Your program tonight rings with state patriotism.
Tonight you are little citizens of the great state of Missouri, some day, some of you may be its mighty leaders.

We hear much about “See America First.”

Your program makes us wish to “See Missouri first.” We live in a great state: 10th in population – 18th in size.
Missouri has been the mother of a large part of the west.

Here branched civilization westward over the Oregon and Santa Fe trails as Mary Bernard told you.
The great bend in the Missouri River, farthest point west etc. Westport Landing.

Nancy Leathers.
Missouri River longest river in the world. Drains one-fifth the entire area of the U.S.
The most even flow; one foot per mile.
Fed by snow waters of the Rockies.

Next week the Government barge line will initiate freight transportation on this mighty stream.
Missouri is a state of wonders.
The two biggest springs in the U.S. are in Missouri, near Van Buren; 500,000,000 gallons of water a day, enough to supply Kansas City for a week.

Lake of the Ozarks largest artificial lake in the U.S.
The Ozarks, of which Dayton Blume spoke so well, through southern Missouri are the oldest land in America; perhaps 10,000,000 years older than the Rockies. Life on the American Continent began in Southern Missouri.

That high plateau was the first land in our country to raise its head above the sea that once covered this entire region.
The Osage River is perhaps the most crooked river in the U.S. because the rainwater flowed around in all directions on this high level plateau to find its way to the sea.
On this high plateau has been found the remains of the dinosaur, amphibians, and mastodons of prehistoric times.

We perhaps have more natural bridges in Missouri than any other state in the country, and more caves full of interesting and beautiful sights.

One of these caves contains the largest stalagmite in the world.

Yes, your program tonight is built around a wonderful state.

From here the 49rs started westward in the conquest of gold.

Tonight you are graduating from this splendid school better prepared, some of these days, to become the 49rs in developing the abundant supply of raw resources in your state.

We have great banks of clay along the Missouri River that should be made into china and pottery.

Great mines of lead and zinc in the south to be used for industry.

Great hardwood forests which can be made into beautiful furniture.

Perhaps some of you may be the genius who will discover a way to make many manufactured articles from the corn stalks; oat straw and wheat straw, and potatoes, and other farm products thus greatly increasing the wealth of the state of Missouri.

Some of you may become great chemists who will develop alcohol from the products now going to waste on the farms, to drive the automobiles and other engines of our country.

For generations the population of our country has been moving westward.

Today our new lands are all occupied, and you young people may fare far better by only turning your eyes to this grand old state of Missouri living here, working here, making it richer in resources, and a happier place to live.

The very rapid growth of the J.C. Nichols School is typical of the power of our state.

As you look around this beautiful district in which your school is located, it seems to me the trees are a little greener; the flowers bloom a little more colorful and the birds sing a little more gaily than almost any other place you can find.

You do not have to go to far off Europe or Asia to find beautiful scenery. Your great state abounds in some of the most beautiful scenes to be found anywhere.

Go to any high point in this district on any evening and see the gorgeous sunset in the west; ride through Jackson County and enjoy the beautiful rolling country; the picturesque scenes and rocky ledges.

Missouri is a great out of doors state. Many of its streams abound with fish, and with the fine work of the state hatchery is fast becoming the playground of this part of America.

You have beauty on every hand, on every side if you will just stop to enjoy it. Learn to observe – owl story.
One of the greatest advantages you are getting out of your education in this school, in your high school and college, is to learn to see and appreciate the beauty all around you.

Then, too, you have fine people in Missouri. Just as fine folks as you will find any place under the sun.

The splendid friendships you have made in the school should go with you through life. Keep on making friends; do things for your friends; go to a lot of trouble and out of your way to perform little services for them. This will make you happier than anything you can do.

Missouri folks are noted for their hospitality and fine, sturdy character.

Here again education teaches you to appreciate friendships; teaches you how to work together and pull together in good team work to make your neighborhood better and your town and state better.

Your program tonight shows how rich Missouri is in its history and its life.

I hope the next time you go to the art gallery you will go down to the Indian room and ask to see the early vases and other articles of pottery that have been dug from the deep silt lands in southeastern Missouri; remnants of a lost civilization; people who lived here long before our American Indian and the cliff dwellers; long before the time the Spaniards and French roamed over this land.

Ask to see the beautiful paintings by Bingham one of the greatest artists that ever lived in Missouri.

Ask the guard to show you the beautiful columns that came from St. Genevieve, Missouri, and remember that St. Genevieve was established away back in 1720, 200 years ago, as Nancy Leathers said, long before the American Revolution.

Isn't it fine to feel that you live in the heart of America? The section that has been called “The bread basket of the world”?

Did you ever stop to think that, as Jack Harris said, we grow as wide a range of products as you can find any where in the country – from rice and cotton in the south to corn and wheat and oats in the north?

You can cut ice and pick cotton in the same month in Missouri.

Do you realize that the soil in the Missouri River Valley from Kansas City North is as rich and fertile as the delta of the Ganges in the Valley of the Nile?

Did you know, that 1,062 battles were fought in Missouri in the Civil war, of which Willard Griescke spoke? 11% of all the engagements.

Did you know that Missouri furnished 1/5 of the soldiers to the Union in the Civil war and one fifth of the troops to the Confederacy? Showing that we have a people who are brave and willing to fight for the right.

Do you know that some of the old bunkers in the old Country Club, which is not the Loose Memorial Park, were breastworks thrown up by General Joe Shelby in the Civil war?
And some of the wagon ruts of the trail of the 49rs are preserved in Loose Memorial Park just south of the rose garden?

There are 28,000 Indian mounds in Missouri which have been identified and many of them explored.

Here lived the Flathead Indians, the Osages, and many other tribes.

Taum Sauk Mt. named for a great Indian chief is 1,750 feet high; the highest elevation in the state, and located down in the iron country. From its base flows a spring which makes a beautiful river.

Down on 50 highway where it crosses the Osage River is a bluff known as the “Painted Rock” showing Indian hieroglyphics painted in some lost language with color pigments unknown to us today.

Down on the White River, near Forsythe, are the great pillars of rock which resemble the pipes of some giant pipe organ.

No wonder you have been able to give such a fine program tonight about your home state.

In this school you have learned good citizenship.

You have learned to love your own section of the country.

On your athletic field you have developed an enthusiasm for doing things.

Many a boy or girl in this class will leave a high mark in the progress of the state of Missouri during the years to come.

I urge you all to work together and make Missouri even lovelier and its people happier.

Don’t feel you have got to go away around the world to live; begin right here at home in the neighborhood of the JCN school; make dearer and better friends; make your district more beautiful; protect its parks and ornaments; learn to know good architecture and appreciate interior treatment of homes.

Always keep dear the association and affection for the JCN School: its faithful teachers who have done so much for you.

Be strong for Kansas City; one of the greatest cities on earth; be proud of the State of Missouri.

Let me say again and again – make up your minds you are going on to high school and to college, studying and working hard to equip and make yourself greater and better and more useful citizens, and all through your lives remember all the fine things you have heard here tonight from all the members of your class about the wonderful state in which you live, and of which you may be justly proud.

In years to come when you grow up, marry and have children, and are attending their commencement exercises, you will recall this evening and all the fine things you have learned about that grand old state of Missouri.
Perhaps after you leave here tonight all of you will never be together again at the same time in all your lives. You will go to different schools; you may move to other towns and cities, but the link and bond of friendship of your happy years here together will always be a sweet memory that will make everyone of you pledge yourselves that your lives will be so good and so successful and so helpful that the class of 1935 of the JCN School will always be proud of you.

The J.C. Nichols Company Records (KC106) – Speech JCN032

Arguably Jesse Clyde Nichols (1880-1950) was the single most influential individual to the development of metropolitan Kansas City. Moreover his work, ideas, and philosophy of city planning and development had far-reaching impact nationally – so much so that the Urban Land Institute has established the J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionary Urban Development to recognize a person or a person representing an institution whose career demonstrates a commitment to the highest standards of responsible development.

Nichols’ objective was to “develop whole residential neighborhoods that would attract an element of people who desired a better way of life, a nicer place to live and would be willing to work in order to keep it better.” The Company under Nichols and his son, Miller Nichols (1911- ), undertook such ventures as rental housing, industrial parks, hotels, and shopping centers. Perhaps the most widely recognized Nichols Company developments are the Country Club District and the Country Club Plaza Shopping Center, reportedly the first shopping area in the United States planned to serve those arriving by automobile rather than trolley car.

The J.C. Nichols Company Records (KC106) contains both personal and business files concerning J.C. Nichols' private and business life. Included are personal correspondence, family related material, and speeches and articles written by him. Business and financial files pertain to actions of the Company, including information about different developments and the securing of art objects; and printed materials produced by and about the Company.