



Paris of the Plains: Kansas City from Doughboys to Expressways

John Simonson

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From the end of the Great War to the final years of the 1950s, Kansas Citians lived in a manner worthy of a place called Paris of the Plains. The title did more than nod to the perfumed ladies who shopped at Harzfeld's Parisian or the one-thousand-foot television antenna nicknamed the "Eye-full Tower." It spoke to the character of a town that worked for Boss Tom and danced for Count Basie but transcended both the Pendergast era and the Jazz Age. Author John Simonson introduces readers to a town of vaudeville shows and screened-in porches, where fleets of cream-and-black streetcars passed beneath a canopy of elms. This is a history that smells equally of lilacs and stockyards and bursts with the clamor of gunshots, radio baseball and the distant whistle of a night train.

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