twenty-two years ago. She was a member of the Methodist church. Mr. Sollars died June 28, 1929.

She is survived by three sons, Leo N. Sollars of Sterling, Leonard G. Sollars of East Moline and Charles Wesley Sollars of Rock Falls; a daughter, Nellie Beebe of Prophetstown; four brothers, John Black of Empire, Ore., Jesse Black of Prophetstown, Arthur Black of Yorktown, and Floyd Black of Fenton, and three sisters, Mrs. Anna Needham of Oklahoma City, Mrs. Maude Pier-son of Manlius and Mabel Wilson of Rock Falls.

The Moline Dispatch, May 10, 1937.