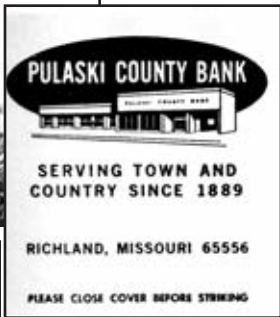


The Family Business — for 142 years



The business is located on the southeast corner of Pine and McClurg streets in Richland and it has been there since 1869. *Warren's store is recognized as the oldest business in Missouri operating under the same name.*

Captain Henry E. Warren came to Pulaski County from Tennessee soon after the Civil War. Railroad construction, which had ceased due to the hostilities of the War of Rebellion, resumed and crossed northern Pulaski County in 1869. Milton Santee, the railroad's surveyor, laid out the town straddling the railroad near the adjacent county boundaries of Laclede and Camden. Warren and Sam Gibson erected one of the first buildings, which became the H. E. Warren Store. Captain Warren (pictured at middle left) was the second

mayor of Richland and, along with others, founded the Pulaski County Bank, which became Boatmans Bank and is now Bank of America.

The Warren store buildings anchor the corner of Pine and McClurg streets, which parallel the railroad. Over the nearly century and a half, the Warren corner has offered a grocery store, Ben Franklin variety store, shoe store, and department store.



The large cash register from a previous era anchors a counter corner. Behind the counter was the once bustling business office. When the sale is rung up, the cash drawer slides open from the back of the machine into the office area.

Donna Payne, manager, pointed out the racks of fine suits on the south wall. The bigger sellers come from the large selection of Levis, not found at other area retailers. On our visit, several customers came by to inspect the yard goods. "The yard goods business has been good since Walmart discontinued its yard goods department," Donna remarked.

Richland has continued to prosper since its early railroad days with entrepreneurs such as Captain H. E. Warren and the intense area promotion by E. A. Steckel in the 1920s (see the article about E. A. Steckel, beginning on page 30).



Although mostly obscured by trees and foliage, Captain Warren's residence in Richland was stylish enough to warrant its own post card. Courtesy of Jan and Terry Primas.



One of our favorite pictures is this grocery wagon of H. E. Warren, delivering groceries on the muddy street in front of Richland City Hall, ca. 1910. The sign on the wagon says "Buy your groceries of H. E. Warren. Maude." Courtesy of Jan and Terry Primas.



Richland had a town band by 1890. Courtesy of John Bradbury.



Our earliest view of Warren's corner and the dirt streets intersection in 1908. Courtesy of John Bradbury.



Showing more windows and awnings to shade some of them in a bustling Richland, 1937. Courtesy of John Bradbury.



The awnings are gone, as well as some of the windows, but business goes on in 2011. Photo by Terry Primas.