Early in the twentieth century Kodak introduced its customers to what it called “real photo postcards,” which let anyone with the right camera to make a postcard from any picture they took. When the federal government allowed such items to be mailed with address and message on the back in 1907, the popularity of these postcards soared.

Shortly after America’s entry into World War I, the United States Army erected a monument locating the center of the nation near the newly constructed Camp Funston at Fort Riley, Kansas. This “real photo postcard” image of the “Ogden Monument” was likely made around 1917. “The Competition to Claim Ownership of the Center of the Nation” is the subject of one of this issue’s feature articles, which focuses on the Smith County town of Lebanon, 140 miles west of Ogden. Lebanon captured official designation of the geographic center of the U.S. in 1940, but its proud claim was immediately and continually challenged by states and towns throughout the region for promotional and legitimate geographic reasons.
"Over the Hill to the Poorhouse": 2

Kansas Poor Relief  
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