

## Kansas Sesquicentennial 2011



### ELMER McCOLLUM

CHEMISTRY

Johns Hopkins University



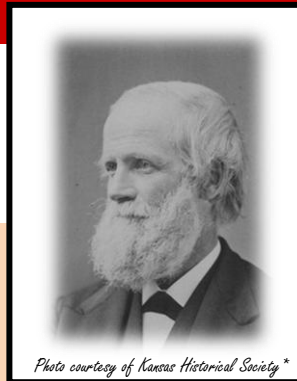
### Elmer McCollum 1879-1967

- Born and raised on a farm near Ft. Scott.
- Earned two degrees in chemistry at the University of Kansas.
- He discovered Vitamins A and B and found that Vitamin D helps prevent a bone disease called rickets.
- His studies helped Americans understand that what they eat affects their health.

**EXTRA COOL:** McCollum Hall at KU is named in honor of Elmer and his brother Burton, another scientist.

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### Benjamin Franklin MUDGE

GEOLOGY / PALEONTOLOGY

Kansas Geological Survey



*Photo courtesy of Kansas Historical Society\**

### Benjamin F. Mudge 1817-1879

- Moved to Wyandotte County in 1861.
- Became the first state geologist.
- Led geology and fossil expeditions in Gove, Ellsworth, Smith, Trego, Ellis, and Jewell Counties. Famous for finding the first fossil ever in America of a bird with teeth in 1872.
- Co-founder of the Kansas Academy of Science in 1867. Taught at what is now Kansas State University.
- Discovered 80 new species of extinct plants and animals from the time when Kansas was an ocean.

**EXTRA COOL:** Three of his discoveries have been named for him.

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### Ernest Fox NICHOLS

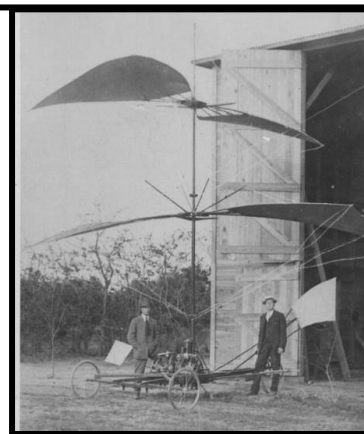
Physics  
General Electric

### Ernest Fox NICHOLS 1869-1924

- Born in Leavenworth. Because of poor health he was homeschooled by his mother.
- Orphaned at age 15, he went to live with his aunt and uncle in Manhattan.
- Graduated from Kansas State University.
- Famous for his work on infrared radiation. He proved that light exerts pressure, information important to astrophysicists as they study the stars.
- Also known for the Nichols radiometer, a device for measuring stellar radiation.
- Did radiation research for General Electric.

**EXTRA COOL:** Nichols was one of the most famous scientists of the time and was friends with Albert Einstein.

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*KansasMemory.org, Kansas State Historical Society\**

### William PURVIS/Charles WILSON

Inventors

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### William PURVIS / Charles WILSON

- They were railroad mechanics in Goodland in the early 1900s.
- Worked together in the railroad shop to build an aircraft that could take off and land vertically. Their first version lifted several feet off the ground.
- Applied for the first U.S. patent for a rotary wing aircraft (helicopter) in 1912.
- Their project to build a full-scale version was unsuccessful, but their main ideas were taken and improved upon in the 1930s to make forward flight possible.

**EXTRA COOL:** A replica of their helicopter is on display at Goodland's High Plains Museum.

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2011 SCIENCE in KANSAS  
150 years and counting

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