



William Allen White Family LIFE & TIMES

January 2006



1868 - WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE - 1944 IN MEMORIUM



In 1996, a panel of 15 historians and journalists convened to determine the most influential person in all of Kansas History. Their consensus over President Eisenhower, over Arthur Capper and over Bob Dole was William Allen White.

Born in Emporia on February 10, 1868, White grew up in El Dorado, Kansas. He graduated from public schools there, enrolling in the new College of Emporia in 1884. Later, he would transfer to the University of Kansas in Lawrence.

His first taste of the newspaper business came as a teen printer's devil in El Dorado. While at KU, White worked as a stringer for several newspapers. Leaving college without his degree, White eventually worked for the *Kansas City Star* editing and writing opinion.

In 1893, William Allen White met and married Sallie Moss Lindsay, a young school teacher in Kansas City, Kansas. By 1895, the young couple decided to buy a newspaper of their own. With a loan of \$3,000, the Whites settled on *The Emporia Gazette* in the town of his birth.

In 1896 White published his career-making editorial, *What's the Matter with Kansas*. For the next 48 years, William Allen White remained a home-town newspaperman with an international readership. A voice of the heartland, White wrote on all subjects in a style that captivated his audience whether they agreed or not.

On January 29, 1944 – Kansas Day, The Sage of Emporia died of cancer. Though the voice was silenced, his provocative points of view resonate today. William Allen White influences today through his legacy of words and deeds.

In coelo quies est
"In Heaven there is rest."

*A publication of the William Allen White Community Partnership, Inc.
for the Friends of the William Allen White House State Historic Site*

Tributes to William Allen White

William Allen White died on January 29, 1944 — Kansas Day. What follows are editorials and tributes to White after his passing.

Wichita Eagle- “The thousand brilliant facets of his outstanding gifts have become as much a part of the life of the people of this commonwealth as in the sunshine of their prairies!”

Salina Journal- "Above all things the Emporia editor was a Kansan. When the state was attacked, he defended. When things went wrong, he preached encouragement and optimism. When evil flourished in political or social problems, he went on the war path. Born with the spirit of a crusader, crossed with kindly, friendly, sentimental tendencies, he never dared let his right hand know what his left was doing. In his passing the nation as well as his home state has lost a valiant fighter for all that is worthwhile. His place will not be filled."

Henry J. Haskell, editor of *The Kansas City Star*, speaking at White's funeral- “Behind all his work was the personality of the man. He was a great human being- great in intelligence, in understanding, in courage, in zest. Life to him always was a glorious adventure. 'I never have been bored an hour in my life,' he wrote on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday. 'I get up every morning now wondering what new, strange, gorgeous thing is going to happen, and it always happens at fairly reasonable intervals.’”



President Franklin D. Roosevelt in a telegraph to Mrs. White-

"My heart goes out to you and Bill in the loss of a beloved husband and father. The newspaper world loses one of its wisest and most beloved editors in the death of William Allen White.

"He made *The Emporia Gazette* a national institution. As a writer of truth, forcible and vigorous prose, he was unsurpassed. He ennobled the profession of journalism which he served with such unselfish devotion thru more than two score years. To me his passing brings a real sense of personal loss, for we had been the best of friends for years."

Kansas Senator Arthur Capper- "William Allen White, sincere citizen and great editor, chose to live most of his useful life near the scenes of his youth. Yet his deep sympathies knew no boundaries of space, religion, color or nationality.”



William Allen White House State Historic Site

Hours: 2:00-5:00 p.m. Saturday & Sunday, last tour starts at 4:30 p.m.

Group Tours: For groups of 10 or more, call for arrangements

Admission: \$3.00 adults; \$2.00 seniors (65 and above) and \$2.00 for students (K-12, college), annual passes are available, KSHS members admitted free

ADA Accessible

Ask about “William Allen White’s Emporia” thematic tours

927 Exchange St., PO Box 426
Emporia, Kansas 66801-3040
620-342-2800 · wawhitehouse@kshs.org
www.kshs.org/places/white/