

Tempe Historic Preservation Office

Tempe Historic Property Survey and Inventory, Gage Addition and Park Tract (pre-1941)

Historic Contexts and Property Forms

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1930



2010

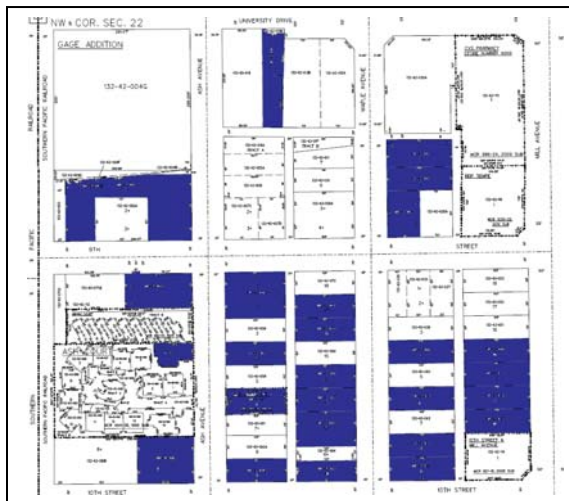
INTRODUCTION

This historic property survey and inventory seeks to identify and evaluate pre-1941 properties in Tempe's historic Gage Addition and Park Tract subdivisions. Situated between West University Drive, South Mill Avenue, West 13th Street, and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, and divided by West 10th Street, Gage Addition (platted in 1909) and Park Tract (platted in 1924) constitute Tempe's sole remaining pre-World War II residential subdivisions. The purpose of the survey was to compile preliminary historical and architectural data to expedite the production of Tempe Historic Property Register nominations for individual Gage Addition and Park Tract properties. Tempe Historic Preservation Office (HPO) identified seventy-six pre-1941 properties in the surveyed area: twenty-six in Gage Addition and fifty in Park Tract.

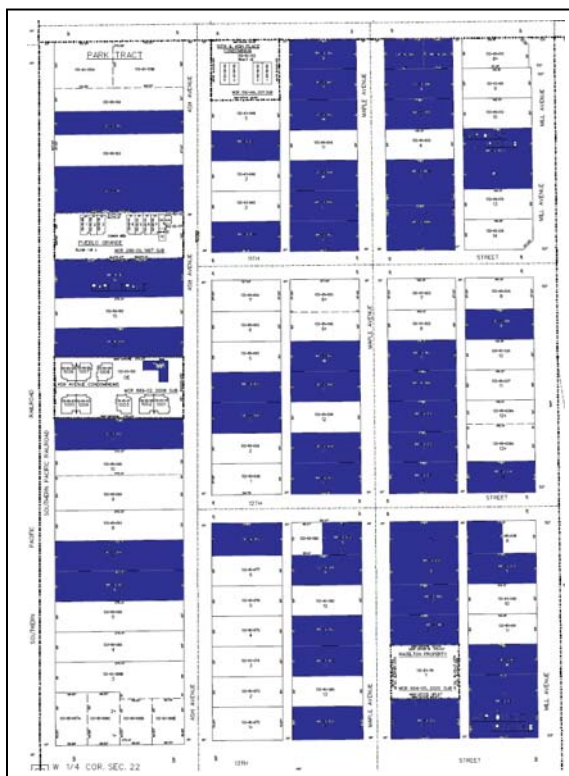
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METHODOLOGY

The method of determining pre-1941 properties involved city directory research. The 1940 *Baldwin ConSurvey Directory* provided a picture of residential development in Gage Addition and Park Tract near the survey's chronological cut-off date. Yet because 1940 was an active year for homebuilding in Park Tract, some pre-1941 properties were not included in the 1940 directory. To account for these properties, the *Directory Mesa, Tempe, Chandler and Gilbert 1946-7* was consulted to identify properties built between 1940 and 1946. Of these properties, year-built dates were established to determine which were built before 1941. The following County Assessor maps (below, left) indicate the locations of parcels in Gage Addition and Park Tract containing pre-1941 properties (shaded in blue).



Gage Addition



Park Tract

Determining year-built dates for these and other properties involves cross-referencing a range of sources, including available aerial photographs; city and telephone directories from 1909 forward; U.S. census rolls from 1910, 1920, and 1930; Sanborn fire insurance maps from 1911, 1915, 1927, and 1945; and deed and mortgage records obtained from the Maricopa County Recorder's Office website, which provides an index of property records searchable by name. The basic pattern of research involved determining the name of a property owner through city directories and census rolls, then tracking down the name of the original occupant through deed research;

once the name of the original occupant was determined, a mortgage record for the subject property offered reasonable assurance of its year-built date. In lieu of a mortgage record, year-by-year city and telephone directory research also yielded accurate year-built dates. In cases where city directories and census rolls indicated owner-occupants of properties, deed and mortgage research was simplified: a Maricopa County Assessor's Office website search for the name "Pyle, Howard," for example, returned 1938 deed and mortgage records for Block 7, Lot 13 of Park Tract—the location of 1120 South Ash Avenue. Because the 1937 aerial photograph of the region indicates that 1120 Ash did not yet exist in 1937, it was determined reasonable assurance that Howard Pyle built 1120 Ash in 1938.

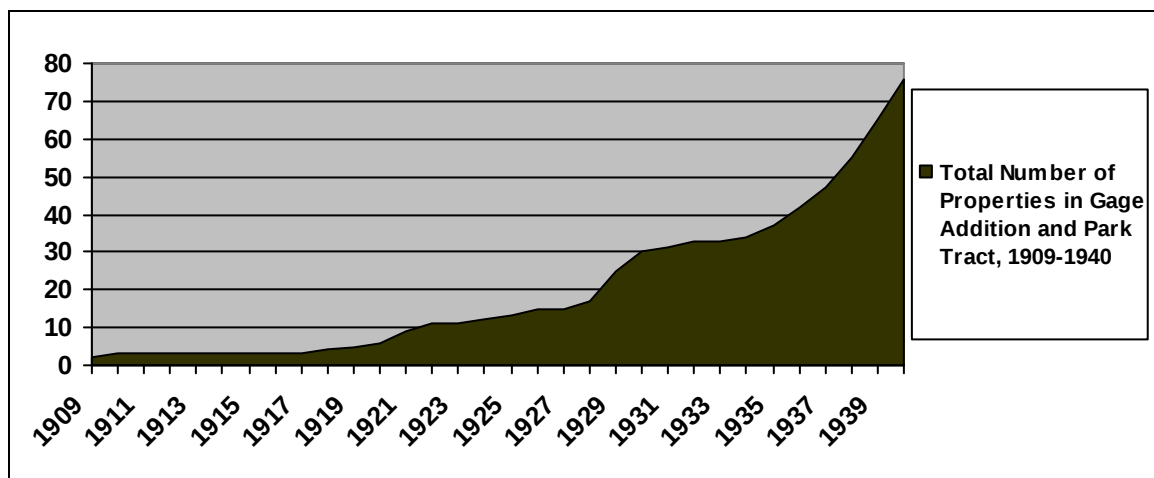
This method of piecing together year-built dates improves data compiled by the

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Maricopa County Assessor's Office, which lists estimated year-built dates. As they surveyed property owners for year-built dates, the Assessor's Office might receive a vague estimate such as "mid-1930s" and this would be recorded as 1935. Sometimes these estimates proved quite accurate; other times they missed the mark by decades. The following table is list of surveyed pre-1941 properties with corresponding T-number and accurate year-built dates:

T-Number	Address	Year-built	T-Number	Address	Year-built	T-Number	Address	Year-built
T-121	Mill 928	1926	T-356	Ash 1117	1940	T-401	Maple 1191	1937
T-122	9th 143	1921	T-357	Ash 1111	1935	T-402	Maple 1185	1937
T-123	Ash 948	1918	T-358	Ash 1029	1939	T-403	Maple 1111	1939
T-125	Ash 1104	1928	T-360	Ash 1019	1940	T-404	Maple 1109	1940
T-161	Maple 916	1929	T-362	Ash 971	1929	T-407	Maple 1029	1936
T-163	Maple 1010	1929	T-365	Ash 959	1929	T-408	Maple 1017	1929
T-164	9th 24-26	1920	T-371	Maple 904	1930	T-409	Maple 1005	1938
T-165	Ash 850	1910	T-372	Maple 908	1922	T-410	Maple 1001	1929
T-169	Ash 907	1932	T-374	Maple 922	1929	T-411	10th 15	1929
T-194	Mill 918	1924	T-375	Maple 928	1921	T-412	Maple 949	1926
T-195	Mill 1034	1925	T-377	Maple 936	1921	T-415	Maple 915	1928
T-203	University 115	1888	T-378	Maple 1002	1940	T-417	Maple 823	1931
T-210	Maple 1210	1930	T-379	Maple 1008	1938	T-418	Maple 821	1922
T-224	Maple 923	1930	T-380	Maple 1022	1938	T-419	Mill 930	1930
T-225	Ash 940	1909	T-381	Maple 1024	1940	T-420	Mill 944	1935
T-231	Maple 919	1919	T-382	Maple 1026	1930	T-423	Mill 1104	1940
T-248	12th 35	1937	T-385	Maple 1108	1936	T-427	Mill 1190	1936
T-249	Maple 1290	1937	T-386	Maple 1114	1932	T-429	Mill 1204	1940
T-334	Ash 1018	1939	T-388	Maple 1180	1938	T-430	Mill 1220	1939
T-336	Ash 1026	1939	T-389	Maple 1190	1938	T-431	Mill 1290	1936
T-338	Ash 1116	1934	T-391	Maple 1204	1938	T-521	12th 13	1937
T-339	Ash 1120	1938	T-394	Maple 1216	1940	T-550	Ash 902	1935
T-341	Ash 1126	1936	T-395	Maple 1220	1938	T-701	Maple 1115	1940
T-345	Ash 1206	1939	T-397	Maple 1225	1939	T-702	Maple 1011	1939
T-346	Ash 1210	1939	T-399	Maple 1215	1940			
T-353	Ash 1203	1940	T-400	Maple 1209	1939			

The build-out of Gage Addition and Park Tract corresponded with construction trends reflecting contemporary economic fluctuations. A steady rate of development during the 1920s paused amidst the Great Depression of the early 1930s, only to regenerate during the mid-late 1930s with the resumption of mortgage lending. The following table traces the accumulation of the 76 existing (as of 2010) pre-1941 properties in Gage Addition and Park Tract from 1909 through 1940:



ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTIONS

Arizona Property Record forms also called for architectural descriptions to supplement historical research. These involved surveying the neighborhood, making photographs of pre-1941 properties, and building upon earlier descriptions of Gage Addition and Park Tract properties written in 1983 and 1997. In many instances, Gage Addition and Park Tract properties possessed a high degree of historic integrity and retained all character defining features; others endured window and roof replacements; a few other had undergone major structural changes. The following table is a list of pre-1941 architectural styles in Gage Addition and Park Tract.

Architectural Style	Gage Addition	Park Tract	Total	Architectural Style	Gage Addition	Park Tract	Total
Bungalow	14	10	24	Pueblo Revival		2	2
Transitional/Early Ranch		19	19	American Colonial Revival		2	2
Southwest	3	5	8	Western Colonial	1		1
Transitional/Early Spanish Colonial Ranch		5	5	Transitional/Early French Provincial Ranch		1	1
National Folk	2	3	5	Victorian Vernacular	1		1
Spanish Colonial Revival	2	2	4	Art Moderne Ranch		1	1
Georgian Revival	1	1	2	Norman Revival		1	1

HISTORIC OVERVIEW AND CONTEXTS

The following historic overview and contexts for Gage Addition and Park Tract synthesize published and non-published secondary-source research compiled in the course of the survey.

Historic Background

During the 1870s, groups of Anglo American, Mexican American, and Mormon settlers arrived in the east Salt River Valley to establish communities at the foot of Tempe Butte. Collectively they built, maintained, and expanded a complex of canals and ditches that by 1883 irrigated 9,150 acres of farmland south of the river. Along the Butte's west slope a nascent business center anchored by Charles T. Hayden's grist mill, dry goods store, and Salt River cable ferry provided nearby farmers with a distribution point for grain and a source of imported goods.ⁱ

"The creators of towns and the builders of cities," writes one scholar, "strained to use all the resources at their disposal, including crude political clout, to make great fortunes out of place." Tempe was no exception. In 1885 the town's territorial legislator, John S. Armstrong, secured an appropriation for the State Normal School of Arizona, then amended a railroad bill to locate the Maricopa & Phoenix Railroad bridge "at Tempe" rather than "near Tempe." Both provisions played an incalculable role in the town's development through the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The railroad had the most immediate effect. Its arrival in July 1887 captured the attention of a consortium of Arizona and California financiers, who formed the Tempe Land & Improvement Company (TLIC) as a vehicle for building up the town's commercial prospects and profiting from the sale of town lots. Recruiting George N. Gage, brother of investor E. B. Gage, to serve as secretary, the TLIC acquired 705 acres west and south of the Butte where they platted a townsite of streets, blocks, and lots. Under Gage's direction the TLIC also established a hotel, warehouse, bank, and a lumber yard to meet the needs of a growing commercial town. For himself and his family, Gage built

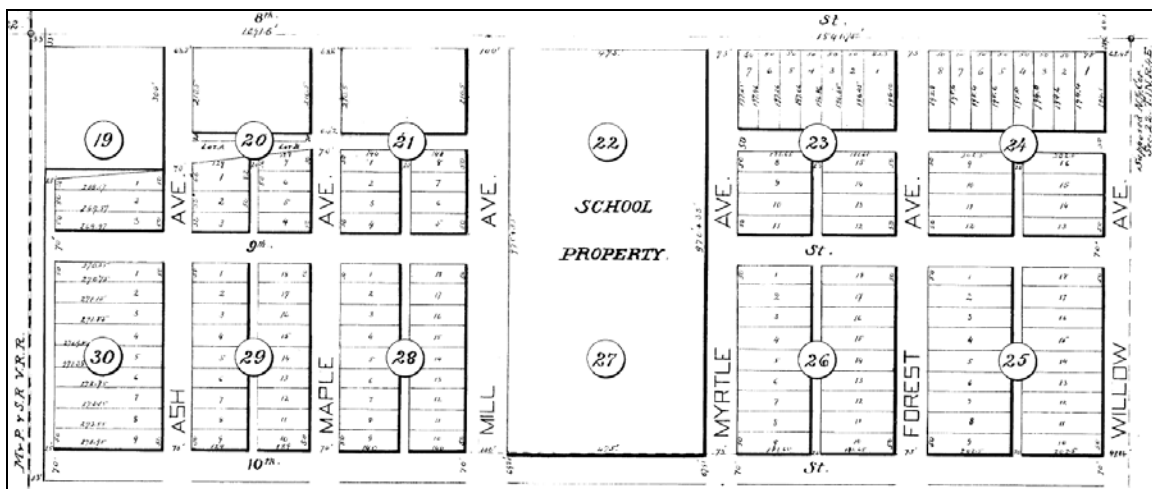
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a modern wood-frame at the outskirts of town on the southwest corner of Mill Avenue and Eighth Street (now University Avenue).^{ii iii iv}

The railroad's arrival in 1887 thrust Tempe into the nexus of American shipping and receiving, but with the 1890s came a nationwide economic depression caused in part by the overbuilding of western railroads; during this period Tempe endured cycles of drought and flood endemic of the Salt River Valley. Despite these setbacks, however, the town emerged as a model of progressive era community-building, particularly with the development of picturesque educational institutions south of Eighth Street. In 1892 school officials oversaw the construction of a two-story grammar school at the southeast corner of Mill Avenue and Eighth Street—reportedly “one of the finest such school buildings in the southwest.” Three blocks to the east, administrators of the Tempe Normal School added a training school, dining hall, and auditorium-gymnasium to its already-venerable complex of Victorian era buildings, and in 1908 Tempe school officials opened Tempe High School at the corner of Mill Avenue and Ninth Street.^v

Historic Context: Gage Addition, 1909-1941

During the progressive era American towns and cities also experienced an initial wave of suburbanization, as affluent families sought to flee the din and vice of older quarters for “wholesome” neighborhoods on the outskirts of town. Gradually Tempe’s residential periphery crept south across Eighth Street, in part pushed by the nuisance of Mill Avenue industry but also pulled by the town’s picturesque educational institutions. In 1892, a local merchant named Ben Goldman subdivided land south of Eighth Street east of the Normal School, where rows of attractive brick houses along Normal, Van Ness, and McAllister Avenues formed a new neighborhood called the “Goldman Addition.” In 1909 the TLIC emulated Goldman Addition west of the Normal School, opening the “Gage Addition” along Maple, Ash, Mill, Myrtle, Forest, and Willow (now College) avenues between Eighth and Tenth streets. That December, sixty-seven-year-old George N. Gage sold his home to Benjamin H. Scudder, a professor of history at Tempe Normal School, and retired to Orange County, California, where he died in 1913. B. B. Sanders took over as TLIC secretary, but the company thereafter played a diminished role in Tempe’s development.^{vi vii}

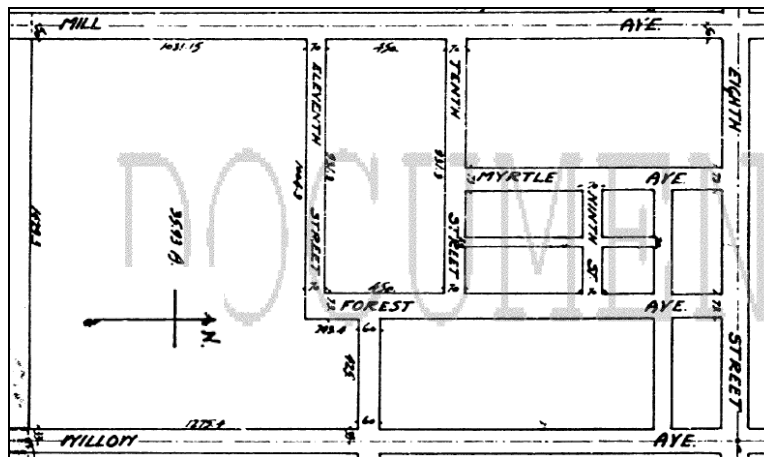


“Plat of Gage Addition to Tempe, Arizona,” filed 30 March 1909, Maricopa County Recorder’s Office, Book 3, Page 58.

Scudder, praised by *Tempe News* as a “perpetual booster of Tempe,” invested heavily in Gage Addition lots and envisioned the neighborhood as an ideal location for Normal

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School student and faculty housing. Between 1910 and 1920 he built a series of prefabricated National Folk style rental cottages and custom-built Bungalow houses in Gage Addition, then in 1912 played a key role in the Normal School's acquisition of several lots east of Mill Avenue. In 1919 the Normal School expanded this purchase and bought up all the remaining Gage Addition lots east of Mill Avenue, including unsurveyed lands south of Tenth Street, excluding the grammar school and high school. In April 1919, the Arizona Board of Education filed a new plat map entitled "Amended Plat Map of Gage Addition," which supplanted the TLIC street grid between Mill and Willow avenues with an irregular layout that remains evident today in the layout of Arizona State University.^{viii ix}



"Amended Plat Map of Gage Addition," filed 24 April 1919, Maricopa County Recorder's Office, Book 8, Page 41.

After World War I, however, Scudder's vision of modest student and faculty housing yielded to a more affluent middle-class housing stock anchored by Christian Saylor's 1909 bungalow at 940 Ash Avenue and by William A. Moeur's opulent 1910 Colonial Revival-style residence at 850 Ash Avenue. In 1938 Gage Addition attained concrete sidewalks installed by WPA workers. Unlike the Goldman Addition, which surrendered to the expansion of Arizona State University during the 1960s, most of the Gage Addition's pre-World War II build-out remains intact, though several of Scudder's cottages succumbed to infill development between 1945 and 1960. Multi-family residential development accomplished in the wake of 1960s up-zoning has also altered the neighborhood's pre-1941 suburban form.

Historic Context, Park Tract, 1920-1941

The post-World War I era opened with great promise in Tempe, as the town prospered amidst a cotton boom fueled by global demand for long staple Pima cotton, a high-quality strand developed by E. W. Hudson at Sacaton during the 1910s. With economic prosperity, however, came population growth and a housing shortage, which the town's leaders resolved to meet with a new suburban development immediately south of Gage Addition. In March 1920 ten local investors bought shares in nine undeveloped city blocks between 10th Street, Mill Avenue, 13th Street, and the Arizona Eastern tracks. Pledging \$18,000 in total, they recruited three of their co-investors—E. W. Hudson, Hugh E. Laird, and Fred J. Joyce—as trustees to administer the sale of lots. The new neighborhood would be called "Park Tract."^x

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Development of Park Tract stalled almost immediately as Tempe's cotton bubble burst in the fall of 1920. Around the same time, the town's agricultural landscape showed signs of overirrigation, as alkaline groundwater seeped into the water table and ruined local fields. In 1923 the area's irrigators joined the Salt River Project to combat the problem through an elaborate pumping system, and gradually the town's economy recovered as the fortunes of its farming families stabilized. In April 1924 Hudson, Laird, and Joyce revived the development of Park Tract, filing a plat map with the County Recorder and commencing the sale of town lots.^{xi}



"Park Tract," filed 4 April 1924, Maricopa County Recorder's Office, Book 13, Page 27.

Like the Gage Addition opposite Tenth Street, Park Tract provided Tempe's upwardly-mobile residents with a haven of modern housing in a setting far removed from the town's older quarters. Restrictive covenants limited Park Tract to residential development only. Property values were to exceed \$3,000, while builders were to set back homes twenty-five feet from the street to allow for lushly landscaped front yards; garages and outbuildings were to be set back seventy-five feet. Restrictive covenants also prohibited racial minorities from owning or even renting property in the neighborhood, a provision that remained in place through the late 1940s.^{xii}

Despite Tempe's booming late-1920s economy, Park Tract developed slowly. In February 1928 the trustees transferred all of the neighborhood's lots into private hands: some were sold individually but the majority were distributed to the neighborhood's investors at a scale commensurate to the amount of shares owned.

Despite this transfer, by 1930 builders had

developed only eleven of the Park Tract's one-hundred lots. Home building further slowed during the early 1930s with the collapse of the American banking system. Only with arrival of the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) in 1937 did Park Tract begin to fully develop: the years 1937-1941 marked the neighborhood's most rapid period of development. In 1938 another New Deal program, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), provided Park Tract with paved sidewalks; a year later WPA workers also widened and beautified Mill Avenue along the neighborhood's eastern boundary. By 1945 the neighborhood had achieved near total build-out. Only through a series of late-twentieth-century multi-family redevelopment projects accomplished in the wake of 1960s up-zoning did the neighborhood's form sustain significant alteration.^{xiii xiv}

ⁱ Mark E. Pry, *Oasis in the Valley: The Story of Water in Tempe* (Tempe: Tempe Historical Museum, 2003), 11.

ⁱⁱ John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 53.

iii Larry Dean Simpkins, "The Rise of the Southeastern Salt River Valley: Tempe, Mesa, Chandler, Gilbert, 1871-1920," Ph.D. diss., Arizona State University, 1989, 50-63.

iv Ibid., 63-69.

^v Ibid., 72-106.

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^{vi} Ibid., 71; "Tempe, Arizona," Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1911, Sheet 6

^{vii} "Excerpts: HPS-203," <http://www.tempe.gov/museum/Tempe_history/properties/cite203.htm> (accessed 24 May 2011).

^{viii} "Excerpts: HPS-231," <http://www.tempe.gov/museum/tempe_history/properties/cite231.htm> (Accessed 24 May 2011).

^{ix} *Acts, Resolutions and Memorials of the Regular Session Fourteenth Legislature of the State of Arizona* (Phoenix: State of Arizona, 1919), 22.

^x "Agreement and Declaration of Trust," June 10, 1920. Available at Maricopa County Recorder's Office, Book 12, Page 354-361.

^{xi} Simpkins, "The Rise of the Southeastern Salt River Valley," 125.

^{xii} Example "Warranty Deed," September 20, 1924. Available at Maricopa County Recorder's Office, Book 187, Page 45-46.

^{xiii} Larry Schweikart, *A History of Banking in Arizona* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982), 102.

^{xiv} The WPA reportedly laid 80.6 miles of new sidewalks in Maricopa County prior to 1940. *Summary of Inventory of Physical Accomplishments by the Work Projects Administration: From July 1, 1935 to January 1, 1940* (Phoenix: Federal Works Agency, Works Progress Administration, 1940), 16, 22. See also *Arizona Highways*, March 1939, 38.