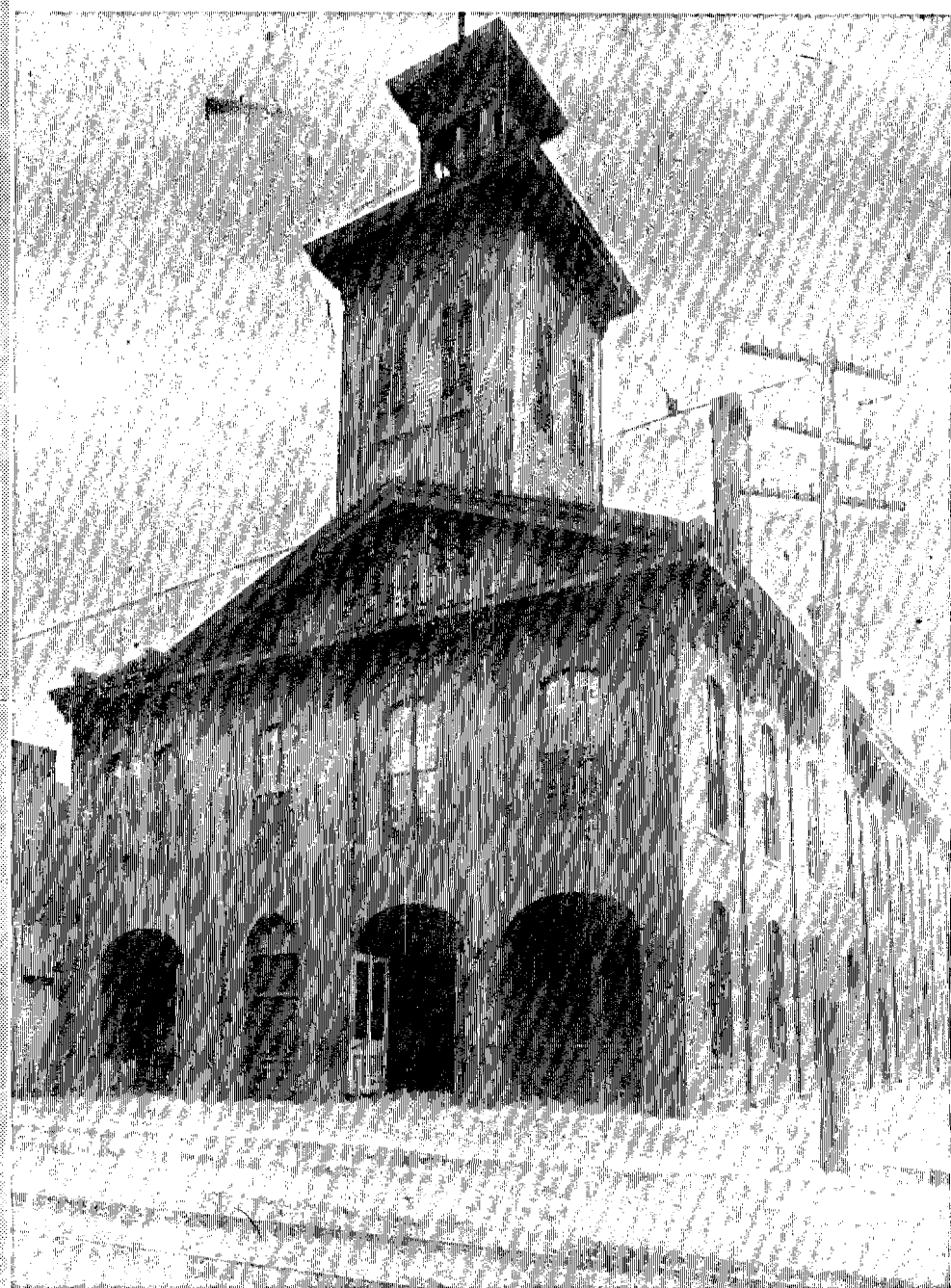


The Mansfield That Was



When Mansfield's city offices, fire and police departments and courtroom were moved to the present municipal building in 1925, there was a resurgence of nostalgia among local citizens. No longer would the tolling bell, atop old city hall, tell them a fire was being made. Indeed, the building's associations with the past were many. The structure was erected by Isaac Bowman on the southeast corner of Park Avenue West and South Walnut St., where the Walpark Building stands now. The lot had been a hog sty. Purchased for \$1,500 in 1855 by the village of Mansfield, the building was dedicated as a city market house in 1858. The 1860 census showed a population of 5,000, and school rooms were completed on the second floor over the market house. The embryo city volunteer fire department was also provided quarters in a portion of the ground floor, and the building's rear was utilized as a jailhouse until 1890. In later years, the place became fire station number one, with the first floor taken over by the horse drawn hook and ladder, hose cart and chief's buggy. The fire horses were stabled there, ready to be harnessed for a run. During this time, too, the second floor was utilized for city offices and council meeting room. In 1922, city council voted to build a new city hall, fire station and police department on the present West Second Street site; sold the old property for \$87,000; and the old building was finally razed.