



Webb City (Images of America)

Priscilla Purcell Brown

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Agriculture--not mining--brought the first pioneers to Webb City. In 1856, John C. Webb moved his family from Tennessee to southwest Missouri. On the first day of June in 1859, he purchased 240 acres at the General Land Office in Springfield, Missouri. He farmed this land until 1873, when he found lead on top of the ground while plowing his cornfield. Webb City soon became part of the greatest lead and zinc mining district in the world. In September 1875, Webb platted the township of Webb City on part of this same land. His journey from farmer to wealthy mine owner may be a unique story in the world, but it was common in southwest Missouri. Like any boomtown, Webb City grew quickly, and businesses seemingly emerged overnight to meet the needs of the community, making many early founders rich. This book covers the changes in the community as it transitioned from farming to mining, as well as the influence of Route 66.



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