Memorial High School

The February 23, 1922, *Hill City Republican* carried an unobtrusive notice, signed by Board of Education Clerk Martha J. Worcester, soliciting contractor bids to supply “400 cords of hard (Ogallala quartzite) sandrock” to a school-owned site.

The stone was “to be quarried without cost from the L.P. Hogan farm (northeast of Hill City), with rock to average in size from 12”x12”x12” to as large as 18”x18”x24” (along with) 200 cubic yards of sand.

Actually, the plan which could become *Hill City Memorial High School*, was initiated on November 8, 1921, when patrons of Rural High School District #3 voted, 505-378, to issue bonds in the amount of $135,000.00 to purchase land and to construct “a building for school purposes thereupon.”

A second *Republican* notice, this one on December 22, 1921, qualified that, as the result of an 181-10 vote of patrons, the new building would be placed “in the block east of the present building” (the stone school of 1904) and would be named *Memorial High School* to honor soldiers “who made the supreme sacrifice in the world war.”

Built largely on property condemned specifically for the building—O.B. Kaclely’s famous Great Western Livery building was still at the southwest corner of the site—the massive concrete-floored and tile-roofed building opened for classes on September 10, 1923, to 155 students. That number would quickly grow as rural students found homes in which to “board.”

Featuring a largely-subterranean gymnasium with perimeter seating; a balcony-furnished auditorium, considered the finest in western Kansas; and departments specifically designed for vocational agriculture, industrial arts and home economics, the building was the pride of Hill City.

The 23 county soldiers who had died in World War I were honored on November 12, 1923; and the 30 who were lost in World War II during a second dedication on May 30, 1948.