

R Sligo Furnace Company.
1270 Plat, 1908.
One item.

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This a blueprint plat (28 inches x 56 inches) of the Sligo Furnace Company plant at Sligo in Dent County, Missouri, showing the furnace, charcoal kilns, chemical plant, and tracks of the Sligo and Eastern Railroad, 1 February 1908. The plat also shows residences, shops, and other structures in the village along with associated streets and water mains.

A. J. Crawford of Terre Haute, Indiana; A. L. Crawford of New Castle, Pennsylvania; H. A. Crawford of St. Louis, Missouri; J. P. Crawford of Missouri; and David Carson, former superintendent of the Maramec Iron Works in Phelps County, Missouri, formed the Sligo Furnace Company in 1880. A Missouri corporation named after the Sligo forges near Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, the company was capitalized at \$30,000 (later recapitalized at \$100,000) to exploit iron deposits in Crawford, Dent and Phelps counties along the line of the St. Louis, Salem and Little Rock Railway. The company built a furnace along Crooked Creek in Dent County on a site within reach of the St. Louis, Salem & Little Rock Railway and close to plentiful deposits of iron ore, limestone for flux, and timber for charcoal-making.

The company's physical plant took shape in 1880. The original furnace consisted of an iron-cased furnace stack resting on cast-iron columns and mantle. It was fueled by charcoal and the melting point of iron achieved with forced air draft. Rebuilt in 1891, the furnace produced 100 tons of iron daily and had an annual capacity of 25,000 tons. Sligo's iron ore came from mines in Dent, Crawford and Phelps counties, including those at Simmons Hill, Cherry Valley, Pomeroy, Clinton, Hawkins Bank, Plank, Stephens, Orchard, and others. Wagons hauled ore from the mines to points along the St. Louis, Salem and Little Rock Railway (later the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway's Salem Branch) between Salem and Steelville, and along a spur built from the Salem Branch to the furnace at Sligo. Later the company incorporated the Sligo and Eastern Railroad to haul ore and timber from as far east as Iron County. Sligo was a charcoal-fueled furnace and charcoal-making was a corollary operation. Workers produced charcoal on site in large conical-shaped kilns with a capacity of forty-five to fifty-five cords of wood each. Eventually there were seventy-two kilns at Sligo with an annual capacity of 2,160,000 bushels of charcoal. The company recovered wood alcohol and other distillates from the charcoal-making process, making Sligo what now would be termed an integrated plant.

Edward F. Goltra (1862-1920) of St. Louis bought the company in 1898. Later the American Car and Foundry Company of St. Louis acquired Sligo Furnace Company, after which Goltra became president of American Car and Foundry. After World War One, American Car and Foundry determined to shut down the increasingly unprofitable operation. The furnace "blew out" and was largely dismantled by 1923.

The 1908 plat of Sligo shows the furnace complex as well as the village of Sligo, built by the company to house its workers immediately west of the furnace. About a thousand residents lived in one hundred frame houses rented from the company. The village also featured a school and church funded and built by the company, and a small business area consisting of a hotel,

(R1270) Sligo Furnace Company. Plat, 1908.

general store, feed store, barbershop, and other shops. The superintendent's house, dubbed the "mansion," overlooked the entire complex.

The plat of Sligo was donated by Robert W. Marshall, Jr., the grandson of William Dey Marshall (1879-1928), Sligo's last superintendent. The original blueprint has been scanned; a full-sized positive copy is available for reference use.

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19 August 2009

Robert W. Marshall, Jr.

Gift

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