

Yesterday, Tomorrow Meet Today in Millard

By Tom Allan

Yesterday and tomorrow are meeting today in Millard. It's a pleasant paradox.

Fifth Street, across the tracks on the west end, portrays the pleasant yesterday.

D Street, with its new buildings and modern store fronts, is today. Just peering over the hill is the town's tomorrow, the giant Western Electric Company Plant nearing completion.

True there is a bustling lumber yard and a new concrete plant in the old section. But for the most part Fifth Street has retained its quaint charm.

Porches over the sidewalk on a couple of stores could easily provide hitching posts. Even today in the window of the grocery in the old "Farmer's Home" sacks of chicken feed vie with modern victuals.

Perhaps it's appropriate that an old ice station featuring crushed and block ice is located on the old street beneath the spreading trees.

It spotlights the contrast with the fancy-front stores on across the tracks where neon signs shout the merits of freezers and air conditioners.

Then there's Johnny's, a refreshment spot of the old school. It looks condescendingly at the two chrome plated upstarts across the tracks.

The promise—and the hope—of tomorrow is evident on the new main drag. Its businesses are sandwiched between a loan company and a real estate company.

Town Marshal Otto H. Hibbeler figures the once sleepy village of four hundred now has about 750 permanent residents. This does not include

hundreds of construction workers at the plant whose cars jam the street during lunch hour.

There's a full house at a trailer court on the edge of town. There has been plenty of new house building on the hill but not as much as one might expect with at least four thousand jobs upcoming at the new plant.

Real estate developers have their foot in the door. But there has been a wariness similar to that of Town and School Board officials.

Still to be answered is the big question: How many of the plant employes will commute from Omaha and suburban communities?

Max R. Herrington, town druggist for 38 years and its postmaster for 28, concedes with a mixture of sadness and

gladness, that the town is already too big for the postoffice in the back of his store.

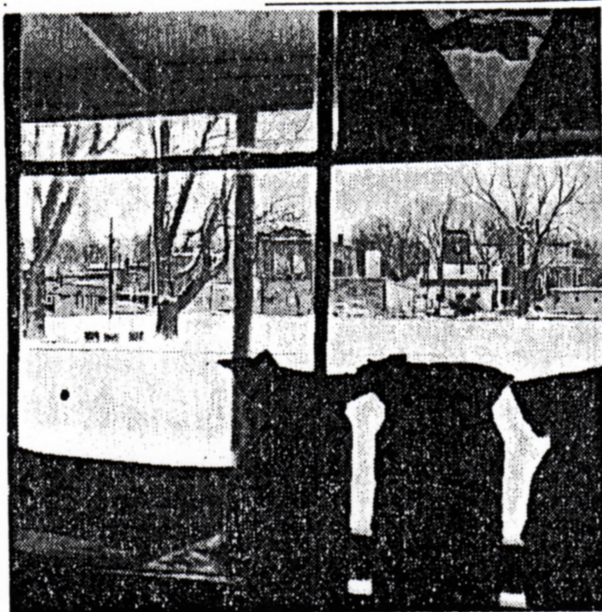
"Just a year ago we had 123 boxholders," he said Friday. "Today we have 391."

The bank next door has made tentative plans to build a modern building this year, leaving an ideal spot for a new mail center.

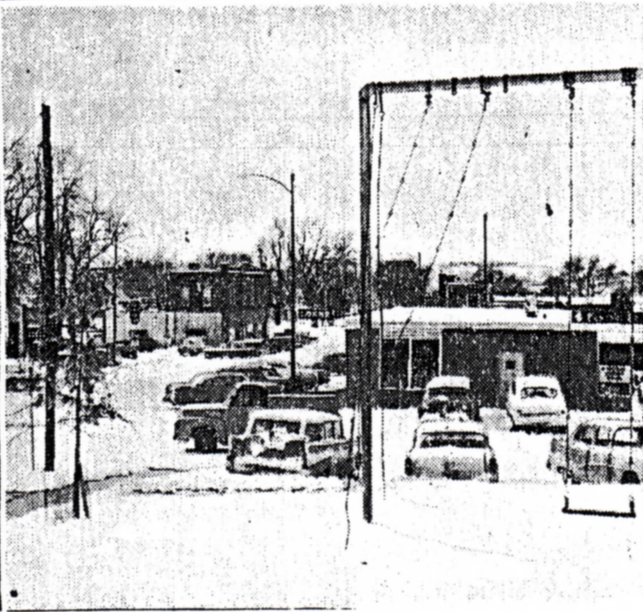
The price of progress would be the loss of the folksy touch around the drug store's mailboxes—the spice of neighborly gossip against a colorful background of FBI wanted posters, medicines and the latest magazines and perfumes.

Mr. Herrington waved his hand at the busy new main street.

"Never thought I'd see the day when I couldn't find a parking spot right off in front of my door. Now look."



Across feed sacks . . . to uptown.



New main street from school . . . Promise of tomorrow.



Drugstore-postoffice . . . Marshal Hibbeler, left, and Postmaster Herrington, center, with neighbors.



Millard's old main street—The charm of yesterday.

—World-Herald Photos.