A post office was established at Independence on July 1, 1870. Pursuant to a proclamation issued by President Ulysses S. Grant, Independence became incorporated as a village on July 22, 1870.

From the spring of 1871 to the same time in 1872, over 200 houses were built, and the population swelled to a healthy pace, and in 1882 Independence had a population of 3,000 and became a first-class town.

In October, a party of eighteen families of emigrants from Vermont, headed by Samuel Pamukur, took up homesteads in the town and constructed log shanties which they lived during the winter. During the summer of 1883, the town company erected a double-log hotel called the Johnson House, for the accommodation of travelers.

The first business house was established in October, 1863. As an example of Independence, one of the first buildings erected and the site of the town was chosen, commencing at the southeast corner and extending north and west.

The first building erected was a store, the first was a log cabin, which Frank Buxton had built to the south of the town. On September 11, 1866, the founders of the town and their friends gathered at the site and the town was named Independence. According to the town and their friends, the town and their friends thought that it would be a good name for the town.

The town was chosen for its location, which Frank Buxton had built to the south of the town. The town was named Independence, which Frank Buxton had built to the south of the town. The town was named Independence, which Frank Buxton had built to the south of the town. The town was named Independence, which Frank Buxton had built to the south of the town. The town was named Independence, which Frank Buxton had built to the south of the town.

We are proud of our heritage and will continue to preserve the historic story of Independence.

This walking tour of historic homes is only a portion of the beautiful sites to visit in Independence.

In August, 1869, a band of men, headed by R. W. Wright, left the city of Oswego, Kansas, with the hope of finding a favorable spot and become the founders of a city. Steering their course to the west and south, they each reached the valley of the Verdigris River.

They were determined to erect upon their own unoccupied lands and find a city that would be named Independence. According to its founding fathers, the town was named Independence, which Frank Buxton had built to the south of the town.

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1. 500 EAST MYRTLE (1904) - Henry S. Beck, a wealthy man, had this huge home built for his daughter as a wedding present when she wed William A. Spencer. Beck then lived with the Spencers after the house was constructed. Spencer was a successful executive with Prairie Oil and Gas and Prairie Pipe Line. He was also the president of the State Bank of Commerce.

2. 201 N. SECOND (1903) - A prominent businessman, Mr. T. C. Truman was the proprietor of the city's leading ice factory and cold storage plant. Truman made his start manufacturing beer and carbonated drinks in 1871, before adding the ice factory.

3. 617 EAST MYRTLE (1908) - Constructed by William E. Scott for William W. and Welthly A. Curtin, this home has many unique characteristics, including a smoking room for gentlemen guests to retire to after dinner. The home originally had a red tile roof; many of the rooms have been restored to their original appearance.

4. 102 SOUTH FIRST (1925) - Dana H. Kelsey, a vice-president of Prairie Oil and Gas, had this home designed by J.C. Nichols, the same architect who designed the Plaza in Kansas City. The seventeen-room home includes service quarters in the basement, a wine room, recreation room and two car garage.

5. 201 SOUTH FIRST (1888) - When Henry Baden, a young man without much experience, walked to Independence from Kansas City in 1870 the town consisted mostly of tents, hay and box houses, and the Indians possessed the land. Baden bought a lot and erected a building 23 x 20 feet, but not having the goods to fill it, rented one-half for a barber shop and occupied the other room with a cigar stand and cigar factory, and slept in the back part. Baden and his sons later had a tremendous influence on our business community where they operated four different stores at one time. His home was constructed from hand pressed brick made only one block away.

6. 201 SOUTH SECOND (1903) - This home was built for W.R. Pratt who had started in the stationary and book business in Independence in 1889. The home was built by Frank D. Brewster. It features, solid walls, 16 inches thick, two glass fireplaces, beveled glass doors, and pocket doors. The basement is unusually deep with nine-foot high ceilings. At one time the roof drainage went underground to a manual valve which could direct flow to the cistern, if needed, or into the street.

7. 510 EAST MAPLE (1907) - A.E. Todd built this spacious, ten-room, $4,500 home for William E. Stich, an insurance man, who was a brother of A.C. Stich - one of Independence's most prominent citizens. Another interesting family connection was the marriage of W.E. Stich's daughter to Earl Sinclair, a brother of Harry F. Sinclair. The home was built very near the western lot line which, it had been claimed, so angered neighbor Cam Bloom that he considered constructing a "spite fence" to illustrate the width of his property.

8. 500 EAST MAPLE (1884) - The most sensational story in Independence history is the turn-of-the-century social, political and business feud between bankers A.C. Stich and George T. Guernsey, Sr. This fifteen-year feud purportedly started in Paris between their touring wives concerning the French pronunciation of "baggage" but culminated into quite a rivalry. This home was built for George T. Guernsey, Sr. He later sold his home for $4,000 in late 1899 to Cam Bloom so he could build an even bigger one on North Penn Avenue, called "Ridgewood".

9. 418 EAST MAPLE (1929) - This pitched roof home was built for Charles Waits.

10. 200 SOUTH FOURTH (1903) - This home was constructed by A.E. Todd for Mr. August Zutz, a pioneer in the grocery and hardware business. The interior has red oak throughout, including the floors of the first floor.

11. 201 SOUTH FOURTH (1916) - Burns Uhrich had A.E. Todd construct the first fireproof home in Kansas. Uhrich had drawn the plans and cut the woodwork at his father's mill. His father had received the patent for the revolving door and was the owner of the revolving door and sash company here in Independence.

12. 209 SOUTH FOURTH (1915) - This home was built by Arthur Hurd for Roderick Morrison who was an independent oil operator. Oak beams, oak mantles on the five fireplaces and all the woodwork in the home were made by the Uhrich Mill here in Independence. Because of the crooked driveway, which has since been removed, Morrison had a turntable constructed in the garage so his car could be turned around and driven forward out of the garage.

13. 217 SOUTH FOURTH (1909) - This home was built by A.E. Todd for Earl Sinclair, a brother of Harry F. Sinclair. One outstanding feature of the home is a 24 foot entrance hall outlined by oak beams, woodwork, staircase with a built-in bench and a fireplace at the far end.

14. 218 SOUTH FOURTH (1904) - This home was built for Frank Freeling who was in the dry goods business. Special interior features include oak woodwork, hardwood stairs, an open staircase, and two fireplaces.

15. 300 SOUTH FOURTH (1915) - Earl Todd, the son of A.E. Todd, built this home for Nelson K. Moody, the president of Sinclair-Prairie Oil Marketing Company. Mr. and Mrs. Moody entertained at their home every Sunday evening. Several renovations have been made to the home since.
16. 400 SOUTH FOURTH (1905) — This home was built for William N. Banks, a young attorney from Indiana. This thirteen-room home features oak woodwork in ribbons and bows pattern, a large stained glass window on the landing halfway up the stairs, sliding pocket doors and two gas fireplaces.

17. 401 SOUTH FOURTH (1906) — This ten-room home was built by A.M. Lind for Henry H. Ditmmer. Ditmmer came here from Germany with his brother John to work for their uncle, Henry Baden. Henry Ditmmer was in charge of the wholesale grocery store and was a traveling salesman for Baden.

18. 301 SOUTH FOURTH (1881) — This home was built by P.S. Edmundson and J.W. Graham for Mr. and Mrs. E.P. Allen. Allen contended that the home was built on "sacred ground" because the fill dirt had been dug for the basement of the St. Andrew Catholic Church. Allen was experienced in the real estate business and he was an important pillar in the community. His primary occupation was president of the First National Bank.

19. 215 SOUTH FIFTH (1906) — Many of the big, beautiful historic living rooms have parquet-patterned hardwood floors.

20. 301 SOUTH FIFTH (1907) — This home was constructed by A.E. Todd for Albert W. Blower, the vice-president of George Guensey's Commercial National Bank.

21. 300 SOUTH SIXTH (1901) — The E.E. Wilson home was built shortly after the turn of the century. It was constructed on a solid native stone foundation with two floors along with an attic and base-

22. 302 SOUTH PENN (1896) — William Dunkin was a lawyer, citizen, capitalist and real estate owner. He came to Independence in March 1873 and became known as one of the most active attorneys in Montgomery county. At that time, Mr. Dunkin was considered one of the wealthiest men in the county as a result of developing "financial genius." The house was built in 1896 and was remodeled by A.E. Todd sometime before 1903. The porches and column supports were also considerably changed at that time.

23. 319 SOUTH PENN (1910) — John and Henry Ditmmer were sent to this country from Germany without either of them being able to speak English. Each had a tag fastened to their coat lapel which indicated that they were to come to Independence and be delivered to their uncle, Henry Baden. Of course both learned the language and were very productive workers for Baden. John was in charge of the wholesale dry goods department of Baden's business. This fourteen-room home was built for John Ditmmer. It is equipped with a dumb waiter which was used to bring the food from the basement where it was

24. 301 SOUTH PENN (1879) — John M. Anderson, an 1871 settler, was not only the original owner of this beautiful home, but also did some of the construction work as well. Mr. Anderson had joined D.F. Camenga in 1871 to start a dry goods store. Mr. Anderson was a fine carpenter so he built the building with the help of his partner. It burned down and was rebuilt by them in 1883. Mr. Anderson then sold to Camenga and started a store. Fire destroyed his stock once again. Originally this home was heated by fireplaces that burned coke in bas-

25. 207 SOUTH PENN (1907) — This was the first apartment house in Independence. It was built for Dr. C.W. DeMott and hence called "DeMott Flats."

26. 300 SOUTH EIGHTH (1901) — This home's original address is 300 W. Maple, but was moved in 2005 to its current location to be used as the Landon Center. It was the home of Independence's most famous political citizen, Alf Landon. Landon was Kansas Governor in 1932 and the Republican presidential candidate in 1936. He lived here prior to taking office.

27. 216 SOUTH EIGHTH (1903) — A. Frank Johnson came to Independence in 1880 and worked for Henry Baden in his dry goods store. Later he established his own stationary and book business. He had this beautiful home built and he also owned the homes on the north and east. He had bought these houses for his son to live in, and the story has it that he was contemplating building a third house close by for his third son.
BEGIN & END AT THE LETTER a

A. 300 E. Main—Montgomery County Judicial Center
B. 200 E. Main—Montgomery County Courthouse
C. 120 N. Sixth—Independence City Hall
D. 220 E. Maple—Independence Public Library, Carnegie Library, listed on the National Historic Register
E. 201-209 W. Main—Booth Hotel, listed on the National Historic Register
F. 123 N. Eighth—Independence Historical Museum, listed on the National Historic Register
G. 121-123 W. Main—Union Implement and Hardware Building, listed on the National Historic Register

This self-guided tour is approximately 1.6 miles in length and will take approximately 45 minutes to walk.

All homes are privately owned and are not open for tours. Please stay on city sidewalks. Please respect all property.