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Crow becomes first to work in Arkadelphia real estate

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HISTORY

QUESTIONS? Contact Editor Jamal Brown at jbrown@siftingsherald.com

CLARK COUNTY CHRONICLE

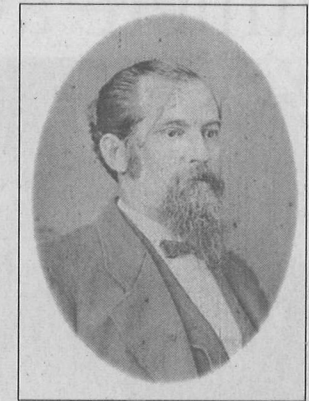
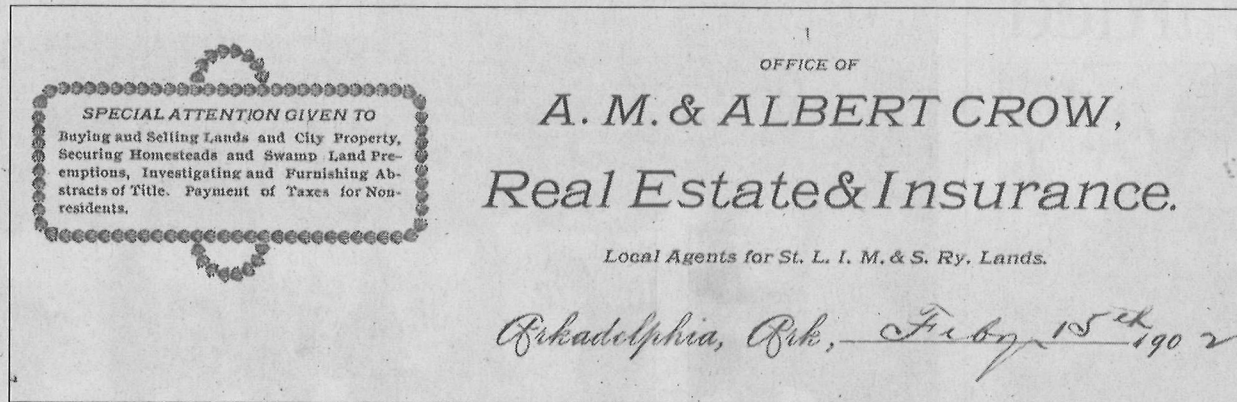
Crow becomes first to work in Arkadelphia real estate

By Wendy Richter
For the Siftings

Through the years, many Clark Countians have enjoyed distinguished careers and have made significant contributions to the development of the area.

One such individual was businessman Austin M. Crow. While no one today has a living memory of Mr. Crow, his wide-ranging activities place him among the early leaders of the Arkadelphia community.

Austin M. Crow was born on his family's farm in southwestern Clark County in 1833, the son of James and Emily Wells Crow. Both James and Emily came from pioneer Clark County families. At age twenty-four, Austin Crow moved to Arkadelphia to work at his father's sawmill, and ran the operation for few years. In 1862 he married Abigale Mendenhall of Ouachita



Shown above left is the company letterhead of Austin M. and Albert Crow in 1902. The document is a part of the Albert Crow Papers, Clark County Historical Association, OBU Library Archives and Special Collections. Above right is Crow.

County and the couple had nine children.

Shortly after the Civil War, Austin Crow became the first person in Arkadelphia to work exclusively in the real estate business, and he had great success at the endeavor. Within twenty years, he controlled over 10,000 acres of land. He also served as agent for the Iron Mountain Railroad, which put him in charge of over 200,000 acres.

Crow represented numerous banks and companies, and came to be recognized as one of the state's leading realtors. As a natural outgrowth of this activity, he established and ran an abstract company together with his son, Albert.

Austin Crow was active in the Methodist church, and was also a member of the Masonic lodge. It is believed he was the longest-serving member

of the local lodge at the time of his death. While Crow became a successful businessman, he sought only one public service office—a position on the Arkadelphia School board of directors, where he served many years. Crow was also among the men who reorganized the local Board of Trade (now called Chamber of Commerce) in 1899. And, he made many contributions to the community's less

fortunate citizens. The Southern Standard newspaper once stated that Crow “was always the same and always the poor man's friend.” Adam Clark, editor of the paper wrote, “His many good deeds are a living monument to his character.”

Austin M. Crow died October 26, 1911, and is buried at Rose Hill Cemetery in Arkadelphia. The late Bill Newberry was a descendant of Austin

Crow, and authored books about his Crow and Mendenhall ancestors.

For additional information about Clark County history, visit or contact the Clark County Historical Museum (www.clark-countyhistory.org or (870) 230-1360) or the Clark County Historical Association's Archives at the Ouachita Baptist University Library (www.obu.edu/archives or (870) 245-5332).