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1933

### A Tribute Quote from C. J. Wilson, President of the Alumni Association

C.J. Wilson

*Kansas State Teachers College of Hays*

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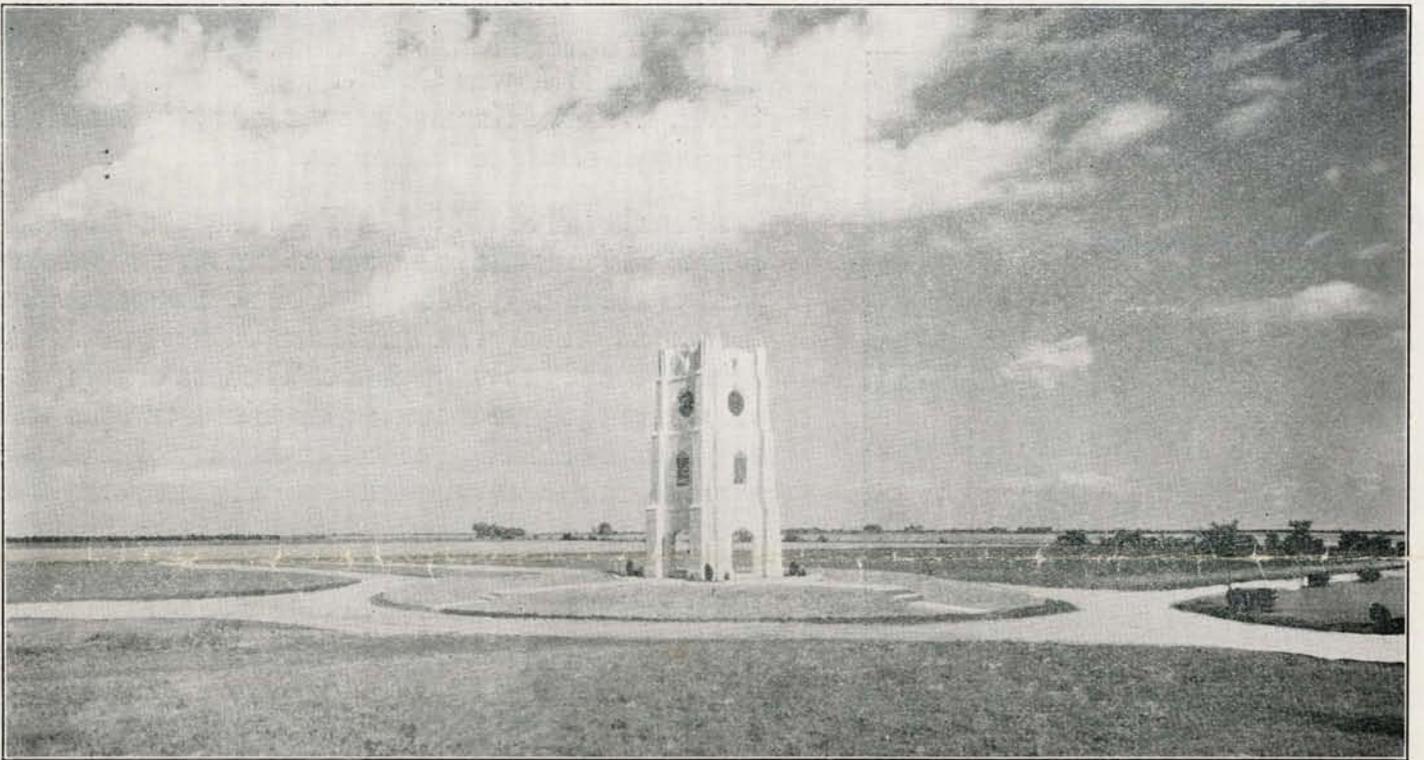
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## **Tower of Music Memorial Lawns**

**Memorial Lawns Cemetery**

**Wichita, Kansas**

**T. G. KLEPPER**  
President and Manager

**R. J. HAMILTON, Architect**  
Wichita, Kansas

**MITCHELL ELECTRIC CO.**  
Sound Equipment Contractor  
Wichita, Kansas

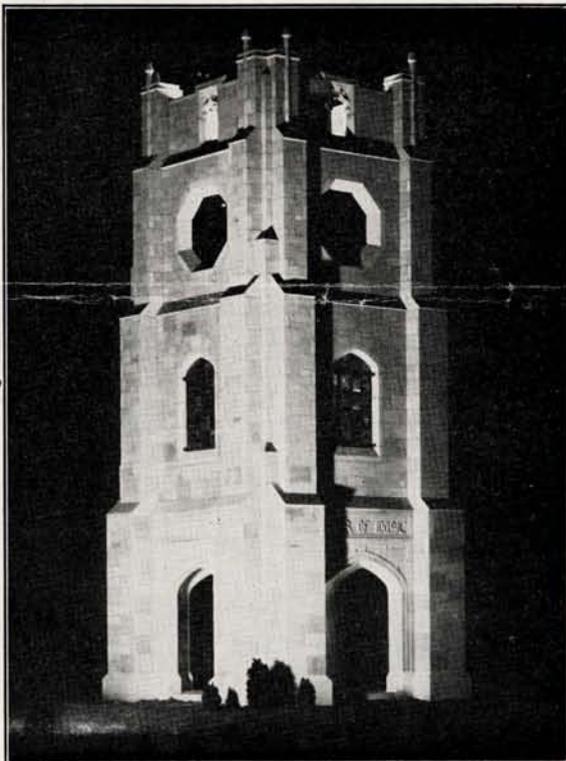


CLOSE UP VIEW OF TOWER

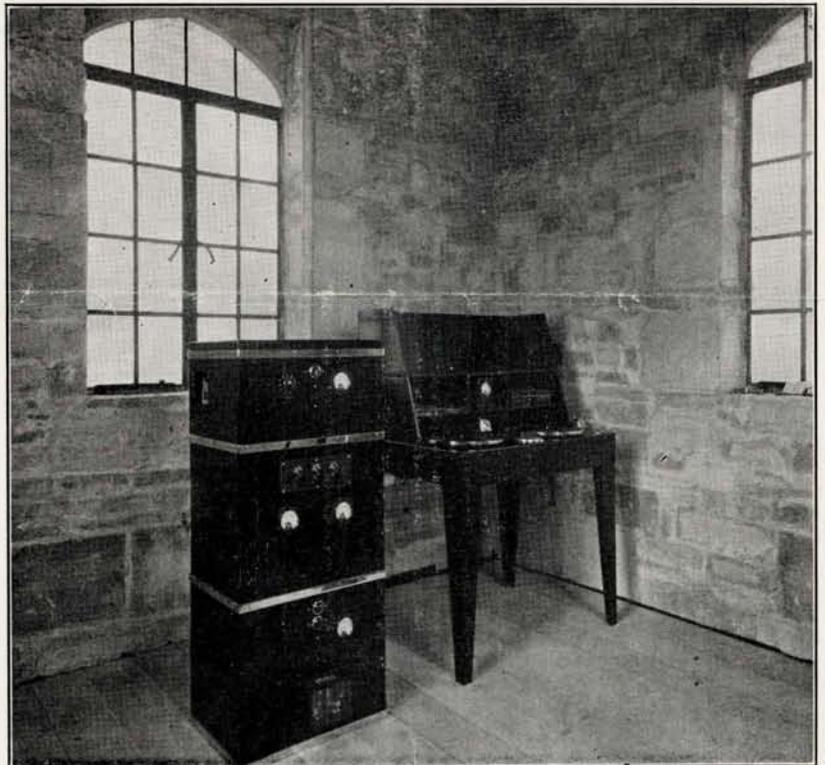
**T**HE Tower of Music erected on the property of the Memorial Lawns Cemetery, located at 17th and Oliver, Wichita, Kansas, is outstanding in that it is the only structure of its kind ever built.

Early in the fall of 1930, Mr. T. G. Klepper, the President of Memorial Lawns made several trips to various parts of the country to inspect Chimes Towers. All of the towers visited were satisfactory, except that they were all limited to chime music. The idea of using reproducing equipment instead of chimes or bells was originated by Mr. Klepper, and in January of 1931 the appropriation was allowed and the architect was selected to design a tower which would combine the beauty and simplicity of the old world Carillon Towers and the present day method of reproducing and amplifying recorded music.

The English Gothic design was selected for its charm and dignity which are essential requisites for all cemetery buildings. The preliminary studies were approved, and in March the final drawings and specifications were prepared. Contracts were awarded and actual construction work commenced in April.



NIGHT VIEW



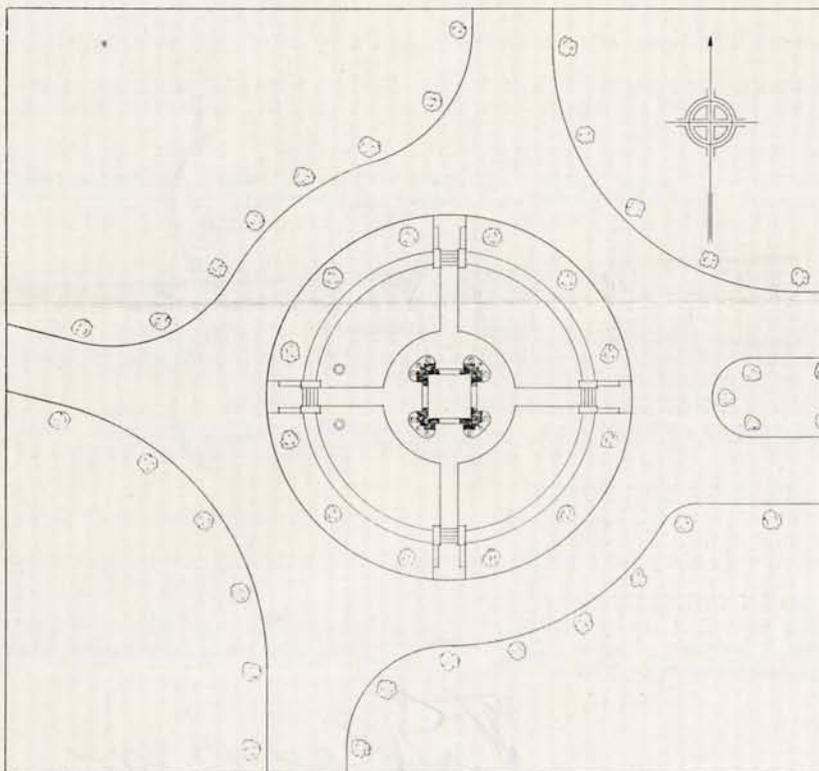
EQUIPMENT

**T**HE Tower is located on a terrace in the center of a circle, one hundred feet in diameter, in a section of the cemetery recently opened for development.

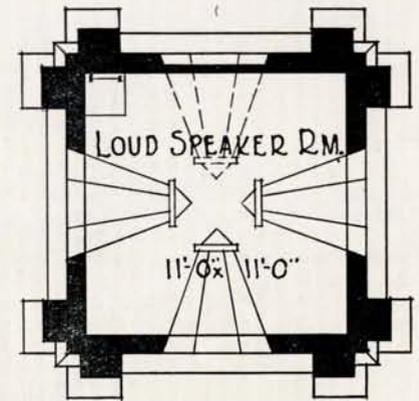
The exterior walls of the tower and the interior walls of the Memorial Room on the First Floor are faced with Silverdale stone. The ceiling of the Memorial Room is of white textured composition board with rough stained wood beams.

The Second Floor of the tower houses the record equipment and the amplifiers. This apparatus consists of the amplifier units and the console on which is mounted two record turntables. On these turntables, any recorded music may be played at an adequate volume. The recordings are transmitted through the amplifiers and to the speakers which are located on the Third Floor.

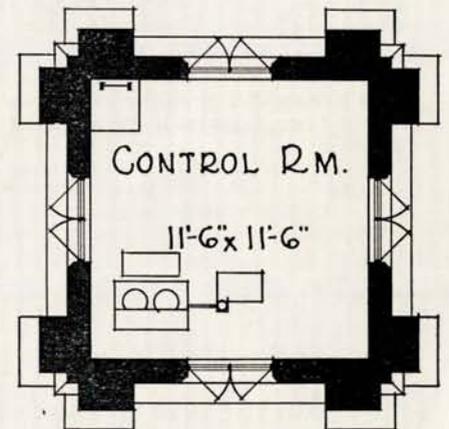
*The equipment is designed to furnish music for evening Concerts and Sunday Vesper Services, as well as for use in connection with burial services.*



GROUND PLAN



THIRD FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

# An Open Letter -

from Mr. T. G. Klepper, President and Manager  
Memorial Lawns Cemetery  
Wichita, Kansas

—Showing how a TOWER of MUSIC, erected in a comparatively new cemetery, instantly attracted widespread favor and actuated a most remarkable increase in the sale of lots even during the long depression period, in a year when the mortality rate decreased 20%, and also in the face of unusually active competition from four large protestant cemeteries.

**NOTE:**—Mr. Klepper has generously allowed us to make public the results of his sales experience, based squarely upon the Tower of Music, in order that the cemetery managers in other cities may benefit if they wish by adopting the same Sales Stimulus which he has proved to be so surprisingly productive.

He says:

In order that you may get a comprehensive picture of our very interesting experience and rapid development, I will begin my story back in the years of 1928-29 at which time another large cemetery was opened here—employing from six to ten salesmen and offering contracts with a small down payment and easy monthly installments.

In view of the fact that Wichita already had four large protestant cemeteries, the advent of still another one soon made competition exceedingly keen. Therefore, it was not very long before our executives realized the necessity that something MUST be done to cope with a situation which was rapidly becoming acute.

This serious state of affairs continued to drift along about two years—the various cemeteries were making very determined sales efforts to meet the strong competition, business conditions were steadily going backward and, as our own cemetery was then a comparatively new project, our problem was exceedingly difficult of solution. In fact, we were anxiously hoping something miraculous would happen to help us. And something did happen! Yes, indeed, and far better than we had expected!

In the early part of 1931, I conceived the idea of erecting and equipping our now famous Tower of Music. Straightway I consulted Mr. R. J. Hamilton, a prominent architect, and The Mitchell Electric Co., expert sound equipment engineers. Plans were made, work progressed rapidly and on Decoration Day, May 30, 1931, the Tower in all its majestic beauty and grandeur was splendidly ready to send forth its glorious music to the four winds of Heaven.

It was the FIRST Tower of its kind in the United States. And what an impression it made! It was an instant success! People came from miles around to listen to its enthralling music and marveled at this wonderful innovation. Deeply moved by what they heard and greatly pleased at what they saw, their praise and appreciation was beyond compare.

It is undeniably true that the presentation of the Tower of Music heralded the coming of a prosperous new era for Memorial Lawns. From that time on, our Sales Sheets show a record of which any cemetery anywhere would be justly proud.

## IMPORTANCE OF EFFICIENT HOUSING

Since our Tower has been completed, some few cemeteries have installed a more or less makeshift arrangement of loud speakers on a roof, or an unattractive installation in an obscure building. Such methods cannot be satisfactory as a very large portion of the effectiveness is entirely lost. The beauty and dignity of the Tower is delightful to the eye, lends untold charm to the music, and adds very materially to the scenic beauty of the Cemetery.

## EFFECT OF THE TOWER ON SALES

Following the announcement that the Tower would be built, our sales rose to an average of over \$2500.00 a month.

In the month of June, immediately following the first presentation of the Tower, our sales reached almost \$6000.00. The steady growth in sales has resulted in our opening more new additions to the original tract.

Our Sales in 1931 were practically double those of 1930—and this in the face of a 20% mortality decline in 1931.

Our Sales from June 1st to December 31, 1931 were almost 25% more than the total of 1930. 1932 bids fair to be our banner year.

These attractive records have been established without increasing the selling personnel of two people.

## FACTS ABOUT THE TOWER OF MUSIC

The installation is Record Equipment with Amplifiers. There are three distinct uses for the equipment: RECORDED MUSIC which includes Vocal and Instrumental, choral, organ and carillon numbers—or any music of which a reproducing record has been made; RADIO for tuning in on a church or other program for rebroadcasting via the amplifiers; MICROPHONE for singers and speakers.

The Tower and its equipment represent but a nominal investment when compared with the splendid sales record already established.

The Custodian of the Cemetery operates the equipment, and since it has been in operation, we have had no service or repair expense. Our bills for electric current have never exceeded \$3.00 per month even though we give five concerts a week of and hour and a half duration, and illuminate the Tower with floodlights.

## USE AND PURPOSE OF THE TOWER

The truly dominant thought regarding the Tower installation is the wonderfully impressive part it enacts during the conduct of Burial Services in Memorial Lawns. As the funeral cortege enters the outer portals of the cemetery and wends its way to the sepulchre, there comes from the Tower indescribably beautiful music simulating the soft, sweet cadences of angels singing in Paradise.

If desired, the music will continue during the Service and until those attending have left the grounds. It is our practice to learn what musical selections the relatives desire and to play them as they wish. This adds greatly to the beauty of the Service and creates lasting memories.

## SUMMER EVENING PUBLIC CONCERTS

On May 30, 1931, we gave our first Tower concert and continued them, during the nice weather, for five months. We gave five concerts a week from 7:30 P. M. to 9:00 P. M. and on Sundays from 5:30 P. M. to 7:00 P. M.

## ATTENDANCE IN FIVE MONTHS OVER 100,000

As an example of the interest manifested in these concerts, we have often counted fully 700 cars standing in adjacent roads and filling our parkways. We have kept a reasonably accurate record of the attendance which totals over 100,000 in the concert season.

## EXPLOITATION OF THE TOWER

Whenever our salesmen take a prospective purchaser to Memorial Lawns—the custodian renders some fine music from the Tower and, almost without exception, the sale is readily made.

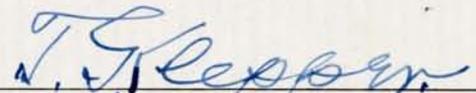
People so often say to us, "We wish to have our loved ones sleep here within the pale of this wondrous music. Such surroundings are, indeed, beautiful."

## A WORD IN CONCLUSION

Down through the Ages, no other human factor has ever had the power to sway mankind—as has musical expression. Therefore, realizing the potency of this truism, it will readily be seen why we enlisted its agency and applied it to practical use in popularizing our cemetery and in the selling of lots and mausoleum crypts.

General Offices  
Suite 208 Orpheum Bldg.,  
Wichita, Kansas.

Signed,



INQUIRIES RELATIVE TO TOWER DESIGNS AND EQUIPMENT ARE REQUESTED

R. J. Hamilton, Architect  
214 Orpheum Bldg., Wichita, Kansas

Mitchell Electric Co., Sound Equipment Engineers,  
408 E. Harry St., Wichita, Kansas



Home of The Tower of Music