

# Annie J. Scott

Missionary, Doctor, and Real Estate Developer  
1876-??

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by Susan Jezak Ford

Who could imagine that an orphan girl, working from dawn to dusk on a farm in the 1880s, could rise to become one of Kansas City's most educated, respected, and wealthiest women? Driven by an eagerness to better herself, Annie J. Scott became a doctor, land speculator, and builder of houses.

Annie Scott's ambitious nature was revealed as she labored for a farm family in Lafayette County, Missouri. One day she overheard a visitor praise the State Normal School in Warrensburg, Missouri. Determined to attend the school, Scott received permission to earn money by milking the farm's cows and churning the cream into butter. A short time later, the 14-year-old traveled to Warrensburg with the \$50 she had saved and her few possessions to enroll in the school.

Scott worked her way through the Normal School, graduating as a teacher in 1894. She then enrolled in the Scarritt Bible and Training School in Kansas City to become a Methodist home missionary. While recuperating in the hospital from work-related stress, she decided to pursue a medical degree.

In 1897 she enrolled in the medical college of the University of Kansas, where she graduated third in her class. During Kansas City's first smallpox epidemic, she cared for 2500 patients in the city's isolation hospital.

In 1902, Scott invested \$2000 in 11 acres near 43rd Street and State Line. The land was quickly divided into plots and sold, earning her a swift \$5000 profit for her investment. Scott soon learned that she could reap greater returns by building and selling houses. From 1904 to 1909, she built and sold 200 houses, drawing her own blueprints, buying materials, supervising construction and even running her own rock quarry. She earned more than \$100,000 through this venture before she was 36 years old.

In 1908, Scott was too ill to continue her work and went to Mexico to recuperate. Her abandoned projects began to fail, but she returned

to Kansas City within a year to continue her developments. She married Dr. Maxwell Banner, a New York surgeon, but continued to live in Kansas City.

**Sources**

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*Kansas City Post*, 28 Aug. 1915

*The Kansas City Star*, 19 Jan.1912.

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