

**THE PROSPECTS OF  
FRANKLIN COUNTY,  
ILLINOIS, 1912**

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The prospects of Franklin County, Illinois, 1912 by Benton Commercial Club

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**BENTON COMMERCIAL CLUB**

**THE PROSPECTS OF  
FRANKLIN COUNTY,  
ILLINOIS, 1912**



1912

*The Prospects of*  
**Franklin County**  
Illinois

Opportunities

Opportunities for the land owner, investor,  
and the farmer.

**Franklin County**  
Illinois

**Shows the Greatest Development  
in the State in Wealth, Pop-  
ulation and Improvement**

## EXAMINE THESE STATISTICS

**T**HE POPULATION in 1905 of Franklin County's principal towns was as follows: Benton—1860; Christopher—300; West Frankfort—100; Sesser—100; Hanaford—20; or a total of 2380.

THE POPULATION in 1912 of the principal towns of Franklin County was as follows:

Benton—5100; Christopher—3500; West Frankfort—3500; Sesser—2200; Hanaford—1000; or a total of 15,300.



A STREET SCENE IN BENTON TODAY

THE ASSESSED VALUATION of Franklin County for the year 1900 was \$6,753,380.00.

THE ASSESSED VALUATION of Franklin County for the year 1912 will approximate \$21,250,000.00.

THE TOTAL WAGE SCALE of Franklin County in the year of 1905 did not exceed \$250,000.00.

THE TOTAL WAGE SCALE of Franklin County in the year of 1912 will exceed \$4,000,000.00.

THE BANK ASSETS of Franklin County in the year of 1900 were approximately \$140,000.00.

THE BANK ASSETS of Franklin County in the year of 1912 exceeded \$1,850,000.00.

### LOCATION, TRANSPORTATION, RESOURCES AND CLIMATE

FRANKLIN COUNTY, ILLINOIS, is situated in the south central part of the State, 300 miles south of Chicago and 90 miles east of St. Louis.

THE PRINCIPAL CENTERS of population of the county lie to the east, west, north and south, all within easy access and reached by several trunk lines of railway. Its location is central and situated so as to command the best markets for its products.



OLD TAVERN

JOHN A. LOGAN'S OLD HOME

A STREET SCENE IN OLD-TIME BENTON

**RAILROADS**—Four of the world's greatest railway systems intersect this County, the Illinois Central; the Frisco; the Burlington and the Missouri Pacific; two other great systems, the Rock Island and the Big Four, are extending their lines into this section.

FRANKLIN COUNTY is noted for the immense deposits and superior quality of its coal, which at the present time is perhaps its greatest asset.

THE CLIMATE IS IDEAL. The winters are short and the spring and autumn seasons extend far into the winter and summer months.

## THE CITIES AND TOWNS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY

A wonderful advancement in population and wealth in the past ten years has taken place in the urban population of this County.

**BENTON**, the County seat, is a city of 5000 people. The City has three railroads, the Illinois Central, Chicago & Eastern Illinois and Missouri Pacific. Two new lines are also projected. It has paved streets, an electric lighting plant, a water system, an opera house, hotels, modern schools, churches, etc. Two large coal companies operate here and five more are planned for the near future. Benton has a Commercial Club and an intelligent and prosperous people.

**CHRISTOPHER** is a thriving City of 3500 people, lying in the west part of the County. It has two important railroads, the Illinois Central and the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. In 1905 the population did not exceed 300. There are three operating mines and two more are planned. The City has electric lights, miles of granitoid walks, a magnificent new opera house, and its people confidently expect a population of 10,000 within the next ten years.

**WEST FRANKFORT** has one of the most beautiful locations in Southern Illinois. It boasts of a population of 3500 and has grown from a village of 100 people in seven years. Here are located four important mines and three more projected. It is a division point for the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railway, the company having round-houses at this place. West Frankfort is steadily growing in population and commercial importance.

**SESSER** is one of the progressive towns of the County, situated on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railway. It has a population of 2200, all secured during the past six years. There is located here the large plant of the Sesser Coal Company. There are other mines projected and Sesser is advancing rapidly.

**HANAFORD**, was not on the map three years ago. It now has 1000 inhabitants and is rapidly growing. It has the Illinois Central Railroad and two more have been surveyed. The Carroll and Franklin Counties Coal Company



now employ 150 men and will employ 500 men when the mine is fully equipped. Five other Coal Companies own valuable holdings here. Hanaford has two banks, and is an important shipping point for poultry products.

THOMPSONVILLE is situated on the Illinois Central Railway. Adjacent to the town are valuable coal deposits and a company has been formed to develop the coal. The population is about 800 and it is perhaps the most important shipping point for poultry products in Southern Illinois.

EWING is a college town. The Ewing College is located here and is one of the oldest and most successful in the State. Many eminent men have graduated here and the college was never in a more prosperous condition. Its railway station is known as Whittington.

ZEIGLER has a population of 1000. Zeigler is important as a coal producing community. Here was the first real development of the valuable coal field of Franklin County. Joseph Leiter controls 8000 acres of valuable holdings and one of the largest plants anywhere in operation, the initial cost being more than \$1,000,000.00. Zeigler is situated on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy and Illinois Central Railways. The mine is operated by the Bell and Zoller Mining Co., of Chicago.

ROYALTON is an important coal producing town situated on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railways. The town was named after William J. Royal. There is a large and modern plant here known as the Royalton Coal Company. The quality of the coal is of the highest and the company is most prosperous. The population is 800. It has a bank, good stores and an enterprising people.

AKIN is situated in the eastern part of Franklin County. It is an important trading point, having large stores and two State Banks, the Bank of Akin and the Farmers' Exchange Bank.

MACEDONIA is in the extreme eastern part of the County and is surrounded by a well-to-do farming community. It has good stores and two banks, the Bank of Macedonia and the People's Bank.

WHITTINGTON is an important trading point on the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railway in the northern part

of the County. It has valuable deposits of coal in the vicinity not yet developed.

MULKEYTOWN lies in the western part of the County on the Illinois Central. There are several prosperous stores here as it is surrounded by a good farming community.

PARRISH is about seven miles east of Benton on the Illinois Central Railway. It has valuable deposits of coal and is surrounded by excellent farming land.

BUCKNER lies on the Illinois Central Railway four miles west of Benton. It was entirely vacant one year ago. The town now claims 600 population and is rapidly growing. Here is the plant of the United Coal Mining Company, the largest perhaps in the country, with a capacity of 4000 tons per day of eight hours. The grade of coal is of the best.

REND CITY is one of the important coal producing points in the County. It is reached by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railway. Col. W. P. Rend was the founder of this town. The Rend mine is thoroughly modern and the coal ranks with the very best. The comfort and well being of the employees of the coal company is of particular interest.

FREEMAN lies in the extreme southern part of Franklin County. The population is about 500. The Possum Ridge mine, the property of the Southern Illinois Coal and Coke Co., is located here. This company employs 300 men. This number will be materially increased as this valuable property is developed. Freeman has several good stores and the schools are excellent.



The prosperity of a people is proportionate to the number of hands and minds usefully employed.—*Johnson*.



## AGRICULTURE—MANUFACTURES —LABOR—CAPITAL

**T**HE AGRICULTURAL VALUE of the lands of Franklin County is enormous. The percentage of arable land is practically the same as in the most-favored sections of Illinois, Iowa and Indiana. The land will produce corn, wheat and other products as profitably as in any of the above states. The principal agricultural products that are particularly adapted for profit in Franklin County on account of climate, soil and market conditions are: *Vegetables, Fruit and Poultry.*

The soil and climate make possible the growth of vegetables with much greater success than on land farther north. The land, being more than usually responsive to fertilizers, is known as "Quick soil" by agricultural authorities. The value of our soil can be attested by the fact that the State of Illinois has provided us with one of their best experimental farms.

The growing seasons are long in this latitude, in many instances being sufficiently long to produce from two to four crops in one season, which is a very desirable factor in the growth of tomatoes, cabbage, potatoes, sweet potatoes, beans, pumpkins, etc. The quality and flavor of the vegetables are excellent. In this latitude can be raised favorably most of the products used by the great canning industries.

The same advantages of soil and climate that assist in the profitable growth of vegetables in this section also apply to fruits of all kinds, which grow with the utmost profusion with little care. The smaller fruits are particularly remunerative, such as strawberries, raspberries, cherries, peaches, etc.

THE POULTRY BUSINESS of the section is an important industry and there is a reason for this. The climate is not so severe as farther north. Chickens may range practically all the year. Yet there is enough sharp, freezing weather to energize poultry and to kill parasites that